FEEL SOMEONE FOLLOWING ME...
ALL RIGHT, MR. CHICKEN PANTS! I'M GOING TO WRAP THAT HORN AROUND YOUR SKINNY NECK!

THE ONLY WAY TO GO BACK IN TIME AND PROVE THAT SHAKESPEARE DID NOT WRITE ALL HIS PLAYS ALONE IS WITH THIS STRANGE, ODDBALL SUPERHERO... BUT HE IS SO... SO GOOFY!
ONE DAY AT SCHOOL...

...AND IN FACT MANY CRITICS HAVE POSTULATED THAT WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE DID NOT WRITE ALL THE PLAYS AND SONNETS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM, PERHAPS NONE OF THEM. IN THE LAST TWENTY YEARS, A NUMBER OF NOTED SCHOLARS HAVE PROPOSED THAT THEY WERE REALLY WRITTEN BY FRANCIS BACON, CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, OR A SERIES OF PEOPLE WHO SHARED THE SAME BARBER...

PROFESSOR DOGWOOD!! I'VE CAUGHT YOU RED-HANDED THIS TIME!

ER...
PRINCIPAL JENKINS/ YOU WERE LISTENING OUTSIDE...

SEE HERE, PROFESSOR!! THERE'LL BE NO MORE OF THIS REVISIONIST HISTORY IN THIS ENGLISH CLASS! WHAT HOGWASH! WHY EVERYONE KNOWS THAT SHAKESPEARE IS SHAKESPEARE!

YES! WHY WOULD SOMEBODY WRITE THE GREATEST LITERATURE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME?

AND WHO'S THIS PICTURE IN THE FRONT?
TAKE A LOOK/ IT'S SHAKESPEARE/
EVEN I CAN SEE THAT!

GOOD HEAVENS, PROFESSOR! THESE HALLOWED HALLS OF IVY AND TRADITION AT RANDALL P. MCGRATHY HIGH WILL NOT BROACH SUCH BANAL NONSENSE!/ THIS MALARKEY IS TOTALLY UNCALLED FOR!!

ER, BUT... ALL RIGHT THAT'S IT YOU'RE FIRED!!
AFTER SCHOOL...
POOR PROFESSOR DOGWOOD. IS A GOOD TEACHER. MUST HELP HIM!

KNOCK! KNOCK! PROFESSOR?

NO ANSWER. MAY HAVE ALREADY COMMITTED SUICIDE... THESE ENGLISH TEACHERS CAN BE SENSITIVE TYPES.

SOME NOISE IN BACK...

ALAS, POOR YORICK! FOR I KNEW HIM, HORATIO...

IS BAD... TALKING TO GRAPEFRUIT. MAYBE I BETTER GO BACK OUT AND KNOCK MORE LOUDLY...

HEY PROFESSOR DOGWOOD!
Ah, yes... why Herbie!

Professor, if you can prove that Shakespeare didn’t write the sonnets, they wouldn’t fired you, would they?

Yes, teaching was my life. I can’t think what I shall do now...

No, Herbie, but how can you prove that, after all these hundreds of years? Why, the greatest scholars in the world have tried and...

Maybe there’s a way. I’ll check back later.

Herbie! It’s about time! Really about time! I wanted to fix this clock now look at this mess!

Bad. Need Grandfather clock to travel back in time to Shakespeare’s day and help Prof. Dogwood.

Oh, what a son! Other fathers have mechanically inclined children that grow up to be great engineers and inventors!

All I have is a little fat nothing, who can’t do anything but sit on the couch and watch television.

Please Dad, let me try. You’ve done the hard part taking it apart, now let me try to put it together.
LATER... STILL A FEW PARTS LEFT OVER, BUT IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING. LET'S TAKE IT FOR A SPIN!

BUT THE TIME-TRAVELING GRANDFATHER CLOCK WILL ONLY TAKE HIM AS FAR BACK AS THE DISCO AGE...

ENOUGH OF THIS! Gotta find another way! Must find Father Time, he would know... but where is he?

NOT IN HIS SUBTERRANEAN ICE CASTLE AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD!

NOT IN THE GREAT UNKNOWN!

UNKNOWN

HE'S NOT AT HIS FAVORITE TABLE AT THE STORK CLUB!

NOT WITH HIS MISTRESS IN ROTTERDAM!

