

THE ANNOTATED SHAKESPEARE



# The Tempest



William Shakespeare

*Fully annotated, with an Introduction, by Burton Raffel*

*With an essay by Harold Bloom*

THE ANNOTATED SHAKESPEARE

*Yale University Press • New Haven and London*

For Richard and Thetis Cusimano, magus et ux

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## ABOUT THIS BOOK



In act 2, scene 1, Antonio asks Sebastian a rhetorical question: “Who’s the next heir of Naples?” Sebastian replies, “Clari-bel,” this being the king’s daughter and, so far as they know, his only surviving child. Antonio then speaks as follows:

*Antonio* She that is Queen of Tunis. She that dwells  
Ten leagues beyond man’s life. She that from Naples  
Can have no note, unless the sun were post  
(The Man i’ th’ Moon’s too slow) till newborn chins  
Be rough and razorable. She that from whom  
We all were sea-swallowed, though some cast again,  
And by that destiny to perform an act  
Whereof what’s past is prologue, what to come  
In yours, and my, discharge.

This was perfectly understandable, we must assume, to the mostly very average persons who paid to watch Elizabethan plays. But who today can make much sense of it? In this very fully annotated edition, I therefore present this passage, not in the bare form quoted above, but thoroughly supported by bottom-of-the-page notes:

*Antonio* She that is Queen of Tunis. She that dwells  
 Ten leagues beyond man's<sup>1</sup> life. She that from Naples  
 Can have no note,<sup>2</sup> unless the sun were post<sup>3</sup>  
 (The Man i' th' Moon's too slow<sup>4</sup>) till<sup>5</sup> newborn chins  
 Be<sup>6</sup> rough and razorable. She that from whom<sup>7</sup>  
 We all were sea-swallowed, though some cast<sup>8</sup> again,  
 And by<sup>9</sup> that destiny<sup>10</sup> to perform an act  
 Whereof<sup>11</sup> what's past is prologue, what to come  
 In yours, and my, discharge.<sup>12</sup>

The modern reader or listener may well better understand this intensely sarcastic speech in context, as the play continues. But without full explanation of words that have over the years shifted in meaning, and usages that have been altered, neither the modern reader nor the modern listener is likely to be equipped for anything like full comprehension.

I believe annotations of this sort create the necessary bridges, from Shakespeare's four-centuries-old English across to ours. Some readers, to be sure, will be able to comprehend unusual, historically different meanings without any glosses. Those not fa-

- 1 human, civilized
- 2 written comment
- 3 the early form of mail was, by horse or coach, from one "post" (for changing horse(s) ) to another
- 4 i.e., the sun takes a single day to complete his circuit; the moon takes 28 days
- 5 till the time that it takes for
- 6 to be/become
- 7 she that from whom=she who away from whom
- 8 some were cast up
- 9 because of
- 10 fact, course of events, predetermined fortune
- 11 by means of which
- 12 fulfillment, performance, execution



miliar with the modern meaning of particular words will easily find clear, simple definitions in any modern dictionary. But most readers are not likely to understand Shakespeare's intended meaning, absent such glosses as I here offer.

My annotation practices have followed the same principles used in *The Annotated Milton*, published in 1999, and in my annotated editions of *Hamlet*, published (as the initial volume in this series) in 2003, *Romeo and Juliet* (2004), *Macbeth* (2004), *Othello* (2005), and *The Taming of the Shrew* (2005). Classroom experience has validated these editions. Classes of mixed upper-level undergraduates and graduate students have more quickly and thoroughly transcended language barriers than ever before. This allows the teacher, or a general reader without a teacher, to move more promptly and confidently to the nonlinguistic matters that have made Shakespeare and Milton great and important poets.

