

Whats So Special About Shakespeare

Societies and entire nations draw their identities from certain founding documents, whether charters, declarations, or manifestos. The Book of Common Prayer figures as one of the most crucial in the history of the English-speaking peoples. First published in 1549 to make accessible the devotional language of the late Henry the VIII's new church, the prayer book was a work of monumental religious, political, and cultural importance. Within its rituals, prescriptions, proscriptions, and expressions were fought the religious wars of the age of Shakespeare. This diminutive book--continuously reformed and revised--was how that age defined itself. In Shakespeare's Common Prayers, Daniel Swift makes dazzling and original use of this foundational text, employing it as an entry-point into the works of England's most celebrated writer. Though commonly neglected as a source for Shakespeare's work, Swift persuasively and conclusively argues that the Book of Common Prayer was absolutely essential to the playwright. It was in the Book's ambiguities and its fierce contestations that Shakespeare found the ready elements of drama: dispute over words and their practical consequences, hope for sanctification tempered by fear of simple meaninglessness, and the demand for improvised performance as compensation for the failure of language to fulfill its promises. What emerges is nothing less than a portrait of Shakespeare at work: absorbing, manipulating, reforming, and struggling with the explosive chemistry of word and action that comprised early modern liturgy. Swift argues that the Book of Common Prayer mediates between the secular and the devotional, producing a tension that makes Shakespeare's plays so powerful and exceptional. Tracing the prayer book's lines and motions through *As You Like It*, *Hamlet*, *Twelfth Night*, *Measure for Measure*, *Othello*, and particularly *Macbeth*, Swift reveals how the greatest writer of the age--of perhaps any age--was influenced and guided by its most important book.

From the Artful Dodger to Miss Havisham to Scrooge, Charles Dickens brought some of our favorite fictional characters to life. But what inspired him? Who was the man behind the pen? Michael Rosen's chatty and engaging narrative helps answer these questions and explores the world of Dickens and four of his best-loved books: *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, and *Great Expectations*.

Describes Shakespeare's life and work, from his relocation from Stratford to London as a young man to his pursuit of a career in the theater.

Presents the plays "As You Like It", "Antony and Cleopatra", "Richard III", "Twelfth Night", "King Lear", "The Merchant of Venice" and "Much Ado About Nothing" in a comic-strip form.

In this first substantive study of directing Shakespeare in the USA, Charles Ney compares and contrasts directors working at major companies across the country. Because of the complexities of directing Shakespeare for audiences today, a director's methods, values and biases are more readily perceptible in their work on Shakespeare than in more contemporary work. Directors disclose their interpretation of the text, their management of the various stages of production, how they go about supervising rehearsals and share tactics. This book will be useful to students wanting to develop skills, practitioners who want to learn from what other directors are doing, and scholars and students studying production practice and performance.

Millions of words of scholarship have been expended on the world's most famous author and his work. And yet a critical part of the puzzle, Shakespeare's library, is a mystery. For four centuries people have searched for it: in mansions, palaces and libraries; in riverbeds, sheep pens and partridge coops; and in the corridors of the mind. Yet no trace of the bard's manuscripts, books or letters has ever been found. The search for Shakespeare's library is much more than a treasure hunt. The library's fate has profound implications for literature, for national and cultural identity, and for the global Shakespeare industry. It bears upon fundamental principles of art, identity, history, meaning and truth. Unfolding the search like the mystery story that it is, acclaimed author Stuart Kells follows the trail of the hunters, taking us through different conceptions of the library and of the man himself. Entertaining and enlightening, *Shakespeare's Library* is a captivating exploration of one of literature's most enduring enigmas. Stuart Kells is an author and book-trade historian. His 2015 book *Penguin and the Lane Brothers* won the Ashurst Business Literature Prize. An authority on rare books, he has written and published on many aspects of print culture and the book world. Stuart lives in Melbourne with his family. 'Stuart Kells presents a fascinating and persuasive new paradigm that challenges our preconceptions about the Bard's literary talent.' *Age* 'A delight to read, a wonderful piece of erudition and dazzling detective work.' David Astle, *Evenings on ABC Radio Melbourne* 'An excellent and incredibly fascinating read.' *3RRR Backstory* 'Kells's reflections are wonderfully romantic, wryly funny... There's no doubt we can all learn a lot from the magnificently obsessive and eloquent Kells.' *Australian on The Library: A Catalogue of Wonders* 'Kells is a magnificent guide to the abundant treasures he sets out.' Mathilda Imlah, *Australian Book Review on The Library: A Catalogue of Wonders* 'If you think you know what a library is, this marvellously idiosyncratic book will make you think again. After visiting hundreds of libraries around the world and in the realm of the imagination, bibliophile and rare-book collector Stuart Kells has compiled an enchanting compendium of well-told tales and musings both on the physical and metaphysical dimensions of these multi-storied places.' *Age on The Library: A Catalogue of Wonders*