ONE LAST PLACE TO CHECK.
PAY DIRT AT THE DAYTONA 500. WHERE FATHER TIME AND HIS PIT CREW ARE IN THE THICK OF IT!

WELL, LET'S SEE THERE'RE ONLY THREE OF THOSE GRANDFATHER CLOCKS LEFT IN SERVICE. THERE'S THAT ONE ON THE WEST COAST, THERE'S YOURS, WHICH YOU BROKE, AND THE NEAREST ONE IS IN IRON CITY! IT BELONGS TO A BLUE-COLLAR SUPERHERO CALLED FLAMING CARROT!

HEY! FATHER TIME!

WHAT KIND OF NAME IS THAT FOR A COSTUMED AVENGER? FLAMING CARROT?

IN IRON CITY...

Yeah! You look like someone who'd be looking for flaming carrot! You should find him down in palookaville, that's our tenderloin district...

TENDERLOIN?

Yeah, the slums! skid row! rummyn town! if he's up this early in the day, that means he prob-ably hasn't gone to bed yet!

There he is... looks like he's catching a bad guy right now!
AH! HA! GOT YOU NOW, MR. CHICKEN PANTS! I WILL PUT SALT ON YOUR TAIL AND YOU WILL DIE!

A BLIND ALLEY! THE JIG IS UP!

NOW I GOTA READ YOU YOUR RIGHTS/ LESSE... HARD TO READ... THE DARN THING WENT THRU THE WASH LAST WEEK... "YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN VIOLENT. ANYTHING YOU SAY AND CAN, WILL BE SUED TO DANCE YOU." ... WAIT A MINUTE THAT'S NOT RIGHT!

SO... WHILE YOU FIGURE THAT OUT, WHAT SAY I GO GET US SOME SODA POP?

YEAH, OKAY! MR. PIBB OR DR PEPPER FOR ME!

WOULD BE GETTING OFF TOO EASY IF I JUST ARREST HIM!

THE CRIMINAL IS GETTING AWAY, GOING BEHIND THAT BARBECUE PLACE.

HIDE IN THERE!

OH, HEAVENS TO Betsy! WHERE DID MR. CHICKEN PANTS GO?!
LOOK! THIS BARBECUE PIT WAS LEFT UNLOCKED! SOME POOR LITTLE KIDS COULD GET TRAPPED WHILE PLAYING.

WELL, TIME TO GO HOME AND DIG SOME MORE HOLES IN THE BACK YARD.

HEY! HEY! LEMME OUTTA HERE!

GREAT CAESAR’S GHOST! A TALKING OVEN! CHICKEN PANTS IS USING VENTRILOQUIST TO PLAY A TRICK!!

YAAAAAAAAAAH!!!!!!! AIIIIIIIIIIEEEEE!

CHICKEN PANTS! YOU ARE BURNT! BETTER GO TO THE HOSPITAL NOW!

AHHHHH!

OH, AND ONE THING....

WHERE’S MY SOODAAAAAA!!!!!

I LET HIM GO NOW! HE’LL BE IN THE HOSPITAL FOR A WEEK AND THEN I ARREST HIM!

WHAT A STRANGE CREATURE! HE ALMOST BURNED THAT MAN TO DEATH... BETTER TRY CUNNING PLAN!
USE POWER OF SUGGESTION. THERE HE IS WAITING FOR A BUS.

YOUR GETTING VERY SLEEPY...

VERY SLEEPY...

YOUR EYES ARE GETTING HEAVY...

HEAVYYY...

WHAT A SUGGESTIBLE MIND! IT'S TAKEN EFFECT A LREADY! HE'S FLOATING AWAY A LREADY!!

THAT'S IT! GET THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK OUT! WE'RE GOING BACK IN TIME TO THE ERA OF SHAKESPEARE!!

NOW LET'S SEE! SHAKESPEARE RODE WITH BILLY THE KID AND THE DALTON GANG! THE OLD WEST! SAY ABOUT THE YEAR 1607?

RIGHT ON THE DOT, PARDNER!
TIME LOLLIPOP?
NO THANKS! I USE MY BUBBLE PIPE! CUTTING DOWN ON THE SUGAR!

BETTER SHIFT UP A GEAR! THIS LITTLE FAT GUY IS HEAVY!

1965
1918
1912

YAAHHHH! OUT OF CONTROL

FALL DOWN AND GO BOOM!