It is the inevitable forces of linguistic change, operant in all living tongues, which have inevitably created such wide degrees of obstacles to ready comprehension—not only sharply different meanings, but subtle, partial shifts in meaning that allow us to think we understand when, alas, we do not. Speakers of related languages like Dutch and German also experience this shifting of the linguistic ground. Like early Modern English (ca. 1600) and the Modern English now current, those languages are too close for those who know only one language, and not the other, to be readily able always to recognize what they correctly understand and what they do not. When, for example, a speaker of Dutch says, “Men kofer is kapot,” a speaker of German will know that something belonging to the Dutchman is broken (“kapot” = “kaputt” in German, and “men” = “mein”). But without more linguistic awareness than the average person is apt to have, the

German speaker will not identify “kofer” (“trunk” in Dutch) with “Körper”—a modern German word meaning “physique, build, body.” The closest word to “kofer” in modern German, indeed, is “Scrankkoffer,” which is too large a leap for ready comprehension. Speakers of different Romance languages (French, Spanish, Italian), and all other related but not identical tongues, all experience these difficulties, as well as the difficulty of understanding a text written in their own language five, or six, or seven hundred years earlier. Shakespeare’s English is not yet so old that it requires, like many historical texts in French and German, or like Old English texts—for example, *Beowulf*—a modern translation. Much poetry evaporates in translation: language is immensely particular. The sheer *sound* of Dante in thirteenth-century Italian is profoundly worth preserving. So too is the sound of Shakespeare.

I have annotated prosody (metrics) only when it seemed truly necessary or particularly helpful. This play requires much less of such annotation than other volumes in this series. Miranda’s opening lines, in act 1, scene 2, are in a sense the start of the play’s poetry, most of the first scene being in prose. And Miranda’s poetry is supple, flowing, even majestic:

If by your art, my dearest father, you have  
 Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.  
 The sky it seems would pour down stinking pitch,  
 But that the sea, mounting to th’ welkin’s cheek,  
 Dashes the fire out.

Not surprisingly, the mellowness of the play seems to have carried over to its metrics.

Readers should have no problem with the silent “e” in past

participles (loved, returned, missed). Except in the few instances where modern usage syllabifies the “e,” whenever an “e” in Shakespeare is *not* silent, it is marked “è.” The notation used for prosody, which is also used in the explanation of Elizabethan pronunciation, follows the extremely simple form of my *From Stress to Stress: An Autobiography of English Prosody* (see “Further Reading,” near the end of this book). Syllables with metrical stress are capitalized; all other syllables are in lowercase letters. I have managed to employ normalized Elizabethan spellings, in most indications of pronunciation, but I have sometimes been obliged to deviate, in the higher interest of being understood.

I have annotated, as well, a limited number of such other matters, sometimes of interpretation, sometimes of general or historical relevance, as have seemed to me seriously worthy of inclusion. These annotations have been most carefully restricted: this is not intended to be a book of literary commentary. It is for that reason that the glossing of metaphors has been severely restricted. There is almost literally no end to discussion and/or analysis of metaphor, especially in Shakespeare. To yield to temptation might well be to double or triple the size of this book—and would also change it from a historically oriented language guide to a work of an unsteadily mixed nature. In the process, I believe, neither language nor literature would be well or clearly served.

Where it seemed useful, and not obstructive of important textual matters, I have modernized spelling, including capitalization. Spelling is not on the whole a basic issue, but punctuation and lineation must be given high respect. The Quarto and the Folio use few exclamation marks or semicolons, which is to be sure a matter of the conventions of a very different era. Still, our modern preferences cannot be lightly substituted for what is, after a

fashion, the closest thing to a Shakespeare manuscript we are likely ever to have. We do not know whether these particular seventeenth-century printers, like most of that time, were responsible for question marks, commas, periods and, especially, all-purpose colons, or whether these particular printers tried to follow their handwritten sources. Nor do we know if those sources, or what part thereof, might have been in Shakespeare's own hand. But in spite of these equivocations and uncertainties, it remains true that, to a very considerable extent, punctuation tends to result from just how the mind responsible for that punctuating *hears* the text. And twenty-first-century minds have no business, in such matters, overruling seventeenth-century ones. Whoever the compositors were, they were more or less Shakespeare's contemporaries, and we are not.

