



April is the month when Shakespeare was born (in 1564) and died (in 1616). Both events occurred in the English town of [Stratford-upon-Avon](#).

We can't be sure of the exact day on which he was born, because there seems to be no surviving birth certificate, but church records show he was baptized on April 26th, 1564 (at [Holy Trinity Church in Stratford](#)).

If his parents followed the then-normal protocol for baptizing children, their son was likely born three days earlier (which is why scholars use April 23 as Shakespeare's birth date).

It seems that Will also died on April 23. If that's the right date, in 1616, the great bard was 52 years old when he left this life on his last birthday.

Shakespeare wrote many plays, poems and sonnets. The chap really knew how to turn a phrase and is famous for many things, but in this story we're going to focus on his ... insults. He wrote some doozies!

Here are some examples (and their sources).

*Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit, for I am sick when I do look on thee.*

*A Midsummer Night's Dream - Act II, Scene i*

*I desire that we be better strangers.*

*As You Like It - Act 3, Scene ii*

*Thou art a boil, a plague sore, an embossed carbuncle in my corrupted blood.*

*King Lear - Act II, Scene ii*

*Thou elvish-mark'd, abortive, rooting hog!*

*Richard III - Act I, Scene iii*

*...in his sleep he does little harm, save to his bed-clothes about him.*

*All's Well that Ends Well - Act IV, Scene iii*

*I scorn you, scurvy companion.*

*Henry IV Part II - Act II, Scene iv*

*Would thou were clean enough to spit upon.*

*Timon of Athens - Act IV, Scene iii*

*It is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.*

*Macbeth - Act V, Scene v*

*I'll beat thee, but I would infect my hands.*

*Timon of Athens - Act IV, Scene iii*

*Away, you three inch fool!*

*Taming of the Shrew - Act IV, Scene iii*

*Villain, I have DONE thy mother.*

*Titus Andronicus - Act IV, Scene ii.*

*Thou sodden-witted lord! Thou hast no more brain than I have in mine elbows.*

*Troilus and Cressida - Act II, Scene i*

*Would thou wouldst burst!*

*Timon of Athens - Act IV, Scene iii*

*The rankest compound of villainous smell that ever offended nostril.*

*The Merry Wives of Windsor - Act III, Scene v*

Alas, the lead quote, at the top of this page—frequently attributed to Will Shakespeare—is not part of his written record.

Some have claimed that he *said* it, not *wrote* it, but that also seems unverified.

Instead, a version of the quote—at least in December of 1928—was attributed by Walter Winchell to a comedian named Frank Fay (who'd had a disagreement with an interior director):

*"Mr. Fay, is this going to be a battle of wits?"*

*"If it is," was the indifferent retort, "you have come unarmed!"* (See the December 12, 1928 *Lexington Herald*, "The Diary of a New Yorker," by Walter Winchell, Quote Page 4, Column 5, Lexington, Kentucky.)

Even though credit for *that* awesome quote seems to belong elsewhere, isn't it cool that 400 years after Shakespeare's death his biting insults—voiced by his characters—are still relevant in the 21st century?

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/How-to-Insult-Like-Shakespeare>

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