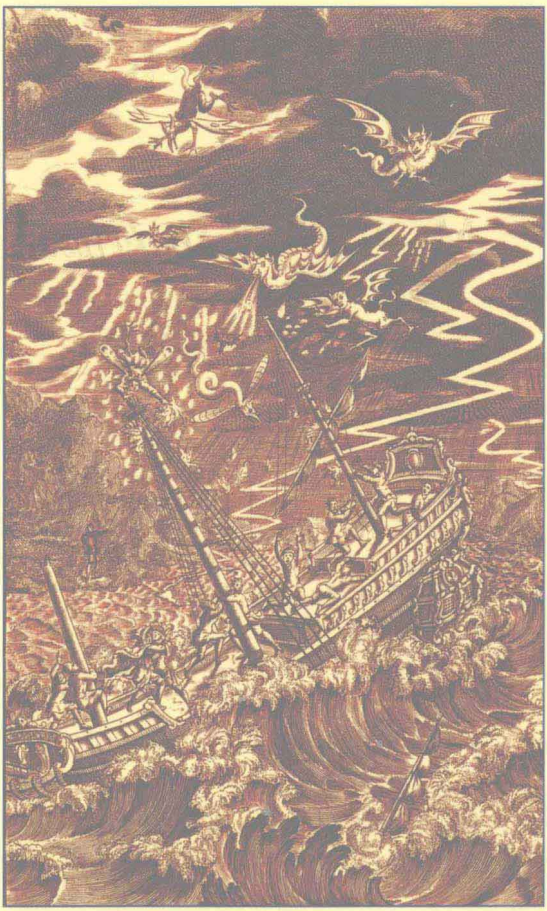
THE TEMPEST

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



EDITED BY PETER HULME AND
WILLIAM H. SHERMAN

A NORTON CRITICAL EDITION

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THE TEMPEST

AN AUTHORITATIVE TEXT
SOURCES AND CONTEXTS
CRITICISM
REWRITINGS AND APPROPRIATIONS

Edited by

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UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
AND
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UNIVERSITY OF YORK

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Preface

The earliest recorded performance of *The Tempest* was at court, before King James, on "Hallomas nyght" (November 1), 1611. A year and a half later, on May 20, 1613, the play was performed again for the King, during the festivities leading up to the marriage of his daughter. The play was probably also performed for a wider public by the company formed under the patronage of King James, the King's Men—either indoors at the Blackfriars Theatre or outdoors at The Globe. But the text's first appearance in print (as with roughly half of Shakespeare's plays) was seven years after Shakespeare's death, when it was published as the opening title in the First Folio of 1623.

This privileged position has given weight to *The Tempest*'s status as Shakespeare's swan song. Although Shakespeare had a major hand in at least two plays after this one (*Henry VIII* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*), and although scholars now tend to be suspicious of simplistic identifications between Prospero and Shakespeare (making the former's renunciation of illusions and charms the latter's farewell to the stage), the play's position as both a crowning and an inaugural work is entirely appropriate. *The Tempest* offers some of Shakespeare's most profound meditations on the cycles of life, shuttling between a sense of an ending and a sense of a beginning, and culminating in a potent (and potentially unstable) mixture of death and regeneration, bondage and release.

The editors of the First Folio divided Shakespeare's plays into three generic groupings—comedies, histories, and tragedies. They placed *The Tempest* in the first of these categories, but few modern readers have been entirely content to leave it there. The play shares some of the otherworldly setting and romantic playfulness of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and it moves, like other Shakespearean comedies, toward reconciliation and marriage; but the seriousness of its tone, the suffering experienced by all of the play's characters, and the presence of themes such as exile, enslavement, and mortality have led many modern critics to label it a tragicomedy or to group it with Shakespeare's other late plays in a special category called the "romance."

