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Cathie Brettschneider
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Dear Cathie,

Here is the scaled down version of the manuscript. I've been able to make considerable cuts in the manuscript starting with Chapter 37, in which I go through all of the 36 plays in the First Folio. It's a long chapter, but I've revised the Table of Contents and provided page numbers for each of the plays.

As you will see, by bringing all of the First Folio plays into Chapter 37, I've been able to eliminate chapters 40-50. Chapters 49 and 50 in the original version are now Chapters 38 and 39. If you think I've cut too much, please let me know.

As for getting scholars to read the manuscript, I recommend that you contact Harold Bloom at Yale University. I don't know him personally and have never met him, but I've quoted him in the book. I shall try to find others whom you may want to contact.

Meanwhile, I hope you enjoyed Michael Rubbo's video and Hoffman's book.

Please let me know what more I can do to facilitate your efforts.

I trust you had a good Christmas holiday, and hope that 2007 will be a great year for both of us.

With warmest regards,

Sam

We believe we know who wrote the poems and plays attributed to the man from Stratford on Avon.

It was Christopher Marlowe, the brilliant poet-playwright, who was supposedly killed in 1593.

But the startling truth is that he was not killed!

The "murder" was an ingenious plot by the most powerful men in Queen Elizabeth's government to save the great poet from certain execution.

This book is the dramatic story of how all of this came about. It is a detective story that sifts through all of the historical evidence available in order to get at the truth.

The mystery has been solved!

About the Author

Samuel L. Blumenfeld

I first became aware of the Shakespeare authorship controversy back in 1960 when I first met Calvin Hoffman, author of The Murder of the Man Who Was Shakespeare. At the time, I was editor of the Universal Library, a line of quality paperback reprints at Grosset & Dunlap. Hoffman had submitted his book as a potential reprint.

Like so many college-educated individuals, I assumed that Shakespeare's authorship had been established on very solid ground, with plenty of documentation. After all, there were a half-dozen fat biographies of Shakespeare in the libraries which seemed to indicate that there was no question as to who actually wrote the world's greatest plays.

Hoffman's book opened my eyes. Suddenly I realized that there was indeed a problem about the authorship of the plays and poems attributed to Man from Stratford. There were theories that the plays were written by the Earl of Oxford or by Francis Bacon. But Hoffman's book was the first to advance the thesis that Marlowe was the actual author. And it made a great deal of sense to me.

We reprinted Hoffman's book, which had originally been published by Julian Messner in 1955. I added a new Introduction and additional material that Hoffman had gathered in his pursuit of the truth.

How Hoffman came to believe that Marlowe was the true author is an interesting story. He had spent years reading both Marlowe and Shakespeare, and he found so many echoes of Marlowe in Shakespeare that he created a list of Parallelisms, that is, lines in Shakespeare that matched lines in Marlowe. But the big stumbling block in all of this was the historical record that Marlowe had been murdered in 1593 and therefore could not have possibly written the plays attributed to Shakespeare.

But then he began to investigate the details of the so-called murder and came to the conclusion that a murder had been faked to allow Marlowe to escape possible hanging for offenses he was accused of by the government. Another body had been substituted for Marlowe, and that body was the subject of the coroner's inquest that "proved" that Marlowe was dead. Indeed, there is a scene in Measure for Measure in which a similar body substitution takes place.

After the reprint was published, Hoffman and his wife retired to Florida, and I left the publishing business and moved to Boston. There I went to work for an

industrial publication, visiting plants, writing articles, attending industrial exhibitions.

In 1970, I decided that I wanted to write books. I quit the industrial magazine and got in touch with Neil McCaffrey, an editor I had met in my New York days, who had started his own publishing company, Arlington House. He asked me if I'd be interested in writing a book about how to start a private school. I said yes, and so my first book, *How to Start Your Own Private School*, was written and published.

After that, I wrote three other books for Neil: *The New Illiterates, How to Tutor,* and *The Retreat from Motherhood.* My next book, *Is Public Education Necessary?*, was published in 1981 by Devin-Adair. Fortune Magazine called it "brilliant revisionist history." By then, I had developed into an expert on matters of literacy, education and schooling. My next book, published in 1984, *NEA: Trojan Horse in American Education,* sold over 65,000 copies.

For the next few years I wrote a newsletter on education and did a great deal of lecturing. In 1996, my latest book on the literacy crisis, *The Whole Language/OBE Fraud,* was published. In 1997, *Homeschooling: A Parents Guide to Teaching Children,* was published by the Carol Publishing Group. As you can see, I have been dealing with controversy for a very long time.

However, I never lost interest in the Marlowe-Shakespeare story. Three years ago I began to seriously think of writing a book on the subject and began doing extensive research. There is now much more material available than there was when Hoffman wrote his book, which has been out of print for many years. At the moment, the Oxfordians are on center stage, with articles appearing in various magazines. The magazines have been inundated by letters from readers, indicating an intense interest in the subject of authorship.

The book I am proposing, as yet untitled, has enormous potential: first as a magazine article, then as a book, then a book-club selection, then a stage adaptation very much like Amadeus, then a screenplay, then a fabulous motion picture that will vie for an Oscar.

What I need is an editor and publisher who see the potential in this project as a worldwide blockbuster, with translations in other languages, and a motion picture with universal interest.