When Jane Sutcliffe sets out to write a book about William Shakespeare and the Globe Theatre, in her own words, she runs into a problem: Will's words keep popping up all over the place! What's an author to do? After all, Will is responsible for such familiar phrases as "what's done is done" and "too much of a good thing." He even helped turn "household words" into household words. But, Jane embraces her dilemma, writing about Shakespeare, his plays, and his famous phrases with glee. After all, what better words are there to use to write about the greatest writer in the English language than his very own? As readers will discover, "the long and the short of it" is this: Will changed the English language forever. Backmatter includes an author's note, a bibliography, and a timeline.

An electrifying new study that investigates the challenges of the Bard's inconsistencies and flaws, and focuses on revealing—not resolving—the ambiguities of the plays and their changing topicality. A genius and prophet whose timeless works encapsulate the human condition like no other. A writer who surpassed his contemporaries in vision, originality, and literary mastery. A man who wrote like an angel, putting it all so much better than anyone else. Is this Shakespeare? Well, sort of. But it doesn't tell us the whole truth. So much of what we say about Shakespeare is either not true, or just not relevant. In *This Is Shakespeare*, Emma Smith—an intellectually, theatrically, and ethically exciting writer—takes us into a world of politicking and copycatting, as we watch Shakespeare emulating the blockbusters of Christopher Marlowe and Thomas Kyd (the Spielberg and Tarantino of their day), flirting with and skirting around the

cutthroat issues of succession politics, religious upheaval, and technological change. Smith writes in strikingly modern ways about individual agency, privacy, politics, celebrity, and sex. Instead of offering the answers, the Shakespeare she reveals poses awkward questions, always inviting the reader to ponder ambiguities.

A gargantuan, mind-altering comedy about the Pursuit of Happiness in America Set in an addicts' halfway house and a tennis academy, and featuring the most endearingly screwed-up family to come along in recent fiction, Infinite Jest explores essential questions about what entertainment is and why it has come to so dominate our lives; about how our desire for entertainment affects our need to connect with other people; and about what the pleasures we choose say about who we are. Equal parts philosophical quest and screwball comedy, Infinite Jest bends every rule of fiction without sacrificing for a moment its own entertainment value. It is an exuberant, uniquely American exploration of the passions that make us human - and one of those rare books that renew the idea of what a novel can do. "The next step in fiction...Edgy, accurate, and darkly witty...Think Beckett, think Pynchon, think Gaddis. Think." --Sven Birkerts, *The Atlantic*

Examines current debates about the actual authors of Shakespeare's plays, citing challenges from famous historical figures while discussing the sources of modern doubts and the author's own beliefs.

A balanced editorial approach, a highly respected editor, and comprehensive glosses, footnotes, and historical and cultural essays make this the most reader-friendly introduction to Shakespeare available today. The seventh edition of this comprehensive anthology addresses the two key issues confronted by readers approaching Shakespeare today: a lack of knowledge about the historical period and difficulty with the language of Shakespeare's plays. A richly illustrated general introduction offers insight into Shakespeare's England and background on the literary and cultural contexts in which Shakespeare wrote and produced plays. Each play is introduced by a descriptive essay designed to help the reader appreciate the cultural contexts and interpretive issues raised by the play -- without dictating their interpretations. Thoroughly revised and updated notes and glosses provide additional support to understanding the language of Shakespeare's time.

