

Candice Macabuhay  
ELIT17 Julie Pesano  
5 December 2017

## Happy Engagements

### Scene 1

(It is daytime, C is taking a stroll through the garden of a university.)

C: What is this? My dearest companions! What do they do without my presence, were we meant to meet at this moment? But, wait, why does he look so nervous?

J: I'm nervous.

S: Be not nervous.

J: My, uhm, dearest, I, on my one knee, um... kneel before you, of course, I suppose... to propose to you...

S: To propose what, exactly?

J: Well—to propose to you, that I think that you and I, should marry.

S: Oh, well, what a splendid moment indeed! I shall of course accept your proposal, as I have loved you long and sufferingly, despite the awkward tone and shifty eyes. Perhaps you may stand, take a deep breath, and try again?

C: What's that? Mine own best friend, my dear S, and my truest love, my boyfriend J, betrothed to each other in secret? Behind my back? What sort of sick trick is this? But yet, he repeats his words and they laugh and he blushes and—

Oh! I wish only that the sun were not so bright, so as not to glare on me with its truth and brilliance, so that my tears would not glisten, so that I may hide. Perhaps if it rained, my tears would mask themselves by the side of the tears of the sky.

(C exists, B enters.)

S: If you ask C in such a way as you have inquired towards me, she will surely be too embarrassed to reply.

J: For the life of me, I can't shake my nerves. What if she says no?

S: You two are a splendid couple, residing in the upper division of our university—why would she say no?

(Aside) B: So the lovely c has misunderstood the intentions of her dearest two, I wonder what it is I can do to modify this situation?

And what is this? Rain? In the middle of summer? What tricks here does nature make, and how could I, humble as I am, match our mother in mischief? Oh—

(A enters).

B: Abigail! My sweet sister, do come quickly to my side so I may part upon you wisdom!

A: Ever complacent to your ways, I bear the grief of my ear to your... wits?

B: Remember in the week past, we made a bet that—

A: We need not reminisce on the details of the bet.

B: Ah, dear sister, ever embarrassed of your own insolence. I would like, as payment, for you to falsify yourself as man for the next week—the bondage of your chest—

A: What chest?

B: ...You are correct, no bondage necessary. Well, you will dress as man, and you will talk with a different tone, and I shall sit back and enjoy myself fruitfully.

A: (Aside) In earnest, this sounds not nearly as entertaining as he will believe.

(To B) I go now to scourge your wardrobe. Adieu.

(A exits.)

## Scene 2

(It is nighttime, the rain has cleared. A is wandering through the woods when she hears c, who is sitting alone in the same woods.)

A: oh, what a beautiful maiden my eyes have had the chance to meet. Could it be c? By chance, I suppose it is. Yet why doth she stray so far from civilization at such a time of night? I shall hide in this brush, os she does not see me dressed alike my own brother whom she does despise for his notoriously treacherous ways.

C:

Day changes so swiftly to night.

Thought I that love could in truth exist

As between his words I found the lover's bliss,

The friendly reminder that this, and only this,

Could ever ensure life-long happiness.

And S, oh, as heart does cry  
How could perhaps the truth betray mine eye?  
That you should be anything but by my side...  
I wish only that you had not tasted the wine of his lies.  
My two most trusted companions have felled me so,  
Have chosen each other, have cast me far and low,  
It is impossible now, in life, for me to say or know,  
Whoever can I entrust with my heart and soul?  
Ah, the clouds, how they flee to reveal moonlight's path shining down on me,  
So unaware are they of all the secrets they are meant to keep—  
But what there is that noise I hear rustle from the brush?? A wild beast?  
Come, my life means nothing, it is mine enemy

A: I am sorry to disappoint, my lady, but I am no beast, only Abi—Abraham... I did not wish to disturb the lovely tones of your lamentations, and now I am ashamed as I admit to you my crimes against your privacy.

C: Having heard my lamentations, sir, I beg only that you do not share my misfortune with others.

A: What misfortune have you thus experienced? It can only be fortune to lose someone who does not love you as they claim to—to lie about love is to be a liar. But love is never lost until both partners in the dance decide not to move. Do you dance?

C: I would dance again were it with someone true.

A: I have many times been told that I am a splendid dancer.

C: I am no good myself, but attempt for you sir, I can.

