



## The Tempest



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# The Tempest

*William Shakespeare*

## **The Tempest** William Shakespeare

Putting romance onstage, *The Tempest* gives us a magician, Prospero, a former duke of Milan who was displaced by his treacherous brother, Antonio. Prospero is exiled on an island, where his only companions are his daughter, Miranda, the spirit Ariel, and the monster Caliban. When his enemies are among those caught in a storm near the island, Prospero turns his power upon them through Ariel and other spirits. The characters exceed the roles of villains and heroes. Prospero seems heroic, yet he enslaves Caliban and has an appetite for revenge. Caliban seems to be a monster for attacking Miranda, but appears heroic in resisting Prospero, evoking the period of colonialism during which the play was written. Miranda's engagement to Ferdinand, the Prince of Naples and a member of the shipwrecked party, helps resolve the drama.

The authoritative edition of *The Tempest* from The Folger Shakespeare Library, the trusted and widely used Shakespeare series for students and general readers, includes:

- Freshly edited text based on the best early printed version of the play
- Full explanatory notes conveniently placed on pages facing the text of the play
- Scene-by-scene plot summaries
- A key to the play's famous lines and phrases
- An introduction to reading Shakespeare's language
- An essay by a leading Shakespeare scholar providing a modern perspective on the play
- Fresh images from the Folger Shakespeare Library's vast holdings of rare books
- An annotated guide to further reading

Essay by Barbara A. Mowat

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31 pages

### About the Author

William Shakespeare was born in April 1564 in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon, on England's Avon River. When he was eighteen, he married Anne Hathaway. The couple had three children--an older daughter Susanna and twins, Judith and Hamnet. Hamnet, Shakespeare's only son, died in childhood. The bulk of Shakespeare's working life was spent in the theater world of London, where he established himself professionally by the early 1590s. He enjoyed success not only as a playwright and poet, but also as an actor and shareholder in an acting company. Although some think that sometime between 1610 and 1613 Shakespeare retired from the theater and returned home to Stratford, where he died in 1616, others believe that he may have continued to work in London until close to his death.

Barbara A. Mowat is Director of Research *emerita* at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Consulting Editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, and author of *The Dramaturgy of Shakespeare's Romances* and of essays on Shakespeare's plays and their editing.

Paul Werstine is Professor of English at the Graduate School and at King's University College at Western University. He is a general editor of the New Variorum Shakespeare and author of *Early Modern Playhouse Manuscripts and the Editing of Shakespeare* and of many papers and articles on the printing and editing of Shakespeare's plays.

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