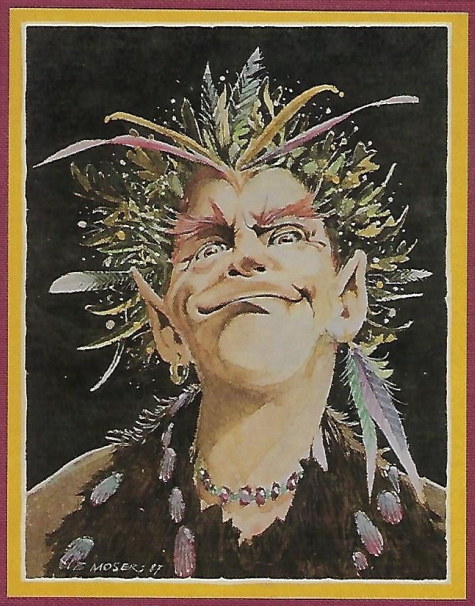
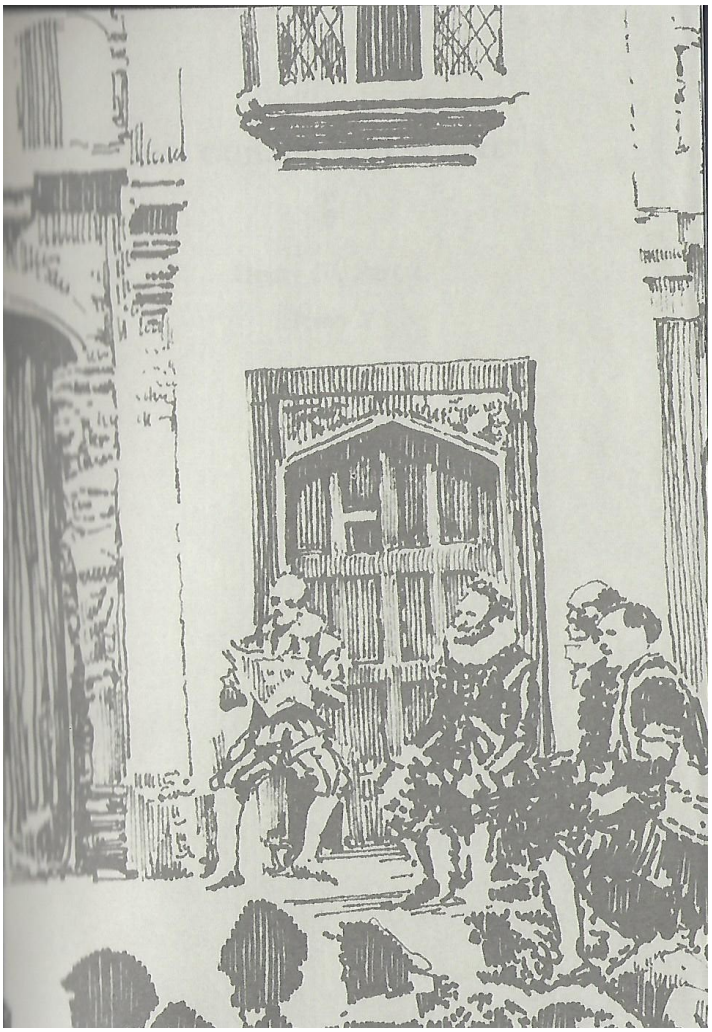
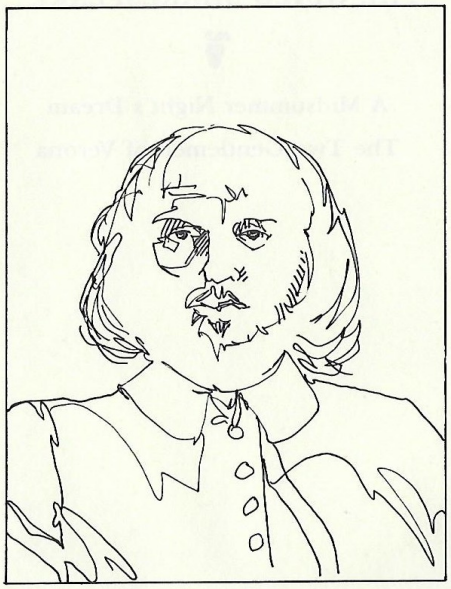
THE GUILD

