

# Dogberryisms / Malapropisms (or Miss-Marple-isms\*)

\* A malapropism for 'malapropism'  
(see *New Scientist*, June 2005, as quoted on Wikipedia)

Constable Dogberry in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (1600) claims:

'Our watch, sir, have indeed comprehended two auspicious persons' (3.5.44)

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'Our watch, sir, have indeed apprehended two suspicious persons' (3.5.44)

In Act 3 Scene III of Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), Mrs Malaprop declares to Captain Absolute:

"Sure, if I reprehend any thing in this world it is the use of my oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs!"

In Act 3 Scene III of Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), Mrs Malaprop declares to Captain Absolute:

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In Act 3 Scene III of Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), Mrs Malaprop declares to Captain Absolute:

"Sure, if I apprehend any thing in this world it is the use of my vernacular tongue, and a nice arrangement of epithets!"

You will promise to forget this fellow – illiterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

She's as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile.

I would have her instructed in geometry, that she might know something of the contagious countries.

He is the very pineapple of politeness!

(Mrs Malaprop, *The Rivals*)



You will promise to forget this fellow – obliterate him, I say, quite from your memory.

She's as headstrong as an alligator on the banks of the Nile.

I would have her instructed in geography, that she might know something of the contiguous countries.

He is the very pinnacle of politeness!

O villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting redemption for this.

First, which man do you think is most desertless to be leader of the watch?

You're thought to be the most senseless and fit man here, so you will carry the lantern and be constable.

(Dogberry, *Much Ado About Nothing*)

O villain! Thou wilt be condemned into everlasting damnation for this.

First, which man do you think is most deserving to be leader of the watch?

You're thought to be the most sensible and fit man here, so you will carry the lantern and be constable.

(Dogberry, *Much Ado About Nothing*)

I'm ravished! (I missed my breakfast.)

Nothing better than a hardy stew to beat a cold winter's day.

For all intensive purposes.

You are the heart of my afflictions.

We went to see some flamingo dancing.

You could have knocked me over with a fender.

The flood damage was so bad they had to evaporate the city.

I'm famished/ravenous! (I missed my breakfast.)

Nothing better than a hearty stew to beat a cold winter's day.

For all intents and purposes.

You are the heart of my affections.

We went to see some flamenco dancing.

You could have knocked me over with a feather.

The flood damage was so bad they had to evacuate the city.

The law I sign today directs new funds... to the task of collecting vital intelligence... on weapons of mass production.

We cannot let terrorists and rogue nations hold this nation hostile or hold our allies hostile.

They have miscalculated me as a leader.

(George W. Bush)

The law I sign today directs new funds... to the task of collecting vital intelligence... on weapons of mass destruction.

We cannot let terrorists and rogue nations hold this nation hostage or hold our allies hostage.

They have underestimated me as a leader.

Let's avoid upsetting the apple tart of this country's economic success.

(former Taoiseach of Ireland Bertie Ahern)

Conference, mark my words. We will make breakfast a success.

(Welsh Conservative leader Andrew Davies's encouraging words at the Conservative party conference)



Let's avoid upsetting the apple cart of this country's economic success.

(former Taoiseach of Ireland Bertie Ahern)

Conference, mark my words. We will make Brexit a success.

(Welsh Conservative leader Andrew Davies's encouraging words at the Conservative party conference)

The old gentleman, too, had publicly declared that the Fieldhead estate and the De Walden estate were delightfully contagious – a malapropism which rumour had not failed to repeat to Shirley.

(Charlotte Brontë, *Shirley. A Tale.*)

“If we could only get one of them newfangled carriages that makes no noise that Father O’Rourke told him about – them with the rheumatic wheels – for the day cheap.”

(Eliza in ‘The Sisters’ – James Joyce, *Dubliners*)

CAPTAIN JACK BOYLE: I’m telling you... Joxer... th’ whole worl’s... in a terrible state o’... chassis!

(Sean O’Casey, *Juno and the Paycock*)

The old gentleman, too, had publicly declared that the Fieldhead estate and the De Walden estate were delightfully contiguous – a malapropism which rumour had not failed to repeat to Shirley.

“If we could only get one of them newfangled carriages that makes no noise that Father O’Rourke told him about – them with the pneumatic wheels – for the day cheap.”

CAPTAIN JACK BOYLE: I’m telling you... Joxer... th’ whole worl’s... in a terrible state o’... chaos/crisis!