A midSEMER nights dream.

(Video et Taceo – I see and say nothing)

The year is 1589. Queen Elizabeth 1st is on a secret third royal visit of Suffolk and is taking up residence at The Manor in Semer for a few days before traveling on to Bury St Edmunds. She is staying at The Manor home of Lord and Lady Trump. Lord Trump is an old friend and very close acquaintance of Queen Elizabeth's. In the Queen's honour, the Trumps have arranged an evening of entertainment: a dramatics group are performing Shakespeare's new play *Titus Andronicus*.

Characters

Witch 1: A witch (Ugly)

Witch 2: A witch (uglier)

Witch 3: A witch (Ugliest)

Lord Trump: Lord of The Manor in Semer.

Lady Trump: Lady of The Manor in Semer.

Pluck: A Shakespearean Fool.

Queen Elizabeth: Queen Elizabeth 1st of England

Rupert: Guard of Queen Elizabeth 1st of England.

Anne Boilin': A lady in waiting for Lady Trump.

Fortinbras: An Actor and a womaniser

Adriano de Armado: A Spanish Actor

Hugh Morris: *A feeble Actor – thinks himself funny.*

Christopher Mallard: A new and young explorer of the age. Lord Trumps Nephew

and cousin to Sir Francis Drake.

The lights rise on a small raised section of staging revealing a cauldron bubbling and boiling over. Smoke bellows from its black bowels. A cackling is heard and in a whirlwind of

excitement the THREE WITCHES sweep through the audience, moving swiftly and gracefully in an individual manner but together as one unit; much like a pack of dogs. The lines begin as they reach the cauldron.

SFX - Thunder and lightening

Witch 1: Hail!

Witch 2 / Witch 3: Hail!

Witch 1: When shall we three meet again? In thunder, lightning, or in rain?

When the hurly-burly's done? When the battle's lost and won. That will be ere the set of sun!

Witch2: Now is the hour of our discontent; made glorious summer by this Six Acre Production: And all the clouds that lour'd upon this house n the deep bosom of the ocean buried.

Witch 3: Two households, both alike in dignity, in fair Semer, where we lay our scene. From ancient grudge break to new mutiny, where civil blood makes civil hands unclean. A misadventured piteous overthrows; doth with a life, death buries a strife. Is now the two hour's traffic of our stage. The which if you with patient ears attend, what here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.

The Three Witches cackle and dance around the cauldron in a ritual type manner. They spit in turn into the cauldron and with each spit the cauldron bubbles over and smoke bellows from it.

Witch 1: Sisters, our work here is done. The seed is sown, the plot doth grow. The audience shall know.

The cauldron bubbles over again and a light can be seen shining out of it illuminating the witches faces.

Witch 3: A murder most foul has happened in our fair land. An out stretched arm, a flash of metal. Red is the colour.

Witch 2: The evidence we shall present to thee, shall bring forth and reveal the killer's true identity.

Commented [JS1]: All the sections of Shakespearean speech need translations, perhaps projected onto a screen somewhere or written in the programme??

The Three Witches exit the small stage area as the light in the cauldron disappears.

Enter Lord Trump followed by Pluck

Lord Trump: (With great Gusto) Yes, yes. This banquet hall is looking

magnificent this evening young Pluck. I must say you have

excelled yourself. Well done lad.

Pluck: Why thank you M'lord.

Lord Trump: Her majesty will be most pleased with this!

Pluck: Her majesty?

Lord Trump: Yes, Good Queen Bess will be most pleased with this. May even

be a knighthood in it!

Pluck: You mean Queen Elizabeth? Here? Tonight?

Lord Trump: Oh Pluck! Do keep up. Yes my good friend Queen Bess is

arriving later this afternoon and staying here for a few days before she travels on to Bury St Edmunds to speak with the

Bishop there.

Pluck: First I've heard of it!

Lord Trump: It's the first any of you servants will hear of it. Her arrival is top

secret. The Spanish are still rather upset about her majesty's fleet destroying the Spanish Armada's plans to attack England. Word is the Queen desires Sir Francis Drake to launch a counter

Armada later this year, to finally finish those damn Spaniards off once and for all.