Accordingly, when the original printed text uses a comma, we are being signaled that *they* (whoever "they" were) heard the text, not coming to a syntactic stop, but continuing to some later stopping point. To replace commas with editorial periods is thus risky and on the whole an undesirable practice. (Dramatic action, to be sure, may require us, for twenty-first-century readers, to highlight what four-hundred-year-old punctuation standards may not make clear—and may even, at times, misrepresent.)

When the printed text has a colon, what we are being signaled is that *they* heard a syntactic stop—though not necessarily or even usually the particular kind of syntactic stop we associate, today, with the colon. It is therefore inappropriate to substitute editorial commas for original colons. It is also inappropriate to employ editorial colons when *their* syntactic usage of colons does not match ours. In general, the closest thing to *their* syntactic sense of the colon is our (and their) period.

The Folio's interrogation (question) marks, too, merit extremely respectful handling. In particular, editorial exclamation marks should very rarely be substituted for the Folio's interrogation marks.

It follows from these considerations that the movement and sometimes the meaning of what we must take to be Shakespeare's *Tempest* will at times be different, depending on whose punctuation we follow, *theirs* or our own. I have tried, here, to use the printed seventeenth-century text as a guide to both *hearing* and *understanding* what Shakespeare wrote.

Since the original printed texts of (there not being, as there never are for Shakespeare, any surviving manuscripts) are frequently careless as well as self-contradictory, I have been relatively free with the wording of stage directions—and in some cases have added brief directions, to indicate who is speaking to whom. I have made no emendations; I have necessarily been obliged to make choices. Textual decisions have been annotated when the differences between or among the original printed texts seem either marked or of unusual interest.

In the interests of compactness and brevity, I have employed in my annotations (as consistently as I am able) a number of stylistic and typographical devices:

- The annotation of a single word does not repeat that word
- The annotation of more than one word repeats the words being annotated, which are followed by an equals sign and then by the annotation; the footnote number in the text is placed after the last of the words being annotated
- In annotations of a single word, alternative meanings are usually separated by commas; if there are distinctly different

ranges of meaning, the annotations are separated by arabic numerals inside parentheses—(1), (2), and so on; in more complexly worded annotations, alternative meanings expressed by a single word are linked by a forward slash, or solidus: /

- Explanations of textual meaning are not in parentheses; comments about textual meaning are
- Except for proper nouns, the word at the beginning of all annotations is in lower case
- Uncertainties are followed by a question mark, set in parentheses: (?)
- When particularly relevant, “translations” into twenty-first-century English have been added, in parentheses
- Annotations of repeated words are *not* repeated. Explanations of the *first* instance of such common words are followed by the sign ★. Readers may easily track down the first annotation, using the brief Finding List at the back of the book. Words with entirely separate meanings are annotated *only* for meanings no longer current in Modern English.

*The most important typographical device here employed is the sign ★ placed after the first (and only) annotation of words and phrases occurring more than once. There is an alphabetically arranged listing of such words and phrases in the Finding List at the back of the book. The Finding List contains no annotations but simply gives the words or phrases themselves and the numbers of the relevant act, the scene within that act, and the footnote number within that scene for the word’s first occurrence.*

## INTRODUCTION



First performed, so far as we know, in 1611, and probably written either in that year or in 1610–1611, *The Tempest* is very likely the last play that Shakespeare wrote entirely on his own. *Henry VIII* has been dated from 1612–1613, and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* from 1613, but the latter play was written with John Fletcher, and the former (if it is, as generally conjectured, a collaborative effort) with an undetermined writer or writers. *Cardenio*, 1613, and fairly clearly drawn from Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quijote*, is known to have been written with Fletcher, but the play has been lost. *The Winter's Tale* is conjecturally dated from 1610–11, just before *The Tempest*.

