

# The Collected Works of GRAPHIC SHAKESPEARE Competition 2022

We are proud to present the nine amazing Graphic, Cosplay and Script adaptations of Shakespeare's works by winners and runners-ups of the Graphic Shakespeare Competition 4 (2022) <the Graphic section> Winner: Kathryn Martin "*Malvolio's transformation.*" / Runner-up: Hui En Lye and Rachel Chan "*Pericles, Prince of Tyre act V.*" / Runner-up: Edouard Lekston "*Richard III.*" / <the Cosplay section> Winner: Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology Theater Club "*Macbeth and the Three Witches*" / Runner-up: S. Kavitha Bhavani group "*King Henry IV part 1*" / <the Script section Between 15 and 24 years old group> Winner: Abhipreeti Das "*Juliet Within Romeo*" / Winner: Apabrita Mitra Sarkar, Indradattaa Basu, Deya Bhattacharya, Dishannessa Mukherjee, Brishti Roy "*What Wouldst Thou Write of Me?*" / Runner-up: Sabarno Sinha "*That Within Which Passeth Show*" / <the Script section over 25 years old group> Winner: Ji Young Choi "*While Ophelia's Korean Drum Weeps*"

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Not for sale.

Graphic Shakespeare Competition

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1015421885177194>

The Graphic Shakespeare Competition 1 was held in 2016, the Graphic Shakespeare Competition 2 in 2018, the Graphic Shakespeare Competition 3 in 2020. [graphicshakespearecompetition@gmail.com](mailto:graphicshakespearecompetition@gmail.com)

# The Collected Works of GRAPHIC SHAKESPEARE Competition 2022



## GRAPHIC

Kathryn Martin  
"*Malvolio's transformation.*"

Hui En Lye and Rachel Chan  
"*Pericles, Prince of Tyre act V.*"

Edouard Lekston  
"*Richard III.*"

## COSPLAY

Tunku Abdul Rahman University of  
Management and Technology Theater Club  
"*Macbeth and the Three Witches*"

S. Kavitha Bhavani group  
"*King Henry IV part 1*"

## SCRIPT

Abhipreeti Das  
"*Juliet Within Romeo*"

Apabrita Mitra Sarkar, Indradattaa Basu,  
Deya Bhattacharya, Dishannessa  
Mukherjee, Brishti Roy  
"*What Wouldst Thou Write of Me?*"

Sabarno Sinha  
"*That Within Which Passeth Show*"

Ji Young Choi  
"*While Ophelia's Korean Drum Weeps*"

the

# Graphic Shakespeare Competition 4

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the



## Kathryn Martin

*"Malvolio's transformation."*



Kathryn is a multi-award winning illustrator, writer and university lecturer based in London, UK. She is a keen researcher into theatre and performance history, with a passion for early Twentieth Century ballet and modern dance, and is a published researcher in the peer reviewed Journal of Illustration.

Kathryn studied BA(Hons) Illustration at the University of Worcester and MA Visual Communication at the Royal College of Art. Since graduating in 2015, her work has been recognised in national and international awards, and has been exhibited internationally in Europe and Asia.

Kathryn is currently Senior Lecturer in Illustration at Ravensbourne University London.



In Twelfth Night, Malvolio receives a letter he believes to be from his mistress Olivia, requesting he wear yellow stockings with cross garter in order to win her heart. This adaptation plays with the idea of Malvolio's transformation, posing him as an Elizabethan puritan transforming into a drag queen.

The puritanical opposition to "indulgences" such as theatre in Elizabethan and contemporary times would quash cultures such as nightlife and drag, mainstays of queer culture, something that hard-line Christianity also opposes. To pose a puritanical character throwing his prejudices to one side for his own personal gain in this comic is a critique on the inequalities that arise from religious fanaticism and conservatism.

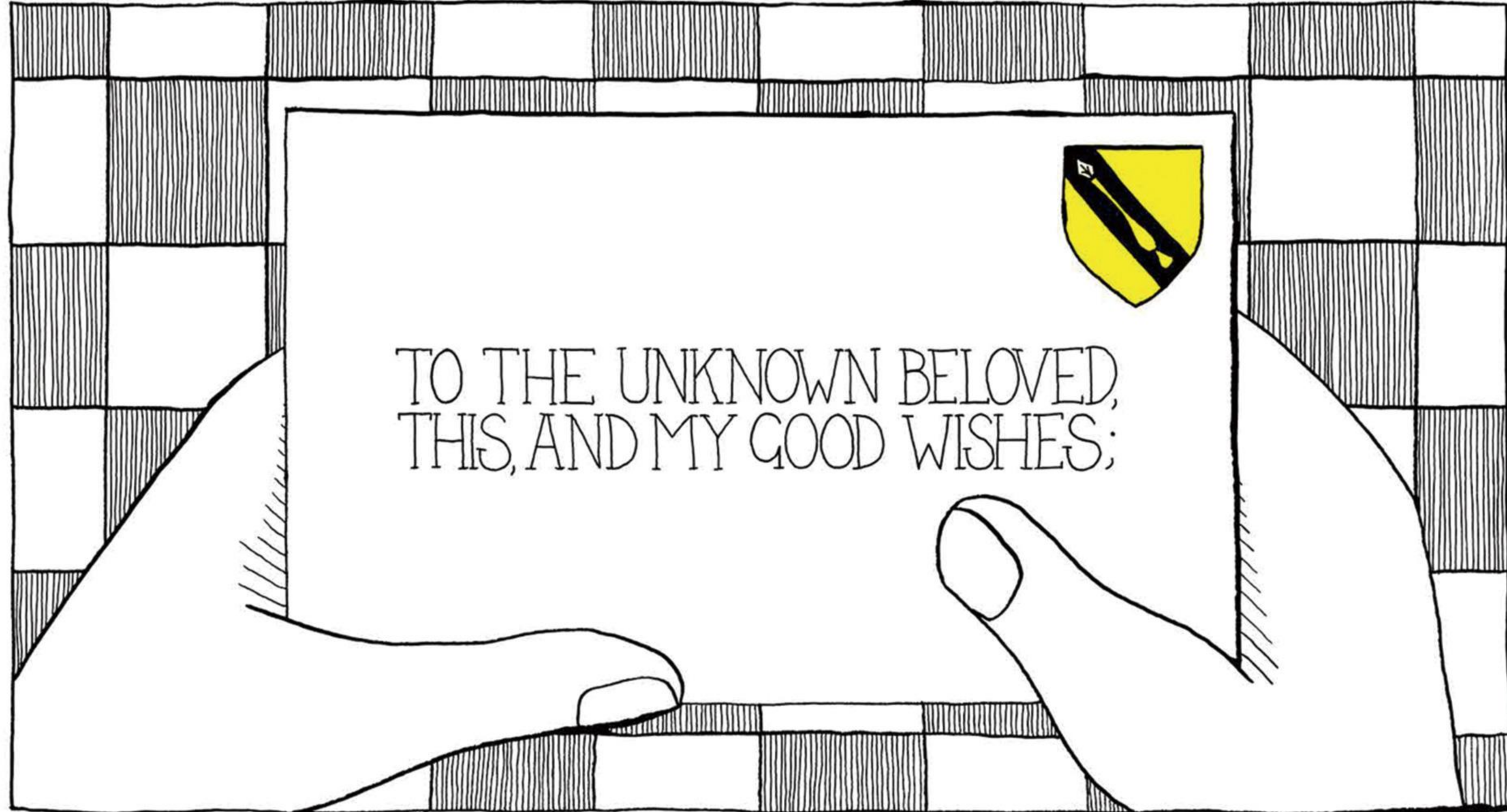
**Website:** [www.kathrynmartinillustration.co.uk](http://www.kathrynmartinillustration.co.uk)  
**Instagram:** @kathrynmartinillustration



As drag is at the heart of Shakespearean history, and the narrative of Twelfth Night (with Viola taking on the appearance of her brother for the majority of the play), I felt it was the perfect thematic example to make this critique. I was also inspired by the 2017 National Theatre production of Twelfth Night, in which the brilliant Tamsin Greig plays 'Malvolia', a female version of the character, giving the production the opportunity to explore lesbianism within this farcical tale.

# TWELFTH NIGHT

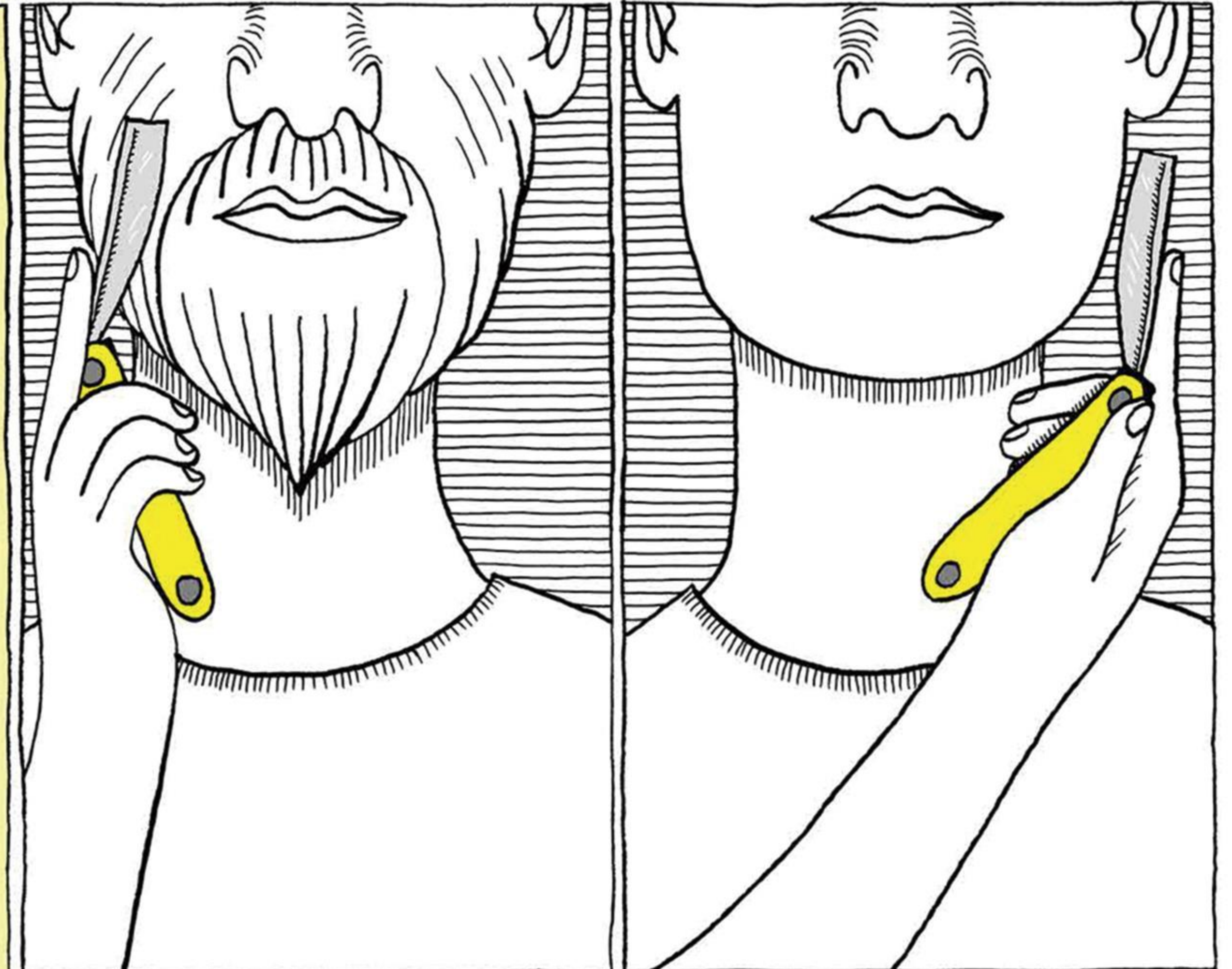
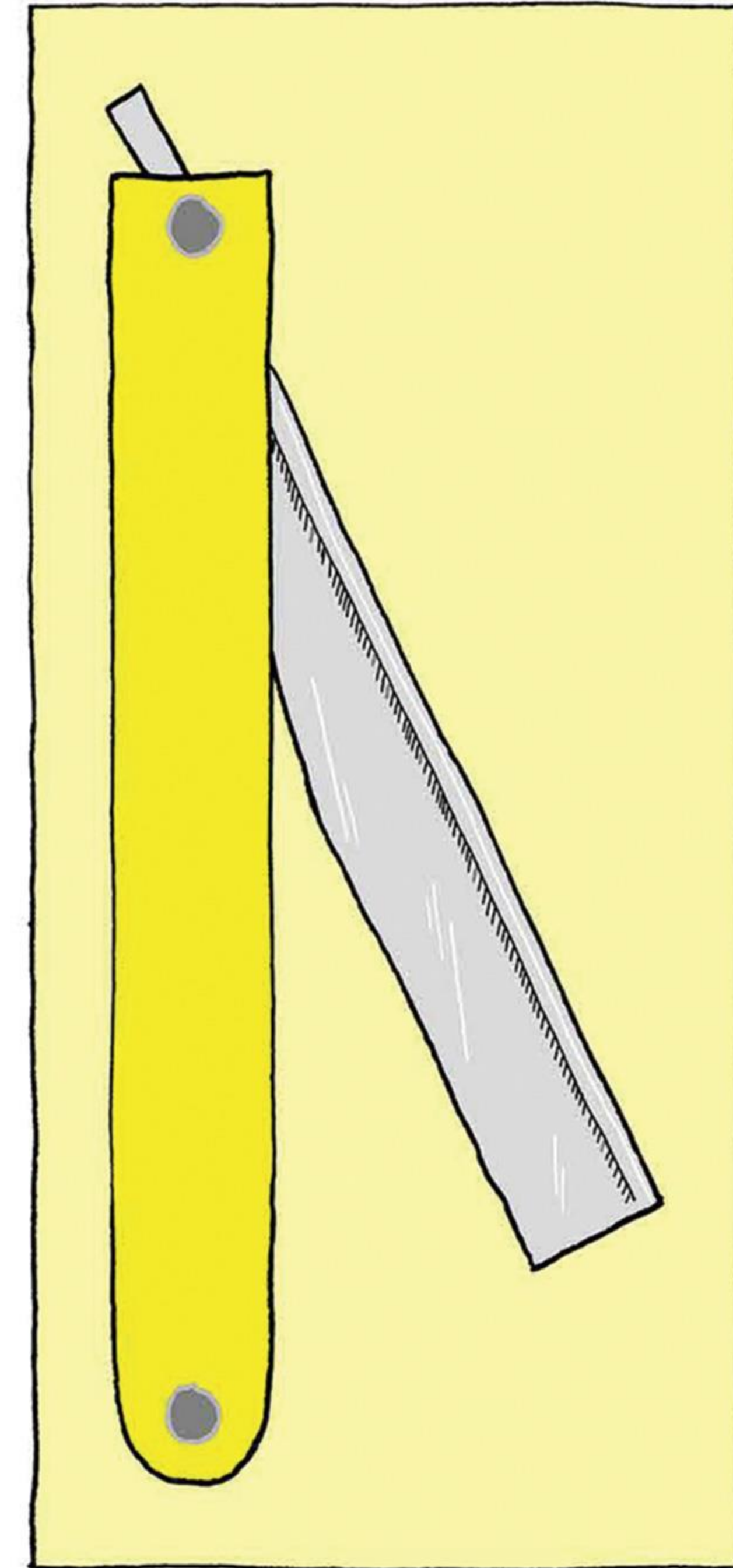
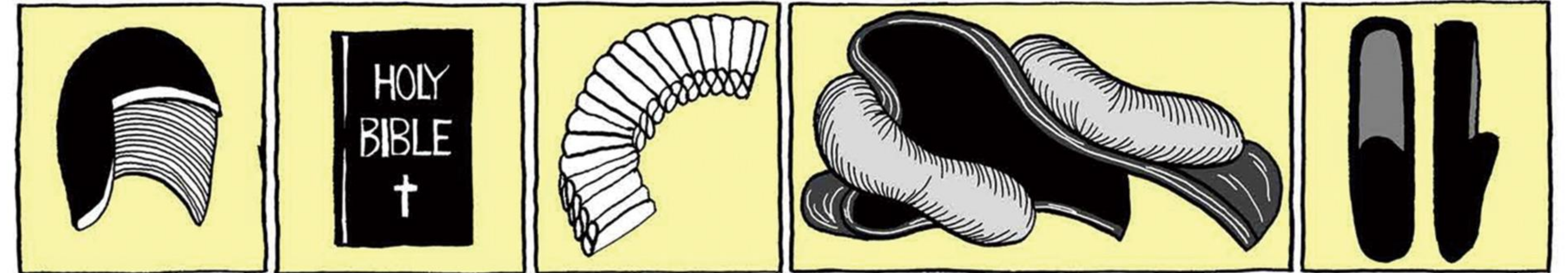
## MALVOLIO'S TRANSFORMATION



JOVE KNOWS I LOVE,  
BUT WHO?  
LIPS, DO NOT MOVE; NO MAN MUST KNOW.

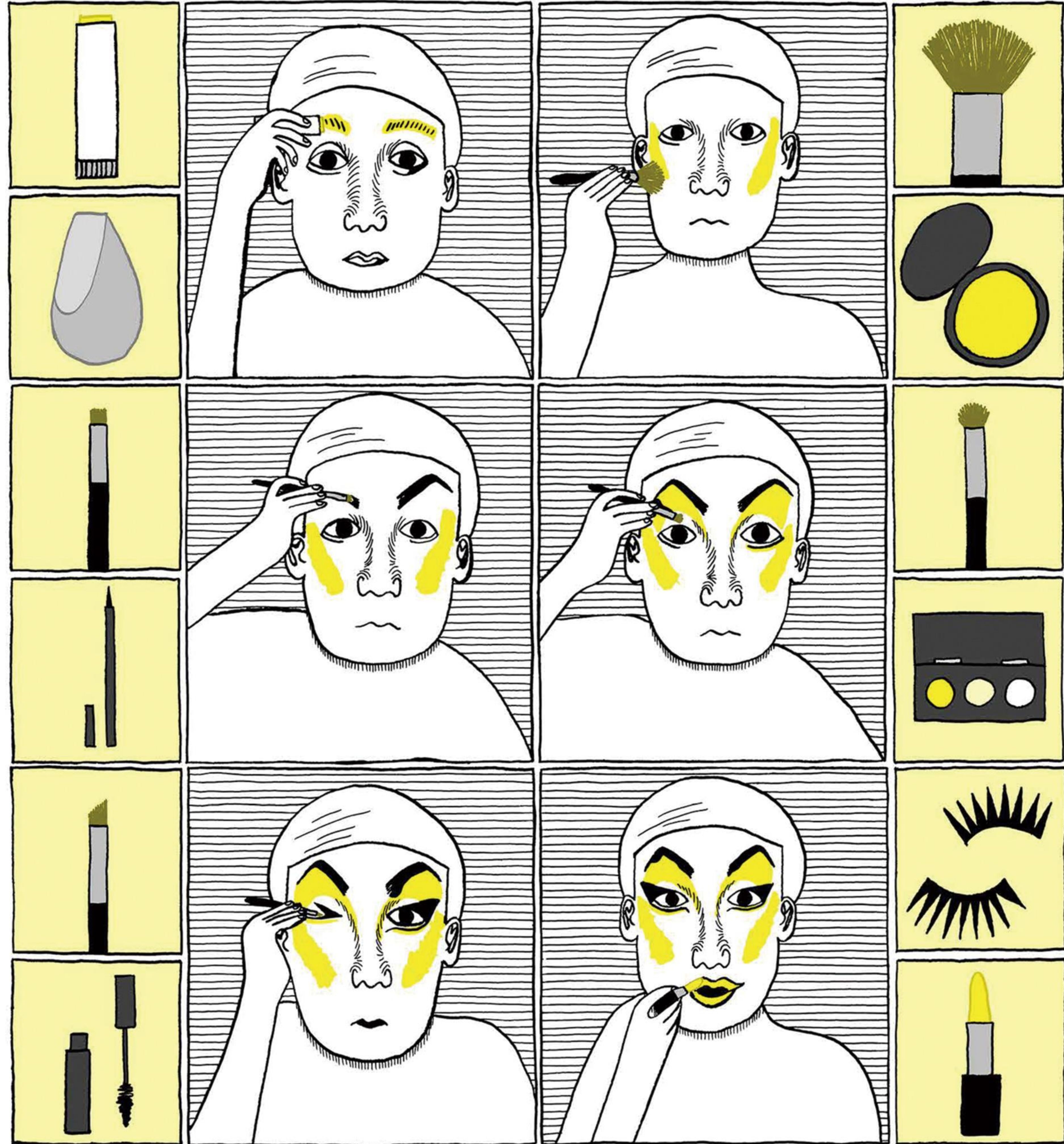
I MAY COMMAND  
WHERE I ADORE;  
BUT SILENCE,  
LIKE A LUCRECE  
KNIFE,

WITH  
BLOODLESS  
STROKE MY  
HEART GORE;



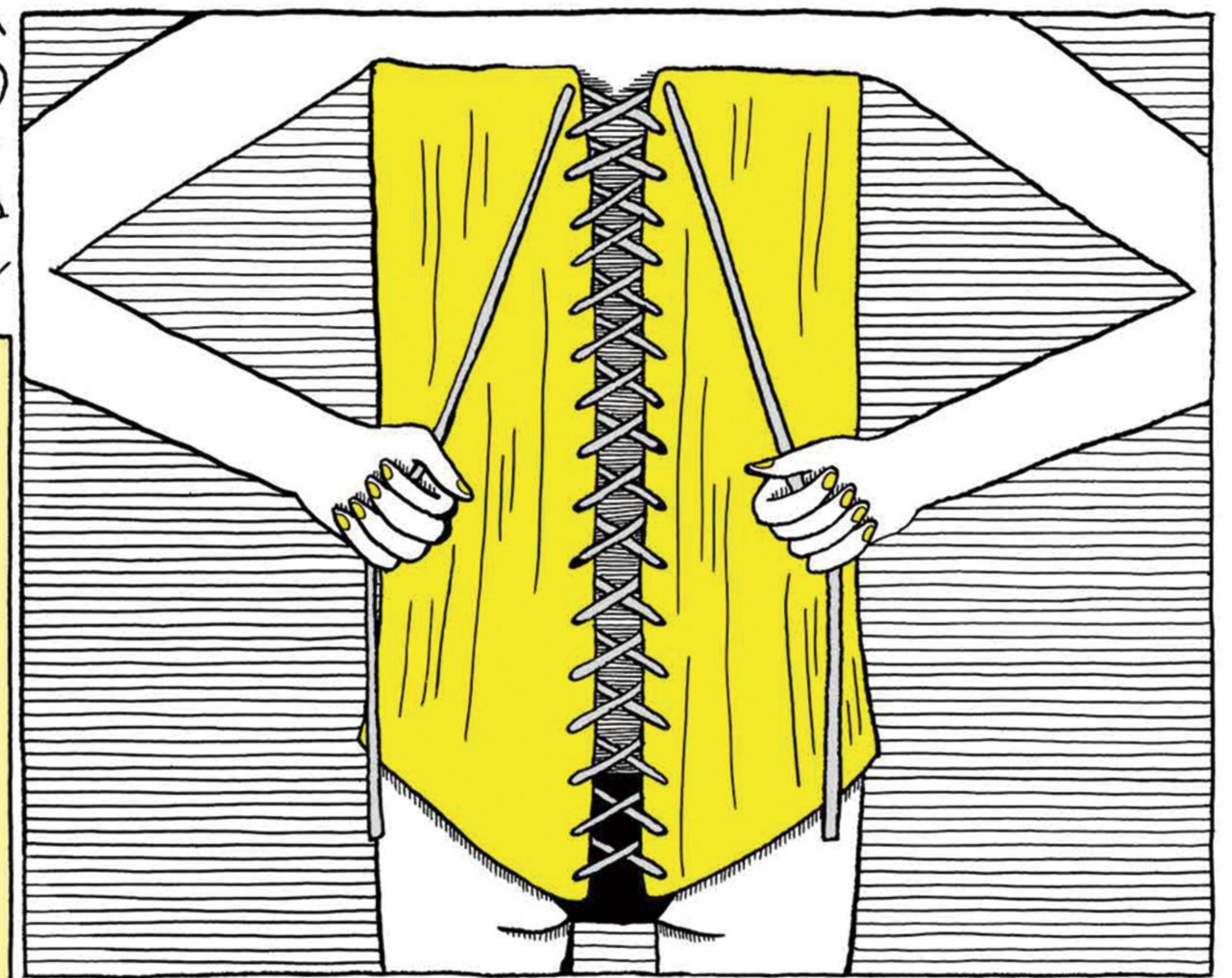
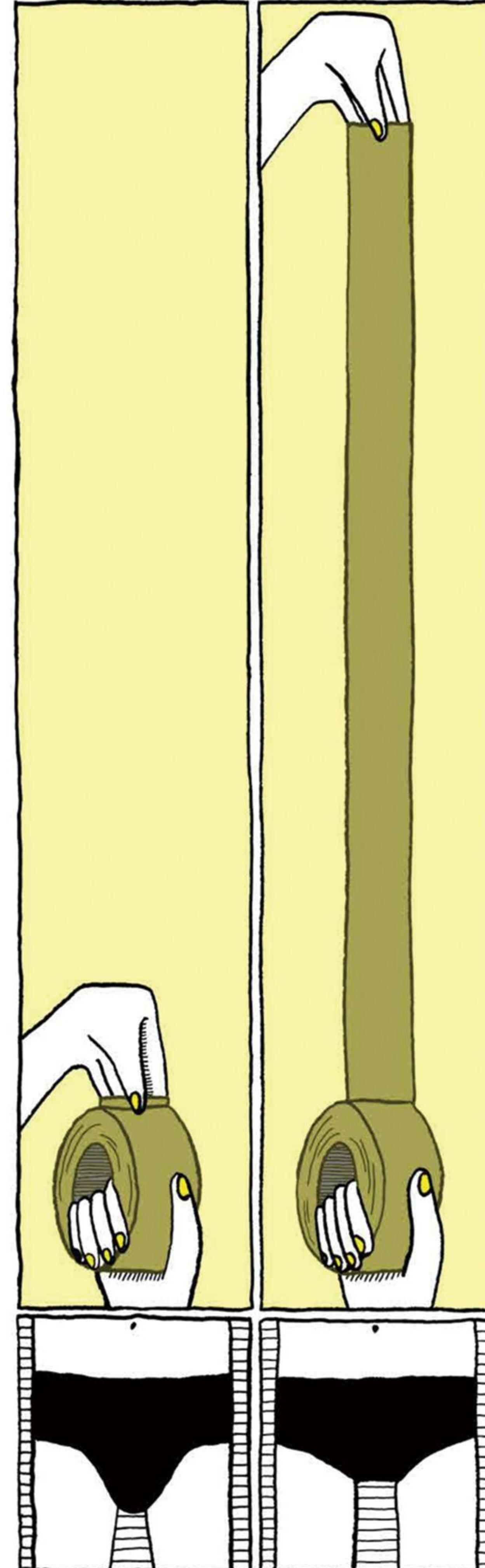
CHARISMA, UNIQUENESS,  
NERVE AND TALENT  
DOTH SWAY MY LIFE.

