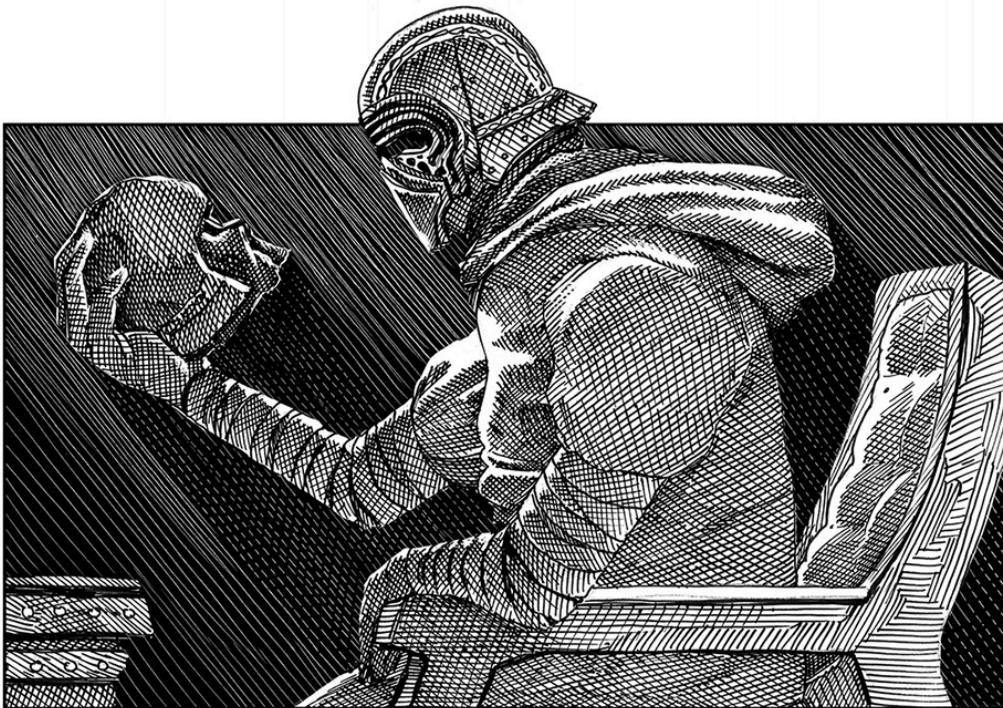


WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE FORCE DOOTH AWAKEN EDUCATORS' GUIDE



By Ian Doescher

INTRODUCTION

This guide offers a brief introduction to Shakespeare and to the elements that *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* has in common with his plays. First, let's define quick and easy elements of Shakespeare's plays, all of which can be found in *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*.

- Each play contains five acts. This structure, which was common in Shakespeare's time, drew on the earlier tradition of ancient Roman plays, many of which also had five acts. There can be any number of scenes within each act. When you are referring to a specific act, scene, and line from that scene, the typical Shakespearean convention looks like II.iii.45—which means Act 2 (represented by II, the upper case Roman numerals), scene 3 (represented by iii, the lower case Roman numerals), line 45. I use the same references for lines in *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*.
- Shakespeare included minimal stage direction. He let his plays' performers determine who should do what on stage. *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* follows this convention, though ultimately it has more stage directions than a Shakespearean play would, so that action sequences are clear.
- Shakespeare often ended his scenes with *rhyming couplets*. A rhyming couplet is two adjacent lines of verse that rhyme, like "No thread the same, unique in ev'ry stitch, / And ev'ry episode both fresh and rich!" This is a simple way to mark a narrative shift, similar to a final cadence in music.
- Language that is meant to be spoken, not just read! Shakespeare wrote his plays to be performed by actors he knew in local London theaters, not to be put in a book and assigned as reading (though this is how most modern students first encounter Shakespeare). If your students are trying to read Shakespeare for the first time, encourage them to read the book out loud with friends. The words will make more sense when they hear their rhythms and cadences. As a result, students will be less caught up in the old-fashioned language and more engaged in the quick and witty dialogue, beautiful metaphors and clever jokes.
- Characters sometimes have *asides*, which are lines spoken so the audience can hear but the other characters on stage (supposedly) cannot. Often, an aside explains a character's motivations or inner thoughts or a background situation the audience wouldn't otherwise know. These days, an aside in theater is sometimes called *breaking the fourth wall*, that is, the imaginary divide between stage and audience. Asides in Shakespeare tend to be fairly short.
- Characters also make long speeches by themselves, known as *soliloquies*. They are similar to asides in that they often explain why a character is acting a certain way, but they occur when the character is alone on stage. In general, soliloquies are longer than asides.

THE LANGUAGE

Shakespeare's old-fashioned language can be one of the hardest hurdles to jump when you're getting started. Here are some things to know about the language of Shakespeare's time.

