

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

### Life of William Shakespeare

- ❖ William Shakespeare was born on **23rd April 1564** in **Stratford-upon-Avon**, a town in England.
- ❖ He received his early education at **King's New School**, a grammar school in Stratford.
- ❖ He later lived in a house called '**New Place**', one of the largest homes in Stratford.
- ❖ Shakespeare married **Anne Hathaway**, who was eight years older than him.
- ❖ He died on **23rd April 1616**, which was his 52nd birthday.
- ❖ He was buried in the **Holy Trinity Church** in Stratford-upon-Avon, his hometown.
- ❖ Shakespeare lived during a historical period known as the **Age of Shakespeare**, which lasted from **1558 to 1625**.
- ❖ The ruler of England during most of his lifetime was **Queen Elizabeth I**, who reigned from **1558 to 1603**.
- ❖ After her, **King James I** ruled England from **1603 to 1625**.

### Epitaph on Shakespeare's Grave

- ❖ The epitaph on Shakespeare's grave was written by **William Shakespeare himself**.
- ❖ The lines on his grave are:  
*"Good friend for Jesus' sake forbear,  
To dig the dust enclosed here.  
Blessed be the man that spares these stones,  
And cursed be he that moves my bones."*
- ❖ In this epitaph, Shakespeare kindly asks people not to disturb his burial place.
- ❖ He blesses those who respect his grave and warns those who might move his bones.

### Career

- ❖ William Shakespeare was a famous **English poet, playwright, and actor**.
- ❖ He is often called the **Father of English Drama** for his great contribution to English theatre.
- ❖ He is also known as the **Bard of Avon**, because he was from Stratford-upon-Avon.
- ❖ Many people also call him the **National Poet of England**.
- ❖ A writer named **Robert Greene** once insulted Shakespeare by calling him an "**Upstart Crow**" in a pamphlet titled *A Groat'sworth of Wit*, which meant that Shakespeare became famous quickly despite not having a university education.

### Shakespeare's Work in Theatre

- ❖ Shakespeare became a partner in an acting company called **The Lord Chamberlain's Men**.

## **Act IV: Othello's Downfall**

### **Othello's Jealousy Intensifies:**

- ❖ Iago continues to manipulate Othello, who becomes increasingly erratic and violent. He publicly humiliates Desdemona and strikes her.

### **Iago's Further Schemes:**

- ❖ Iago convinces **Roderigo** to kill Cassio, promising that it will clear the way for Roderigo to win Desdemona.
- ❖ Iago also arranges for Othello to overhear a conversation between Cassio and **Bianca** (a prostitute), making it seem like Cassio is mocking Desdemona.

### **Desdemona's Foreboding:**

- ❖ Desdemona senses her impending doom and sings the "**Willow**" song, a mournful tune about lost love.

## **Act V: The Tragic Conclusion**

### **The Ambush:**

- ❖ Roderigo attacks Cassio but is wounded. Iago stabs Cassio and kills Roderigo to cover his tracks. Othello, hearing Cassio's cries, believes Iago has killed Cassio and proceeds to kill Desdemona.

### **Desdemona's Death:**

- ❖ Othello smothers Desdemona in their bed, despite her pleas of innocence. Emilia discovers the murder and exposes Iago's lies.
- ❖ Emilia reveals that she gave the handkerchief to Iago. Othello realizes his mistake and tries to kill Iago but only wounds him. Iago kills Emilia and flees but is captured.

### **Othello's Suicide:**

- ❖ Othello delivers a final speech, lamenting his actions, and stabs himself, dying beside Desdemona.
- ❖ **Lodovico** (a Venetian nobleman) orders Iago's execution and takes control of Cyprus. Cassio is appointed governor, and the play ends with a sense of tragic loss.

## **DETAILED SUMMARY**

### **Act I, Scene 1: The Argument and the Plan**

#### **Roderigo and Iago's Argument:**

- ❖ The play starts with Roderigo, a rich man, arguing with Iago, Othello's ensign (a lower-ranking officer). Roderigo is upset because he's been paying Iago to help him win Desdemona's love, but Desdemona has just married Othello, a general.
- ❖ Iago tells Roderigo that he hates Othello too. The main reason for his hatred is that Othello promoted Cassio, a younger and less experienced man, to the position of

## KING LEAR-SHAKESPEARE

### The date of composition of the play

The date of composition for William Shakespeare's play *King Lear* is generally believed to be around 1605–1606. This estimation is based on a combination of internal and external evidence.

