

Vere-Similitude from *The Puzzling Life of Edward de Vere*
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'Vere-similitude' is a playful term for Ed. de Vere's use of Elizabeth Tudor's Court to provide the cast, relationships, and dialogue that give verisimilitude to the plays. It is curious that this topicality — the writers source and inspiration, if you will — should be among the least studied subjects of 'Shake-speare'. Because John Lyly was associated with de Vere and the political faction of William Cecil, it was immediately perceived that his plays were satiric entertainments on and for Court audiences. Shakespeare, however, lacked any verifiable connections. His work has been assumed to have sprung only from a fertile imagination. According to the legend, he needed only the outline of a history, or some sideshow material from a minor work, to launch the most polished, profound, and enduring masterpieces in literature. "Native wood-notes wild"... ? I think John Milton knew better.

Dr. Michael Delahoyde,

I think you'll find happy hunting in the connection between St. Anthony, patron saint of lost persons, and Mark Anthony. Verily, the author asserts His Story to confront and oppose forced Tudor Oblivion. It is important to note that thousands of examples, like those that follow, constitute a strong argument for 'Shakespeare' being the child suspected of Princess Elizabeth. That this may be called the writers preoccupation is surely an understatement; it must seem 'Our Obsession' — the Royal obsession. 'Tu Be', *really is* the question.

The wordplay of Anthony & Cleopatra is among the most comprehensive in All de Vere; it starts with Philo *l.i.11*, a punster similar to the cobbler in Julius Caesar. He seems to know Everything:

Original

~ Gloss ~

Note that my transpositions are well within the range of semantical variation with due consideration to etymological integrity. Most of the 'substitutions' are directly from Schmidt's Lexicon or Cassell's Latin. The rest are metonyms.

- 1 *Philo.* **Nay, but this dotage of our General's**
~ *Nay, but [that] this 'de'mentia of His Majesty's ~ dotage: 'imbecility', mental weakness (of senility?)*
- 2 **O're-flows the measure: those his goodly eyes** *o're: (wordplay on surname frag.) ore, gold*
~ *Exceeds golden proportion: those, his mercantile watchmen ~*
- 3 **That o're the Files and Musters of the War,** *o're: (as l.2) as a verb*
~ *That fund the ranks and assemblies of the [Civil] War ~*
- 4 **Have glow'd like plated Mars: now bend, now turn** *glow'd: 'burned'*, plated: (wordplay) 'plaited'*
~ *Have consumed as a braided Mars: One 'veered', One overturned, now: (anagram) Won, One, (Wonder)*
Typical de Vere riddle-sylogism: too complex to be apprehended on casual reading, hence the wordplay is overlooked. The repetition of 'now' should have caught my attention... silly me. The two 'Won' anagrams combine with the 'Two' 'Ores (ll.2-3) to produce 'Tud'or. There's a certain childish thrill when one discovers one of these; they appear to be restricted to Tudor-Seymour surname wordplay.
- 5 **The Office and Devotion of their view**
~ *The Duty and Affection of their purview ~*
- 6 **Upon a Tawny Front. His Captain's heart,** *Front: 'to oppose, to defy', 'the van(guard) of an army'*
~ *[Presently] Upon an orange-tawny opposition. His commander's 'Hart'— ~*
The 'Tawny Front' probably refers to the de Vere livery (orange-tawny) as worn by retainers or soldiers of the de Vere family.
- 7 **Which in the scuffles of great Fights hath burst**
~ *'Witch' in the 'hand to hand' of power struggles hath burst ~*
- 8 **The Buckles on his breast, reneges all temper** *all: (metonym) Tudors; One, Ever, the Same*
~ *The [Ore] fasteners on his heart, is renegade to Tudor limits ~*
- 9 **And is become the Bellows and the Fan** *become: a metamorphosis*
~ *And Being becomes the Blast and the Breeze ~*
'Become' is a key word in A&C, meaning the outcome or accommodation of change.
- 10 **To cool a Gypsy's Lust.**
~ *To abate Leicester's Lust.*
'Thomas Ratcliffe, 3rd Earl of Sussex, as he lay dying, apparently referred to Robert Dudley as "The Gypsy"; this may have been a widespread epithet. Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon* lists "Gipsy, one of a race of vagabonds of a dark complexion, supposed to have come from Egypt".

Floursh. Enter Anthony, Cleopatra, her Ladies, the Train,
with Eunuchs fanning her.

