

**THE LAST SANE DAYS OF
SHAKESPEARE**

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THE LAST SANE DAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

TIME

Present day delusional.

PLACE

In the Georgetown brownstone of Robert and Patricia Greene, and, notionally, in the final scene, Mersea Island, Essex, England.

CHARACTERS

SENATOR ROBERT (“Bud”) GREENE, 55, a U.S. Senator and former university mathematics professor. Senator Greene – 15 years on with a heart transplant – is now endowed with the conviction/knowledge that his last few hours alive are upon him. He has miles to go before he sleeps.

PATRICIA (“Button”) GREENE, 45, wife of ten years of Robert Greene, long-suffering of her husband’s esoteric obsessions. Often at an opposite end from his intellectual expositions, she remains a woman deeply in love with a difficult husband.

Four others (essentially non-speaking parts, except for offstage lines that can be prerecorded).

NOTES

Senator Greene, when seated in the dining room with his hand calculators, papers, pens, laptop, briefcase, and whiteboard, is “lost” in a near chaos of page upon page of calculations and literary notes covering his end of the table – most of which are directed toward solving Fermat’s Last Theorem algebraically – a feat not before accomplished. In the historical/political arena, Greene, like few others, senses the dark implications behind the Kennedy and King assassinations, and the evisceration of the 1968 Kerner Commission Report (re: the Detroit uprising).

A screen [SCREEN], or screens, visible to the audience display Greene’s writing on the whiteboard (and possibly other events, in the Director’s discretion).

... in the dialogue indicates a thoughtful break.

... // signals the starting point of interrupting (but **not** overlapping) text.

This is our basic conclusion: Our Nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white – separate and unequal.... Segregation and poverty have created in the racial ghetto a destructive environment totally unknown to most white Americans. What white Americans have never fully understood – but what the Negro can never forget – is that white society is deeply implicated in the ghetto. White institutions created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.

– Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders,
February 29, 1968.

THE LAST SANE DAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

SCENE 1 – THE WALK

A bleak, overcast, windy evening outside the Greenes' Georgetown brownstone – thunder in the distance and paper blowing down the sidewalk and street.

SENATOR GREENE enters alone, from **stage left**, carrying a briefcase and a closed umbrella, wearing an N95 mask, and walking briskly. Following him (at a distance) is a lady in red, fighting the wind while appearing to be involved in a conversation on her handheld. Her primary intent, however, is obvious: keeping eyes on Greene. Behind her walk three men wearing trench coats. SENATOR GREENE ascends the steps to the front door of his home (number 1729), unlocks it, enters, and closes the door behind him. A few seconds later the woman and the men reach the steps, and enter the brownstone without a key.

SCENE 2 – THE TALK

In the Greenes' dining room – a room which Senator Greene has converted into his office and study. Handwritten on a whiteboard in the room and visible to the audience are mathematical equations (with ample space at the bottom for more):

$$A^n + B^n - C^n = \emptyset$$

$$[A + B - C]^n = D^n = n(A + B)(C - A)(C - B)T, \text{ where}$$

$$T = M^{(n-3)/2} - [(n-5)/2] ABCD (M)^{(n-7)/2} + [3(n-5)(n-7)/9 \cdot 4 \cdot 2] Q^2 M^{(n-9)/2} + [(n-7)(n-9)/4 \cdot 2] (ABCD)^2 M^{(n-11)/2} - [3 \cdot 3(n-7)(n-9)(n-11)/9 \cdot 8 \cdot 3!] ABCD Q^2 M^{(n-13)/2} + [3(n-7)(n-9)(n-11)(n-13)/15 \cdot 16 \cdot 4!] Q^4 M^{(n-15)/2} - [(n-9)(n-11)(n-13)/8 \cdot 3!] (ABCD)^3 M^{(n-15)/2} + [6 \cdot 3(n-9)(n-11)(n-13)(n-15)/9 \cdot 16 \cdot 4!] (ABCD)^2 Q^2 M^{(n-17)/2} \text{ ETC. ETC. ETC., where:}$$

$$M = [(A + B)^2 - (AB + CD)] = [A^2 + AB - AC + B^2 - BC + C^2]$$

$$Q = (AB - CD)(A + B)$$

Scene 2 begins, initially, in dim light. SENATOR GREENE (still in the N95 mask) is seated at one end of the long dining room table, hand calculators, pens, pads, a laptop with a pair of companion speakers, and stacks of loose papers all spread out in front of him. Buried in mathematical calculations, Greene's thoughts can

be reflected (displayed) on the SCREEN. Also at or near his place are a bottle of Scotch, a glass, a whiteboard, an open briefcase (in which a handgun is concealed), and copies of (1) the Bible, (2) the collected works of William Shakespeare, and (3) Leo Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* – in each of which are stuffed loose sheets of paper marking pages, some with notes on them.

At the opposite end of the table sits PATRICIA GREENE, quietly and patiently watching her husband, from time to time writing in her own notebook, and occasionally sipping from a wineglass which she refills from a double large bottle resting by her on the table. Until her line (when lighting goes full), SENATOR GREENE is unaware of her presence.

Also on the table, halfway between the two of them sits a glass container that holds an indistinguishable and awful something – almost like a decapitated head floating amidst seaweed and formaldehyde.

Along the length of the table the woman in red and three men in trench coats will take their places – two on either side. They are non-speaking parts, and treated as invisible (except to the audience).

Over the laptop speakers:

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

They've admitted to it, I tell ya ... //

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

Hell, they knew it all along ... //

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

I knew it all along ... //

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

It *was* a conspiracy ... //

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

I always said it was ... //

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

Asses back in gear, ladies and gentlemen. This is not break time...
What's up with you?... What's going on?

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

They were killed by conspiracy.... All three of them.

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

Who were? What are you talking about?

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

The Kennedys ... //

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

And Martin Luther King.

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

Who cares? And who says so, anyway?

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

It's everywhere, on the net ... //

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

From secret government files ... //

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

Not so secret, huh?

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

Greene says so.... Senator Robert Greene ... //

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

And Dick Gregory, before he died. Remember ... //

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

And Oliver Stone ... //

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

Goddamn, tons of people. It's written on the subway walls ... //

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

And Jackie.

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

You gits have cement heads. All of youse.

Don't you know how to spot fake news?

You can't believe crap like that.

And you can't believe a word Greene says.

He's so liberal his pants are on fire.

If it's Greene, it's a lie. You can bet on it.

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

The time he said he'd lied ... was that a lie, too?... Sir?

FOREMAN (male, on speaker)

Go to Hell; and get back to work ... or beat it.

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

People don't believe what they don't wanna believe anymore.

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

And believe what they want to believe, even when it's lamebrained.

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

Facts are who you voted for.

FIRST WORKER (male, on speaker)

The world's flat, if their people say so.

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

Dinosaurs are flat, if their people say so.

SECOND WORKER (male, on speaker)

I wonder how much Jackie really knew, and kept it hidden.

THIRD WORKER (female, on speaker)

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.

But I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep.

In the Director's discretion a somewhat scratchy recording plays (over the speakers) the section of the Kerner Report quoted in the Notes above.

SENATOR GREENE clicks off the speakers and removes his N95. In the dim light the lady in red and the three men in trench coats enter, taking seats along the sides of the table. One of them places a recording device down, which remains on the table throughout. It is raining outside. Spot on SENATOR

GREENE. He is deep in thought, pen in hand, staring at his papers. Suddenly he slams his hand down, flat against the tabletop. PATRICIA GREENE remains quietly watching her husband at the opposite end of the table. (Lights go full on her initial line, which is the moment he first realizes she is there.)

SENATOR GREENE

Am I what I am? or what I've done?
The sin of what I've done, or nothing worth?
Which is it, God? if you're there in the silence.... Tell me.
Nothing worth gets my vote. And betrayal, not dignity, is my destiny.
I'm tired of these fucking dreams.
I've got to talk to somebody before I go insane, or I am insane before I go.

So many places in our country are drowned in so much shit that people let truth and trust go down the toilet while they crawl into their convenient hiding places.
Who's willing to share one moment's weight of courage?
And I? Am I an ounce less cowardly? concealing what *I* know?...
Afraid to publish what *I* know?... *Shame on me!*

**SENATOR GREENE slaps his forehead.
Lights flicker, and a sound like a woman's cry is heard from offstage –**

SENATOR GREENE

My last flurry of heartbeats, and you're still there?
What do you want from me? Go away!
Surely I've been haunted enough.
These past few weeks especially, when time's so short.
Jesus! Must I doctor my guilt on my own?...
[beat] Those people are right, you know: I *did* lie. And I confessed it....
Every time I knew the truth and kept quiet, I lied....
[beat] Nightmares, down the nights and down the days. There's no end ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

[*in a raised voice*] Rock bottom.

SENATOR GREENE

[*surprised and embarrassed*] O my God! I didn't know you were still here.

PATRICIA GREENE

I never left.

SENATOR GREENE

Well, you should get to bed.

PATRICIA GREENE

Says the spider to the fly. *You're the one* who should get to bed.

SENATOR GREENE

I can't.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why not?

SENATOR GREENE

Because I can't, that's why not....

[*beat*] You said rock bottom.

PATRICIA GREENE

What?

SENATOR GREENE

When I said "There's no end," you said "rock bottom."

PATRICIA GREENE

Everybody knows that when you're an addict, like you are anymore, you have to hit rock bottom before you quit.

SENATOR GREENE

Or die.

PATRICIA GREENE

But conspiracies, they never hit rock bottom, do they?

