EVERYMAN

THE TEMPEST

William Shakespeare

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former editor of the *Shakespeare Quarterly*

Foreword by Sir John Gielgud

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THE EVERYMAN SHAKESPEARE

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FOREWORD BY SIR JOHN GIELGUD

As a very young actor, I was engaged in the early 1920s to play the part of Ferdinand for a few performances at the Savoy Theatre in London by Robert Courtneidge, whose daughter Rosaline was to play Miranda. Courtneidge presented a short Shakespeare season every year starring Henry Baynton, who was then a popular provincial actor with a romantic appeal. Following the examples of Sir Frank Benson and Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Baynton decided to give prominence to Caliban, finding, as did most managers and actors at that time, that Prospero was merely a tedious old bore. I have never found him so. (Benson hung upside down, with a fish in his mouth, while Tree staged a final tableau in which he was left desolate on the island watching the receding ship as it sailed back to Italy.)

A few years later, Tree's daughter Viola went into management and presented a very unhappy production of the play, which I had gone to see with high hopes but in which I was sadly disappointed. The Prospero was Henry Ainley, previously outstanding as Malvolio and Leontes under Granville Barker, but apparently bewildered in attempting Prospero, despite a sonorous delivery in his beautiful voice, and perhaps distracted by an Ariel (a charming but unsatisfactory musical comedy actress named Winifred Barnes) who flew about and hovered above him on a wire. The Caliban, a fine actor, Louis Calvert, was made up to look like an animal, and walked about on all-fours. Only the young lovers (Joyce Carey and Francis Lister) shed a few moments of beauty and romantic style, while the scenery, evidently resuscitated from Tree's version of the play many years before, did little to rescue a disastrous failure.

When I first attempted the part of Prospero at the Old Vic, in 1930, I was only 26, but extremely fortunate in my director,

Harcourt Williams, and enormously helped by the imaginative skills of Leslie French and Ralph Richardson, who were Ariel and Caliban respectively. I became increasingly devoted to the play, and was to act Prospero in three subsequent productions on the stage under three fine directors, George Devine, Peter Brook and Peter Hall, over a number of years. Finally, two years ago, I played the part again for the director Peter Greenaway, in his controversial film entitled *Prospero's Books*, a most fascinating and rewarding experience. Each time, I had to re-examine my previous performance, but tried to profit by the different ideas of the directors, actors, and designers with whom I came to be associated. Since I have never directed the play myself, I have always been too busy concentrating on my own part to examine in detail the scenes in which Prospero does not appear (both the conspiracy scenes of the usurping lords, and the low-life comedians who conspire with Caliban to destroy Prospero). The long dialogue between Prospero and Miranda at the beginning of the play is something of a problem for the actors and audience alike. The speeches are long and involved, though so essential to the understanding of the plot. Curiously enough, I felt that this was one of the most successful scenes in Greenaway's film, greatly helped by the closeups, angles of the camera, and its visual beauty.

I once spent a somewhat exhausting half hour discussing the play with Jonathan Miller when we chanced to meet at Nice Airport while we were both waiting to board a plane. I had recently seen his production of the play at the Mermaid Theatre in London, in which he seemed to have concentrated on the colonial implications of the 'still-vex'd Bermooths', and he was derisive of all the 'magic nonsense' as he called it, so naturally we argued to little purpose. I was greatly taken by a suggestion of Professor Glynne Wickham, with whom I talked at Bristol when we were giving the play there. He thought that Shakespeare intended the end of the play to flatter the new king, James I; that, in the masque, Iris was to represent Queen Elizabeth (referring to the famous 'Rainbow' portraits of her), Juno for James's Queen, and that Ariel is finally freed to ascend into Heaven, as a kind of John the

Baptist, to herald the deification of Prospero, celebrating his triumphant welding of England and Scotland into a single kingdom.