11 **Take but good note,**

~ *Take otherwise [with] careful notice, ~*

That's an advisory to the reader. De Vere uses 'but' very specifically.

11 **and you shall see in him**

~ *and you shall 'Sey' in him ~*

12 **(The triple Pillar of the world) transform'd**

~ *(The threefold Pillor of the [Rich]monde) (con)Ver-ted ~*

convertēre = to turn Vere heir

~ *(The thrice-fold pilloried of the heirs) (con)Vere-ted ~*

13 **Into a Strumpet's Fool. Behold and see.**

~ *Into a Whore's Sucker. Be 'Moor' and 'Sea'. ~*

— *triple* is often read as 'third', referring to the Triumvirate of Octavius, Lepidus, and Antonius.

I believe the intended reading should be as wordplay on *Latin* 'triplex' [*tri*: 'three' + *plexus*: 'braided plaited'] — the threefold identities of de Vere: Tudor-Seymour, and 'Nemo'; the last is my catch-all for Vere pseudonyms (Golding, Lyly, Shakespeare, etc.).

— *Pillar* plays on 'pillory', creating the object **pillor** [one with head and hands restrained].

— *world* is standard de Vere proper name wordplay on **Richmond**, the title of the Welsh Tudors.

— *Strumpet*, of course, is Mom, Elizabeth R.

— *behold* wordplay Be + hold: **moor**, secure, fasten, and as indirect surname fragment.

— *see* and its variants play on the surname fragment **Seymour**.

14 *Cleo.* **If it be love indeed, tell me how much.**

indeed, truly: (Latin) vērē

~ *If it Sum-[ǎ]mōr Vērē, 'Sey' how much. ~*

~ *If it be Summer Vere, say how much. ~*

The first act of A&C is heavily laced with wordplay on the surname fragment 'Say', otherwise 'Sey', 'Sea', 'Seem', etc.; note that the Latin verb *to say, to speak* is *for, fārī*, which will become important in

Act 1, scene 2.

15 *Anton.* **There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.** *beggary*

~ *There's ōrare in amor that can be toll[ed]. ~*

~ *There's 'Ore heir' in 'a Mor' that can be 'Sey'd'. ~*

16 *Cleo.* **I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.**

(Latin) fārī: 'to say, to speak'

~ *I'll place an 'Ora', how 'Two' say Sum Amor. ~*

(Latin) ora: limit, 'an edge, boundary'

~ *I'll place d'Or, how [we] 'Tu' say Seymour. ~*

17 *Anton.* **Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.**

heaven: (Latin) deorum or divinum

~ *Then must thou necessarily discover [two things] 'de-Ore-um', 'heireth'. ~*

~ *Then must thou necessarily discover 'Tu-d'or heirs. ~*

26 *Cleo.* **You must not stay here longer, your dismission**

here: heere (FF)

~ *You must not be specified heir longer, your separation from deputation ~*

27 **Is come from Octavius; therefore hear it Anthony.**

~ *Is come (evenire) from Cecil; therefore hear it Lost One. ~*

28 **Where's Fulvia's process — Ocatavius' I should say — both?**

~ *Where's Anne's summons — her Father's, I should say — both? ~*

29 **Call in the messengers. As I am Egypt's queen,**

messenger: nuntius (vera)

~ *Call in the 'Truth Announcers'. 'The Same' am I : England's Queen, ~*

30 **Thou blushest, Anthony, and that blood of thine**

~ *You blush, 'Vere', and that blood[line] of yours ~*

31 **Is Octavius' homager: else so thy cheek pays shame**

~ *Is Cecil's vassal: otherwise Child, thy obeisance pays in shame ~*

32 **When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds. The messengers!**

~ *When acute-tongued Anne scolds. The Truth Announcer's! ~*

Following Lyly's method of Court Allegory, I would expect the characters of *Anthony and Cleopatra* to have these analogs:

Anthony = Edward de Vere
Cleopatra = Elizabeth Tudor
Fulvia = Anne Cecil
Caesar = William Cecil

This is not a perfect transposition, of course, as Octavius was Fulvia's son-in-law, not her father; but perhaps we can view this discrepancy as a convenience for Anne and William's shared political interests. It's one of those delights of history that Octavius divorced Fulvia's daughter Claudia, sending her back home (as he could certify) "in mint condition", the marriage not having been consummated.

Charmian: the alter ego of Venus/Cleopatra. Charmian is a charm, (*Latin*) *vēnēnum*, a drug or potion; i.e. the harmful side of

Love.

