

Armchair Adventures: A Join-in Story Podcast For Kids

A Shakespeare Adventure! Part 2

Connie: Welcome to the Armchair Adventures Travel Agency, journeys of the imagination. I'm Head Travel Agent and Host, Connie!

Music: Armchair Adventures theme tune

Connie: G'day, afternoon or bonne nuit, wherever you're listening from adventurers (or similar). The voices of this episode's special guest adventurers are...

Adventurers all say their names

*George
Lola
Evie
Freddie
Alexis
Alex
Lakon
Jackson*

Connie: Hi Everyone!

Children: Hi Connie!

Connie: You too can star in an episode of Armchair Adventures as one of our special guest adventurers. All you need to do is ask your grown up if you can join the Armchair Adventures fanclub on patreon. For more info, simply head to the Armchair Adventures website – that's www.armchair-adventures.co.uk and click on the Adventurer Fan Club page!

On an Armchair Adventure we can go anywhere we like from the comfort of where we are right now, so they're perfect for everyone, no matter what age you are. Restart. Call. Now.

Music: Edvard Grieg – Peer Gynt – morning mood to underscore until record scratch

Unc. Chris: Welcome back Adventurers! last time we saw you, my community theatre company and I travelled back to the Elizabethan era, to gather facts for Connie's essay on William Shakespeare...we landed slap bang in the court of Queen Elizabeth the first herself!

SFX- a twinkling sound to represent the recap, then recap clip from episode one:

Julia: Oooh, where are we?

Dan: It looks very grand.

John: Lots of people in fine clothes, made of silk

Chris: Blooming heck, everybody's in bloomers!

Unc. Chris: It feels quite royal in here, almost like we are at the Tudor court...

Queen Liz: EXCUSE ME!

SFX- glorious fan fare

Queen Liz: Precisely, how dare you walk into my court unannounced, make yourselves known or my guards shall make mincemeat of you...

Unc. Chris: Unfortunately, someone...upset her majesty and she sent the guards to cut off our heads...

SFX- a twinkling sound to represent the recap, then recap clip from episode one:

Unc. Chris: (Coming in over the laughing) And might I say your queen-ness, what an honour it is to be here at Shakespearean court.

SFX- the laughter cutting out one voice is heard 'ohhh, you're in trouble'. A pin drops

Queen Liz: What...did...you...just...say...

Chris: (not reading the room) he said 'it's an honour to be here at Shakespearean court...

Queen Liz: ELIZABTEHAN, THIS IS THE ELIZABETHAN COURT! MINE, THOU GREAT CLOTS! William Shakespeare is just a silly little playwright, and I am the Queen of ENGLAND, the time we live in is named after me...

Com. Theatre desperately apologising.

Queen Liz: Guards, seize them! Off with their heads!

Unc. Chris: So we had to go on the run through Elizabethan England to save our lives...there was only one problem... we still had to try and gather the facts about Shakespeare for Connie, while we did...

Paul: We've hidden in the market already...

SFX- market

Louise: And they found us there...

Guards: There they are! Seize them!

John: So, we had to set the pigs on them!

Guards: Who let these pigs out! Aggh!

SFX- pigs sounds

Paul: But at least we found out some facts about Shakespeare from the traders!

Dan: Then we ran to a tavern...

Julia: We thought we would be safe in there...

SFX- Tavern

John: and we learnt that Shakespeare made up language we still use today!

Chris: Like 'fair play'.

Julia: And 'vanished into thin air'.

Habib: But they found us again!

Guards: Stop this wild goose chase at once!

Unc. Chris: Luckily for us Chris ate some perpetual stew, a dish that had been boiling for years and years... and it gave him a little bit of wind!

SFX- Chris's big fart!

Unc. Chris: And that gave us enough cover to get out of there!

SFX- soldiers reacting to fart

Unc. Chris: So now we're on the run with no idea where to go next!

Chris: And my perpetual fart won't hold them for long!

SFX- small squeak fart

Everybody: What was that? Etc.

Chris: Sorry! just a little extra recap...

SFX- guards signal horn and boot steps

Julia: They're right behind us!

Habib: Where shall we go!?

Julia: The streets feel so crowded.

John: All the buildings look upside down - they stick out over the street as they go up!

Dan: Like they're closing in on you.

SFX – a window opening.

Person: Look out below!

SFX – slop hitting the street

Unc. Chris: Maybe, it was to stop people emptying their chamber pot on your heads if you were walking down the street!

John: Ha! Oh yes, the buildings protect you.

Louise: Oh, that's disgusting! No wonder it smells so bad here!

Mike: I thought it was you again Chris...

Chris: Cheeky!

Unc. Chris: Whatever the reason, the street design also creates these little back streets! Quick, down here everyone before they see us!

SFX- the gang running on cobbles.