The play is, of course, intensely difficult to stage successfully with so many possible pitfalls to be avoided. The shipwreck should surely be very simply suggested and the speeches must be audible despite the competition of the background storm. I am sure that Ariel should be acted by a boy or a very young man, though at various times, at the Vic and Stratford, both Elsa Lanchester (Charles Laughton's wife) and Margaret Leighton were very successful in the part. The lovers must combine youth and beauty with style and breeding, and the comics kept in reasonable check, not forgetting their sinister intent. The late Arthur Lowe was a superb Stephano in the Peter Brook production. Jack Hawkins, Denis Quilley and Alec Clunes all played Caliban in productions with me, all fine performances, though I felt Richardson surpassed them all. Needless to say how important it is to mingle the fantasy, songs and magnificent language – both poetry and prose – with the powerful suggestions of evil, repentance and forgiveness which bind the whole play together. And then, in the epilogue, the beautiful fable is crowned with a poignant simplicity and charm.

Sir John Gielgud

SIR JOHN GIELGUD's first stage appearance was playing the role of the Herald in *Henry V*. He has since appeared in such diverse Shakespearean roles as Hamlet, Shylock, Antony, King Lear, Prospero, Julius Caesar, and Richard II, and directed productions of *Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, The Merchant of Venice,* and *Twelfth Night,* among many others.

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION TO *The Tempest*

The Tempest is a drama about the uses of display, and it draws to a fitting close with an ageing showman's reflections on the 'Magic' that has long enabled him to flourish as a behind-the-scenes manipulator. Like a ducal impresario, this purveyor of special effects has ransacked the 'Globe' for spectacles to ornament his crowd-pleasing extravaganzas. Like a shrewd carnival proprietor, he has conjured up 'Music', 'Viands', and 'golden Palaces'. Like a skilled sorcerer, an alchemist of the mind and imagination, he has exploited the secrets of an 'Art' that works with 'great creating Nature' (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iv.88) to impress and move others and to summon forth a 'new World' too 'brave' and wondrous to be regarded as merely 'Natural'.

But now this instigator of haunting 'Noises' and edifying 'Visions' is compelled to take stock. With the prescience of a seasoned astrologer, he divines that his 'Charms' are about to be 'o'er-thrown'. He discerns that his flaccid 'Sails' will soon depend upon the 'Breath' he can solicit from forces beyond his ken. And he confides that, like a 'Deceiver' whose devices have been discovered, he will wind up in 'Despair' unless he be 'reliev'd by Prayer'.

For all his magisterial aura, the wizard who orchestrates *The Tempest*'s culminating 'Pageant' is a self-confessed fraud: the vulnerable if ostensibly omnipotent human being beneath the persona of a domestic and political patriarch, the insecure if stern principal of a 'Vanity' that repeatedly directs our attention to the nervous ventriloquist on the far side of the rear stage curtain.

The name this wonder-worker carries is Prospero, and he presides over a 'bare Island' with analogies to the 'Wooden O' (*Henry V*, Prologue, line 13), the three-tiered amphitheatre that accommodated public performances by His Majesty's Servants in Southwark, a suburb of early seventeenth-century London. Like a manager of the King's Men, as these Servants were known

to their fellows, he oversees his attendant ministers as a troupe of 'Actors'. By his deployment of their skills he weaves subtle illusions out of 'thin Air'. He conducts puppet-like playthings through mazes as intricate 'as ere Men trod'. He wields fierce 'Vexations' and restorative 'Dreams'. He erects 'solemn Temples' and fills the Heavens with 'Cloud-capp'd Tow'rs'. And in the process he prompts his audience to ponder the relationship between the protagonist's own doings and those of the poet who begot him.

When Shakespeare penned Prospero's lines, he was nearing the end of a distinguished career as England's foremost knitter of riddling 'Distractions'. He was shortly to bid adieu to the 'Cell' in which he had plotted so many diversions, and he no doubt looked forward to the tranquillity he expected to repossess when he retired to the 'Dukedom' of his birth. He may have suspected that he would enjoy his reclaimed state only briefly before he too commended his soul into the hands of a higher authority. He may thus have intuited that he would be 'Wise hereafter' to devote 'Every third Thought' to his 'Grave'. All we know is that, whatever his thoughts and motives, he took the occasion to produce a drama that gives eloquent expression to Everyman's yearning for 'Sea-change', for a 'second Life' to gainsay 'the dark Backward and Abysm of Time' and confer his spirit to eternity.