SENATOR GREENE

I've heard it said.

PATRICIA GREENE

Because *you've* said it, yourself:

There's always another rock at the bottom, to turn over.

SENATOR GREENE

I came to Washington to make a difference ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

You *can* make a difference ... //

SENATOR GREENE

Because people I trusted promised me I *would* make a difference...
If they only knew.

PATRICIA GREENE

You *do* make a difference, Bud. You *do*...

SENATOR GREENE

This place is knee deep, and I haven't done any of the mucking up.

PATRICIA GREENE

How can you say that?

SENATOR GREENE

I can say that because the grossest of felonies lie like unswept turds in horse stalls, and nobody's doing anything about it.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why don't you come to bed?
That will make you forget your troubles.

SENATOR GREENE

I can't come now. I can't stop what I'm doing.
Voices, driving like the wind in my head, won't leave me alone.

PATRICIA GREENE

Bud, what's wrong with you?

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] Button, I love you.

PATRICIA GREENE

And??... Can we talk about it? Senator Greene?

SENATOR GREENE

About what?

PATRICIA GREENE

About sleep deprivation. It's been night after night, for weeks.
You'll make yourself sick.

SENATOR GREENE

I can't.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why not?...

What are you not telling me?

SENATOR GREENE

She told him not to go. She begged him not to go.

PATRICIA GREENE

Who?... Go where?

SENATOR GREENE

To Dallas.

PATRICIA GREENE

Oh! Yes. Of course. We've talked about *that* enough, haven't we?

SENATOR GREENE

She knew something was terribly wrong.

She knew he was going to die.

But didn't know how she knew.

Just sobbing.

And he wouldn't listen to her.

PATRICIA GREENE

I'm not sure I agree with you.

But even so, too many lies. Too many lies to listen to the truth.

SENATOR GREENE

He had everything a man could ever want, but took advantage of too many people.

DiMaggio even hated him.

PATRICIA GREENE

Don't get obsessed again. There's nothing anybody can do about it, now.

SENATOR GREENE

When you believe you have a future, you think in terms of decades and years.

When you don't, you think, not just by the day, but by the minute.

PATRICIA GREENE

Sad.

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] Button?...

PATRICIA GREENE

Yes?

SENATOR GREENE

I have twenty-four hours to live....
Probably less.

PATRICIA GREENE

What!?

SENATOR GREENE

It came to me three weeks ago.
As clear as to Jackie Kennedy.
I don't know how I know, but I am certain of the date.
And miles to go before I sleep.

PATRICIA GREENE

No one knows when they're going to die.
Your heart is fine.
And if not, let's get you to your cardiologist tomorrow morning.

SENATOR GREENE

I've had it on loan for fifteen years, and the lease term is up.

PATRICIA GREENE

You don't know that.
And if something's wrong, we'll have it fixed....
Why didn't you tell me it was bothering you?

SENATOR GREENE

It's not the heart that's sending me the message.
It's

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] It's what?

SENATOR GREENE

It's from outside....
Outside my mind and body.

PATRICIA GREENE

I don't believe you....
I don't mean I don't believe you've not heard something.
I just don't believe it's truly telling you what you think it is.
Probably just common sense, warning you what can happen if you keep driving
yourself this way, night after night.

SENATOR GREENE

Let's make a deal.
If you let me finish my work, and if I'm still alive in twenty-four hours,
I'll go to whatever doctors you want.
And I'll live another twenty years for you.
It that a deal?

PATRICIA GREENE

What is it that's gotten under your skin so bad?

SENATOR GREENE

The conspiracy.

PATRICIA GREENE

Is that all?

SENATOR GREENE

And Fermat's Last Theorem.

PATRICIA GREENE

You've been working on that for years.

SENATOR GREENE

Lifting the book.

Tolstoy's Kingdom of God.

PATRICIA GREENE

Is that my copy?

SENATOR GREENE

Flipping it back down on the table.

Who else's?

PATRICIA GREENE

Anything else?
On your bucket list?

SENATOR GREENE

Shakespeare ... and my dreams.
Shakespeare and nightmares do murder sleep.

PATRICIA GREENE

What?

SENATOR GREENE

Shakespeare said it himself, about dreams.
In Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy:
To die.... To sleep....
To sleep! perchance to dream, ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come?...
[beat] You know ... the fear of an eternal nightmare that never ends.
Well, I've got Hell in my nightmares right now, alive, and can't get rid of it.

PATRICIA GREENE

Tell me.

SENATOR GREENE

We'll talk about it...

Pause.

I'm afraid, Button, for the first time in my life I'm truly afraid.

PATRICIA GREENE

Afraid of what?

SENATOR GREENE

Of losing you.

PATRICIA GREENE

What in the world?

SENATOR GREENE

I'm afraid what you'll do when I tell you what I have to tell you.

PATRICIA GREENE

Which is what?

SENATOR GREENE

People are following me.
The other day a couple of men stopped me on the street ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

How many men?

SENATOR GREENE

A couple.... Two.

PATRICIA GREENE

Who were they?

SENATOR GREENE

I shouldn't be telling you this.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why not? I'm your wife.

SENATOR GREENE

Because I love you.

PATRICIA GREENE

I love you, too.
You're my husband.
And now you're making *me* afraid.

SENATOR GREENE

Am I?

PATRICIA GREENE

Hell, yes. And you're being cruel about it to boot....
What's going on?

SENATOR GREENE

I really can't tell you.

PATRICIA GREENE

Goddammit, Bud.
Who else can you tell, if you can't tell me?
I'm your wife, not some prostitute off the street.
This is our home, not some address in the red light district.
Now, what's going on?

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] Complete strangers.
They wanted to know if they could come around and talk.

PATRICIA GREENE

And what did you tell them?

SENATOR GREENE

“Hell, no!” And I’d appreciate it, if they’d get out of my way.

PATRICIA GREENE

What did they do?

SENATOR GREENE

They said they’d be back, when I was in a better frame of mind.

PATRICIA GREENE

And that’s what you’re afraid of?

SENATOR GREENE

It’s not them.

PATRICIA GREENE

It sure as Hell would frighten me.

Two strange men, on the street....

I’d call the police.

SENATOR GREENE

They probably *were* the police.

Or CIA.

Or NSA.

Or Homeland Security.

PATRICIA GREENE

What would the CIA, or the NSA want with you?

SENATOR GREENE

To destroy what I have here, when I’m gone, and can’t protect it.

PATRICIA GREENE

Be serious, please. This is serious.

SENATOR GREENE

I *am* being. What’s in this briefcase could be a bombshell, an A-bomb, on both the government and national security.

PATRICIA GREENE

I don’t have a clue what you’re talking about. But you ought to give it up.

SENATOR GREENE

Button, I wish I could, but our country is being divided against itself.
And if I had more time to live, I'd risk my life to save it.
Except

PATRICIA GREENE

[beat] Go on.

SENATOR GREENE

Except, I've had my chances, and all I've done is sit on the pot.
In fear ... and constipation.

PATRICIA GREENE

I'm not logically following you.
What in God's name could you expect to do single-handed to stop all the lies and
propaganda?

SENATOR GREENE

What if, say, I had lockdown proof that links an influential American
organization ... almost politically powerful beyond words ... with an unfriendly
foreign nation?

PATRICIA GREENE

That really wouldn't surprise me all that much.

SENATOR GREENE

And if, say, that organization can be directly connected by blood to the group who
masterminded the Kennedy and King assassinations?

PATRICIA GREENE

That would be

SENATOR GREENE

It's true.
And I have proof.

Patting his briefcase.

In here; and not so legally obtained.
Proof that American history for over seventy years has been twisted by murder,
character assassination, propaganda, and treachery.

And they're closing in on me. Standing on the street, stopped by two strangers.
A bewildered, pathetic, hated old man.

PATRICIA GREENE

You're not hated.
What are you talking about?
Not like Lincoln was.

SENATOR GREENE

Thanks.

PATRICIA GREENE

And you're hardly old....

SENATOR GREENE

Well, obsolete then, like the two Soviet cosmonauts left drifting in space by the Russians after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

PATRICIA GREENE

It's all bullshit....
Tell me it's all bullshit.

SENATOR GREENE

I'm in the same boat as Tolstoy was.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*an exasperated beat*] Sorry, Bud, I don't buy that.
How in freaking Hell can you think of yourself like Tolstoy?

SENATOR GREENE

You're the Tolstoy expert. You tell me.

PATRICIA GREENE

I don't have any *fucking idea* what you're talking about.

SENATOR GREENE

Tolstoy made himself a pauper, right?

PATRICIA GREENE

What's that got to do with you?..
[*beat*] Bud, I don't want you giving everything away.... *Please.*

SENATOR GREENE

Troubling other people with all our stuff? I wouldn't dream of it.

PATRICIA GREENE gives a sigh of relief.

SENATOR GREENE

I'm talking about my life ending with this revelation.

PATRICIA GREENE

Dear God! You need help.

SENATOR GREENE

My loaner heart. Its time is nearly up. And this will seal it.

PATRICIA GREENE

That's what you're talking about??

We'll get you to a doctor, Idiot. Like I said. Heart specialists.

SENATOR GREENE

And what are they going to say?

PATRICIA GREENE

They'll tell you what's what about your heart, and if you need new medication.

SENATOR GREENE

They're going to tell me I didn't hear what I've *distinctly* heard?

That my remaining heartbeats are blinks of an eye?

PATRICIA GREENE

Those are words that didn't make their way to this end of the table, Sir....