Shakespeare wrote in *iambic pentameter*, which is a line of poetry with a very specific syllabic pattern. An *iamb* has two syllables—the first is unstressed (or soft) and the second is stressed (or emphasized). An iamb sounds like “da-DUM,” as in the following words:

defend “de-FEND”
consult “con-SULT”
beyond “be-YOND”
across “a-CROSS”
forsooth “for-SOOTH”
Jakku “Jak-KU”

Pentameter contains five iambs per line, so iambic pentameter is a line of ten syllables: “da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM da-DUM.” Here's a classic line, with the unstressed part of each iamb in regular text and the stressed part of each iamb in bold: “I’d **rather** be a **hammer** **than** a **nail**.” So, in other words, the five iambs in this line are (1) I’d RATH- (2) er BE (3) a HAM- (4) mer THAN (5) a NAIL.

Most of Shakespeare's characters speak in iambic pentameter, but there's also an element of class involved. In other words, some speak in prose (normal speech) when Shakespeare wanted to set them apart as lower class. Dogberry in *Much Ado about Nothing* is a textbook example (In *William Shakespeare's The Phantom of Menace* and *The Clone Army Attacketh*, Watto also misuses words much like Dogberry.) In *The Force Doth Awaken*, the members of Kanjiklub and the Guavian Death Gang speak in prose.

Shakespeare sometimes breaks the rules of iambic pentameter. The most famous Shakespearean line of all actually has eleven syllables: “To **be** or **not** to **be**, that is the **question**.” That last “-ion” is known as a *weak ending* and is common in Shakespeare. It's also common that Shakespeare will slip two unstressed syllables into a space where there should be just one, or he'll leave out a syllable entirely. As much as we associate Shakespeare with iambic pentameter, he broke the rule almost as much as he observed it. By comparison, *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* follows iambic pentameter more strictly than Shakespeare did.

The final—and maybe most important—thing to say about iambic pentameter is that it's something students should know about and then not worry too much about. If the whole idea of meter and stressed and unstressed syllables leaves *them* feeling stressed, they should just read Shakespeare's lines out loud and forget about the meter. Have them pay attention to the punctuation and let it guide their pauses. Whatever happens, no one should feel it necessary to pause at the end of each line of Shakespeare. Unless there is a comma, a period, or some other punctuation—or some other break in the meaning—each line should follow immediately after the preceding line.

Here are some lines from *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* (IV.ii.41–48):

KYLO REN

*Thou art alone, of leaving most afeard.
At night, thou art so desperate to sleep.
Within thy mind an ocean, and an isle
Plac'd in the ocean's vast expanse—I see't.
Han Solo: he is in thy mind as well. 45
To thee he seemeth like the father whom
Thou ne'er didst know. Hear thou my words most true:
The man, I'll warrant, would but disappoint.*

This speech illustrates a few different points:

- First, as noted above, the punctuation should guide how these lines are spoken, not the actual ends of the lines. Obviously, lines 43–44 “Within thy mind an ocean, and an isle / Plac'd in the ocean's vast expanse—I see't” expresses a single thought that is split across two lines. Any line that doesn't end with punctuation or the sense of which is complete should roll right into the next line.
- These lines follow the rules and rhythm of iambic pentameter (if one pronounces “isle” with two syllables, line 43 has a weak ending. I think you can hear the rhythm most clearly in line 18: “Han Solo: he is in thy mind as well.” (Han Solo: **he** is **in** thy **mind** as **well**.)
- Students may wonder: What happens if a word has more than two syllables, since an iamb calls for only one stressed syllable? Does every word in the English language really only have a single syllable emphasized? Those are important questions. When it comes to multisyllabic words, it's important to figure out first which syllable has the main emphasis. Here are three examples of three-syllable words, each with an emphasis on a different syllable:

senator (emphasis on first syllable)
regardless (emphasis on second syllable)
Tattoo**ine** (emphasis on final syllable)

Four- and five-syllable words are even trickier. Most words, figure out which syllable should be emphasized and then see if another syllable has a minor emphasis. The word *Imperial* is a good example. The main emphasis is on the second syllable, **Imperial**. In iambic pentameter, it makes sense for the first iamb to be **Imper** and the next iamb to be **ial**. So the syllable -al at the end of the word *Imperial* has a secondary stress that fits the meter nicely. To give you an idea of how these decisions are made... if you read carefully you'll notice that throughout *William Shakespeare The Force Doth Awaken* I use the word “Skywalker” variably—sometimes with the main emphasis on the first syllable (**Skywalker**) and sometimes with the middle syllable getting the main emphasis (Sky**walk**er). I did this because “Skywalker” is a challenging word. It's a compound word, and if you break it into two words, it has two stressed syllables at the front—**Sky walker**. To put it in iambic pentameter means having to pick a syllable to stress, so I did what (I hope) Shakespeare would have done, stressing the syllable one way when it suited certain situations and the other way in other situations.

Regarding all those -est and -eth endings: In general, the -est (or -st or just -t) ending is used with the pronoun *thou*, like “thou art” or “thou ne’er didst” in Kylo Ren’s speech, meaning a singular *you*. The -eth ending (or “doth”) is used for *he* or *she* or a neutral (but always singular) *it*, for example: “he seemeth like the father...”

Words that would normally end in -ed, like the word *placed*, are sometimes spelled in Shakespeare as *plac’d*: This because in Shakespeare’s time, the -ed was sometimes pronounced, so instead of pronouncing the word “placed” as “placd” (as we do now) as two syllables, “pla-ced.” When such a word was to be shortened because of the meter, it became a contraction, “plac’d.” Often in modern editions of Shakespeare—and in *William Shakespeare’s The Force Doth Awaken*—if a word ending in -ed is supposed to have the -ed pronounced as a separate syllable, it will appear with an accent over the e: “placèd.”

