

“That Damned Moor”, and Lucius’ Warning in Titus Andronicus

*“Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a noted weed,
Such that every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth, and where they did proceed?” (Sonnet 76)*

That’s a funny thing to say. Of course, ‘Shakespeare’ says a lot of peculiar things ... and funny as well. I think it’s because he is a master of the double meaning. Could he suffer from bouts of madness? Or is his madness contrived, like that of Hamlet, or Edgar’s Tom o’ Bedlam, or the fools and clowns that are fixtures in Shakespeare’s plays? Is the mad ‘strangeness’ of his art a by-product of the double meaning?

A Latin word for *madness* is **fūror**: ‘madness, raving, insanity’ *Cassell’s*, but that refers to an involuntary state of derangement. Polonius perceives that Hamlet’s madness is not the result of an unsound mind:

“though this be madness, yet there is method in it,” (Hamlet II.2 208)

Somewhere in the slightly dull-witted recesses of Polonius’ mind is the idea that this is another kind of madness. I would suggest to him that he’s searching for the notion in a very similar Latin word **fūror**: ‘to counterfeit, personate’. Maybe it isn’t madness that haunts Hamlet, but ‘made-ness’; **fūror = madness, fūror = madeness**. Maybe *pretending to be* is a ‘boarish’, ‘grunting and sweating’ (*Ham. III.1 55-88*), counterfeit existence.

We know that Hamlet is not raving mad, he is displaced. Similarly, King Lear’s Edgar, accused of plotting against his father, must hide his identity (“Edgar I nothing am”); and his ‘half-brother’ Edmund wants the worth of his blood to be recognized: “I should have been that I am ...” (*Lear I.2 128*) Alas, it’s a lengthy argument that infers the writer of ‘Shakespeare’ to be Edward de Vere, and that words of these ‘characters’ are precisely expressions of the writer’s own forlorn being. We’re fortunate that he would not trust fate to reveal the whole story; otherwise, he might have been struck “*more dead than a great reckoning in a little room.*” (*As You Like It III.3 12*) .

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There’s little doubt that *Titus Andronicus* was intended as a cautionary tale. The closing set-piece by LUCIUS, examined below, is followed by four lines that appear to have been added by the editors of Quarto 2 and are included in the First Folio:

LUCIUS (Titus V.3 201-4)
201 *See justice done on Aaron, that damned Moor,*
202 *By whom our heavy haps had their beginning.*
203 *Then, afterwards, to order well the state,*
204 *That like events may ne’er it ruin.*

With such a purpose in mind, let’s ruminate on the curious repetitions of Lucius’ oratory. Here is a transposition of Lucius’ words examined for wordplay. All types of play with lexical semantics—morphologic, syntactic, and phonologic—were employed by the writer.

LUCIUS
Some loving Friends convey the Emp.[error] hence,
191 **Some-a’Mor-ing friends transfer the Commander from here,**
And give him buriall in his Father’s grave.
192 **Moreover, give him interment in his Father’s mort.**
My Father, and Lavinia, shall forthwith
193 **My Father and Lavinia shall at the Same-hour**
Be closed in our Household’s Monument:
194 **Sum enclose in Our Family Monument.**
As for that ravenous Tyger Tamora,
195 **The Same for that famished nearest Relation, So-mor-a,**
No Funeral Rite, nor man in mournful Weeds:

buriall: possibly intentional

- 196 **No Funeral Rite, nor Vere in mour-nful See:**
No mournfull Bell shall ring her Buriall:
- 197 **No mour-nful Sea shall attend her interment:**
But throw her forth to Beasts and Birds of prey:
- 198 **One-ly, throw her forth to the Little Bear and Aquila:**
Her life was Beastly, and devoid of pity,
- 199 **Her way of living was un-Worldly, and without Mer-Sea,**
And being dead, let birds on her take pity!
- 200 **And being Mors, let O-men on her Sum heir Mer-Sea!**

Are the final lines by the Same writer? If not, they are surely by someone who knows the score is Tu.