What's So Special about Shakespeare?Candlewick Press

Step on to a stage full of stories with this beautiful anthology of 12 stories from Shakespeare. Featuring much-loved classics such as *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet* and *Othello*, each story is rewritten in a comprehensive way that is accessible for children and stunningly illustrated by collage artist Alice Lindstrom. This lavish follow-up to *A Year Full of Stories* and *A World Full of Animal Stories* is the perfect gift for book lovers young and old.

What accounts for Shakespeare's transformation from talented poet and playwright to one of the greatest writers who ever lived? In this gripping account, James Shapiro sets out to answer this question, "succeed[ing] where others have fallen short." (Boston Globe) 1599 was an epochal year for Shakespeare and England. During that year, Shakespeare wrote four of his most famous plays: *Henry the Fifth*, *Julius Caesar*, *As You Like It*, and, most remarkably, *Hamlet*; Elizabethans sent off an army to crush an Irish rebellion, weathered an Armada threat from Spain, gambled on a fledgling East India Company, and waited to see who would succeed their aging and childless queen. James Shapiro illuminates both Shakespeare's staggering achievement and what Elizabethans experienced in the course of 1599, bringing together the news and the intrigue of the times with a wonderful evocation of how Shakespeare worked as an actor, businessman, and playwright. The result is an exceptionally immediate and gripping account of an inspiring moment in history.

William Shakespeare, the most celebrated poet in the English language, left behind nearly a million words of text, but his biography has long been a thicket of wild supposition arranged around scant facts. With a steady hand and his trademark wit, Bill Bryson sorts through this colorful muddle to reveal the man himself. Bryson documents the efforts of earlier scholars, from today's most respected academics to eccentrics like Delia Bacon, an American who developed a firm but unsubstantiated conviction that her namesake, Francis Bacon, was the true author of Shakespeare's plays. Emulating the style of his famous travelogues, Bryson records episodes in his research, including a visit to a basement room in Washington, D.C., where the world's largest collection of First Folios is housed. Bryson celebrates Shakespeare as a writer of unimaginable talent and enormous inventiveness. His Shakespeare is like no one else's—the beneficiary of Bryson's genial nature, his engaging skepticism, and a gift for storytelling unrivalled in our time. In three dozen plays and 150 sonnets, William Shakespeare probed the human spirit with unparalleled insight. *What Would Shakespeare Do?* uncovers for the modern reader all the personal advice contained in the Bard's immortal words. Using the same blend of history, drama, and earthy humor that characterizes Shakespeare's work, this book explores ideas that still resonate today: sex and love, youth and aging, morals and the meaning of life. As in *What Would Buddha Do?*, each page features a question about a modern-day dilemma followed by a quote from Shakespeare and an illuminating commentary by the author. Whether read as a diversion for the Shakespeare buff, an imaginative self-help book, or a unique introduction to the Bard, *What Would Shakespeare Do?* proves true the words of Ben Jonson that Shakespeare "was not of an age but for all time."

A provocative, moving, kinky, and often absurdly funny memoir about Shakespeare, love, obsession, and spanking When it came to understanding love, a teenage Jillian Keenan had nothing to guide her—until a production of *The Tempest* sent Shakespeare's language flowing through her blood for the first time. In *Sex with Shakespeare*, she tells the story of how the Bard's plays helped her embrace her unusual sexual identity and find a love story of her own. Four hundred years after Shakespeare's death, Keenan's smart and passionate memoir brings new life to his work. With fourteen of his plays as a springboard, she explores the many facets of love and sexuality—from desire and communication to fetish and fantasy. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Keenan unmaskes Helena as a sexual masochist—like Jillian herself. In *Macbeth*, she examines criminalized sexual identities and the dark side of "privacy." *The Taming of the Shrew* goes

inside the secret world of bondage, domination, and sadomasochism, while King Lear exposes the ill-fated king as a possible sexual predator. Moving through the canon, Keenan makes it abundantly clear that literature is a conversation. In *Sex with Shakespeare*, words are love. As Keenan wanders the world in search of connection, from desert dictatorships to urban islands to disputed territories, Shakespeare goes with her—and provokes complex, surprising, and wildly important conversations about sexuality, consent, and the secrets that simmer beneath our surfaces.