Shakespeare







THE GUILD

Shakespeare

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

THE TWO GENTLEMEN
OF VERONA

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY

JOHN F. ANDREWS

Forewords by

Helen Hayes and F. Murray Abraham

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General Introduction to *THE GUILD SHAKESPEARE*

When we think of William Shakespeare, we usually conjure up an image of the consummate literary artist. And rightly so: in his immortal Sonnets and in his elegant verse narratives, Shakespeare produced some of the greatest poetry in the annals of world literature. But the works we most indelibly associate with Shakespeare's genius today were not originally conceived as literature. They began as scripts for performance, and they were designed, not to be read in the privacy of a library armchair, but to be seen and heard in bustling theatres like the Globe.

Many of us first encountered Shakespeare when we memorized passages from *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth* as students in school. It may therefore surprise us to learn that neither of these classics appeared in print during the author's lifetime. Along with seventeen other plays that had not been published previously, they first emerged as "literature" in 1623, seven years after the playwright's death, in a substantial volume now referred to as the First Folio.

The Folio contained thirty-six plays in all. Half of them had been published in individual paperbacks (now known as quartos)

while the author was still flourishing as a dramatist, actor, and theatre entrepreneur. Many of these compact quarto editions seem to have been printed directly from copies of Shakespeare's own manuscripts. So far as we can determine, however, the playwright himself had little or nothing to do with preparing any of them for the press. Just why we don't know. The only thing that seems clear is that when he died in 1616, Shakespeare had made no provision to ensure that the "insubstantial pageants" he'd produced for London theatre audiences would survive in a more permanent form after the playwright and his stage had passed into the "dark Backward and abysm of Time."

Fortunately, two of his former colleagues, John Heminge and Henry Condell, took it upon themselves to compile a volume that would immortalize the plays of the incomparable dramatist with whom they had collaborated for so many happy years as members of England's most prominent acting company. They secured the patronage of two noblemen who had seen the company through some of its most successful ventures. They commissioned an engraved portrait of Shakespeare for the frontispiece. They obtained several dedicatory poems, including a lengthy eulogy from playwright Ben Jonson. And they published the collected plays in a form and format they hoped would make them accessible to "the great variety of readers."

The Folio editors divided the majority of the texts into acts and scenes. (The early quartos, mirroring the unbroken sequence that probably characterized most Elizabethan performances, had been printed without the structural demarcations typical of Renaissance editions of classical drama.) For a number

of the plays the editors provided rosters of dramatis personae, usually enumerated under such headings as "Names of the Actors." They regularized many of the entrances, exits, speech headings, and stage directions. They made an effort to secure reliable manuscripts and to correct mistakes that had appeared in previous quarto editions. And in general they did their best to present the works in a manner that would make them understandable and enjoyable to an audience that might never be able to see them performed in the theatre.

Not surprisingly, the volume produced under the supervision of Heminge and Condell was plagued by minor flaws, with the consequence that subsequent editors have spent nearly four centuries trying to resolve inconsistencies, ferret out corruptions, and eliminate errors in the texts it transmitted. But the compilers succeeded admirably in their principal aim: "to keep the memory of so worthy a friend and fellow alive as was our Shakespeare." In the process they provided an editorial model, however imperfect, that remains instructive today.

When we compare the First Folio to the typical modern edition of Shakespeare, we are more apt to be impressed by the differences than by the similarities. Since twentieth-century printings of Shakespeare are normally produced in conformity with present-day standards of punctuation, spelling, and usage, they look more neat, clean, and "correct" than the Folio text. Most of them smooth out stylistic rough spots to be found in the early printings. Some even go so far as to translate obsolete words and word forms into modern English. Meanwhile, of course, virtually all of them draw upon the work of previous editors and on the

fruits of modern scholarship in a conscientious effort to repair the deficiencies of the original texts.

