

Out, (Deleted) Spot! Out, I Say!



Arthur Hoppe

THE NOTED SCHOLAR, Dr. Bowsley Bowdler, D.V.M., has jubilantly announced the discovery of a hitherto-unknown Shakespearean play entitled, "Maddick."

From the fragments made public by Dr. Bowdler, it appears that some minor crime has been committed early in the plot. The climactic scene occurs when Maddick meets with his confederates, three witches named H, E and D.

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H, E AND D: Fair is foul and (unintelligible) is fair, especially when the (characterization deleted) are out to get us.

Maddick: Out, (expletive deleted) Spot! Out, I say! And let the record show here that I was referring to my dog. I mean it isn't like I felt guilty about anything. You know, I mean I didn't even know anything was done, did I? That's for sure.

D: Neither did we. That's for sure.

All: That's for sure.

D: But those (characterization deleted) are going to talk.

Maddick: That would be wrong, that's for sure. How much would it take to (unintelligible) those (characterizations deleted)'s silence?

D: A million.

Maddick: No, (expletive deleted)? I know where it could be gotten. And we've gotta keep the cap on the bottle. But if it's gotta be done, it's best we get it done quickly. Right? Now here's what you do:

(Unfortunately, Dr. Bowdler reports that 18½ pages of the manuscript are inexplicably missing at this point.)

D: But perjury will out!

Maddick: Well, it's a hard rap to prove. You can say I don't remember.

You can say I don't recall. You can say you are afflicted with tertiary coreopsis which has induced selective amnesia. You can say . . .

H: Not so fast. I'm taking notes.

D: But what if you get caught?

Maddick: That would be wrong. That's for sure. But (expletive deleted) up your courage.

D: But I'm still afraid the (characterization deleted) will talk.

Maddick: That's why for your immediate things you have no choice but to come up with the money. Right?

D: Right. But the money will have to be washed.

Maddick: (expletive deleted) Do it!

(The scene closes with the three witches gathered around a steaming cauldron, stirring and cackling.)

H, E and D: Double, double toil and trouble; dirty money, boil and bubble.

Unfortunately once again, Dr. Bowdler reports that 16 scenes are missing, ten are illegible and four are smeared with cottage cheese and catsup.

But the end, he says, is highly dramatic. Maddick believes a prophecy that he will be safe "until the woods march up the hill." Yet that unlikely happenstance direly occurs when a woods of Rosemary marches up a hill named Capitol.

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WHILE DR. BOWDLER is delighted by his find, other experts contend the manuscript is so Bowdlerized, the plot so sleazy, the dialogue so fawdry and the characters so petty, they can't believe Shakespeare would have touched it with a ten-foot quill pen.

"In a word," said one disgustedly, "it lacks class."