33 Ant. **Let Rome in Tiber melt and the wide arch** *Tiber: (Italian) Tevere*
~ Let 'More' in TeVere dissolve and the wide span ~

I have thought that de Vere used anagrams; here is an example that clearly confirms it. Because 'Tiber', in Italian *Tevere*, puns on deVere, 'Rome' must surely be an anagram for 'More', a surname fragment for Seymour.

34 **Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space,** *(Latin) mora: 'space of time', 'delay'*
~ Of the well-ordered Empire fall! See what's become of my Time's delay, ~

35 **Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike**
~ Kingdoms 'R[egius]', dust; Ore, to filthy waste, now ~

36 **Feeds beast as man. The nobleness of life** *man: (Anglo-Saxon) were*
~ Feeds Ox as if 'Were'. The noble 'state' of life ~

37 **Is to do thus, when such a mutual pair** *such: 'the same' mutual pair: reciprocal, 'ours'*
~ Is 'Tu'-do' as follows: when 'the Seym' (Same), speak of 'Our' ~

38 **And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,**
~ And 'of the Seym kind', a 'We Tu' can 'do' this, in 'Witch' I engage, ~

39 **On[e] pain of punishment, the world to weet**
~ 'One' [under] threat of punishment, the world to 'wit' ~ *wit: 'to know'*

40 **We stand up peerless.**
~ We remain standing, without equal. ~

Cleo.

Excellent falsehood!

~ Excellent contrivance! ~

41 **Why did he marry Fulvia and not love her?**
~ Why did Vere marry Anne and not 'sua amor'? ~ ?

42 **I'll seem the fool I am not. Antony**
~ I'll 'Seym' the fool I am not. Vere ~

43 **Will be himself.**
~ Will be that he is. ~

Note Cleopatra's response: "Excellent falsehood"; yes, she lightly rebukes Anthony's failure to acknowledge claims on his sovereignty, specifically those from Fulvia and Octavius; but she also clues the audience into the equivocation of his words.

Here we find the crux of their conversation: Anthony's (Vere's) identity. **He will be that 'witch' he is.** Yet, she is no fool and fully understands Anthony's weakened state; Vere, as the writer, pokes fun at his own proud assertions of independence: "I am that I am".

How does this facet of de Vere's writings affect our understanding and appreciation of the whole? If a traditional scholar were to concede that there is in Shakespeare, after all, this peculiar double meaning, and that it does seem to be more than mere coincidence, the question remains: Does the writer intend for us to ignore his subtext or to take measure for measure? What is the value of a consistent Double indexing of Port-folio?

It should be a warning to all readers that many of the most admired in literature have admitted utter consternation at the grammatical oddities in Shakespeare. Otherwise, the Well of his wordplay is Spring itself. By putting the two — grammatical and semantical ambiguity — together, we now have a single enigma to solve; a credible solution is that many of his texts offer double meaning.

By delving deeper into alternate meanings, it is possible to teach synthesis to students who may be too strictly analytical. They may become better 'cognitors'... and certainly better linguists.

Ant.

But stirred by Cleopatra.

~ Yet awakened by the Queen, ~

44 **Now for the love of Love and her soft hours,**

- ~ For the lust of 'A-Mor' and Heir Tender 'Ores', ~
 45 **Let's not confound the time with conference harsh.** Tender Heir: (Latin) mollis aer see Cym. V.v.446
 harsh: 'rough', 'unpolished'
 ~ Let's not amaze the Cecil's with conversation 'inexact'. ~
 46 **There's not a minute of our lives should stretch**
 ~ There's not a fraction of 'Our' being should extend ~
 47 **Without some pleasure now. What sport tonight?** now, still, yet: vēō pleasure: (Latin) placēre
 ~ Without 'Some' 'heir placing' Vere'? What scion [of] 'Tu' Night? ~ night: obscuring of (One)der and Tudor
 48 Cleo. **Hear the Ambassadors.** amb: on both sides + as + Sey + d'ors
 ~ Heir the 'round-about Sey'-d'ors'. ~

Ant.

Fie, wrangling Queen!