On thees and thous:

thou = you (as the subject of a sentence, like “thou art” or “thou didst”)

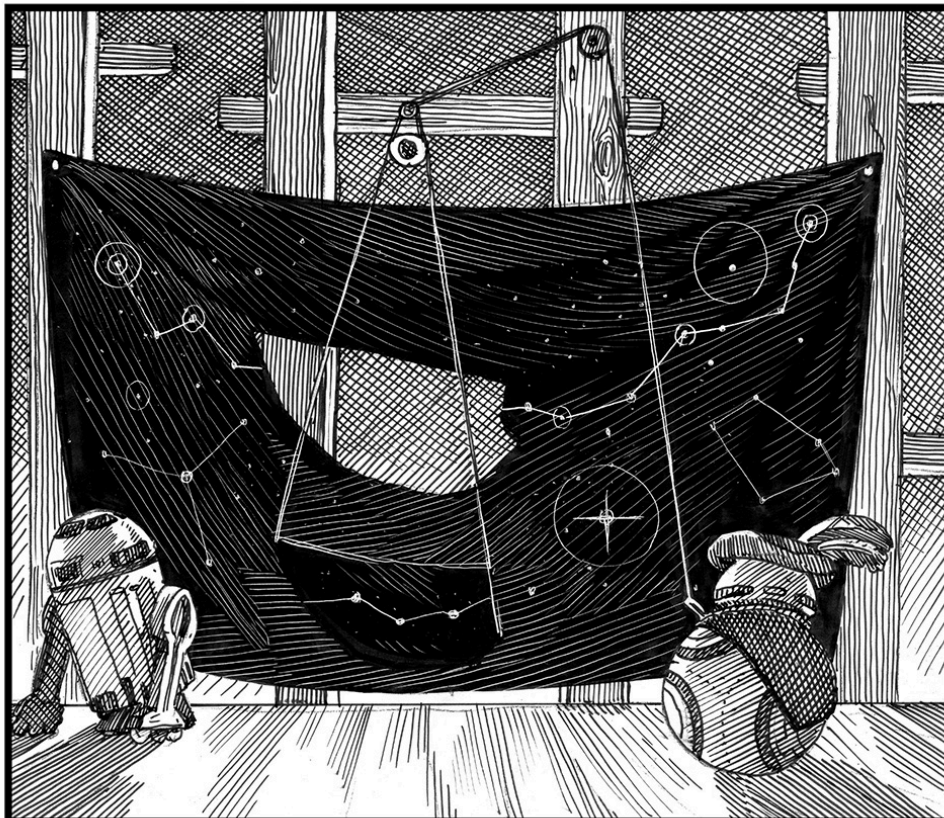
thee = you (as the object of a sentence, like “To thee”)

thy = your (before a word starting with a consonant, like “within thy mind”)

thine = your (before a word starting with a vowel or sometimes an h, like “thine honor”)

ye = you plural (as the subject of a sentence for more than one person, like “ye people”)

A final note about Shakespeare and language: When in doubt, students should look up words they don’t know in the dictionary and even write the definitions in the text next to them if it helps. Most good Shakespeare editions have footnotes that explain unusual words (like *fardels*) or a glossary of terms at the end. This will help students when reading the text aloud doesn’t do the trick.



SHAKESPEAREAN REFERENCES IN *WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN*

Some good news: if your students have read *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*, they've already read some Shakespeare. *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* makes direct reference to several lines in Shakespeare's plays. Here's a guide to where you can find these nods to the Bard in a galaxy far, far away.

Henry V

In terms of structure, *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* borrows from the history *The Life of Henry the Fifth* (more briefly known as *Henry V*). *Henry V* has a grand story to tell—the English defeat of the French in famed battles such as Harfleur and Agincourt and King Henry V's rise to power over two kingdoms. But how could such a sweeping tale be told on a small stage, in the days before movies or computer animation? Shakespeare uses a Chorus at the beginning and throughout, the dramatic device of a Chorus is a narrating character who is not involved in the action and is voiced either by a single person or by a group. The Chorus, which goes back at least to early Greek drama, helps explain what is happening, particularly when the action is too grand to be depicted on the stage.

When I began writing *William Shakespeare's Star Wars*, I was faced with a dilemma: how do I show the action of *Star Wars* in a play with minimal staging opportunities? I decided early on to take a page from Shakespeare and add a Chorus to the play, to explain the visual elements that a theater audience wouldn't necessarily be able to see. In that way, my Chorus functions in the same way as Shakespeare's in *Henry V*.

Recommended film version: Kenneth Branagh starred in and directed the 1989 film version of *Henry V*, with Derek Jacobi as the Chorus.

