



ACT 2 SCENE (4) - [VARIES WITH EDITIONS]	NO OF LINES: 69	TIME ^(approx) : 4 min 50 sec	OBSERVATIONS ON SHERIFF MORE’S FAMOUS IMMIGRANT SPEECH
<div><i>St Martin’s-le-Grand, Aldersgate, London</i></div> <div><i>May Day, 1517</i></div> <div><i>CROWD (of the prevailing mood)</i></div> <div>1-76: Remove the strangers ! ^o</div> <div><i>SHERIFF MORE</i></div> <div>77: Grant them remov’d, and grant that this your noise ^{LE}</div> <div>78: Hath chid down all the majesty of England ; ¹¹</div> <div>79: Imagine that you see the wretched strangers ¹¹</div> <div>80: (Their babies at their backs and their poor luggage) ¹¹</div> <div>81: Plodding to th’ ports and coasts for transportation ; ¹¹</div> <div>82: And that you sit as kings in your desires,</div> <div>83: Authority quite silenc’d by your brawl,</div> <div>84: And you in ruff of your opinions clothed ; ^{11x}</div> <div>85: <u>What had you got?</u> ⁴</div> <div>85: I’ll tell you : you had taught ^{LEV}</div> <div>86: How insolence and strong hand should prevail,</div> <div>87: How order should be quell’d ; and by this pattern ¹¹ ^{LE}</div> <div>88: Not one of you should live an agèd man—</div> <div>89: For other ruffians (as their fancies wrought) ^{11x}</div> <div>90: With self same hand, self reasons, and self right,</div> <div>91: Would shark on you ; and men like rav’nous fishes ¹¹ ^{LE}</div> <div>92: <u>Would feed on one another.</u> ⁷</div> <div><i>DOLL</i></div> <div>93: Before God, that’s as true as the Gospel.</div> <div><i>LINCOLN or GEORGE BETTS</i> ^o</div> <div>94: Nay, this is a sound fellow, I tell you—let’s mark him.</div>			<div><div>LEGEND (MAIN LEGEND PAGE 5)</div><div>^x > alerts you to a note about scansion and elision in the corresponding ePlay resource</div><div>^o > alerts you to a note about text, lineation, stage direction or speech header in the ePlay</div></div> <div>GENERAL</div> <div>CONTEXT / SITUATION</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Sheriff More (he is not yet ‘Sir’ Thomas More) is addressing a mixed mob of educated and uneducated people who are calling for the expulsion of immigrants who they believe threaten their way of lifeThe situation is dangerousWhile admonishing them Sheriff More must also reason with them through force of logic and an appeal to their better natureHe refers to them as ‘good friends’, not ‘<i>you blocks, you stones, you worse than senseless things</i>’ as Murellus does in a similar mob situation in <i>Julius Caesar</i> (Act 1:1)There are references to God. Elizabethans genuinely feared divine retribution and eternal damnation.</div> <div><div>VERSEBUSTER TIP</div><div>The temptation to be angry throughout should be avoided. It will sound shrill. The actor needs to imagine that he has at all costs to <i>persuade and convince</i>, rather than berate and hector. As always in Shakespeare delivery it is a fusion of intellect and emotion. It is about balance. Emotion should never drown the argument. That is not to say one cannot be highly charged, but at specific moments – be sparing. Less is more.</div></div> <div>SHAPE OF SPEECH</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">More’s speech is very long; it would tolerate cutsIt has many mid-line endings, common to later Shakespeare, to encourage the actor not to take excessive pauses after full-stops (^{i.e.} ‘get on with it’).The speech has three distinct phases:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lines 77-92Lines 95-118Lines 119-146</div> <div>The gear changes at 95 and 119 are marked by the gear change sign [⚙]. Note, however, there is variation and ‘mini-phases’ within this larger pattern.</div> <div>TEXT</div> <div>The language is comparatively simple and straightforward and More’s overall argument readily understood today.</div> <div>WORD / PHRASE SUBSTITUTIONS & FALSE FRIENDS</div> <div>We have made some modest word substitutions to make certain bits clearer to audiences e.g. ‘<i>on leash</i>’ (126) for ‘<i>in lyam</i>’. (In substituting we always preserve the metre and, if possible, the alliteration and assonance too.) Check the ePlay for more substitutions. If you want to reverse our substitutions, please do so. Take charge and make the speech your own.</div>