In most of Shakespeare's plays the plot is adapted from readily identifiable historical or literary texts. No such source has been identified for the story of *The Tempest*, but the search has turned up echoes of a wide range of texts, including Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Montaigne's essay "Of the Cannibals," and one or more of the contemporary accounts of the shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* on the coast of

Bermuda in July 1609. The only accepted source for a name in the play is for Caliban's "dam's god, Setebos" (1.2.372), who is borrowed from Antonio Pigafetta's account of Magellan's circumnavigation of the world, in which Setebos is named among the gods of the Patagonians. But echoes have been heard from the Bible (particularly Isaiah XXIX), earlier plays featuring magicians (especially Friar Bacon and Doctor Faustus), histories of Renaissance Italy, and prose romances from Italy, France, and Spain (which often featured shipwrecks, sorcerers, monsters, and long-deferred marriages between knights and maidens).

Similarly, alongside the clear responses to and rewritings of *The Tempest*, a number of texts written by Shakespeare's contemporaries seem to contain echoes of the play, as when Samuel Purchas writes in the 1620s about the native conspiracies against the English colonists in Virginia, or Gabriel Naudé writes in the 1630s about the theatrical exercise of political power. A selection of these materials—few of which can count as indisputable sources, but all of which cast light on the play—is featured in "Sources and Contexts," providing some sense of the contemporary discourses that *The Tempest* was informed by (and that it, in turn, helped to shape). These texts are here divided into three overlapping subsections, "Magic and Witchcraft," "Religion and Politics," and "Geography and Travel."

It is the last of these that is immediately invoked by the play's title and opening scene, and that accounts for some of its exploratory themes and nautical language: the plot of *The Tempest* begins with a dramatic storm that wrecks a ship off the coast of an "uninhabited island." We find out in 1.2 that the island is, in fact, inhabited by as strange a cast of characters as can be found in any Renaissance play. Some twelve years before the play begins, the Italian magician Prospero had been the legitimate Duke of Milan; but by withdrawing into his studies and turning over the ducal duties to his ambitious brother Antonio, he lost power in a coup d'etat—the reversal of which provides the central plot for the play. Prospero was put to sea with his young daughter Miranda, some basic provisions, and at least some of the books from his precious library ("volumes that / I prize above my dukedom"). Their little boat took them to the island where the play is set, and which the geographical references in the text seem to place in both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic: the course being followed by the entourage of Alonso after the celebration of his daughter Claribel's wedding to the King of Tunis is back across the Mediterranean toward his kingdom of Naples, but Ariel refers to the Bermudas and the word Setebos comes from Patagonia.

Prospero and Miranda are attended by two characters who were already on the island when they arrived—their servant Caliban and the spirit Ariel. We are told by Prospero and Ariel that Caliban had been brought to the island by his now-dead mother, the Algerian witch Sycorax (who had herself been exiled to the island, spared from execution because of her pregnancy), and, after an attempted rape of Miranda, he had been confined to a rock and forced to gather fuel for Prospero's fire. Caliban's appearance is one of the most enigmatic aspects of the

play: in this and the following scenes he is described by various characters as "earth," "tortoise," "hag-seed," "fish," "monster," "moon-calf," "puppy-headed," "misshapen," and a "thing of darkness," but he also speaks some of the most beautiful lines in the play and in several places is acknowledged as having human features, feelings, and aspirations. Ariel is also in the service of Prospero, who freed him from the tree in which he was imprisoned by Sycorax. Prospero has promised him (or her, as Ariel is often played) that if he performs all of his magical commands for the duration of the play, he will earn his freedom and return to the elements.

If Prospero's books are the cause of his banishment, they are also the source of the power he uses to overcome it: he raises the storm in order to bring to the island the Italian noblemen who had deposed him and forced him from Milan. The first member of the wedding party encountered by Prospero and Miranda is Alonso's son Ferdinand, the young prince of Naples, who believes himself to be the sole survivor of the shipwreck. According to Prospero's plan, he falls in love with Miranda at first sight. One plotline follows their brief courtship (in the play's central scene, 3.1); the action of the play is brought to a climax with their betrothal in 4.1 and presentation to Alonso and the other courtiers in 5.1.