#### Internal Evidence:

1. **Language and Style:** The play's language, themes, and stylistic elements align with Shakespeare's works from the middle of his career, particularly the tragedies written between 1601 and 1608 (e.g., *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *Macbeth*).
2. **References to Contemporary Events:** Some scholars suggest that references to celestial phenomena, such as eclipses, may allude to actual astronomical events in 1605, which were widely discussed at the time.
3. **Themes of Madness and Chaos:** The play's exploration of madness, political instability, and familial betrayal resonates with the anxieties of the early 17th century, particularly during the reign of James I.

#### External Evidence:

1. **Publication Date:** *King Lear* was first published in 1608 in a quarto edition, titled *M. William Shak-speare: His True Chronicle Historie of the life and death of King Lear and his three Daughters*. This suggests the play was written shortly before its publication.
2. **Performance Records:** The play was performed at court on December 26, 1606, as recorded in the *Stationers' Register*. This performance confirms that the play was written by that date.
3. **Source Material:** Shakespeare's play is based on an older play, *The True Chronicle History of King Leir*, which was published in 1605. Shakespeare likely wrote his version shortly after encountering this source.
4. **Mention in Contemporary Works:** The play is not mentioned in Francis Meres' *Palladis Tamia* (1598), a work that lists many of Shakespeare's earlier plays, suggesting it was written after 1598.

### The source of the play

#### The True Chronicle History of King Leir (1594)

- ❖ An anonymous play titled *The True Chronicle History of King Leir and His Three Daughters* was published in 1605 but performed earlier.
- ❖ It tells the story of Leir and his daughters but has a **happy ending**, unlike Shakespeare's tragic version.
- ❖ Shakespeare borrowed the main plot but added elements like the storm scene, the Fool, and the tragic ending.

- ❖ **Goneril** – Lear’s eldest daughter. Ambitious and deceitful, she flatters Lear to gain power, then betrays him.
- ❖ **Regan** – Lear’s middle daughter. Cruel and manipulative like Goneril; together they conspire against Lear.

### **The Gloucester Family**

- ❖ **Earl of Gloucester** – A loyal nobleman who suffers parallel misfortunes to Lear. He is deceived by Edmund and later blinded.
- ❖ **Edgar** – Gloucester’s legitimate son. Noble and loyal, he disguises himself as “Poor Tom” to survive and protect his father.
- ❖ **Edmund** – Gloucester’s illegitimate son. Intelligent, cunning, and villainous, he manipulates others for power and betrays his family.

### **Other Important Characters**

- ❖ **Earl of Kent** – Loyal to Lear, even after being banished. He disguises himself as "Caius" to continue serving the king.
- ❖ **The Fool** – Lear’s loyal jester. He offers wisdom through riddles and songs, and acts as Lear’s conscience.
- ❖ **Duke of Albany** – Goneril’s husband. Initially passive, but later opposes the cruelty of his wife and her allies.
- ❖ **Duke of Cornwall** – Regan’s husband. Violent and cruel, he helps persecute Gloucester and blinds him.
- ❖ **Duke of Burgundy** – A suitor for Cordelia who withdraws when she loses her dowry.
- ❖ **King of France** – Cordelia’s suitor who marries her for love, not wealth, and supports her cause.
- ❖ **Oswald** – Goneril’s steward. Arrogant and loyal to his mistress, he acts as a messenger and accomplice in her schemes.
- ❖ **Curan** – A minor character; a courtier of Gloucester who spreads news and rumors.
- ❖ **First Servant** – A servant of Cornwall who courageously intervenes when Cornwall blinds Gloucester, wounding Cornwall before being killed.

## **PLOT SUMMARY**

### **Act I: The Division of the Kingdom**

- ❖ **Lear’s Decision:** King Lear, an aging monarch, decides to divide his kingdom among his three daughters – Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia – based on their declarations of love for him.
- ❖ **Goneril and Regan’s Flattery:** The two older daughters, Goneril and Regan, deliver exaggerated speeches of love to win their father’s favor.