Pluck: Why does she want to do that? (Pulls out a quill and piece of

parchment)

Lord Trump: Pluck, you are rather inquisitive aren't you. Look, I'll give you a

quick history lesson. Phillip the second of Spain had been co-

monarch of England up until his wife Mary died in 1558. He is a devout Roman Catholic. Elizabeth is a protestant. Ergo, religious

differences play a big part in Philips plans to over throw

Commented [JS2]: This needs some kind of visual

Elizabeth. Phillip has allegedly supported previous plots to overthrow Elizabeth in favour of Mary Queen of Scots, who is... was Catholic. Elizabeth thwarted his plans by imprisoning Mary Queen of Scots and finally having her executed two years ago 1587. So in retaliation Phillip decided to attack England with his Armada and overthrow Elizabeth and also rid English support from the United Provinces or low counties, which had

previously ceded from Spanish rule. Get it?

Pluck: (Putting away the quill and parchment) I think I got it all written

down.

Why are you writing... or never mind! (He surveys the Hall) Yes, **Lord Trump:**

Bess will love me for this. The reward will be fantastic, perhaps

even a Dukedom!

Pluck: A Dukedom, for me? Oh wow!

No, no, not you Pluck. I mean me. She may make me a Duke for Lord Trump:

this sterling work or if I play my cards right; something more!

Have you brought the cases of wine from Bildeston Crown Inn?

Pluck: Not yet m' lord.

Lord Trump: You had best get that done pronto, before people start arriving.

Pluck scuttles off

Lord Trump: (Looks around him) Dukedom would suit me fine, but if chance

may have me King, why, chance may crown me!

Enter Lady Trump

Lady Trump: Talking to one's self again are we dear?

Lord Trump: Ah my darling Clarissa. I wondered where you had got to.

Pluck has done a wonderful job setting up for the feast which

behoves our most honoured guest.

Lady Trump: (In an uninterested manner) Oh yes, I am sure Bess will love it.

Lord Trump: Darling, you speak with disrespect for our good Queen. Commented [JS3]: Previously been ruled by Spain?

Lady Trump: And you sir, speak with too much gusto for our good Queen

Bess.

Lord Trump: My lady, jealousy is an evil sin. You must cast out the devil

within you. How many times have I told you that I only have

eyes for you - my one true love!

Lady Trump: Then why do you keep saying her name in your sleep?

Lord Trump: Clarissa, a dream is but a dream; there is nothing either good or

bad but thinking it makes it so.

Lady Trump: Do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? You

darling husband need to get ready, you're more scruff than ruff!

Lady Trump exits.

Lord Trump: I will speak daggers to her, but use none! The course of true love

never did run smooth!

Lord Trump goes to exit.

SFX - Dog Barking.

Lord Trump: Out damn Spot! Out I say!

SFX - Dog Barking and running off

Three Actors enter the barn. Fortinbras – pronounced Fort-in-bras, he is the more handsome of the actors and a womaniser. Adriano de Armado has a slight Spanish twang to his voice and Hugh Morris is the final actor - a little insignificant.

From off stage the following is heard:

Hugh Morris: Please allow me to introduce to you for one night, and one night

only: the infamous playboy extraordinaire, a man who treads

the boards regularly the one, the only Fortinbras....

Fortinbras enters and takes his place in the centre of the hall, bowing and kissing his hand to the audience.

SFX - Rapturous round of applause

Hugh Morris: and his friend and long-time companion – Adriano de Armado.

Adriano de Armado enters and takes his place next to Fortinbras, bowing and kissing his hands to the audience.

SFX – Rapturous applause

Fortinbras: And introducing our final performer for the evening Hugh

Morris

Hugh enters and stops just inside the hall.

Hugh Morris: (As if narrating) Steps out into the Hall, awaits audience's applause....

SFX – a small and short applause is heard

Hugh Morris: Not enough I say! (As if narrating) Puts on own recording of

clapping.

SFX – A rapturous round of applause.

Fortinbras: (Looks around) What a dive!

Adriano de Armado: I have been to better places!

Fortinbras: Not a single bird in sight! Are you sure we're in the right place?

Hugh Morris: (Pulls out a scroll and reads it) Yep, this is The Manor; we're in the

right place.

Adriano de Armado: So, who are we performing for?