The remarkable, ridiculous, rain-soaked story of Shakespeare's Jubilee: the event that established William Shakespeare as the greatest writer of all time. The remarkable, ridiculous, rain-soaked story of Shakespeare's Jubilee: the event that established William Shakespeare as the greatest writer of all time. In September 1769, three thousand people descended on Stratford-upon-Avon to celebrate the artistic legacy of the town's most famous son, William Shakespeare. Attendees included the rich and powerful, the fashionable and the curious, eligible ladies and fortune hunters, and a horde of journalists and profiteers. For three days, they paraded through garlanded streets, listened to songs and oratorios, and enjoyed masked balls. It was a unique cultural moment—a coronation elevating Shakespeare to the throne of genius. Except it was a disaster. The poorly planned Jubilee imposed an army of Londoners on a backwater hamlet peopled by hostile and superstitious locals, unable and unwilling to meet their demands. Even nature refused to behave. Rain fell in sheets, flooding tents and dampening fireworks, and threatening to wash the whole town away. Told from the dual perspectives of David Garrick, who masterminded the Jubilee, and James Boswell, who attended it, *What Blest Genius?* is rich with humor, gossip, and theatrical intrigue. Recounting the absurd and chaotic glory of those three days in September, Andrew McConnell Stott illuminates the circumstances in which William Shakespeare became a transcendent global icon.

"This book offers a short, spirited defense of rhetoric and the liberal arts as catalysts for precision, invention, and empathy in today's world. The author, a professor of Shakespeare studies at a liberal arts college and a parent of school-age children, argues that high-stakes testing and a culture of assessment have altered how and what students are taught, as courses across the arts, humanities, and sciences increasingly are set aside to make room for joyless, mechanical reading and math instruction. Students have been robbed of a complete education, their imaginations stunted by this myopic focus on bare literacy and numeracy. Education is about thinking, Newstok argues, rather than the mastery of a set of rigidly defined skills, and the seemingly rigid pedagogy of the English Renaissance produced some of the most compelling and influential examples of liberated thinking. Each of the fourteen chapters explores an essential element of Shakespeare's world and work, aligns it with the ideas of other thinkers and writers in modern times, and suggests opportunities for further reading. Chapters on craft, technology, attention, freedom, and related topics combine past and present ideas about education to build a case for the value of the past, the pleasure of thinking, and the limitations of modern educational practices and prejudices"--

A bright, bold debut about a girl who happens to have been born a boy, but refuses to let that stand in the way of her dream.

Without William Shakespeare, we wouldn't have literary masterpieces like *Romeo and Juliet*. But without Henry Condell and John Heminges, we would have lost half of Shakespeare's plays forever! After the death of their friend and mentor, the two actors are determined to compile the First Folio and preserve the words that shaped their lives. They'll just have to borrow, beg, and band together to get it done. Amidst the noise and color of Elizabethan London, *THE BOOK OF WILL* finds an unforgettable true story of love, loss, and laughter, and sheds new light on a man you may think you know.

Over two million Shakespeare Shorts sold! Discover the world of Shakespeare with this collection of brilliant stories - perfect for readers of all ages. Rome's greatest general, Julius Caesar, returns to the city celebrating a glorious victory. But among the cheering crowds, a group of conspirators are determined to prevent Caesar becoming king... A brilliant retelling of Shakespeare's famous Roman play.