- See justice done on Aaron, that damned Moor,
201 **See Two-do'r upon Aaron, that blamed Moor,**
By whom our heavy haps had their beginning.
- 202 **By whom Our-Mors fortune had t'heir origin.**
Then, afterwards, to order well the state, wards: wp words (?)
- 203 **Then, after wards, Tu-d'Or—Ver the state,**
That like events may ne'er it ruin.
- 204 **That the Same Si's may never that person ruin.** L. si: 'condition, event'

I suggest that the quote from Sonnet 76 (below the title) is to be taken literally; that is, de Vere embedded his true name, **Seymour**, in the text of his works. Perhaps all the great poetic set-pieces in 'Shakespeare' were constructed in a like manner. This, I believe, is the rhetorical method in de Vere's madness. For more examples see my website devereshakespeare.wordpress.com

Below is support for the above reading. Of course, polysemy allows other readings, but this one substitutes interpretations already established generally in the Canon. That is, the word *mercy* (*Mer-Sea*) is always a syntactic replacement value for *pity*. *Mournful* is always full of *mour* — a 'surname fragment' or morphological element of *Seymour*. *Hour* and *Time* are syntactical relations; *hour* and *our* are phonological relations. *Love* is Latin *amor*, or French *amour*. That's the way the game is played. Though it may appear I have strained the limits of wordplay in places (and I'm sure I have), in others, de Vere's exquisite wit sails right past, undetected. Many's the time I've waked in the middle of the night with a *Eureka*, having fathomed Shakespeare's clever wit in my dreams.

These **transpositions** are not meant to replace thoughtful reading of 'Shakespeare', but to help restrict speculations. The writer has taken great care to be make certain that his true concerns may be understood. Intended meaning is stabilized by the *Tu-dor* and *See-more* repetitions— the apparent madness (L. *wp furor*: 'personation, counterfeit') in his method.

Justification: All definitions below are from standard reference sources. These are not my 'interpretation' of words, but from dictionary listings of accepted semantical variation, including frequent TRANSFERRED or FIGURATIVE meaning in Latin. Most definitions are sourced from Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon*, or Oxford and Cassell's dictionaries.

Original

~ **Transposition** ~

191 Some loving Friends convey the Emperor hence,
[**Some** (surname fragment Som, Seym) **loving** (Latin *amor*: wp aMor, note: 'a, a remnant of Anglo-Saxon suffixes, serving as an expletive void of sense to fill up the meter' *Schmidt) **Friends** (L. *familiaris*: 'family, intimate', 'a familiar friend' Cassell's) **convey** (legal 'transfer the title to property'; alt.: L. *transcribere*: 'to copy, transcribe', 'transliterate', 'to transfer, assign'; alt.: L. *abalienare*: 'to make alien, separate', 'to deprive', 'to estrange'; attaint; alt.: carry: L. *ferre*, *portare*) **the Emperor** (L. *imperator*: 'commander') **hence** (L. *hinc*: 'from here', possible wp here/heir),]

~ **Some-a'Mor-ing friends transfer the Commander from here,** ~

~ **Some Mour's Family attaint the Commander from heir,** ~

192 And give him burial in his Fathers' grave.

[**And** ('moreover') **give** (L. *dare*) **him burial** (OE byrgan: 'bury, hide, conceal'; alt.: L. *humatio*, *humo*: 'burial', 'a covering of earth'; a covering of L. *tellus*: 'land, possessions') **in his Father's** (polysemy ancestors: L. *maiores*) **grave** (L. *wp sepulcrum*; likely wordplay on mort, *mors*: 'the state of death').]

~ **And give him concealment in his Father's Mort.** ~

~ **Moreover, give him interment in his Father's mort.** ~

The inhumation of the Emperor's body "in his Father's grave" suggests he is honored by noble descent rather than his own merit.

193 My Father and *Lavinia* shall forthwith

[**My Father** (L. *pater*: 'a father'; TRANSF. *pater patriae*: 'father of his country') **and Lavinia** (L. *lavare*: 'of the sea, to wash a place'; 'to wash away') **shall forthwith** ('at the same time'*; alt.: L. *wp hora*: 'time of day', hour; alt.: *extemplo*, *ex*: 'from, out of' + *templum*: 'a consecrated piece of ground')]

~ **My Father and Lavinia shall at the Same-hour** ~

194 Be closed in our Household's Monument.

[**Be** (L. *sum*: *surname fragment*) **closed** (L. *includere*: 'enclose', 'block, obstruct') **in our** (*wp Or*: *sur. frag.*) **Household's** (L. *familia*) **Monument** (L. *monumentum*).]