Whatever the play's exact place in Shakespeare's work, it remains a profoundly autumnal work.

We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.

(4.1.156–158)

Spoken after the magical wedding pageantry of act 4, and by Prospero, who is the center and narrative fulcrum of the play, the

*sense* of these beautiful lines is not unprecedented in Shakespeare's work. But the wistful, retrospectively oriented *tone* is so remarkably plain, all through this brilliantly mellow theater piece, that critics have quite naturally assumed an autobiographical motif. Pushing the age of fifty and just about to retire from a lifetime in and around the London stage, surely Shakespeare wove his own life as a stage "magician" into this tale of a perhaps fifty-year-old real-life magician, about to retire from the magical island ("stage"?) where for a dozen years he has ruled? But there is not a bit of supporting evidence. Autobiographical speculation fits, and it is appealing; whether it is true we do not know.

The structure and narrative balance of *The Tempest* fits, to some extent, with that of other late and more or less ruminative Shakespeare plays. In the matter of approximate stage time (*not* lines spoken) allotted to particular characters, *The Tempest* assigns the major amount of active presence to Prospero, roughly 52 percent. That is close to the figure received by King Lear, in the play bearing his name. The downward spread in approximate stage time, in *Lear* (1605–1606), runs from the second most often heard-from character, Kent, who receives 39 percent, to 17 percent for Albany and Cornwall; this embraces nine characters. And the downward spread of assigned stage-time in *The Tempest* also embraces nine characters, as follows:

Ariel, 31 percent  
 Sebastian, 28 percent  
 Alonso, 28 percent  
 Miranda, 27 percent  
 Caliban, 25 percent  
 Gonzalo, 24 percent



Antonio, 22 percent  
 Stephano 21 percent  
 Ferdinand, 17 percent  
 Trinculo, 17 percent.

And in *Measure for Measure* (1604), there is a somewhat similar balance, including, however, a total of only five characters, and running from 44 percent for both Isabella and the Duke, down to 17 percent for Pompey. The more ruminative of Shakespeare's seventeenth-century plays certainly employ varying stage-time distributions. In *Hamlet* (1600–1601) stage time varies from a totally dominate 66 percent for Hamlet to 17 percent for Ophelia, with five other characters in between these high and low figures. Stage-time figures in *Othello* (1603–1604) show Iago at 64 percent, Othello at 59 percent, followed thereafter by four other characters whose stage-time runs from 32 percent (Emilia, Iago's wife), to 17 percent for Roderigo, Iago's much-abused victim.

But *Lear*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello* are unmistakably tragedies; *Measure for Measure* is an exceedingly strange comedy—and what is *The Tempest*? Fitting *The Tempest* into the three highly approximate genre descriptions in traditional use—comedies, tragedies, and history plays—is no simpler a task than trying to categorize the play's structure. It is clearly neither a tragedy nor a history. But is it truly a comedy? Shakespeare's former colleagues, when in 1623 they published the First Folio, not only gave *The Tempest* pride of place, putting it smack in the front of the book, but definitely labeled it comedic. And it does have significant comedic pages, as it also has two characters—Stephano and Trinculo—who are without question outright clowns. But *Hamlet* too gives about 20 percent of its length to comedy of one sort or another,

as does *Lear* and also an earlier tragedy, *Romeo and Juliet*. Is *The Tempest* a romance, as some have suggested? Is it in some ways more like, say, *Midsummer Night's Dream* or even *Twelfth Night*? These latter are both "comedies" and yet resonate with large elements of that something-more, that something-different, and yes, that something-unclassifiable which is part and parcel of what distinguishes Shakespeare from all other dramatists, whether in his own time and or any other, and whether in his own language and culture or any other.