The Tempest is by no means unique in its preoccupation with the search for an antidote to the anxieties provoked by mutability and mortality. The same concern pervades *Love's Labour's Lost*, *King Lear*, and Shakespeare's Sonnets. Variations on it animate *Richard II*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and several other plays. But it resonates with greatest intensity in *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *Henry VIII*, the four late works that commentators now link with the drama a venerable tradition interprets, rightly or wrongly, as the playwright's benediction to the 'Fancies' that have given his 'little Life' focus.

The tragicomedies with which Shakespeare completed his

tenure as a man of the theatre are normally classified today as 'Romances'. Though they all have what can be defined as happy endings, they differ from his earlier comedies and tragicomedies in the earnestness with which they engage the grim realities of 'State and Woe' (*Henry VIII*, Prologue, line 3). In *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, and *Henry VIII*, for example, we either witness or hear reports of the demise of *dramatis personae*, and in *The Tempest* we feel that death is a real danger until the moment when Prospero's own 'Release' is effected.

The term 'Romance' might appear to suggest sentimental escapism. But Shakespeare's experiments in the genre force us to confront a universe in which even the most ordinary pilgrimages are fraught with real peril. As a group these dramatic works reverberate with intimations of the ominous, and they frequently imply that the only way to evade life's snares is through some benign suspension of Nature's usual functions.

Taken together, these late tragicomedies offer a panoramic view of the human condition. Often they do so by emphasizing that the occurrences they depict are widely dispersed in time, location, and circumstance, as in *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Winter's Tale*. On other occasions they do so by basing their events upon action that took place in the murky past, as in *The Tempest*, or by orienting their action to events that will transpire in some remote future, as in *Henry VIII*.

Most of them contain incidents that seem wildly implausible, if not shocking, as when a horrified Antigonus exits pursued by a bear in *The Winter's Tale*; and they rely heavily on storms, shipwrecks, and other 'acts of God' to propel the narrative forward. In patterns that recall *The Comedy of Errors*, a proto-Romance from Shakespeare's earlier years, families are scattered on land or at sea, doomed to wander and then astonishingly reunited at the close. Terrible calamities are but narrowly averted, and then only because of reversals that stem from sudden changes of heart or from unprecedented visitations by 'the Powres above' (*Cymbeline*, V.v.467). Cordelia-like daughters, maidens with symbolic names or pseudonyms (Marina in *Pericles*, Fidele in *Cymbeline*, Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*,

Miranda in *The Tempest*), intervene as instruments of special grace, restoring hope and perception to fathers who have lost their bearings and would otherwise perish in their guilt and grief.

Rather than conceal their improbability or disguise their artifice, Shakespeare's Romances tend to revel in it, on the one hand reminding theatregoers that what they are witnessing is only make-believe, on the other hand laying the foundation for some climactic marvel that will turn out to have been the *raison d'être* of the drama. In these works what initially appear to be opaque 'Fumes', impenetrable to 'Clearer Reason' (*The Tempest*, V.i.67–68), suddenly transfigure themselves into designer clouds with silver linings. 'Things Dying' there may be, but in the cosmos of these new-style mystery plays they almost always become metamorphosed into, or serve as precursors of, 'Things new-borne' (*The Winter's Tale*, III.iii.117).

Like the Tragedies, the Romances are suffused with suffering; but in a way that sets them apart from most of the Tragedies, they depict pain as purgative and even beautifying. In the Romances 'the Seas threaten' and they sometimes drown; but in the last analysis they show themselves to be 'Merciful'. For if there is a first principle of Romance ecology, it would seem to be this: that anything that can be made 'Rich and Strange' will be recycled and refined until it emerges as an emblem of the Providence that burnished it and made it lustrous (*The Tempest*, V.i.177, I.ii.399).

The earliest recorded performance of *The Tempest* was at Whitehall on 1 November 1611, but the script was probably staged at the Blackfriars, if not the Globe, prior to that date. It was not the last of Shakespeare's dramatic works, of course, but the valedictory note it sounds has always made it seem as if it should have been. It has steadily attracted the interest of those in search of the 'real' Shakespeare. It has delighted generations of viewers with its besotted clowns and celestial pyrotechnics. It has fostered more than its share of artistic offspring. And it will long maintain a special hold on the memories of those who share its devotion

to the fragile glories of an 'Art' that can fulfil its destiny only by dissolving into the 'Air' that brought it into being.