Hugh Morris: 'Tis but a secret, apparently all will be revealed later this

evening.

A shriek is heard from off stage. The Actors look alarmed. Anne Boilin' – a Lady in waiting bounds in.

Anne Boilin': Fortinbras is that really you? It is indeed an honour to see you

again. I have followed your career ever since it started. My sister

and I are huge fans. We even saw you at Mr James Burbage's

theatre in Shoreditch in 1578. You were performing in Robin

Hood. I saw you performing in a play about jealousy and then

my sister and I saw the one about greed at the Rose, Bankside in

Surrey. My, you were good in that one: the big hunky

Commented [JS4]: Rewrite to sound like a 1D fan

blacksmith. (She gets all a flutter) And then here at The Manor performing for her Majesty!

Hugh Morris: For who?

Anne Boilin': Good Queen Bess, tonight, here.

Adriano de Armado and Hugh Morris look in shock – over the top actor style.

Fortinbras: My dear lady it is indeed a pleasure to meet a fan of mine.

Perhaps we could take a stroll around the grounds and get better acquainted? You could walk me around the garden

Hugh Morris: Like a teddy bear. One step, Two step...

Adriano de Armado: Tickly under there!

Anne Boilin': My lord, such a request would indeed be an honour, but alas it

will have to wait till later; I have to tend to the lady of the Manor first. I should be free for half an hour before we dine, plenty of time to escort you around the fair grounds we have

here.

Hugh Morris: You have a fairground here?

Fortinbras: Ignore my idiotic companion. My lady I look forward seeing

your fair ground. (He kisses her hand)

Anne Boilin': One more thing before I go, would you mind autographing this

for my sister and me please? (She rummages in her cleavage looking

for a piece of parchment and quill, then lifts her dress and reveals the

paper and quill) Will you be kind enough to give it to me?

Fortinbras: What here? Now? In front of......?

Adriano de Armado: She means give her your autograph!

Fortinbras: Oh, I see what you mean.

He signs the paper without looking at it.

Anne Boilin': Oh, I'm all a flutter -thank you kind sir. Oh I am your biggest

fan. My sister will be so pleased when I show her this. The

ladies will all be jealous of me when I tell them!

Fortinbras: Ladies? There's more than one of you gorgeous creatures

around?

Anne Boilin': Yes, I am a lady in waiting, and there are a few serving girls and

another lady in waiting here at The Manor.

Hugh Morris: What are you waiting for?

Adriano de Armado: Ignore him m'lady.

Anne Boilin': I was. SFX – Servants bell ringing

Anne Boilin': I must away, my lady needs me. Thank you again kind sir, for

your autograph, I shall cherish it always.

Fortinbras: You're most welcome Miss?

Anne Boilin': Boilin', Miss Anne Boilin'

Anne curtseys and toddles off giggling and excited. Fortinbras looks on at her and studies her form as she leaves.

Hugh Morris: Fortinbras!

Fortinbras: I'd love to fight in hers!

Hugh Morris: Snap out of it. This is serious. We're performing for her Majesty.

She's very hard to please (*Beginning to panic*) What if she doesn't like it? She'll have us imprisoned in the tower or worse! I don't want to lose my head. Oh god, we're under rehearsed. What are

we going to do?

Adriano de Armado: Everything will be alright!

Hugh Morris: How? How will it be alright? Our lives hang in the balance on

the strength of a few well said lines!

Fortinbras: Surely she can't kill us just for that?

Hugh Morris: Want to bet? I had a friend, Catholic Carl, who was part of a

dramatic troupe in London. They performed for her majesty and later that evening, after the show was over, the Queen's guard came and arrested the whole troupe for atrocities to drama.

Imprisoned in the tower and before you could say 'ouch' his head was rolling along the floor. Who knows what story they will concoct for us!

Adriano de Armado: He was a catholic was he not?

Hugh Morris: It gets worse!

Fortinbras: How?

Hugh Morris: I'm catholic too!

Fortinbras: Well don't tell her then. I'm sure she will never know your

religious beliefs. Just make sure you don't come in here later

brandishing a cardinal's hat and waving incense about.