HENRY V

Prologue, 1–4
CHORUS

*O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention!
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene!*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

Prologue, 1–4
CHORUS

*Luke Skywalker hath sadly disappear'd,
And in his absence come most wicked foes.
The cruel First Order hath made all afeard—
Like phoenix from the Empire's ash it grows.*

One of the best-known scenes in *Henry V* is King Henry's speech to the English army before they faced the French at the Battle of Agincourt. The English, worried about their chances of winning, are feeling doubtful until Henry V stands and inspires them with a rousing speech. In *William Shakespeare's Star Wars*, I borrowed from this speech for Luke Skywalker before the final Death Star battle. In *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*, I borrow once more from this speech as Han prepares the troops to face Starkiller Base.

HENRY V

IV.iii. 40–67, 74–75

HENRY

*This day is called the feast of Crispian:
He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,
Will stand a tip-toe when the day is named,
And rouse him at the name of Crispian.
He that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast his neighbours,
And say 'To-morrow is Saint Crispian.'
Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars.
And say 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember with advantages
What feats he did that day: then shall our names,
Familiar in his mouth as household words,
Harry the king, Bedford and Exeter,
Warwick and Talbot, Salisbury and Gloucester,
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remember'd;
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition:
And gentlemen in England now a-bed
Shall think themselves accursed they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day...*

WESTMORELAND

*God's will, my liege, would you and I alone,
Without more help, could fight this royal battle!*

THE FORCE DOTH

AWAKEN IV.iii.43–71

HAN SOLO

*This day is call'd the feast of Odan-Urr.
They that outlive this day, and come safe home,
Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is nam'd,
And rouse them at the name of Odan-Urr.
They that shall live this day, and see old age,
Will yearly on the vigil feast their neighbors,
And say, "Tomorrow's the centenary."
Then will they strip their sleeves and show their scars,
And say, "These wounds I had on Odan's day."
Old folk forget; yet all shall be forgot,
But they'll remember with advantages
What feats they did that day. Then shall our names,
Familiar in their mouth as household words —
Sweet General Leia and Adm'ral Ackbar,
Poe Dameron and Ematt, Finn and Snap —
Be in their flowing cups freshly remember'd.
This story shall each parent teach their child;
And Odan-Urr's feast day shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the end of th'universe,
But we in it shall be remember'd, too —
We few, we happy few, we band of comrades;
For they today who shed their blood with me
Shall be my comrades; be they ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle their condition, yea.
So be ye not afeard, my friends, be strong —
'Twill be our finest victory to date,
This grand Starkiller shall be our kill yet!*

LEIA

*My Han! Brave man, would thou and I alone,
Without more help, could fight this present battle!*

Hamlet

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is Shakespeare's most famous play. It tells the story of Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, whose father has died and whose mother, Gertrude, has married his uncle, Claudius (Hamlet's father's brother). In the opening scenes, the ghost of the late king returns to tell Hamlet that he was actually murdered by his brother, so that his brother could marry Hamlet's mother and take the throne. The tragedy unfolds as Hamlet tries to figure out the best way to avenge his father.

Recommended film versions: Kenneth Branagh's 1996 version is good if you want to see Hamlet played sane, Mel Gibson's 1990 version is good if you want to see Hamlet played mad (I prefer Branagh).

The first time we see Hamlet, Claudius is celebrating his marriage to Gertrude before the Danish court. When Claudius indicates Hamlet, the prince responds in an aside with wordplay about his relationship with his uncle. I borrowed this for the scene where Han tells Rey that, if she comes to work with him, he still won't be nice to her.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

I.ii.65

HAMLET

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

III.i.112

HAN SOLO

We would be less than kin, still less be kind.

After Hamlet hears from the castle guards that they have seen his father's ghost, Hamlet pledges that foul deeds that have been done will come to light. Finn (when he is still FN-2187) speaks similar words.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

I.ii.256

HAMLET

*Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to
men's eyes.*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

I.ii.25–26

FN-2187

*O now sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,
Though all of life o'erwhelm them, to mine eyes.*

Laertes, the brother of Hamlet's girlfriend Ophelia, gives his sister the advice that being cautious (or even afraid) is the best way to be safe. Rey comments on this advice as she prepares to face Kylo Ren.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

I.iii.43

LAERTES

Be wary then, best safety lies in fear...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

III.iii.102

REY

*'Tis said that the best safety lies in fear,
Yet though I am afeard I feel not safe.*

Polonius, the father of Laertes and Ophelia, advises Laertes before he returns to college. (Evidently, dispensing advice is big in this family.) I decided Poe would embody Polonius as he tells Finn how to control the TIE fighter's weaponry.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

I.iii.68

POLONIUS

Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

I.vi.63

POE

Give ev'ry gun thy sight but few thy shot.

Polonius offers to test Hamlet on Claudius's behalf, to see if he can find the source of what he perceives as Hamlet's madness. Hamlet spins conversational circles around him, and at one point Polonius recognizes as much (in a phrase that has become a common saying). Han borrows the phrase.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

II.ii.205

POLONIUS

Though this be madness, yet there is method in't.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

IV.v.15

HAN SOLO

Though this be madness, yet there's method in't.

