

SHAKESPEARE IN MODERN ENGLISH

Several currently-available study guides present Shakespeare's texts and, on facing pages, line-by-line translations of them into modern English prose. Such modernizations are invaluable aids to understanding how Shakespeare's language works, though not for the reasons their creators presumably intended.

This is the closing couplet of the first scene of *Twelfth Night or What You Will*:

Away before me to sweet beds of flowers,
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.

And this is the translation of that couplet from the *Shakespeare Made Easy* series:

Lead the way to the flower garden. Love thoughts are best indulged in natural surroundings.

This next pair of lines is from the speech that concludes *Macbeth* 3.2:

Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.

Here is the modernization by Spark Notes from their *No Fear Shakespeare* series:

The gentle creatures of the day are falling asleep, while night's predators are waking up to look for their prey.