And, besides, if your heart starts to falter they'll get you a new one, like last time.

So stop.

SENATOR GREENE

No they won't.

PATRICIA GREENE

Of course they will.

SENATOR GREENE

Don't count on it. I'm not worth it.

PATRICIA GREENE

Bud, you know? You can be impossible sometimes.

Flat out, asshole impossible. Did you know that?

SENATOR GREENE

I am what I am ... left over from what I brought with me.

Everything I respected I threw into a barrel, and rolled it to Washington.

PATRICIA GREENE

You've always been impossible.... In a good way.
I guess that's one of the reasons I love you.

SENATOR GREENE

I love you, too, Pat.
But I have to get the pieces of my legacy put together, tonight, on paper.
So I can leave in dignity, tomorrow.

PATRICIA GREENE

You're just imagining all this, aren't you?
Tell me you're just imagining it. Being dramatic.

SENATOR GREENE

I have a legacy to prepare, with the clock ticking.
If no one reads what I have for them to read, I'm nothing worth.

PATRICIA GREENE

What you're worth the most is, all that you've done to change the lives of others
for the better.
Wouldn't you agree?

Pause (no response from her husband).

How do I get you to bed with me? Take off my clothes?

SENATOR GREENE

Help me.

PATRICIA GREENE

Anything.... What?

SENATOR GREENE

Well, for one thing, listen to the proof I've finally completed.

PATRICIA GREENE

Your Fermat solution?

SENATOR GREENE

My legacy. Part of it. Yes.

PATRICIA GREENE

Your *life* is your legacy. The Senate. Our marriage. Not numbers.
But, go ahead....

SENATOR GREENE

The point is, my life’s legacy comes down to my soul, and my soul’s doing.
And my soul demands that Fermat be solved and published.... Look:

**SENATOR GREENE stands and runs his
finger down the whiteboard, top through
 $Q = (AB - CD)(A + B)$.**

SENATOR GREENE

What Fermat’s genius mind grasped was that Pythagoras’s equation, discovered
2500 years ago, that A squared plus B squared equals C squared, cannot be
applied to any larger power, still using whole numbers.

Like 3 squared plus 4 squared, which is 25, exactly equals 5 squared.

But there’s no 3 cubed plus 4 cubed that equals 5 cubed exactly.

Nowhere.

There is A cubed plus B cubed equals C cubed plus D cubed, where D is a positive
integer, not zero. For example:

1 cubed plus 12 cubed, which is 1729, is the same as 9 cubed plus 10 cubed. 1729.
Ramanujan’s number.

PATRICIA GREENE

Our address.

SENATOR GREENE

Whatever.... But my point is, there’s no A cubed plus B cubed equals C cubed.
Using only whole numbers.

Or A to the 5th plus B to the 5th equals C to the 5th. Or anything higher.

But how to prove it?

Picking up a stack of papers (then putting them down).

This is the largest organized collection of Ramanujan cubes ever assembled.

But not a drop of help in proving Fermat, it turns out. Where the solution comes
from is this cousin of the Binomial Theorem I’ve written here on the board.

Translated into the 5th power, for example ... but it applies to all the larger odd
numbers as well ... we have

**SENATOR GREENE writes on the
whiteboard:**

$$A^5 + B^5 = C^5$$

$$(A + B - C)^5 = 5(A + B)(C - A)(C - B) [A^2 + AB - AC + B^2 - BC + C^2]$$

SENATOR GREENE

From here the solution jumps out:

A plus B; and C minus A; and C minus B, all must divide A plus B minus C in even fractions, or else the case fails, and Fermat is proved.

$$\begin{aligned}
& (A + B) \cdot | \cdot (A + B - C) \\
& (C - A) \cdot | \cdot (A + B - C) \\
& (C - B) \cdot | \cdot (A + B - C)
\end{aligned}$$

And Fermat **is proved!**

Because we have:

$$\begin{aligned}
& (1 - C/\{A + B\}) (B/\{C - A\} - 1) \\
& (A/\{C - B\} - 1) \underline{(A + B - C)^2} = \\
& 5[A^2 + AB - AC + B^2 - BC + C^2] = \\
& 5[\underline{A(A + B - C)} + (C - B)^2 + \underline{BC}]
\end{aligned}$$

From which it is obvious that A plus B minus C [*indicating, in the first line*] must be a common factor of A times A plus B minus C, which, of course, it is [*indicating, in the third line*].

And must also have a common factor with C minus B squared plus BC. Which cannot be.

Pause.

PATRICIA GREENE

And why not? If I may ask.

SENATOR GREENE

We know from above that C minus B divides A plus B minus C.

Therefore, C minus B likewise divides A.

Which we also know from the basic equation:

$$\begin{aligned}
A^5 + B^5 &= C^5 \\
A^5 &= C^5 - B^5 \\
A^5 &= (C - B)(\text{etc.})
\end{aligned}$$

Hence, A, C minus B, and A plus B minus C, all must share a common factor, x. Which leaves poor BC [*indicating BC above*) out there, hanging all alone ... naked ... needing to have, mathematically, that same factor, x; and, at the same time being prohibited from having a factor common to A.

Longer pause.

PATRICIA GREENE

Call me mathematically illiterate, Bud, but, pray tell:
Why is BC prohibited, from what you say?

SENATOR GREENE

Because if B or C share a common factor with A, they both do,
and that factor can be divided out and out,
until A, and B, and C are all mutually prime....
Get it?

PATRICIA GREENE

In a word?

SENATOR GREENE

Yes.

PATRICIA GREENE

No. I don't get it.

SENATOR GREENE

You don't?

PATRICIA GREENE

But that makes no difference.
I can see that you do; and that makes all the difference.

SENATOR GREENE

I guess that goes back to what I was saying before:
If I don't leave something in writing for someone who gets it,
my legacy goes poof.

PATRICIA GREENE

I *do* get that.

Whenever someone is proving an obscure scientific point, we peons in the public
look to experts we respect to see whether *they say* it's true or not.

SENATOR GREENE

Like my writer friends, how they must feel, I suppose. Waiting for the experts to
tell the public whether or not they have a masterpiece. Or composers, creating a
symphony or an opera. Or artists, painting something new. All waiting for experts
to opine, who couldn't hope to hold a candle to their talents.

PATRICIA GREENE

I wouldn't be that hard on the "experts." They're just trying to get along, too.
But still, it doesn't taste all that good, does it?
People should know what to believe, without having to have it spoon fed.

**SENATOR GREENE drops the collection
of papers into the open briefcase.**

SENATOR GREENE

Ramanujan's cubes and Fermat's Last Theorem, in a nutshell, into this nutshell
on my desk. Along with my exposé on the assassinations.

**As SENATOR GREENE pulls a bound
manuscript from his open briefcase,
PATRICIA GREENE pours another glass
of wine, and the lights go out.**

SENATOR GREENE

Goddamn D.C. blackouts.

**SENATOR GREENE whistles, and in a
few moments the lights return.**

SENATOR GREENE

Don't thank me. Thank the anarchists. It'll be longer next time, trust me.
Anyway ... I'm leaving enough copies for you to have published after I die.
Just sell them as fast as you can. It doesn't matter for how much. Just sell them.

PATRICIA GREENE

[nods] I understand.... But what makes you think you've found something new?

SENATOR GREENE

It wasn't just *those three people*, I guarantee you.
Conspiracy's an engine that's been running beneath the surface for years.
Assassins come and go, and never know.
It's an organized system that breeds guns and identifies targets. Eisenhower
would have been mortified to know what existed right under his nose.

PATRICIA GREENE

[beat] We'll never get back to where we were, will we?

SENATOR GREENE

No more so than the British Empire, or the Roman Empire will.

**SENATOR GREENE puts the manuscript
back in his briefcase.**

SENATOR GREENE

The night Martin Luther King was killed, Bobby Kennedy was in a black neighborhood in Indianapolis, making a campaign stop. Standing on the back of a flatbed truck, he asked an aide, "Do they know ... about Doctor King?" They didn't. And Kennedy spoke. Just listen....

**SENATOR GREENE Googles and plays
on his laptop Robert's Kennedy's speech
on Martin Luther King's assassination.**

SENATOR GREENE

[*beat*] Kennedy, on a flatbed truck, never looking down at the paper in his hand. Only at the faces in the crowd....

PATRICIA GREENE

[*catches a sob in her throat*] It's all ... so terribly ... terribly ... lonely....

**SENATOR GREENE picks up Tolstoy's
The Kingdom of God and begins reading.**

**PATRICIA GREENE writes, and pours
more wine.**

Dead silence.

PATRICIA GREENE

This isn't your desk, by the way. It's our dining room table.

SENATOR GREENE

Looking up from his book.

Depends on how you look at it.

PATRICIA GREENE

It's a table, no two ways to look at it, no matter what you've done to it.

You let that logical, mathematical mind of yours near strangle your common sense.

It wraps around your thoughts like a pepper mill.

And it grinds and grinds and grinds, until you don't know what's left.

SENATOR GREENE

Pause. Putting down the book.

There's something else I need to talk about. Please.

PATRICIA GREENE

More sadness?

SENATOR GREENE

About my death. And my dreams, maybe.

PATRICIA GREENE

More sadness.

SENATOR GREENE

The other night something peculiar happened to me.

It wasn't actually a nightmare, as such.

I know nightmares.... But it shook me up like one.

PATRICIA GREENE

What was it?

SENATOR GREENE

When I was working down here, I suddenly felt incredibly exhausted, and had to take a nap. Right here, on the floor.