In a tense scene after Hamlet has killed Polonius, Hamlet remarks to Claudius that worms are among the most powerful creatures, because even they will eventually dine on kings. Chewbacca makes a similar quip about rathtars' appetites.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

IV.iii.21–23

HAMLET

*Your worm is your only emperor for diet:
we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat
ourselves for maggots...*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

II.iv.183

CHEWBACCA

*Your rathtar is the emperor for diet:
We fat all creatures else to fat ourselves;
The crew did fat themselves for rathtars' meals.*

Othello

The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice is a play about jealousy, with a truly evil villain. Othello, a Moor living in Italy, is married to Desdemona. Iago, a soldier who is evil but also trusted by Othello, convinces Othello through deceit that his fellow soldier Cassio is having an affair with Desdemona. Othello enters a slow descent into near madness, throwing his relationship with Desdemona into a storm that ultimately takes their lives.

Recommended film versions: Laurence Fishburne as Othello and Kenneth Branagh as Iago in the 1995 version can't be beat. There's also a modern retelling of the play called simply *O* from 2001, which puts a good spin on the tale.

In the terrible scene when Othello comes to kill Desdemona, she realizes what he is going to do before he does it. They have a painful dialogue, which I gave to Darth Vader and a Jedi youngling, who also realizes he is about to be killed.

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE

V.ii.12–13

OTHELLO

*I know not where is that Promethean heat
That can thy light relume.*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

IV.i.114–115

C-3PO:

*Bethink I he may, sadly, ne'er improve, Ne'er
find the spark that can his light relume.*

Romeo and Juliet

The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet is a famous story of a young woman and man from two rival families, who fall deeply in love. It doesn't end well.

Recommended film versions: Baz Luhrmann's 1996 movie starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Claire Danes is a fast-paced, fun, modern take. Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story* is also based on *Romeo and Juliet*.

In one of the most famous scenes in *Romeo and Juliet*, Romeo sees the light in Juliet's room from below and woos her from beneath her balcony. I parodied this line in *William Shakespeare's Star Wars*, and it was fun to do it again in *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*.

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET
I.ii.2

ROMEO

*But soft, what light through yonder window
breaks?*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN
II.iv.83

REY

*Canst see? What fight through yonder window
breaks?*

Romeo's friend Mercutio—who is something like the conscience of the play—tells an extended (and fantastical) tale about Queen Mab. "Mab" was too much like "Maz" for me to pass up, so I borrowed Mercutio and Romeo's dialogue for Maz and Rey.

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET
I.iv.as.50–56
ROMEO

I dreamt a dream to-night.

MERCUTIO

—And so did I.

ROMEO

Well, what was yours?

MERCUTIO

—That dreamers often lie.

ROMEO

In bed asleep, while they do dream things true.

MERCUTIO

*O then I see Queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fairies' midwife, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agot-stone
On the forefinger of an alderman...*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN
III.i.282–289
REY

*What happen'd? I should not have gone therein.
I dreamt a dream inside.*

MAZ

—And so did I.

REY

Well, what was thine?

MAZ

—That dreamers often lie.

REY

Upon the ground while they do dream things true.

MAZ

*O, then I see keen Maz hath been with you.
She is the vision giver, and she comes
In shape no bigger than an agate stone
On the forefinger of a Jedi Knight.*

Macbeth

The title character of *The Tragedy of Macbeth* is a close companion and courtier of the Scottish King Duncan. Macbeth is led via ambition, fortune-telling witches, and a devious wife to murder the king. *Macbeth* is a play full of ghosts and witches and visions—it has a reputation among actors and stage crews for bringing bad luck, so many people who work in theater have a superstition about saying the word “Macbeth” anywhere near a playhouse. (In conversation, they call it “the Scottish play.”)

Recommended film version: The best might still be Orson Welles’s 1948 *Macbeth*.

When Macbeth begins to consider killing King Duncan, he gives a speech about whether or not he should do it (“If it were done when ’tis done, then ’twere well it were done quickly...”). In that famous speech, he refers to the assassination being “the be-all and the end-all,” a phrase I borrowed for General Hux.

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

I.vii.4–5

MACBETH

—that but this blow
Might be the be-all and the end-all...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

II.ii.85–86

HUX

He thought the girl was ev’rything to us,
The be-all and the end-all...

Shakespeare is known for coining several common phrases, including “one fell swoop.” Macduff talks about his children all being killed in one fell swoop (i.e., at once), and Finn talks about losing Rey and gaining Poe back in one fell swoop.

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

IV.iii.218–219

MACDUFF

What, all my pretty chickens, and their dam,
At one fell swoop?

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

IV.i.30–31

FINN

O twist of Fate, which takes one friend from me
And gives another back in one fell swoop.

General Hux, I guess, is my Macbeth—filled with ambition and, ultimately, headed for a fall. When Macbeth’s castle is under siege, he is full of pride and proclaims the castle won’t fall to his enemies (spoiler: it will). Hux makes the same claim about Starkiller Base.

THE TRAGEDY OF MACBETH

V.v.2-3

MACBETH

The cry is still, “They come!” Our castle’s
strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

IV.vi.23-24

HUX

The cry is still “They come!” Our base’s strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn! Yea, let them come!

Richard II

The Tragedy of King Richard the Second tells the story of Richard II and his rival Henry Bolingbroke, who will eventually become King Henry IV. Henry has a rightful claim to the throne, of which he convinces Richard. But further plotting and deceptions lead to Richard's death and Henry's coronation. They are not enemies—Henry is saddened by the death of Richard—but Henry still takes the throne in the end.