Adriano de Armado: Look, we have two hours before we go on stage. It's

plenty of time to rehearse further and conjure up a plan with some elaborate back story and save our skins. We're actors – lets

act!

The Three Actors exit.

Sir Christopher Mallard enters

Christopher Mallard: (He peers round a post and cautiously says) Hello? (He steps

out further into the hall) Hello? Anyone there? (He looks around)

No-one here – Good! (He drags a huge hessian sack out with him

and swings it on to his back) At least I can get these gifts sorted in

peace.

Christopher Mallard approaches the table and lays out a few pieces of treasure including two small vials and a length of red cloth.

Christopher Mallard: And this last gift is very special indeed! Her majesty will

reward me greatly for this! (He playfully tosses a small pouch of herbal tobacco in the air) The whole of England shall know my name: Christopher Mallard, the greatest explorer! No longer will good Queen Bess favour my cousin Sir Francis Drake and his golden behind!

Lord Trump enters

Lord Trump: Ah Christopher Mallard I presume!

Christopher Mallard: The greatest explorer of new lands that England has ever

known!

They embrace as they say the following two lines:

Lord Trump: Christopher!

Christopher Mallard: Donald!

Lord Trump: It is so good to see you. So glad you could make the journey

from Southampton dock all the way here. It is indeed a true

honour!

Christopher Mallard: After travelling around the Cape of Good Hope,

surviving waves a hundred feet high, ocean serpents and killer sea gulls, what's another hundred miles to visit your favourite

uncle!

Lord Trump: Your words are far too kind.

Lady Trump enters

Lady Trump: Oh Husband of mine, have you....(*In shock*) Christopher!

Christopher Mallard: Clarissa... I mean Lady Trump!

Lord Trump: You mean Auntie Clarissa or Auntie Lady Trump.

Lady Trump: It is a pleasure to see you again Christopher.

Lord Trump: You two have met before?

Christopher Mallard: Many years ago, when I set sail from Southampton dock.

I had been struck ill at Lord Flinders' Hall. Lady Trump was a

lady in waiting there and was in charge of my recovery.

Lady Trump: Well said... I mean, what an excellent recollection of our

meeting you have, in spite of the fever you were suffering.

Christopher Mallard: If it wasn't for your fair hands, I would have surely not

survived.

Lord Trump: Well done my dear; saved my nephew's life.

Lady Trump:

It was nothing. Prey tell, what treasures have you brought for us

from your travels?

Christopher Mallard:

d: My Lady and my Lord, I have brought many gifts. None more potent than this; the natives call it herbal tobacco. It has many medicinal purposes. I am going to present it to her majesty as a gift!

He hands Lord Trump a clay pipe with tobacco in it. Lord Trump puffs on it without lighting

it.

Lord Trump: This tobacco is strong stuff Christopher.

Christopher Mallard: Stronger once you light it uncle!

Lady Trump:

Christopher, you look weary from your travels. Come; take a rest in our parlour. I shall get my lady in waiting to serve to your needs. Anne Boilin' is the very best.

Lady Trump exits and Christopher Mallard follows her off.

Christopher Mallard: It is the east and Clarissa is the sun.

Only Lord Trump is left in the room. He picks up the vial and examines it. He sniffs it and recoils from its pong.

Lord Trump: I am a man more sinned against than sinning.

Lord Trump freezes where he is and the Three Witches appear. They move with flowing grace and rapidity through the audience to centre stage and surround Lord Trump.

SFX - A thunder storm

Witch 1: Wh

Who gives anything to poor Tom? Whom the foul fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and through ford and whirlipool o'er bog and quagmire;

Witch 2:

Do poor Tom some charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I have him now.

Witch 3:

Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey thy uncle; keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud array. Tom's a cold.

Commented [JS5]: Needs more business here, like Bob Newhart

Commented [JS6]: This is a bit obscure – probably needs something less subtle!

Commented [JS7]: Leave out?

Witch 2: Thrice the brinded cat hath mew'd

Witch 3: Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined.

Witch 1: Harpier cries 'Tis time, 'tis time.

The Witches move over to the cauldron.

Witch 1: Round about the cauldron go, in the poison'd entrails throw.

Toad, that under cold stone days and nights has thirty-one.