PATRICIA GREENE

A nap is in the afternoon.

A sleep is what you do at night.

No wonder you're so screwed up.

SENATOR GREENE

Anyway, I had this lucid moment. Like in a dream.

I felt I was suffocating. And trembling.

Already dying.

And then, I stepped out of my body, and saw myself here.

On the floor.

My legs were shaking against the leg of the table, and I was gasping for air.

I thought: It's too soon. He's not supposed to be dying yet.

But if he is, is he going to go to heaven? With what he's done? And unforgiven?

I wasn't hoping to see myself die.

But I was strangely transfixed by the thought of seeing if heaven would take me.

And then I clearly heard a voice from somewhere, talking to me:

SENATOR GREENE

“There is no heaven but heaven on Earth.”

“There is no heaven but heaven on Earth.”

PATRICIA GREENE

God? God was talking to you, do you think?

SENATOR GREENE

Am I losing my sanity, Pat?

When I was a kid, I asked a question they never answered me in church:

If God made Earth in a week, who made God the week before?

PATRICIA GREENE

You probably didn't stick around long enough to get an answer.

SENATOR GREENE

We're here because we're here because we're here because we're here.

I've always known that. Like, for donkey's years. Because the others aren't.

PATRICIA GREENE

What “others” are you talking about?

SENATOR GREENE

Raptors, Neanderthals, and the Roman legions....

PATRICIA GREENE

You're a heathen.

SENATOR GREENE

Call me a heathen, then.

PATRICIA GREENE

You *are* a heathen. And I've known *that* for donkey's years.

SENATOR GREENE picks up the complete works of William Shakespeare (stuffed with loose sheets), and turns to a marked page to read from it:

SENATOR GREENE

[reads] Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow, creeps in this petty pace from day to day to the last syllable of recorded time. A tale told by an idiot, signifying nothing.

PATRICIA GREENE

You can't turn to Shakespeare for everything.
And, besides, what does that have to do with your dreams? and God?
Or heaven?

SENATOR GREENE

They take such pains to convince us that God created Earth,
and heaven, and everything.
And that God is Love and Goodness.
But if I'm a heathen, I'm a heathen who sees how Creation had no more
compassion than an idiot spider, sucking a fly, listening to Iron Maiden without a
prayer.

PATRICIA GREENE

Prayers are of no use to you, either?

SENATOR GREENE

Prayers are of no use to sucking spiders. Or earthquakes.
Or dinosaur-annihilating asteroids.
Pray to yourself. Be true to your soul.
Those are the prayers that count.
"To your own self be true, and it follows, as the night the day, that you cannot be
false to any man."
And through prayer, maybe you'll get a glimpse of heaven.
What do *you* think?

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] To begin with, you know I don't subscribe to every word in the Bible.
Or in Shakespeare.
Parables tell a lot more than mere words.
And they show you that you don't find heaven by giving your possessions away.
You find it by *caring*, and *sharing*, and loving people around you.
You never know how far gifts like that go.

SENATOR GREENE

You shame me. I've barely earned a crust of bread for the little *I've* given.

PATRICIA GREENE

For God's sake, Bud, I've never been with a more generous man than you.
And it's not in the going price of silver, anyway.
Charity helps those who help themselves....
[*beat*] Do you want me to go on?

SENATOR GREENE

Please do.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] Well, I'm only going to say one more thing about this.

Two more things.

I believe we find heaven by where we are in what we do.

I mean, the most Christ-like life *I* know of was Albert Schweitzer.

Leaving his home, his career, his family, his comfort, to risk everything,
to take care of lepers in Africa.

The Bible says, somewhere:

What profit is there? if you say you believe all things, and yet do nothing?

If anyone found heaven on Earth, it was Doctor Schweitzer. In Africa.

Heaven follows the goodness a soul does, is what I believe.

And then there's the nonsensical parable in Mathew 25 about ten virgins, all of
whom are waiting for the same man as their bridegroom. Who is their heaven.

Five bring enough oil with them for their lamps, and five don't.

When he arrives, late, for his wedding,

the lamps of the five foolish virgins have gone out.

They plead with the five wise virgins to share their oil, but are refused.

And so it's the selfish five who get their man,

and the foolish, needy five who are out in the dark.

Where's the charity there?

Lights flicker.

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] "There is no heaven but heaven on Earth."

After hearing those words I woke up.

But I couldn't get myself up right away. I didn't have the will power.

It was as though those words were paralyzing me.

There, on the floor.

And I remembered your book. Tolstoy's Kingdom of God.

PATRICIA GREENE

The Kingdom of God Is Within you.

SENATOR GREENE

Tolstoy saw it.

PATRICIA GREENE

Saw what?

SENATOR GREENE

That the Kingdom of God is suffering, along with the rest. Suffering.
The people, in the fields.
The bitter cold winters.
Anna Karenina.

PATRICIA GREENE

Your point?

SENATOR GREENE

Suffering's universal. Tolstoy suffered. I'm suffering.

PATRICIA GREENE

And Washington suffers. So what?...

SENATOR GREENE

God is within me, and you. Heaven is within me and you. Just like suffering is.
Tolstoy had a philosophy, that to truly believe in Jesus Christ one must act like
Jesus. Suffer like Jesus. Give up all useless worldly possessions.
Live life as a pacifist.

PATRICIA GREENE

Tolstoy's Kingdom of God was banned in Russia, by the way, I suppose you know.

SENATOR GREENE

Tolstoy spelled it out: Religion fears uncertainty.
The early Christian church, when it didn't know how to answer a tough question,
invented things, made things up, and a mess out of the New Testament....
Church is someone else's dream.
And why do we have to be at the mercy of someone else's dream?

PATRICIA GREENE

You're treading on thin ice, Buddy.

SENATOR GREENE

I know.
God's strength throughout Christianity has been the Christian Church.
A little less forgiving than the man they follow.
And not a faith for Tolstoy to believe in.

PATRICIA GREENE

What is it that you believe Tolstoy believed in?

SENATOR GREENE

Tolstoy showed that the Kingdom of God is found on Earth.
That it is within us. While we're alive. Not dead.
That the way to it is through *nonviolence*, even in the face of suffering.
And he passed his enlightenment on to Gandhi, King, and Nelson Mandela.
What's left for me to do is to find out what neighborhood of this loner heart of
mine God hangs out in.

PATRICIA GREENE

What do you mean, what *neighborhood*?

SENATOR GREENE

[beat] Do you love me, Pat?

PATRICIA GREENE

What?! Well, of course I do.

SENATOR GREENE

Do you love anybody else?

PATRICIA GREENE

No.... What do you mean?...
I love *you*. I don't love anybody else like that.

SENATOR GREENE

How then? How do you love other people?

PATRICIA GREENE

I *care* for people; and give them a helping hand, when I can.

SENATOR GREENE

Do you love your neighbor as yourself?

PATRICIA GREENE

Are you trying to sandbag me?

SENATOR GREENE

Do you?

PATRICIA GREENE

I try to follow Christian teachings ... *Christ's* teachings.
But that's a different kind of love, from loving your husband.
It comes from a different pocket in your heart. It's *empathy*....
The problem is, there should be different words for what you're talking about.

SENATOR GREENE

Different words?

PATRICIA GREENE

Yes. You can love somebody, but be *in love* with only your husband.

For you, I have a *standing* love.

Standing up for one another through good times and tough times.

That kind of love.... Husband and wife, in love, kind of love.

A stand-up kind of love ... with lying down and making love thrown in....

If I could just get you to bed.

SENATOR GREENE

And for other men?

PATRICIA GREENE

And for *others*, I guess it's what you'd call *empathy*, or *caring*, like God has.

SENATOR GREENE

Do you empathize with me? Do you feel empathy for what I'm going through?

PATRICIA GREENE

Of course I do.... I mean I would, if I could understand it better.

SENATOR GREENE

Understand *me* better?

PATRICIA GREENE

Yes, understand *you* better.

SENATOR GREENE

Where do you want me to start?

PATRICIA GREENE

Start?... Where?... When?... Now?... Okay.... Okay, let's do this thing....

Why are you...? I've been feeling like you....

I feel like you've stolen from our bed.

And that was one sacred promise we made to each other, remember? That no matter what went wrong, we'd always make up, and go to bed, and make love.

SENATOR GREENE

Is that all?

PATRICIA GREENE

Isn't that enough??

SENATOR GREENE

I love you, too, Pat. With all my heart.
And I have to ask myself, isn't that better than all the rest?
I mean, if there's a Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, why isn't it simply with you?
And, I guess, that's my basic problem tonight.
With Fermat, and Tolstoy, and Shakespeare, and all the rest.
Why do I have this clawing inside me to leave a legacy when I could be in bed?
Making love with you?

PATRICIA GREENE

Good question.

But an even better question is, in the day-to-day practical world of our marriage:
Why have you been going around, talking to yourself like you're on another
planet? writing notes at all hours? not eating or sleeping the way you should?
stamping your foot? I don't know whether you're pissed at me, or something I've
said, or done, or what.

SENATOR GREENE

It's what you do when you're about to die.
I told you. I'm writing my farewell.
To public life.
To a place that has grown to shame me.
And I don't write so well in bed.

PATRICIA GREENE

You've *got* to get to bed. You're exhausted.
Come to bed. You'll have your solution in the morning.

SENATOR GREENE

If I sleep, perchance I'll have dreams.

PATRICIA GREENE

So what?

SENATOR GREENE

It's what happens when I hear too many people talking to me at the same time.
It drives me crazy.