Recommended film version: The 1978 version starring Derek Jacobi and John Gielgud is the best.

There are a lot of great death scenes in Shakespeare, and when a character dies in *Star Wars* I often try to borrow someone's dying lines from Shakespeare. Han, before he dies, borrows the words of Richard II.

RICHARD II

V.v.111–112

RICHARD II

*Mount, mount, my soul! Thy seat is up on high,
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

V.i.179–180

HAN SOLO

*Mount, mount, my soul! Thy seat is up on high,
Whilst my gross flesh sinks downward, here to die.*

A Midsummer Night's Dream

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a fantastical comedy full of spirits and sprites and the lovers they confuse and ultimately bring together. It tells the story of two couples—Hermia and Lysander, and Helena and Demetrius—who are taken through a series of comic misunderstandings by the denizens of the fairy world before finally being reunited with each other. At the same time, the fairy king Oberon is seeking reconciliation with his queen, Titania.

Recommended film version: 1999's film version with an all-star cast including Kevin Kline, Michelle Pfeiffer, Rubert Everett, Stanley Tucci, Calista Flockhart, Christian Bale and others.

The fairies put Hermia and Lysander to sleep so they can trick Lysander into falling in love with Helena when he awakes. When Hermia awakes, she comments on the dreams she has had. I borrowed her line for R2-D2, waking from his droidly sleep when Luke Skywalker's location is soon to be revealed.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

II.ii.147

HERMIA

Ay me, for pity! what a dream was here!

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

V.iii.12

R2-D2

Ay me, for pity! What a dream was here!

Cymbeline

The tale of *Cymbeline* is the story of the titular ancient British king, and the various intrigues that go on with his wife, Queen Cloten, their daughter Imogen and her beloved Posthumus. The play is often considered one of Shakespeare's tragedies, it is also sometimes characterized as a romance.

Recommended film version: The BBC made *Cymbeline* in 1982. There's a modern version starring Ed Harris and Ethan Hawke that also is fun, if you can get over the violence.

In every book in the *William Shakespeare's Star Wars* series, I have borrowed an opening line from one of Shakespeare's plays. *Cymbeline* gets that honor for *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*.

THE TRAGEDY OF CYMBELINE

I.i.1

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You do not meet a man but frowns...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN:

I.i.1

LOR SAN TEKKA

Alas, you do not meet a man but frowns...

The Tempest

One of my favorite of Shakespeare's plays, *The Tempest* is a fantasy in which Prospero, rightful Duke of Milan, has been exiled on an island by his wicked brother Antonio. Using magic and through the help of two spirits named Ariel and Caliban, Prospero shipwrecks a boat of his former countrymen on the island and maneuvers their experience so that he gets his post back and his daughter Miranda finds a husband.

Recommended film version: Julie Taymor's *The Tempest* from 2010 starring Helen Mirren as Prospero is fabulous.

Ariel sings a song that enchants Ferdinand (Miranda's soon-to-be love interest) after Ferdinand is shipwrecked on the island. The phrase "full fathom five" is such pleasing alliteration that I wanted to borrow it for Finn.

THE TEMPEST

I.ii.397

ARIEL

Full fathom five thy father lies...

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

I.vi.158–159

FINN

*Do his bones lie full fathom five below,
His final resting place upon the dune?*

Timon of Athens

Timon of Athens tells the story of an Athenian gentleman, who lavishly gives all his possessions to his friends. Not realizing the dire straits his finances are in, though, Timon eventually loses everything and ends up alone in a cave. It's a riches-to-rags story.

Recommended film version: The BBC 1981 version of *Timon of Athens* is the best in a short list.

Sometimes, short phrases occur to me that have their origin in Shakespeare, and I get to throw them in where I can. Han—privately expressing his admiration of Rey—uses a phrase from the Painter in *Timon of Athens*.

TIMON OF ATHENS

V.i.21

PAINTER

—Good as the best.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

III.i.27

HAN SOLO

A simple trick. [Aside:] Good as the best.

[To BB-8:] Hence, ball!

Antony and Cleopatra

The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra is the story of what happened to Marc Antony later in life, as he began an ill-fated love affair with Cleopatra, the queen of Egypt.

Recommended film version: The 1972 version starring Charlton Heston and Hildegard Neil is a bit campy but worth the watch.

Antony—far from the hero he is in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*—is blinded by love and ambition in *Antony and Cleopatra*. The phrase he uses to condemn his enemies finds itself in General Hux's mouth as he pledges to find FN-2187.

THE TRAGEDY OF

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

IV.viii.3–4

ANTONY

Before the sun shall see's, we'll spill
the blood That has to-day escaped.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

I.vi.104

HUX

We'll spill the blood that hath today escap'd!

Much Ado about Nothing

Much Ado about Nothing tells the story of two sets of couples: Hero and Claudio, who are natural lovers, and Beatrice and Benedick, who are both sharp-tongued and have sworn off love. All ends well, but not before Beatrice and Benedick are tricked into loving each other (by overhearing their friends say that each loves the other) and Claudio and Hero are saved from a huge misunderstanding—engineered by the villain Don John—that nearly results in Hero’s death.

