

My Shakespeare

Performance by Kate Tempest

He's in every lover who ever stood alone beneath a window,
in every jealous whispered word,
in every ghost that will not rest.
He's in every father with a favorite,
every eye that stops to linger
on what someone else has got, and feels the tightening in their
chest.

He's in every young man growing boastful,
every worn out elder, drunk all day;
uttering false prophecies and squandering their lot.
He's there—in every mix-up that spirals far out of control—and
never seems to end,
even when its beginnings are forgot.

He's in every girl who ever used her wits. Who ever did her best.
in every vain admirer,
every passionate, ambitious social climber,
and in every misheard word that ever led to tempers fraying,
every pawn that moves exactly as the player wants it to,
and still remains convinced that it's not playing.

He's in every star crossed lover, in every thought that ever set your
teeth on edge, in every breathless hero, stepping closer to the ledge,
his is the method in our madness, as pure as the driven snow—his
hair standing on end, he saw that all that glittered was not gold.
He knew we hadn't slept a wink, and that our hearts were upon our
knees, and that the beast with two backs had us all upon our knees
as we fought fire with fire, he knew that too much of a good thing,
can leave you up in arms, the pen is mightier than the sword, still
his words seem to sing our names as they strike, and his is the milk
of human kindness, warm enough to break the ice—his, the green
eyed monster, in a pickle, still, discretion is the better part of valor,
his letters with their arms around each others shoulders, swagger
wards the ends of their sentences, pleased with what they've done,
his words are the setting for our stories—he has become a poet who
poetics have embedded themselves deep within the fabric of our
language, he's in our mouths, his words have tangled round our own
and given rise to expressions so effective in expressing how we feel,
we can't imagine how we'd feel without them.

See—he's less the tights and garters—more the sons demanding
answers from the absence of their fathers.
The hot darkness of your last embrace.
He's in the laughter of the night before, the tightened jaw of the
morning after,
He's in us. Part and parcel of our Royals and our rascals.
He's more than something taught in classrooms, in language that's
hard to understand,
he's more than a feeling of inadequacy when we sit for our exams,
He's in every wise woman, every pitiful villain,
Every great king, every sore loser, every fake tear.
His legacy exists in the life that lives in everything he's written,
And me, I see him everywhere, he's my Shakespeare.

COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSION With a partner, discuss the overall effect
of the video. Cite words and phrases in the video that depart from the
text of the poem and consider whether these variations affect your
response.