*The Tempest* is a ripe, wise play, and a meditatively sad play, and a funny play, and a majestically grand play. And more, for Shakespeare's tough, probing intelligence, even as it never for a moment leaves the fictive world it so vividly creates, pushes into realms both as distinct and as eternally unsettled as the comparative virtues of civilization and nature; the dynamics of social order and hierarchies; relationships between peoples (and beings?) of different origin; the variable realities of loyalty, love, and magic; and the role of the divine in human existence. Neither Shakespeare nor anyone else has final answers to any of these matters. But Shakespeare's wise autumnal explorations, and the gorgeous writing with which he prosecutes them, make *The Tempest* worthy of virtually endless investigation.

*Item*: Caliban. We have only a sometimes vague account of his origins, but there can be no doubt as to the opinions and beliefs of the Folio's editors. Caliban is there described, in the list of characters printed after the text of the play, as "a savage and deformed slave." "Savage" had a number of meanings, in Shakespeare's time, "wild, undomesticated, uncivilized, rude, ungovernable, ferocious," all of them (except perhaps the full sense of

“ferocious”) applicable to Caliban. A “slave” was someone in the full control of someone else; the word carried additional and negative senses of contempt and disapproval (“rascal”), as well as that of a submissive or devoted servant, in which latter sense Shakespeare uses it in the first scene of the first act of *The Taming of the Shrew*, 1593–1594). But the third element of the Folio description, “deformed,” meaning “misshapen, shapeless, monstrous, ugly,” is arguably the most important, for it helps in defining Caliban’s genetic being. Caliban’s mother, Sycorax, was a witch, exiled from her native Algeria to the island of the play, where she arrived, pregnant with Caliban, and where he was born and has grown up. We do not know for sure who or what was Caliban’s father, though Prospero in a moment of anger says that Caliban was “got [engendered] by the Devil himself” and we know it was widely believed that witches copulated with devils. Prospero also says Caliban “was not honored with a human shape”; Alonso, on seeing the monster for the first time, declares, “This is a strange thing as e’er I looked on”; Trinculo is never clear whether Caliban is “a man or a fish”; and Antonio, admittedly sneeringly, also calls Caliban a “plain fish.” But Shakespeare was not as concerned with Caliban’s origins and physical/genetic (or, again, “racial”?) nature as with his character and actions; we will never have certainty on these matters.

What *is* certain is that, though Caliban is perceived as a “monster,” he often speaks with the tongue of an angel:

I prithee let me bring thee where crabs grow,  
 And I with my long nails will dig thee pig-nuts,  
 Show thee a jay’s nest, and instruct thee how  
 To snare the nimble marmozet. I’ll bring thee

To clust'ring filberts, and sometimes I'll get thee  
 Young scamels from the rock. Wilt thou go with me?  
 (2.2.156–161)

This delicate and delightful invitation may be wasted on a pair of drunken sots like Stephano and Trinculo. It remains the passionate invocation of a country-bred man's boyhood pleasures, distinctly comparable to those of Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*. And when Stephano and Trinculo, obviously city-bred (or at least city-broken), are frightened by the nighttime sounds of the island, Caliban speaks to them even more enchantingly:

Be not afeard, the isle is full of noises,  
 Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.  
 Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments  
 Will hum about mine ears, and sometimes voices,  
 That if I then had waked after long sleep,  
 Will make me sleep again, and then in dreaming  
 The clouds methought would open, and show riches  
 Ready to drop upon me, that when I waked  
 I cried to dream again.

(3.2.131–139)

There is sadness in these evocations, and others like them. This is, as I have said, an autumnally wistful play. But it cannot be accidental that Shakespeare consistently gives lines of such loveliness to a “savage and deformed slave,” as it cannot be accidental that, while other “low” characters in the play speak in prose, Caliban is regularly poetic. He can be lecherously ugly, he is usually cowardly, and his social and moral perspectives are indeed “savage.” But the tenderness we often hear from his mouth seems pretty clearly a mark (even if qualified) of Shakespeare's favor.