My address is: 73 Bishops Forest Drive, Waltham, MA 02452, 781-899-6468. Email address: slblu@netway.com.

1 Servant. Hold your hand, my lord!
I have served you ever since I was a child;
But better service have I never done you
Than now to bid you hold.

The Servant's intervention angers Cornwall who draws and fights him. Regan takes a sword and kills the Servant from behind. Cornwall is wounded, but continues to take out Gloucester's other eye. Gloucester calls for Edmund. But Cornwall tells him that "It was he / That made the overture of thy treasons to us." Gloucester then realizes that Edmund has betrayed him. He cries:

O my follies! Then Edgar was abused.
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him.
Regan. Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell
His way to dover.

The Servants lead Gloucester out. But Cornwall is seriously hurt, he is bleeding. He and Regan leave.

In Act IV, scene I, we find Edgar lamenting his present state. But then he sees his father and an Old Man who has been Gloucester's tenant for sixty years. Gloucester bids the Old Man go away.

Old Man. You cannot see your way.
Gloucester. I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;
I stumbled when I saw....O dear son Edgar,
The food of thy abused father's wrath,
Might I but live to see thee in my touch
I'ld say I had eyes again!

The Old Man notices Edgar and tells Gloucester, "'Tis poor mad Tom." "Is it a beggarman?" asks the Earl. "Madman and beggar too," he replies. Gloucester comments: "He has some reason, else he could not beg." The Earl then bids the Old Man to fetch some clothing for naked Tom, whom he'll "entreat to lead me."

Old Man. Alack, sir, he is mad.
Gloucester. 'Tis the time's plague when madmen lead the blind.

Meanwhile, Edgar agonizes over whether or not to tell his father who he really is. Gloucester asks him: "Know'st thou the way to Dover?"

Edgar. Both stile and gate, horseway and footpath....
Gloucester. Here, take this purse, thou whom the heavens' plagues
Have humbled to all strokes....Dost thou know Dover?
Edgar. Ay, master.
Gloucester. There is a cliff, whose high and bending head

Looks fearfully in the confined deep.
Bring me but to the very brim of it,
And I'll repair the misery thou dost bear
With something rich about me. From that place
I shall no leading need.
Edgar. Give me thy arm.
Poor Tom shall lead thee.

The scene ends. In scene ii, we find Goneril and Edmund arriving at Goneril's house. She wonders why her husband Albany did not meet them on the way. She asks Oswald, "Now, where's your master?"

Oswald. Madam, within, but never man so changed.
I told him of the army that was landed:
He smiled at it. I told him you were coming:
His answer was, 'The worse.' Of Gloucester's treachery
And of the loyal service of his son
When I informed him, then he called me sot
And told me I had turned the wrong side out.
What most he should dislike seems pleasant to him;
What like, offensive.

Goneril is disgusted by what Oswald has told her. She tells Edmund to hasten to Cornwall and assist him. Before he leaves, she kisses him, after which she says to herself:

My most dear Gloucester,
O, the difference of man and man:
To thee a woman's services are due;
My fool usurps my body.

Albany then enters and stares angrily at Goneril:

O Goneril,
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind
Blows in your face....What have you done?
Tigers not daughters, what have you performed?
A father, and a gracious aged man,
Whose reverence even the head-lugged bear would lick,
Most barbarous, most degenerate, have you madded....
See thyself, devil:
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman....
Were't my fitness
To let these hands obey my blood,
They are apt enough to dislocate and tear

Thy flesh and bones. Howe'er thou art a fiend,
A woman's shape doth shield thee.

A messenger suddenly arrives and informs Albany and Goneril that Cornwall is dead, "Slain by his servant, going to put out / The other eye of Gloucester." He then describes what happened:

A servant that he bred, thrilled with remorse,
Opposed against the act, bending his sword
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,
Flew on him, and amongst them felled him dead;
But not without that harmful stroke which since
Hath plucked him after.

The messenger has also brought Goneril a letter from Regan. Goneril now realizes that her sister is a widow, and that she has sent Edmund to be with her. She suspects that they will become lovers.

Scene iii, brings us to Kent and a Gentleman at Dover. The King of France has suddenly returned to his realm on urgent matters, leaving the Marshal of France in charge. Kent asks the Gentleman to describe Queen Cordelia's reactions to the letters he gave her. He tells Kent that he saw a tear "trilled down her delicate cheek," otherwise she was queen-like and showed no emotion. However, she did utter the name of father, and then cried 'Sisters, sisters, shame of ladies, sisters!'

Kent. It is the stars,
The stars above us govern our conditions….
Well, sir, the poor distressed Lear's i' th' town;
Who sometime, in his better tune, remembers
What we are come about, and by no means
Will yield to see his daughter.
Gentleman. Why, good sir?
Kent. A sovereign shame so elbows him; his own unkindness,
That stripped her from his benediction, turned her
To foreign casualties, gave her dear rights
To his dog-hearted daughters—these things sting
His mind so venomously that burning shame
Detains him from Cordelia.

Kent then asks the Gentleman if he has heard anything about Albany's and Cornwall's powers. "They are afoot," he replies. Kent then requests the Gentleman to watch over Lear while he must attend to other matters.