Swelter'd venom sleeping got, boil thou first I' the charmed pot.

All: Double, double toil and trouble; fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Witch 2: Fillet of a fenny snake, in the cauldron boil and bake. Eye of

newt and toe of frog, wool of bat and tongue of dog. Adder's fork and blind-worms sting, Lizard's leg and owlet's wing. For a

charm of powerful trouble, like a hell-broth boil and bubble.

Witch 3: That's the audience's dinner done, what are we going to have?

Witch 1: Pass me that Asp.

Witch2: I can't see an asp!

Witch 3: She means Wasp – she can't pronounce her 'W's.

Enter Pluck

Witch 1: By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way

comes. Open, locks knocks

Pluck: How now, you secret, black and midnight hags. What is't you

do?

Witch 2: A deed without a name.

Pluck: I conjure you, by that which you profess. Howe'er you come to

know it, answer me. Answer me to what I ask you.

Witch 3: Speak.

Witch 2: Demand

Commented [JS8]: Think we need to add something in here to make it clear that they know something is going to happen and they are going to summon up spirits to give them clues.

Witch 1: We'll answer. Say if thou'dst rather hear it from our mouths, or

from our masters?

Pluck: (*To the audience*) This should be good for a laugh. (*To the Witches*)

Call 'em; let me see 'em.

Witch 1: Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten her nine farrow; grease

that's sweaten from the murderer's gibbet throw. Into the flame

come high or low thyself and office deftly show!

SFX Thunder storm

Pluck: Don't do that, you'll ruin the dinner for everyone.

Witch 3: He knows thy thought; hear his speech, but say nought.

Witch 2: Trump, Trump, Mallard, Armado, Morris - Beware

Witch 1: Beware Fortinbras. Beware Bess. Enough, enough.

Witch 3: Be bloody, bold and resolute; laugh to scorn. The power of man,

for all of woman born shall harm. Red, Red, An out stretched

arm, a flash of metal. Red is the colour.

Pluck: You speak in tongues and riddle's you gibbering crows. Be gone

with you, be gone. Serve the dinner when the time doth come,

and forget none.

The Witches scatter cackling and 'cawing' like crows.

Pluck: My good sirs and ladies. I whole heartedly apologise for those

crazy, black hearted crows. The heat from the summer son does

betray their minds and burn their skins most foul. Ignore their

riddles and cryptic clues. 'Beware, beware, red is the colour' Ha

poppycock.

SFX - A royal fanfare.

Pluck spins around as Queen Elizabeth saunters in; she is wearing a black cloak and stands in front of Pluck. He has a look of confusion on his face. A man appears behind the Queen as

she raises her arms the Man pulls of the cloak revealing her magnificent, royal dress and her true identity. Pluck falls to the ground immediately.

Pluck: Your majesty, it is indeed an honour to be in your presence.

Queen Elizabeth: Arise you repulsive individual. Your kind words are indeed

welcome, yet slightly grovelling. Where is Donald?

Pluck: Donald ma'am?

Queen Elizabeth: Strike him Rupert.

Rupert approaches Pluck and clips him around the head.

Queen Elizabeth: Ask him again Rupert! I am too weary from our journey to

waste my breath.

Rupert: Where is Donald?

Pluck: Donald sir?

Queen Elizabeth: Strike him again until he remembers!

Rupert strikes him again and again whilst asking him.

Rupert: Where is Donald?

Pluck: Donald?

Rupert: Where is Donald? Donald who lives here?

Pluck: There is no Donald that lives here.

Queen Elizabeth: Think man, think.

Pluck: I can't think with him hitting me so your majesty.

Queen Elizabeth: Ok, stop hitting him Rupert. Now listen here little boy. What is

your name?

Pluck: Pluck!

Queen Elizabeth squeaks in shock as she has misunderstood what he has said to her. Rupert goes to strike Pluck, but he recoils and starts acting the fool darting around the room shouting his name and pretending to be a chicken.

Pluck: Pluck, Pluck-Pluck. PLUCK, PLUCK,

PLUCK, PLUCK, PLUCK.

The whole time Queen Elizabeth squeaks at his name.

Queen Elizabeth: This man is ill of temperament.

Pluck: No ma'am, my name is Pluck – P.L.U.C.K.