Com. Theatre out of breath

Gary: Phew, let's have a rest in this side street a while.

Dan: These huge beer barrels make a perfect seat.

SFX- everybody sitting down and getting settled.

Unc. Chris: Good idea, let's see what we have found for Connie so far!

John: Some facts about William Shakespeare himself

Julia: Lots of the language that he made up.

Habib: That we still use today...

Mike: And look here, there's loads of posters for his plays on this wall.

Unc. Chris: Wow, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet , Henry V, Julius Caesar, Twelfth Night!

John: Yes, he wrote mainly in three genres - that means a type of play, here we see Comedy, tragedy and history plays.

Unc. Chris: What type of play do you like Adventurers?

SFX- Ding

Adventurer: I love comedy

Adventurer: With loads of jokes

Adventurer: I like the ones with big battles in!

Adventurer: It's the spooky ones for me.

Unc. Chris: And the reason Shakespeare's plays are so popular today is that they use something called 'Universal Themes'

Habib: What's that Uncle Chris?

Unc. Chris: It means that the events that happen in the stories still happen to people today, hundreds of years later!

John: So, people can still see themselves and their feelings in his plays.

Louise: Oh, like greed in Macbeth, because he wants to be king himself!

John: And he won't let anything stop him!

Julia: Or love in Romeo and Juliet.

Dan: And there's lots of jealousy in A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Gary: I relate to that; I was jealous when Louise beat me to the last chocolate biccy!

Louise: You snooze you lose, Gary!

Unc. Chris: That's right everyone. And in the history plays they had a big mix of all the themes. He used real kings like Henry VIII and events like the War of the Roses but added his own drama to them!

John: Oooh my favourite is Henry V:

SFX- (too loud- Add effect like it is huge and echoing, perhaps birds disturbed etc.)

'O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention'

Com. Theatre protesting at how loud that was, and that they will get caught!

Chris: John we are supposed to be hiding!

John: Oh, sorry!

Julia: The Guards will definitely find us now!

SFX- guards trumpet

Head guard: A- HA! Got you, thou foul cretins! Surrender at once!

Mike: NEVER!

Head Guard: Seize them!

SFX- Guards rushing boots

Gary: (scared) What are we going to do?

Unc. Chris: Right you lot, tip a big beer barrel on its side, and get running on the top.

Chris: Like a medieval hamster wheel

John: This will give us some speed

Louise: Arrrghhh its going so fast!

Unc. Chris: You too adventurers, pretend you're on top of a barrel racing away from the guards woohooooo...

SFX- Ding

Adventurer: Eat my dust, guards!

Adventurer: This is a little bit scary.

Adventurer: Woohoo – look at us go!

Adventurer: Ner-ner-ner-ner-nerr – can't catch us!

SFX – barrels rolling at speed into the distance and the guards out of breath.

Head guard: Get back heeeeeere!

Promo swap

Unc. Chris: While we roll off on these barrels, lets pause our journey of the imagination, to hear from another podcast I think you might like...

SFX – ad plays

Right Adventurers, lets get up on our barrels and get back to our journey of the imagination.

Julia: This is so much fun.

Mike: Hehe look at us go.

Dan: See you later guards!

Unc. Chris: Eyes front everyone - we're going to crash into that big round building!

Com. Theatre screaming as they crash into the Globe theatre.

SFX – crashing sounds, the barrels exploding etc.

Julia: Oh my head!

John: That was very dramatic

Louise: Where are we?

Unc. Chris: You won't believe this gang, we have only just crashed into the Globe Theatre itself! Shakespeare helped to build this theatre and put on lots of his plays here.

Com. Theatre admiring the globe – oohs and ahhs

Unc. Chris: It's three floors high and round like a roman amphitheatre with a hole at the top to let light in. If you were poor you'd pay a penny to stand on the floor in front of the stage.

Dan: You'd get soaked if it was raining.

Unc. Chris: Tell me about it! But if you could afford better seats, you could sit under cover of the thatched roof on the upper floors, very swish!

John: It would have been so busy, theatre was like the television or even cinema of its day.

Dan: And Shakespeare's plays were like the blockbuster movies of the time.

Louise: Everyone loved Macbeth because it was so gory and it had witches in it!

Mike: In fact, a lot of modern movies use his plays for inspiration.

Unc. Chris: That's right Mike, The Lion king is based on 'Hamlet'

Gary: And West Side Story is based on Romeo and Juliet

Julia: I can't believe it! How interesting.

Unc. Chris: And how lucky that we are getting to see the original building! It burnt down after a cannon effect went wrong in 1613.

John: But we made a new one in our time that you can visit now, I wonder how different this one is inside?

Chris: Maybe we should take a look... because the guards are here!

SFX- guards horn

Head Guard: We've got you now! After them

SFX – everyone running, doors opening and closing, distant performance of hamlet in the background (Francesca's line v low in mix)

Chris: Quick up here

SFX the company Storming the stage.