Scene iv brings us to Cordelia, a Gentleman, whom she calls Doctor, and Soldiers. She has been told that her father is "As mad as the vexed sea, singing aloud, / Crowned with rank fumiter and furrow weeds." She tells an officer: "Search every acre in the high-grown field / And bring him to our eye." She then asks the Doctor what can be done to help him. What he needs is repose, "the nurse of nature," replies the doctor. A messenger then arrives and informs Cordelia that "The British pow'rs" are coming.

> *Cordelia.* 'Tis known before. Our preparation stands
> In expectation of them. O dear father,
> It is thy business that I go about....
> No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
> But love, dear love, and our aged father's right.
> Soon may I hear and see him!

Scene v. *Enter Regan and Steward Oswald.*

Regan wants to know what is in the letter from Goneril that Oswald is carrying to Edmund. "Let me unseal the letter," she says. Oswald refuses to give it to her.

> *Regan.* I know your lady does not love her husband,
> I am sure of that; and at her late being here
> She gave strange eliads and most speaking looks
> To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.
> *Oswald.* I, madam?
> *Regan.* I speak in understanding—y'are, I know't—
> Therefore I do advise you take this note;
> My lord is dead; Edmund and I have talked,
> And more convenient is he for my hand,
> Than for your lady's....
> If you do find him, pray you give him this....
> So fare you well.
> If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,
> Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

In scene vi, we find Gloucester and Edgar climbing the hill that overlooks Dover.

> *Edgar.* Come on, sir; here's the place. Stand still. How fearful
> And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
> The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
> Show scarce so gross as beetles. Halfway down
> Hangs one that gathers sampire—dreadful trade;
> Methinks he seems no bigger than his head.
> The fisherman that walk upon the beach
> Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark,
> Diminished to her cock; her cock, a buoy
> Almost too small for sight. The murmuring surge
> That on th' unnumb'red idle pebble chafes
> Cannot be heard so high. I'll look no more,
> Lest my brain turn, and the deficient sight

Topple down headlong.

This was a sight that Marlowe was well familiar with. His mother was from Dover, and his mother's parents and kin lived there. Marlowe must have had many opportunities as he and his mother walked from Canterbury to Dover to stand on top of the cliff and view what was below, so vividly described by Edgar. It was a dizzying sight: the fishermen below, the tall ship, the murmuring surge, the soaring birds. Note the mention of the sampire gatherer that Marlowe was undoubtedly familiar with. The sampire, a fleshy plant with small clusters of yellowish flowers, was an aromatic herb used in foods. Marlowe too must have known every "stile and gate, horseway and footpath" to Dover. Was Edgar Marlowe? He too was persecuted and forced to live in disguise.

Edgar takes his father's hand. "You are now within a foot / Of th' extreme verge. For all beneath the moon / Would I not lean upright."

> *Gloucester.* Let go my hand.
> Here, friend, 's another purse; in it a jewel
> Well worth a poor man's taking....
> Bid me farewell, and let me hear thee going.... [*Gloucester kneels.*]
> O you mighty gods!
> This world I do renounce, and in your sights
> Shake patiently my great affliction off....
> If Edgar live, O bless him!
> Now, fellow, fare thee well.
> [*Gloucester falls forward and swoons.*]
> *Edgar.* Ho, you, sir! Friend! Hear you, sir? Speak!...
> Yet he revives.
> *Gloucester.* Away, and let me die.
> *Edgar.* ...Thy life's a miracle. Speak yet again.
> *Gloucester.* But have I fall'n or no?
> *Edgar.* From the dread summit of this chalky bourn.
> Look up a-height. The shrill-gorged lark so far
> Cannot be seen or heard. Do but look up.
> *Gloucester.* I have no eyes....

Edgar lifts his father up and asks him about the fellow who had brought him to the cliff.

> *Gloucester.* I do remember now....That thing you speak of,
> I took it for a man. Often 'twould say
> 'The fiend, the fiend'.

King Lear then enters, mad, and bedecked with a crown of weeds. What ensues is almost surrealistic, as Lear speaks like a madman. Yet, at moments he makes perfect sense as when he tells Gloucester: "Get thee glass eyes / And, like a scurvy politician, seem / To see the things thou dost not." Or, when he says, "When we are born, we cry that we are come / To this great stage of fools."

The Gentleman enters with Attendants. He has been looking for Lear, and the Attendants take the King in hand. Lear doesn't know whether he has been rescued or taken prisoner. He exits running, followed by the Attendants. The Gentleman is left with Edgar. He comments on Lear's pitiful sight. Edgar asks how near is the enemy army.

Gentleman. Near and on speedy foot....
Though that the Queen on special cause is here,
Her army is moved on.

The Gentleman then leaves. Gloucester asks Edgar, "What are you?"

Edgar. A most poor man, made tame to fortune's blows,
Who, by the art of known and feeling sorrows,
Am pregnant to good pity. Give me your hand;
I'll lead you to some biding.

Just then Oswald enters and sees Gloucester. He is about to kill him when Edgar challenges him and kills him instead. As Oswald is dying, he gives Edgar Goneril's letters intended for Edmund and urges him to deliver them. Edgar reads the letters to his father. In the letter to Edmund, Goneril urges him to kill her husband so that she can become Edmund's wife.

Drums are then heard far off, and Edgar takes his father to be with a friend.