1918

YOU CAN FIX IT?

WELL AT LEAST WELL ENOUGH TO GET BACK TO THE DISCO AGE!

ONWARD TO AVON! YES, AVON CALLING!
Chapter 2

THE BOOBS OF AVON

FORSOOTH! WHAT LIGHT THROUGH YON WINDOW BREAKS?

HEY! SHUT UP DOWN THERE! I'M TRYIN' TO GET A LITTLE SHUT-EYE!
This Shakespeare is a playwright, right? Lesssee... platypus trainers, playgrounds, playwrights? Hey, there's no phone numbers in these phone books. Only names and addresses.

That's because the telephone hasn't been invented yet!

...and there's no William Shakespeare, either!

But no, there's Drury Lane!

...and the Globe Theatre!

It's closed! Shakespeare was to be around here somewhere! We'll wait in this bistro!

Hey! Billy Bob!

Hey, Billy Bob! Gettest thou feet off the table posthaste!

Forsooth! Billy Bob Shakespeare, wast thou borneth in a barn?!
GARSH! SHUCKS! YUP... I WAS AT THAT!

...AND NO MORE SHALT THOU DO THE "PULL MY FINGER" TRICK ON THE FAIR AND MODEST MAIDENS IN THIS ESTABLISHMENT OR THOU SHALT BE THROWN OUT ON THY EARLIEST!

HAR/HAR/GOLLIWEE! I DIST LAWS TA HAVE A LI'L FUN NOW AN' THEN!

GREAT SCOTT! COULD THIS HICK, THIS BOORISH HAYSEED, THIS COUNTRY BUMPKIN BE WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE? THE BARD OF AVON AND GREAT MAN OF LETTERS?

HEY! ARE YOU...ER, I MEAN...ART THOU WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, THE PLAYWRIGHT?

-BURP-


WHAT'S THIS? INVENTIONS? YOU'RE AN INVENTOR TOO?/

AH'M WHAT YOU'D CALL AN ENTERPRISING IN-DEE-VID-YODOL! HERE'S MUH LATEST INVENTION... IT KILLS MICE WHEN YER NOT AROUND!
KILLS THEM?

YEAH, SPLATTERS THEIR BRAINS ALL OVER THE PLACE. WATCH THIS TRIFLE!*

*TRIFLE: A BRITISH DESSERT MADE OF CUSTARD, CAKE, FRUIT, AND WHIPPED CREAM. ED.

HMMMM...

WELL, IT'S A LITTLE MESSY...

WHAT ABOUT PLAYS?... HEARD YOU WERE A PLAYWRIGHT. WHAT ABOUT THAT?
PLAYS!...HERE YOU GO...!
THIS ONE'S ABOUT A GUY NAMED
WILBUR WHO HAS A TALKING HORSE...
AND IN THIS ONE, A BUNCHA PEOPLE
GO OUT FOR A THREE-HOUR TOUR ON
A FISHING BOAT, BUT A STORM
COMES AND THEY'RE MAROONED
ON A DESERT ISLAND AND...

THIS IS MUM FAVORITE...
AS A LITTLE KID, THIS GUY
HAS HIS PARENTS KILLED BY
CRIMINALS AND WHEN HE
GROWS UP HE FIGHTS CRIME
DRESSED UP AS A BAT SO
HE SCARES THEM...

YES! CRIMINALS ARE
A SUPERSTITIOUS AND
COWARDLY LOT!

BUT WHAT ABOUT MACBETH,
AND THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
AND HAMLET...?

HMMMM...NOW YOU'RE TALKIN'!
I LAH THEM TITLES/ LEMME WORK
ON 'EM TONIGHT AND MEET ME BACK
HERE TOMORROW... RIAGHT NOW
I Gotta SKEE DADDLE OFF TO
MY ONE FULL-TIME GIG!

NO WAY, HOSAY?
THAT RUBE DID NOT PEN
HAMLET OR MACBETH!

LET'S FOLLOW!

TIME FOR
DISGUISE KIT!
Hup hoo ha... one up, one down... and bennnnd... and twist!

Come over here and look in the window.

Gadzooks! Shakespeare is an aerobics instructor!!!
HOLDETH IT RIGHT THERE, VARLETS!

OH NO!...SHAKESPEARE LEFT US WITH THE TAB AND THEY DON'T TAKE VISA IN THIS PLACE!
LATER, BACK AT SHAKESPEARE'S...

