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Tax Day Comfort---Shakespeare Was A Tax Cheat

To cheat or not to cheat, that is the question. Like other universal truths, no one likes to pay taxes. Some claim it is patriotic to pay more than your share. For most people, however, it's somehow satisfying to arrange your affairs to outsmart the tax man.

For universal truths on pride, love, greed, envy, ambition and honor, we look to Shakespeare. It turns out we can for taxes too, for new evidence suggests the bard was a bit of a tax cheat. So says a team of academics focused like a laser on Shakespeare's business savvy ways. See [Shakespeare the 'Hard-Headed Businessman' Uncovered](#).

Details are sketchy, but the bard was evidently pursued for tax evasion. In 1598, he was prosecuted for hoarding grain during a shortage. See [William Shakespeare: Tax Dodger, Shady Businessman?](#) Still, much of the recent aha moment is aimed at his business savvy and profit making activities more than his tax dodging. See [Bad Bard: A Tax Dodger and Famine Profiteer](#).



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Perhaps they go hand in hand. It made me wonder whether Shakespeare's plays and sonnets couldn't be restyled with a more tax-centric theme. Why pen a sonnet about love when one can write about taxes? Here's an example.

When in Disgrace With a Tax Bill (After William Shakespeare)

When I'm disgraced by an IRS tax bill,
I all alone beweep it, feeling rather ill.
I know that I should muster some arguments and proof,
Yet sorely I do worry, my taxes through the roof.
But when I your love remember, can it a tax bill fix?
It's not enough to save me, for I need good tax tricks.
Citations, yes, and rulings, some tech advice and more,
I need to win each battle to win the whole tax war.
It's clear my tax is painful, my arguments are few,
I swear and ask the gods to act, praying that they do,
For Heaven seems quite deaf to me, never coming through.
But letter rulings rescue me, my arguments renew,
The rulings they support me, and like a soothing balm,
The tax law is my savior, and then I'm finally calm.

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