In Scene vii, we find Cordelia, Kent, the Doctor, and Gentleman. Cordelia thanks Kent for his goodness and bids him remove his disguise. But Kent replies that he is not ready to do so. Cordelia then asks the Doctor about her father. He is asleep, replies the Doctor, but he has slept enough and should be wakened. Cordelia then approaches her father:

O my dear father, restoration hang
Thy medicine on my lips, and let this kiss
Repair those violent harms that my two sisters
Have in thy reverence made....
Had you not been their father, these white flakes
Did challenge pity of them. Was this a face
To be opposed against the jarring winds?...He wakes....
How does my royal lord? How fares your Majesty?
Lear. You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave.
Thou art a soul in bliss; but I am bound
Upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears
Do scald like molten lead.
Cordelia. Sir, do you know me?
Lear. You are a spirit, I know....
Where have I been? Where am I?...
Would I were assured

Of my condition.
Cordelia. O look upon me, sir,
And hold your hand in benediction o'er me.
You must not kneel.
Lear. Pray, do not mock me.
I am a very foolish fond old man,
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less....
Do not laugh at me;
For, as I am a man, I think this lady
To be my child Cordelia.
Cordelia. And so I am! I am!
Lear. Be your tears wet? Yes, faith. I pray weep not.
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.
I know you do not love me; for your sisters
Have (as I do remember) done me wrong.
You have some cause, they have not.
Cordelia. No cause, no cause.
Lear. Am I in France?
Cordelia. In your own kingdom, sir.
Lear. Do not abuse me.
Doctor. Be comforted, good madam. The great rage
You see is killed in him.
Desire him to go in. Trouble him no more
Till further settling.
Cordelia. Will't please your Highness walk?
Lear. You must bear with me.
Pray you now, forget and forgive. I am old and foolish.

The scene ends as Lear is finally reconciled with his beloved youngest daughter. Act V opens with Edmund, Regan, Gentleman, and Soldiers on stage. Regan asks Edmund, "Do you love my sister?" Edmund replies: "No, by mine honor, madam." Albany, Goneril, and Soldiers then enter. Albany informs Edmund and Regan that "the King is come to his daughter," and they must decide how to proceed. Goneril urges that they combine forces. The two sisters leave. Edgar enters, and Albany delays leaving. He gives Albany the letter that Goneril had sent Edmund. Edgar leaves, and Edmund enters. He tells Albany that he is urgently needed: "The enemy 's in view; draw up your powers." Albany exits and Edmund, alone, coldly reflects on his predicament of having two women after him:

To both these sisters have I sworn my love;
Each jealous of the other, as the stung
Are of the adder. Which of them shall I take?
Both? One? Or neither? Neither can be enjoyed,
If both remain alive. To take the widow
Exasperates, makes mad her sister Goneril;
And hardly shall I carry out my side,

Her husband being alive. Now then, we'll use
His countenance for the battle, which being done,
Let her who would be rid of him devise
His speedy taking off. As for the mercy
Which he intends to Lear and to Cordelia—
The battle done, and they within our power,
Shall never see his pardon; for my state
Stands on me to defend, not to debate.

In Scene ii, Edgar informs Gloucester that Lear and Cordelia have been taken prisoner by their enemies. Edgar and Gloucester leave.

In Scene iii, Edmund is with his two prisoners, Lear and Cordelia. Cordelia is depressed, but Lear tries to cheer her up. He is so happy to be with her.

Come, let's away to prison,
We two alone will sing like birds i' th' cage.
When thou dost ask me blessing, I'll kneel down
And ask of thee forgiveness. So we'll live,
And pray, and sing, and tell old tales, and laugh
At gilded butterflies, and hear poor rogues
Talk of court news; and we'll talk with them too—
Who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out—
And take upon 's the mystery of things
As if we were God's spies; and we'll wear out,
In a walled prison, packs and sects of great ones
That ebb and flow by th' moon.

Edmund orders them taken away. He bribes the Captain to murder them in prison. Albany, Goneril, Regan, and Soldiers then enter. Albany praises Edmund for his valor, but asks that the two captives be brought to him. Edmund explains that they have been put in prison. Albany then gets into a heated argument with Goneril and Regan over Edmund's status. Knowing that Goneril and Edmund have a plot to kill him, Albany arrests Edmund for treason. A Herald then sounds a trumpet to find anyone who will prove that Edmund is a traitor. Edgar comes forth. He and Edmund duel, and Edmund falls.

Goneril. This is practice, Gloucester.
By the laws of war thou wast not bound to answer
An unknown opposite. Thou art not vanquished,
But cozened and beguiled.
Albany. Shut your mouth, dame,
Or with this paper shall I stop it.—Hold, sir.—
[*To Goneril.*]
Thou worse than any name, read thine own evil.
No tearing, lady! I perceive you know it.

"Ask me not what I know," she shouts, and storms out.

Edmund then asks Edgar who he is, and Edgar tells him the truth, that he is their father's son. Edmund: "Th' hast spoken right; 'tis true. / The wheel is come full circle; I am here." Albany asks: "Where have you hid yourself? / How have you known the miseries of your father?" Edgar tells his full story, how he disguised himself in a madman's rags, met his blinded father and became his guide. When he finally told his father who he really was, the old man's heart gave out. Edmund is moved by his brother's speech. Edgar then tells the story of Kent, who also in disguise, followed the King who had banished him and did him service.

