

*Death Meets Harlequin* is a family friendly comedy with music in English with some Spanish language. The play is an original new work written by Nina Kaye in 2016, inspired by Commedia Dell'Arte, philosophy, archetype and Tarot cards. Harlequin is a foolish dreamer who loves to chase butterflies, play guitar, and avoid his chores. His father, the Doctor, is losing patience with his irresponsible son. The Doctor finds meaning in his work, healing the sick, but he still misses Harlequin's mother, who died when Harlequin was born.

The Doctor reprimands Harlequin for skipping his chores and then returns to his rounds. Harlequin plays guitar and forgets his troubles. He awakens from his reverie to find himself in the company of a lovely woman with a flower in her hair. She asks Harlequin about his life ambitions and his relationship with his mother and father. She says her name is Butterfly, but that many people call her Death. She teaches Harlequin how to dance and leaves him singing a new song to himself.

The Doctor returns in a whirl, searching for a woman, the Widow Vidova, who he has fallen in love with and who promised to meet him. Harlequin helps the Doctor search. When they cannot find the widow, the Doctor falls into despair. Harlequin fears the Doctor is dying, and pleads with his father not to die. The Doctor explains that he is not dying, he is merely in love and has given up hope of the love being requited. Harlequin encourages the Doctor to stay hopeful, and teaches him a song to sing to his beloved. The Doctor exits, singing.

Harlequin starts his chores, sings a song, and says farewell to the audience, before leaving to complete the rest of his chores.

Thematically, *Death Meets Harlequin* presents the concept of death as a lesson to remind us of the importance of finding meaning in life and making best use of the time we have. The play values family, relationships, music, discovery, and change. The freedom of exploration of all that is new is weighed at equal value as the benefit of schedules and routine to meet regular responsibilities. The comedy, music, symbolism and clown-like performances provides a light touch to the heavy themes, leaving the piece accessible for a children's performance.