IF THIS FALL INTO THY HAND, REVOLVE.  
 IN MY STARS I AM ABOVE THEE;  
 BUT BE NOT AFRAID OF GREATNESS:

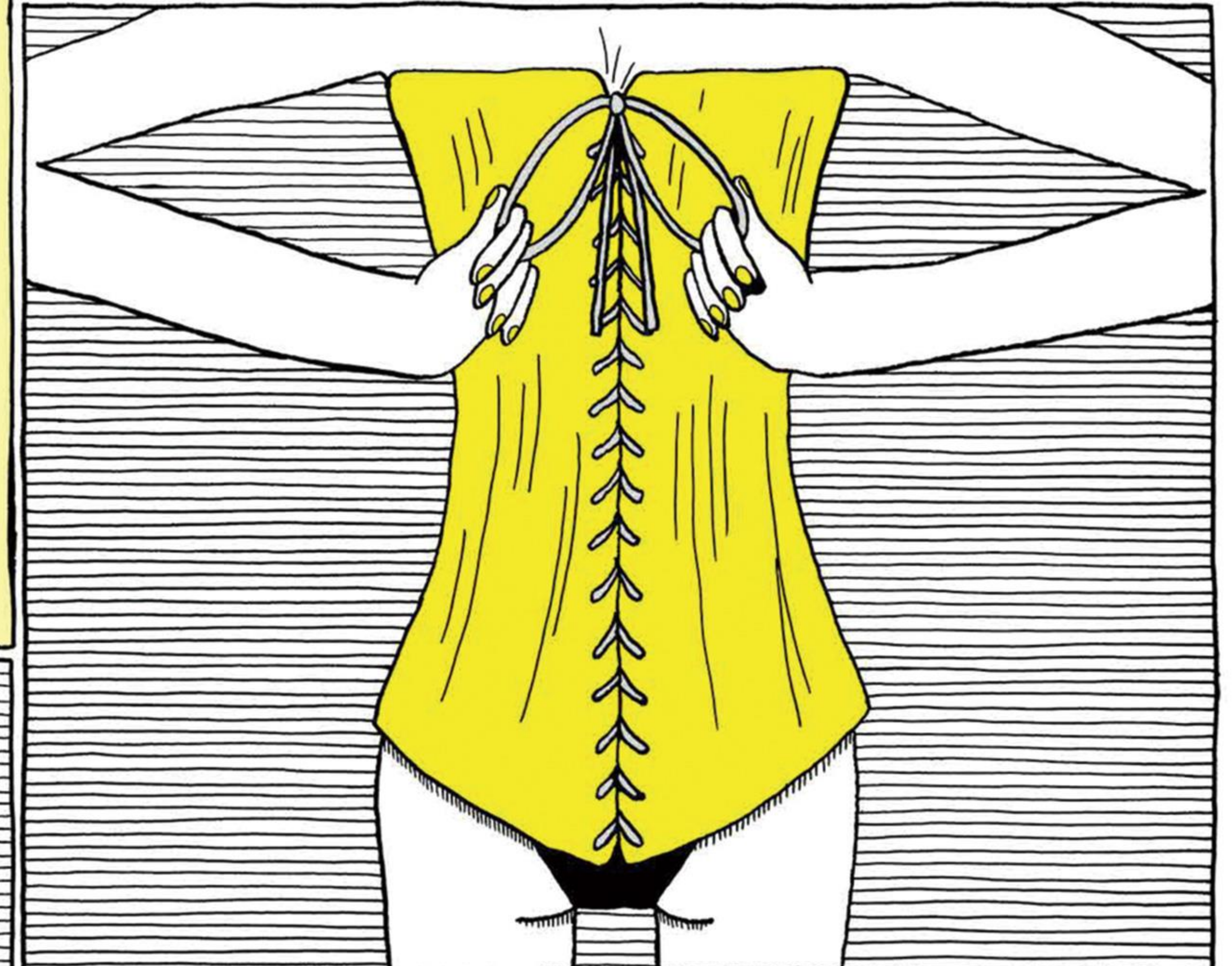


SOME ARE BORN GREAT,  
 SOME ACHIEVE GREATNESS, AND SOME  
 HAVE GREATNESS THRUST UPON THEM.

THY FATES  
 OPEN THEIR  
 HANDS:

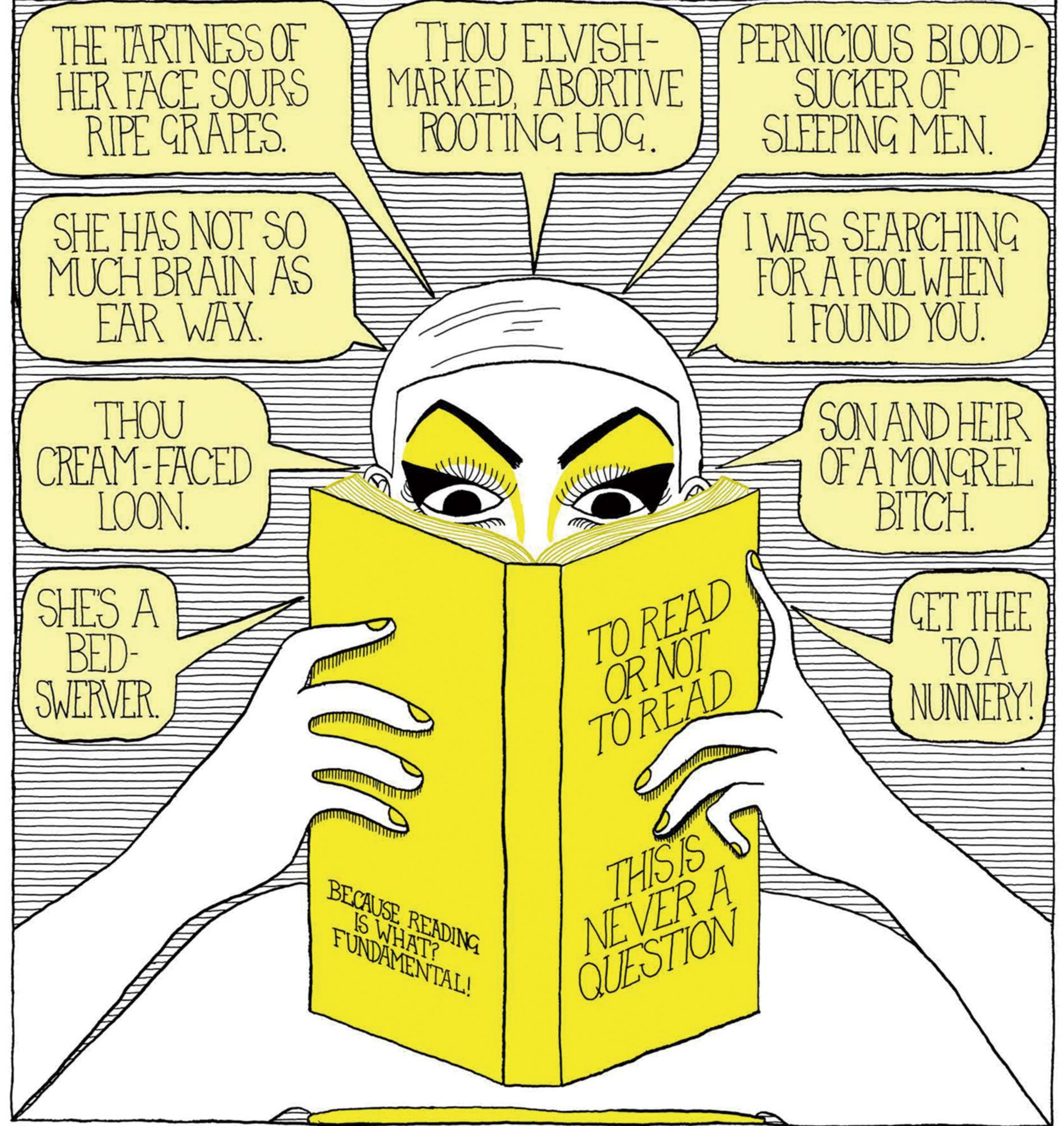


LET THY BLOOD  
 AND SPIRIT  
 EMBRACE THEM:

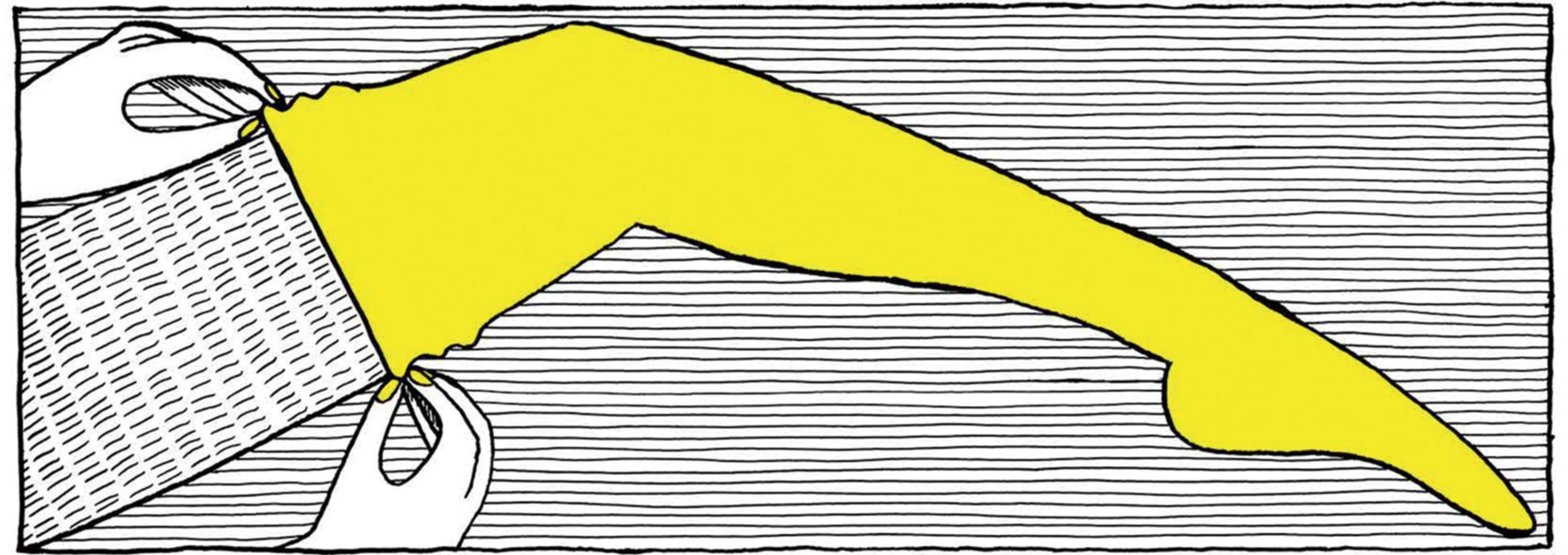


AND TO INURE THYSELF TO WHAT THOU  
 ART LIKE TO BE, CAST THY  
 HUMBLE SLOUGH, AND APPEAR FRESH.

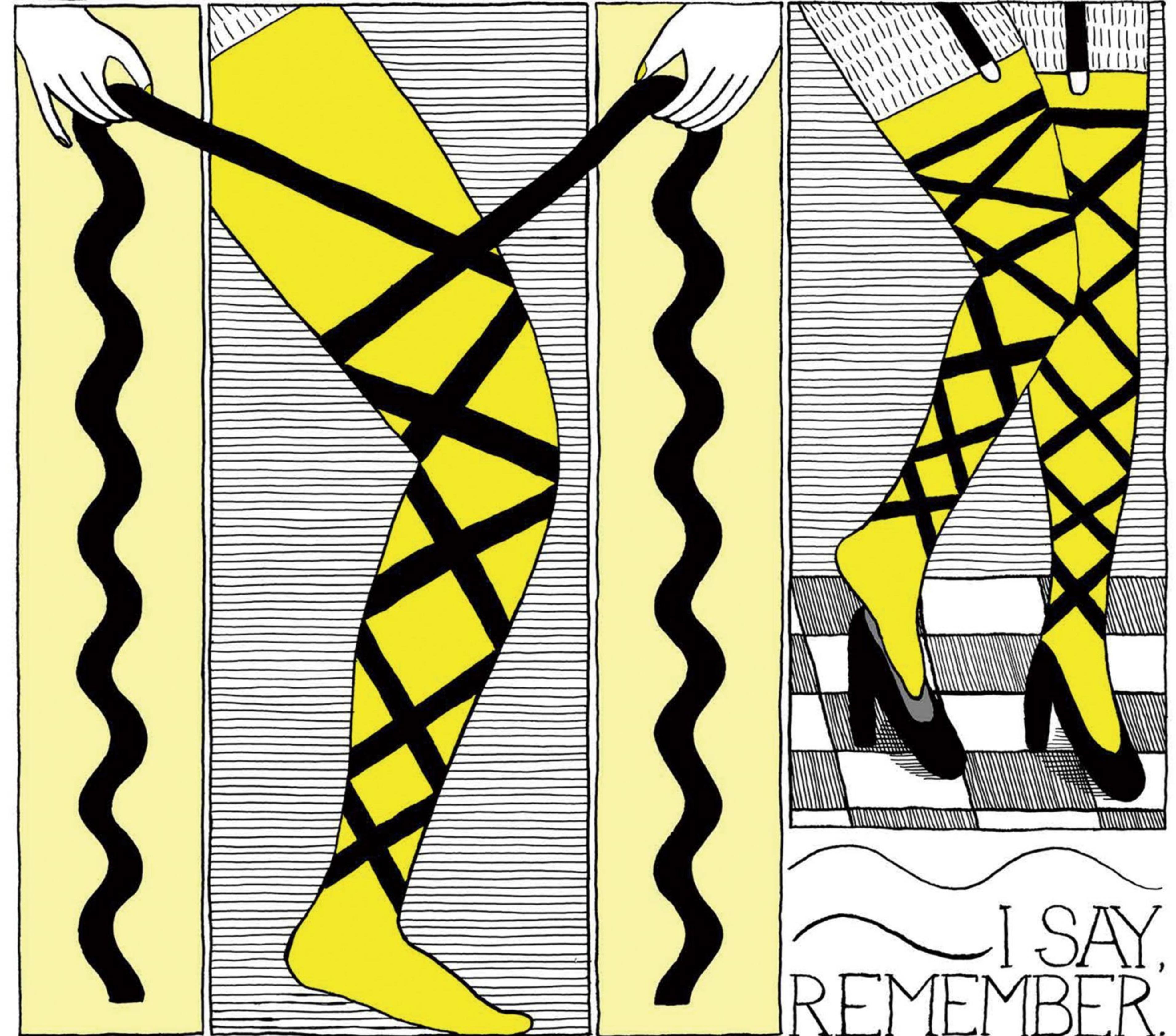
BE OPPOSITE WITH A KINSMAN, SURLY  
WITH SERVANTS; LET THY  
TONGUE TANG ARGUMENTS OF STATE:



PUT THYSELF INTO THE TRICK OF  
SINGULARITY. SHE THUS  
ADVISES THEE THAT SIGHS FOR THEE.



REMEMBER WHO COMMENDED THY  
YELLOW STOCKINGS, AND WISHED TO  
SEE THEE EVER CROSS-GARTERED:



I SAY,  
REMEMBER.



# Runner-up **GRAPHIC** Section

## Hui En Lye and Rachel Chan

*"Pericles, Prince of Tyre act V."*

The two of them were visual development artist / research assistants at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore working on a variety of Shakespeare projects for Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality and other media. (2022)

### Hui En Lye

Concept artist and  
illustrator (2024)

**Website**

<https://linktr.ee/Hueywheel>

**Social media**

@hueywheel

### Rachel Chan

Concept artist,  
2D game artist (2024)

**Website**

<https://www.artstation.com/rachelchanyk>

# Author's Commentary

We tried a fresh take for Shakespeare by exploring an alternative visual look to the story line.

This is a comic based on the story of Pericles where the characters and setting are re-imagined as anthropomorphized animals in a Southeast Asian setting. The style of the comic is based on Chinese papercut art.





BELIEVING HIS BELOVED WIFE AND DAUGHTER TO BE DEAD, THE PRINCE PERICLES ROAMS THE SEA, FILLED WITH GRIEF

AM I DESTINED TO FOREVER BE ALONE?

WAAAAAH!

WOOSH!

WHAP!  
ACK!

HUH?  
WHAT'S THIS?

SHE LOOKS SO FAMILIAR!

VISIT US @  
MYTILENE

TO  
MYTILENE  
!!

ZOOM!

WELCOME  
TO MYTILENE!

MY  
NAME IS  
LYSIMACHUS!  
I'LL BE YOUR  
GUIDE AROUND  
TOWN!

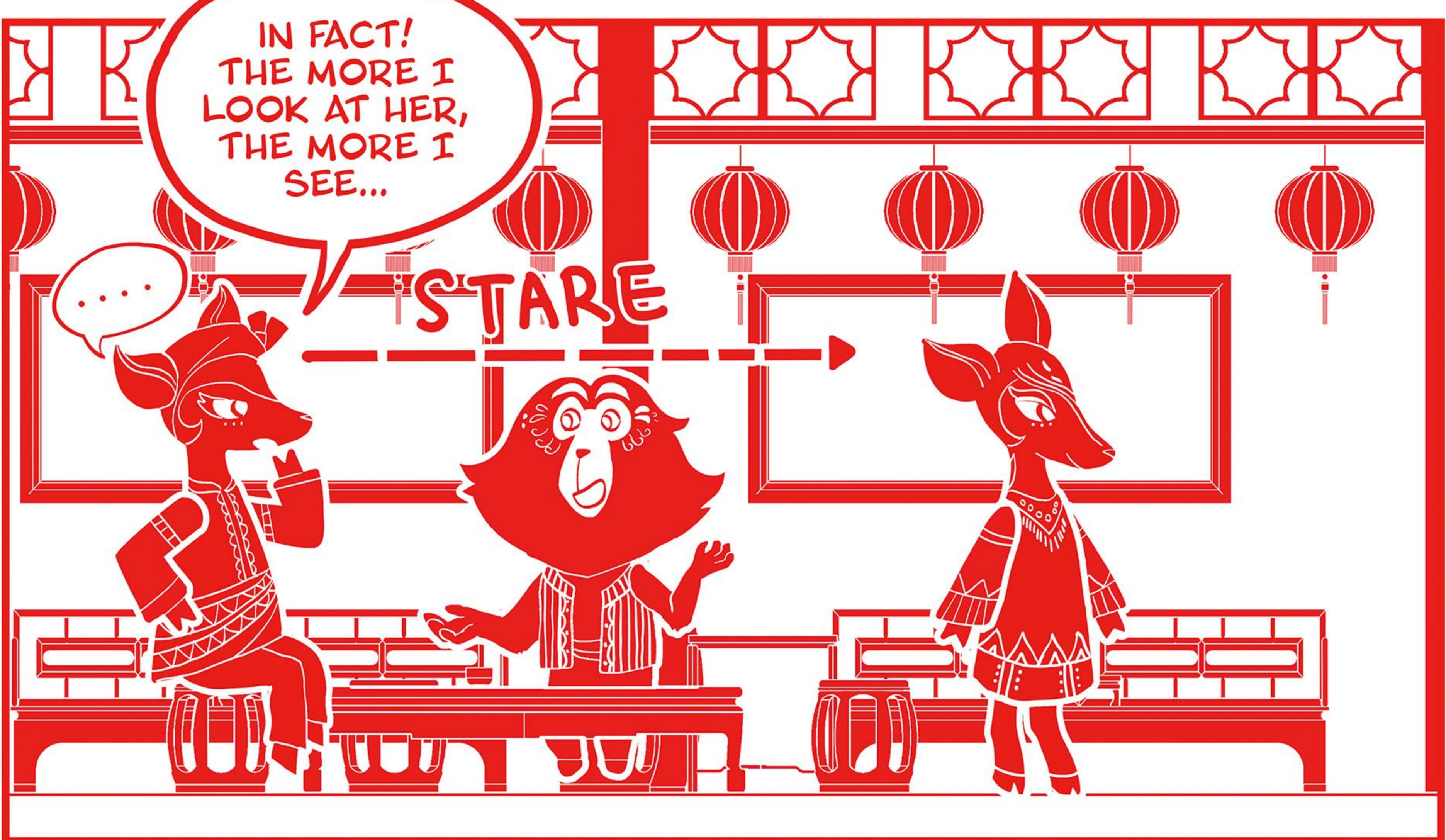
LET'S GO  
TO THE BROTHEL,  
THERE'S A LOVELY  
MAIDEN THERE WHOM  
I HAVE HEARD MUCH  
ABOUT!