The results are on the whole splendid. But there are losses as well as gains to be had from the modernization of Shakespeare's works. Some of the older conventions in the presentation of his texts are like the forerunners of modern musical instruments: they have qualities that cannot be duplicated with fidelity by later instruments and modes of representation. We've learned from recent interpretations of Renaissance and Baroque music that there are often aesthetic benefits to be obtained from a return to the original sources—to the scorings and instruments with which works like Handel's "Water Music" were initially presented. And we've learned from our century's experiments in the performance of Shakespeare's plays that an open stage analogous to that on which they were first produced does more justice to them than does the kind of proscenium auditorium devised for plays that came later in the development of drama.

Like other twentieth-century printings of Shakespeare, *The Guild Shakespeare* derives a great deal from the editorial tradition that has led to so many excellent modern versions of the author's works. But in an attempt to draw fresh inspiration from the spirit that animated the plays and poems when they first appeared, the *Guild* edition preserves and highlights a number of attributes from the original printings that seem germane to the content of the drama and literature they transmitted to posterity.

In its punctuation, for example, the *Guild* text endeavors to give equal emphasis to sound and sense. In many situations where modern practice normally calls for commas—after voca-

tives and interjections such as "O" and "alas," for example, and before "Sir" in phrases like "Ah Sir" and "Yes Sir"—this edition follows the original printings and omits them. In places where Elizabethan practice calls for heavier punctuation—to mark the caesural pause in the middle of a line of verse, for example—this edition will sometimes include a comma that would not be required in ordinary twentieth-century usage. In either case, *The Guild Shakespeare* attempts to preserve the way the lines were meant to be spoken as well as what they were meant to convey.

Original spellings are generally retained whenever there is reason to believe that they might have a significant bearing on how a word was pronounced or on what it conveyed in Renaissance England. In many cases this practice affects the names of characters. Readers of this edition will discover, for example, that Romeo is a "Mountague," not a "Montague"; and in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* they will follow the fortunes of "Protheus," not "Proteus."

In numerous instances the retention of original spellings will preserve puns and verbal ambiguities that would otherwise be obliterated, as in the wordplay on "amour" in the references to "sycamours" and "gossamours" in *Romeo and Juliet.* In other instances archaic spellings will remind readers of subtle ways in which the language has evolved since Shakespeare's time, as in the distinction between our word "myself" (often more or less equivalent to "me") and the Elizabethan phrase "my self," which allowed a Shakespearean character to speak of his or her personality in a more objective fashion.

In the *Guild* edition apostrophes are used to indicate the

elision of syllables in words that could be pronounced differently in different metrical contexts. In a typical passage of *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* for example, the same word is rendered in two distinct ways in the same line: "And with her Pers'nage, her tall Personage." First "pers'nage" is treated metrically as a two-syllable word; then it is drawn out to three syllables.

In many cases the syllabic elisions marked in this edition reproduce those found in the Quarto and Folio texts. But because the original editions are anything but consistent in this matter, the *Guild* text frequently elides syllables (or adds them, as in the metrical alternation between "Empress" and "Emperess" in *Titus Andronicus)* where the early texts fail to do so.