YEAH, HE'S IN THERE, WRITING UP A STORM... GOT SOME DARK FIGURE IN A CLOAK WITH HIM.

MAYBE THAT'S THE DARK LADY OF HIS SONNETS!

AND THEN HE SEES THIS LIGHT A-COMIN' THROUGH THIS HERE BROKE WINDOW...

NAH... YOU GOTTA MAKE IT MORE POETIC... YA GOTTA HAVE SOME FLAIR!

LET'S TRY AND JUICE THIS UP HERE: "HARK! WHAT LIGHT THROUGH YONDER WINDOW BREAKS?"

THERE YA GO LITTLE BUDDY... THA'S JUS' EGG-ZAKLY WHUT AH MEANT!

TAKE PICTURES NOW!

YEAH! I SEE! THAT DOES SOUND BETTER... MORE EDUCATED... MORE HIGH-FALUTIN'!

LET'S BUST 'EM RIGHT NOW!

NO! NO! THIS IS NOT A CRIME... THOSE TWO ARE CREATING SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST LITERATURE... WE CAN'T AFFORD TO DISTURB ONE SECOND OF THEIR TIME TOGETHER... OR SCARE THE MYSTERY GUY OFF!

OH!
LATER...
MYSTERY FIGURE LEAVES THROUGH SECRET PASSAGE...
BUT WHO IS HE?
LOOK AT FOOTPRINT/ LOOK WHAT IT SAYS THERE/
UNDERNEATH THE DARK CAPE AND HOOD IS SOMEONE WEARING NIKES!

SOMEONE FROM THE FUTURE JUST LIKE US!
HE MUST BE FROM OUR TIME, AND MUST HAVE THE THIRD GRANDFATHER CLOCK...IS OUR ONLY WAY BACK TO OUR OWN TIME?
THERE HE GOES!

NO, NO, PLEASE...I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY! DON'T KILL ME!
WE WON'T HARM YOU! WE NEED YOUR GRANDFATHER CLOCK TO GO FORWARD IN TIME, BACK TO OUR OWN ERA!
BUT WHO ARE YOU? LET ME LIGHT A MATCH!
Buddy Hackett!

You're Buddy Hackett, who traveled back in time to help Shakespeare write his masterpieces... but why?

I've always dabbed in the arts... sculpture, oil, poetry, theatre... art was my first love... then comedy.

Why, if that ever got out, it could ruin my career... nobody could ever stomach a comedian who is also a serious artiste!

Ahh... and ya know, nobody respects anything unless it was written long, long ago... if it ain't old, it ain't good! And I agree! I feel so creative, so full of inspiration in these old days!

And anyways, who would take a face like mine seriously in our age of photography and television?

That's all okay, but you gotta do us one big favor!
THE FOLLOWING MONDAY IN ENGLISH CLASS...

...AND SHAKESPEARE AND I WORKED WELL TOGETHER...WE WERE A GOOD TEAM, LIKE MARTIN AND LEWIS OR CAGNEY & LACEY?...IT'S JUST THAT MY PERFECT PARTNER LIVED OVER 400 YEARS AGO...

...AND SO PROFESSOR... YOU SEE SHAKESPEARE DID NOT WRITE ALL HIS PLAYS AND SONNETS ALONE...

...AND HE WAS PRETTY MUCH A HICK, A HAYSEED, AND A HILLBILLY...BUT HE WAS VERY INGENIOUS, AS WE SEE HERE IN THESE PROJECTED BLOWUPS FROM HIS LOST NOTEBOOK...

HE WAS THE INVENTOR OF THE SPEEDBREAKER...

...SOAP ON A ROPE, CLOTHESPINS ON YOUR NOSE TO DETER BAD ODORS, PANELING FOR DENS AND REC ROOMS, GAG JOKES ON COCKTAIL NAPKINS, SLIPPING ON BANANA PEELS...

THIS IS INSANE! ALL SO RIDICULOUS! I'VE LOST MY JOB FOR SURE NOW!

...AND SO YOU SAY THAT SHAKESPEARE AND HACKETT WERE A TEAM?

COULDN'T A DONE IT WITHOUT HIM?

WELL, DOGWOOD! THIS IS QUITE IMPRESSIVE! IT SEEMS I WAS WRONG AFTER ALL...YOU CAN HAVE YOUR JOB BACK.