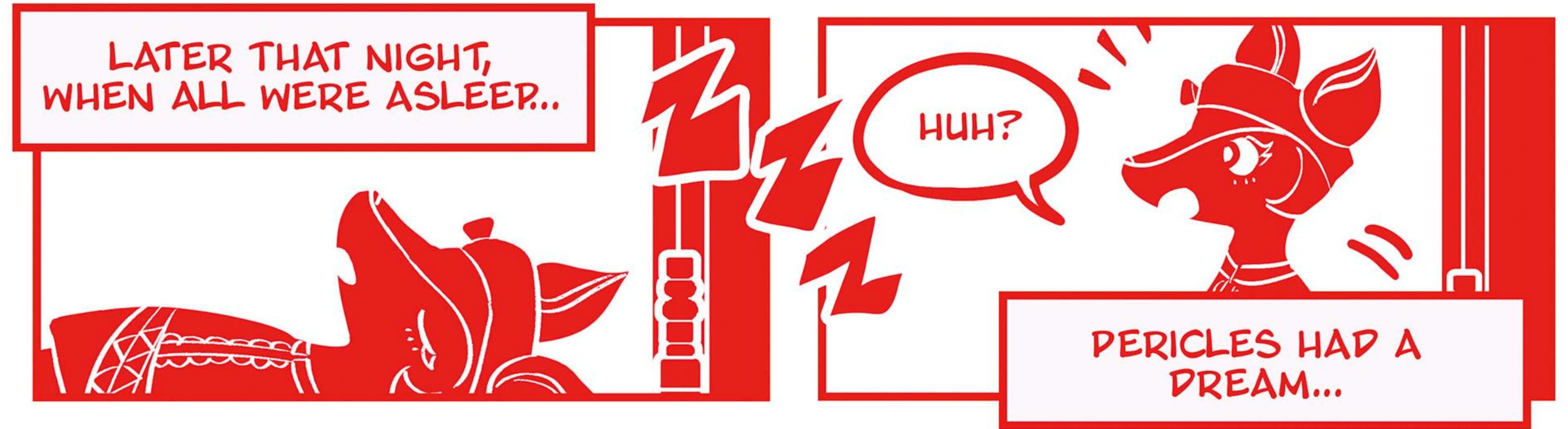
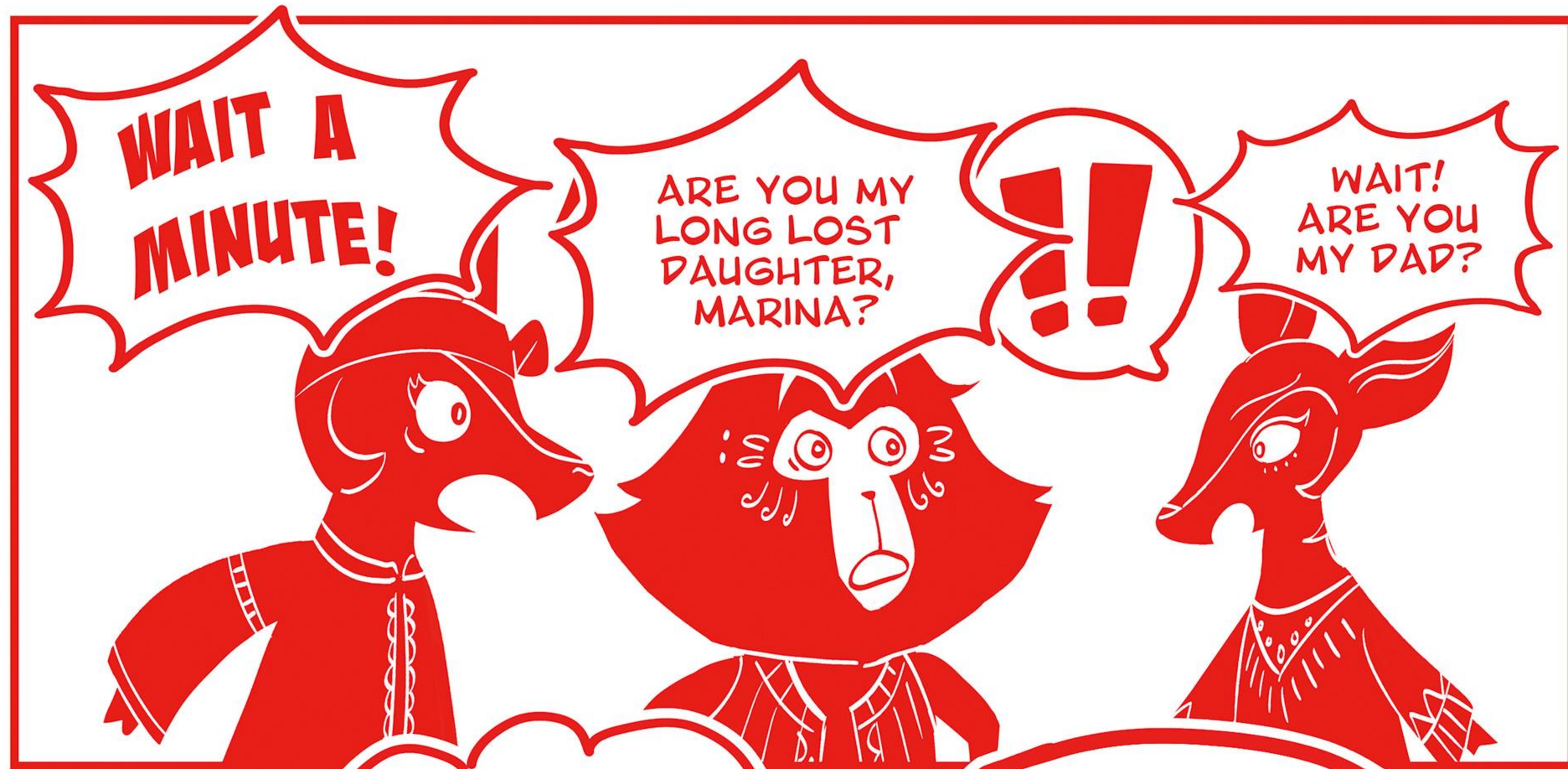
SHE'S THE  
TALK OF THE TOWN!  
EVERYONE CAN'T GET  
ENOUGH OF HER!  
SHE'S THE PUREST  
LITTLE THING!

HERE  
SHE  
IS!

ISN'T SHE  
LOVELY?

OH MY,  
LYSIMACHUS!  
YOU ARE TOO  
KIND!





THEY FOLLOWED  
THE GODDESS PIANA



THROUGH THE  
DENSE FOREST



SHE WENT  
THAT WAY!

LET'S  
HURRY!

AND TO THEIR SHOCK...  
THEY SAW A FAMILIAR  
FIGURE...



THAISA, WHOM THEY HAD BELIEVED TO  
BE DEAD, WAS ALIVE AND WELL!

HAPPILY REUNITED,  
THEY ALL EMBRACED



PROMISING NEVER  
TO PART AGAIN

AND THAT CONCLUDES THE TALE  
OF PERICLES!

# Runner-up GRAPHIC Section

## Edouard Lekston

"Richard III."

EdouardLekston lives and works in Poissy (France). He graduated from the National School of Decorative Arts in Paris (Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris). There, for his final year diploma, he presented a collection of serigraphs entitled My Friend William (Mon Ami William), which as devoted to three major tragedies by Shakespeare – *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Le Roi Lear*.

In addition to his illustration work for young people and the press, he has since produced several graphic works on Shakespeare's history plays: *Richard II* (Le Basculement) (2006), *Family Gathering ou la danse macabre de RIII* (2008), *Harry & Jack* (2015).

He has published several interviews on his graphic work, from "Le Basculement (Richard II): du texte à l'illustration" (P. Drouet, dir., Shakespeare au XXème siècle: mises en scène, mises en perspective de King Richard II, PUR, 2007) until "Un avant-goût de Harry & Jack: Entretien avec Édouard-Lekston" (Shakespeare en devenir - Les Cahiers de La Licorne - Shakespeare en devenir | N°7 - 2013 | Varia) and "'Four legs and two voices': An Interview with EdouardLekston" (S.A. Brown, R.I. Lublin, L. McCulloch, eds, Reinventing the Renaissance, Palgrave MacMillan, 2013). In 2019, he did some graphic work on Dante's Hell (from The Divine Comedy). The same year, he released Festernacht, a "mechano-astrono-festive" almanac, published by Apeiron publishing house. For several years now, he has been working on an adaptation of Shakespeare's The Tempest in comic strip.

"For these images from Harry & Jack, as for many of my illustrations, my work is inspired and nourished by old and contemporary engravings. For example, for some of these images, I used the iconography of old playing cards and their joker figures, hence their stenciled tint. This is a way of highlighting the idea of the game (acting; stage acting; drawing game). For most of my work on Shakespeare, since it is about the destinies of kings, I often rely on the iconography of the Tarots. "

## Author's Commentary

Hello everyone, My name is Edouard Lekston. I'm going to speak in French because my English is very bad. Sorry.

Je suis une fois de plus très heureux d'avoir participé à nouveau au concours et bien plus encore d'avoir gagné la troisième place de ma catégorie.

J'ai donc sélectionné pour cette nouvelle participation une adaptation graphique sur la tragédie de Richard III.

Mes huit dessins sont tirés du recueil R III The Family Gathering, que j'ai réalisé en 2007, reprenant le style mordant et satirique des dessins de presse, ainsi que les jeux visuels des transformations cauchemardesques que l'on peut y trouver. Car, comme pour beaucoup de pièce de Shakespeare, cette œuvre reste terriblement d'actualité. J'ai aussi voulu insister sur le fait que Richard de Gloucester éliminait ses proches, c'est pour cela que j'ai donné à ce recueil le sous-titre de La Réunion de Famille, The Family Gathering.

### blogs

<http://lekston-shakespeare.blogspot.com/>  
<http://edlekgarden.blogspot.com/>



Je remercie infiniment Madame Yukari Yoshihara, qui m'a invité à participer à nouveau au concours, à tous les membres du jury et à l'équipe du concours, un grand Merci.

Je salut tous les participants à ce formidable concours.

Je vous souhaite à toutes et à tous une belle cérémonie.

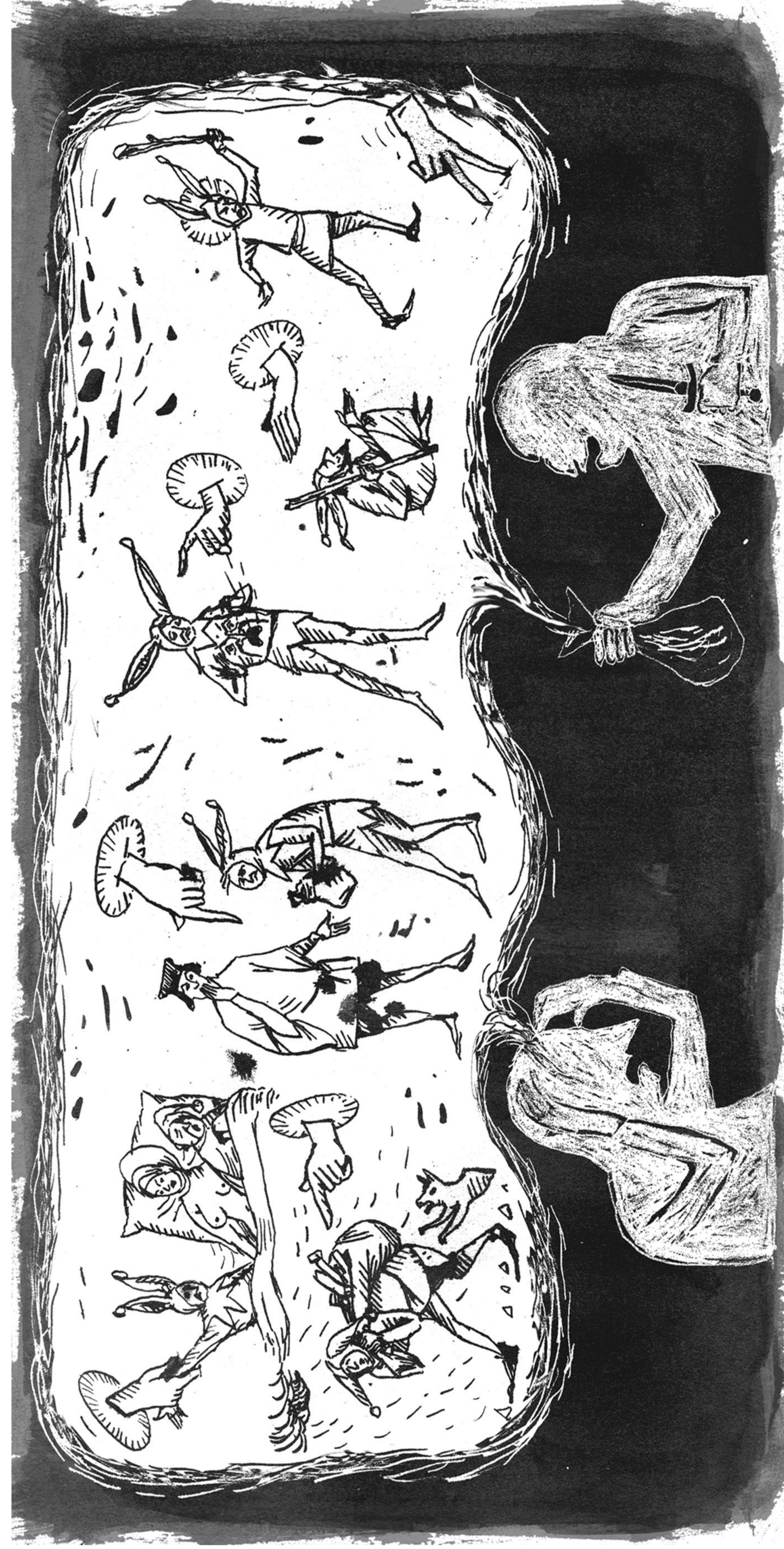
Bien à vous tous !  
Bye

Richard III - Acte I, scène 2



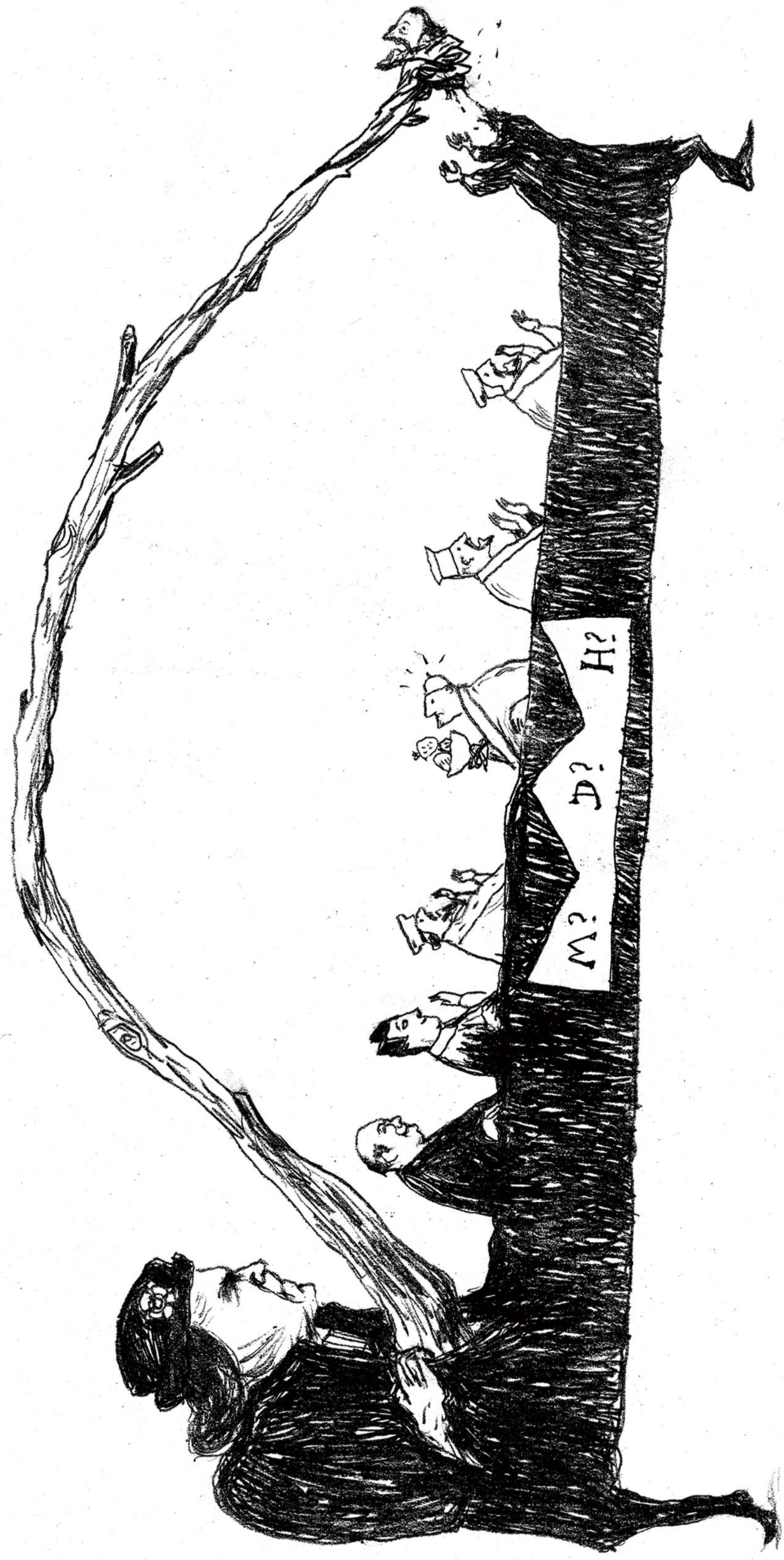
*The tears of Lady Anne on the body of Henry VI.*

Richard III - Acte I, scène 4



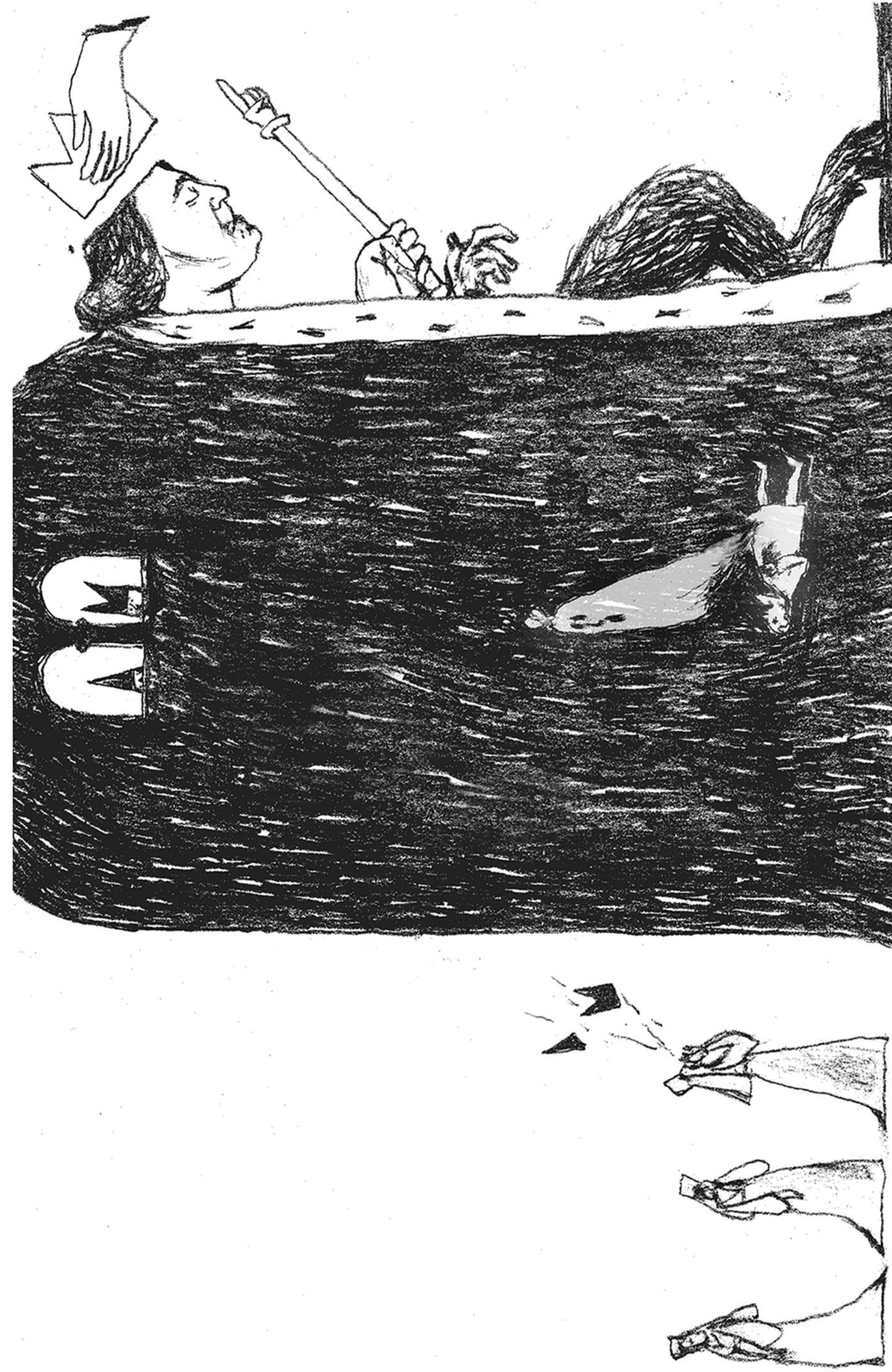
*The two murderers and the conscience of the second murderer.*

