

“SOMETHING NEW” lyrics by Mark Evan Chimsky and music by Alexander Zwick copyright © 2023 Mark Evan Chimsky and Alexander Zwick

(BURBAGE and WILL stand on the bare stage of the Globe Theatre. BURBAGE, the greatest tragedian of his age, is consummately theatrical.)

BURBAGE

FORGIVE ME, MY FRIEND, BUT WHY MUST YOU REFUSE?
YOUR GRIEF ROBS YOUR SPIRIT, YOU’RE SHORT OF A MUSE.
JUST TAKE UP YOUR PEN, IT MAY EASE THE STING
AS I ALWAYS SAY, THE PLAY’S THE THING...

WILL

RICHARD, I’M STRUGGLING, I’M ALL LOST AT SEA
I CALL TO MY MUSE – BUT IT’S HIDING FROM ME
SO, WHAT CAN I DO, THE PAIN IS TOO GREAT
HOW CAN I WRITE *SOMETHING* WHEN I CAN’T CREATE?

BURBAGE

You’ll find a way. You’re a National Treasure. You told me so.

WILL

I WISH I COULD DO IT, BUT NOW’S NOT THE TIME
HOW CAN I GET TO IT -- I’M ALL OUT OF RHYME?

(LORD CHAMBERLAIN’S MEN appear on various levels of the stage and sing with BURBAGE.)

BURBAGE AND LORD CHAMBERLAIN’S MEN

WE KNOW YOU CAN DO IT, IT’S ALL UP TO YOU
WHY NOT GET TO IT AND WRITE SOMETHING NEW!

(WILL shoos away LORD CHAMBERLAIN’S MEN and THEY exit, only to immediately return.)

WILL

MY WORDS HAVE NO WORTH NOW, WHAT USE IS MY QUILL?
I’VE LOST ALL MY MIRTH NOW, I CAN’T FIND THE WILL.

BURBAGE

Why not dust off that revenge play you had started to revise years ago – that old warhorse by Thomas Kyd that you thought could be a hit – revolutionary even --with your magic touch. *The Tragedie of Hamlet*, remember? A prince avenging his father's death.

(Sings)

A PART OF A LIFETIME TO SINK MY TEETH INTO
A MAN WHO'S CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT HE MUST DO
A PRINCE WITH A STRUGGLE, WHO QUESTIONS HIS SOUL
IT'S PERFECT FOR ME, MY GOD WHAT A ROLE!

A MAN WHO'S ROMANTIC, YOU SHOULD DRESS HIM IN BLACK
A PLAY TO AMAZE -- YOU'VE STILL GOT THE KNACK
SO, WRITE ME A HERO, AND I'LL FIT THE BILL
FOR WHERE THERE'S A WAY, I KNOW THERE'S A WILL!

BURBAGE AND LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN

WE KNOW YOU CAN DO IT, IT'S ALL UP TO YOU
WHY NOT GET TO IT AND WRITE SOMETHING NEW!

WILL

(Speaks, getting angry.)

No more plays, Richard. You're driving me mad...

BURBAGE

(Speaks)

Put that anger in the play, too, my boy. Pour everything you feel into it.

(Sings)

PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS, WRITE SOMETHING COMPLEX
AS GREAT AS MEDEA OR OEDIPUS REX
A PLAY TO EXCITE AND MAYBE PERPLEX
WITH PLENTY OF BLOOD AND EVEN MORE SEX!

A SIMPLE REQUEST -- JUST ASTONISH THE THRONG
WITH YOUR PERSONAL BEST, YOU CAN'T GO WRONG
SO DO IT OR RUE IT, IT'S ALL UP TO YOU
WHY NOT GET TO IT AND WRITE SOMETHING NEW!

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN

(Circling WILL as THEY sing.)

A PLAY THAT'S AMAZING, WRITE ROLES FOR US ALL
WE WILL BE READY – THE MOMENT YOU CALL
TIME TO START WRITING, SO PICK UP YOUR QUILL
FOR WHERE THERE'S A PLAY, WE KNOW THERE'S A WILL!

*(WILL shakes his head no, is about to exit but is held in place by the LORD
CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN.)*

WHY NOT THROW US A SMALL BONE OR TWO?
WE KNOW IT'S NOT EASY, SO DON'T MISCONSTRUE
WE FEEL THAT YOU OWE US,
SO WRITE SOMETHING NEW!

WILL

Does the word "no" mean nothing to you?

BURBAGE AND LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN

Nothing!

(Sing this verse boisterously.)

A PLAY THAT'S AMAZING, WRITE ROLES FOR US ALL
WE WILL BE READY – THE MOMENT YOU CALL
WHY NOT START WRITING, NO TIME LIKE TODAY
FOR WHERE THERE'S A WILL, WE KNOW THERE'S A PLAY!

WE'LL KEEP CAJOLING TILL YOU'VE HAD YOUR FILL
WE'VE GOT THE NEED AND YOU'VE GOT THE SKILL
MUST WE KEEP PLEADING "CAN WE GET A PLAY?"
TO BE OR NOT TO BE, WHAT DO YOU SAY?

WILL

That is the question!

(Sings)

I'VE BEEN FIGHTING MY FEELINGS AND RUNNING AWAY
BUT I'LL FACE THE PAIN THAT I'VE KEPT AT BAY
I DON'T MEAN TO BE TERSE BUT LET'S CALL IT A DAY
FOR BETTER OR WORSE, YOU'LL GET YOUR PLAY.

BURBAGE AND LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S MEN

HOORAY!

WE BET YOU CAN DO IT, IT'S ALL UP TO YOU

SO NOW GET TO IT, AND WRITE

WRITE WRITE WRITE

WRITE SOMETHING NEW!