But if this philosophical drama is a study of what the Prince of Denmark calls 'the Purpose of Playing' (*Hamlet*, III.ii.24), it is also a meditation on the 'baseless Fabric' of the 'Isle' an 'unworthy Scaffold' (*Henry V*, Prologue, line 10) attempts to confine within its charmed circle. And whether we think of Caliban's tormented domicile as a dot in the Mediterranean or as a counterpart to the 'still-vext Bermoothes' in the eye of an Atlantic hurricane, it is difficult to resist the inference that what the playwright is really representing in *The Tempest* is a microcosm of the marbled gem our own bold voyages have revealed to Earth's inhabitants as a precious 'demi-Paradise' against the silent backdrop of an ever-deepening void.

In June of 1609, under the auspices of the Virginia Company, whose members were acquaintances of the intrepid spirits in Shakespeare's own global enterprise, a group of entrepreneurs sailed from Plymouth to transport a newly appointed Governor to England's first permanent settlement in the Americas. As it happened, the ships encountered a terrible storm, and on 24 July the vessel carrying Sir Thomas Gates foundered off the coast of the Bermudas. To the amazement of everyone who had been on the flagship, there were no casualties. To their further surprise, 'the Devil's Islands' on which they had landed proved remarkably 'temperate'. Not only did all the mariners survive; by May of 1610 they had pieced together two pinnaces and completed their journey to Jamestown, Virginia.

Before the year was out several accounts of the Bermuda adventure, including William Strachey's *True Repertory of the Wrack*, were circulating in London. They all praised Providence for a rescue that seemed little short of miraculous, and they generated a spiritual climate that Shakespeare freely invoked when he conceived *The Tempest*. When it suited his design he alluded to details his audience would recognize from the recent English forays into 'unpath'd Waters' (*The Winter's Tale*, IV.iv.581). But he also took material from other travel narratives,

among them tales of Magellan's and Drake's encounters with the Patagonians of South America, who worshipped a god named Setebos; and he immersed himself in reactions to those narratives as he read works such as John Florio's 1603 translation of Michel de Montaigne's essays on cannibals and other topics. For the storm that opens the play he recalled the New Testament story (Acts 27) about the Apostle Paul's role in saving the occupants of a Roman sailing vessel. For the meanderings of the Neapolitans after their arrival on Prospero's island, he drew parallels with the Exodus of the children of Israel from captivity in Egypt and their wanderings in the wilderness that frustrates their quest for the Promised Land. Meanwhile, as usual, he borrowed at will from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which he probably read both in Latin and in Arthur Golding's 1567 English version. And, as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, he incorporated both structural paradigms and incidental themes from the *Aeneid*.

In many respects the enveloping frame of *The Tempest* reiterates Virgil's epic. The playwright suggests analogies between the odyssey that Alonso and his companions undertake from Tunis to Naples and the mission that conveyed Aeneas from Dido's Carthage to the Latium that would become his new Troy. By doing so Shakespeare reminds us that these latter-day Trojans can gain their destination only by negotiating a 'Vast' (*The Winter's Tale*, I.i.35) that is totally unfamiliar to them.

According to its only aboriginal (a character the First Folio cast list for *The Tempest* describes as a 'salvage and deformed slave'), the 'Isle' on which the grounded Italians find themselves in Shakespeare's play is 'full of Noises'. But on one point the observant Caliban is incorrect: not all the 'Sounds' to be heard here are 'sweet Airs that give Delight and hurt not'. The acrimonious Duke who has ruled for twelve years and who commissions these disturbances appears at times to be a spiteful Lear – more sinned against than sinning, to be sure, but at first unable to register the degree to which his own neglect has contributed to the 'Evil Nature' he awakened in a perfidious recipient of his favour. As a result of the intemperance Prospero

displays in his initial conversation with Ariel, an obedient sprite who has never done anything to offend his master, the old man comes across as an iron-fisted despot. He then behaves so imperiously with the gentle Ferdinand, and even with his own daughter, the 'admir'd Miranda', that we can't help speculating about the agitation that appears to underlie his presumably beneficent ministrations. And notwithstanding Prospero's comments about a surly 'Monster' who is supposedly incapable of the least 'Print of Goodness', the exchanges *we* witness suggest that Caliban's ruler may finally be disclosing more than he perceives when he says 'this Thing of Darkness I / Acknowledge mine'.