The Gentleman suddenly enters with a bloody knife. It turns out that Goneril poisoned Regan and then took her own life. Kent then enters. He wants to see the King. Edmund then realizes that he has ordered the captain to kill Lear and Cordelia, and he tells Edgar to rush to the castle and order a reprieve. But it is too late. Cordelia has been hanged. Edmund is then carried off the stage to die.

In Scene iii, Lear enters with Cordelia in his arms. There follows one of the saddest scenes in all of English literature, with Lear bemoaning the death of the one daughter who truly loved him.

> Howl, howl, howl!...She's gone for ever.
> I know when one is dead, and when one lives.
> She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking glass.
> If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
> Why then she lives....
> This feather stirs; she lives!...
> Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha,
> What is't thou say'st? Her voice was ever soft,
> Gentle, and low—an excellent thing in woman.
> I killed the slave that was a-hanging thee.

Lear looks at Kent. "Who are you?" he asks. "Are you not Kent?" Kent admits that he is. A messenger then enters and announces that Edmund is dead. Lear then looks at Cordelia: "Do you see this? Look on her! Look her lips, / Look there, look there--.

He dies.

The play ends with Edgar's last words:

> The weight of this sad time we must obey,
> Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say.
> The oldest hath borne most; we that are young
> Shall never see so much, nor live so long.

What shall we make of this immensely moving and passionate play? So much cruelty, so much suffering, so much pain. What could have driven the author to write such a play? There is no doubt that Marlowe put much of his own suffering in this play. Like Edgar, he had lost his identity, was forced to live in disguise since May 1593, and was unable to assert his true identity publicly.

Was he ever able to see his parents since his supposed death? What was their reaction to the news of their brilliant son's demise? Did he ever disguise himself as a madman in order to see his father John Marlowe before he died in February 1605? A Bible was listed among his goods. None was listed among Shakespeare's. Marlowe's mother Katherine died barely a month after her husband's death. Was Marlowe ever able to visit their graves?

The wills of Marlowe's parents reveal that they had three living daughters: Margaret Jurden, Ann Cranford, and Dorothy Cradwell. Since his younger brother was not mentioned in the wills, it is assumed that he was dead. To what extent did Marlowe model Lear's daughters on his three sisters? Of course, we will never know. But we know that Marlowe started writing *King Lear* after the death of his parents. Burdened with grief, he was in a state of mind to pour his own suffering into this extraordinary play. The vivid images of Dover must have brought back happy moments of childhood with his family. He had the same filial love and devotion for his father that Edgar had for Gloucester, that Kent had for the King, that Cordelia had for Lear.

It is quite easy to believe that Marlowe identified with Edgar, the hunted son who had to live in abject disguise in order to stay alive. He is the one with the vivid memories of Dover. Obviously, Marlowe suffered greatly as he lived in social exile, and he must have wondered why God would let this to happen to him, the same God that had endowed him with such powerful literary gifts. David Bevington writes in his Introduction to the Bantam edition of the play (p.xvii-xviii):

> In *King Lear,* Shakespeare pushes to its limits the hypothesis of a malign or at least indifferent universe in which man's life is meaningless and brutal. Few plays other than *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* approach *King Lear* in evoking the wretchedness of human existence….One of Shakespeare's editors, Dr. Samuel Johnson, evidently spoke for most eighteenth century audiences when he confessed that he could not bring himself to read Shakespeare's text. Cordelia's slaughter violated the age's longing for "poetic justice." Her death implied a wanton universe and so counseled philosophical despair.

Did Marlowe write this play under a cloud of despair, having suffered over twelve years of namelessness, yet producing one literary masterpiece after another, masterpieces that would retain their relevance and power for centuries to come? We know that they will be read and performed as long as Western civilization exists. Yet, they were written by a genius who could not even proclaim his authorship. He had to use his own code, embedded in each play, to put a mark in its text. If he was no longer Marlowe, who was he? Even Lear asks: "Who is it who can tell me who I am?"

The unique power of the play is reflected in what commentators have written about it. A. C. Bradley wrote in his book *Shakespearean Tragedy*:

> The presence in *King Lear* of so large a number of characters in whom love or self-seeking is so extreme, has another effect. They do not merely inspire in us emotions of unusual strength, but they also stir the intellect to wonder and speculation. How can there be such men and women? we ask ourselves. How comes it that humanity can take such absolutely opposite forms?

For Marlowe, it was no mystery. For eight years he had been saturated with Calvin's pessimistic view of humankind as being innately depraved, capable of any evil a sinner could imagine. So he knew how humanity could take such absolutely opposite forms. We who have lived in the twentieth century have seen such extremes in the Nazis' persecution and slaughter of the Jews, and America's benign pursuit of human happiness.

Bradley wrote that in *King Lear* we see "the idea of monstrosity—of beings, actions, states of mind, which appear not only abnormal but absolutely contrary to nature." Yet, from 1933 to 1945 we saw the civilized and highly cultured nation of Germany engaged in a persecution of Jews so severe that it led to mass murder in gas chambers. How could that happen? Bradley writes further (p.240, Signet Edition):

> *King Lear*... is the tragedy in which evil is shown in the greatest abundance; and the evil characters are peculiarly repellent from their hard savagery, and because so little good is mingled with their evil. The effect is therefore more startling than elsewhere; it is even appalling....If we ask why the world should generate that which convulses and wastes it, the tragedy gives no answer, and we are trying to go beyond tragedy in seeking one.