In 2.1 we are introduced to the rest of the wedding party—notably Gonzalo (the old and noble councillor), Antonio (Prospero's usurping brother), and Sebastian (Alonso's younger brother). While the exhausted King and courtiers sleep, Antonio tries to persuade Sebastian to murder the King and, like himself, take over his brother's role—but Prospero, through Ariel, prevents this first of two conspiracies in the play. The other conspiracy is hatched by Caliban, who (in 2.2 and 3.2) encourages the jester Trinculo and the butler Stephano to seize control of the island from Prospero by killing the magical tyrant, burning his books, and taking his daughter as their queen. For their part, Stephano and Trinculo are more interested in the alcohol they have managed to rescue from the ship, and their mock-conspiracy (along with Caliban's dreams of freedom) degenerates into drunken banter. In 3.2 they are led off by an invisible Ariel and his music.

In 3.3 the busy Ariel arranges for an edifying (and mystifying) dumb show, which presents the hungry courtiers with the image of a feast before snatching it away and chastising them for their wrongs. While they are wandering in despair, Prospero (in 4.1) takes the opportunity to unite Miranda and Ferdinand and celebrates their engagement with a masque featuring the goddesses Iris, Juno, and Ceres. Suddenly remembering the threat of Caliban and his co-conspirators, Prospero breaks off the show and delivers the play's most famous speech ("Our revels now are ended").

Having foiled Caliban's conspiracy by tempting Trinculo and Stephano with gaudy clothing, Ariel and his spirits chase them through a filthy swamp. In the play's final act, Prospero resolves to give up his magic and, once the King's ship is safely on its way back to Italy, to grant Ariel his freedom and turn his own thoughts to preparing for

death. The King and his courtiers are reunited with Ferdinand and his future princess—and queen—Miranda. Ariel returns the ship and the mariners, miraculously restored, and after general statements of apology and forgiveness, the Italians prepare for their departure while Prospero (in a brief epilogue) asks for the audience's applause.

The Tempest is, after *The Comedy of Errors*, Shakespeare's shortest play, and it is full of loose ends and open questions. Where (indeed, what) is the island on which the play is set? How are we supposed to feel toward Caliban? What are we to make of the play's absent women? What happens to the balance of power at the end of the play, as the ship prepares to return to Milan? And what is the source of Prospero's power? Does it derive from his study of the "liberal arts" and the books from his library that he took into exile? From his magical book, robe, and staff, and the assistance of Ariel and other supernatural spirits? From his ability (like Shakespeare's) to enchant an audience with words and images? Or from his tyrannical control over those he has placed in a position of weakness?

The range and openness of these questions has guaranteed a long and lively critical history, reflected in the section called "Criticism," which contains material from four centuries and includes such notable literary figures as Dryden, Coleridge, and Henry James. Over the last fifty years *The Tempest* has been at the heart of critical debates about matters as diverse as postcolonialism, textual editing, and Renaissance magic, all of which are discussed in the latter part of the "Criticism" section.[1]

The universality of *The Tempest*'s relationships (father and daughter, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, king and subject, master and servant, colonizer and colonized) have helped make it one of the most adaptable texts of the entire literary canon, and it has been reread and rewritten more radically than any other of Shakespeare's works. The play has in fact been adapted from the outset, and the text as we now know it has only been used on stage for just over half of its existence. The section "Rewritings and Appropriations" offers extracts from some of the earliest theatrical responses by Shakespeare's contemporaries or near-contemporaries that imitate or parody aspects of *The Tempest*, as well as from Dryden and Davenant's 1667 adaptation for the Restoration theater, *The Enchanted Island*, which displaced the version printed in Shakespeare's First Folio (and itself became the subject of imitation and parody). In addition, we offer representative examples of the astonishing array of altered forms—including burlesque, comic opera, and postcolonial appropriation—in which the play has continued to appear.