(B enters from random tree)

B: Yes, 'tis I yet again. I have spectated this foolish sport that is courtship and have come up hands-free of self pity and arms full of opportunity. That my sister would dare to abuse her gender of now, to manipulate it in her own favor. I will teach her a lesson she ought not to forget.

(All exit.)

Scene 3

(Nighttime of the following day, in the same garden as previously).

J: How in the world am I going to face my beloved? Do I have the strength, the charm, to be engaged? Do I have the willpower to be as faithful and true as I know I want to be for her? She'll

be here in any moment and still my fingers shake and shake.

(Enter C)

J: Ah, C! You look absolutely beautiful!—but who is that man that stands behind you? Well, no matter. Come, come!

C: I have no intention of returning to my complacent position by your side.

J: What do you mean?

C: Thought you that I might never know,  
Yet here you bring me where you have sewn  
A second path for yourself and yourself alone,  
A place where two wives can fill a home?  
You do not deserve the right to say to me that everything is fine and I will not carry on as if I do not know of your dishonesty. And at the same time, you do not deserve to terminate the bond that had at least once appeared to be tangible between us. I leave you now, sir. I finally have the strength, the power, to tell you goodbye.

J: C? What do you mean? Dishonesty? My love, my truest love—

C: Do not ever refer to me with such words of renown and adoration. Bury yourself in the shrine you have labored for. I never wish to see your falsely charming face again!

A: There, there, my love. Let us go.

J: You would leave me for this feminine creature? This man who is but half a man, this boy?

C: He is no boy. He is more man than you are ever destined to be.

(B's distinct laughter can be heard aside, and A and C exit.)

J: What do you mean?

(Enter S)

S: Ah, hello lovely J, has the grand proposal commenced? Have I come too late or do I arrive in a timely matter? Hello? Art thou ghost or human? Doth thou mouth function?

J: Quit waving in my eyes. They're open and they see but they never wish to see again. C has left me! For a boy who looks of thirteen years.

S: She has betrayed you?

J: Well, in all honesty, it is also I who betrayed her... She commented that she was leaving because of my own dishonesties... She must know about what happened those months ago. But how she found the truth, I do not know.

S: What truth do you speak of?

J: My relations with M, a few months ago...

S: You—I was told that such relations were found untrue...

J: I wish that I could hold true to that lie.

S: Well, what now will you attempt?

J: Perhaps, if C is gone, it is possible to woo you?

(Enter B from side stage).

B: Wait! Before you go, my dear companions in the war that is education, would you be so kind as to support myself and attend my humble play?

S: I adore plays. When shall it be held?

B: Tomorrow, the hours just before dusk engulfs the world in darkness, if you'll come in your finest wear I would be so honored. It is a one-man act, but I will bring plenty of... volunteers, to the floor.

S: That sounds simply magnificent! Your words please my soul.

B: It honors me to please. Adieu, till tomorrow's lights shine on the truths and the costumes of tomorrow's spectacle.

(B exists.)

J: Finally.

S: As C is no longer a friend, we can attend without fear of her judgement, and as she despises B with a strange passion, surely she shall not attend despite the glory that is soon to come!

J: All fun and games. Now come, S, before the night is gone.

#### Scene 4

(A crowd has assembled in a large auditorium.)

C: Why must we be here if we both despise B, Abraham?

A: Unfortunately, I made a promise to do so.

C: We shall see how—

B: Ladies and GentleMAN, tonight I present a one-man play created and acted solely by myself. Welcome to a little something which I have decided to entitle Happy Engagements, as an assignment for my theatre class, instructed by the lovely Professor Pesano. Please take a bow professor and bask in your own glory! Now, I will be calling to the stand each of you in the front row progressively, so be prepared when your name is called.

It all began on a sunny day in early June, when flowers were in bloom despite the dry ground. Please, J and S, come to the stage! Now, J, kneel. No, not you S, however familiar with the position you are. Yes, like that silly. Okay perfect.

Two friends met in a garden green, and practicing his lines for C, he proposed to a lovely lady who accepted the curse of his words. And his “true” love, who had seen, misunderstanding the sentiment in their eyes?, ran far and far away—into the arms of a man who was not nearly as manly as they might think. Dear Abigail, please come to the stage. You, yes you. I mean it sister I will tell everyone of our bet if you do not rise. Very nicely done.