"All the world's a stage", William Shakespeare wrote, "And all the men and women merely players." Sit back as the curtain goes up on the dramas, sonnets, and life of one of the greatest writers in the English language. Shakespeare wrote or contributed to more than 40 plays, ranging from romantic comedies to the profound tragedy *King Lear*, as well as 154 sonnets. The Shakespeare Book has visual plot summaries of each one, with diagrams to show the intricate web of relationships in plays such as *A Midsummer's Night Dream*. Commentaries explain Shakespeare's sources and set each drama in context, revealing, for instance, how the warring Protestants and Catholics of his day are mirrored in *Romeo and Juliet*'s Montagues and Capulets. Written in plain English and packed with graphics and illustrations, *The Shakespeare Book* illumines the Bard's world - his marriage, businesses, and friends - and explains how his works became an enduring phenomenon. Whether you need a guide through complex plots and unfamiliar language, or you're looking for a fresh perspective on his well-loved plays and sonnets, this indispensable guide will help you fully appreciate Shakespeare, the man, and the writer. Reviews: "Generous helpings of illustrations, time lines, plot diagrams, and character guides ensure that even readers in their 'salad days' will enjoy every dish at the Shakespearean feast." - Booklist "Enlightening" - YA Book Central "In this latest addition to the series, the Bard comes alive for young aficionados." - School Library Journal "Countless volumes have been written about William Shakespeare and his work, but here is a single volume that has organized his plays (and some of his sonnets) in exactly what the subtitle says: 'Big Ideas Simply Explained...a must-have.'" - VOYA magazine

Now a Netflix film starring and directed by Chiwetel Ejiofor, this is a gripping memoir of survival and perseverance about the heroic young inventor who brought electricity to his Malawian village. When a terrible drought struck William Kamkwamba's tiny village in Malawi, his family lost all of the season's crops, leaving them with nothing to eat and nothing to sell. William began to explore science books in his village library, looking for a solution. There, he came up with the idea that would change his family's life forever: he could build a windmill. Made out of scrap metal and old bicycle parts, William's windmill brought electricity to his home and helped his family pump the water they needed to farm the land. Retold for a younger audience, this exciting memoir shows how, even in a desperate situation, one boy's brilliant idea can light up the world. Complete with photographs, illustrations, and an epilogue that will bring readers up to date on William's story, this is the perfect edition to read and share with the whole family.

WINNER OF THE NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD *A New York Times Best Seller* "Of all the stories that argue and speculate about Shakespeare's life... here is

a novel ... so gorgeously written that it transports you." —The Boston Globe In 1580's England, during the Black Plague a young Latin tutor falls in love with an extraordinary, eccentric young woman in this "exceptional historical novel" (The New Yorker) and best-selling winner of the Women's Prize for Fiction. Agnes is a wild creature who walks her family's land with a falcon on her glove and is known throughout the countryside for her unusual gifts as a healer, understanding plants and potions better than she does people. Once she settles with her husband on Henley Street in Stratford-upon-Avon she becomes a fiercely protective mother and a steadfast, centrifugal force in the life of her young husband, whose career on the London stage is taking off when his beloved young son succumbs to sudden fever. A luminous portrait of a marriage, a shattering evocation of a family ravaged by grief and loss, and a tender and unforgettable re-imagining of a boy whose life has been all but forgotten, and whose name was given to one of the most celebrated plays of all time, Hamnet is mesmerizing, seductive, impossible to put down—a magnificent leap forward from one of our most gifted novelists.

More than four hundred years after William Shakespeare's death, his name is known in every corner of the world. Why? Poet, critic, and Shakespeare enthusiast Michael Rosen answers that question, offering a whirlwind tour of Shakespeare's life, his London, and four of his plays: A Midsummer Night's Dream, Macbeth, King Lear, and The Tempest. Playing Shakespeare is the premier guide to understanding and appreciating the mastery of the world's greatest playwright. Together with Royal Shakespeare Company actors—among them Patrick Stewart, Judi Dench, Ian McKellen, Ben Kingsley, and David Suchet—John Barton demonstrates how to adapt Elizabethan theater for the modern stage. The director begins by explicating Shakespeare's verse and prose, speeches and soliloquies, and naturalistic and heightened language to discover the essence of his characters. In the second section, Barton and the actors explore nuance in Shakespearean theater, from evoking irony and ambiguity and striking the delicate balance of passion and profound intellectual thought, to finding new approaches to playing Shakespeare's most controversial creation, Shylock, from The Merchant of Venice. A practical and essential guide, Playing Shakespeare will stand for years as the authoritative favorite among actors, scholars, teachers, and students.

