

## RE-WRITING SHAKESPEARE

Re-writing and adapting are two of the most fascinating and productive ways of paying tribute to renowned authors and classics.

The students of the English Literature Section have had a go at it... Here are some of their productions !

### 1. ROMEO AND JULIET, BALCONY SCENE

*Here is an interpretation of Romeo's and Juliet's inner thoughts by Hajar.*



## 2. King Hamlet's Diary

*Here is a re-writing of Hamlet's investigation of his father's death, in the form of a gothic diary.*

I was attempting to hide my anger and sorrow because of my genitor's death. I went to lament where no one could see me : next to my father, in the crypt. I was going downstairs, each step was louder and louder. I wanted to be next to my father urgently. I arrived in a large and empty room with walls made of stone and lots of trunks around my father's tombstone. I sat over one of the trunks that was next to my creator. I was in a flood of tears when I perceived through my tears a trunk under numerous blankets. I opened it and saw a deep blue diary decorated with a piece of lace. While I was trying to break its lock, a torn page fell out of it. This page was written by my father. I unfolded it carefully and read it immediately.

December 11<sup>th</sup>

I just had the weirdest day... Dear diary, you know me so well, at dinner time, I used to have a lot of appetite. I was once compared to an ogre ! But today, nothing ! My stomach wouldn't dare to let me eat a single grape without the feeling that it was already rotten. How weird is that ! I don't feel like this, it was because my stupid brother was about to play me the most utterly stupid prank of putting dead frogs in my bed, even though he knew how much I fear them ! It was like my body could feel that he was up to something. Thank God I was prepared for this horror.

December 13<sup>th</sup>

I think that something is seriously wrong with me, it has been three days since I last ate a regular meal. I fear everyone and everything that I eat, smell or touch. I can feel that something terrible is going to happen... I fear that my people might get hurt, I've barely seen my wife these days, is she okay ? And my dear son, he's been hiding in his room all week, is there something that I'm missing ?

December 16<sup>th</sup>

Dear diary, the royal doctor just came to see me, it is very hard for me to stay out of bed. I still haven't heard from my wife, why doesn't she come to visit me ? The whole Kingdom knows that I'm feeling unwell, I've received many presents for me to get well. But something feels very strange, this story between you and me, I don't feel sick, I have no urge to vomit, my head feels fine, I don't have a runny nose, but I feel that something terrible is coming, I can feel it in my bones, it looks like chaos. I was hoping to be happy, to tell you that Hamlet came to see me this afternoon, but this visit was so strange, not a word came out of his mouth, he was standing next to my door in the shadow of my dresser. I tried to talk to him but all he did was staring at me with a weird look on his face, he wasn't sad to see me unwell. I think that he was happy...? His eyes were sparking in the dark, waiting to see if I could die right in front of him, I feel shivers in my back just thinking about it. I think that he might be up to something terrible.

December 20<sup>th</sup>

My wife came home today, she looked weirdly happy, my sickness doesn't seem to worry her, I guess that it is for the better ? Our son seems to need someone strong to help him in these hard times and I guess that I am no use. I've heard them fight about something when she arrived in the dining room, it was about her being stupid. I didn't hear really well but the screams were loud enough. Did she do something terrible ? Is she about to ? I don't understand what is happening but I need answers, and soon.

December 21<sup>th</sup>

I knew it, I knew that something terrible was going to happen to me, thank God for my troubled mind or I wouldn't have been able to stand last night, it was impossible for me to close my eyes, I could feel an evil eye on me, so I called a guard to sleep in the royal room to replace me. For the first time in my life, I slept among my servants, it was a horrible night but this little experience isn't the point of my worries. This morning, I came back to my room to check on him, but I found him cold dead, stabbed what looked like a hundred times with pure rage. His eyes filled with terror, staring into the ceiling, I instantly felt sick to my stomach. I can't stay in this castle. I need fresh air to think about what I am going to do next, who could do this to me ? I need to go.