Yes, so this here is my SISTER, Abigail, who has dressed like a man for the past few days. So she likes girls, right? And she fell in love with the beautiful woman from before, and then didn’t want to admit she was a girl. Beautiful, enchanting C, if you would please join us on this stage, I believe you will hear the story of a lifetime...

#### Scene 5

(All of the main cast has gone to a classroom just outside of the auditorium.)

C: So the dismemberment of my heart you have dared to occupy your hands with... and yet, not with whom I expected nor when.

J: I would have loved you forever had you not chosen another over myself.

C: I’d have loved you for all eternity had you not been the paradigm of a worthless, lousy, f—

S: The crowd may still hear from the auditorium, perhaps it is better to discuss elsewhere?

C: Discuss? Discuss! I refute, I refuse this word “discuss”. There is nothing to discuss. You are creatures who belong to each other—evil, dirty, slimy snakes slithering along the floor until it is time to shed a new skin, develop a new skin.

J: What do you mean?

C: You will “love”, passionately. Hot, sensual lust. And you will die by the other’s dark soul. And then you will each find a new toy to passionately chase. But whatever happens in your lives, I shall never again be part of them.

S: So very unforgiving.

J: Come, S, let us return to our seats in the crowd. Even there is better than here.

S: Adieu, best friend.

(Exit J and S.)

C: And you, A, do you leave me now, as well?

A: Leave? My heart could never attempt such a thing. Stay is all it sings. But it fears your judgement, it regrets its lies. Leave? Leave C? ‘Tis impossible. You must do the deed, you must be the one to leave me.

C: Oh, silly girl indeed, as your brother does say! No, do not look so betrayed my dear. Be it a girl or boy, that one who sat and talked to me for hours until morning’s light when I needed one most, I’d have fallen even if I had known you were Abigail and not Abraham. For, what a lovely name, this Abigail. What a lovely look on this face—what lovely long hair, what a beautiful mind behind it. Is it too bold, or might I say? The truth my love, I much prefer you THIS way.

A: Female? Could it be true?

C: I love you for you. Abigail or Abraham or simply A, let us away. We need not watch the final parts of your brother’s play. I would love to know the other half of you that you have kept hidden away.

(C and A exit. B enters, mischievous still.)

B: Well, my actors have fled, and could it be that I’ve helped? I’ve mended hearts tonight. I will have to now tear a few apart. Ah, but before I am free, I must bring an end to my masterpiece.  
(To the audience.)

This has been brought to you by the Candy Company and Pesano Association!

So now we see the moral of life,  
That love is always worth the strife,  
But should love exist in secrets,  
It is lived without certain wits.

And should a secret be revealed too late  
There is no promise that the mate  
Will accept the change, may change thy fate.  
And should you simply open your eyes,  
It just may be that you will find,  
The perfect person for you, when blind,  
Is not your original choice's kind.  
And those that bring much lying and hate  
Living in secrets crafted as a story they've made  
Are bound to someday fall by the hand of their own poisoned blade.

And they all lived happily ever after.  
Except J and S.



## Play Analysis / Explanation

When presented with the chance to write a play instead of a traditional essay, I was enthralled. But seeing as I am neither very creative nor especially gifted in writing, I rallied the forces of the technical checklist, attempting to put more weight in the ideas I attempted to portray rather than the story itself.

The setting of my play is a university, with a lot of forest land and gardens in order to allow the mishaps that the structure of actual school doesn't allow. It is meant to contrast the idea of rigidity found within the classroom—thus, when the play ends and all truths are revealed, we are taken into an actual class setting and not a garden/"pastoral setting".

As for the characters, since I attempted my hands at a comedy (while it is not actually very funny), they are seen as very one-sided, especially with the page limitation. I attempted to show some sort of change within the main character, C, and maybe even some change within the mischievous B.

Regarding more structures of a typical comedy, I have not only a land where balance goes awry, but also the weather and day/night setting are also supposed to support this idea. I have my lower-class, "comic relief" (I know he's not very comedic) character who ties the plot together much as Puck did in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Another key element I employed was the confusion of genders and intentions, an aspect of miscommunication used frequently throughout Shakespeare's plays. And finally, I included a play within a play that is meant to wrap up the conflicts created throughout the story—I cut the play off because I did not know how to write it without being redundant seeing as it is simply the retelling of my play itself.