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The Shakespeare in All of Us

By Dick Reeves

Few of us realize that we can scarcely speak three or 2, Scene 2. four sentences without, unknowingly, quoting the Great Bard. When we say everyday things like "foregone conclusion", "better days", "budge an inch", "fair play", "the crack of doom", or almost any other time-worn cliche' we are quoting the greatest wordsmith of all time, William Shakespeare (1564-1616) author of 36 plays, 154 sonnets and four long poems.

So the next time you are at a bar or cocktail party, you can surprise your companions by saying something like, "I'll bet you don't know where that phrase you just uttered comes from." Even if the speaker guesses Shakespeare, chances are that he or she won't be able to name the play, to say nothing of the act and scene.

Here are a few you would know had you paid greater attention in school.

Bated Breath - Shylock, "The Merchant of Venice", Act 1, Scene 3.

Be all and end all - Macbeth, "Macbeth", Act 1, Scene 7

Have seen better days - Duke Senior, "As you Like it", Act 2, Scene 7.

"Henry the Fourth", Part 1, Act 5, Scene 4

Brevity is the soul of wit - Polonius, "Hamlet", Act

- Budge an inch Sly, "The Taming of the Shrew", Intro, Scene 1.
- Good riddance -Patroclus, "Troilus and Cressida", Act 2. Scene 1.
- The green-eyed monster Iago, "Othello", Act 3, Scene 3.
 - Hoist with his own petard Hamlet, "Hamlet", Act 2, scene 4.
 - An itching palm Cassius, "Julius Caesar", Act 4, Scene 3.

The milk of human kindness - Lady Macbeth, "Macbeth", Act 1, Scene 5. One fell swoop - MacDuff, 'Macbeth", Act 4, Scene 3.

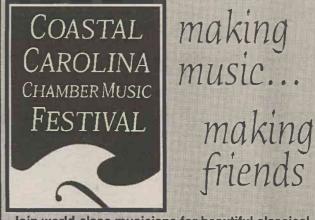
What's done is done - Lady Macbeth, "Macbeth" Act 3, Scene 2. Fair play-Bastard, "King John", Act 5, Scene 1. Flaming youth -Hamlet, "Hamlet", Act 3, Scene 4. For goodness sake - Prologue, "Henry the Eighth", Prologue 23-25. Full circle - Edmund, "King Lear",

Act 5, Scene 3.

Wild goose chase - Mercurio, "Romeo and Juliet", Act 2, Scene 4.

All of the above phrases and many, many more are The better part of valor is discretion - Falstaff, from - "Brush up your Shakespeare" by Michael Macrone, Grammercy Books, Copyright 1990 by Cader Company, Inc.

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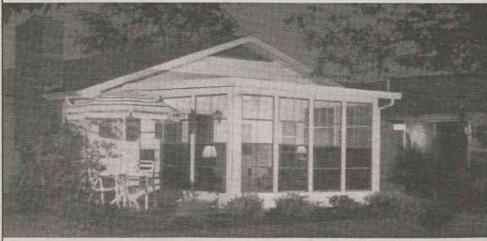
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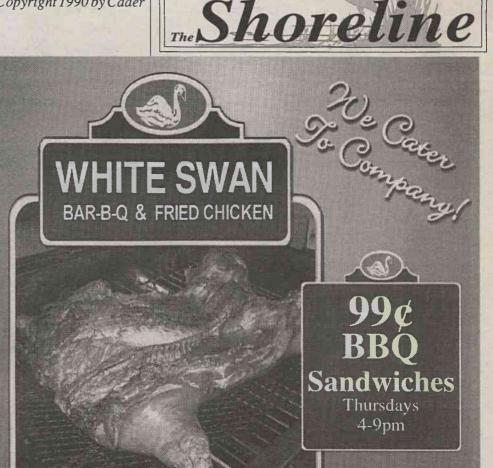
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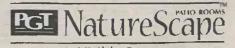
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