3. **Tricking Edgar:** Edmund then talks to Edgar and warns him that their father is **very angry** with him for some reason. He advises Edgar to **avoid Gloucester** and always carry a **sword** for protection. This sets up a situation where Gloucester might see Edgar with a weapon and think he's trying to kill him.
- ❖ Edmund's plan is **clever** and **evil**. He manipulates both his father and his brother to turn them against each other, all so he can gain **power** and **wealth**.

### Act 1, Scene 3: Goneril's Disrespect

- ❖ Meanwhile, **King Lear** is staying at the castle of his eldest daughter, **Goneril**, as part of his retirement plan. However, Goneril is already **fed up** with her father. She complains to her **steward, Oswald**, about Lear and his **knights**. She says the knights are becoming **rowdy** and **disrespectful**, and Lear himself is a **difficult guest**.
- ❖ Goneril decides to take action to **humiliate** Lear and reduce his authority. She orders her servants to treat Lear and his knights **rudely** and to **ignore his commands**. This is a **bold move** because it shows that Goneril no longer respects her father and is willing to **undermine him** in his own home.

### Act 1, Scene 4

#### Kent Returns in Disguise:

- ❖ **Kent**, who was banished by Lear in Act 1, Scene 1, returns to serve the king. He disguises himself as a **peasant** named **Caius**.
- ❖ Kent approaches Lear and convinces him to take him into service by emphasizing his **honesty** and **loyalty**. Lear, unaware that Caius is actually Kent, agrees.

#### Disrespect from Goneril's Servants:

- ❖ Lear begins to notice that **Goneril's servants** are no longer obeying him or his knights. This is part of Goneril's plan to **undermine** her father's authority.
- ❖ When Lear asks **Oswald**, Goneril's steward, where Goneril is, Oswald is **rude** and walks away without answering. Oswald returns later but continues to **disrespect** Lear, prompting the king to **strike him**.
- ❖ **Kent** (still disguised as Caius) steps in to help Lear and **trips Oswald**, showing his loyalty to the king.

#### The Fool's Warnings:

- ❖ **The Fool**, a court jester, arrives and uses **puns, jokes**, and **riddles** to criticize Lear's decision to give up his power to Goneril and Regan. The Fool tells Lear that he has made a **huge mistake** and that his daughters will not treat him well.

#### Goneril's Confrontation:

- ❖ After a long wait, **Goneril** finally appears. She tells Lear that his knights and servants have been **disorderly** and **disruptive**. She demands that he **reduce the number of his**

## THE TEMPEST - WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The date of composition for **William Shakespeare's** *The Tempest* is generally believed to be **1610-1611**. This estimation is based on a combination of **external evidence** (historical records and references) and **internal evidence** (themes, style, and textual clues within the play itself).

### External Evidence

#### First Performance Records:

- ❖ *The Tempest* was first performed at court on **November 1, 1611**, as recorded in the *Revels Accounts*. This provides a clear *terminus ad quem* (latest possible date) for its composition.

#### Publication of Source Material:

- ❖ Shakespeare likely drew inspiration from several sources, including:
  - ❖ **William Strachey's** *A True Reportory of the Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates* (1610), which describes the shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* in Bermuda in 1609.
  - ❖ **Sylvester Jourdain's** *A Discovery of the Bermudas* (1610), another account of the same event.
  - ❖ **Montaigne's** *Essays* (translated into English in 1603), particularly the essay "*Of the Cannibals*," which influenced Gonzalo's speech about an ideal society.
- ❖ These sources suggest the play was written after 1610.

#### Mention in the Stationers' Register:

- ❖ *The Tempest* was entered into the **Stationers' Register** (a record of works intended for publication) on **November 8, 1623**, as part of the **First Folio**, the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays.

#### The King's Men and Court Performances:

- ❖ The play's themes of **magic, reconciliation**, and **colonialism** align with the interests of **King James I**, who was the patron of Shakespeare's acting company, the **King's Men**. The play's emphasis on harmony and order may reflect the political climate of the time.