Another feature of the *Guild* edition that will be immediately apparent to readers is its bountiful use of capital letters. Most of the words that were normally capitalized in the First Folio are capitalized here. These include titles such as King, Queen, Duke, Duchess, Lord, Lady, Master, and Mistress. They also include words that name or identify persons (Father, Mother, Husband, Son, Daughter, Nurse, Friar, Villain, Dog), and references to particular classes of beings (Gods, Fairies, Elves), places (Court, Castle, City, Monument, Orchard, Chamber), aspects of the natural world (Sun, Moon, Stars, Summer, East), and furnishings or objects that serve as properties in the staging of a play (Throne, Curtain, Letter, Sword, Knife, Vial). Other categories of capitalized words include major concepts (Love, Nature, Fancy, Law, Justice, Mercy) and key terms in "conceits" (extended metaphors) or aria-like "set pieces" (such as Mercutio's celebrated

speech on Queen Mab in *Romeo and Juliet* and the melancholy Jaques' reflections on the Seven Ages of Man in *As You Like It).*

In some instances the *Guild* edition capitalizes words not highlighted in the original texts, particularly when they involve personification (as with Mirth and Melancholy in Theseus' second speech of *A Midsummer Night's Dream)* or thematic emphasis (as with the repeated references to Hands in certain passages of *Titus Andronicus).*

Rather than "normalize" Elizabethan grammar (such as when Shakespeare uses a singular verb form with a plural subject in a clause like "my Wits faints"), this edition leaves it intact. Among other things, this principle applies to instances in which archaic forms preserve a meaning that differs only slightly from that of similar modern forms (as in the expression "you are too blame," where "too" is treated as an adverb and "blame" is used not as a verb but as an adjective roughly equivalent to our word "blameworthy").

In its treatment of stage directions and speech headings, the *Guild* text retains as much as possible of the phrasing of the original texts, adapting the original wording only when doing so is necessary to indicate precisely what action or gesture is called for. Where the dialogue makes it obvious that a certain action or gesture is required, a stage direction is inserted if one is not provided in the original text. Where what is to be inferred from the dialogue is subject to different interpretations, however, the usual practice will be to refrain from specifying stage action in the text itself. In such cases there will often be an accompanying note

to comment on some of the possibilities for stage business suggested by the lines.

Often a character is given different designations in a play's most authoritative early printing. Juliet's mother is variously identified, for example, as "Lady," "Old Lady," "Lady of the House," "Mother," "Capulet's Wife," or simply "Wife." Interestingly, one designation she never receives in the original texts of *Romeo and Juliet* is the name to be found in most modern editions: "Lady Capulet." In this edition, references to her are usually normalized to "Capulet's Wife," the title that seems to capture her role in the play most faithfully and consistently. A similar procedure for the designation of characters is adopted throughout *The Guild Shakespeare.*

The *Guild* edition will occasionally introduce conjectural readings when difficulties in the text cannot otherwise be resolved satisfactorily. And like other modern editions, it will accept many of the emendations proposed by previous editors. But much more often than is usual, the *Guild* text will retain the original readings in cases where other editions emend.

In order to assist readers who might otherwise be puzzled about shifts in the dialogue, the *Guild* edition will normally place a dash at the beginning of any statement in which the speaker is altering his or her mode of address (from one listener to another, for example, in mid-speech) or changing the direction of the dialogue (addressing someone other than the person who has just spoken, for instance).

The line-numbering system in this edition is like that of most modern texts of Shakespeare. When a line of verse needs to be

carried over to a second indented line in the text, it will still be counted as a single line. Similarly, when two or more speeches combine to form a "shared" line of verse (even in cases where as many as speakers are involved), the individual components are set in a "stairstep" pattern that counts as a single unit in the line count. Prose passages that go beyond one line are not indented, and each line of prose, however short, will be considered to be one unit in the line count.

The notes facing each page of text will explain words, phrases, and actions whose meanings are not obvious. Whenever possible, they will provide information about the origin and development of expressions that may not be familiar to modern readers. In this way they will attempt to elucidate not only *what* a passage means, but *how* that meaning is derived from the language in the original text.

The editor's introductions to individual volumes in the set will attempt to place each Shakespearean work in a context that illuminates its structure, atmosphere, and content. In some instances the editorial introductions will comment on sources and influences for the work. In others they will focus primarily on the problems involved in interpreting it. In yet others they will concentrate on such matters as how a given work fits into the larger patterns of Shakespeare's career, or how it has inspired subsequent theatre professionals, dramatists, literary artists, composers, or painters.