PATRICIA GREENE

Sweetheart, you *need* your sleep. That's all it is.
You're not getting enough sleep. It'll be fine. Everything will be fine....

SENATOR GREENE

You go. I'll stay.... Women and children first.

PATRICIA GREENE

I'm not going to leave you down here by yourself.

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] I *do* dream, Pat. I do.

PATRICIA GREENE

Who doesn't?

SENATOR GREENE

Bad dreams. Horrible dreams. Dreams about murder. Nightmares. I've found that when you risk finding heaven inside yourself, at the same time you risk finding Hell.

PATRICIA GREENE

Do you want to talk to me about it?

Lengthy pause.

SENATOR GREENE

I killed her, Button.
I killed her in my rage, just as surely as Tolstoy killed Anna Karenina.
And I need to find God for forgiveness.

**SENATOR GREENE begins drinking
Scotch, heavily.**

SCENE 3 – THE BETRAYAL

The lady in red picks up the “head” to give it a studied, close look, and puts it down where it was. Thunder and lightning.

PATRICIA GREENE

You what?...

Pours herself another full glass of wine.

SENATOR GREENE

I murdered her.

PATRICIA GREENE

Whom are you taking about?

SENATOR GREENE

Eddie.

PATRICIA GREENE

Your wife? Your ex-wife? That's preposterous. You couldn't have.

SENATOR GREENE

I think I did.

My dreams are certainly telling me I did. Years ago.

I don't have bloody proof. I must have blacked out.

But my dreams have returned now to haunt and chastise me.

PATRICIA GREENE

How? How did it happen?

SENATOR GREENE

One night, when I'd been drinking ... pretty heavily.

I can't really remember.

PATRICIA GREENE

Explain to me where you were that night.

SENATOR GREENE

I'm not sure. I've tried my damndest to remember.

The last thing I can remember about that night was, I was drinking at a bar.

I'd probably had too much.

PATRICIA GREENE

And what happened?

SENATOR GREENE

I must have run into her there. It was a place we often went to.

She, more often than we, I figured.

And

I don't cotton to adulterating another man's wife.

But it's a free country, I guess.

And how do you stop it?

Cats will mew and pricks will have their day.

So, I ask you, does it matter to care?

PATRICIA GREENE

I understand how you feel.... Honestly, Bud, I do.

SENATOR GREENE

I gave her total freedom, and she fucked me with it. She was a mockery to fidelity.

PATRICIA GREENE

If she died, lots of things could have caused it.

SENATOR GREENE

With my name on them?
I hated her enough.

PATRICIA GREENE

A lot of men feel that way.
But there's no reason to think you killed her.

SENATOR GREENE

The dreams.

PATRICIA GREENE

Tell me about them.

SENATOR GREENE

It's night. I'm coming home, and she's there....
It's so vivid, what I saw.

PATRICIA GREENE

What did you see? exactly.

SENATOR GREENE

I don't know.... I see myself cutting her head off.

PATRICIA GREENE

With what?

SENATOR GREENE

I can't remember. It's more a feeling....
With a knife, I guess.

PATRICIA GREENE

With a knife?

SENATOR GREENE takes a drink, picks up the Bible, and then slams it down.

SENATOR GREENE

There's no forgiveness, Goddammit. No church gives forgiveness for this....
With a knife....
Maybe it *was* a dream. I've never seen or heard anything in the news.

PATRICIA GREENE

Nor have I. Ever.

SENATOR GREENE

A knife. Yes. A kitchen knife.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] Think about it....
Calm down and think about it.
You couldn't have killed her, and nobody know.
You couldn't have killed *anybody*, and get elected to the U.S. Senate.
And a kitchen knife can't cut a human head off. No way.

SENATOR GREENE

It's so vivid in my dreams now. What could have unleashed it?
Every hair on her head....
Every hair on her head was a lie. And they're stuck in my memory.

PATRICIA GREENE

Then pull the hair out, and burn it.

SENATOR GREENE opens the Bible.

SENATOR GREENE

Jesus said that a man can be guilty of forcing his wife to commit adultery.
Do you believe that?

PATRICIA GREENE

Jesus said a lot of things. Out of context.

SENATOR GREENE

Did I force Edie to play around?
Too many mathematical equations filling my head all the time?
I mean, is it the husband's fault if his wife goes out and screws half the men around?

PATRICIA GREENE

I know I wouldn't.
Your mathematical equations never bothered me. Never in ten years.

SENATOR GREENE

[*beat*] Button, when you die, does everything go black?
Or only if your head is cut off?

PATRICIA GREENE

We need to talk about this now?

SENATOR GREENE

I do.

PATRICIA GREENE

They say you see white when you die.
Down a long, dark tunnel.

SENATOR GREENE

I'll see black.
Black is the color cuckolds see; and I fucking hate it.

What do you do when everywhere men are laughing at you, behind your back?
Professors ... tennis partners ... students, even.
When what you thought was a marital oasis becomes a public orifice?
When your innocence ... your stupidity ... is raped right in front of you?

Have I known hatred? Not a bit.
Only a hatred that could produce a canvass of swine, with ugly, bald heads and fat
asses, raping screaming women.
An abiding hatred, that I thought had gone away, but is back....
I think it may be this woman's heart in my chest.
Taking this long to feel a man's rage.
And because of her, I killed her....
Button, I know I did.
And I need forgiveness before *I* go.

PATRICIA GREENE

No you didn't.
I know you didn't.
And people need forgiveness for what they *do*.
Not what they wish for.
Or dream about.

SENATOR GREENE

After I left her, men would suggest lunch, and unload the horseshit of their conscience on me. People got to saying I was standoffish. But how would you feel? if every man you talked to might have screwed your wife? And most did.

Everyone who had sex with her raped me. Like gangrene.
And I didn't feel it until sobs I could barely recognize escaped of their own accord from my throat.

Oh, how a woman can kill a man's soul with her body....

[beat] I remember, when I was a kid, watching a monkey at a zoo who'd caught a sparrow and was eating it raw, its wings flapping helplessly in the air.
That bird was me....

Say a prayer for me, Pat, and end it, Amen.

PATRICIA GREENE

What, in God's name, possessed you to marry a woman like that?

SENATOR GREENE

She pulled me into an empty bedroom, at a house party, threw her arms around my neck, and told me she couldn't go on without me.

PATRICIA GREENE

She told you that?... And you believed it?

SENATOR GREENE

I was unforgivably naïve....

If you need marry, marry a fool; for wise men know what monkeys you make of them.

PATRICIA GREENE

It's hard for you to love, isn't it? Or be loved.

SENATOR GREENE

Caring was always a beast for me. Until you came along.... My saving grace.

PATRICIA GREENE

I could have saved you.... I still can!

Bud? You don't have to answer this, if you don't want to.

SENATOR GREENE

What?

PATRICIA GREENE

What did it feel like to you?
I mean, in bed with a woman like that?

SENATOR GREENE

Like an alley cat.

PATRICIA GREENE

How?

SENATOR GREENE

Sex with Edie had no more expression than a cat, staring into cigarette smoke.
And, I'll tell you: You don't control a cat. No. The cat controls you.

**SENATOR GREENE begins to fill his
glass again when the lights go out.**

A spotlight on PATRICIA GREENE:

PATRICIA GREENE

[to herself] It's all on me, isn't it?

When I was young, I used to ride, every morning, and every evening. My stallion, Spirit, was like you, Bud. Like troubled days in March I loved. We knew each other, and trusted each other, and under my knees we would go into the same realm together. It was a lot like making love.

One morning, maybe I'd gotten too close to his ears. He couldn't stand that. Suddenly he threw his head back, and it cracked against mine. I fell, and broke my arm, and that was the last time I was on a horse. I can't let that happen again.

Lights return to normal.

SENATOR GREENE

I guess I never knew her.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why should you?
She never let you.

SENATOR GREENE

I'm sorry, though, I killed her.

PATRICIA GREENE

She must have been crazy on hormones or something.
Or some sexual fixation. Probably from childhood.
Was why she attacked you in the first place.
And after you'd had enough, and got out,
she likely decided to make *you* pay for it.
By pulling a vanishing act.
Hoping you'd pine away for her, I guess.

[*pause*] Bud ... listen to me.

Eyes here.

You and I have made love for over ten years,
and every time we do I ask myself: "Was it always this good?"
You are an absolutely wonderful lover. In every way.
And you satisfy me in every way possible.
Hear that?

SENATOR GREENE

[*looking at her*] You embarrass me.

PATRICIA GREENE

Let me tell you one more thing, though you already know it:
The guilt your dreams are making you feel is not for hurting anyone.
It is for blaming yourself for not being a good enough lover, and you're convinced
your time is up.
Well let me tell you, you are the perfect lover; and your time is *not* up.

SENATOR GREENE

Staring into his glass of Scotch.

Button ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

And one more thing:

Pause. Direct eye contact.

I forgive you.

**SENATOR GREENE drops the glass of
Scotch with a gasp. It lands on the table,
spilling but not breaking.**

Lights go out.

Spotlights on SENATOR GREENE and the four along the sides of the table. The lady in red and the three men in trench coats stand and exit. One of them takes the “head.”

As they are leaving SENATOR GREENE pulls a handgun out from his briefcase, jumps up, and fires. Unaffected, the four exit; and GREENE puts the gun back in his briefcase and sits down. PATRICIA GREENE does not notice a bit of this.

Spotlights go out, and in total darkness, after a beat:

SENATOR GREENE

For now my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a joyous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see.

