

## Player King

Wardrobe mistress hands me the boots  
I pity her needle stabbed fingers  
Slather on the greasepaint evil  
Hear her next door reading lines  
She thinks I can't act, ha I'll show her  
Shrug on the false hump clumsily  
It's weight biting into my spine  
I stretch into the discomfort, harness it.  
The boots are different heeled, for limping  
I pierce into character, damned villain  
How dost thou think?

Page hands me the boots  
He pities my struggle with them  
Wash off the appearance of villainy  
Think on my calculated seduction  
She hates me, but she will bend  
The page laces the back brace gently  
Every pull on the leathers cracks my silence  
I bite back the discomfort, suppress it.  
The boots correct the limp, but ache

Deformed, unfinished...  
God that gave me such things  
And the devil that gave me my tongue  
That I may, like a skilled tailor,  
Sew myself a second skin  
Far more pleasing than its naked purpose  
Like a sheath to a dagger  
So is my skill in façade  
I am almost a player  
The Player Lord  
Acting upon the boards of court  
And playing the audience as well  
As if my words were dreamt by great men  
If to my spectators I am great  
Then ney, who will say Richard is evil?  
Who will dare jest that Gloucester is plotting?  
He who once was pity's fool despised  
Will rise to king- player king- disguised.