"From leading Shakespeare scholar James Shapiro, a timely and insightful examination of what the world's greatest dramatist can teach us about life in an America riven by conflict. The United States has always been divided, but Americans from all walks of life have also always shared a deep affinity for the plays William Shakespeare, even if their meaning has been fiercely contested. For well over two centuries now, Americans of all stripes--presidents and activists, writers and soldiers--have turned to his plays to prosecute the most intense and pivotal quarrels in the soul of the nation, a nation defined by its political and social pluralism. That prosecution dates back to pre-Revolutionary times, when Hamlet's famous soliloquy--"To be or not to be"--was appropriated both by defenders of British rule and those seeking to overthrow it. Shapiro traces Shakespeare's formative and crucial role in our nation's history, from the otherwise progressive John Quincy Adams's sinister opinions on race expressed via (and only via) his views on Othello; to the politically-charged rhetoric that gripped Lincoln's assassin, John Wilkes Booth; to the resounding American triumph of Shakespeare in Love, produced by Harvey Weinstein's then fledgling company, Miramax, which exploded a debate about adultery at the time of President Clinton's Oval Office affair with Monica Lewinsky. But Shapiro also reports firsthand on Shakespeare's undeniable contemporary significance, after a production of Julius Caesar, which depicted the assassination of a President Trump-like Julius Caesar, was exploited calculatedly by Breitbart and Fox News to ignite outrage. With style and unmatched expertise, Shapiro contends brilliantly that few writers or artists can shed as much light on the hot-button issues of American life--such as immigration, same-sex love, political violence, and class warfare--and that by better understanding the role of Shakespeare's plays in American history we might take steps towards mending our bitterly divided land"--

This book explores the conversations between two media, the book and the stage, as they evolved in both competition and sympathy. Focusing on seven of Shakespeare's plays, it argues the book on stage, as both object and idea, offers one of the most articulate and developed hermeneutic tools available in the study of early modern English culture.

A startling and profound exploration of how Jewish history is exploited to comfort the living. Renowned and beloved as a prizewinning novelist, Dara Horn has also been publishing penetrating essays since she was a teenager. Often asked by major publications to write on subjects related to Jewish culture—and increasingly in response to a recent wave of deadly antisemitic attacks—Horn was troubled to realize what all of these assignments had in common: she was being asked to write about dead Jews, never about living ones. In these essays, Horn reflects on subjects as far-flung as the international veneration of Anne Frank, the mythology that Jewish family names were changed at Ellis Island, the blockbuster traveling exhibition Auschwitz, the marketing of the Jewish history of Harbin, China, and the little-known life of the "righteous Gentile" Varian Fry. Throughout, she challenges us to confront the reasons why there might be so much fascination with Jewish deaths, and so little respect for Jewish lives unfolding in the present. Horn draws upon her travels, her research, and also her own family life—trying to explain Shakespeare's Shylock to a curious ten-year-old, her anger when swastikas are drawn on desks in her children's school, the profound perspective offered by traditional religious practice and study—to assert the vitality, complexity, and depth of Jewish life against an antisemitism that, far from being disarmed by the mantra of "Never forget," is on the rise. As Horn explores the (not so) shocking attacks on the American Jewish community in recent years, she reveals the subtler dehumanization built into the public piety that surrounds the Jewish past—making the radical argument that the benign reverence we give to past horrors is itself a profound affront to human dignity.

Shakespeare: His Work and His World is written by Michael Rosen in an accessible, modern, child-friendly style. As well as facts about his life and the theatre of the day, Rosen provides lively studies of Macbeth, A Midsummer Night's Dream, King Lear and The Tempest. Also included is a detailed analysis of a scene from Romeo and Juliet.

A portrait of Elizabethan England and how it contributed to the making of William Shakespeare discusses how he moved to London lacking money, connections, and a formal education; started a family; attempted to forge his career in the competitive theater world; grappled with dangerous religious and political forces; and rose to become his age's foremost playwright. 100,000 first printing.