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<div><p>SHERIFF MORE </p><p>⁹⁵: Let me set up before your thoughts, good friends,</p><p>⁹⁶: On supposition ; which if you will mark,</p><p>⁹⁷: You shall perceive how horrible a shape LE</p><p>⁹⁸: <u>Your insurrection bears.</u> ⁶  ∞ [FF] ^{11x}</p><p>⁹⁸: First, 'tis a sin !</p><p>⁹⁹: Which oft the apostle did forewarn us of,</p><p>¹⁰⁰: Urging obedience to authority ;</p><p>¹⁰¹: And 'twere no error, if I told you all,</p><p>¹⁰²: <u>You were in arms against your God Himself !</u></p><p>ALL</p><p>¹⁰³: Marry, God forbid that ! ^{6a}</p><p>SHERIFF MORE</p><p>¹⁰⁴: Nay, certainly you are ; ^{6b}</p><p>¹⁰⁵: For to the king God hath His office lent LE</p><p>¹⁰⁶: Of dread, of justice, power and command ;</p><p>¹⁰⁷: Hath bid him rule, and willed you to obey ;</p><p>¹⁰⁸: And—to add ampler majesty to this—</p><p>¹⁰⁹: He hath not only lent the king His figure, ¹¹</p><p>¹¹⁰: His throne, His sword, but giv’n him his own name,</p><p>¹¹¹: <u>Calls him ‘a god on earth’.</u> ⁶</p><p>¹¹¹: What do you then—</p><p>¹¹²: Rising 'gainst him that God Himself installs—</p><p>¹¹³: <u>But rise 'gainst God?</u> ⁴</p><p>¹¹³: What do you to your souls LE</p><p>¹¹⁴: <u>In doing this?</u> ⁴</p><p>¹¹⁴: O desp’rate as you are,</p><p>¹¹⁵: Wash your foul minds with tears ; and those same hands—</p><p>¹¹⁶: That you like rebels lift against the peace—</p></div>			<p>The speech has five ‘false friends’ which we denote in the margin with the symbol [FF].</p> <p>Definition: False friends are words that look familiar to us today but actually meant something (or could mean something) quite different – even the exact opposite – in Shakespeare’s day.</p> <p>For the purpose of this demo speech we have taken the liberty of ‘modernising’ them (indicated by the infinity sign ∞ placed before [FF]). Check the ePlay for the original word or phrase.</p> <p>VOICE</p> <p>Shouting at the mob for 69 lines will wreck your voice and be intolerable for the audience. So play around with the ‘persuasion / admonishment’ mix. Find places to change the volume, rhythm and pitch – hear the audio example for ideas</p> <div><p>AUDIO CAVEAT</p><p>The audio is only our ‘take’ on the speech the day we recorded it. It represents ‘work-in-progress’. Tomorrow we’d do it differently. You’ll notice some little inconsistencies, a bum note and slips of the tongue – just as might occur in live performance. Our recordings are emphatically not definitive and should be treated with a healthy dose of critical detachment. We don’t have, or claim to have, a monopoly on the right way to speak Shakespeare.</p><p>That said, our methodology and approach, based on the work of the greatest exponents of Shakespeare-speaking, has a sound pedigree. It can be applied to any speech or part to help yield a consistently proficient result. We leave the truly inspirational, virtuoso stuff to you.</p></div> <p>GESTURE / ILLUSTRATION</p> <p>More’s speech invites a lot of gesture, but be specific. “<i>Suit the action to the word, the word to the action</i>”.</p> <p>SCALE</p> <p>Know what space you will be playing in. A smaller, more intimate space requires smaller gestures and more subtle vocals. Try the speech two ways. First imagine you are playing to a huge arena (but don’t push your voice, you’ll wreck it). Then try it again to (imaginary) family in the kitchen – enroll your pet if you have to!</p> <p>AUDITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">For auditions cutting this lengthy speech is essential – 30-35 lines max. <div><p><u>VERSEBUSTER TIP</u></p><p>Make the judges the mob and persuade <i>them</i>.</p></div>

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<div><div><div><div>117: Lift up for peace ; and your unrev’rent knees LE</div><div>118: <u>Make them your feet to kneel to be forgiven !</u> 11 o</div><div>⌂</div><div>119: Tell me but this : ▼ what rebel captain—9 > 11</div><div>120: As mutinies are like to hap—by his name 11x LE o ∞ [FF]</div><div>121: Can still the rout? <u>Who will obey a traitor?</u> 11</div><div></div><div>122: Or how can well that proclamation sound</div><div>123: When there is no addition but a ‘rebel’ 11 LE</div><div>124: <u>To qualify a rebel?</u> 7e > 6</div><div>124: You’ll put down strangers, (11 > 10)x</div><div>125: Kill them, cut their throats, possess their houses, (10 > 11)x</div><div>126: And lead the majesty of law on leash LE o ∞ [FF]</div><div>127: <u>To slip him like a hound.</u> 6</div><div>127: Say now the king</div><div>128: (As he is clement if th’ offender mourn)</div><div>129: Should so much come too short of your great trespass 11 LE</div><div>130: As merely t’ banish you—whith’r would you go? o ∞ [FF]</div><div>131: What country—by the nature of your error—11</div><div>132: <u>Should give you harbor?