I love you, Button.
More than words and every thank you in the world could ever say....

She's gone.
I can feel it.
Like a gunshot.

I'd asked and asked myself, how ...
How can I say this right? How does a person move beyond what he is incapable of accepting and unable to escape?
He isolates the moving parts of the pain, and ...
But I could find no solution.
Until you.
Until God remade himself into you.

SCENE 4 – THE BARD

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause, still in the dark*] You know, it all *would* add up, except for one flaw.

PATRICIA GREENE

Are you thinking of math problems again?

SENATOR GREENE

Nope. Shakespeare ... and Queen Elizabeth.
She was no virgin. I'd bet the house on it. That's not my problem.
My problem is: if Shakespeare were her lover ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

Whoa! Whoa! Shakespeare was Queen Elizabeth's lover? did you say?

SENATOR GREENE

Does that shock you?

PATRICIA GREENE

How could a complete commoner from Stratford-on-Avon be the lover of a queen?... Come on.

SENATOR GREENE

It's just that obvious, isn't it?

Lights return.

SENATOR GREENE is sitting, holding the collected works of William Shakespeare (with notes) in front of him.

PATRICIA GREENE

You've been reading Shakespeare in the dark?

SENATOR GREENE

Does *that* shock you?

PATRICIA GREENE

Get serious.

SENATOR GREENE

What makes you think I'm not? Look. Ten reasons.

SENATOR GREENE goes to the whiteboard, spins it to the clean side, and writes down a column of numbers: 1, 2, 3 to 10. Aside number 1 he writes: Shakespeare was no commoner.

SENATOR GREENE

How could a complete commoner, growing up in an illiterate household, in what was then an obscure country town, who never went to university, never travelled abroad, even to Scotland, whose two daughters couldn't even write, who left no compositions at his death, except for a will giving his second best bed to his wife? How could such a man possibly have produced what Shakespeare wrote?

PATRICIA GREENE

From the tone in your voice, I guess the only correct answer is:
How could he?

SENATOR GREENE

He couldn't have.

PATRICIA GREENE

Then why does everybody think he did?

SENATOR GREENE

I don't think everybody does, anymore.
I certainly don't.
But one step at a time.
For over a year now I've been reconstructing the essential Shakespeare, the man, from what he wrote.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why? How can that possibly be important today?

SENATOR GREENE

Because Shakespeare had one of the greatest minds ever.
And to see who he was helps me better comprehend what he teaches.

PATRICIA GREENE

You're too hung up on Shakespeare, you know.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 2,
writes: Shakespeare was an elitist.**

SENATOR GREENE

Shakespeare was an elitist.
He believed God himself ordained the divine right of kings.

PATRICIA GREENE

Okay. Prove it.

SENATOR GREENE

He spells it out best in Ulysses' speech in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act I, Scene iii, but more succinctly in King Richard's soliloquy in *Richard the Second*:

[*reads from one of his notes*] "Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king ...
The deputy elected by the Lord."

PATRICIA GREENE

What would you expect? Shakespeare to be a liberal?

SENATOR GREENE

William Blake was.

PATRICIA GREENE

You better be able to do better than that.

SENATOR GREENE

Well, consider Shakespeare's education. And the extent of his legal training.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 3,
writes: Shakespeare was trained at law.**

PATRICIA GREENE

His *legal training*? He was a playwright and a poet, wasn't he?

SENATOR GREENE

Shakespeare's plays employ 600 different legal terms without a single mistake. And that's mathematically impossible, unless he was trained at law, which he was.

PATRICIA GREENE

Was he? trained at law?

SENATOR GREENE

He was, if he was Edward de Vere, the Seventeenth Earl of Oxford.

PATRICIA GREENE

Oh, the *Oxford* thing. I've heard about it.

SENATOR GREENE

Yes, the Oxford thing.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 4,
writes: Oxford graduated Cambridge
and Oxford, and attended Gray's Inn.**

SENATOR GREENE

By nineteen de Vere had earned degrees from Cambridge and Oxford, and was attending Gray's Inn to study law. Before that, he'd had the best possible private tutors in England: Laurence Nowell, the Anglo-Saxon scholar; Thomas Smith, the preeminent Greek scholar; and Arthur Golding, with whom he translated Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Growing up at Lord Burghley's he had the run of one of the best libraries in all of Europe.... *And*, he worked with the world famous gardener, John Gerard.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*laughs*] You think Shakespeare was brought up to be a gardener?

SENATOR GREENE

[*laughs*] Of course not.

PATRICIA GREENE

Then why mention it?

SENATOR GREENE

Because it's another fascinating piece that fits perfectly into the puzzle. It was that particular gardener, John Gerard, who pioneered a brand new violet, checkered with white.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*ironically*] Oh! My God! Did he?

SENATOR GREENE

I'll have you know that it's the very same flower Shakespeare describes in *Venus and Adonis*.

PATRICIA GREENE

And what does *that* prove?

SENATOR GREENE

Shakespeare was the only Elizabethan writer to mention it. And that makes Shakespeare de Vere.

PATRICIA GREENE

You must be kidding. Is that all you have?

SENATOR GREENE

Oh! for God's sake!
De Vere was a champion horseman, jousting, and swordsman.
He was a trained falconer. He composed music....
All of those things are replete in Shakespeare's plays.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 5,
writes: Oxford was fluent in French,
Italian, and Spanish.**

SENATOR GREENE

Plus ... deVere was fluent in French, Italian, Spanish, Latin, and Greek.

PATRICIA GREENE

Shakespeare's plays are in English.

SENATOR GREENE

Not entirely.
Take The Merchant of Venice, for example.
Shylock claims a pound of flesh as forfeiture for Antonio's failure to repay his
debt.
Where did a pound of flesh idea come from, do you think?
Not from England.

PATRICIA GREENE

Isn't that what everybody says?

SENATOR GREENE

It's not from the Bible.
So where did it come from?

PATRICIA GREENE

Let me guess.... From Oxford's O so genius brain....
Right?

SENATOR GREENE

No.... The pound of flesh penalty came from a collection of short stories, written
by an Italian, published in Italian, and not translated into English until after
Stratford-on-Avon's death.

PATRICIA GREENE

So ... where is this going?

SENATOR GREENE

After finishing at Gray's Inn, de Vere served in a military campaign in Scotland, and then embarked on a grand tour of France and Italy, where he spent time visiting Paris, Venice, Genoa, Florence, Palermo, and Roussillon, all of which are in Shakespeare's plays.

PATRICIA GREENE

And?...

SENATOR GREENE

And in Italy he undoubtedly read the pound-of-flesh story, *in Italian*, along with plenty of other Italian books he used in his plays.

PATRICIA GREENE

You say.

SENATOR GREENE

And you have a better explanation?

PATRICIA GREENE

I'm not the expert, Dear.

SENATOR GREENE

Like "Gobbo" that's in *The Merchant of Venice*, that no one in England had heard of before the 1600's.
And "gondola."

PATRICIA GREENE

What about them?

SENATOR GREENE

He used the word "gondola" in *The Merchant of Venice*.
But it wasn't in common use in England until the mid-1700's.
Shakespeare picked it up off the locals there....
[beat] But, there's a gaping hole in my thinking.

PATRICIA GREENE

You think?

SENATOR GREENE

If Shakespeare was Queen Elizabeth's lover,
his plays should have been riddled with Oedipus.
And they're not.

PATRICIA GREENE

I know this is a can of worms I'm opening up, but have you ever read Hamlet?...
[beat] I figured you had. It's laced with a boy's obsession about his mother ...
about his mother's clothes, her bedroom, her lovers, and her sex life, and with
patricidal fantasies. Or hadn't you noticed?
Oedipus Rex and Hamlet are two sides of the same coin, I'd say.

SENATOR GREENE

[slaps his forehead] Of course! Of course! Right under my nose.... You're right !

PATRICIA GREENE

But *you're wrong*. Queen Elizabeth was a virgin, not some 16th-century cougar.

SENATOR GREENE

Consider her father, Henry the Eighth ... a sexaholic.
Consider her mother, Anne Boleyn ... beheaded for adultery.
Without the virgin persona, Elizabeth stood little chance remaining queen for
long. Virginity was her only protection.
But she was no more an actual virgin than Queen Guinevere.
It was just one of the state secrets of the time.

PATRICIA GREENE

You're going mad, Robert. And madness in great ones must not go unwatched.

SENATOR GREENE

Nor unwed pregnancies, at court.

PATRICIA GREENE

Like whose, for instance?

SENATOR GREENE

Let's try Lady Macbeth's.

PATRICIA GREENE

Lady Macbeth wasn't pregnant.

SENATOR GREENE

Not by Macbeth, we can assume. But how else do you explain her speech?
[reads] "I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you have done to this."

PATRICIA GREENE

I have never had any explanation for that speech. None.
It doesn't fit.

SENATOR GREENE

Nor I.
Except that she must have been pregnant; and it made an impression on
Shakespeare.

PATRICIA GREENE

On Shakespeare?... Don't you mean on *Macbeth*?

SENATOR GREENE

Macbeth couldn't have cared less.
And when an emotion doesn't fit the character, pin it on the author.

PATRICIA GREENE

To prove what?

SENATOR GREENE

To prove Shakespeare's virgin queen had a son ... whom she didn't treat so well.
I have a theory. Sonnets came from de Vere's diary; and Sonnet 33 reads ...

