



Sir Thomas More

Shakespeare's Sheriff More speech, Act 2.[4]

GENERAL EDITOR: John Nobody

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ACT 2 SCENE (4) – [VARIES WITH EDITIONS]

NO OF LINES: 69

TIME ^(approx): 4 min 50 sec**GUIDE TO NO.3 'PHRASING' SCRIPT**

TAKING NO.1 AND NO.2 SCRIPTS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

If you have followed the DEMOs sequentially you will recognise the notation that has so far accrued:

- ✓ An ^x at the end of a verse line alerts you to a note about scansion and elision in the corresponding ePlay resource
- ✓ The symbol ^o alerts you to a note about text, lineation, stage direction or speech header in the ePlay
- ✓ The superscript numbers
 - ^{11, 12, etc} tell you the verse-line syllable count
 - ^{7e, 5e, etc} identify epic caesuras
- ✓ Based on metrical rules applied to each individual verse line:
 - blue highlighter for challenging elisions, i.e. virtuous [VIRT-chus], ruffians [RUFF-yans], appropriate [ap-PRO-p'ate]
 - Possible expansions, i.e. for 'ocean' > o-ce-an [O-ce-an]
 - Pronunciation issues, i.e. [can-NOT] in one line but [CAN-not] in another. Ditto [AL-lies] and [al-LIES]
 - The poet's accent for placement of stress, i.e. adversary [AD-ver-s'-ry] (USA) as opposed to [ad-VER-sa-ry] (UK)
- ✓ The symbol ^{rh} to mark dramatic gear changes
- ✓ The abbreviation ^{Rh}! in the margin to alert you to a Rhyme
- ✓ ^{LE} and ^{LEV} to mark dramatic line-endings or line-ending verbs.

No.3 'Phrasing' script has the following additional performance scoring:

- ✓ The consonant separator []]. Consecutive words that end and begin with the same consonant sound benefit from a fractional pause to separate them – notoriously the [s] sound, i.e. 'vicious] circle'
- ✓ The single slash / after nouns, verbs, interesting adjectives or naturally suspenseful words invites you to give that word a little extra choice >> it is NOT a place to breathe (otherwise delivery will be choppy and broken rather than fluid and eloquent)
- ✓ The double slash // to mark a HIDDEN CAESURA, a natural sense break mostly unmarked by punctuation >> you have the option to suspend or even take a breath here (but be selective)
- ✓ The slur mark to indicate what word or combination of words can be tripped faster provide a contrast in pace within a line. It also earns you the right to take another segment slower.

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The final piece of additional scoring to be found in no.3 'Phrasing script' is:

- ✓ Text **bolding**. This is used to suggest words that we think have – or could have if you so choose – a little extra kick; or words that have long vowels that might be profitably exploited. In Sheriff More's speech below, see 'feed' line (92).

Line beginnings with trochees [TUM-ti], as opposed to regular iambs [ti-TUM], invariably have extra punch – see lines (77), (81) & (85) below.

Other reasons that words or a syllable of a word might be bolded include the possibility it's a repetition, a word that modifies a repetition or its synonym, an antithesis, a pun and so on. If you're still not sure why, the ePlay resource for the script should supply the answer.

CAVEAT 1

The phrasing script is a guide only – the exercise is not, nor can it ever be, a perfect science. Nothing in Shakespeare is writ in stone and there is, as always, room for debate.

Only by standing up and vocalising will you discover what works for you personally and what doesn't. Then mark up your blank no.1 script accordingly. It's your performance – own it.

CAVEAT 2

Metricists are like economists – put ten in a room and you will get ten different opinions. As the scholar George T. Wright says, verse lines are probably more iambic than they are typically scanned. There are also less hexameters (Alexandrines) than people assume, i.e. the Elizabethans elided a lot more, something we try to emulate in our output to encourage greater overall velocity and greater variation in pace. If, however, you spot a copper-bottomed scansion howler, please contact us.

ACT 2 SCENE (4) – [VARIES WITH EDITIONS]

NO OF LINES: 69

TIME ^(approx): 4 min 50 sec*St Martin's-le-Grand, Aldersgate, London**May Day, 1517***CROWD** (of the prevailing mood)