In light of the present war of Western civilization against Islamic terrorism and the horror that was done to America on September 11, 2001, we all ask the same question about the nature and force of evil: Why does God permit evil to exist? The answer is that Adam and Eve permitted evil to enter the human race when they chose to eat the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. It was their choice, fatal and enduring.

Did Marlowe ever think of suicide? The answer was given by Hamlet himself. Edgar, of course, was faced with the same dilemma. But Harry Levin comments:

> But Edgar's moral ... redefines patience as the ability to bear one's sufferings, to face and endure them in calm of mind; "Bear free and patient thoughts."

Those words, put into the mouth of Edgar, must have reflected Marlowe's philosophy of endurance. He would continue to write plays for as long as he could and not complain of "fortune's blows," preferring to think, in the end, of those who saved his life and of God's ultimate goodness.

Chapter Forty-Six

The First Folio (Part X)

Macbeth

This is a play about murder and tyranny as personified by Macbeth and his wife, a happily married couple, who make a deliberate decision to embark on a bloody course of evil. That is the irony of the play: that a happy couple with great ambitions should choose to fulfill their dreams in a way that would ultimately destroy them.

Marlowe, from early on, had a deep interest in that aspect of human nature which we call the dark side. He eagerly explored it in order to understand it, for he saw it all around him. As a secret agent for the Cecils, he had a front-row seat to the political intrigues which made heads roll. He knew the history of Northumberland's attempt to gain the crown for the Dudley family. He knew of the struggle between Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth for the throne of England. He had written about this great ambition to be king in *Tamburlaine,* (Act 2, Scene 7), in which Tamburlaine rhapsodizes about his ambition:

> Nature, that fram'd us of four elements
> Warring within our breasts for regiment,
> Doth teach us all to have aspiring minds....
> Wills us to wear ourselves and never rest,
> Until we reach the ripest fruit of all,
> That perfect bliss and sole felicity,
> The sweet fruition of an earthly crown.

Marlowe also believed in Calvin's view that man was innately depraved because of his fall. According to Calvin, nothing could save a man except an unequivocal adherence to the commandments of God.

Although it is probable that Marlowe drew on more than one source for the history of Macbeth, Sylan Barnet, in his commentary in the Signet Classic edition of the play, writes (p. 136): "Holinshed alone seems to have provided Shakespeare with the raw material of the story of Macbeth." One merely has to read what Holinshed wrote, selections of which are in the Signet edition, to see how the author made changes for the play. Apparently, the changes were more political than literary. The play was performed before King James I and his guest, the King of Denmark, his brother-in-law, at Hampton Court in 1606.

Since King James did not like long plays, it should not surprise us that Macbeth is "abnormally short," as the Yale edition notices. Also, in the Holinshed account, Banquo, Macbeth's fellow general, is an accomplice to the murder of King Duncan. But in the play Banquo takes no part in the murder. Why? Because King James was a descendant of Banquo who was considered the father of the Stuart line.

Was *Macbeth* written especially for King James? It probably was, and the author was no doubt paid a considerable sum for his efforts. No quarto of the play was ever published. The only text we have is the one published in the First Folio of 1623.

The play takes place in Scotland with an opening scene that sets the stage for the evil to come. Three Witches, in a background of thunder and lightning, have come together to meet Macbeth as he and Banquo are on their way home from battle. They pronounce:

> Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
> Hover through the fog and filthy air.

In Scene 2, King Duncan is told of the bravery of Macbeth and Banquo, his two generals, in defeating the king's enemies. Two noblemen then tell the king of the treason of the Thane of Cawdor in the battle against Norway. King Duncan sentences the Thane of Cawdor to death and awards his title to Macbeth.

In Scene 3, the three Witches enter. They engage in their usual gibberish until Macbeth and Banquo encounter them.

> *Macbeth.* Speak, if you can: what are you?
> *1 Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Glamis!
> *2 Witch.* All hail, Macbeth! Hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!
> *3 Witch.* All hail, Macbeth, that shalt be king hereafter!

Both Macbeth and Banquo are shocked by these prophecies. Banquo asks the Witches: What can they predict for him? They reply:

> *1 Witch.* Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.
> *2 Witch.* Not so happy, yet much happier.
> *3 Witch.* Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none.

Macbeth wants them to tell him how they know he is Thane of Cawdor. But they vanish. Ross and Angus, two noblemen, enter and tell Macbeth how pleased the king was by his military success and that he has been named Thane of Cawdor. The Witches' prediction has come true. But Macbeth is concerned with the Witches' prophecy that Banquo's children will become kings.

In Scene 4, Macbeth and Banquo meet with King Duncan. The king praises the two generals for their great deeds. He then tells them that he has selected his son Malcolm to be his heir and has named him Prince of Cumberland. We hear Macbeth's private thoughts in an aside:

> The Prince of Cumberland! That is a step
> On which I must fall down, or o'er-leap;
> For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires;
> Let not light see my black and deep desires.

In Scene 5, Lady Macbeth is reading a letter from her husband in which he tells her of the prophecies of the "weyard sisters." But she is fearful that Macbeth won't have the courage to do what has to be done, because his nature is "too full o' th'milk of human kindness." She wants him to hurry home,

> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
> And chastise with the valor of my tongue
> All that impedes thee from the golden round,
> Which Fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
> To have thee crown'd withal.

