

LOVE IN FIVE SCENES

(The Taming of the Shrew; Venus and Adonis; Romeo and Juliet; Hamlet; Twelfth Night; The Merry Wives of Windsor; A midsummer Night's Dream; Sonnet 106)

compiled by Bogumila Misztal

Narrator 1:

If love have lent you twenty thousand tongues,
And every tongue more moving than your own,
Bewitching like the wanton mermaid's songs.
Yet from mine ear the tempting tune is blown;
For now, my heart stands armed in mine ear,
And will not let a false sound enter there.

Scene 1

Baby 1:

O mistress mine, where are you roaming?
O stay and hear, your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low.

Baby 2:

Trip no further, pretty sweeting,
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

Baby 1:

If I profane with my unwortheiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentler sin is this:
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand
To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

Baby 2:

Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this.
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Scene 2

Teenager 1:

I have sent after him, he says he'll come.
How shall I feast him? What bestow of him?

Teenager 2:

I come, anon! By and by I come! Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,
That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops.

Teenager 1:

But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee.

Teenager 2:

O, speak again, bright angel; for thou art.
As glorious to this night, being o'er my head.

Teenager 1:

Three words and good night indeed.
If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word tomorrow.
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee, throughout the world.

Teenager 2:

A thousand times the worse to want thy light.
Love goes toward love as schoolboys from their books,
But love from love, toward school with heavy looks.

Scene 3

Priest:

So smile the heavens upon this holy act
That after hours with sorrow chide us not!

Groom:

Amen, amen. But come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight.
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love devouring death do what he dare-
It is enough I may but call her mine.

Bride:

Although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract tonight.
It is too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightening.

Groom:

Come, better once than never, for never too late.

Bride:

If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully;
Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.

Priest:

Come, come with me, and we shall make short work,
For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone
Till Holy Church incorporate two in one.

Scene 4

Wife:

Art thou gone so, love, lord, my husband, friend?
I must hear from thee every day in the hour,
For in a minute there are many days.

Husband:

Do I entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or rather do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?

Wife:

You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant,
But yet you draw not iron; for my heart
Is true as steel. Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Husband:

Ask me no reason why I love you, for though love use reason for his precision, he admits him not for his counsellor. You are not young; no more am I. Go to, then, there's sympathy.

Wife:

The more my wrong, the more his spite appears.
What, did he marry me to famish me?

Husband:

Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick when I do look on thee.

Wife:

Husband, let's follow the end of this ado.

Husband:

First kiss me and we will.

Wife:

I will give thee a kiss. Now pray thee love.

Husband:

Is not this well? Come, better once than never, for never too late.

Scene 5

Man:

Fair love, you faint with wand'ring in the wood,
And, to speak truth, I have forgot our way.
We'll rest us if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Woman:

O, think'st thou we shall ever meet again?

Man:

I doubt it not, and all those woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our times to come.

Woman:

O, God, I have an ill-divining soul!
Methinks I see thee, now thou art so low,
As one dead in the bottom of a tomb.
Either my eyesight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Man:

And trust me, love, in my eye so do you.
Dry sorrow drinks our blood. Adieu.

Woman:

Adieu.

Scena 6

Narrator 2:

I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but slave to memory,
Of violent birth but poor validity,
Which now like fruit unripe sticks on the tree,
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

Narrator 3:

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely nights;
Then in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have expressed
Even such a beauty as you master now.
So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all but prefiguring,
And for they looked but with divining eyes
They had not skill enough your worth to sing;
For we which now behold these present days
Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.