The play's interest in magical illusions and musical charms and its physical and psychological struggles in remote locations are some of the factors that have made it attractive to filmmakers. It provided the plot for the pioneering science-fiction film *Forbidden Planet* (1956),

1. A thorough overview of critical approaches to *The Tempest* is Patrick M. Murphy, "Interpreting *The Tempest*: A History of Its Readings," in *The Tempest: Critical Essays*, ed. Patrick M. Murphy (New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 3–72.

which featured the first completely electronic score in cinematic history, and it was filmed as *Prospero's Books* by Peter Greenaway in 1991. This section concludes with Greenaway's fantastic list of the twenty-four books that Prospero might have taken to his island—and that served, literally or metaphorically, as the source of his power.

As a play that foregrounds the power of books, *The Tempest* has been an enduring source of inspiration and provocation to contemporary writers working in a wide range of genres and styles. Novels and longer narrative poems are difficult to excerpt, so here we merely gesture toward them with the opening and closing sections of Robert Browning's "Caliban upon Setebos"; but within the lyric tradition, Shelley, Rilke, and many others have given new voice to the play's characters in their meditations on the music of the theatrical island, the power of language, and the ends of art. Contemporary authors have been drawn less to Prospero than to Ariel and Caliban; some—like contemporary critics—have also been fascinated by the shadowy presence of Sycorax, Claribel, and Setebos, who never appear on stage. Ted Hughes's corruscating use of the whole range of the play's characters to relate the story of his marriage provides a dramatic and powerful conclusion to this section.

The editors would like to thank the authors of several of the pieces included in this volume for either suggesting ways of editing their material or allowing the editors a free hand in doing so. Particular thanks go to George Lamming, Barbara Mowat, Stephen Orgel, John Gillies, and Leah Marcus. We would also like to thank Susan Forsyth for her assistance with securing permissions for reprinted materials. Finally, we regret that the fees requested by some publishers put a few crucial essays and rewritings out of our (and your) reach.

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The Tempest

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IRIS, CERES, JUNO, NYMPHS, REAPERS } [presented by] spirits

THE SCENE: An uninhabited island

2. Alonso: As King of Naples he controls the large area of southern Italy that in Shakespeare's time was controlled by Spain.
3. Sebastian: second in line to the throne of Naples after Ferdinand.
4. Prospero: an Italian word meaning favorable or propitious. He is the "right," that is legitimate, Duke of Milan (pronounced throughout the play with the accent on the first syllable). Milan was one of the most powerful states in Renaissance Italy, but it was taken over first by France and then by Spain.
5. Antonio: As Prospero explains in 1.2, he had usurped Prospero's dukedom twelve years earlier.
6. Ferdinand: heir to the throne of Naples.
7. Gonzalo: gives advice (counsel) to his king.
9. Caliban: often considered an anagram of "canibal."
10. Trinculo: a name probably derived from the Italian *trincare*, to drink. He is a jester, a fool employed by the royal house for entertainment.
12. The Master: the ship's captain.
13. The Boatswain: pronounced "bosun"; he is in charge of the ship's rigging and anchors and acts as intermediary between the Master and the sailors.
15. Miranda: a word derived from the Latin verb *miror*, meaning "she who is to be wondered at or admired." She is next in line to Prospero's dukedom.
16. Ariel: a word glossed in the Geneva Bible as "lion of God," but which probably just denotes "airiness."

Act 1, Scene 1

[*On a ship at sea.*] *A tempestuous noise of thunder and lightning heard. Enter a* SHIPMASTER *and a* BOATSWAIN.

MASTER Boatswain!

BOATSWAIN Here Master. What cheer?

MASTER Good, speak to th' mariners. Fall to't yarely, or we run ourselves aground. Bestir, bestir! *Exit.*

Enter MARINERS.