At this point a messenger informs Lady Macbeth that King Duncan is coming to visit and will stay the night. She senses the opportunity:

> *Lady Macbeth.* The raven himself is hoarse
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements. Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> And fill me from the crown to the toe top-full
> Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood,
> Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> Th' effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick Night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
> To cry 'Hold, hold!'

Macbeth then enters, and Lady Macbeth tells her husband what has to be done. His response: "We will speak further."

In Scene 6, King Duncan arrives and tells Banquo how pleasant he finds this beautiful castle. When Lady Macbeth enters, the king tells her how much he appreciates her hospitality. After he retires for the night, Macbeth tells his wife:

We will proceed no further in this business;
He hath honor'd me of late, and I have bought
Golden opinions of all sorts of people …

But Lady Macbeth is not deterred. She chides Macbeth for being too cowardly to follow through on his original plan.

Lady Macbeth. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me—
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
As you have done to this.

Marlowe was well versed in such cruel behavior when he told the story of what the Greeks had done to Troy in *Dido: Queen of Carthage.*

Macbeth. If we should fail?
Lady Macbeth. We fail?
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail.

She explains that she will get Duncan's two chamberlains drunk with wine so that they will fall into a deep swinish sleep. They will steal their daggers and use them to murder Duncan, after which they will smear the two men with Duncan's blood so that suspicion will immediately fall on them.

Lady Macbeth. When in swinish sleep
Their drenched natures lies as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan?…
Macbeth. … Will it not be receiv'd
When we have mark'd with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber, and us'd their very daggers,
That they have done't?
Lady Macbeth. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?
Macbeth. … False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

In Act II, Scene 1, Banquo and his son Fleance enter. It is late at night. They encounter Macbeth.

Banquo. What, sir, not yet at rest? The king's a-bed.
He hath been in unusual pleasure,

And sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess, and shut up
In measureless content.

Banquo then tells Macbeth that he dreamt of the three weyard sisters: "To you they have show'd some truth." He and Fleance then retire to bed.

Macbeth then contemplates on the bloody business he is about to commit. A bell rings.

I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan, for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell.

In Scene 2, Lady Macbeth enters. She doesn't know whether or not her husband has already murdered Duncan. "I laid their daggers ready; He could not miss 'em." Macbeth then enters and tells her, "I have done the deed."

Macbeth. Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murther Sleep,' the innocent Sleep....
Lady Macbeth. Who was it that thus cried? Why worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place?
They must lie there. Go carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.
Macbeth. I'll go no more.
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.
Lady Macbeth. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead
Are but as pictures.

There is a knocking at the gate. Lady Macbeth tells her husband that they must get to bed. "A little water clears us of this deed. How easy is it, then!"

In Scene 3, the porter opens the gate. Macduff and Lennox enter. King Duncan had instructed them to be with him early. Macbeth enters, and they ask him if the King is awake. He doesn't know, but he takes Macduff to the King's chamber. Macduff enters but comes out shortly, shouting "O horror! horror! horror!" Duncan has been murdered. Everyone in the castle is awakened. Lady Macbeth enters, pretending ignorance of what has happened. Banquo enters and is told, "Our royal master's murther'd."

Lady Macbeth. Woe, alas!
What, in our house?

Duncan's two sons, Malcolm and Donalbain enter. They are told of their father's murder. They ask, "O, by whom?"

> *Lennox.* Those of his chamber, as it seem'd, had done't.
> Their hands and faces were all badg'd with blood;
> So were their daggers, which unwip'd we found
> Upon their pillows.

Macbeth then enters and tells them that he has already killed the two grooms in a violent emotional reaction to what he saw. Lady Macbeth swoons and is carried out. Malcolm and Donalbain, afraid that they will be next on the assassin's list, decide to leave Scotland. Malcolm will go to England, and Donalbain to Ireland: "our separated fortune / Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are, / There's daggers in men's smiles."

In Scene 4, we are told by Macduff that Macbeth has been named king and has gone to Scone to be invested. He also tells us that because Malcolm and Donalbain have fled, and that they are now under suspicion of having killed their father.

In Act III, Scene 1, Banquo muses that everything the "weyard women" promised for Macbeth has come true. They also predicted that Banquo would be "the root and father of many kings." [James I, before whom the play was performed, believed that he was a direct descendant of Banquo.]

A trumpet is sounded, and Macbeth, as king; Lady Macbeth as queen; Lennox, Ross, Lords and Attendants enter. Macbeth tells Banquo that there will be a "solemn supper" that night and requests Banquo's presence.

> *Macbeth.* We hear our bloody cousins are bestow'd
> In England and in Ireland, not confessing
> Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
> With strange invention.

Banquo and Fleance then leave to go riding. They will be back at suppertime. Meanwhile, Macbeth harks back to what the sisters predicted for Banquo, "They hail'd him father to a line of kings." And thus he posed a threat to Macbeth:

> Upon my head they plac'd a fruitless crown,
> And put a barren scepter in my gripe,
> Thence to be wrench'd with an unlineal hand,
> No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
> For Banquo's issue have I fil'd my mind;
> For them the gracious Duncan have I murther'd....
> Rather than so, come Fate into the list,
> And champion me to th' utterance.

He must dispose of Banquo and his son. To do the job, Macbeth has engaged two murderers.