A shudder ran through me. Bewildered, I dropped the torn sheet, trembling. I glanced at my ancestors' crypt. Flames rose monstruously to the pace of my heartbeat. To my dismay, they depicted a murder scene, could it be that of my father ? Would I really have killed him ? Impossible. On the day he died, my memories were hazy... All I have left is a feeling of pain. Father, oh Father, why me... ? The crackling sounded like drums, the rats squeaked like trumpets of death. My body sank to its knees, my back bent with regret. The lines for my sight seemed to curve. I couldn't look straight... My hands, my hands ?! Why are they red ? Am I the murderer ? My sense of smell awoke and caught the most nauseating odour, the smell of death. Impossible, IMPOSSIBLE ! I closed my eyes so tightly I couldn't accept this reality. I tried to pull myself together with so much willpower that I stood up with a start. Suddenly, I felt a chill and before I knew it, I was opening my eyes ? As well as shaking, I was startled when I saw the spirit of my father standing in front of me, calm and rested, but determined. He announced, 'Claudius has murdered me'.

Written by Inti, Hajar and Neela

### **3. JULIET'S PLAN GOES WRONG**

Juliet just found a solution to her and Romeo's forbidden love story : they have to run away together. That evening, the Montagues organized a masquerade ball which Juliet decided to mingle in and explain her new plan to Romeo.

Juliet (Enters the ballroom) : Excuse me, have you seen Romeo ? I am looking for Romeo, have you seen him ?

Romeo where are you ? (Nobody answers her, she is walking through the crowd. She sees Vincenzo, Romeo's twin, but thinks it's Romeo) Oh Romeo, here you are ! I've been looking for you ! It's me, Juliet.

Vincenzo (Confused) : Who are - ?

Juliet : Listen, I have a plan. We will never be able to be in love freely if we stay here with our families. We have to run away.

Vincenzo (*More and more confused*) : But -

Juliet : You don't have to worry about anything, my love, I have got it all planned. Come with me so that we can be happy forever. (*She is going to get closer and take his hand. Vincenzo takes a step back and, without a word, walks away. Juliet is petrified, she is confused. She sees Vincenzo getting closer to someone he really looks like : it is Romeo*)

Juliet (*Soliloquy*) : Oh ! Why am I seeing Romeo twice ? Am I going crazy ? What is going on ? ... (*She is slowly understanding and suddenly it hits her*) Oh, what have I done ! He told me he had a brother but I didn't think he was his twin ! (*She sees Vincenzo and Romeo talking together*) I just spoilt all our chances to be in love freely. (*The two brothers turn their heads towards her and look at her intensely.*)

Juliet (*Soliloquy*) : I have to escape before they catch me, otherwise they are going to kill me. (*She starts running to the front door with tears running on her face.*)

Romeo (*Running after her in a panic*) : Juliet ! Wait ! (*Members of his family stop him.*)

Romeo (*Agitated and crying*) Let me go ! Let me go ! I have to talk to her. (*Juliet walks through the door and disappears.*)

**Written by Amandine and Eryne**

## **04. LADY MACBETH**

*Here is an extra episode in which Lady Macbeth gets even more ambitious than Shakespeare had imagined.*

Lady Macbeth finally murdered King Duncan in her castle. She thought she would be satisfied but she was left disappointed. Her desire to murder her husband next was deeper, although she refused to believe that she could act by herself in that way against her lovely husband.

“Oh Lord,” thought Lady Macbeth, “why did I not think about it earlier ? Wouldn't it be a fantastic idea to be on my own in this huge kingdom ? These spirits gave me more power than I thought. I wouldn't have any trouble getting over this hurdle. It would save me a few restrictions such as being under man's rules. I would transform all the rules according to my interests, and obviously have respect and be idolized by every one of my subjects.”

One evening, as King Macbeth was preparing to take his medicine before going to bed, Lady Macbeth took advantage of his brief absence in the next room to put a very powerful poison in the glass provided for his care. This poison took effect during the night and the King died in the morning. When the doctor arrived he passed off his death as a stroke, as he was already ill. He didn't take the time to analyse him as the Queen had the last word.

However, after a few months of enjoying her power, she realized that these dark spirits had taken her mind. But she regretted it just as quickly, realising that she was doomed to regret it for the rest of her life, that was to be her fate. This feeling of darkness and misfortune would always be a part of her.

**Written by Inès**