Richard III - Acte III , scène 4



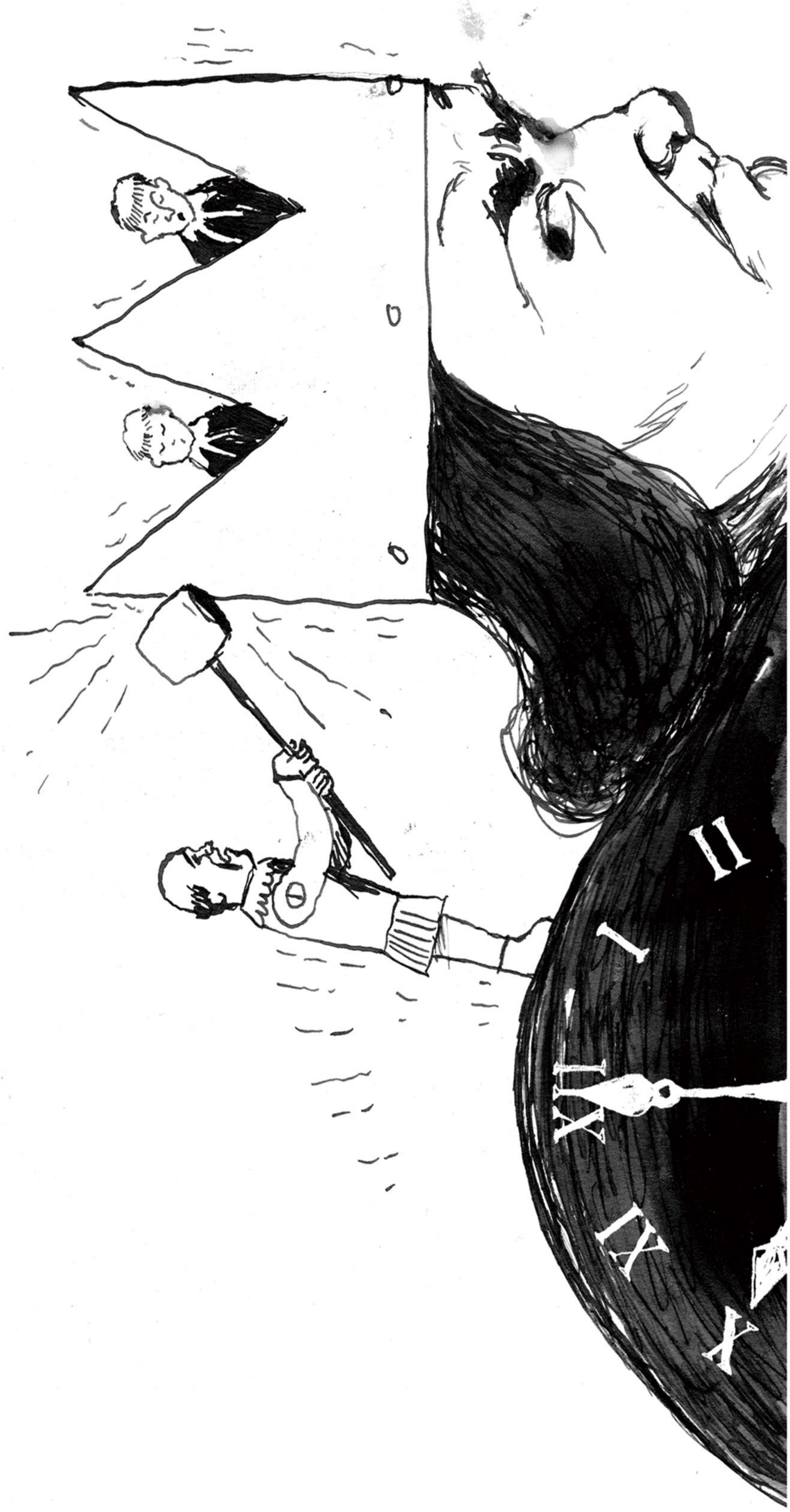
*The Negotiating Table*

Richard III - Acte IV , scène 1



*The Tower of London and Richard's Coronation*

Richard III - Acte IV , scène 2



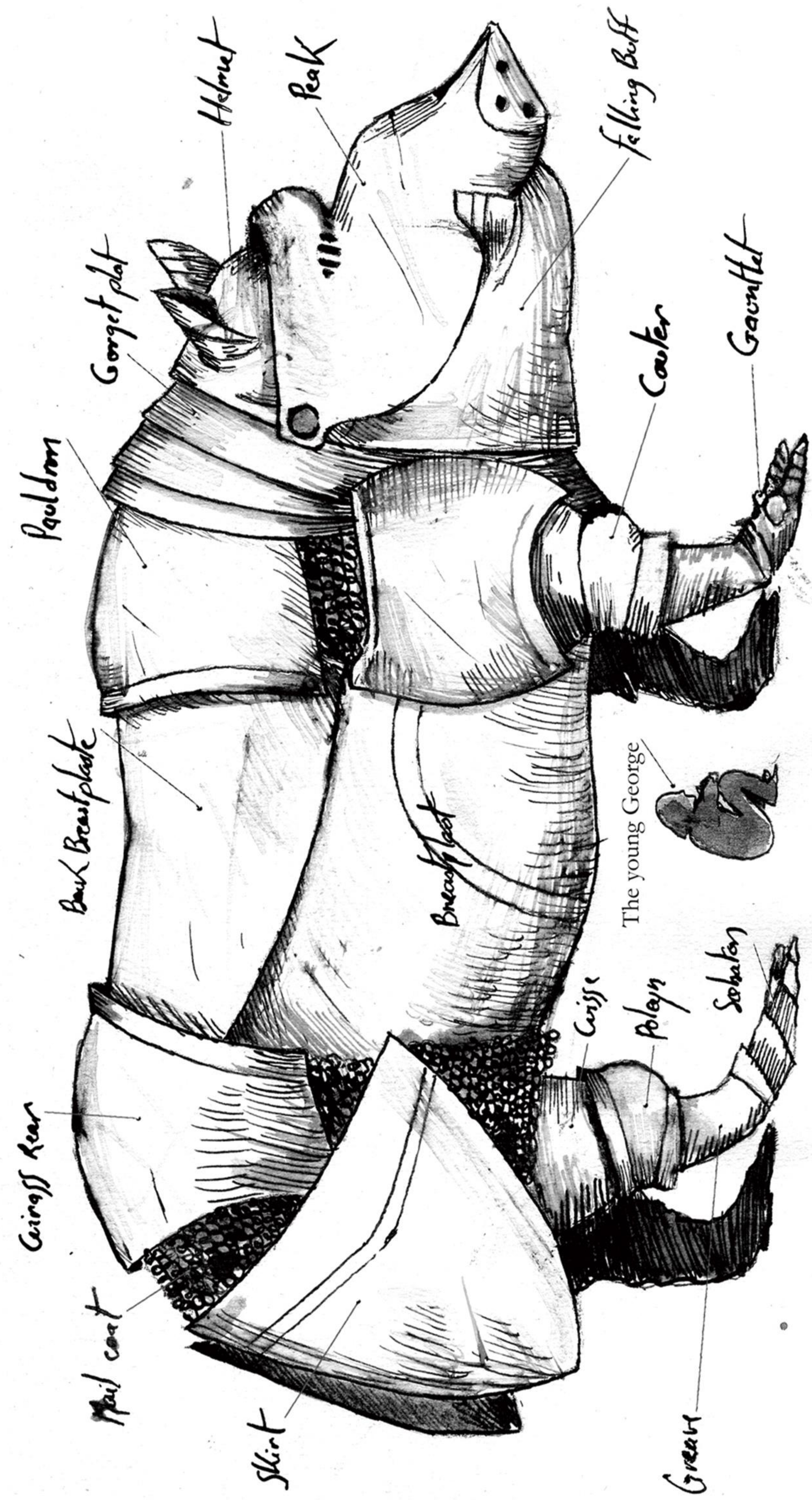
... Like a jaquemart !

Richard III - Acte V , scène 5

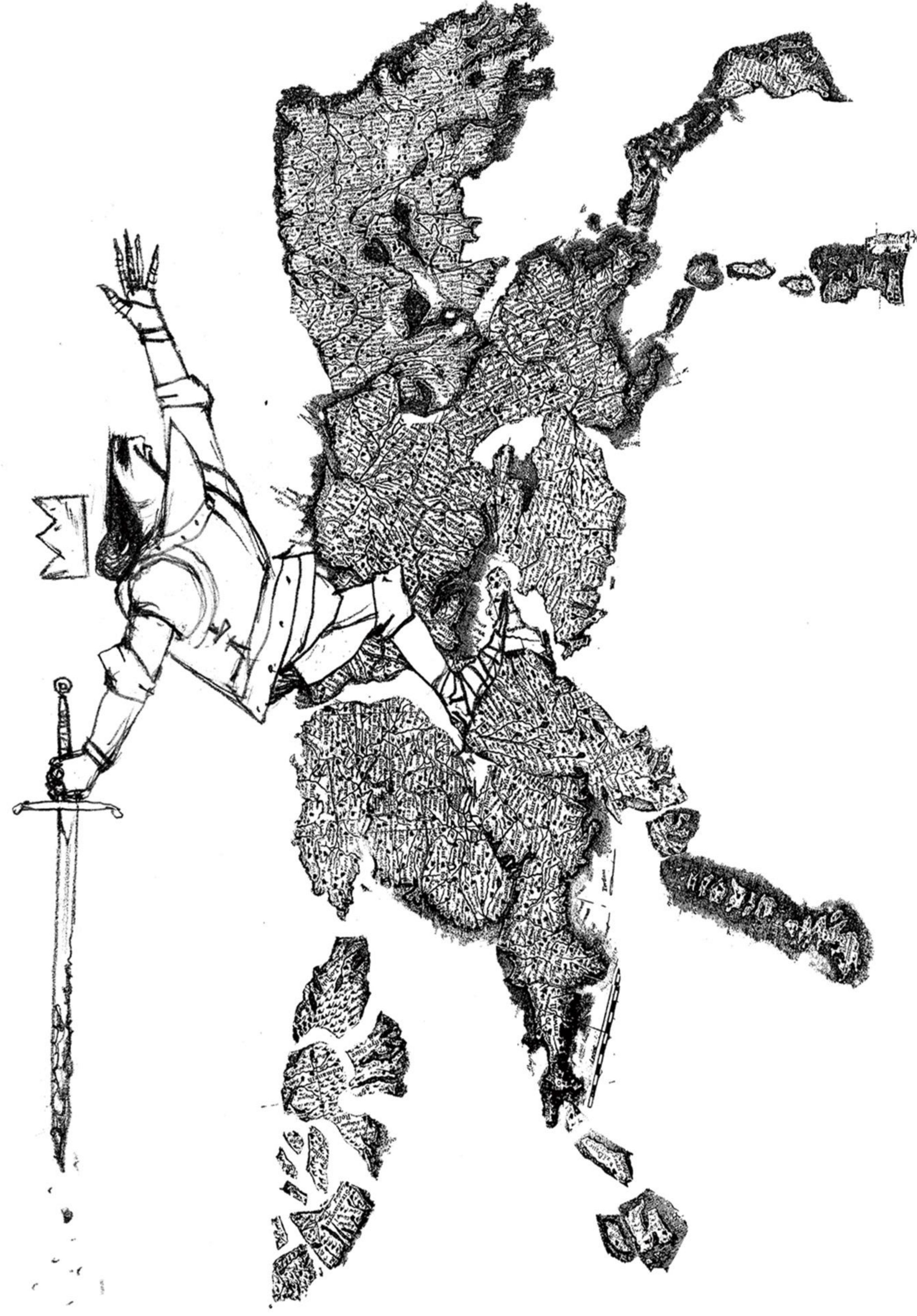


« ... Despair and die ! »





Richard in his armor keeping the young Georges captive.



« A horse ! A horse ! My Kingdom for a horse ! »

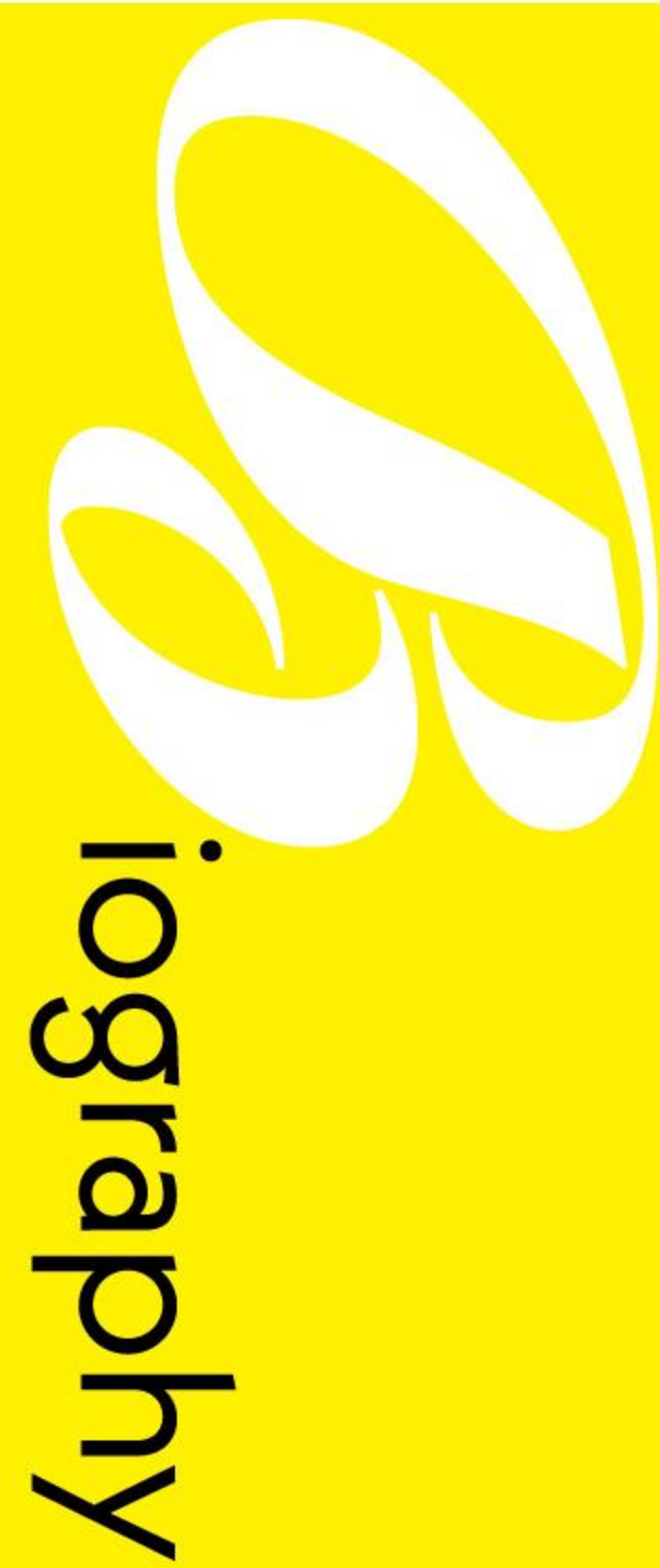
the

# Winner CosPLAY Section

## Tunku Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology Theater Club

*"Macbeth and the Three Witches"*

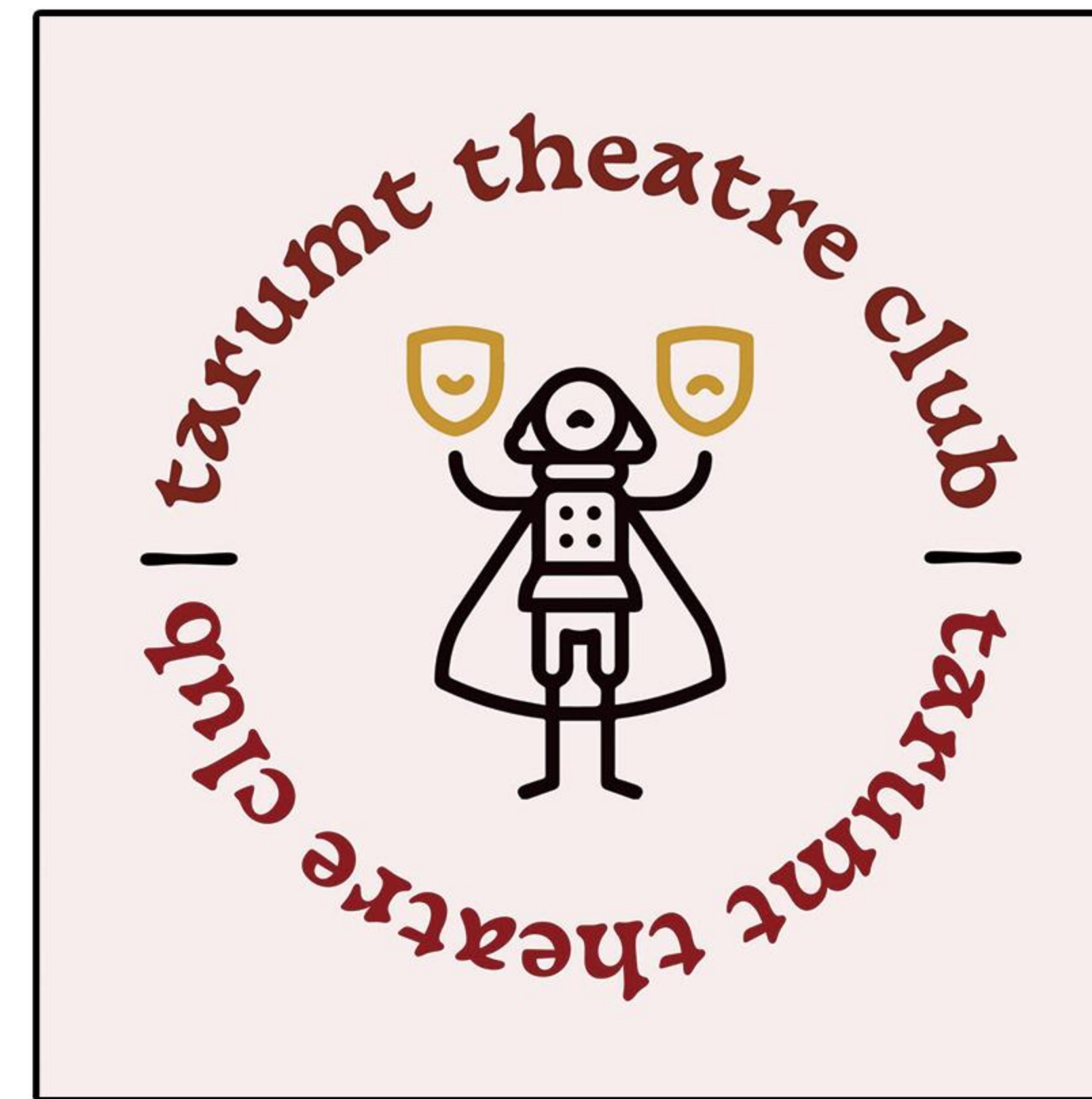
1. Choong Heng Zhi - Editor
2. Sri Haree A/L R.Natarajan - witch 1
3. Alena Soo Quai Ling - Coordinator
4. Liew Hew Yan - Macbeth
5. Rexanne Yii Chee Ru - Banquo
6. Bernice Hee Shu Qi - Head Witch
7. Avaniishpriyan A/L Ravindran - witch 2
8. Thian Ning - CostumerLiana
9. Liana Shazni Binti Abdul Aziz - Advisor



TARUMT Theater Club can still be considered as a club in its infancy. Established in 2018, the club took a major hit when the pandemic happened. However, the club has now been revived and is actively participating in projects both locally and internationally. The club has also created more and more activities for students to express themselves such as

'Cakaplah!' (every semester) and 'Late Night Limelight'. Apart from these two major events, regular meetings and workshops are also held to hone students' skills in the arts. TARUMT Theater Club endeavours to further grow and allow students the means and outlet to indulge themselves in the world of art and theater.

# Author's Commentary

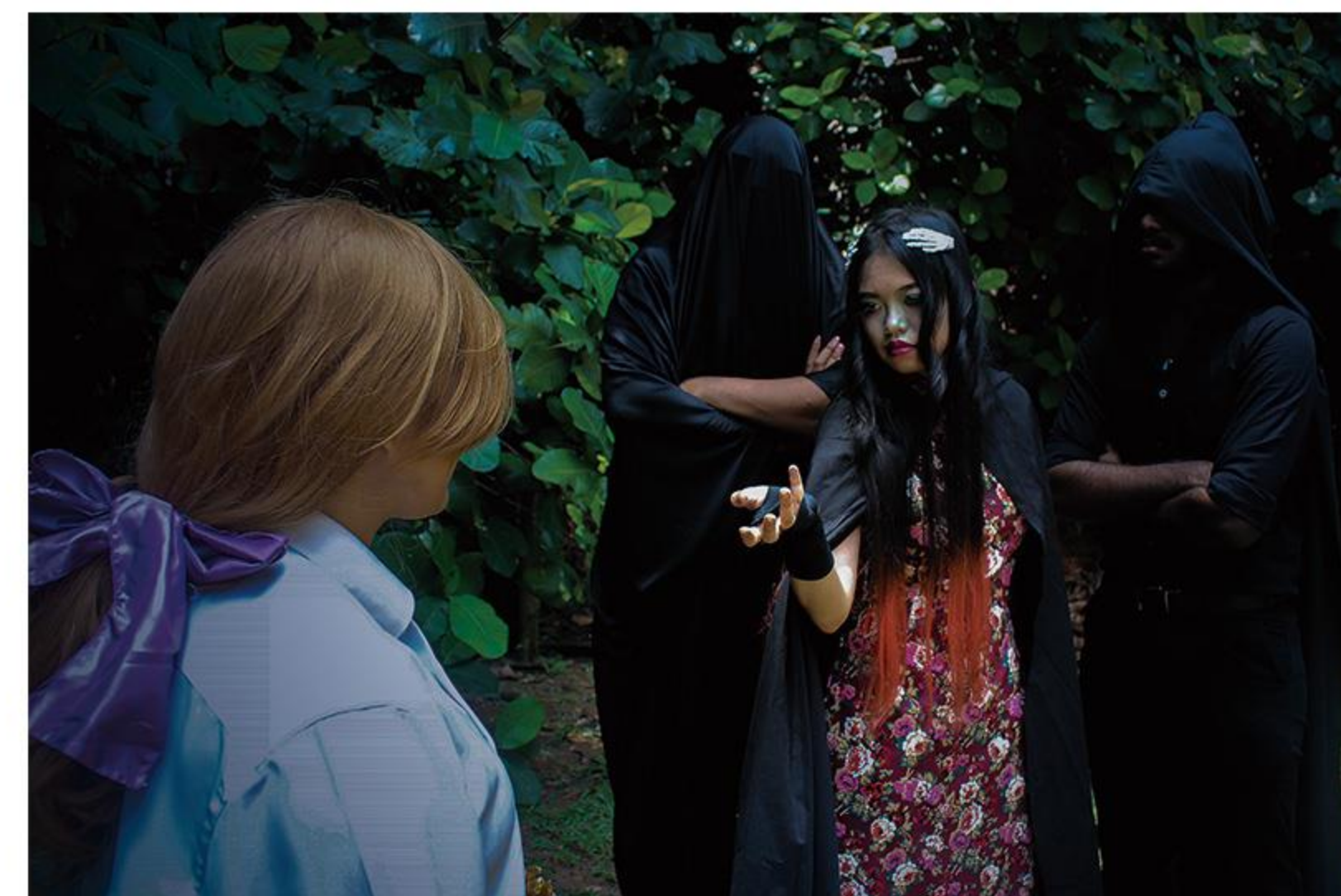


The Logo of TARUMT Theater Club  
**Instagram**  
<https://www.instagram.com/tarumttheatre/>

Our group chose Macbeth because we have always found the play's themes to be truly universal. Life will often present you opportunities but how you go about seizing those opportunities will affect how you live later on. The play makes you think about your choices and think about the consequences of those choices which is something that people nowadays really need to think about due to the freedom that one has on the internet.

For this Cosplay we just wanted to have fun while showcasing different group members' talents. Most of the cosplay pieces were handsewn while other members' became the photographer and makeup artist. Everyone's abilities and talents and hard work came together beautifully.

**Tunku Abdul Rahman University of  
Management and Technology Theater Club  
"Macbeth and the Three Witches"**



the

# the **Runner-up** **COSPLAY** Section

## **S. Kavitha Bhavani** **group**

*"King Henry IV part 1"*

# **A**uthor's **C**ommentary

I'm interested Shakespeare act so I'm create a small group after do this play. That's only reason for join this competition.

