

Taylor Mac
From *The Fre*

The Fre is a play written in the form of Old Comedy, set in an actual mud pit. Just prior to this excerpt, Hero, wearing a white suit, has been thrown in the mud by his nemesis, Frankie.

HERO

Is something wrong, has all this mud replaced
Your brain's ability to think in haste
Your hand. Put forth. It's all that I require
Come, lift me up, I don't wish to perspire.

FRANKIE

Too bad Bra.

HERO

Yes right. Too bad for you and your red-necked
Who think you own the world and can subject
Your ways and wiles upon each passing soul.
Too bad, for when I'm freed from this sink hole
You'll learn that bad, once given, is a coup
Who turns its vice upon the giver too.

FRANKIE

Bra, why are you talking like that?

HERO

I speak the kings speech as tis meant to sound.

FRANKIE

Tis?

HERO

Yes, do wit and poetry confound?
Would you prefer I speak like all my peers
And "like" and "oh my god" into old years?
I speak the way I speak for tis absurd-.
That's right I said it, "tis", for 'tis' a word.
And words are swords and shields and lances much
More potent, trustworthy and in true touch
Than bullets, bombs, and bully's camouflage
That sneaks and hides its truth of sabotage.
And tis absurd that words, so ample and profuse,
Have fallen out of favor, in disuse.

FRANKIE

Whatever, s'all good. You just sound kinda stupid, that's all.

HERO

I am not stupid.

FRANKIE

I'll take your word for it.

HERO

I can be gullible and fall headlong
Like all whose hearts are pledged to righting wrong-

FRANKIE

It wouldn't bother me if you were stupid.

HERO

I read philosophy.

FRANKIE

(Uninterested)
That's Cool.

HERO

I taught
Myself. And have devoured and besought
The meaning of each way and circumstance
Of how and why each molecule does dance.
I'm not some simpleton, some ign'ant vermin
I learned from French translations into German
Which were themselves translations of the Greek.

FRANKIE

Okay. I Got it.

HERO

No. Stop. Don't you speak
Of what you understand when clearly you're
The kind of man whose brain is like manure.
You say you comprehend to save your face
When really there is not a single trace
Of apprehension lingering within.
Admit, your greatest deed in life has been,

HERO

(Continued)

When shaking hands, you wiggle, snap, contort
As if it were some great and noble sport.
Yes you, you're just like all the placid rest.
Those chowderheads whose goal in life is jest.
Who cat call, cheer and at the hooters hoot.
Who sing their bumptious tunes with burps and toots.
It's you and all your strain, that in this swamp
Of life, don't know the piss-pot's a Duchamp.

FRANKIE

What's a Duchamp?