</u> 5e > 4</div><div>132: Go you to France or Flanders ; 11</div><div>133: To any German province ; Spain or Portugal ; 12</div><div>134: Nay, anywhere that not adheres to England—11</div><div>135: <u>Why, you must needs be strangers.</u> 7e > 6</div><div>135: Would you be pleased LEV</div><div>136: To find a nation of such barb’rous temper, 11</div><div>137: That breaking out in hideous vi-o-lence 11x (9-10)</div><div>138: Would not afford you an abode on earth?</div><div>139: Whet their detested knives across your throats? o [HWET]</div><div>140: Spurn you like dogs? and like as if that God LE</div><div>141: <u>Own’d not, nor made not you?</u> 6 ∞ [FF]</div></div></div></div>			<div><div><div>SPECIFICS</div><div>VERSE-LINE ENDINGS</div><div>The speech has number of enjambed lines (meaning their sense is incomplete and flow over on to the next line). These provide opportunity for rhetorical suspense i.e. the sense goes straight on but you can pause for dramatic effect. These are marked opposite with the symbol LE [Line-Ending] or LEV [Line-Ending Verb]. Verbs at the end of such lines can be particularly effective as rhetorical breaks. See lines (85) and (143) in this respect.</div><div>We also use LEV for incomplete questions. See (136)</div><div>MID-LINE ENDINGS</div><div>The speech has a heavy preponderance of mid-line-endings, typical of Shakespeare’s later style. This means the thoughts are tumbling thick and fast. You can take a breath here, though some Shakespeareans are not keen it. Certainly you should not dawdle on a mid-line ending. If you listen to the audio you’ll notice we rarely take a breath here unless there is some acting business or a highly fractured line that necessitates it.</div><div>SCANSION</div><div>Lines (125) and (142) are fully trochaic (TUM-ti) which is unusual even in late Shakespeare. The lines are discussed in the ePlay resource</div><div>ELISION</div><div>Where the metre demands elision (contraction) we do it for you if we can. When it might cause confusion we highlight the letter(s) in blue instead. You have the option either to ignore it or try and make a fist of it. For instance, ‘obedience’ line (100) which is normally four syllables would become three [o-BEAD-yence].</div><div>Line 137 combines, in effect, a contraction with an expansion. To keep the metre it’s [HI-yous VI-o-lence]. (‘Violence’ is actually three syllables anyway but most of us make it two in every day speech so we have to make a conscious effort). Fashions change in Shakespeare. The current vogue is generally not to bother, but it is technically correct. ACT (According To Taste, as we say.)</div><div>ANTITHESES, REPETITIONS, PUNS, ALLITERATION, ASSONANCE, LONG VOWEL SOUNDS, ETC</div><div>These are highlighted in the ePlay.</div><div><div>You will find a wealth of performance-specific information in our ePlay resource. These are attractive PDFs with in-depth annotation [glossary, etc.] and notation using helpful, easy-to-grasp graphics. See the Sir Thomas More ePlay demo on Homepage. They can be used for private study or projected on a wall for group-sharing.</div><div>For an attractive slide-show that explains the significance of the Shakespeare-related terms below citing numerous examples, please see the slide show ePlay demo</div></div></div></div>

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<div><div><div>141:</div><div>Nor that the elements¹² ^{LE}</div></div><div><div>142:</div><div>Were not all appropriate to your comforts,^{11x}</div></div><div><div>143:</div><div><u>But charter’d unto them?</u>⁶</div></div><div><div>143:</div><div>What would you think ^{LEV}</div></div><div><div>144:</div><div><u>To be thus used?</u>⁴</div></div><div><div>144:</div><div>This is the strangers’ case ;</div></div><div><div>145:</div><div><u>And this your mountainish inhumanity.