An actor: 'To be or not to be that is the question'. Arrgh

SFX person falling down with a crash.

Unc. Chris: This is the stage! What are we doing! And you've just knocked over Hamlet!

SFX the crowd booing

Queen Liz: SILENCE! What on earth do you think you're doing here? *That* is the question! How dare you interrupt my play...

Com. Theatre company give humble apologies – very exaggerated

Queen Liz: Oh not you again, I thought I told my guards to relieve your shoulders of your heads...

Head guard: Sorry Your majesty, they were just extremely quick...

Queen Liz: Enough excuses, just get on with it, you have a captive audience, and we do love a good execution, don't we everyone?

SFX – Crowd cheer

Head guard: Right you are, your radiance. Two ticks, I'll just go and find my best axe...

SFX – rummaging for axe

Queen Liz: Oh do hurry it up or I'll have your head too.

Head Guard: (gulp) Yes, your Majesty...

SFX – comically fast rummaging for the axe

Gary: (terrified) What are we going to do!

Louise: I like my head where it is.

Julia: How will we get out of this one Uncle Chris?

Unc. Chris: Only one thing for it, we're a theatre company, aren't we? It's time to sing for our suppers - or in this case lives!

Dan: What are we going to sing about?

Unc, Chris: No idea, what do you think adventurers?

SFX- Ding

Adventurers: What about Shakespeare?

Unc. Chris: Great idea! Let's sing about all the facts we learnt about Shakespeare on our adventure, that will help Connie out too.

Head Guard: Here it is! My favourite axe...

SFX – a gleaming sound of the axe

Com. Theatre company terror at the sight

Unc. Chris: Your royal highness! Please halt-uth, give us one chance to entertain thee, I beg oh fairy Queen, let us sing for our lives!

Queen Liz: What do we think audience?

SFX – audience cheering

Queen Liz: (petulant) Very well, but if I do not like it, your heads are on a pike.

Unc. Chris: Take it away gang!

Chris: Come on gang, let's do this!

Louise: Are you ready?

Mike: 5, 6, 7, 8!

Woah, William Shakespeare,

The greatest playwright of all time.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

Writing stories of what it's like, what it's like,

To be alive.

Sometimes he wrote about death,

Sometimes he wrote about tragedy.

Sometimes about Kings and Queens,

Or the green-eyed monster jealousy.

Sometimes he wrote about love,

Sometimes he wrote about history.

Sometimes about regret and revenge,

Or a laugh and a joke writing comedy.

And William's stories

Are the basis for many of the stories we tell today.

He invented words,

In his language and verses, words that we now say.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

The greatest playwright of all time.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

Writing stories of what it's like, what it's like,

To be alive.

Group: Uncle Chris! What are you doing! Get back here.

Uncle Chris: Please, release us your majesty,

It's time to end this tragedy.

I'll sing and dance and act for you,

A Shakespeare play or opera too...

And William's stories

Are the basis for many of the stories we tell today.

He invented words,

In his language and verses, words that we now say.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

The greatest playwright of all time.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

Writing stories of what it's like, what it's like,

To be alive.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

The greatest playwright of all time.

Woah, William Shakespeare,

Writing stories of what it's like, what it's like,

To be alive.

The song finishes but there is no response.

SFX- tumble weed, wind blowing, a solemn crow, someone clearing their throat.

John: Did she like it?

Chris: Did anyone like it? The crowd are silent...

Unc. Chris: They have to wait for the Queen's reaction first...

Dan: But she's not saying anything...

Julia: Close your eyes everyone, I think it's curtains for us...

Com. Theatre company worrying

Queen Liz, light tittering that develops into huge laughter.

Queen Liz: BRAVO!

SFX – the crowd going wild, applause etc.

Queen Liz: Rest your axes guards, that was absolutely hilarious! and I do so love hearing about old William, he's my favourite playwright after all!

Unc. Chris: We thank you for your kindness Your Majesty! All's well that ends well!

Queen Liz: How did you know my favourite play? I hope you're not a witch...

Unc. Chris: Not at all your Highness!

Now we have everything we need for Connie, we'd better say goodbye to our journey of the imagination and get back to reality... before I get us into more trouble!

Unc. Chris: Goodbye adventurers!

Adventurers: Bye!

Unc. Chris: Goodbye everyone.

Com. Theatre all say goodbye.

Unc. Chris: That's all from me today adventurers, but Connie and her customers have even more fun coming up for you soon. Look out for their next adventure wherever you get your podcasts!

Unc. Chris: End. Call. Now.

SFX phone down

Unc. Chris: Lovely.

Music: Armchair Adventures theme tune

Ian: Armchair Adventures is a Made by Mortals production. This episode was funded by the arts council England.