Queen Elizabeth: Oh, I see you silly person. I thought you were saying...

Pluck: Never in a million years would I say such a foul word, m'lady.

Queen Elizabeth: Now young – Pluck! I wish to know where my friend Donald is.

He lives here and is the owner of The Manor.

Pluck: You mean Lord Trump, ma'am?

Queen Elizabeth: Yes, Lord Trump!

Pluck: I don't know where he is your majesty.

Rupert: Shall I strike him again ma'am?

Lord Trump enters

Lord Trump: That won't be necessary. Your majesty, I am here and may I say

- Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Thou art more lovely

and more temperate: Rough winds do shake the darling buds of

May, and summer's lease hath all too short a date.

Queen Elizabeth: Rupert, you are excused and take the wretched excuse for a

human being away with you. Teach him some manners!

Rupert: With pleasure your majesty.

Rupert grabs Pluck by the ear and drags him out!

Pluck: PLUCK!

Queen Elizabeth looks at Lord Trump lustfully. She teeters on holding back her emotions for him and giving into her passion. She tries to remain as proper as possible but has a wanting look in her eye and mannerism, gentle and subtle flirtation.

Lord Trump: Your majesty...

Queen Elizabeth: Sweetly Lord Trump.

Lord Trump: It is indeed an honour to have you once again in my home. Long

have been the nights since we last saw each other; if I may be so

bold.

Queen Elizabeth: Men of few words are the best men. Oh Donald, I have missed

you.

Lord Trump: Bess, I have missed y...

Queen Elizabeth: How's Lady Clarissa Trump?

Lord Trump: She's very well, especially now.

Queen Elizabeth: How do you mean?

Lord Trump: My nephew – Christopher Mallard has returned from journeys

afar. He has survived the rough seas around the Cape of Good Hope, defied savage attacks from serpents of the seas, tempests,

tossing him, around for days on end, sea men with sea

sickness...

Queen Elizabeth: Yes, yes, yes, get on with the story.

Lord Trump: The long and short of it is, he knew Clarissa before we were wed

two year ago. She nursed him back to health. Their relationship appeared to be deeper than that of nurse maid and patient. It worries me that their being together may rekindle any magic,

much like a spark to a thatched roof.

Queen Elizabeth: My dear Donald, (She draws near in comfort) what will you do?

Lord Trump: I know not my lady.

Queen Elizabeth: But does your heart not beat for another?

They draw in closer to each other

Lord Trump: The course of true love never did run smooth. A man may have

many loves in his life, but a woman's dainty fingers should only

play the strings of one harp.

Queen Elizabeth: I am but a mere woman, but I play two harps with my dainty

fingers; my love for this great country which we reside and my love

for...

Lord Trump takes her hand and leans in for a kiss.

Queen Elizabeth: Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under 't!

Lord Trump: Ma'am?

Queen Elizabeth: Be not afraid of greatness: some are born great (*Indicates herself*).

Some achieve greatness (indicates herself again) And some have

greatness thrust upon them! (Indicates Lord Trump)

Queen Elizabeth and Lord Trump kiss.

Lord Trump: I dare do all that may become a man; who dares do more is

none!

SFX - Dog barking

Lord Trump: Out damn Spot! Out, I say!

Lord Trump escorts Queen Elizabeth out. Lady Trump appears from the other side of the barn she watches them leave together.

Lady Trump: Out. Out, brief candle! Life's but a walking shadow, a poor

player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage and then is heard no more! It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Nothing will come of nothing! These words are razors to my wounded heart. Beware; there's daggers

in men's smiles. Beware; all the perfumes of Arabia will not

sweeten this little hand!

Christopher Mallard enters

Christopher Mallard: Ah, my dear lady love, there you are, I thought we would

never get a moment together to rekindle Southampton... My,

what is wrong? You look like you have seen a ghost of our dear

Yorick!

Lady Trump: Some rise by sin and some by virtue fall.

Christopher Mallard: Clarissa? Whatever is the matter? You're speaking

gibberish.

Lady Trump: Doubt that the sun doth move, doubt truth to be a liar, but never

doubt I Love. (As she finishes this sentence Lady Trump faints on the

floor.)

Hitchcockscillis