</u>^{11x} ^o</div></div></div>				<div>THE ePLAY MARKS UP (list not exhaustive):</div> <div><div><div><div><div></div><div>all repetitions, antitheses, puns, etc. > important not to miss these and their frequent interconnection</div></div></div><div><div></div><div>monosyllabic as opposed to polysyllabic lines; long vowels as opposed to short vowels; trochaic rhythms (TUM-ti) versus iambic rhythms (ti-TUM), elisions, etc. > all of these impact on the pace of lines (or sections of lines – the first half might be slow, the second half quick, or vice-versa)</div></div><div><div></div><div>interesting switches between:<div><div><div>forms of address > (status games: clue to shifting attitudes)<div><div>‘you’ and ‘thou’</div><div>titles and epithets</div></div></div><div>verse and prose > clue to sincerity versus insincerity; to openness versus disguise; to sanity rather than madness, etc. (Note that verse and prose are far less to do with status as many imagine – Hamlet, a prince, interchanges between both, as does Rosalind, a Duke’s daughter)</div><div>complex and simple language > another clue to sincerity or guile; or to the articulation of difficult emotions; or to pomposity, or to hyperbole, etc.</div></div></div><div><div></div><div>alternative stage directions > there can be huge differences between popular texts (Arden, Penguin, Cambridge, Oxford, etc.) as to:<div><div><div>the placement of entrances and exits</div><div>the type of action (if any) at a given moment</div><div>who speaks certain lines (known as ‘Speech Headers’ or ‘Speech Prefixes’)</div><div>to whom lines are addressed (an ‘aside’ or ‘not an aside’; to one person or all?) and so forth.</div></div></div><div>Empower yourself and pick the stage directions that work best for you</div></div><div><div></div><div>alternative text and line layout > in heavily disputed texts like <i>Richard III</i> and <i>King Lear</i> there are many textual variations between editions. Pick the best and leave the rest! If you are familiar with the original texts – ‘Quarto’ and ‘Folio’ – you can also compare these alongside the modern. If you’re not familiar with these do not panic! Versebuster’s own text serves the actor very well. It is sensitive to all the well-known and lesser-known textual disputes. Ours is very much an <i>actor’s</i> script as opposed to a <i>school-room</i> script, but certainly it is still very usable and intelligible in a school or college environment.</div></div><div><div></div><div>scansion > Shakespeare’s dramatic verse is somewhat different to his poetic verse – the <i>Sonnets</i> scan meticulously, the plays irregularly. Modern editions can be very hit and miss with solutions. Some barely bother because their book is intended for students not actors. In the opening soliloquy to <i>Richard III</i> there are three non-scanning lines. One of these requires that, technically speaking, the actor contracts / elides ‘vir-tu-ous’ (3 sybs) to ‘virt-chus’ (2 sybs). Ignore or respect? There is no easy answer. The debate on scansion is much coloured by ever-changing tastes in verse-speaking, as well as the modern aversion to rules (discussed on the Homepage under ‘Show more’ top of the page).</div></div></div></div></div></div></div>

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Theatre Script Legend [©]				
11	Verse line syllable count			
	NB Lines <u>without a number</u> are 10 regular syllables (with or without the help of elision) – the focus is on line lengths that deviate from this norm, short or long			
11x	Doesn’t scan – some word, or component of a word, or a combination of two or more words need eliding, e.g.			
	THEATRE SCRIPT	ePLAY		
	Obedience	[o-BEAD-yence]		
	Ruffians	[RUFF-yans]		
7e	Epic caesura - - the final weak or unstressed syllable is not counted			
°	Alerts actor to a note in the ePlay about a textual or line setting dispute			
[SD] ° [SH] °	Alerts actor to a note in the ePlay about a Stage Direction or a Speech Header			
x	Alerts actor to a note in the ePlay about scansion and / or elision			
103:	Coloured line numbers indicate disagreement across the five editions we examine			
104:	over how a line should be properly set (i.e. whether it’s prose or verse, whether it’s a shared line, whether it’s an isolated half-line or part of an adjacent line, where it comes in a sequence of lines, etc.)			
[FF] °	False friend in the script and actor needs to check the ePlay for real meaning			
∞ [FF]	False friend replaced by us and actor may want to check the ePlay for the original word[s]			
▢	Notable gear change / change of tack – argument, attitude or mood			
LE	Verse line with suspenseful ending (typically because the sense is incomplete)			
LEV	Verse line with suspenseful ending driven by a verb (often stronger still)			
[xxxx]	Suggestion how a word should be pronounced			
	THEATRE SCRIPT	ePLAY		
	Whet	[HWET]		