

2021

## The Shakespearean Actor

John Grey  
*Johnston, RI*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio\\_one](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio_one)



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Grey, John (2021) "The Shakespearean Actor," *Studio One*: Vol. 45, 50.

Available at: [https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio\\_one/vol45/iss1/26](https://digitalcommons.csbsju.edu/studio_one/vol45/iss1/26)

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Studio One by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@CSB/SJU. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@csbsju.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@csbsju.edu).

## THE SHAKESPEAREAN ACTOR

He's on stage, every night, playing grief,  
be it Hamlet's for his father, Macbeth  
at his vainglory or Othello's  
hard look at his own reasonless rage.

But he puts so much into Shakespearean  
misery that his personal anguish is  
treated almost casually backstage,  
a sip from a bottle as the makeup goes on,

two as it comes off. A fractured marriage  
can't compete with the treacherous minxes  
of the printed page. And what's a friend's  
broken promise to duplicitous whispers

in the ear, a murderous stepfather.  
His family aggravate him but their  
ghosts don't appear on parapets.  
And the news is never encouraging.

But it sure beats the cackling bile of witches.  
He even considered suicide once.  
Trouble was, he could never come up  
with a soliloquy to rival, "To be or not to be."

One day, when he's much older, and his wife  
has left him, and children seldom call, he'll be ready  
to play Lear. Seven nights a week, a breakdown for the ages.  
He'll have no strength left for his own tragedy.

John Grey  
Johnston, RI