**S. Kavitha Bhavani group**  
**"King Henry IV part 1"**



**KING HENRY IV**



**Prince Hal**



**Poins**



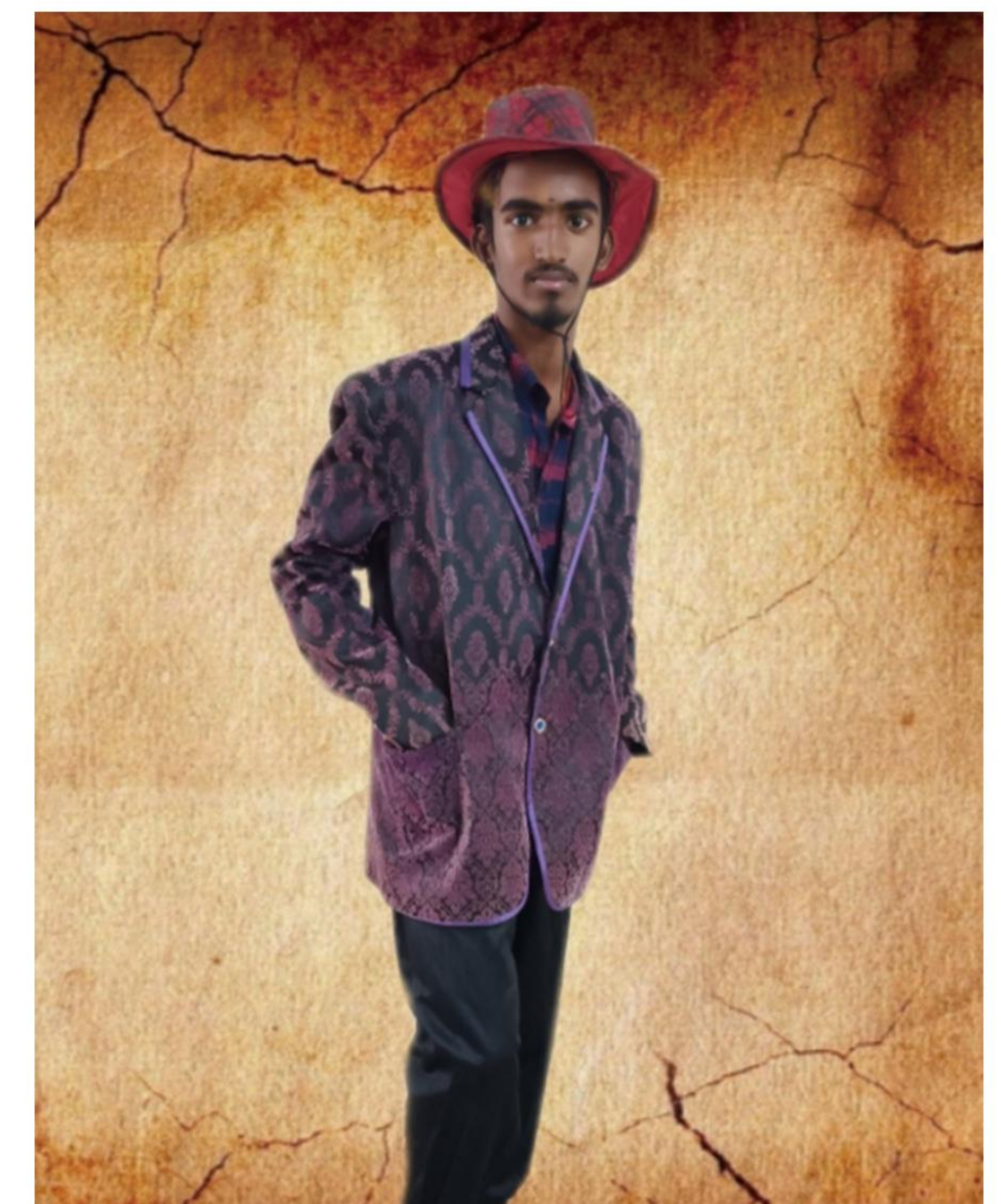
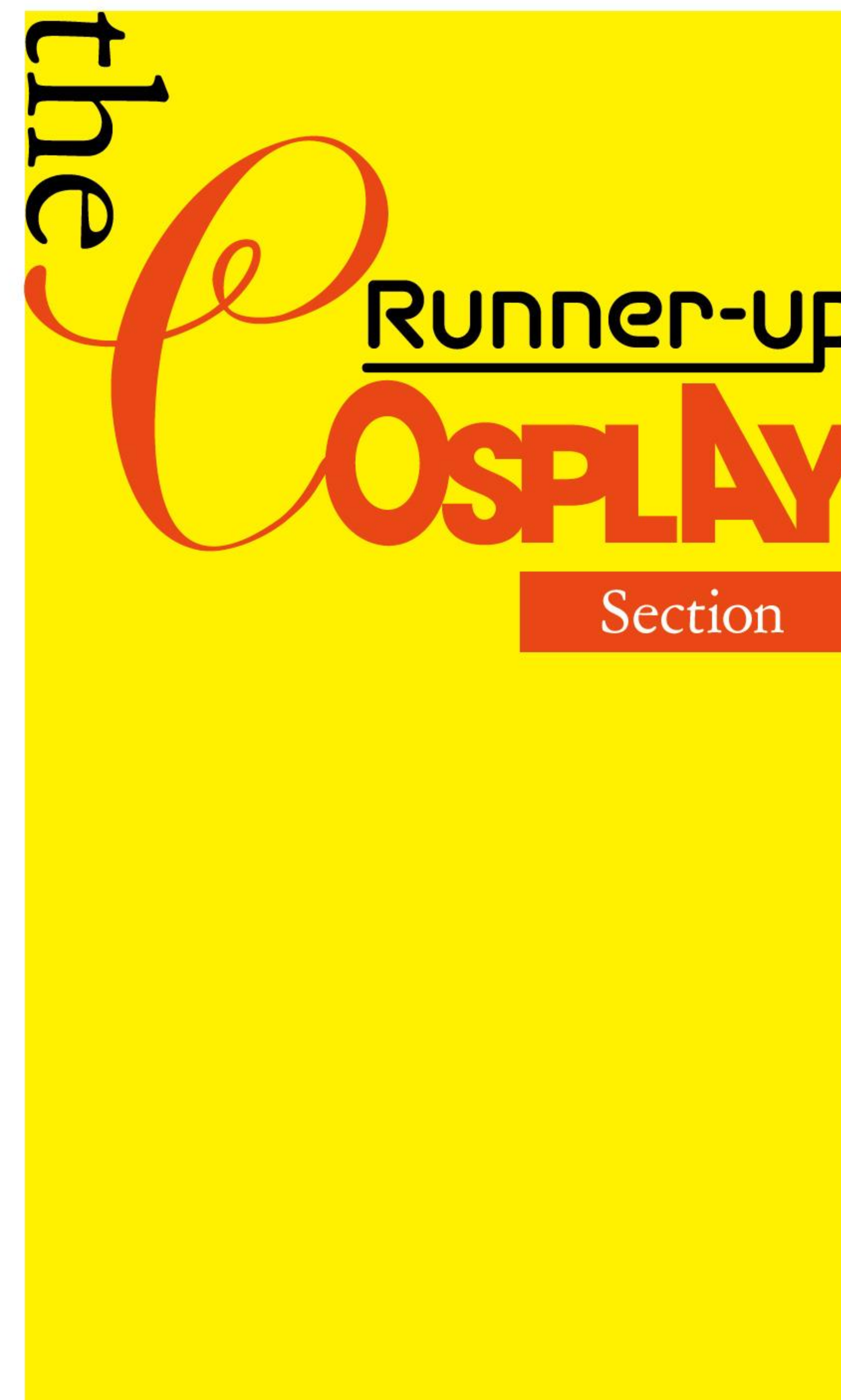
**Gadshill**



**Falstaff**



**Hotspur And Lady Percy**



**Francis**

the

# Winner SCRIPT

Between 15 and 24 years old group

Section

## Abhipreeti Das

*"Juliet Within Romeo"*

ography

Abhipreeti Das is a girl born in 2005, from West Bengal, India. She has been writing since 2017, from the time she was in fifth grade. Honestly speaking, she didn't know that she could write or that she has always had a special place for writing in her heart. Abhipreeti's first piece of writing was a two page horror play, which she had written in fifth grade, for her library class. Then in seventh grade, she wrote two more short plays named Neha and Kushongoshkar Bhagao (meaning, 'chase away superstitions'), in her mother language Bengali, which had also been made into a performance by Abhipreeti's father's theatre group Kalyani Kalamandalam. In 2021, another one of her plays, Pujor Gondogol (meaning, 'a Puja mess'), written in Bengali, which is a humorous, yet satirical play based on COVID-19, was as well made into a performance. Abhipreeti had also acted as a part of her father's theatre group's Children's Theatre Workshop from 2012 to 2021, that is, for

nine years. In the year 2016, she had acted in a few scenes of the Bollywood movie TE3N, with the great and versatile Bollywood actor, Mr Amitabh Bachchan. In 2019, at the age of thirteen, for the first time Abhipreeti had acted in a play named Macbeth Mirror which was based on William Shakespeare's play Macbeth, and was the Bengali version of the play, translated by Professor Dattatreya Dutta and directed by Dr. Santanu Das. This play Macbeth Mirror has not only been performed in different places of India, but also in several international theatre festivals around the world (Czech Republic, Poland, Israel, Vietnam and Nepal). In 2019, Abhipreeti had performed in Macbeth Mirror at the 4th International Experimental Theatre Festival, in Hanoi, Vietnam. This was her first step from children's plays to the next level with more experienced artists. Besides this, Abhipreeti also publishes stories written by her, on the social writing and reading platform Wattpad.

# Author's Commentary

Commentary on my work, "Juliet Within Romeo" When I had first made up my mind to participate in Graphic Shakespeare Competition 4 in the Script Group, I had initially thought of using Macbeth for my play to be based on. This was because I had read the whole play more than twice, and it could be said that I know the play by heart. Not to mention, having been already acted in the play, I was very familiar with the story. I had read Romeo & Juliet in ninth grade, and to be true, for some reason I had not liked the storyline back then. I could not understand why both of them killed themselves for love? Why, were both of them so sure that they were in love, at the ages of just 13 and 16 years, and even when Romeo had claimed to be in love with Rosaline before seeing Juliet? I probably failed to feel the emotions because I was judging and seeing the story from the eyes of a 21st Century girl. Thus, I took the risk and decided to use Romeo & Juliet for my work to be based on, but change the plot with my touch, yet give it a tragic ending. Before sitting down to write the play, I had no idea or previous planning of my plot. I remember sitting down in front of my laptop in the afternoon, and just starting to type. And slowly all the words and ideas flew into my brain before I finished Juliet Within Romeo. I knew I wanted to write something based in the modern world, and emphasize more on the present struggles of our society. That is why, I highlighted the education pressure on students, the lacking of self-confidence, struggling to become self-dependent, loving one's own self and so on. I wanted to focus on a new form of love, yet in a tragic way. In my play, Juliet Within Romeo, Romeo belonged from a wealthy family with the pressure of one day becoming the next CEO of his father's company. His parents wanted him to become perfect in every way possible, and thus failed to give them the love he deserved. Through the harsh words and treatment, Romeo couldn't love himself and became dependent on his parents. Now, DID or Dissociative Identity Disorder develops during childhood, if a child goes through sexual, emotional or physical abuse for a long time. In case of Romeo, he had to suffer through emotional abuse from his parents, even when he was just a child. And that is why, he developed the disorder and began seeing Juliet as a real person. He was not aware that Juliet was his alter, and began loving her like a real person. This was because Romeo deep down wanted to love himself, and having been somewhere failed there, he developed his alter, Juliet. Unknown to

Instagram: @abhipreetidas



him, he started to love himself in the name of loving Juliet. Here I want to point out that in Scene I, Act IV, Romeo for the first time meets his alter Juliet. I wanted to portray the famous balcony scene of Romeo & Juliet, but the only difference was that this time Romeo was the one standing in the balcony, while Juliet, his alter, was there as his saviour. In Scene II, Act III, when Romeo confesses his love to Juliet, after his alter Juliet makes him realise his worth, it was actually the beginning of Romeo embracing his flaws and learning to love himself. Although he did not know that. In the same scene, when Juliet says, "Romeo, but we do not always live right?" it was actually Romeo's conscious mind speaking to him, as it was not healthy for Romeo and he soon needed to face the reality. But Romeo was purely seeing the world through his subconscious mind, which can be here understood with this dialogue that Romeo says, "I know but, I want to face death, if it has to come anytime soon with you. If you die, I die. If you leave, I leave. Promise me Juliet." There is no doubt that Romeo was starting to love himself, but our brain is such a thing that it can make even hallucinations look real. And that's how Romeo was in an unconditional love with someone, who didn't even exist, and was his alter. According to doctors, DID patients are not aware of the fact that they are suffering from a psychological disorder. But when they do get to know about it, in 90% cases, those patients tend to commit suicide. This is because they learn that the people who might have been their comfort zone did not exist. At the end of the play, Romeo kills himself, after learning the truth. As a result, he kills his alter Juliet along with himself. In the original text, Romeo and Juliet kill themselves, not being able to live without one another, leading them to have a tragic end. My play Juliet Within Romeo, as well, has a tragic end, where the end of both Romeo and Juliet are seen, even though Juliet does not exist in my play. This being a tragic end, also has a scientific ending, since Romeo got to know about his disorder and committed suicide at the end, making him join those 90% DID cases. Thus, I had named my play Juliet Within Romeo, since here, Juliet is living inside Romeo, and can be seen only through the eyes of Romeo. And that is also why, there is no mention of Juliet in somebody else's presence, other than the time when Romeo wanted to introduce Juliet to his parents.

# Juliet Within Romeo

Scene-I, Act-I

[Morning. 7A.M]

[The stage lights up to the scene of an elementary school, in Verona, Italy. A car stops in front of the school building. A young boy, dressed in his school uniform gets down from a luxurious car, along with his mother, Lucy Montague.]

Lucy [On phone]: Ah yes Ms Ross, I'll bring my son after his school.

[To her son]: Romeo.

Romeo: Yes mother?

Lucy: I hope you have thought about our talk last night.

Romeo: Yes mother.

Lucy: Well, what is your answer now?

Romeo [stoic]: A healthy child should engage in education, rather than fooling around, just like you said, mother.

Lucy: And by fooling around I meant?

Romeo: Playing with the middle class low or poor children.

Lucy [Smiles]: Good. I am glad that you have taken in my words well. But listen dear, if you talk against my decision again, then I will not hesitate to home-school you and teach you in my own way.

Romeo: I understand mother. I will be a good son.

Lucy: Very good. The driver will pick you up after your school, and then drop you off to your new tuition at Ms Ross's house.

Your father is returning back today so make sure to be at your best behaviour.

[Romeo nods without any expression on his face. His mother gets inside the car and leaves the stage. Romeo stands alone on the stage, as a single tear leaves the boy's eyes.]

Scene-I, Act-II

[A teacher leads Romeo to his classroom. The whole class stares up at him. Romeo looks around in curiosity.]

Teacher: Students, this is your new classmate and friend. Please welcome him and make him feel comfortable. Go ahead and introduce yourself Mr Montague.

Romeo: Hello everyone. My name is Romeo Montague. I am nine years old. I live in 42 Lane on Lindson Street.

Student 1: Are your parents the famous Lucy and Armand Montague?

Romeo: Yes, they are.

[Loud gasps and shocks spread across the classroom. But Romeo's face remains apathetic]

Student 2 [whispering]: Who are his parents?

Student 3: Don't you know? Mr and Mrs Montague are very wealthy people. My mother works in one of the boutique owned by Mrs Montague.

Student 4: They own like the whole city of Verona, literally. I have heard that Mr Montague is the CEO of a very famous company.

Student 2: Whoa! It must be great to have such popular parents and being rich. I wonder how it feels.

Student 5 [sighs]: I bet Romeo gets everything he wants. I honestly am envious of him.

Teacher: Enough now kids! No more whispering and murmuring. Now Mr Montague, why don't you find yourself an empty desk and sit down?

[Without answering, Romeo walks through the rows of desks with the students still gawking at him and mumbling about his family background. He finally sits down while the teacher starts the class.]

Scene-I, Act-III

[Evening. 8 P.M.]

[The stage lights up to reveal Romeo's house where he and his parents are having their dinner. A maid exits the stage after serving the Montague family dinner.]

Armand: How was your first day at school, Romeo?

Romeo: It was good father. I learnt a lot.

Armand: What did you learn?

Romeo: The teacher read to us the story of Matilda today. Then we all played instruments and sang together. I played the piano. After recess, we were taught Mental Mathematics, which included adding and subtracting numbers in mind, then we were taught fractions—

Armand: Hold up son. Addition and Subtraction? Fractions? Pfft. That is for children.

Romeo: Father, but after all I am only nine years old and in 4th grade.

Lucy: Romeo, behave. Apologize to your father.

Romeo [looks down]: I am sorry father.

Armand [hums]: Make sure to never cross my or your mother's words. Understood?

[Romeo nods.]

Armand: I need words.

Romeo: I understand father.

Armand: Alright, so where was I, Lucy?

Lucy: You were talking about the subjects at Romeo's school—

Armand: Ah yes, yes, right. What I meant is that children at your age must learn theorems and topics like that. I remember mastering Trigonometry when I was seven years old. Had always been a bright student.

Lucy [pours tea into her husband's cup]: Yes honey. I know it better than anybody else. And that is why now you are the CEO of one of the most top company in Italy, and I am proud to be your wife.

Armand: You flatter me too much Lucy. Anyway, so Romeo, what did you say, Matilda? You should be reading great works of Dante, Shakespeare now to nurture your literature side.

Romeo: Yes father.

Armand [with distaste]: Did you learn anything productive at school today even?

Romeo: The teacher had told us to share about our dreams for future.

Lucy: What did you say?

Armand: I am sure he said that he will be becoming the next CEO of our company. Now, son, this is why you should be now focusing on being a great, knowledgeable—

Romeo: No father, I said nothing.

[Silence prevails.]

Armand: Why so?

Romeo: I-I don't know father. I don't know if I want your company—

[Armand bangs his fist on the table cutting off Romeo's words.]

Armand: Silence! How dare you go against my decisions again?! I didn't even have the strength to look at my father's face when I was your age and here you go around disrespecting me, putting shame upon my name, by spitting nonsense like a pathetic fool.

[Romeo starts to silently sob, while keeping his gaze down. On the other hand, Lucy doesn't say anything except for nodding her head once in a while, in agreement with Armand's words.]

Armand: What type of school did you even pick for Romeo, Lucy? I told you, homeschooling him would be better.

Lucy: I thought it was a very good school, based on its reviews but I didn't know that the middle class kids go there too. Maybe he is learning to talk against us because of those kids.

Armand [in a comparatively calm voice]: Romeo, kids like you who are born to elite houses with a good family background are destined to become perfect in every way possible. And son, your mother and I will do anything to help you become a true Montague. Even if that means, you need to be homeschooled. [Romeo shakes his head while desperately crying and pleading his father.]

Romeo: Father, please no. I beg you! Don't home-school me. I promise to never speak up. I will listen to everything you and mother say and do it accordingly.

Lucy: There's nothing wrong in the idea of homeschooling, son. Your father was homeschooled as well. And now look at Armand. He has grown up to be such a well-known person. Your aim must be to be like him.

Romeo: Mother, what about you? You went to school as well.

Lucy: My time was different. And I didn't go to any normal school. It was a school especially for the wealthy, bright and elite students. Unfortunately, the school does not exist now or we would have enrolled you in there.

Romeo [gets down on his knees and cries out loud]: Please don't do this to me. I do not want to be caged anymore.

Armand: We aren't caging you, Romeo. Now get up and wipe off your tears. A true man never cries. Don't you want to grow up and be a successful man like—

Romeo [shouts]: No I don't want to be like you! I hate you! I hate you both!

[Romeo's parents call him but Romeo runs away, exiting the stage.]

Scene-I, Act-IV

[Night. 9 A.M]

[Romeo's room. He keeps his gaze down and draws something in his notebook. A whistling sound catches his attention.]

[He walks up to the balcony of his room and stares down. A little girl, around his age looks up at him.]

Juliet: Hi, what is your name?

Romeo: My parents say that I shouldn't talk to strangers.

Juliet [giggles]: Well, I am Juliet Capulet. Now we are not strangers anymore, are we now?

Romeo: No.

Juliet: What is your name then?

Romeo: I am Romeo Montague.

Juliet: Nice to meet you Romeo. Would you like to be my friend?

Romeo [smiles]: Yes.

Juliet: Great! We can then play together at the playground nearby from now on.

Romeo: I am not allowed to play.

Juliet: Why?

Romeo: My parents say children should only focus on education, rather than playing.

Juliet: That's not true. Having fun is important too, you know— [A distant voice calls Juliet's name.]

Juliet: My mother is calling for me. I should go now to avoid getting a good scold from her.

Romeo: Would you come back again?

Juliet: I will, around this time, maybe?

Romeo: Aren't you afraid of the dark? It is quite risky around here.

Juliet: I like taking risks. It is adventurous. I will come back tomorrow night again! Wait for me here Romeo!

Romeo: I will Juliet!

[Romeo and Juliet bid one another goodbye. Juliet exits the stage.]

Scene-II, Act-I

[Morning. 8.45 A.M]

[The stage reveals a big library. Armand, who is now in his fifties enters the stage. A young man, in his early twenties follows him.]

Armand: The book must be here.

[Takes out a book and hands it to Romeo]

Armand: Read this book. It has all the tips and suggestions on establishing business, and company. Since you will be taking over the company on your twenty fifth birthday, I want you to be all prepared. You still have two more years until you become the CEO, so utilize your time and remember to not bring my name down. Your progress hasn't been very substantial.

Romeo: Yes father.

Armand: Good. I'll be off to Japan for a few weeks due to work. Would you like to come with me and see how our company works with our foreign clients?

Romeo: Thank you for asking father but I would like to stay at home and prepare myself, just like you said.

Armand: Very well then, son. I'll see you later. Remember, I and Lucy brought you in this world to see you become successful and happy. Do not put shame upon your family, therefore.

Romeo: Have a safe journey father.

[As soon as Armand exits the stage, Romeo sits down on the couch kept at a corner with a content smile and stretches his arms.]

Romeo: Finally, I get to have some break.

[A young lady around Romeo's age enters the stage and puts her hand over the boy's eyes.]

Juliet: Guess who it is?

Romeo: My most favourite person.

[Juliet removes her hands and sits beside Romeo.]

Juliet: Ew. That's so cheesy.

Romeo: What? I just spoke the truth. You are my most favourite person after all.

Juliet: Alright stop! You sure do know how to make a girl blush.

[Romeo laughs.]

Romeo: Now tell me, how did you get inside?

Juliet: I snuck in through the back door right when I saw Mr Montague leaving. Your mother isn't home, right, or is she?

Romeo: No, she is at the boutique.

Juliet: And that means, we get to go out after so many days!

[Juliet pulls Romeo's hands but he shakes his head.]

Romeo: I don't think that's a good idea Juliet.

Juliet: Oh come on! It would be fun! I'll take you to the arcade today.

Romeo: Ar-what?

Juliet [sighs]: You're kidding me right? You don't know what an arcade is?

[Romeo shakes his head in confusion.]

Juliet: No worries. I'll show you and then we'll go the mall, movies and the city carnival, as well!

Romeo: Juliet, slow down!

[Light dims as the laughing sounds of the pair fade away slowly.]

Scene-II, Act-II

[Afternoon]

[Arcade.]

[Juliet inserts four coins inside a machine and pushes the start button.]

Juliet: This is Dancing Elle. The game is simple. We'll choose a song of our own choice, and then dance to it. And the best part? We need to step on the specific block, which when lights up. Whoever completes the challenge with as many correct steps as possible will win.

Romeo: Okay, I think I can manage that.

Juliet: Let's see then. Choose a song.

Romeo: I really don't know any song displaying here.

Juliet: Oh right, your parents make you listen to classical songs. But you know, pop songs of the 21st century aren't that bad. Let me show you an example.

[“Rain On Me” by Lady Gaga & Ariana Grande starts playing]

Juliet: This song is just dope, like literal dope.

Romeo: The way you speak sometimes confuses me very much.

Juliet: Your Highness, I'm no Cinderella, thus, I happen to speak in such a way. Now stop talking and let me see your moves!

[The two start to dance and laugh and giggle.]

Romeo: I love this!

Juliet: I told you so!

Romeo: Now I know what I was missing all these years! This is amazing!

[The light dims again.]

## Scene-II, Act-III

[Romeo and Juliet are on a Ferris wheel, enjoying cotton candies. Romeo stares at the setting sun and view of the whole city of Venice from the cabin he is in, in the Ferris wheel.]

Romeo: Wow. I never knew Venice could look so pretty.

Juliet: I know right. Whenever I get time, I either climb up to the top of something high or simply ride the Ferris wheel just because of this view. Sunset and night view are the best, trust me.

Romeo: I sometimes envy you.

Juliet [chuckles softly]: I wonder why.

Romeo: No seriously. You are free. Nobody cages you, locks you up, or takes decisions for you. You are simply—free.

Juliet: So are you.

Romeo [scoffs]: Yeah right.

Juliet: You are free. Deep inside you are free and you know that too but you aren't yet psychologically free from your parents.

Romeo: What do you mean?

Juliet: What I mean is, I know they are your parents but you should know they do not possess the right to not let you go outside, decide when you should go outside, the specific people you should converse with, when you should do what. No, they cannot do such things. When we first met, I saw how you were treated under your parents.

So, until you speak up and let them know that it is your responsibility to make your own decisions, you would forever be—caged.

Romeo: You are right. I need to put a stop to this. Thank you, Juliet.

Juliet: And start loving yourself from now on. Do not take the harsh words of Mr and Mrs Montague by heart and instead, cherish the love you have for yourself. Not many people are as kind as you are, Romeo.

[Romeo stares at Juliet lovingly.]

Romeo: I think I love you Juliet.

Juliet: I know. I love you too.

Romeo: Promise to never let go of me. Promise me, whatever happens, you will stay with me.

Juliet: Romeo, but we do not always live right?

Romeo: I know but, I want to face death, if it has to come anytime soon with you. If you die, I die. If you leave, I leave. Promise me Juliet.

Juliet: I promise.

[Light cuts.]

## Scene-II, Act-IV

[Evening. 6 P.M]

[Romeo's house. Lucy calls his son to the living room.]

Lucy: Romeo! Come here for a moment, son!

[Romeo enters.]

Romeo: Yes mother?

Lucy: I have an important matter to discuss with you. Please sit down.

Romeo: What's the matter mother?

Lucy: Your father is returning back home this week, instead of the week after the next week.

Romeo [somberly]: Oh that's very nice.

Lucy: Well, the reason why he is returning back soon is because, we have decided to marry you off to a girl who is, a year younger than you, but perfect in every way possible. Her name is Heather Marino. She is the eldest daughter of the Marino family—

Romeo: Mother, I don't want to marry Heather Marino or any other girl, I am sorry.

Lucy: Ah my son, your humour isn't that—

Romeo: I am not joking mother.

Lucy: Watch your tone young man.

Romeo: Mother, you need to understand that I am an adult with full rights—

Lucy: Shut your mouth! You do not get to talk like that. Do you know how much estate we will be receiving after your marriage with Heather?

Romeo [scoffs]: Does my happiness matter to you both or just money?

Lucy [stutters]: That is not the point. You are marrying Heather and it is final. After your father returns, the Marinos will be coming to meet us.

Romeo: I love someone else.

Lucy: W-what? How is that even possible? You never leave the house.

Romeo [sighs]: It is the truth mother. Don't ask how but I have someone whom I deeply love, and her love for me is the same. So mother, if you and father want me to get married, please meet her once. I don't know if she is ready for marriage at the moment but at least you would know that I will marry the love of my life some day.