BOATSWAIN Heigh, my hearts! Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts! Yare, yare! Take in the topsail. Tend to th' Master's whistle. [*To the storm*] Blow till thou burst thy wind, if room enough!

Enter ALONSO, SEBASTIAN, ANTONIO, FERDINAND, GONZALO, *and others.*

ALONSO Good Boatswain, have care. Where's the Master? Play the men!

BOATSWAIN I pray now, keep below.

ANTONIO Where is the Master, Boatswain?

BOATSWAIN Do you not hear him? You mar our labor. Keep your cabins: you do assist the storm!

GONZALO Nay, good, be patient.

BOATSWAIN When the sea is. Hence! What cares these roarers for the name of king? To cabin! Silence! Trouble us not.

GONZALO Good, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

BOATSWAIN None that I more love than myself. You are a councillor: if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more—use your authority. If you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap. [*To the mariners*]

3. Good: good fellow; **yarely**: quickly.
5. hearts: hearties.
6. Take . . . topsail: the first stage in reducing the ship's speed; **Tend:** attend. Both Master and Boatswain would convey orders by means of a whistle.
7–8. Blow . . . enough: Blow as hard as you like, as long as we have room between the ship and the rocks. Winds were often pictured as faces with puffed cheeks.
10. Play the men!: either (to the mariners) "Act like men!" or (to the Boatswain) "Ply the men!" that is, put them to work.
15. good: my good man; **patient:** composed.
16. cares: a plural subject with a singular form of the verb was a common formulation in the period; **roarers:** roaring winds and waves, with a metaphoric link to social disorder ("roaring boys" were riotous young men).
21. work . . . present: bring peace to the present turmoil; **hand:** handle.
24. hap: happen.

Cheerly, good hearts! [*To the courtiers*] Out of our way, I say!
Exit [*Boatswain with mariners*].

GONZALO I have great comfort from this fellow. Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him; his complexion is perfect gallows. Stand fast, good Fate, to his hanging; make the rope of his destiny our cable, for our own doth little advantage. If he be not born to be hanged, our case is miserable.
Exit [*with courtiers*].

Enter BOATSWAIN.

BOATSWAIN Down with the topmast! Yare! Lower, lower! Bring her to try with main-course. (*A cry within.*) A plague upon this howling! They are louder than the weather or our office.

Enter SEBASTIAN, ANTONIO, *and* GONZALO.

Yet again? What do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

SEBASTIAN A pox o' your throat, you bawling, blasphemous, incharitable dog!

BOATSWAIN Work you, then.

ANTONIO Hang, cur, hang, you whoreson insolent noise-maker! We are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.

GONZALO I'll warrant him from drowning, though the ship were no stronger than a nutshell and as leaky as an unstanched wench.

BOATSWAIN Lay her a-hold, a-hold! Set her two courses. Off to sea again! Lay her off!

Enter MARINERS *wet.*

MARINERS All lost! To prayers, to prayers! All lost!
[*Exit mariners in confusion.*]

BOATSWAIN What, must our mouths be cold?

26. Methinks: it seems to me.
26–28. he . . . gallows: The proverb was "He that is born to be hanged will never be drowned."
27. complexion: appearance; temperament.
29. doth little advantage: is of little use.
31–32. Bring . . . try: move forward tentatively under minimum sail; **main-course:** mainsail.
34. office: (the noise we make at) our work.
35. give o'er: stop working.
37. blasphemous: Unless some original blasphemy was cut from the Boatswain's speech, this simply implies "abusive" or "disrespectful."
42. warrant . . . drowning: guarantee he'll never drown.
43–44. leaky . . . wench: The phrase may refer to a menstruating woman, with the flow of blood unstopped; but *leaky* could also mean sexually insatiable.
45–46. Lay . . . off: bring the ship close toward the wind by setting foresail and mainsail (the two *courses*), then take her out to sea.
48. must . . . cold? must we die?