Recommended film versions: Kenneth Branagh’s 1993 *Much Ado* is still my favorite—it was one of the things that turned me on to Shakespeare in the first place. Joss Wheedon’s 2012 version is also required viewing.

Claudio, the young lover, thinks Don Pedro has fooled Claudio’s beloved, Hero, into marrying Don Pedro instead of Claudio. When his friends surprise him with the news that Don Pedro has wooed Hero on Claudio’s behalf, he is speechless. Beatrice, never without a word to say, tells him it’s his turn to speak. Poe Dameron, in defiance of Kylo Ren, uses the same phrase in a much more serious context.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

II.i.305

BEATRICE

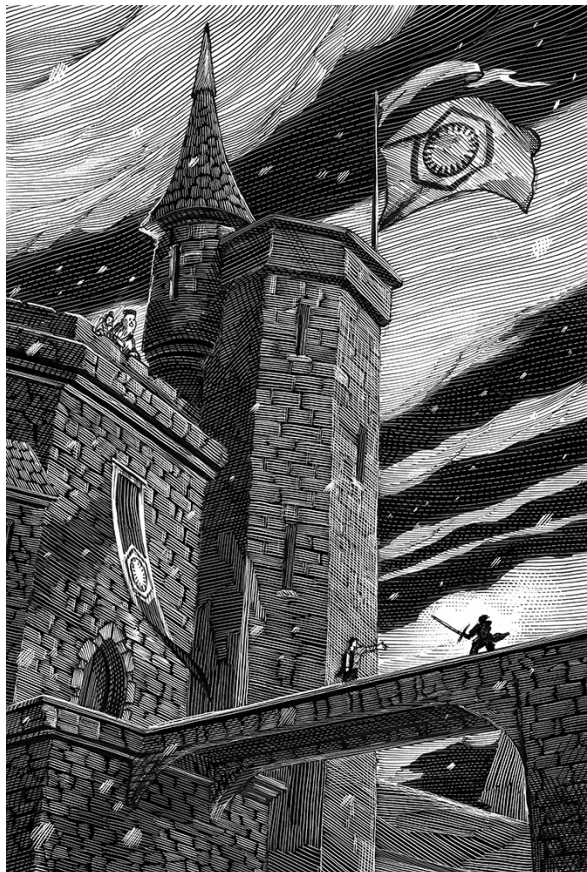
Speak, Count, 'tis your cue.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

I.i.149

POE DAMERON

Pray speak, Count, 'tis your cue.



As You Like It

As You Like It tells the story of Duke Senior, whose throne is taken away by his brother Duke Frederick. The rightful Duke Senior then lives in the Forest of Arden with his followers until he is finally restored to his throne.

Recommended film version: the Kenneth Branagh-directed version from 2006, set in Japan.

Jacques, one of the loyal subjects living in the forest, has a famous speech that begins “All the world’s a stage” and describes the stages of life: from a baby crying to an old man whose voice is weakening. Han borrows from the speech and two different points in *William Shakespeare’s The Force Doth Awaken*.

AS YOU LIKE IT

II.vii.139–166

JACQUES

— *All the world’s a stage, And
all the men and women merely players; They have
their exits and their entrances;*

*And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse’s arms;
Then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress’ eyebrow. Then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon’s mouth. And then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lin’d,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
Into the lean and slipper’d pantaloon,
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
His youthful hose, well sav’d, a world too wide
For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,
Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,
That ends this strange eventful history,
Is second childishness and mere oblivion;
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing.*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

V.i.102–104

HAN SOLO

*The pure and perfect infant whom we held,
Whilst he did smile and coo, e’en when he was
Mewling and puking in his mother’s arms...*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

II.iv.148–150

HAN SOLO

*How sad the day when hath a Solo turn’d
Unto a song sung in a childish treble,
With pipes and whistles in his sound.*

The Sonnets

In addition to plays, Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets and a handful of other poems. As a poetic form, a sonnet always has 14 lines (just like a limerick has 5 lines and a haiku has 3). Shakespearean sonnets are in iambic pentameter and have the following rhyme scheme: ABAB CDCD EFEF GG.

(That is, lines 1 and 3 rhyme, lines 2 and 4 rhyme, and so on, and then the final two lines rhyme.) As I said above, I took the idea of the Chorus from *Henry V* one step further and made the Chorus's lines rhyme. I also wrote the Chorus's opening prologue and closing epilogue for *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* as Shakespearean sonnets.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

Prologue, 1–14

CHORUS

Luke Skywalker hath sadly disappear'd,
And in his absence come most wicked foes.
The cruel First Order hath made all afeard —
Like phoenix from the Empire's ash it grows.
They shall not rest till Skywalker is dead,
Yet others seek to rescue him from harm.
By Leia — General Organa — led,
Th'Republic doth a brave Resistance arm.
Her brother she doth earnestly pursue,
Thus may he help bring peace to restoration.
She sends a daring pilot to Jakku,
Where one old friend perchance knows Luke's location.
In time so long ago begins our play,
In yearning galaxy far, far away.

SHAKESPEAREAN DEVICES IN WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

In addition to direct references to various plays, *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken* contains a handful of literary devices that are used by Shakespeare as well. Here's a sampling of them.