### Internal Evidence

#### Themes and Tone:

- ❖ *The Tempest* is often considered Shakespeare's **farewell to the stage**, as it deals with themes of **forgiveness, art**, and **retirement**. This suggests it was written toward the end of Shakespeare's career, likely around 1610-1611.

- ❖ **Alonso** is overwhelmed with **guilt and despair**. Hearing Prospero's name makes him believe Ferdinand is dead, and he runs off to **drown himself**.
- ❖ **Sebastian and Antonio** decide to **chase and fight the spirits**.
- ❖ **Gonzalo**, the voice of reason, tells the other lords to follow Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio to stop them from doing something **reckless**.

#### Act IV, scene i

##### Prospero's Blessing and Warning

- ❖ **Prospero** gives his **blessing** to **Ferdinand** and **Miranda** but warns Ferdinand not to break Miranda's "**virgin-knot**" before their wedding.
- ❖ **Ferdinand** promises to respect Prospero's wishes.
- ❖ Prospero calls **Ariel** and asks him to summon **spirits** to perform a **masque** (a festive performance) for Ferdinand and Miranda.

##### The Masque of the Spirits

- ❖ Three spirits appear as **mythological figures**: **Juno** (queen of the gods), **Iris** (Juno's messenger and goddess of the rainbow), and **Ceres** (goddess of agriculture).
- ❖ **Iris** calls **Ceres** to celebrate the "**contract of true love**" between Ferdinand and Miranda.
- ❖ **Juno** and **Ceres** bless the couple:
  - **Juno** wishes them **honor and riches**.
  - **Ceres** wishes them **natural prosperity and plenty**.
- ❖ **Ferdinand** is amazed by the spectacle and says he would like to live on the island forever, with Prospero as his father and Miranda as his wife.
- ❖ **Juno** and **Ceres** send **Iris** to fetch **nymphs and reapers** for a **country dance**.

##### Prospero's Sudden Anger

- ❖ Just as the dance begins, **Prospero** suddenly remembers **Caliban's plot** to kill him.
- ❖ He becomes angry and sends the spirits away, interrupting the masque.
- ❖ **Ferdinand** and **Miranda** are alarmed by Prospero's anger, but he reassures them, saying his reaction is due to his age and that a walk will calm him.
- ❖ Prospero gives a short speech about the **masque**, saying the world is as **insubstantial as a play** and that humans are "**such stuff / As dreams are made on.**"

##### Prospero and Ariel's Plan

- ❖ After Ferdinand and Miranda leave, **Prospero** summons **Ariel**.
- ❖ Prospero scolds Ariel for not reminding him about **Caliban's plot** earlier.
- ❖ **Ariel** explains that he led **Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo** through **rough briars** and into a **filthy pond**.
- ❖ Prospero thanks Ariel and sets a **trap** for the three conspirators.

## Act 1, Scene 2: Claudio's Arrest and the Brothel Scandal

- ❖ **Lucio**, a lively and talkative man, is chatting with two **gentlemen** about recent events. They joke about the Duke's trip to Hungary and the peace agreement being proposed between Hungary and Vienna.
  - The gentlemen, who are soldiers, don't like the idea of peace because they prefer war.
  - Lucio makes a joke, comparing the soldiers to pirates who ignore rules like "Thou Shalt Not Steal."
- ❖ As they continue joking about diseases, **Mistress Overdone**, the owner of a brothel, arrives and tells them that **Claudio** has been arrested for getting his fiancée, **Juliet**, pregnant.
- ❖ **Pompey**, a funny and clever pimp, tells Mistress Overdone more details:
  - Claudio has been taken to prison for having sex before marriage and will be executed.
  - The government has ordered all brothels in the "red-light district" to be shut down, but brothels in the city will stay open because a rich investor is protecting them.
  - Mistress Overdone worries about her business, but Pompey assures her she'll always have customers.
- ❖ Claudio is brought in by the **Provost**, the prison officer, who says he's just following Angelo's orders.
- ❖ Claudio explains to Lucio that he and Juliet were planning to marry but had sex before the wedding. Now, under Angelo's strict new laws, this is a crime punishable by death.
  - Claudio says his intentions were honorable, but Juliet's family didn't approve of their relationship, so they kept it secret.
  - He thinks Angelo is being harsh to prove himself as a strong leader.
- ❖ Lucio suggests Claudio ask the Duke for help, but Claudio says no one knows where the Duke is.
- ❖ Claudio asks Lucio to find his sister, **Isabella**, who has just become a nun, and ask her to plead with Angelo to spare his life.