****Winner of the 2021 International Book Award in Narrative Non-Fiction**** The true story of a self-taught Shakespeare sleuth's quest to prove his eye-opening theory about the source of the world's most famous plays, taking readers inside the vibrant era of Elizabethan England as well as the contemporary scene of Shakespeare scholars and obsessives. Acclaimed author of *The Map Thief*, Michael Blanding presents the twinning narratives of renegade scholar Dennis McCarthy, called "the Steve Jobs of the Shakespeare community," and Sir Thomas North, an Elizabethan courtier whom McCarthy believes to be the undiscovered source for Shakespeare's plays. For the last fifteen years, McCarthy has obsessively pursued the true origins of Shakespeare's works. Using plagiarism software, he has found direct links between *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and other plays and North's published and unpublished writings—as well as Shakespearean plotlines seemingly lifted straight from North's colorful life. Unlike those who believe someone else secretly wrote Shakespeare, McCarthy's wholly original conclusion is this: Shakespeare wrote the plays, but he adapted them from source plays written by North decades before. Many of them, he believes, were penned on behalf of North's patron Robert Dudley, in his efforts to woo Queen Elizabeth. That bold theory addresses many lingering mysteries about the Bard with compelling new evidence, including a newly discovered journal of North's travels through France and Italy, filled with locations and details appearing in Shakespeare's plays. North by Shakespeare alternates between the enigmatic life of Thomas North, the intrigues of the Tudor court, the rivalries of English Renaissance theater, and academic outsider Dennis McCarthy's attempts to air his provocative ideas in the clubby world of Shakespearean scholarship. Through it all, Blanding employs his keen journalistic eye to craft a captivating drama, upending our understanding of the beloved playwright and his "singular genius."

"First published in the United States of America by Viking Penguin Inc. 1953"--title page verso.

CYMBELINE, King of Britain CLOTEN, son to the Queen by a former husband POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, a gentleman, husband to Imogen BELARIUS, a banished lord, disguised under the name of Morgan GUIDERIUS and ARVIRAGUS, sons to Cymbeline, disguised under the names of POLYDORE and CADWAL, supposed sons to Belarius PHILARIO, Italian, friend to Posthumus IACHIMO, Italian, friend to Philario A FRENCH GENTLEMAN, friend to Philario CAIUS LUCIUS, General of the Roman Forces A ROMAN CAPTAIN TWO BRITISH CAPTAINS PISANIO, servant to Posthumus CORNELIUS, a physician TWO LORDS of Cymbeline's court TWO GENTLEMEN of the same TWO GAOLERS

Richard Stonley has all but vanished from history, but to his contemporaries he would have been an enviable figure. A clerk of the Exchequer for more than four decades under Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I, he rose from obscure origins to a life of opulence; his job, a secure bureaucratic post with a guaranteed income, was the kind of which many men dreamed. Vast sums of money passed through his hands, some of which he used to engage in moneylending and land speculation. He also bought books, lots of them, amassing one of the largest libraries in early modern London. In 1597, all of this was brought to a halt when Stonley, aged around seventy-seven, was incarcerated in the Fleet Prison, convicted of embezzling the spectacular sum of £13,000 from the Exchequer. His property was sold off, and an inventory was made of his house on Aldersgate Street. This provides our most detailed guide to his lost library. By chance, we also have three handwritten volumes of accounts, in which he earlier itemized his spending on food, clothing, travel, and books. It is here that we learn that on June 12, 1593, he bought "the Venus & Adhonay per Shakspere"—the earliest known record of a purchase of Shakespeare's first publication. In *Shakespeare's First Reader*, Jason Scott-Warren sets Stonley's journals and inventories of goods alongside a wealth of archival evidence to put his life and library back together again. He shows how Stonley's books were integral to the material worlds he inhabited and the social networks he formed with communities of merchants, printers, recusants, and spies. Through a combination of book history and biography, *Shakespeare's First Reader* provides a compelling "bio-bibliography"—the story of how one early modern gentleman lived in and through his library.

Celebrated poet, critic, and Shakespeare enthusiast Rosen offers kids a whirlwind tour of William Shakespeare's life, his London, and four of his plays: "A Midsummer Night's Dream, Macbeth, King Lear, " and "The Tempest." Illustrations.

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