Lucy: Who is she? Who are her parents?

Romeo: Her name is Juliet Capulet. I don't know much about her family though.

Lucy: Capulet? If I am not wrong I think the Capulet family residing in Venice are quite wealthy and of high standard, just like us. Alright, bring this Juliet here when your father returns. I would like to meet her personally and see if she is worthy enough to be called a Montague.

[Light cuts.]

## Scene-II, Act-V

[Morning. 10 A.M]

[Romeo and Lucy are sitting in the living room. Armand is present there too.]

Lucy: We have been waiting for fifteen minutes. Where is Juliet?

Armand: I hope you didn't make up a story to avoid the marriage, son because that won't take you anywhere.

Romeo: No I promise, she will be here any moment now.

[After a moment or two, Romeo suddenly smiles and speaks.]

Romeo: You are here Juliet.

[Romeo's face contorts into a more serene smile as he tucks a strand of hair behind his ear.]

Romeo as Juliet: Of course I am here, I promised you, I would come.

Lucy: What nonsense are you speaking Romeo?!

Romeo: What do you mean mother? Juliet is here, just how I told you.

Romeo as Juliet [forwards her hand]: How are you doing Mr and Mrs Montague?

Armand: Romeo! Stop your act and wake up!

Romeo: I don't seem to understand what both of you are saying. I am not acting.

Lucy: R-Romeo, son, please, if you are messing around with us stop. There is no Juliet.

Romeo as Juliet: I am here Mrs Montague. I am very much here.

What do you mean?

Romeo: You two are behaving very odd today. I am sorry Juliet—

Romeo as Juliet: It's alright Romeo.

Romeo: If you don't mind, I'll be in my room with Juliet.

[Romeo exits the stage.]

Lucy [sobbing]: Armand, we need to call a doctor. Romeo is sick.

Armand: I'll contact a doctor immediately.

[Light cuts]

## Scene-III, Act-I

[Noon.]

[Montague's house, the doctor, Mr and Mrs Montague are present. Romeo can be seen hearing their conversation from somewhere out of the room.]

Doctor: I am sorry to say this but Romeo Montague has DID, which is, Dissociative Identity Disorder.

[Lucy puts up a hand on her mouth and cries.]

Armand: How is that possible doctor?

Doctor: DID develop generally during childhood. If a child goes through physical, sexual or emotional abuse for a long time, then in many cases, they create alters or imaginary characters in their mind. If their brain is not able to handle the trauma or pain, they tend to develop this disorder. Was Romeo ever abused when he was a child?

Armand: Not that we know of.

Doctor: Then, no offence Mr and Mrs Montague, I think the reason of Romeo imagining Juliet and thinking of his alter as a real person, is because of you both. After talking with Romeo yesterday, I had to come to a conclusion. Emotionally he never got the love he always craved for from both of you. He has always been emotionally disturbed and tortured due to your ways of bringing him up.

[Lucy and Armand look down in shame.]

Lucy: Is it possible to cure him?

Doctor: It is and that would mean letting Juliet, his alter, go. I

know, it will be quite hard for Romeo, but there is no other way.

[Romeo leaves hearing the words.]

[Light cuts.]

[He enters the kitchen while crying hysterically.]

Romeo: Juliet is not real. I have to let go of Juliet.

[He looks forward and with a bitter smile cries again.]

Romeo: But I can't. Juliet, even though you are a part of my imagination, I love you. You taught me how to love the world. You taught me how to love myself. You brought my inner self out. You saved me. And I can never let you go.

Romeo as Juliet [crying]: I love you too. But you have to let me go. I need to leave now, Romeo.

Romeo: I promised to leave with you. I promised to die with you.

If you are not in my world then I do not want to live as well.

[Romeo picks up a knife and stabs himself before falling down.]

~The End~

[The script is based on William Shakespeare's popular play "Romeo & Juliet."]



the

# Winner SCRIPT

Between 15 and 24 years old group

Section

**Apabrita Mitra Sarkar,  
Indradattaa Basu,  
Deya Bhattacharya,  
Dishannessa Mukherjee,  
Brishti Roy**

*"What Wouldst Thou Write of Me?"*

**Biography**

The five of us, at the time of the competition and the composition of the script, were students in our final year of the postgraduate programme in English at Jadavpur University, Kolkata. Currently, we are all engaged in various projects and work.

## Instagram

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# Author's Commentary



As students of English Literature studying in an English Department located in a post-colonial, 21st century India and as people who identify ourselves as women, we felt a simmering rage while reading Othello. By the end of the play we couldn't help but ask, whose tragedy was it really? Was it the tragedy of Othello or was it the tragedy of Iago? And what became of Bianca in the end? To us, it reads like a tragedy of ill-treated women who suffered and died because of non-intervention.

We could not help but wonder what would these three women talk about in the absence of the sinister and injudicious men of the play, and perhaps the male author who wrote them. Our dramatis personae includes women not just from Othello or other Shakespeare dramas but spans a wide range of history and literature, born and written in different locations and times, sharing stories of subjugation and oppression. The play is structured on the first Act of Caryl Churchill's Top Girls which itself was a critique of Judy Chicago's installation entitled "Dinner Party."

# What Wouldst Thou Write of Me?

## Act I

Emilia: So...I cannot rest easy. I must say it again, I am sorry for betraying your trust.

Desdemona: Well, I'm not very sure about how to react to this, this is all so new to me, this is coming as a shock...you? You took the handkerchief? But then...Emilia, how can I blame my husbandatallPYou-know,thathandkerchiefwasveryspecial,heeven said that the worms that spun the napkin were blessed.

Bianca:/ Blessed worms?! What a load of rubbish!

Desdemona:...I mean...how could you?

Emilia: I have always been taught not to disobey my husband..

Bianca: Oh yes, one mustn't, under any circumstances,disobey 'the lord'! (Sarcastic, rolls eyes) (turn into verse later)

Emilia:..What could I have done, I did everything to please his fantasy.

Bianca: Of course.

Eve joins the meeting.

Desdemona: (pause) Yes, perhaps,perhaps it's not really your fault. I would have done the same had I been in your shoes.

Bianca: Of course you would have-

Emilia : We always have had to-

Bianca: It's not in our hands-

Emilia: It has never been upto-

Bianca: Us. They took it-

Emilia: When we picked it up-

Bianca: Never gave a reason

Emilia: And never gave it back.

Bianca:Itwas always a weapon

Emilia: To cause us pain

Desdemona: The handkerchief?

Bianca: No, the pen.

Eve: Also, the fruit.

Bianca: Eve! It's s o good to hear your voice after ages!

Emilia: All ages.

Desdemona:What took so long

Eve: I was ashamed. And scared.

Bianca: What!

Eve: Your plight is my doing

Desdemona: How?

Eve: I was the first woman, the first one to speak in man's tongue. If I hadn't agreed back then.

Emilia But you had n o choice

Eve: I didn't have a language of my own-

Bianca: Have we yet?

Eve: I had asked, how didst thou make me?

Bianca: He didn't-

Desdemona: I had asked, how wouldst thou praise me?

Bianca: He wouldn't-

Rokeya enters the meeting

Eve: He named me and..

Bianca: Well, he named you and damned you.

Emilia: It was never your fault-

Bianca: The man had a choice, you didn't.

Rokeya:হাতা, প্রতিটি পুরুষের মধ্যে এখনো আদম আছে।

Emilia: (sardonically) Can you ever take the Adam out of the Man ?/

Desdemona: If only.

Bianca: /Are you talking about the rib? -

Rokeya:এই একবিংশ শতাব্দীর সভ্যজগতেই বা আমরা কি? দাসী! পৃথিবী থেকে দাস ব্যবসা উঠে গেছে শুনতে পাই, কিন্তু আমাদের দাসত্ব গেছে কি?

Emilia :Oh, that still sounds like a utopia.

Eve: A dream.

Rokeya: Sultana's dream.

Bianca: We never stopped being subordinates-

Emilia: Lesser than.

Desdemona: Lower beings.

Bianca: The second sex.

Rokeya: দাসী।

Eve: In conclusion, you never stopped being Eve.

Desdemona:You never started the subservience

Eve. They wrote us that way.

Bianca: And they never wrote our praise.

Emilia: Ugh we even called them 'lord'.

Rokeya: লর্ড বলতে মনে পড়ল, আমাদের দেশের এক লর্ডের কথা। এই চন্দ্র আবার ...

Emilia: Am I thinking about..

Eve: The same person that..

Bianca: T'm also thinking about?

Rokeya: Yes, he who mustn't be named. Or, else..

Eve: Oh, yes! Because it is 'he' who must always name.

Rokeya: হ্যাঁ, একটু 'নাম' করতে পারলে পতি বেচারা তাতেই সন্তুষ্ট হয়। কি চমৎকার আত্মত্যাগ

Emilia: Oh! Don't I know about self-sacrifice...

(Pause

Desdemona: But my Othello, he really loved me so much.

Bianca: Really?

Desdemona: He gave me his handkerchief as a symbol of his love, a sacrifice of his heart.

Eve: He made you that kerchief?

Desdemona : No of course not. That handkerchief didan Egyptian to his mother give, she was a charmer and could almost read the thoughts of people.

(Pause)

Rokeya: নিশ্চয়ই, পুরুষদের এতখানি সহিষ্ণুতা কই, যে তারা ঈর্ষ্যের সাথে ছুঁচে সূতা পরাবে?

Enter Edna

Desdemona : But he did love me-

Emilia: He suspected you.

Bianca: Never respected you.

Emilia: He struck you.

Bianca: HE KILLED YOU.

Emilia: And let's not even begin to talk about my wayward husband.

Bianca: Really, let's not, lest we should summon him.

Desdemona: Who could've thought, the honest lago

Bianca:HAH.

Eve: I don't know much about this man, but I reckon we should go easy on the word 'honest dearest Desdemona./ use the word with discretion?

Desdemona: Ah yes, old habits die hard.

Bianca: But you did. Because of him.

Desdemona: Worse and worse.

Emilia: The amount of abuse we accepted is unbelievable.

Desdemona: I agree. Would we have suffered as much if we were born of women?

Bianca: I mean...I would have, everyone demeans courtesans, even now

Desdemona: Edna, what say you?

Edna: I as on par with the drapery and the dinner menu. As he let me know through his looks- a valuable piece of personal property.

Desdemona : So was I. A purchase made..

Edna: I yielded to him unthinkingly, as we walk, move, sit..go through the daily treadmill of life.I felt nothing for that man. My affections lay elsewhere, across the ocean.

Emilia:/ my lucky Edna, you were written by a woman.

Edna : Even so, I was not allowed to live. Yet, I must concede this, because I was of woman born, I was able to have a taste of a precious, precious life of my own, no matter how brief, which so many are denied.

Bianca, Desdemona: Tell me, how did it feel to live ?

Edna: I cannot put it in words. I know the precise moment I was born into myself. I was aware of my blooming into my own person with every passing moment. I became aware of my position in the universe as a human being. My creator, she allowed me dual lives- the outward existence that conforms, the inward life which questions. The freedom ! The moonlight! The music ! The waves! The sea!All are me ! Emilia: I envy you.

Desdemona:If only our lives were as beautiful as yours!

Emilia: Or even our ends.

Emilia: I think Binodini and Marsha are trying to join.. Wait, let me add them.

Enler Marsha and Binodini

Eve:Howdoesitfeelto letincharactersinyourown play? Edna: for a changer

Emilia: Different, tor sure. And..

Edna: And?

Emilia: Well... nev, I suppose. Different and new are all I can say.

Eve:Yes,this is our play.

Bianca: Unlike,you know,the one where we all were trapped

Desdemona: and suffocated-

Emilia: and murdered-

Desdemona:by a man-

Emilia: within a man's play-

Rokeya: অথচ আমাদের কথা আমরা চিন্তা না করলে আর কে ভাববে? ভাবলেও তাতে যে আমাদের ষোল আনা উপকার হচ্ছে না, তা তো দেখাই যাচ্ছে।

Marsha:I can feel each one of your pain.All my life I lived entrapped in a body I didn't wish for.I never wished for a male body.

Desdemona: 'Wait, so you are MarshaJohnson?

Marsha : Marsha P. Johnson

Emilia: What does the P stand for?

Marsha: Pay it no mind

Emilia: (chuckles) So you just dressed as a woman?

Marsha: I am a woman and and everything a woman is

Emilia: Everything?

Eve: I was a woman...

Marsha: I was the Queen Mother

Eve ..and nothing else, only a woman

Desdemona: I'm not sure I understand how you.

Marsha : I was a mother to the homeless, the abandoned, the oppressed

Marsha: I was a mother to the haunted,the lonely,the repressed

Bianca: You were more than...

Marsha: A teacher, a guide

Bianca: an icon

Marsha: At Stonewall

Emilia: You threw the first stone

Marsha: oh no,it was my birthday party but most people didn't turn up, you know ..

Bianca: oh why?

Marsha : So I went to Stonewall anyway, turned up later, I climbed up a lamppost

Desdemona: Surely you are...

Marsha: And dropped a bag on a police car

Desdemona...joking

Marsha: shattered the windshield

Desdemona: What? You're crazy!

Marsha : You know what I say to that? I might be but that don't make me wrong

Emilia : But did you really know what it is like to be treated so so harshly, to be forgotten and thrown, to be called mindless and Marsha: Let me tell you something, ladies, and I will only say it once. Us,women? We have always had it bad

Desdemona: My husband strangled me, the pain lives on and to be so young and...

Marsha: People would walk by me in the streets and say, "What is it?" Oh, they treated their dogs better.

Bianca: I can say I understand

Desdemona: Yes, nothing I said could ever make a difference, I was written off, I never made so much as a ripple in the tale..

Marsha: and you know what I did? I paid it no mind. That's right. I spoke back, I was at Stonewall, I walked down the street in a mini skirt and they stared alright, but that don't make me any less fabulous. People pulled guns at me, at parades, I was harassed. They pushed thorazine in my spine to make me "calmer" I know I did my bit, I stood by Sylvia when she started the STAR house..

Bianca:What was that?

Marsha: Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries but I suggest you Google the rest you know, now you have the internet and everything, that back then, was a different world Desdemona: And you were part of it

Emilia Yes

Marsha: Part? I was a queen in it.

Bianca: Yes.

Binodini: আমি এতক্ষণ শুনছিলাম, কিন্তু না বলে পারছি না। কি আশ্চর্য পরিহাস!

Marsha: Binodini, what is your history?

Binodini: ইতিহাস? কেউ কি আর মনে রাখে মেয়েদের ইতিহাস?

Edna: Oh yes, it is always his story.

Eve: From the very beginning

Desdemona: Alas, she has no speech! (Direct from Othello)

Bianca: although it was you who first tasted the apple, Eve.

Eve: it has always been ike that, ever since.

Rokeya: বিনোদিনী, তুমি তোমার কথা বলো শুনি। তোমার সমান্তরালেই সে সময় চলেছিল আমারও সংগ্রাম।

Binodini: আমার কথা? আমার এই যন্ত্রণার জীবনের যখন শেষ নেই, তখন আমার কথাও শেষ নেই।

Bianca:But now,it is our play,we'll end it in our way.

Binodini:আমাদের বেশ্যাদের আর কী জীবন! তবু, সকলে বলেছিল তখন আমার নামে থিয়েটার হবে, থিয়েটার বি... আমার মতো এক মেয়ের কাছে এ যে কত বড় হাতছানি, বি-য়ান্ধা হয়তো বুঝতে পারছেন খানিক।

Bianca : I do. Despite years of betrayal,promises and dreams have never ceased to spark a ray of hope. We never stopped dreaming, after all these days. Funny, isn't it Binodini? (Feel free to change) Binodini: এখন তো ভাবলে হাস্যকরই মনে হয়। বি থিয়েটার হল না অবশ্যই, তার নাম হল স্টার থিয়েটার। এখনো তাই, এত বছর পরেও কেউ কথা রাখেনি। Edna: They never do keep their promises...

Eve: and they are the ones who must always name.

Marsha: and they who write.

Binodini: আমার কথা যে সত্যিই আমার লেখা তা অনেকে বহুদিন পর্যন্ত বিশ্বাসই করেননি, জানো? পুরুষ হলে, এই অবিশ্বাস কল্পনা করতে পারতে?

Rokeya: অথচ এইটাই সত্যি। এই মুহূর্তে...

Marsha: this play-

Bianca : here-

Desdemona : right now-

Eve: this space

Emilia : all of us together

Edna: writing ourselves together- Marsha: knitting our stories-

Bianca: telling our stories-

Eve :this is our truth

Edna : Hear them out!

Marsha: You had to sell your body for society, Bianca and Binodini. And I had to live in a body I didn't want, for society.

Emilia: But all the pain, did you put a stop to it Marshar

Bianca: she died too early and..

Marsha: I suggest you figure out the rest of it

Edna : And yet you lived a thousand lives, you touched a thousand more and you live today, they could never kill Marsha P Johnson and oh how they tried...

Desdemona: Here, we speak and we shout and we say no and are be-lieved, there I was incarcerated, silenced.

Marsha: You know what I say. Pay no mind to it. Eve: You are a fearless woman Marsha

Marsha: Love is fearless, and I am love.

Enters Radha

Emilia: Indeed.

Bianca: Who do you fear when you sleep with the devil each night.

Desdemona :I feared my husband by the end, why I should fear I knew not, since guilt I knew not. But yet I felt fear. He denied me a last prayer and I died a guiltless death.

Emlia : Of course you did, you were innocent. You never loved anyone else.

Radha: আর যদি অন্য কাউকে ভালোবাসতে?

Eve: Does that reduce yourworth as a person?

Desdemona: doesn't it? What about the loyalty to your husband and the sanctity of marriage vows? Edna:which one do you esteem more worthy? Love or Marriage?

Desdemona : but, how do you differentiate between the two?

Radha: যদি বলি একটা মুক্তি, আরেকটা বন্ধন?

Desdemona: but I loved Othello, and that love w a s pure.

Radha: বিবাহে আমি সুখ পাইনি ডেসডিমোনা, কিন্তু তার বাইরে পেয়েছিলাম। মুক্তিও পে-য়েছিলাম তাতো। তা বুঝি বিশুদ্ধ নয়, তা কি তবে অর্থহীন হয়ে যায়?

Desdemona: Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong For the whole world.

Emalia : Why the wrong is but a wrong i' th' world, and having the wodd for your labor, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Radha: আমার ভালোবাসা, আর যাই হোক, মেকি ছিল না। আমি বলতে পারি আমার প্রেমে "তার মতো মোকে করি, সে মোর মতো হইল।"

Binodini: পতি প্রেমের সাধ আমাদেও ছিল ডেসডিমোনা। কিন্তু কোথায় পাক কেউ দেবে কি ভালোবাসা? শরীরের জন্য প্রেমকথা শোনাবার লোকের অভাব নেই, কিন্তু হৃদয়?

Bianca: They don't invest in hearts of fallen woman-they kill them.

Eve: Wouldst anyone do such a deed for all the world?

Marsha : Why, would not you? (Chuckles)

Edna: Not by this heavenly light, I might do't as well i'th' dark. (Chuckles)

Desdemona: Remember Emilia when you told me-

Emilia: that the world is a huge thing, it is a great price tor a small vice.

Bianca: A great price indeed.

Desdemona: What would YOU know about husbands-

Bianca: I know more about your husbands than you could ever know-

I know who they meet at night

Who they pass by alright

Who they drop their napkins on

Who they pick up touches from

I know who they kiss at day

I know who they kill at night

I know all the lies they say

And all the truths they fight

I know more of you and he Than you could ever hope to see All the men and now even you No one keeps me close, nothing new

So, do not tell me I don't love

Do not tell me I don't know

I know love like you and her

I know all there is to know!

[Pause]

Enters Sappbo and Nandini

Emilia: Remember Desdemona, I said to you that it was the husband's fault if wives fell

Eve: How so, tell us as well

Emilia: Say that they slack their duties

And pour our treasures into foreign laps

Bianca: And make other women accomplices in their betrayal  
Emilia: Or else break out in peevish jealousies  
Throwing restraint upon us, or say they strike us,  
Or scant our former having in despite  
Why, we have galls:  
Everyone: Hear hear!  
Emilia : and though we have some grace yet have we some revenge.  
Everyone: Hear hear!  
Emilia:Let husbands know  
Their wives have sense like them. They see and smell  
And have their palates both for sweet and sour,  
As husbands have. What is it that they do  
When they change us for others? Is it sport?  
I think it is. And doth affection breed it?  
I think it doth. Is 't frailty that thus errs?  
It is so too. And have not we affections, Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?  
Then let them use us well, else let them know, The ills we do, their ills instruct us  
Everyone: Hear hear!  
[Pause]  
Bianca: The whore is as worthy as any other woman.  
Binodini: আমরা প্রতারণা করেছি নাকি প্রতারণা হয়ে প্রতারণা শিখেছি তা কি কেউ অনুসন্ধান করেছে?  
Radha:না করেনি। Korar proyojon bodh koreni. Amader protarok hisebe kolpona kora je beshi soja. Marsha: And don't never forget it, my body was found in the water and there wasn't no investigation Enter Nandini  
Bianca: Our bodies at dawn  
Hold men some scorn  
Unknown crimes through night  
Call murder, bring light!

You love him more  
Death on your door  
Do you not learn?  
Love'll never return.  
Desdemona: Yes, I loved a man, I loved a man more than myself and before I loved him, I loved my father and I ceased to be when that love wa s questioned  
Binodini: কিন্তু কী হল শেষ অবধি  
Rokeya: তোমার বাবা তোমায় ত্যাগ করলেন। আর যে পুরুষের জন্য নিজের বাবাকে ছাড়লে তুমি, সেও ...  
Binodini: আমরা সব সময়েই আসলে একটা উপার্জন, যুদ্ধ জয়ের পুরস্কার মাত্র, জানো ডেসডিমোনা। তুমিও তাই।  
Desdemona: Me too?  
Binodini:হ্যাঁ তুমিও। এমন কী আমিও। এই যুদ্ধ কখনো দেশের, কখনো জাতির, কখনো দুই পুরুষের। গ্লীস-ট্রয়, রাম রাবণ- যে জেতে, হেলেন বা সীতারা তার হয়ে যায়। আমিও যখন থিয়েটারের টানে গুরু্থ রায়ের রক্ষিতা হতে রাজি হলাম আধ লক্ষ টাকার প্রলোভন ছেড়ে- আমি যে যুবকের আশ্রয়ে ছিলাম তার সাথে তখন গুস্থুখ বাবুর প্রায় যুদ্ধই লেগে গেল! গুন্ডা, মারপিট, ঝনঝন শব্দ...  
Emilia: and in your case, Desdemona, it was your father and Othello. See?  
Bianca: the same story, the same pattern.  
Eve: everywhere.  
Desdemona: Me too! I remember my father asked, "where most you owe obedience?" He wanted me to choose between Othello and him. Yes, Emilia, you're right. Me too.  
Emilia: and yet the man lived. He was and the story is his  
Bianca: I worked and I loved and I too faded away into oblivion, you were still the wronged, Desdemona but I was always the wrong and never more than a non-man in a man's tale..  
Eve:Nevera woman in her own right.  
Emlia:Tis not a year or two shows us a man. They are all but stomachs, andwe all but food. To eat us hungerly,andwhentheyare ful,They belch us

Binodini: তবু ঈশ্বর সকলকে সুখ দুঃখ অনুভব করার ক্ষমতা দিয়েছেন। আমাকেও দি-য়েছেন, অথচ তা শোনার জন্য লোক দেননি কারণ আমি পতিতা, বারনারী। লোকে কেন আমায় দয়া করবে? আমার আত্মীয় নেই, সমাজ নেই, বন্ধু নেই, বান্ধব নেই। আমার বলতে কেউ নেই ।

Bianca:I remember (assio refusing to accompany me, because he was waiting for the general and, of course, he didn't want to be seen 'wom-aned' Oh,Binodini, how I can feel your pain!

Rokeya:আমি মাঝেমাঝে অবাক হয়ে ভাবি, যদি ধর্মগুরু মহম্মদ এঁদের হিসেব নিকেশ নেন যে "তোমরা কন্যার প্রতি কী রূপ ব্যবহার করেছেন," তবে এঁরা কী বলবেন?  
Binodini:করেন? ধর্মগুরু ঈশ্বর কোথায় সে ঈশ্বর? কোথায় সে দয়াময়? যিনি আমার মতো পাপীী তাপীকে দয়া করেন?