## Act 1, Scene 3: The Duke's Secret Plan

- ❖ The **Duke** goes to a monastery and asks **Friar Thomas**, a monk, to hide him there.
- ❖ He explains that he lied to Angelo about where he was going and has good reasons for hiding.
- ❖ The Duke tells Friar Thomas that Vienna's laws have been ignored for the past 14 years, and people no longer respect the government.
  - He compares the situation to a baby hitting its nurse, meaning the people have become too bold because the laws weren't enforced.

- Escalus threatens to torture the “Friar” for slandering Angelo.
- ❖ **Lucio** accuses the “Friar” of insulting the Duke and pulls off his hood, revealing the Duke underneath.

### **The Duke’s Judgment and Resolution**

#### **Angelo’s Confession and Sentence**

- ❖ The Duke, now revealed, asks **Angelo** if he has anything to say in his defense.
  - Angelo confesses to his crimes and asks for a death sentence.
- ❖ The Duke sentences Angelo to **marry Mariana** instead of being executed.

#### **Isabella’s Shame and the Duke’s Explanation**

- ❖ The Duke calls **Isabella** forward, and she expresses shame for asking him for help.
  - The Duke explains that he couldn’t reveal his identity earlier and that **Claudio’s death** happened sooner than expected.
  - He claims Claudio is now in a better place (heaven).
- ❖ On Isabella’s behalf, the Duke orders Angelo to be executed as punishment for Claudio’s death.

#### **Mariana’s Plea for Angelo**

- ❖ **Mariana** is horrified and begs the Duke not to make her a widow.
  - She asks for Angelo to be pardoned, saying everyone has faults.
- ❖ **Isabella** kneels and joins Mariana in pleading for Angelo’s life.
  - She argues that Angelo meant well in his efforts to clean up the city.

#### **The Duke’s Investigation and Claudio’s Reveal**

- ❖ The Duke questions the **Provost** about why Claudio was executed at an unusual hour.
  - He fires the Provost for following private orders but changes his mind when the Provost explains he saved **Barnardine**.
- ❖ The Provost brings out Barnardine and a muffled prisoner who looks like Claudio.
  - When the muffled man is unveiled, it is revealed to be **Claudio**, alive and well.
- ❖ The Duke pardons Claudio and tells Isabella her brother is free.

#### **The Duke’s Proposal to Isabella**

- ❖ The Duke asks **Isabella** to marry him as a reward for freeing her brother.
  - Before she can answer, he turns to **Lucio** and orders him to marry the woman he impregnated (**Kate Keepdown**).
- ❖ The Duke concludes by saying everyone should live happily ever after.
  - He tells Isabella, “What’s mine is yours, and what’s yours is mine,” implying they will share everything as husband and wife.

### **Quotes**

#### **1. Duke, Act 1, Scene 1**

- ❖ **Quote:** "Mortality and mercy in Vienna / Live in thy tongue and heart."

## SONNET 29

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,  
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
(Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth) sings hymns at heaven's gate;  
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

### SUMMARY

#### Feeling Despair

The speaker begins by describing a time when he feels out of favor with both fortune and people. He feels alone and abandoned, weeping over his miserable state. He cries out to the heavens, but his cries seem useless and unanswered. He looks at himself and curses his fate, feeling trapped in a life that brings him little joy or hope.

#### Envy and Regret

In his despair, the speaker begins to wish that he were like someone else – someone who is more fortunate, with a life full of hope, wealth, and friends. He envies those who have qualities he lacks, such as the talents of one person or the opportunities of another. The speaker feels discontent with the things he most enjoys and almost despises himself for feeling this way.

#### Turning to Love for Comfort

However, the speaker's mood changes when he thinks of the person he loves. Suddenly, his despair lifts. He compares his feelings to a lark, a bird that rises from the dark, damp earth at dawn, singing happily as it soars toward heaven. This thought of the beloved fills him with joy and lifts his spirit, turning his sorrow into happiness.

#### The Power of Love