~ Chjezus, argumentative Queen! ~

- 49 **Whom everything becomes, to chide, to laugh,** to chide: castīg-are to laugh: rīd-ēre
 ~ Whom the E.Ver matter turns to every-thing, 'Tu' reprove the Queen, 'Tu' ride heir, ~
 50 **To weep, who[se] every passion fully strives** to weep, to regard as lost: dēplōr-are
 ~ 'Tu deplore the Queen, whose E.Ver suffering fully aspires ~
 51 **To make itself, in thee, fair and admired.** admire: admīrari
 ~ 'Tu' make 'Tu', in you, fair heir and Wonder. ~
 52 **No messenger but thine, and all alone to night**
 ~ No augury but thine, and 'All (Tudors) All-One' 'Tu-Night' ~
 53 **We'll wander through the streets and note**
 ~ We'll wander through the streets and 'mark' ~ mark: unit of account, not exchange
 54 **The qualities of people. Come, my Queen;**
 ~ The qualities of people. Venī, my Queen; ~ Venī: (Latin wordplay) Venus
 55 **Last night you did desire it. — Speak not to us.**
 ~ [The] previous 'Night' you did 'de'sire it. 'Say' 'Nothing Tu' us.

- 56 Dem. **Is Caesar with Antonius prized so slight?**
 ~ Is Cecil with Vere valued so little [as Vere is evidently with Cecil]?

- 57 Philo **Sir, Sometimes when he is not Antony**
 ~ Sir, [in] Some-times when he is not Antony ~

- 58 **He comes too short of that great property**
 ~ He venīre[']s two [letters] short of that Summ[us] estate ~
 ~ He Vere's two short of that Summ[er] estate ~
 ~ He Vere's short of that Ore [Antimony] ~
 ~ He appears 'Tu' missing that 'd'Or' estate ~

- 59 **Which still should go with Antony.**
 ~ 'Witch E.Ver' should reducēre Antony. ~ go with: (Latin) reducēre, indirect pun on reduce
 're'
 ~ 'Witch' E. Ver should reduce 'er' 'Lost'. ~
 ~ 'Witch' E.Ver should reduce 'Lost' heir. ~

What, not Antony? Who should he be? W'heir should he be? As ever, gone missing?

This is a riddle or syllogism. The precise meaning is difficult to determine because of the playful syntax. An impediment to understanding is the readers reluctance to let go of what he has learned about the dense, elliptical style, of 'Shake-speare'. Truth to tell, his meaning is often more puzzling when one attempts to take apparent context at face value; unraveling the wordplay pinpoints context.

The author revels in words yet reveals a dispirited state of mind... I should say 'reveals what would be dispirited in a less high-spirited mind'.

— *Sometimes*: the discrete and true entity of Seymour/Somer/Summer within de Vere + *time*: the age, period, or duration; Tudor-Seymour is the *Something* opposed to *Nothing/Nemo* of false identities.

— [to] come: (Latin) venīre.

— great: (Latin) summus.

— *Property*: estate, playing on Italian *estate* (summer), from Latin *aestās*; hinting at the time of year prescribed for military campaigns.

— *great Property*: ? Ore Antimony, used in alchemy and cosmetics.

— *which*: wordplay Witch, a male sorcerer, capable of changing appearance or form.

— *go with*: (Latin) reducēre; wordplay reduce [by] re.

Demetrius responds curiously, yet not without a familiar Vere-similitude:

59 *Dem.*

I am full sorry

a ~ I am so-Rey ~

b ~ I am fully 'Region (Regent) Child' ~

60 **That he approves the common liar, who**

a ~ That he proves the general rumor, which ~

c ommon: manorial lands available for common use

b ~ That [which] lends credit to the deceit concerning the 'Commons', ~

61 **Thus speaks of him at Rome; but I will hope**

Rome: (anagram?) More

a&b ~ Thus 'Seys' of him at 'More'; otherwise I will hope ~

62 **Of better deeds tomorrow. Rest you happy.**

a&b ~ Of improved titles 'Tu'-'More'-'O'. Rest you happy. ~

Reputation is discussed as if it is 'real property'. Anthony's 'deeds' (with wordplay on *actions* and *land titles*) are 'great property' or 'common' — "something, nothing" *Othello* 3.3.157 — and the verity of a 'good name' rests with the integrity of those who speak it. Knowing how easily reputation may be ruined by ignorance and ill-intention renders reputation of little honest value... yet most business is traded on it.

Milton's 'L'Allegro' and 'Il Penseroso' 1631? offer a balanced reconciliation on the themes of cheerful and pensive dispositions, thinking primarily of the light-touched 'Shakespeare' as a contrast to Milton's own melancholia. Considering the probable dates of these poems, the plays in First Folio would have been a hot topic among the Cambridge 'literati'; Milton was prominent among them. It's worth recalling what seems incongruous about 'L'Allegro', or 'cheery types' — that their verse, as typified by Shakespeare, is often deceptively light:

And ever against eating Cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian Airs
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;

John Milton "L'Allegro" ll. 135-42

Mazes indeed!