Rokeya:ঠিকই। নন্দিনী, তুমি তো এসেছো অনেকক্ষণ। তুমি কিছু বলবে না?  
Nandini:আমি আসবো সবার শেষে, সময় হোক। এখন শুনছি তোমাদের গল্প, ইতিহাস। এখানেও যক্ষপুরী! কি আশ্চর্য...এর কি শেষ নেই? ঐ সুরঙ্গের অন্ধকার ডালাটা খুলে ফেলে তার মধ্যে আলো ঢেলে দিতে ইচ্ছে করে জানো। ইচ্ছে করে, তোমাদের যক্ষপুরী থেকে বের করে আনি।

Radha:তুমিই পারবে নন্দিনী। পারলে তুমিই পারবে। কারণ, তুমি তো আমরা সকলেই।  
Eve: Yes, you are everywoman Nandini.  
Edna:You are me,and I am you.  
Marsha: Though you were written by a man, how fascinating and rare!  
Nandini: হ্যাঁ, আমায় লিখেছেন পুরুষ। রবীন্দ্রনাথ জানতেন আমায় চিত্ত বানিয়ে দেওয়া হবে, একটা সংকেত, রূপক... তাই তিনিই লিখে গেছেন- নন্দিনী একটি 'মানবীর ছবি।' এই যেমন বললে, তোমার মতো, তোমাদের মতো। আমাদের সকলের মতো। তাইই আমি নন্দি-নী হতে পেরেছি, কেবল নাটকের প্রাণহীন রূপক হয়ে যাইনি।  
Desdemona: Oh, how I envy your literary sisters! Charulata, Mrinmoyee, Mrinal..

Nandini:তুমি জানো তাদের?  
Desdemona : Oh, yes. We share the same stories, in different tales and narratives of different languages  
Nandini: হ্যাঁ। আমাদের যক্ষপুরীতে সকলে ছিল সংখ্যা, এই যক্ষপুরীতে সকলেই পণ্য। তাই, সবাই নিশ্চয়ই সবাইকে চেনে। আমাদের সুতোটা যে এক!

Radha: হ্যাঁ, সুতোটা একা!

Nandini: তোমাদের কথা শুনি। কখনো যে শুনতে পাইনি তোমাদের স্বর! তোমরা আজ বলো। শেষে, রক্তকরবীর মালা আছে তোমাদের সকলের জন্য... এখন শুনি তোমাদের কথা । তোমাদের এই পালাটা আমার বেশ ভালো লাগছে।

Rokeya: বেশ।

Nandini: শুধু, এমন খোপের মধ্যে আটকে কথা না বলে যদি সত্যিই দেখা হতো কোথাও, স্পর্শ পেতাম তোমাদের...

Marsha : On the streets...

Edna: that we could really meet, instead of google meet.

Emilia:We are helpless in the pandemic.

Eve We are.

Desdemona: Sappho, you loved women and you wrote women, what was it like?

Emilia: But did you really love women the way we loved men? Are you really what they call you, living on the island of Lesbos surrounded by young women and loving them?  
Sappho: They call me a lot of things, Homer called me 'the poet, Plato named me 'the tenth muse'. They also call me a pederast  
Desdemona: What do you call yourself?  
Sappho: Aah, finally..I am a lover and a poet, my lyrics say all that they need to, for centuries they have tried to define me, I will let you do the same...

Desdemona: I wonder what I would call myself, what would I n a m e myself and n o t be named by Eve: Adam

Desdemona : Shakespeare

Emilia: Cinthio

Marsha: Society

Radha: Madhav

Binodini: রঙ্গালয়

Rokeya: আন্ধ্য

Bianca: Men

Desdemona: Never women

Sappho: I named women and at times I only named love,.Anactoria, Megara, Mica

Desdemona: and they came and went as they pleased.

Sappho: I asked myself

What, Sappho, can you give one who has everything,

like Aphrodite?

Eve:Youmaygivethema poem perhaps?

Bianca: You can give them love-

Emilia: And love was my undoing

Sappho: I loved but I did not let love be what these men made it be, my love did not kill, a love of freedom.

Desdemona: Am I free?

Eve: Are any of us

Sappho: Some say an army of horsemen, others say foot soldiers, still others say a fleet is the finest thing on the dark earth. I say it is whatever one loves.

Edna: Yes and I think I have loved my freedom, my independence

Rokeya: আমার জেদ।

Binodini: থিয়েটার

Desdemona: I loved..

Bianca:Donottakea name if it is not yours.

Emilia: That's right, Desdemona. Only you loved.

Sappho: But I wonder, how can someone not be hurt and hurt again, by the person one loves - and wishes above all to ask back?

Desdemona: How can one not?

Emilia: Read us something you wrote, Sappho Sappho: it was really meant to be sung but, I will read  
The sweet apple reddens on a high branch high upon highest, missed by the apple-pickers: No, they didn't miss, so much as couldn't touch."  
Edna: Sappho! How exquisite! Your poem reminds me of that night the two solitary lovers sailed across the moonlit bay..

Rokeya: এই যে আমরা, সব মেয়েরা, একে অন্যের কথা শুনছি নিজের মুখে, যে মুখে চিরকাল বসিয়ে দেওয়া হয়েছে অন্য শব্দ- এত আশ্চর্য লাগছে!

Binodini: হ্যাঁ সত্যিই, আমারও... আশ্চর্য, অদ্ভুত।

Desdemona: I learned and unlearned a lot of things,including my own story that was..

Eve: Hijacked

Emilia: stabbed.

Marsha : appropriated

Bianca: silenced, in the end.

Rokeya: আমরা এত কাল ধরে অবরোধ হয়ে থাকতে থাকতে এমন অভ্যস্ত হয়ে গেছি যে অবরোধের বিরুদ্ধে বলার আর কিছুই নেই আমাদের। কিন্তু, আজ মনে হচ্ছে যেন আমার সুলতানাস ড্রিম, সত্যি হল।

Bianca: I feel heard.

Edna: And seen.

Desdemona: And alive.

Eve: and free of the guilt that I put on myself

Radha: এতদিন কত কবি, কত পুরুষ লিখলেন আমায়। আজ, হঠাৎ মনে হচ্ছে, যেন নিজেই লিখছি নিজেকে নিজের মতো। আমার মতো। একটা মেয়ের মতো।

Binodini: মেয়েবেলায় ভাবতাম যে মায়ের কোলেই বুঝি চিরকাল কাটাবো এমন সরল জীবন। কত সখী ছিল আমার... সারাদিন তাদের সাথে খেলা করে রাতে ঘুমাতাম মায়ের কোলো। আহ্, কি শান্তি ছিল। তারপর বারনারীর জীবনে, ভালোবাসার থিয়েটারে এত বি-শ্বাসঘাতের পর কত দূরে চলে এসেছি সেই জীবন থেকে। অস্পষ্ট সে সব দিন। অথচ, আজ, এখন মনে হচ্ছে, যেন সেই জীবনই ফিরে পেলাম কিছু, ফিরিয়ে দিলে তোমরা  
Nandini: এইবার সময় হল।

Radha: কীসের?

Nandini: আমাদের সমস্ত শক্তি নিয়ে ভাষার সঙ্গে আমাদের লড়াই করার। আর, তোমা-দের সকলকে রক্তকরবী ফুল দেওয়ার। আমি যে বলেছিলাম আমি আসবো সময় হলে, সময় হয়েছে।

Desdemona : what do we do now, then?

Emilia: Write our own ends, I suppose, now that we have come to the end

Bianca :Just the way we want to?

Eve: Just the way We want to.

Marsha: As queens, as people

Sappho: There's no joy like this. I declare I am your steady friend.

Rokeya: সত্যিই তাই!

Radha: এভজনের কল্পনা মিশেছে আমার মধ্যে, আমি কল্পনাই করতে পারছি না এ কেমন হতে পারে। মনেই পড়েনা আমি কে ছিলাম...

Binodini: সে প্রয়োজনও নেই। আজ থেকে, তুমি যেমন লিখবে, তুমি তেমন। তুমি মুক্ত।

Radha: আশ্চর্য্য

Nandini: বলো তবে, বলো কেমন করে শেষ করতে চাও এ পালা...

Marsha: A song, maybe?

Desdemona: Yes, a song

Binodini: হ্যাঁ নন্দিন, একটা গান ধরো...

Nandini: বেশ। তবে আমাদের এই কথা বলা নিয়েই একটা গান গাই... কথা কও মোর হৃদয়ে, হাত রাখো হাতো বন্ধু রহো রহো সাথে|[Glitches]

Iago: Coughs.

Marsha: Hold on, hold on, there's som eone in our meeting

Bianca: Someone apart from the eleven of us?

Emilia: Yes, I cannot control the settings somehow, a virus or a glitch..wait I'm trying to fix this...

Edna: We have an intruder?

Iago: Hello, am I audible? It's Iago.

Bianca WHAT

Desdemona: Thou art a villain

Iago: Though in the trade of war I have slain men..(breaks off into some-thing gibberish, incomprehensible.)

Everyone: [Very chaotic] What is going on? What? Hello? My device is gettingdisconnected.Can you hear me? Am I audible? Hello? Are you all still there? Is the connection lost? Hello... hello..

Fin

the



## Sabarno Sinha

*"That Within Which Passeth Show"*



I am a final year undergraduate student of English Literature at Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India. I am deeply interested in the long eighteenth century as well as Shakespeare in Indian pedagogy and performance. I am associated with the Shakespeare in Bengal project of our department where I help in the archival process.

I love Japanese cinema (being a fan of Kurosawa, Hamaguchi and Koreeda) and I am also learning the Japanese language. In the future, I wish to explore Shakespeare in Japan, if it is possible.

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That Within Which Passeth Show was written adapting the second act of Hamlet. I had conceived it at a time when I felt very strongly about the existence of certain privileged dominant groups in the space of the university who controlled, watched and surveilled all the movements of people who dissented, eventually causing trouble for them. Finding Hamlet to be present in a similar situation, and his resistance through his mask of madness, I decided to use Shakespeare's text to talk about these problems in our contemporary times.

# THAT WITHIN WHICH PASSETH SHOW

**Background:** For this work, Hamlet has been transported to a modern college scenario. Hamlet has recently defected from his powerful and influential friend group (Claudius, Gertrude and Polonius) after they falsely implicated Hamlet Sr. (fondly called the King) in a case of cheating and he was rusticated.Gertrude also broke up with the King and got together with Claudius very soon after the King was made the scapegoat in order to maintain her own influence. Hamlet’s girlfriend, Ophelia, was told by the main group to stay away from him otherwise they would cast her out. Afraid and nervous, she listened to them. All of this is taking place during the vacations, so nobody can meet. Everything takes place over phone calls and video calls.

**Before these scenes:** Polonius speaks to Ophelia, who tells him that Hamlet has been behaving rather strangely. He has become extremely anxious and cannot understand what to do. Polonius thinks that his behaviour is so as he cannot speak to Ophelia, who is continuously rejecting his calls and turning away from him. Polonius has reported all to Claudius and Gertrude and they are quite worried.

**Based on:** Act 2, Scene 2 of Hamlet

Scene 1

[Characters in the scene: Claudius, Gertrude, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Polonius]

Claudius and Gertrude decide to speak to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Polonius has already reported to them about Hamlet’s situation as he came to know from Ophelia.

Gertrude: Hello guys. Sorry, it was a bit of an emergency so we had to call you here over a zoom meeting and on top of that, Claudius asked me to host the meeting! Psh!

Claudius: You folks have come, that’s good, really good.

Rosencrantz: Anything for you, sir.

Guildenstern: Yes, anything at all.

C: Sir?! Hahahaha, you like to hear that, Gertrude?

Ge: Haha, yes, yes. But let’s get on with the business.

C: Polonius was supposed to join us, wasn’t he? Where is he?

Ge: Oh yeah, right. I’ll give him a call. You continue. [mutes herself and turns off video]

C: Anyway, we were thinking about something.

Ro: What about, sir? You can tell us anything!

Gu: Anything at all! We are always there with you!

Ro: I mean, who in their right senses in campus would not want to speak to you two [both giggle]

C: (nods) You guys know Hamlet, right?

Ro: Yeah, the guy who abandoned your group, right?

Gu: How could he do something like that?

Ge: Please don’t say that. [turns on video to show that she is online.] He’s our good friend.

C: Was. We didn’t want all of this shit. Gertrude? (pause) In any case, Polonius informed me about Hamlet’s “transformation”. Nothing of his interior or exterior remains the same. He doesn’t resemble the person he once used to be.

Gu: Seems very grave. But why are you so concerned about him?

Ro: Yeah, why? Even I was wondering about that. He’s a nobody.

C: After his best friend, who you must remember as the King got himself rusticated, he just changed bizarrely. Old Hamlet basically ruled the college. Everyone respected him and even I had a very close connection, with him (sighs). Now everything has changed. I can’t really trust any of them. Hamlet is very unpredictable, and I’ve heard that he’s become pretty suicidal as well. What if he just suddenly decided to blame us for everything?!

Ge: Claudius, how could you

C: I know what you’re trying to say. Hamlet was very close to you but don’t forget that I loved him equally!. But I’m sure you know that my concerns are valid.

Ge: Yeah, whatever.

Ro: Exactly, how can anyone condone the stuff he has done?

Gu: Moreover, betraying you guys was simply not done! The entire college was shaken!

C: He was jealous of me, quite clearly he was. We thought that he imagined our friendship as some kind of power equation, as though this was just some game of thrones. I’m sure we all commanded the same level of respect when we were together.

Ge: Claudius, love, we have to start talking business. Is there any point in saying these things?

C: Yes, of course. Rosenstern and Guildencrantz...

Both: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, sir.

C: Yes, yes, whatever it is. I have some work for you two.

Gu: Please. Your wish is our command.

Ro: Exactly so.

C: Look. We are not sure of what Hamlet is planning right now. He left the group, very well, but how is he, what is he thinking, what’s he doing, right this moment, we are simply in the dark about it. We have tried reaching him but he won’t take our calls. All of this happened right before the vacations so we are in a bit of a spot. But anyway, if memory serves me well, you are his old friends, right?

Ro: Yeah

Gu: Ever since we were infants

Ge: But, Claudius, don’t you think Hamlet will be suspicious?

C: That’s what I am worried about...But if these two can play their parts well, I don’t think there will be any problem.

Ge: You have to be very discreet about this. Nobody must get to know about this, especially Hamlet.

Ro: Please tell us what you want.

Gu: Exactly, tell us and we will try our best.

C: Look, We are a bit concerned. Isn’t that so, Gertrude?

Ge: Yeah, like how is he, what is he doing, if anything’s bugging him...

C: Yeah all that is there, of course. But more importantly, there’s a chance that he might be plotting something against us.

Ro: What?

Gu: Are you serious?

Ge: Claudius, please, you don’t have to be so rough

C: But I don’t want to mince my words, Gertrude. That’s the truth. Hamlet is unstable now. He can do anything he wants right now. I don’t know why he is behaving this way. Maybe he is blaming us in his head for whatever happened with the old King.

Ge: Which...really might not be the case. Why are you making things up?

C: Yeah, well, it could be something else but who can be sure?

Ge: I’m we’re all very concerned.

C: I want you guys to find out what the hell is his problem. Plain and simple. What is he planning? What in the world has happened because of which he is doing all this nonsense? What did he mean by leaving us? Why? What have we done to him? Have we done anything to him? Have we really done anything at all? What is it that is bothering him so very much? (pauses) That’s the gist of it. But you guys must not ask all this directly. As Gertrude said, be discreet. Be gentle.

Ge: Yeah he’s going through a bad phase. You have to understand. What connections is his head making right now, we have no idea.

Ro: Don’t worry. We’re here, right?

Gu: Exactly, if you are so concerned, we are definitely concerned. We will surely do something for him. After all, he is our friend too and doing something for him is our responsibility!

C: You two are his good friends. I’m glad you’re there for him.

Ge: Yes...

Ro: We just have one request, sir.

C: Yes, please, go ahead!

Ro: Can we have a photo with you once campus reopens?

Gu: (excitedly) Yes! That would be great!

C: (smiles) All in good time. Now, get going. Oh, Polonius is.

[Polonius enters]

Polonius: Yeah, hi, so oh Rosencrantz Guildenstern are here?

Ro: How are you, sir?

P: Well, been better. Anyway, I guess Claudius had to speak to you two.

Ge: We have spoken to them.

P: Fantastic.

R: We’re leaving, then.

Gu: Bye!

[Rosencrantz and Guildenstern leave, everyone else stays quiet for a bit before Claudius breaks the silence.]

C: Listen, Gertrude. You know Hamlet very well, don’t you? What do you think? Why is he being like this?

Ge: I can only think of one thing. He doesn’t like how you and I became a thing after I broke up with the King. Hamlet probably blames me because

C: You guys broke up right after he was rusticated, right?

Ge: (sighs) Yes, I didn’t have a choice.

C: Well, I think that after the old King left, I had to keep the group together. Everyone looked up to me and they still do. So he probably holds a grudge against me.

Ge: Yes, andP: Hello! Won’t you give me a chance to speak? I did tell you about the Hamlet situation but there’ve been some developments.

C&Ga:(mid-low voice tone) What?

P: Check WhatsApp.

[everyone checks and sees messages of woe and suicide threats sent by Hamlet]

Ge: Hamlet sent these to Ophelia?

P: (smiles proudly) She’s very obedient. No doubt I think of her as my younger sister.

Ge: So, you’re suggesting he is sad because Ophelia won’t talk to him anymore?

P: Precisely so.

Ge: Are you absolutely sure that it’s got nothing to do with the old Hamlet thing? Or the breakup?

C: Yeah, I mean that’s what we were thinking.

P: Listen, Claudius, what do you think of me?

C: Look, I think you’re faithful and honourable.

P: Then trust my deduction. I’ll prove this fact.

C: Then who was that blithering idiot who asked her not to speak to Hamlet?

P: I was the one. You know that I’m very protective of her.

C: Polonius, was that a very wise thing to do.

P: But well, come on, I didn’t know he liked her THIS much!

Ge: Come on, we all knew he did. But yeah, we didn’t know to what extent.

P: Look, we had thought that it would have the opposite effect and he would come running back

to the group. Who knew that he would do all this?

C: Wait. What will he do? Will he...?

P: Nope. I don’t think he would go that far. At any rate, I don’t think it’s old Hamlet. It’s all because of Ophelia.

C: Ophelia should be told at once to be normal with him, then! She could even persuade him to give up his drama and come back to us. The entire university is with us. If he does something, it will go against him, not us. I think Ophelia can help her understand this best.

Ge: Hm, Hamlet was always sensitive about Ophelia. Why did we even do this...it was a bad move on our part.

P: Anyway, no point thinking about it now. I’ll then tell Ophelia to speak to him normally, okay?

C: And do not forget to mention that he should return to the group. Ophelia’s interaction with him needs to serve our purpose as well. We need to look out for ourselves. You get it, right...?

P: Then, let’s do one thing. I’ll also tell Ophelia to get a grip on what he’s doing and thinking. She is the only one who can know what his actual intentions are.

Ge: That’s a good idea.

C: Why? Rosencrantz aar Guildenstern?

Ge: I don’t know, Claudius...

C: I don’t even want to know it, Gertrude. We have to make sure that he doesn’t leak any sensitive information. I’m trying to protect us from all sides. And my “us” includes you as well, if you’ve not forgotten that already.

P: Right. I’ll leave. I have to speak to Hamlet once as well.

[Polonius leaves]

C: You don’t have to think about your ex. I’m here. You don’t need to think about anything else.

[Claudius leaves]

Ge: You will never understand what I feel. I wish...things were...anyway

[leaves]

Scene 2:

[Characters in scene: Polonius, Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern]

Polonius has started an online meeting. He calls Hamlet with the sole intention of getting surprising him with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. But he also wants to try getting a grip on Hamlet.

Polonius (on the phone): Yeah, please, please try now. Okay. Okay.

Hmm... [He hangs up]

[Hamlet enters]

P: Right, so you are here.

Hamlet: No, sir! I am in the market haggling with you!

P: What?

H: Aren’t you a fishmonger? Who’s trying to sell fish worth 400 for 800 to me?

P: What on earth are you about?

H: We all have that within which passes show, right?

P: Didn’t someone write that?

H: Absolutely not, this is reality. There is a fishmonger hidden deep inside you but your face reeks of politician. You would agree, right?

P: Has he really lost it? (murmurs)

H: Did you say something?  
P: What? No...nothing  
H: I see. Can you see this, sir?  
P: What?  
H: What the date is today?  
P: Yes, it's 15 June. Why?  
H: Do you have a date?  
P: What?  
H: You should use dating apps, you know. I'm sure Ophelia's on one.  
P: How did you know?  
H: Very soon she will have more than date, sir. Multiple dates. 30 every month. 31 on some. 28 on one. Such ideas she may conceive, friend. Look to it! P: Are you still interested in her? You still can't forget her?  
H: The fish stinks!  
P: Not again! (aside) So tell me, how's everything? I was thinking about you the past few days. I thought you must be lonely, nobody speaks to you.  
H: Well, you're right there, not even the King.  
P: Really? I wasn't aware of the fact that you two didn't speak anymore.  
H: Well, now you know. But I thought fishmongers caught all news in their nets first. How come this one didn't reach you?  
P: Can someone please explain to me how the hell am I a fishmonger?  
H: Simple! You sell cheap things at huge prices! You get profit and there's your pleasure!  
P: I have no idea what you're talking about, Hamlet. You really need some psychological help, my friend.  
H: Friend? You have graced me with that word, my lord.  
P: Anyway, how have you been? What are you doing these days?  
H: Suddenly?  
P: I did ask you that a couple of minutes ago...  
H: I am reading. Lots of books.  
P: So what are you reading now?  
H: You'd love to know, wouldn't you? Just today, I finished a couple of synonyms, antonyms, nouns, pronouns, homophones and homonyms. Homonyms remind me...  
P: What?  
H: You are a homonym!  
P: I'm convinced, dear lord! He's gone! (murmurs)  
H: You look the same. You sound the same. Usually. But you always mean different things!  
P: Hamlet, I just wanted to know what text are you reading now?  
H: Oh, you should've asked me that. I am reading common, proper, collective, abstract, concrete, countable and uncountables. Yes!  
P: Hamlet, please. Behave like a human for once.  
H: Look who's saying (murmurs)  
P: Sorry, I didn't get that.  
H: I like speaking to myself these days!  
P: Right. [gets a call] Hey, just give me a second. I'm coming in some time. [he leaves the meeting]  
H: Hmm. Did you really come to check on me? What am I, a fool? A clown? Should I just wear the motley and dance on the streets? That's all you have made of me, heh. Thinking that I have fallen for everything. Nobody can play me, Polonius, I'm nobody's flute. (pause) Who are these people trying to join? Wasn't it Polonius' meeting room? Damn, I'm the host now?  
[enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and turn their videos on]  
H: Rosencrantz? Guildenstern? Where were you all this while? What are you doing here?  
[laughing]  
R: How are you, Hamlet?

G: It's been a long time indeed!  
H: Why're you here?  
G: Claudius said that you are in bad shape. So we wanted to just check on you, y'know.  
H: Claudius told you? You know him?  
R: Well obviously! Who doesn't know him in the whole university?  
G: Exactly!  
H: Oh...yeah...right...hmm.  
R: But Hamlet, are you alright?  
G: Yeah, we're pretty worried.  
H: Who told you that I'm not alright?  
R: No I mean...we all knew that you were close to the King...that's what was worrying us.  
G: Hmm, you were pretty close to him.  
H: I was close to you two as well at some point...But oh well...-time, time, time. Time destroys all, right?  
R: Hmm that's true.  
G: But don't you want to do something about him?  
H: What?  
R: What we mean to say is that...  
G: Don't you want to do something about this whole rustication thing?  
H: But why do you guys want to talk about this? We are meeting after so long. Thanks to Claudius, these old friends are getting an opportunity to talk, why choose this topic?  
R: No, we were concerned about you, surely you're not feeling well.  
H: Did Claudius and Gertrude say that I'm planning something?  
G:What non(Stammers) Why would they say that, heh!  
R: No but why do you think that?  
H: Of all the things in heaven and earth, this is what you choose to talk about.  
R: Why are you being so rude, Hamlet? We just want you to share your grief with us.  
G: Yeah, we're here for you, that's what we wanted to say.  
H: Are you sure about that? I wouldn't be so sure myself.  
R: What did you say?  
G: We couldn't hear you. Could you speak closer to the mic?  
H: No, look, whatever happened with the old King, it's done. I cannot do anything about it, right?  
R: But why did you leave your friends?  
G: Yeah, I mean, should you really have done that?  
H: Oh well, if you were in my position, I don't think you could've said those things.  
G: Why do you say that?  
R: Yeah, tell us frankly. But we really don't think you should have done that.  
G: They have been friends with you for two years, man. They have been by your side through everything. If you leave the group right now, what will people think of everyone? It's not right, right?  
R: We all know that the King had actually done those things. The entire university knows that. Why do you want to defend him? You yourself know that the blame you're putting on the group about framing old Hamlet for cheating and trapping him it's just bull-shit, Hamlet.  
H: Are you sure of all that?  
G: Hyan. Why would they lie?  
H: They?  
R: Claudius and Gertrude. And even, Polonius. We all saw the proof.  
G: Exactly  
H: There's no point talking about this.  
R: You should reconsider your decisions, Hamlet. Take some rest and think about it. These thoughts, this grief...it's not right.