~ **Sum enclose in Our Family Monument.** ~

195 As for that ravenous Tyger, Tamora,

[**As** (*metonym* 'the Same'; Schmidt suggests redundancy—i.e. '= for') **for** (*inversion wp L. foras*: 'out of doors', i.e. out of d'Ors) **that ravenous** (L. *famelicus*: 'hungry'; *wp familia*; alt. from FF *heinous*: *wp* 'highness') **Tyger** (*Welsh wp Ty*: 'house' + *ger*: 'nearest, before us'; ? TRANSF. L. *sagitta*: 'an arrow'), **Tamora** (L. *metonym Tam*: 'so' + *mor*: *sur. frag. mour* + *a*: 'an ancient or Latinized modern feminine forename'),]

~ **The Same for that famished nearest Relation, So-mor-a,** ~

Tamora refers to Queen Elizabeth as Sommer/Seymour, apparently indicating either a secret marriage to Sir Thomas Seymour, common law marriage, or an ecclesiastical legalism of the Catholic Church that allowed the legitimizing of the children of proposed marriages.

196 No Funeral Rite, nor man in mournful Weeds:

[**No Funeral Rite** (sorrow; alt.: L. *maeror*, *dolor*: 'mourning'), **nor** (n'Or: no ore) **man** (L. *wp vir*, *vere*) **in mournful** (*wp mour* + *nful*; FF "mournful" showing repetition with l.197) **Weeds** (L. *video*, *vides*: 'to see'; *v* pronounced as *w*):]

~ **No Rite of Mors, nor Vere in mour-nful See:** ~

197 No mournful Bell shall ring her Burial:

[**No mournful** (*wp mour*+ *nful*) **Bell** (L. *aes*: *anagram Sea*) **shall ring** (L. *corona*: 'crown'; TRANSF. 'assembly of men, audience') **her Burial** (L. *humatio*: 'burial, interment'):]

~ **No mour-nful Sea shall attend her interment:** ~

198 But throw her forth to Beasts and Birds of prey:

[**But** ('only', OE 'onely') **throw** (L. *abicere*: 'to throw down', 'to dispose of') **her forth** (L. *foras*) **to Beasts** (L. *ferus*: beast, FIG. *astronomical* 'the Great and Little Bear', i.e. John and Robert Dudley; alt. L. *belua*: TRANSF. 'monster') **and Birds of prey** (*astronomical Aquila*; L. *Aquila Jovis*, Gr. *Aetos Dios*: the great eagle who is Jupiter's companion may denote punishment by the gods; or, *Aquila Jovis* may be the writer's self-identification with a Mercury-like emmissary):]

~ **Only throw her forth to Usurpers and**

~ **One-ly, throw her forth to Ursa and Aquila:** ~

The *Little Bear* and *Aquila* are constellations. The 'Great' and 'Little Bear' also appear to refer to John and Robert Dudley (respectively) in the Canon; the references derive from the 'Bear and Ragged Staff' of their coat

of arms. Aquila, as Jupiter's 'servant', is a messenger and intermediary between Jove and Man. He is the only bird powerful enough to wield thunderbolts and able to fly directly into the rays of the sun. Jupiter regarded Aquila as a sign of good omen, and may represent the Mer-curial writer himself.

199 Her life was Beast-like, and devoid of pity,
[**Her life** (L. *vita*: TRANSF. 'way of living') **was Beast-like** (L. *immundus*: 'unclean'; *wp im*: 'un' or 'not' + *mundus*: 'of the world', possibly referring to the Tudor title Richmond), **and devoid** ('free from'; alt.: L. *wp vacuus*: TRANSF. 'of women, unmarried or widowed') **of pity** (L. *pietas*: TRANSF. 'kindness', *wp* familial, 'devotion towards family'; alt.: L. *pietas*: 'dutifulness towards one's native country, patriotism'),]

~ **Her way of living was un-Worldly, and widowed of Mer-Sea,** ~

200 And being dead, let Birds on her take pity!
[**And being** (L. *sum, esse*) **dead** (L. *mors*), **let Birds** (L. *avis*: 'an omen', 'a bird of omen, the favorite Roman means of divination';) **on her take** (L. *sumere*) **pity** (L. *miser cordia*: 'mercy', 'pity')!]