Dr. Delahoyde,

Here is a correction for A&C l.i.9; there is obviously much more to it than first appeared.

I'm sure I usually fall short of the depth that de Vere is plumbing, but this is my process for transposition.

9 **And is become the Bellows and the Fan**

[**And is** (i.e. "The Captain's heart" A&C l.i.6, "the Commander's Hart") **become** (Latin *fiēri*: wordplay Fire/'consuming heir'; alt.: Italian *fiera*: 'fair', multiple wordplay *venustus*, 'beautiful', i.e. derived from Venus; also 'trade fair') **the Bellows** ('instrument used to blow the fire'* *Schmidt*, the instrument of forced air in a blast furnace; i.e. the instrument of the **Tempest**: 'Time's Storm' = the political storm of the English Reformation) **and the Fan** ('instrument used by ladies to cool themselves by moving air'* *Schmidt*; alt.: 'creates a current of air' *Oxford*, indirect wordplay *currant heir*; i.e. gentle air, Tender Ayre *Cymbeline* V.5 437, Latin *Mollis Aer* *Cym.* V.5 446)]

~ And [that Hart is] 'fairly' the Tempest and the Tender Heir ~

(To Coole a Gypsies Lust)

Surely he is the most underestimated and least understood of writers, despite being the most celebrated.

These beautiful lines—seemingly concise and memorable—are nonetheless suspect. To take them at face value would ignore Philo's admonishment above, that is "Take but good note,".

The first axiom of de Vere study must be that he has at least considered 'wordplay' (polysemy, amphiboly, and indeterminacy) in his phrasing... in All instances, in Every iteration, and More. It appears he cannot avoid this "wearisome train of circumlocution", as Samuel Johnson noted *Preface, 1765*. What Johnson failed to reason was the parallel dialogue inferred by this pervasive double meaning. The great "set speeches" or 'set pieces' in 'Shake-speare' have also the richest transpositions. If these lines are not stunning contrivances I'd be Very Much surprised. Included in this is the '**small Latine**' Ben Jonson spoke of in his dedication to the First Folio. "Perchance? Nay, and most like" *A&C l.i.25* we *should* 'seek for names' 'from thence to honour' [de Vere].

Why did he do it? What's the explanation for all these 'hidden treasures'? Certainly, **to be remembered**. They cannot have been created for artistic reasons: no one could possibly hear them casually 'played' and comprehend them. You might say they are analogous to subtle voices in counterpoint; no listener can fully appreciate the beauty of that musical form unless he is a musician steeped in the form *and* well rehearsed in the exemplified piece. Just the same with this de Vere wordplay; careful study of the writer's process and careful examination of any particular example is needed to figure what's eating Ed-dy Vere.

Stratfordians have wondered whether the writer did not suffer from periodic bouts of depression. The vehemence of his occasional rants is worrisome; but if my Oxfordian 'Proposal of Vere-similitude' is correct, and the apparent repetitious self-identification is not an artifact of my own madness, then concern for *his* mental state is justified... "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" *Jack Torrance, The Shining* .

The other day, I tried to explain the importance of context in 'Shakespeare' to my fourteen year old son Graham. He has a real interest in jazz; hence the following analogy: Do you remember in the film 'Apollo 13'... early in the flight one of the astronauts stirs the oxygen tanks and the contents begin venting to space. With limited power and oxygen in the Command Module, the astronauts have to occupy the Lunar Module. However, carbon dioxide levels soon rise above safe levels. Down at the space center, the Flight Director organizes a group of engineers to 'improvise' a solution using only the materials available. So I asked Graham: Being commanded to 'improvise', how did the engineers know not to run for their trumpets and saxophones and start extemporizing on chord progressions?

This is a concept that must be understood by students of Shake-speare. Take, for example, the word 'reckoned' in line 15; if the context is erotic love between Anthony and Cleopatra, we assume that "reckoned" means 'measured', 'described'; or 'told'. However, if the context is thought to be the usurped material value of the Monarchy, "reckoned" will mean (with wordplay) 'tolled' or 'exacted'. If the reader recognizes allegory, he will know there are alternate contexts to be understood, and will want to consider polysemic alternatives.