There can be no question that the lord of *The Tempest* was expected to cut an imposing figure on the Shakespearean stage. Like Duke Senior in the Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*, he is an exile who has profited from pastoral adversity; and like Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*, he endeavours to model himself on the Good Shepherd. But though his effects on the lives of others turn out in general to be salutary, he fails in at least one of his aims: he never extracts so much as an admission of wrongdoing, let alone any expression of remorse, from his faithless brother. And if it is eventually Prospero who achieves the drama's 'most majestic Vision', he attains it only by way of a psychological and spiritual progress that depends upon his forswearing 'Vengeance' for the 'rarer Action' of a compassionate 'Virtue'.

What Prospero hopes to bestow on the play's other characters, friend and foe alike, is a spirit of 'Grace' and an informed understanding of each person's own 'Meaning'. Before he can attend to the needs of lesser mortals, however, the isle's physician must first address his own ills. He must take part with the 'nobler Reason' that is his only salve for a 'Fury' that continually threatens to sabotage his well-intentioned 'Project'. He must submit himself to the truth in Ariel's hint that to be fully human is, in the end, to be humane. Eventually Prospero breaks his 'Staff' and drowns his 'Book'; but even then the once and future Duke of Milan leaves us asking if he has really learned all he'll need to

know if he aspires to leave a renewable 'Island' behind him and bequeath a bounteous 'Dukedom' to posterity.

Shortly after he finished *The Tempest*, if not before, Shakespeare appears to have retired from London to New Place, the house he had purchased more than a decade before in his native Stratford. Two years later, when he was back in the capital for an early performance of *Henry VIII*, the final play to bear his name as sole author, he was probably on hand to see 'the great Globe' burn to the ground, leaving 'not a Rack behind'. A year later a second theatre stood on the site its predecessor had occupied, but by 1616 the man who would become renowned as the world's foremost playwright was permanently at rest, in the church where he had been christened a little more than half a century earlier.

Some time prior to 1623, a monument to Shakespeare was placed above his tomb in Holy Trinity Church, and that tribute is still on view today. But of course the poet's greatest memorial is the legacy he left in works that will keep his 'Art' potent forever. In the words and actions that invigorate his poems and plays, in the revivals that enrich our theatres and silver screens, in the offshoots to be enjoyed in the efforts of later writers, and in the influence Shakespeare continues to exercise in one cultural sphere after another, the genius behind *The Tempest* remains a 'brave God' who 'bears celestial Liquor'.

John F. Andrews, 1994

THE TEXT OF THE EVERYMAN SHAKESPEARE

Background

THE EARLY PRINTINGS OF SHAKESPEARE'S WORKS

Many of us enjoy our first encounter with Shakespeare when we're introduced to *Julius Caesar* or *Macbeth* at school. It may therefore surprise us that neither of these tragedies could ever have been read, let alone studied, by most of the playwright's contemporaries. They began as scripts for performance and, along with seventeen other titles that never saw print during Shakespeare's lifetime, they made their inaugural appearance as 'literary' works seven years after his death, in the 1623 collection we know today as the First Folio.

The Folio contained thirty-six titles in all. Of these, half had been issued previously in the small paperbacks we now refer to as quartos.* Like several of the plays first published in the Folio, the most trustworthy of the quarto printings appear to have been set either from Shakespeare's own manuscripts or from faithful copies of them. It's not impossible that the poet himself prepared some of these works for the press, and it's intriguing to imagine him reviewing proof-pages as the words he'd written for actors to speak and embody were being transposed into the type that readers would filter through their eyes, minds, and imaginations. But, alas, there's no indisputable evidence that Shakespeare had any direct involvement with the publication of these early editions of his plays.

What about the scripts that achieved print for the first time in the Folio? Had the dramatist taken any steps to give the permanency of book form to those texts? We don't know. All we

* Quartos derived their name from the four-leaf units of which these small books were comprised: large sheets of paper that had been folded twice after printing to yield four leaves, or eight pages. Folios, volumes with twice the page-size of quartos, were put together from two-leaf units: sheets that had been folded once after printing to yield four pages.