[reads] "Full many a glorious morning have I seen
Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
With ugly rack on his celestial face,
And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
With all triumphant splendor on my brow;
But out! alack! he was but one hour mine,
The region cloud hath masked him from me now...."

PATRICIA GREENE

Which means, what?

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 6,
writes: Shakespeare's and Queen
Elizabeth's love child.**

SENATOR GREENE

Simple enough, at the beginning: a particularly beautiful, sunlit morning, driven away by clouds. The trickier part is the subtext.... Sun, S-U-N, is a pun with son, S-O-N; and I believe what Shakespeare was saying was that it was *his own son* who was born one morning; and after only an hour, the boy was whisked away.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why? By whom?

SENATOR GREENE

To be kept masked by authorities.

PATRICIA GREENE

What authorities, Sherlock?

SENATOR GREENE

Elizabeth's ... the Queen's ... regina, the region cloud of the poem.

PATRICIA GREENE

Why would she do that to Shakespeare?... Or to the boy's mother?

SENATOR GREENE

Because *she* was the boy's mother. And if so, he would be King, some day.... You see, sun, S-U-N, also stands for king, in Shakespeare's poetry.

PATRICIA GREENE

God! No wonder you think they kept state secrets in England.

SENATOR GREENE

In fact, that same boy ... if he was indeed their love child ... eventually was one of the ones, in 1601, who marched on the Queen's residence, to confront her directly about his succession to the throne.

PATRICIA GREENE

I hear you talking, but you're not coming in.

SENATOR GREENE

Okay; okay. Shakespeare's works must have been created by a man who had a personal relationship with Queen Elizabeth, who had intimate knowledge of court life, who was versed in science, medicine, mathematics, music, astronomy, and philosophy, and who had personal experience with war and storms at sea.

PATRICIA GREENE

Storms at sea as well?

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 7,
writes: Tempests at sea.**

SENATOR GREENE

Yes, storms at sea, and that's de Vere. In 1588 de Vere commanded his own ship, the Edward Bonaventure, in raging waters against the Spanish Armada. Shackspere, on the other hand, the Stratford-on-Avon actor, never went to sea. So how could he possibly have written *The Tempest*? He could hardly write his own name the same way more than once.

PATRICIA GREENE

I'm up to my hair in de Vere.

SENATOR GREENE

Wait, wait...

Two more things ... please ... before you cut me off.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 8,
writes: Pirates.**

And aside number 9, writes Santiago.

SENATOR GREENE

In April, 1576, when de Vere was returning home from his grand tour, his ship was hijacked by pirates, who stripped him near naked. But for the fact that he knew the clan of one of the pirates, and talked ardently about it, he might have been murdered at sea on the spot.

That's fact. *And* ... that's Hamlet's adventure at sea to a T.

And, while still in Paris before the pirate escapade, a friend came to de Vere with a false story that de Vere's young wife had been unfaithful. De Vere bought it, and stayed away from her for years. It was later he learned of his friend's treachery ... the same "friend" who betrayed British troops to the Spanish. Whom Spaniards nicknamed Santiago ... Saint *Iago* ... *Othello*; and convince me otherwise, Dear!

PATRICIA GREENE

Oh.... Three questions; and I'm done with this.

SENATOR GREENE

Ask away.

PATRICIA GREENE

Was de Vere, himself, known for anything *he* wrote?

SENATOR GREENE

Categorically. On one list de Vere was named number one of the seventeen best playwrights of the day. On another, number one of seven. And on a third, after his death, he was mentioned first among the Golden Age of Elizabethan writers.... Then there was Gabriel Harvey's speech at Audley End in 1578, where he said....
[beat] I'll summarize, to keep it short.

[reads] "I have seen many of your verses. You have drunk deep of the Muses of France and Italy. O thou hero, worthy of renown, throw away the pen. Throw away the books and writings that can draw no blood. Seize the sword. Sharpen the spear, and handle the great engines of war. Your eyes flash fire. Your countenance shakes a spear."

PATRICIA GREENE

He said *that*? "Shakes a spear?"

SENATOR GREENE

And *that's* what gave de Vere the idea for his nom de plume.

PATRICIA GREENE

So, why? Why use a pen name?

SENATOR GREENE

Because it was so far beneath their rank for lords to publish in their own names. He would have been laughed out of court, if they knew....
[beat] But one person knew

PATRICIA GREENE

Who?

SENATOR GREENE

Queen Elizabeth. She protected de Vere like no other playwright. Consider Christopher Marlowe, who got a dagger in his eye in 1593. And Ben Jonson, who was tortured in prison in 1597 for a play he wrote. In contrast, de Vere was protected, *and* awarded a virtual king's ransom, an annuity of 1000 pounds. Roughly a million dollars a year, in today's cash. Nobody else got anything close.

**SENATOR GREENE, aside number 10,
writes: £1000 annuity.**

PATRICIA GREENE

Okay. Second question:
How could Queen Elizabeth ever give birth to a child and keep it a secret?

SENATOR GREENE

She had a secluded place called Havering, where she could go for long periods, and not be visited. The Court wouldn't dare bother her, on pain of death. One serving woman, in fact, reportedly did lose her life, for talking too much.

PATRICIA GREENE

And the child?

SENATOR GREENE

Sent to a noble family who guarded the secret with their lives.

PATRICIA GREENE

Last question: What about manuscripts left at death?
You said the Stratford Shakespeare didn't leave any.

SENATOR GREENE

De Vere's death is a mystery.

PATRICIA GREENE

Now why does that not surprise me?

SENATOR GREENE

When Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, James assumed the throne; and de Vere served as Lord Great Chamberlain at the coronation. Four weeks later King James renewed de Vere's 1,000 pound annuity. Then in June, a year later, de Vere disappeared. It was attested in legal documents that he died, June 24th, 1604. But there are no credible records *how* de Vere died ... or *where* he died ... or even *if* he died. No funeral. No will. No elegies or epitaphs. No tomb or corpse. No mention of his death in any correspondence anywhere, despite the fact that the death of a notable was always a major topic of conversation in letters back then.... The earliest suggestion that de Vere had actually died occurs in a June, 1606 letter of Sir William Browne.

PATRICIA GREENE

And you believe?

SENATOR GREENE

[*pause*] I believe de Vere retreated to an island.
Where he spent the last year of his life, or so, finishing Lear, Timon of Athens, and The Tempest, and editing his other plays to make them ready for *his* legacy. In any event, somehow de Vere got his edited proofs into his daughters' hands before he actually died.

PATRICIA GREENE

Daughters' hands.... ?

SENATOR GREENE

The First Folio of Shakespeare's plays was dedicated to two of Mary Herbert's sons, William, who was engaged to de Vere's daughter, Bridget, and Philip, who had married Susan de Vere on December 27, 1604.

PATRICIA GREENE

And the island?...

[*pause*] Oh, come on now, I know you know.

SENATOR GREENE

The island of Shakespeare's *Tempest*.

Bleak and stormy, yellow sands, and a rock-hard shore.

Frost in the fall upon the sharp north wind.

That would place it somewhere on the east coast of England.

It's depicted as being in two parts, surrounded by foul mud-flats, with brackish water, but a freshwater well.

It adds up to *one* place in the world.... In Essex, 20 miles from the de Vere castle.

PATRICIA GREENE

What's its name?

SENATOR GREENE

Do you really want to know?

PATRICIA GREENE

Of course.... What's your problem? I'm not going to tell anyone.

SENATOR GREENE

[*beat*] Its name is Mersea Island.

PATRICIA GREENE

Big deal.

SENATOR GREENE

It might be, someday....

[*beat*] May I have a minute to tell you one last thing?

PATRICIA GREENE

Sure. If it only takes a minute.

SENATOR GREENE goes back to the whiteboard and writes, 11. The Last Sane Days of Shakespeare. PATRICIA GREENE then dims the lights, and sits.

SENATOR GREENE

Six months after his supposed death, de Vere attended a masquerade given by King James in honor of Susan de Vere's marriage to Philip Herbert.

PATRICIA GREENE

And *only* if it's the truth.

SENATOR GREENE

It was the night before the wedding, and part of a weeklong celebration during which the Court had seven of her father's plays performed. No record of his being invited. No one reported seeing him. Vintage de Vere. And that night the play performed was Measure for Measure, where the Duke of Vienna goes into hiding, only to reappear at the end, with a wedding following.

PATRICIA GREENE

You would have liked him, wouldn't you?

SENATOR GREENE

If we had known him, they might have been the most incredible days of our life. His endless genius. His anger, shame, despair, and melancholy. His outlandish pranks. His nights of youthful madness in Windsor. His duels. His wounds. His exploits at war and sea. The recollections of his tour of France and Italy, and the theatre there. The heartbreak of his and Elizabeth's son, taken away from them. The creation of the Globe. The ceaseless nag of expenses and debts. And, of course, the man, and his never-ending love for a Queen who could never be his.

"Death is now the phoenix' nest ...
And the turtle's loyal breast to eternity doth rest."

[*beat*] Yes, I would have liked him very much ... very, very much.

PATRICIA GREENE

I would have, too....

SENATOR GREENE

Pat?... If you had to choose ... would it be de Vere? or Stratford?

PATRICIA GREENE

If I tell you, will you come to bed now?

SENATOR GREENE

[*beat*] Yes.

PATRICIA GREENE

I have never seen you so beside yourself, like tonight.

[*beat*] Stratford is buttons on the ground.

De Vere is the entire suit, coat, shoes, and feathers.

The hardest thing to believe, sometimes in life, is the truth.

And the greatest lies ever told are the untruths people want to believe in, more than the truth.