In many cases the emphasis in an editorial introduction will be designed to complement the remarks that accompany it in the foreword to a given work by one of the eminent theatre artists

and authors who have contributed so much to this undertaking. The Literary Guild is honored to have such a distinguished array of voices represented in *The Guild Shakespeare.* And we are exceedingly grateful to the outstanding actors, directors, and writers who have agreed to share their perspectives on Shakespeare with readers of the *Guild* edition.

We are also pleased that a visual artist of Barry Moser's unique gifts was able to participate in this exciting venture. Like the forewords, his handsome design and illustrations will delight and inspire readers as they journey to the treasured realms we all owe to the most profound poetic imagination the world has yet witnessed.

JOHN F. ANDREWS

FOREWORD

by

Helen Hayes

More people would be content with life if they had at least one quote from Shakespeare to store in their memories. I have three that over and over illuminate moments for me in the course of a day.

Never a Christmas morning dawns that I don't begin that Holy Day involuntarily, when I first open my eyes, with Marcellus' speech at the beginning of *Hamlet* (Shakespeare's only reference to Christmas in all that great body of work). It starts off the day for me on the proper reverent note.

> Some say that ever 'gainst that Season comes
> Wherein our Saviour's Birth is celebrated,
> The Bird of Dawning singeth all Night long;

HELEN HAYES, the First Lady of the American Theatre, has performed the roles of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* and Viola in *Twelfth Night.* In 1964 she formed the Helen Hayes Repertory Company to sponsor readings of Shakespeare in universities.

> And then, they say, no Spirit dare stir abroad;
> The Nights are wholesome, then no Planets strike,
> No Fairy takes, nor Witch hath power to charm,
> So hallow'd and so gracious is that Time.

Often, on a beautiful spring day, as I look out of my window on my beloved Hudson River, with the sun rising above the hills on the east shore, there flashes in my mind these lines from Sonnet 33.

> Full many a glorious Morning have I seen
> Flatter the Mountain-tops with Sovereign Eye,
> Kissing with golden Face the Meadows green,
> Gilding pale Streams with Heav'nly Alchemy.

While working in my garden or taking a walk, instead of humming to myself one of those cheap little tunes which have a way of sticking in the mind, I get my moment of joy out of remembering the lilting words of Sonnet 18.

> Shall I compare thee to a Summer's Day?
> Thou art more lovely and more temperate;
> Rough Winds do shake the darling Buds of May,
> And Summer's Lease hath all too short a Date:
> Sometime too hot the Eye of Heaven shines,
> And often is his gold Complexion dimm'd;
> And every Fair from Fair sometime declines,
> By Chance or Nature's changing Course untrimm'd;

> But thy eternal Summer shall not fade,
> Nor lose possession of that Fair thou ow'st;
> Nor shall Death brag thou wand'rest in his Shade,
> When in eternal Lines to Time thou grow'st;
> So long as Men can breathe, or Eyes can see,
> So long lives this, and this gives Life to thee.

Some years ago, I received the Laetare Medal at Notre Dame University. I was struck numb with terror at the hilarity of the graduating class, popping their champagne corks and being generally loud and merry. Someone had warned me that they were apt to cry me down if my acceptance speech did not strike their fancy.

What, I wondered, would happen if my unadorned expression of gratitude were to provoke them? Then, as I had come to expect, sweet Will Shakespeare came to my rescue. I made alterations in his text, rose confidently to my feet, and said:

"Esteemed class of Notre Dame '79, you may believe that this high honor you have paid me is your idea, but, in truth, I engineered it myself.

> I made me a Willow Cabin at your Gate,
> And called upon my Soul within the House;
> Wrote loyal Cantons of contemned Love
> And sang them loud ev'n in the dead of Night;
> Halloo'd your Name to th' reverb'rate Hills,
> And made the babbling Gossip of the Air
> Cry out, Notre Dame! Ah you could not rest

Between the elements of Air and Earth,
But you should notice me!"

