***Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard**

Septimus

Seven plays from Aeschylus, seven from Sophocles, *nineteen* from Euripides, my lady! You should no more grieve for the rest than for a buckle lost from your first shoe, or for your lesson book which will be lost when you are old. We shed as we pick up, like travelers who must carry everything in their arms, and what we let fall will be picked up by those behind. The procession is very long and life is very short. We die on the march. But there is nothing outside the march so nothing can be lost to it. The missing plays of Sophocles will turn up piece by piece, or be written again in another language. Ancient cures for diseases will reveal themselves once more. Mathematical discoveries glimpsed and lost to view will have their time again. You do not suppose, my lady, that if all of Archimedes had been hiding in the great library at Alexandria, we would be at a loss for a corkscrew? I have no doubt that the improved steam-driven heat-engine which puts Mr. Noakes into an ecstasy that he and it and the modern age should all coincide was described on papyrus. Steam and brass were not invented in Glasgow.

Information about the monologue:

Septimus Hodge is Thomasina Coverley’s tutor at Sidley Park in Derbyshire, England in 1809. He is 22, she is 13 and she is a mathematical prodigy. They are discussing her education, with which she is frustrated to have to learn about ancient civilizations, rather than exclusively study mathematics.