

2023 is the quarter-centenary year of the publication of Shakespeare's First Folio.

This week's cwg piece celebrates that event along with another literary milestone: the first Anniversary of the u3a Comedy Writing Group itself.

Shakespeare's Limericks are not as well known as his sonnets but they do show his characteristic mastery of verse form. The 12 Limericks were discovered in a skip in Stratford-Upon-Avon last New Year's Eve. They are quite possibly in Shakespeare's own hand but are certainly believed to have been used by the Playwright to 'pitch' new projects to fellow members of his company\*. As such they may provide a unique insight into the creative process.

(\*Though closer textual and chemical analysis suggests that at least one may be of a more recent date.)

Enter our competition to celebrate all things Shakespearian and win a book token.

### **Competition rules:**

\*Below are 12 limericks each based on a different play by Shakespeare. Guess to which play each refers and send in your answers to the cwg convenor [marlenejmitchell@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:marlenejmitchell@yahoo.co.uk) by noon on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March.

\*The winner will be the entry with the most correct answers.

\*One entry only per u3a member please.

\*In the case of there being more than one winner the winning entry will be drawn from a hat.

\*The winner will be notified and the result published in the SEL newsletter on April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

\*Cwg will offer a £20 book token to the winning entry.

1

A dithering Prince sees a ghost,  
Who tells him to do what he's most  
Reluctant to do.  
But when he tries to  
The whole dynasty ends up as toast.

2

"I love her!!! 'Tis no childish prattle!!  
She makes my soul shake, roll, and rattle!"  
*(But will He change His mind  
When She leaves Him behind  
In the midst of a furious battle?)*

3

The merest allusion to Witches  
Brings out our royal Patron in twitches:  
So I've cast Three beside  
A disturbed Regicide!  
Thinking Witches plus Twitches means Riches."

4

When He meets Her they're soon spitting tacks.  
Each makes mock of what t'other one lacks.  
But the scheming of *Friends*  
Means this enmity ends.  
Now they're making the beast with two backs!

5

When a Royal Pensioner says he'll retire,  
His Nearest and Fear-est conspire.  
So his plans go awry  
And too many folk die...  
And the future of Britain is dire.

6

A pair of young lovers star-crossed,  
Fell victim to Fate. And it cost:  
"There's Berlioz!" "And Bernstein!"  
"And Spielberg!" "And Sondheim!"  
"Just think of the royalties we've lost!"

7

The King says to his Generals, "You...  
Are losing my War. No, it's true!  
Was your manhood mislaid?  
You were TROUNCED BY A MAID!!!  
Things had better improve in Part 2..."

8

There is no place for Honour in War.  
Here Might is the Sovereign Law:  
Young Lovers are Tortured.  
A Hero is slaughtered.  
And a Wooden Horse waits at the Gates...

9

A randy old man comes to Town  
And pesters the women all round.  
But he's vain, drunk and dim  
That the joke is on him  
When they chase him away like a clown.

10

I was lost as a babe – Do I care?  
There's no chance I'm some rich person's heir!  
But I recall something... Prowly?  
Big, Brown, Furry and Growly?  
Could it be? My real Mum was a *Bear*?

11

An outsider by virtue of race,  
This Hero falls into disgrace  
When a monster from Venice  
Exploits green-eyed menace,  
And an innocent wife is erased.

12

I'm a loveable Rogue it is true,  
If the Prince he agrees, so should you.  
And once he's crowned King  
I can do anything:  
Steal, Murder, Blaspheme, and Stuff You!