Darkness.

SCENE 5 – MERSEA ISLAND

The stage remains dark, save for a long, black tunnel upstage, with a white light at the end. A white mantle is put on SENATOR GREENE and a black dress on PATRICIA GREENE. They sit quietly at their respective ends of the table. Steps are placed on the backside of the table which provide easy access up and down. Then wind, and sounds of a violent, crashing storm at night at sea.

Over the laptop speakers:

SHIPMASTER (on speaker)

Boatswain!

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

Here, master: what cheer?

SHIPMASTER (on speaker)

Good. Speak to the mariners: fall to it yarely, or we run ourselves aground; bestir, bestir.

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

Heigh, my hearts; cheerly, cheerly, my hearts; yare, yare! Take in the top-sail.

A shipmaster's whistle blows and blows.

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

Tend to the master's whistle. Blow till thou burst thy wind, if room enough!

MALE PASSENGER (on speaker)

Where is the master, Boatswain?

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

Do you not hear him? You mar our labour; keep your cabin: you do assist the storm.... To cabin: silence: trouble us not.

MALE PASSENGER (on speaker)

Remember whom thou hast aboard.

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

None that I more love than myself....

If you can command these elements to silence, use your authority.

If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the last moments of your life.... Out of our way, I say....

Down with the top-mast. Yare; lower, lower; bring her to try with main-course.

A woman's scream offstage.

BOATSWAIN (on speaker)

A plague upon this howling!

Lay her ahold, ahold. Set her two courses; off to sea again, lay her off.

MALE PASSENGER (on speaker)

Mercy on us! We split, we split!

O mercy, I am gone.

Farewell, my wife! Farewell my child!

We split, we split, we split!

The wind and storm dissolve into dawn. Lights brighten, revealing the room changed into Mersea Island: a tiny estuary island on the coast of Essex, England, roughly 70 miles East/Northeast of London. The table has become a hill overlooking the land and sea. SENATOR GREENE (now in a white mantle) stands, picks up his closed briefcase, and walks around the table to

his wife (now in black). She stands to meet him; and he leads her up the steps (briefcase in hand), onto the table to look out (upstage) over the island.

SENATOR GREENE

“Mercy on us.”

This is Mersea Island.

And everything I have, and everything I have done, has come to completion in my last hours with you....

This is my legacy. *Our* legacy. *Your* legacy.

PATRICIA GREENE

Did you not witness it?

SENATOR GREENE

Be collected. No more amazement.

PATRICIA GREENE

How not? Who hears the thunder, and thinks not of God and destruction?

Were you not moved? Did you not see the scolding winds?

The ocean swell, and rage, and foam in the dark?

Things that love night love not such a night as last: the wrathful skies

That drove the very wanderers of the dark upon the drowning sea.

Such spouting cataracts, such oak-cleaving thunderbolts,

Such bursts of thunder, such groans of wind and rain.

SENATOR GREENE

All is well.

I promise you.

PATRICIA GREENE

O, I have suffered with those I saw suffer.

The brave vessel, who, no doubt, had noble creatures in her,

Dashed to pieces. Their cries did knock against my very heart.

Poor souls, cast against the rocks, they perished. O, woe the day !

SENATOR GREENE

Tell your heart, no harm is done. Wipe your eyes.

The *tempest* that you saw *I caused*, and have with such provision in my art so safely ordered, that there be no soul, no, not one hair, shall perish from it.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] What *is* a tempest?

SENATOR GREENE

It's the storm that brings the world to our doorstep.

PATRICIA GREENE

But what *is* a tempest?

SENATOR GREENE

It is the passage of time we live upon.
It is this place in time you will have inside you forever.
It is I.

PATRICIA GREENE

But what *is* a tempest?

SENATOR GREENE

It is the ship that I must take away from you.

PATRICIA GREENE

I will not let you go....
You will not go from me.
I refuse.
I love you too much.

SENATOR GREENE leads her down from the table, upstage, onto a higher riser, and, setting the briefcase down, he holds her face affectionately in his hands.

SENATOR GREENE

If how I've lived has offended you ... or if my dying is a burden on you, remember: I have loved you so much I would not your thinking of me, nor your remembering me, bring a single tear to your eye.
Hold the good of me to you. Hold it in your heart. Let your writing be of that.
Through you I reached peace from the demons inside me.
Through you I completed my journey.
The place we stand before is merely an aspect of time. It's like an ocean.
Let me go into it in peace. Give me peace, and, in time, I will bring *you* peace.
My strength that's left cannot suffer the pain of shaming my wife.
Do me that one, last favor, I beg of you.

PATRICIA GREENE

O, my God!

Howls.

How can you ...?... Are you ...? Is your heart made of stone?

Howls again.

Mine is breaking. Oh !!

[*beat*] Stay.... Stay.... You can't leave me here like this.

SENATOR GREENE kisses his wife to stop her lament. Red lights (of an emergency vehicle) begin flashing.

SENATOR GREENE

Please ... please, my Dear. Time is too precious and life too fleeting.
Trouble these moments no more with your grief, I implore you.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*pause*] I have calmed myself.

SENATOR GREENE

Thank you.

[*pensively*] It's too bad we must consume *all* of life to get to the end.
There's so much I'd love to do, now that it's over. And I feel such a beginner.

PATRICIA GREENE

You can't leave me. I love you too much. I need you too much.

SENATOR GREENE

Calm yourself. You promised.

PATRICIA GREENE

I had forgotten my grief before, and shall cry it over again....
I love you too much for you to go, Bud.

SENATOR GREENE

I've already gone, my Love.... We are in a time I cannot explain. It's a place of peace between. It's a fold, like The Tempest ... like The Tempest will always be for us. And it's passing. But for the moment, while we're here, see what we can discover. One truth I see, of the human spirit, is: What we don't know now, there imagination can play.

PATRICIA GREENE

What is this island you've brought me to?

Looks out over the audience.

A wonder, how many godly creatures one can see.
How beautiful everyone is.
O brave new world, that has such people in it.

SENATOR GREENE

It is yours.
Your brave new world.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*beat*] I need

SENATOR GREENE

A push?

PATRICIA GREENE

Yes, a push. I've calmed myself; but I need a push.

SENATOR GREENE takes his wife in his arms, and they dance to soft music (in the light of the flashing red lights).

SENATOR GREENE

We are such stuff as dreams are made of.
And our little life is rounded with a sleep.

PATRICIA GREENE

I would have asked for one last night, but God returned me a lifetime, bathed in dance.
Dance with me....
Dance me off, my Love, to eternity.
Dance my panic into clarity.
Dance me as a prince, forever my Love.
Dance me to the end of love.

SENATOR GREENE

[*dancing*] I shall.... The true and wonderful thing about life I've discovered ... //

PATRICIA GREENE

Is dancing?

SENATOR GREENE

Is that life is constantly evolving.
It's a passage through memory, no sooner lived than past, like bees in flight.
Goodbye, my Sweet Darling. This is time. Time is real.
But more remembered than lived.

They embrace, and kiss long and lovingly. He picks up the shut briefcase.

SENATOR GREENE

I go, but I shall stay forever in your words.... Goodbye.

PATRICIA GREENE

Don't say Goodbye.... Never. You must never say that.
Stay with me. What's going to happen to me, without you watching over?

SENATOR GREENE

I'm no farther from you than the next room.
And you'll always have my Fermat. The proof is yours.

Hands her the briefcase.

[*aside*] And now my charms are all overthrown.
I bid farewell to you. Gentle breath of yours my sails must fill,
or else my project fails,
Which was to please, and be set free.

They embrace again; and he exits. She watches, then comes down from the riser, returns to the table, ascends it, and reaches her arms out to the sky and to the audience, holding the briefcase in one of her hands.

PATRICIA GREENE

Where now, brave new world?...

SENATOR GREENE (offstage)

[*beat*] Everything's round.

PATRICIA GREENE drops her arms.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*raised voice*] What?

SENATOR GREENE (offstage)

Everything.

PATRICIA GREENE

Everything?

SENATOR GREENE (offstage)

Everything.

Space.

Time.

Gravity.

Life.

Death.

Souls.

Waiting.

Choice.

Happiness.

Everything.

PATRICIA GREENE

Are you out there, Bud?

Will I find you again?...

Or has this all been a dream? you and I?

SENATOR GREENE (offstage)

Remembering.

PATRICIA GREENE

I feel like a metal butterfly, trying to fly for you, weighed down by sadness.

I don't have the words in me to understand and tell you how much I love you.

I'm on the border of my life, one step from falling off the edge.

It's all too strange, trying to think....

The tears will come in empty rooms, and dark, closed hours.

And the questions: Did I do enough?

But now ... now are things I must, must do, before time slips away.

Promises to keep, and then I can grieve....

Bud, if you can hear me, I love you more than I'll ever be able to say.

And always will.

I've learned so much from you.

SENATOR GREENE (offstage)

Even in our sleep, pain which cannot forget, falls drop by drop upon the heart,
until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom, through the awful
grace of God.

PATRICIA GREENE

[*kneels*] Thank you.
Thank you for being you.

END

RAMANUJAN to 101 places:

$$A^3 + B^3 = C^3 + D^3 =$$

1130868957232713004044385184640449835933396295890338727364831620
9751834206771436501154080492532347927, where:

$$A = 833634285122092121534404886891086$$

$$B = 2205589002810167956350851303452191$$

$$C = 2205589002810167956350851303452192$$

$$D = 833634285122092121534404886891079$$