

# Motley

by [Letitia Cary](#) (February 2024)



Arlequin, Bernard Fouilloux, 1973

**“Motley is the only wear,”** said Shakespeare,  
Of you it’s especially true;  
With your patches of different personas—  
Twelfth century troubadour,  
Victorian gentleman,  
New Malden schoolboy—  
Sewn together like diamonds, red, green and blue.  
Sometimes pronunciation received,  
Others with cockney crass;  
But neither dialect nor demeanour—  
Maternal Hampshire slang,  
Pagan prejudice,  
Radical Protestant genius—  
Ever feel like just an act.

**“Motley is the only wear,”** said Shakespeare,  
Because personality is always bricolage;  
Only yours more eclectic than most—  
Remnants of bygone centuries,  
Disparate regions,  
Rural folk songs—  
Bound by a golden thread.  
To them you are the heretic;  
Brusque, mad, with caustic wit,  
To me you are the lover;  
Gentle, every word poetic,  
But always the artful seamster, Lucius:  
Forever will I marvel at your costume  
In all its harlequin colours.

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**Letitia Cary** is the pseudonym of a writer from Oxfordshire,

England. She takes her name from the 17th century noblewoman who hosted The Great Tew Circle, a group of theologians and poets who discussed controversial ideas with her husband Lucius, the 2nd Viscount Falkland.

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