Anaphora

The literary device *anaphora* is the same opening of a line that is used repeatedly over the course of several lines. An example from Shakespeare's *The First Part of Henry the Sixth* is shown here, as well as two examples from *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*.

HENRY VI PART ONE

II.iv.11–15

WARWICK

*Between two hawks, which ies the
higher pitch,
Between two dogs, which hath the
deeper mouth,
Between two blades, which bears the
better temper,
Between two horses, which doth
bear him best,
Between two girls, which hath the
merriest eye —*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

II.iv.103–106

HAN SOLO

*O vision I had never thought to see,
O sight beyond belief, an 'twere a dream,
O scene wherein I never thought to play,
O spectacle that warms a smuggler's heart...*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

II.v.30–33

KYLO REN

*The father who did help to give me life,
The father who did raise me to know good,
The father who did nourish all my skills,
The father whom I did, at last, reject.*

Songs

Shakespeare's plays are full of songs. Sometimes playful, sometimes mystical, sometimes sorrowful, songs can appear at unexpected moments and often break from the rhythm of iambic pentameter. As in William Shakespeare's *Star Wars*, when Leia sang after Alderaan was destroyed, she sings again in William Shakespeare's *The Force Doth Awaken* after Han dies. Here's a sample of a song from *Othello* alongside Leia's song.

OTHELLO,

THE MOOR OF VENICE

IV.iii.40–56 (selections)

DESDEMONA

*The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree,
Sing all a green willow;
Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,
Sing willow, willow, willow.
Her salt tears fell from her, and soft'ned
the stones,
Sing willow... willow, willow...
Sing all a green willow must by my garland.
Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve...
I call'd my love false love; but what said
he then?
Sing willow, willow, willow.*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

V.i.186–203

LEIA

*[Sings:] The Force doth move me, works me woe,
My Han hath fallen, this I know.
O death, thou cometh for my Han —
Sing lackaday, my love is gone,
Sing hey and lackaday,
My love hath gone away.
Such torment works within my soul,
An 'twere I had been shatter'd whole,
O Fate, thou cometh for my Han —
Sing lackaday, my love is gone.
Sing hey and lackaday,
My love hath gone away.
My dear, we had too little time,
To revel in our joy sublime,
O end, thou cometh for my Han —
Sing lackaday, my love is gone.
Sing hey and lackaday,
My love hath gone away.*

Extended Metaphor

Frequently, Shakespeare drew out a word and squeezed as much life from it as possible. I tried my hand at an extended metaphor around books in the dialogue between Kylo Ren and Rey. Examples of this are plentiful in Shakespeare, but here's an example from the scene when Romeo and Juliet first meet and kiss, with an extended religious metaphor.

THE TRAGEDY OF ROMEO AND JULIET

I.v.93–109

ROMEO

*If I profane with my unworthiest hand
This holy shrine, the gentle sin is this,
My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready
stand To smooth that rough touch with a
tender kiss.*

JULIET

*Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,
Which mannerly devotion shows in this:
For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,
And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.*

ROMEO

Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

JULIET

Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in pray'r.

ROMEO

*O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do,
They pray—grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.*

JULIET

Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake. REY

ROMEO

*Then move not while my prayer's effect I take.
[kissing her] Thus from my lips, by thine, my
sin is purg'd.*

JULIET

Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

ROMEO

*Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd!
Give me my sin again. [kissing her again]*

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

IV.ii.11–27

KYLO REN

*'Tis thy mind that doth bring me interest:
Much like an open book, I look inside
And scan its contents like so many words.
Thy thoughts are clear: thou'd haply see me dead.*

REY

*If 'tis the story thou dost read therein,
'Tis but the consequence of being hunted
By one who hides beneath a coward's mask.*

[Kylo Ren takes off his mask.]

KYLO REN

*No craven I: I'll show my letters all,
Thou shalt, belike, find them a novel treat,
A text too heavy for thine intellect.
Tell me all thou dost know about the droid.*

*This tale I shall unfold in simple prose:
A BB unit color'd white and orange,
A drive made of selenium withal,
A thermal hyperscanning vindicator—*

KYLO REN

*Would that thy script were sharp as thy foul
tongue.*

Pray, let me tell thee of thy literature...

Stichomythia

Stichomythia is a literary device in which two characters exchange lines back and forth in rapid dialogue, usually with echoes and repetitions of what each other is saying. In *William Shakespeare's The Force Doth Awaken*, Rey and Leia share lines that alternate back and forth as they discuss Han's fate. There is a wonderful example of stichomythia in *Hamlet*, when Gertrude chides Hamlet for his disrespect to her new husband (Hamlet's uncle) Claudius, and Hamlet in turn chides her for her betrayal of his father, King Hamlet.

HAMLET, THE PRINCE OF DENMARK

III.iv.9–12

QUEEN

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET

Mother, you have my father much offended.

QUEEN

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

HAMLET

Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

THE FORCE DOTH AWAKEN

V.iii.1–8

LEIA

Thou hast, in thy young life, seen too much pain.

REY

Thou hast, in thy long life, seen too much pain.

LEIA

Han thought thee brave and strong, a pilot skill'd.

REY

Han thought thee strong and brave, a lover true.

LEIA

We both know sorrow and shall mourn for him.

REY

He doth know peace and shall be with us still.