H: What a piece of work is man! Hahaha! I'm having a lot of rest. That's all I am. That is my state, rest. Though I wish it were not. Like you all, I wish I could carry out the demands of another.  
G: What do you mean?  
R: What are you implying?  
H: Tell me honestly, they have sent you, isn't it? To spy on me? To record every brow and muscle I move?  
R: (stammers) Nnno, wwwwat makes you think that?  
H: I don't know.  
G: Even if it's true, what's the problem? [R palms face]  
R: Yeah, exactly. They worry about you Hamlet. They care for you.  
H: I can understand how selfless they are, their worry about me is very genuine. They're great people. They don't care what happens to them or what I do...They're very powerful. Small fish like me cannot do shit.  
R: Wait, are you really planning to do something?  
H: I have to leave now. Sorry. Bye!  
[Hamlet leaves]  
[Rosencrantz looks angrily at Guildenstern]  
G: What? Why are you looking at me like that?  
R: Who told you to say that we were sent for? If Claudius knows about this, we're done for.  
G: What? They are genuinely concerned about him. That's what I wanted to say.  
R: Dear lord, how deluded are you? Anyway, he had smelled a rat anyway so forget about it.  
[they leave]  
[Polonius joins]  
P: Hamlet, I'm so sorry...What? Where's everyone? Where are Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? Had I not asked them to stay behind to give me a report of whatever happened? It's such a simple task, God, why do I have to put up with such unprofessional behaviour? We told them to let us know what Hamlet is planning and what he is doing exactly. Good lord, I hate this. I'll just suggest that fellow I sent behind Laertes the next time before Claudius gets idiots like these.  
[Polonius leaves]

END

the



## Ji Young Choi

*"While Ophelia's Korean Drum Weeps"*



Ji Young Choi is an actress, playwright and visiting professor at Seoul Institute of the Arts. She studied acting at Columbia University and has performed in Seoul, New York and London. Her monodrama productions of Young company have been focused on finding human truth of feeling in Shakespeare's plays and modifying it into a monodrama incorporating Korean Dance and Culture. She has been dancing Korean traditional dance for 15 years and has applied it to her performance to see how the dance could be expressed more than a language. In 2016, *While Ophelia's Korean Drum Weeps*, was premiered in New York International Fringe Festival, where it was both written and performed by herself. It was an adaptation of *Hamlet* with Korean traditional drum dance.

In 2017, *An Actress Confession* was

performed with "seongmu", a Korean Monk Dance.

In 2019, Her written monodrama, *Love Deadline(Desdemona)* was adapted from Shakespeare's *Othello* to *Desdemona's* metaphorical expression through Korean tea culture was performed in York International Shakespeare Festival.

She directed David Henry Hwang's *The Sound of Voice* in 21th World 2 person play Festival in Seoul. Her most recent work *Macbeth's Lady Shaman* won the "Best International Show" in 14th United Solo Theatre Festival Spring in New York.

*Macbeth's Lady Shaman* is a dance Monodrama shown from the perspective of the lady shaman. The story will accompany Korean traditional shaman dance and solve people's curiosity about the future and looking for the important values in life.

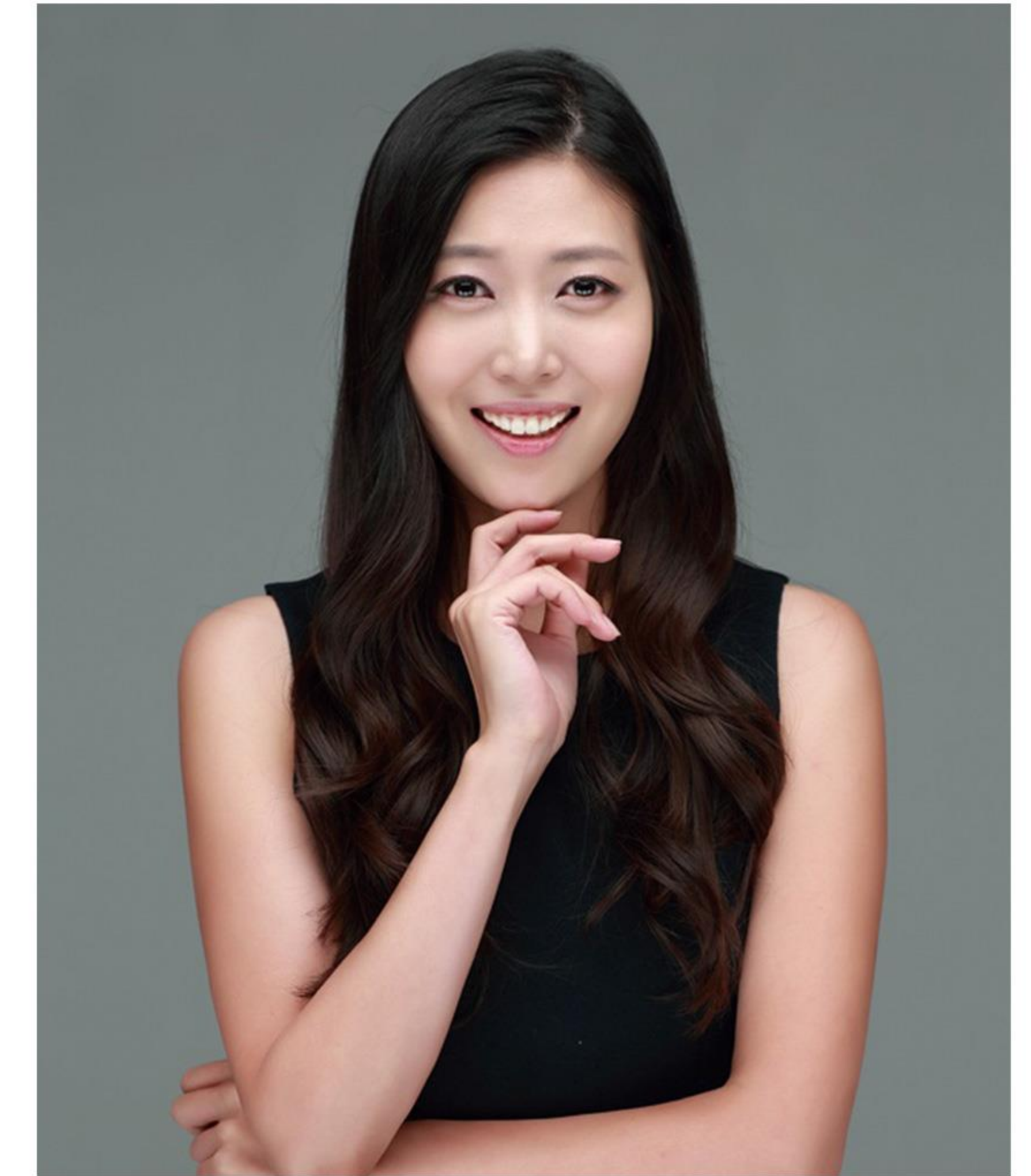


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I first met Shakespeare in acting class. I was a freshman at university. I got a role as Ophelia for the first time. I thought the character was very intensive and difficult to portray, especially the heart-breaking scene after Ophelia loses her father. When she cast away flowers to Claudius and Gertrude, I wondered if Ophelia was really insane or if it was her way of expressing sorrow. I tried to suit the action to the word and the word to action which Shakespeare wrote in *Hamlet's* monologue. And as I followed her lines I had felt that this is how she dealt with her turmoil emotions by using metaphors. She was saying metaphorically with her flowers. "There's rosemary, That's for remembrance, Pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies, that's for thoughts..." "I could feel Ophelia's true heart and one day felt the urge to write about her story and her life. And that became my first monodrama: *While Ophelia's Korean Drum Weeps*. A telling of her story through a Korean drum and was premiered in New York International Fringe Festival. This is how I began to write Shakespeare monodrama as for female roles. I always feel like I am having conversation with Shakespeare, as if I was representing

female roles. Most female characters in male-led tragedies are sacrificed or silently fade away. Due to this lack of the stories of female roles, I wanted to help get the hidden stories of female characters out into the world.

Imagination and physicalizing characters is important in playwriting. I still remember Shakespeare acting classes with Kristin Linklater, a phenomenal voice teacher. She taught me how to turn Shakespeare's images and metaphors into actions and through the voice. She always told me about the importance of creating a role throughout my whole body and to feel the heartbeats in the rhythm.

Since then I have always thought about the beating hearts in the characters I act and trying to feel alive as a human living today.

Every time I write and perform Shakespeare roles, I feel myself growing. For me, the moment of acting on stage allows me to meet enormous Shakespeare through my own created world and again with the audience. I guess that's what makes me continue writing and acting.

# WHILE OPHELIA’S KOREAN DRUM WEEPS

Ji Young Choi

Korean drum is placed on the stage. When the wind sounds, Ophelia comes out and goes to the drum.

Ophelia:

It was winter when my mother left me and father. She told me whenever you are alone, sad, or miss somebody desperately, play the drum and I will be there.

(The slow beat of drum sounds from the distance.)

Ophelia:

I started to dance when I was five. My mother taught me every step of the Korean drum dance.

Breathe with your knees, Ophelia. (She looks down her knees.)

Don’t look down. Where you look is not outside but inside of your mind. One day she brought this long sleeve. It was longer than my height. She let me play with it. I dragged it and tied it until finally, I was tangled. So she got me out of there and then she tied it beautifully to the drum and helped me to wear it.

My mother made a first connection between me and the drum.

(To the audience) Could you help me to tie this drum?

Thank you.

One day my mother asked me, “Ophelia, what do you hear?” (She hits her drum once) “Drum!” I said. She asked me again. “Listen again. (She hits her drum twice in a row) What do you hear?” “Drum Beats!” When I answered the same, she laughed and approached me and put my ears to her chest and asked me again, “What do you hear now Ophelia?” “Mom, it’s warm” I hugged her and said, “Your heart beat.” And She continued, “It’s your heart beat. When you are happy you play it fast like this, when you feel sad you play slowly like this. Always listen your heart and play along.” I wish I could dance like my mom.

She always told me I should dance heavy as if I were in the water. Water?

One day I wanted to experience a real heavy walk. So I went out to the river. I walk into the water from ankle, knees and up to my belly. (She lifts her drum high)

This drum is my mother’s last present to me before she left me. I dreamt of her every night. I imagined that I could sail and reach my mother someday.

Suddenly I heard my father call me. I would be in trouble when I am seen with this drum. So I hide behind a tree.

He came near and looked at the river and called me, "Ophelia, I know you are there. Come out." I was really good at hide-and-seek when I was young. He would never find me. All you had to do was wait until he was gone.

Thank god he couldn’t find me. (She sneezes) My dad hates it when I am with this drum. It is because my mother left us for this very reason. She wanted to be a dancer. But Dad wanted mom to be just a mom. Then she let go of daddy’s hands and ran out to chase her own dreams. But she promised me she was going to come back and watch me dance. I practice the drum but I cannot play it loud because my father would hear it. Wait a minueta, like here at the riverbanks, I can play it as loud as I could.

(She dances and bumps with imaginary Hamlet.)

One day a man named Hamlet appeared in my life. He was right in front of me and at first he took my drum away. So I took it back. But he moved it again and reached out his hand to me and

said, “Hi”. “OH! Hi” I said and we shook our hands and then he gently put my drum back and asked me, “Can you dance for me?” I said “You’d have to pay.” and he said “I will tell you the most ambiguous story ever.” And I asked “Is it like a ghost story?” Suddenly his face got very pale and he said, “Yes. It’s about my dead father who came up to me as a ghost every night.” He told me this whole story of conspiracy. His uncle is a murderer? He looked so confused. He started shivering and collapsed on the ground and started to cry. “Don’t cry. I will dance for you.” He looked at my dancing but I could only hear his voiceless crying over and over again. He and I had one thing in common, we both missed someone dearly. For Hamlet, it was his father and me, my mother. We could only fill our emptiness when we were together. After that day we met every day.

(She takes off the drum and leans on the drum) One day he came to me early in the morning and asked me, “Ophelia, can I take you somewhere?” So I said, “What time is it? Oh Yes, wherever you go.” I followed him. “Where are we going?” Where we arrived at was the sea. We walked along the sea shore and moved with the waves. He asked me, “Ready? Let’s move Backward and Forward.” When we dip our feet in the sea, suddenly Hamlet stopped me and said, “Look, Ophelia!” There was the sun rising on the horizon.” We just looked at it in silence. He cleared his voice and said, “hm, um.. I take you Ophelia to be my bride” “Bride? No, no wait a minute, I am not ready yet.” I stopped him. “Okay, How about this. I take you Ophelia to be my best best friend in the universe from today’s sunrise until my life ends.” When the sun lights scattered on us we kissed. I was fallen love with him.

(She dances with music and stops and turns around) Hamlet?

As soon as he saw me, first he asked me, “Can I borrow your drum?” and then he hit the drum. “Why do you play the drum, Ophelia?”

“Because to remember my mother. I feel alive and not being lonely...

I feel my mother’s heartbeats when I dance.”

And he repeated the words. “To remember. Remember.”

He hit the drum and said, “TO REMEMBER MY FATHER.”

And he left the room.

A Few days later, He came to me early in the morning.

I remember that night so clearly because he looked so different.

His face was so pale like a moon and hands were as cold as ice.

He took me by the wrist, and held me hard

He looked at my face so very precisely

As if he could draw it.

At last,-a little shaking of my arm,

And he waves his head up and down,-

He raised a sigh so piteous and profound,

That it seemed to shatter all his bulk,

And end his being: that done, he let me go,

And this time I took his hands and asked him,

“Hamlet, tell me all about it. What’s wrong? Am I not your best friend?”

But he let me go again.

Then he turned with his head over his shoulder

He seemed to find his way without his eyes;

And to the very last, bent their light on me. Hamlet...He was struggling with something. I thought he was going to come back.

I’ve been waiting. One day passed. Two days passed, three, four,

five, six, seven... eight, nine, ten...

As time passed by, I thought that memories of him would be fade.

But they became more and more vivid, as if he were right beside me all the time.

(knocks) Hamlet? No, It was my father. As soon as he saw me, he told me that Hamlet got crazy so you do not even step close to him. Something must be wrong. “Dad, Can I go and see him?” My father blocked me. “Do you really love to play the drum?” I didn’t say anything. I just looked at him as if you knew already

how much I love this drum. He once looked at the drum and told me, “Ophelia, you don’t have to sneak out of the house to play the drum, Play it anywhere you want to but do not meet Hamlet.” “But, Dad!” He stopped my saying and asked, “Now can I see you dancing?” (She just nods with worries about Hamlet) It was the first time my father asked for me a dance. So I danced. (She dances and a sudden stops) I was so confused. I wish my heart had been separated into two. One part, I was happy to dance in front of my father but the other, I was sad because of Hamlet. (She dances fast.) That night I couldn’t go to sleep. Morning came, and so did my father. He changed his mind to give me one last chance to meet Hamlet. And this time I had to say the last words any two people say before never seeing each other again. I couldn’t do that. Then he took me where Hamlet was. He left me there alone. I could see him walking this way without knowing I was here. He looked so beautiful but also lonely and sad. I had no strength to say those last words to my love. So I hide again. He was murmuring something. I couldn’t hear him well, so I only read his lips.

To sleep –perchance to dream

To dream, not to be

To die, to sleep. No more- and by a sleep to say we end

To die, to sleep—

To sleep, to die

to sleep, to die!

And he drank something and fell.

So I ran to him. He didn’t move. I was scared. I thought he was dead, Hamlet! Hamlet! but all of sudden, he hugged me and kissed me.

This is time to say the words. “BYE! Hamlet!”

He pushed me hard and shouted at me, “You do not marry someone. That is a sin. That is a sin!” Then he went away without a trace.

I came back to my room. That night I had a fever. I was half awake and half asleep. I kept hearing Hamlet’s voice over and over again. You do not marry someone. That is a sin. Hamlet, I didn’t meant to say that. I love you.

Suddenly I heard my dad shouting my name. “OPHELIA!” I ran out, “Father! Father!” and I bumped with Hamlet. He fell down and kept talking without looking at me “Do Not forgive me! Do not forgive me ever, Ophelia. I didn’t know, didn’t know it was your father who was hiding behind the curtain. Do not forgive me, Do Not ever!” Do not? What? You Do not leave me Hamlet! Come back! There was a sudden feeling that something had happened to my father. I ran to see my father. Father! NO! There, I found my father lying on the floor. That night I lost my dear father. Just. like. that.

(She takes a shading light )

In His Grave rained many a tear

You may sigh down and down and you may call him a downer.

I cannot help but cry, to think that they should lay my father in

the cold ground. He must be cold... he must be so cold...

My father held my hand to the last moment. He looked at me and

told me that he loved my dance. And he said, you look just like

your mother. He never said anything about her. But I knew that he missed her so much, in the middle of the night whenever he heard someone’s footstep outside, he woke up, went out on a barefoot and started calling her name. Is that you? But there would be no response.

Father, Will you not come again? What should I tell mom? Can somebody tell me?

Hamlet? Is that you?

No, He is gone and He is gone.

Will you not come again and tell me all of these? Why did you do that to my father, How should I know true love?

Fare you well. Father. (Bows slowly)

God a mercy on his soul.

(Walks with holding a shading light and turns off)

I was locked in darkness.

I was all alone except the four walls surrounding me. I was totally alone. I was locked away in darkness. What I only had was the light of illusion of whom I loved so much. Suddenly I heard “Ku, Kung” I looked at the drum.

I heard it louder and louder. I found that It was not from the drum but from my heart. My heart told me to play the drum. I could hear my heart beat growing bigger and bigger and I heard, “Ophelia, Play the drum, whenever you are alone, sad. Play the drum, Ophelia”

Yes, mother. So I went out.

There Spring came. Only my mind was winter.

(She talks to the audience)

There is the evening primrose which my father used to love. It resembles the yellow moon. Oh, here is a rosemary, that’s for remembrance. Please remember me: will you? and there are pansies, that’s for thoughts. fennel for you, and columbines, there is rue for you; and here is some for me.

I shared this spring energy with people. I was drawn to the rhythm and at this very moment, there were no sadness but only happiness. I remembered the days with mother. We laughed, danced, and held each other and turned round and round. If I could go back to that time, I won’t let go of her hand. I wish this moment would stay still forever. And Ever. And Ever..

(She dances in a slow motion but fast drum beat sounds still. She looks up to the sky and spins again and again.)

I hear the river. On the surface of the river, there were reflections of Sky, Green Trees and Clouds. I want to go in. I stepped in the river on a barefoot. It was warm. Sorrow, hatred, everything was melting away. One...Two...Don’t look down. Where you look is not outside but inside of your mind. Whenever you are alone or sad, Play the drum. Play the drum. (She approaches to the drum and hesitate to hold it. But at last, she took it with her arm) (Hold her breath and hit the drum) One for sorrow towards my father.

(Hit another beat) Two for forgiving Hamlet.

(Hit another beat) Three as I longed for my mother.

Now I hear my heartbeat just like the drum.

“I will always play the drum, as life goes on.”

(She keeps dancing with the drum in slow motion until lights fade away.)



**Paul Gravett****Dr Emerald L King****Jay Crisostomo****Ronan Paterson****Noriyuki Francisco Sato****Jang Hyun Nam****Kim, Kang****Harumo Sanazaki****Ryuta Minami**

Paul Gravett is a London-based writer, curator and lecturer specialising in international comics art. His new book on Tove Jansson has been published in 12 languages and his touring exhibition for The Barbican, *Asian Comics: Evolution of an Artform*, resumes March to September 2024 at The Bowers Museum in California. [www.paulgravett.com](http://www.paulgravett.com)

Dr Emerald L King is Lecturer in Humanities at the University of Tasmania and an award-winning cosplayer, cosplay judge and MC. Her research is divided between Japanese women's writing, cosplay as fan translation, and shōjo manga and culture. As part of her cosplay research, she will represent Australia at the World Cosplay Summit in 2024. [www.emeraldllking.com](http://www.emeraldllking.com)

Jay Crisostomo IV is a playwright and stage director based in Manila, Philippines. He currently teaches at the College of St. Benilde and Assumption College San Lorenzo.

Ronan Paterson is an actor, director and scholar who has worked on and taught Shakespeare's plays in many countries. He is a collector of Shakespeare comics and illustrations, and has mounted several exhibitions from his collections.

Noriyuki Francisco Sato is a third-generation Japanese Brazilian. He established ABRADEMI (The Brazilian Association of Manga and Illustration Artists) in 1984. When Osamu Tezuka visited Brazil in the same year, Tezuka gave a special manga workshop for ABRADEMI. Ever since, Sato has been active to promote manga, including the first animation/ manga event in South America (1996) and the 50th commemoration of the *Rose of Versailles* (2022).

Jang Hyun Nam is a professor in Korea and he has been studying the comics adaptation of Shakespeare's works in the 21st century. His recent research includes "*Shakespeare Manga Business in the 21st century*" and "*Two Manga Versions of Shakespeare's Macbeth*."

Kim, Kang is Professor of English at Honam University, South Korea, Executive Committee Member of the Asian Shakespeare Association, Exchange Scholar Center for Asia-Pacific Exchange, Research Professor UC-Berkeley. Papers on Renaissance politics, Shakespeare and Korean Pop Culture, film and literature, and cultural theories. Recent publications include Korean translation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (Penguin), *Master Plots: English Renaissance Drama*, *Closed Reading of American Plays*, *Prometheus Unbound: Critical Essays on Korean Society and Politics*, a book chapter on "Hamlet as a political drama in Korea" to *Shakespeare's Asian Journeys: Critical Encounters, Cultural Geographies, and the Politics of Travel* ed. by Bi-qi Beatrice Lei (Routledge Studies in Shakespeare), "Comic Book Adaptations of Shakespeare in Korea: History and Context."

Harumo Sanazaki has longer than 20 years' career as a manga artist since she had made her debut at Akita Shoten in 1980. She has published over 500 books and continues to be active. She has been working on a wide range of works, from mysteries to romances, and has written many original stories, especially comic adaptations of Shakespeare's works. She has been involved in cultural exchange activities with foreign countries for over 25 years. Since 1997, she has also been conducting international exchange through manga classes and has also cooperated with GSC on Shakespeare-related projects. She has also worked with director Yuichi Abe on the puppet play Hamlet, which was made into a film, and shown at Asia Shakespeare Association Conference.

Ryuta Minami is Professor of English at the Faculty of Communication Studies, Tokyo University of Economics, Japan. His research interests are early modern English drama, Shakespearean performance in Asia and pop cultural recreations of Shakespeare, and his recent publications include: "*Hello Shakti-peare?: Shakespeares Cutified in Japanese Anime Imagination*".

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# Member profiles ORGANIZER AND CURATOR

**Yukari Yoshihara**

**Sanpo Yokoi**

Yukari Yoshihara (Professor at the University of Tsukuba (Japan) ) is one of the organisers of the Graphic Shakespeare Competition 1-4. Her publications include *“Shakespeare in Japanese Pop Culture”* (2022), *“Ophelia and Her Magical Daughters: the Afterlives of Ophelia in Japanese Pop Culture”* and *“Manga and Shakespeare”* (2020).

Sanpo Yokoi is the curator of this booklet. Sanpo is a Japanese manga artist, illustrator, multimedia artist and sometimes teacher also. Sanpo studied literature at University of Tsukuba.

His main works are related video games. For example the serial manga for video game magazines. Sanpo has drawn his arts for various media—magazines, books, advertising posters, animation and social media, etc...

Sanpo has been interested in the communication using comic art. He joined some international comic festivals as a guest in some country.