1-76: Remove the strangers ! °

SHERIFF MORE

77: **Grant** them / remov'd, and grant / that this your **noise** ^{LE}
 78: Hath **chid** down / all the majesty / of England ; ¹¹
 79: **Imagine** / that you **see** / the wretched strangers ¹¹
 80: (Their babies / at their backs / and their poor luggage) ¹¹
 81: **Plodding** / to th' ports / and coasts / for transportation ; ¹¹
 82: And that you sit / as **kings** / in your desires,
 83: **Authority** / quite **silenc'd** / by your **brawl**,
 84: And you in **ruff** / of your **opinions** / clothed ; ^{11x}
 85: **What** had you got? ⁴
 85: I'll tell you : you had **taught** ^{LEV}
 86: How insolence / and strong hand / should prevail,
 87: How **order** / should be quell'd ; and by this pattern ¹¹ ^{LE}
 88: Not **one** of you / should live an agèd / man—
 89: For **other** / **ruffians** (as their fancies / wrought) ^{11x}
 90: With self same hand, **self** reasons, and **self** right,
 91: Would **shark** / on you ; and men like rav'nous fishes ¹¹ ^{LE}
 92: Would **feed** / on one another. ⁷

DOLL

93: Before God, that's as true as the Gospel.

LINCOLN or **GEORGE BETTS** °

94: Nay, this is a sound fellow, I tell you—let's mark him.

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TIME ^(approx): 4 min 50 sec**SHERIFF MORE**

95: Let me set up / before your thoughts, good friends,

96: On supposition ; which if you will mark,

97: You shall **perceive** / how **horrible** / a shape **LE**

98: Your insurrection / bears. ⁶ ^o

98: First, / 'tis a **sin** !

99: Which oft / the apostle / did forewarn us of,

100: **Urging** / **obedience** // to authority ; ^{11x}

101: And 'twere no error, if I told you all,

102: You were in arms / against your God / Himself !

ALL

103: Marry, God forbid that ! ^{6a}

SHERIFF MORE

104: Nay, certainly you are ; ^{6b}

105: For to the king // God hath His office / lent **LE**

106: Of dread, of justice, power and command ;

107: Hath bid **him** rule, and willed **you** to obey ;

108: And—to add ampler / majesty to this—

109: He hath not only lent the king His figure, ¹¹

110: His throne, His] sword, // but giv'n him / his own] name,

111: Calls him // 'a god on earth'. ⁶

111: What **do** you then—

112: **Rising** 'gainst him / that God **Himself** / installs—

113: But **rise** // 'gainst God? ⁴

113: What **do** you / to your souls **LE**

114: In **doing** / this? ⁴

114: O **desp'rate** / as you are,

115: **Wash** / your foul minds / with tears ; and those] same

hands—

116: That you like rebels / lift **against** / the peace—

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- 117: Lift **up** / for peace ; and your unrev'rent **knees** ^{LE}
- 118: Make them / your feet / to **kneel** / to be forgiven ! ¹¹ ^o
- 119: Tell me / but this : ▼ what rebel captain— ^{9 > 11}
- 120: As mutinies / are like / to hap—by his name ^{11x} ^{LE} ^o
- 121: Can **still** / the rout? Who will **obey** / a traitor? ¹¹
- 122: Or how can **well** / that proclamation sound
- 123: When there is no addition / but // a 'rebel' ¹¹ ^{LE}
- 124: To **qualify** / a rebel? ^{7e > 6}
- 124: You'll **put down** / strangers, ^{(11 > 10)x}
- 125: **Kill** them, **cut** their throats, **possess** / their houses, ^{(10 > 11)x}
- 126: And **lead** / the majesty / of law / on leash ^{LE} ^o
- 127: To **slip** him / like a hound. ⁶
- 127: **Say now** the king
- 128: (As he is **clement** / if th' offender mourn)
- 129: Should so much come too short / of your great trespass ¹¹ ^{LE}
- 130: As **merely** / t' **banish** / **you**—whith'r would you go? ^o
- 131: What country—by the nature of your error—¹¹
- 132: Should give you harbor? ^{5e > 4}
- 132: Go you to France or Flanders ; ¹¹
- 133: To any German province ; Spain or Portugal ; ¹²
- 134: Nay, anywhere / that not **adheres** / to England—¹¹
- 135: Why, **you** / must **needs** / be strangers. ^{7e > 6}
- 135: Would you be pleased ^{LEV}
- 136: To find a nation / of such **barb'rous** / temper, ¹¹
- 137: That breaking out / in **hideous** / vi-o-lence ^{11x} ⁽⁹⁻¹⁰⁾
- 138: Would not **afford** you / an **abode** / on earth?
- 139: **Whet** / their detested knives / **across** / your throats? ^o [HWET]
- 140: **Spurn** you / like / dogs? and like as if that God ^{LE}
- 141: **Own'd** not, nor / **made** not you? ⁶

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141:

Nor that the elements ¹²LE142: Were not all appropriate] / to your comforts, ^{11x}143: But charter'd // unto them? ⁶

143:

What would you think ^{LEV}144: To be thus / used? ⁴

144:

This // is the strangers' case ;145: And this // your mountanish / inhumanity. ^{11x} o

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