This speech I had spoken as Viola in *Twelfth Night.* I brought the house down!

Next morning, when I was strolling alone around the beautiful campus, a young graduate came up and thanked me for making his commencement memorable with my beautiful words. I never thought to tell him the words were Shakepeare's, not mine. Had I done so, perhaps he would have been inspired to find his own magic words to call upon in moments of crisis.

FOREWORD

by

F. Murray Abraham

Shakespeare is boring. Let's be honest, isn't that what most people think? It's like going on a diet: you know it's good for you, but you can't wait till it's over—especially with his comedies.

With a tragedy, each member of the audience responds individually, privately, so that while *you* might be moved to tears, everyone around you might be asleep. This doesn't diminish your experience; it rather intensifies the sense of private communication with the actors, the play, and your own feelings. You have become a quiet participant in an evening that may change your life, even though everyone else is snoring—including the actors. I've given performances so bad the smell made my eyes water, yet after some of these stinkers, people would be waiting to thank me and to explain how much the performance meant to

F. MURRAY ABRAHAM's classical repertory extends from Sophocles to Shakespeare to Chekhov. His Shakespearean roles include Malvolio in *Twelfth Night,* the title role in *Macbeth,* Iago in *Othello,* and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* In 1984 he won an Academy Award for his portrayal of Salieri in the film *Amadeus.*

them. It is also true that after some of my most brilliant performances people have bumped into walls trying to avoid me. I believe their responses are sincere, but so are mine. There is simply no way to measure a tragedy during a performance other than privately.

Comedy, however, is public and requires a collective response. When you laugh out loud and everyone else is quiet, chances are you're not going to laugh again. With a tragedy you arrive in a serious frame of mind, and if you aren't carried away in the first act, you trust that by the second act something monumental is going to happen. Even if it doesn't, the material is usually rich enough to promise thoughtful rewards long after the night is over. Comedy can't wait. If you're not laughing in the first act you might not be there for the second. And you're right. If it's a comedy, it should be funny.

But how often have you gone to a Shakespeare comedy that is so funny you can't wait to see it again? How often have you seen any comedy you really loved? For me, the dry spell between completely satisfying, lusty comedies lasted nearly fourteen years. So much time had passed that I began to doubt my memory, to wonder if perhaps I had imagined the one sweet show that reminded everyone why they loved the theatre. Oh, bits of it would surface from time to time, but never the unity of playwright, company, and audience that vibrates with health and pleasure. Never, that is, until *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

Towards the end of this fabulous play Shakespeare gathers the entire company together with the audience to watch a tragedy performed by amateurs. The moment is designed to focus all

attention on six comic characters, the mechanicals, who have been promising to be funny if they only had the chance. It's the moment every comic actor longs for and dreads, where the audience sits back, folds its arms and says, "O.K. kid, show us your stuff," and I know that the first actors who played these parts thought the same thing we did, "If this doesn't work I'm going to wring Shakespeare's neck."

There was no need to worry. People were rolling around in their seats; they were weeping and shouting with laughter. It's hard to believe a 400-year-old joke could go over so well. The backstage crew would sneak around to the front of the house and stand with the ushers to watch the finale every single time eight times a week. The cast of *Julius Caesar,* which was playing next door, in another auditorium of New York's Public Theatre, would show up in their togas to see as much as they could between entrances.

This gathering together of strangers so that they respond with one mind is nothing less than magic. At certain performances there were audiences spanning four generations, and the nine-year-olds were as delighted as their great-grandparents. They walked out of the theatre with grinning, surprised faces, and many came backstage to let us know they would return to see it again. Why did they insist on telling us? I suppose it was partly encouragement, but I think they also wanted to cling to that feeling we had all created together. We had discovered a great playwright who was as immediate and alive to us now as he was four centuries ago. And I promise you, not one of those audiences will ever again say that Shakespeare is boring.