~ **Moreover, Sum Mors, let O-men on her Some-mer Mer-Sea!** ~

~ **And being Mors, let O-men on her Sum heir Mer-Sea!** ~

201 See justice done on Aaron, that damned Moor,
[**See** (*surname frag. Sey*) **justice** (L. *aequitas*: 'equity'; 'fairness', 'evenness') **done** (*morphologic element Tudor*: do, "the name of action" *Hamlet III.1 88*; alt.: *past part., wp do*; done: 'carried out') **on** ('the ground or occasion of anything done'*) **Aaron, that damned** (L. *damnare, condemnare*: 'possessed, convicted of crime'; 'to blame, disapprove' *Cassell's*) **Moor** (*surname frag. mour*),]

~ **See evenness done on Aaron, that damned Mour,** ~

~ **See Two-do'r upon Aaron, that blamed Moor,** ~

202 By whom our heavy haps had their beginning.
[**By** (L. *ab*: 'out of', 'from') **whom our** (*surname frag. our*) **heavy** (L. *gravis, mors*) **haps** ('events'; 'fortune') **had their** (*wp t'heir*; alt.: L. *suus, wp sus*: 'of swine', swinish) **beginning** (L. *primordium, primord-ium*).]

~ **By whom Our-Mors fortune had t'heir origin.** ~

203 Then, afterwards, to order well the state,
[**Then, afterwards** (*wp after wards*), **to order** (L. *root ord*: 'to arrange' + *suffix er*: 'equivalent to or', hence *wp* "two d'or") **well** (OE *wiellan*: 'to spring, gush'; *wp* spring, *ver*) **the state** ('persons representing a body politic*', i.e. the monarch),]

~ **Then, after wards, Tu-d'Or—Ver the state,** ~

204 That like events may ne'er it ruinate.
[**That like** (L. *similis*: 'like, resembling'; alt.: L. *wp amare, a'Mare*: to Sea; alt.: '= the same') **events** (L. *si*: 'condition', 'a possible future condition', 'if, supposing that') **may** () **ne'er** (never; contracted to avoid *metonym* never: not E.Ver) **it** (L. *id*: 'that person'; this is taken from the idea that the *id* is the element in being that exists from birth; the birth identity) **ruinate** (L. *ruina*: 'a falling down').]

~ **That the Same Si's may never that person ruin.** ~

Titus Andronicus is an important Elizabethan allegory. While it's a commonplace to comment on the 'Senecan blood-letting' and immaturity of the work, it has purpose far above that. The writer of *Titus—again*, probably the man we call Edward de Vere—warns his audience of the **ruination** facing their **State** if it is not **well Tood'or'd**:

"... , **to order well** the **state**,

That like events may ne'er it **ruinate**." *Titus Andronicus V.3 203-4*

The rule of the English Monarchy had been ceded to powerful ministers—principally of the Dudley and Cecil clans—from the outset of Elizabeth's reign. At best, these civil servants were capable managers; at worst, self-serving in the extreme, parasitic and usurping; they came to control the governmental bodies of the Parliament, and the Privy Council and Monarchy. The ministers seem to have derived their power from a combination of smooth flattery and, most singularly, by the possession of a dangerous political secret concerning the youth of Princess Elizabeth. It appears she had been complicit in conspiracies ¹⁵⁴⁸ that meant to challenge the Lord Protector Somerset's Regency. The challenge failed, resulting in the beheading of Somerset's brother, Sir Thomas Seymour. Elizabeth's guilt—by intrigue, and by a sexual affair with Sir Thomas, and perhaps by their unsanctioned betrothal and marriage—was made to weigh shamefully on her, such that she unwittingly became a puppet Queen ... or so 'Shakespeare' implies.