> *Macbeth.* Both of you
> Know Banquo was your enemy.
> *Murtherers.* True, my lord.
> *Macbeth.* So is he mine; and in such bloody distance
> That every minute of his being thrusts
> Against my near'st of life....And thence it is
> That I to your assistance do make love,
> Masking the business from the common eye
> For sundry weighty reasons.

The murderers agree to carry out the king's commands. They will kill Banquo and his son when they return that night from their riding.

In Scene 2, Macbeth tells his wife:

> We have scorch'd the snake, not kill'd it....
> But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
> Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
> In the affliction of these terrible dreams
> That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
> Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
> Than on the torture of the mind to lie
> In restless ecstasy....
> *Lady Macbeth.* ... Be bright and jovial among your guests tonight.
> *Macbeth.* So shall I, love, and so, I pray, be you.

Macbeth then tells his wife of his concern about Banquo and Fleance, and that "there shall be done a deed of dreadful note." He adds, "Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, / Till thou applaud the deed."

In Scene 3, the two murderers are joined with a third, and they assault Banquo and Fleance. Banquo is killed but Fleance manages to escape.

Scene 4 takes place in the banquet hall with Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox, Lords, and Attendants. The first murderer comes to the door. Macbeth goes up to talk with him. "There's blood upon thy face," he says. "'Tis Banquo's," says the murderer. He then explains that they have killed Banquo but that his son escaped. They have left Banquo's body in a ditch.

> *Macbeth.* Thanks for that.
> There the grown serpent lies; the worm that's fled
> Hath nature that in time will venom breed,
> No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone; tomorrow

We'll hear ourselves again.

Macbeth returns to the banquet but he sees the ghost of Banquo seated in his place. No one else sees the ghost.

Ross. Gentlemen rise; his highness is not well.

Lady Macbeth tells them that her husband often acts this way. "The fit is momentary," she explains, "upon a thought / He will again be well." But Macbeth continues to rail at the ghost, until it leaves. When he calms down he tells his guests:

Do not muse at me, my most worthy friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then, I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.

The Ghost returns as Macbeth is offering a toast to the absent Banquo, "whom we miss." Macbeth again rails against it until it leaves.

Lady Macbeth. You have displac'd the mirth, broke the good meeting
With most admir'd disorder.

She then tells the guests that her husband's fit has grown worse and worse and bids them to leave at once. Macbeth then tells her that he will seek the weyard sisters to find out what is still in store for him.

In Scene 5, the three witches meet Heccat, the chief goddess who presides over magic arts and spells. She is angry with them for having traded with Macbeth "In riddles and affairs of death" without her taking part in the ritual. "Thither he / Will come to know his destiny," and this time she will see to it that they practice their art in the approved manner.

In Scene 6, Lennox is in conversation with another Lord. He recounts the strange events that have taken place: the murder of Duncan, believed to have been killed by his sons. The murder of Banquo, supposedly killed by his son Fleance who has fled. He notes how Macbeth reacted to the murder of Duncan by killing the two chamberlains. What news does the Lord bring about Macduff who now lives in disgrace?

He is told that Macduff has gone to England, where Duncan's son lives at court, and has asked King Edward for help in overthrowing Macbeth, so that "we may again / Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights; / Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives."

In Act IV, Scene 1, we find the three witches creating a witches' brew in the proper manner. "Double, double, toil and trouble; / Fire burn, and cauldron bubble." Into the cauldron they throw all manner of organic matter: eye of newt, toe of frog, tongue of dog, lizard's leg, gall of goat, nose of Turk, Tartar's lips, liver of blaspheming Jew, baboon's blood. Heccat is very pleased:

> O, well done! I commend your pains,
> And every one shall share I' th' gains.
> And now about the cauldron sing,
> Like elves and fairies in a ring,
> Enchanting all that you put in.

Heccat leaves and Macbeth enters. "How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags? / What is't you do?" "A deed without a name," they reply.

Macbeth wants to know the truth about the future. The witches raise three apparitions: an Armed Head, which warns Macbeth of Macduff; a Bloody Child, which tells Macbeth: "Be bloody, bold, and resolute....none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth." And a Child Crowned bearing a tree in its hand that tells Macbeth that he will never be vanquished "until / Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill / Shall come against him." Macbeth is pleased, but his pleasure is short-lived when the witches produce an apparition of eight Kings, with the eighth one holding a glass in his hand "which shows me many more." Finally, Banquo, with blood matted hair appears and smiles at Macbeth. This completely unnerves Macbeth.

The witches disappear and Lennox enters. Macbeth asks him if he saw the Weird Sisters. Lennox answers no. But he brings news that Macduff is fled to England. Macbeth decides to slaughter Macduff's wife and babes.

Another indication that *Macbeth* was written for King James are the witchcraft scenes that dominate the play. James was an expert on witchcraft and demonology and had written a tract on the subject, *Demonologie,* published in 1597. He had become interested in the subject in 1590 when there were witch trials in Scotland at New Berwick. He personally interrogated some of the accused witches and even prescribed their torture. Antonia Fraser writes in her biography of James (p. 57-8):

> James's interest in the trials led him to send for one or two of the witches, and be fearfully impressed by what he heard: one, Agnes Simpson, was supposed to have repeated to him things he whispered to the Queen on their wedding night, matters which he swore that all the devils in hell could not have discovered.

It was this experience that made James a believer in the power of witchcraft. And, as an expert he was able to judge the authenticity of what was in the play. Marlowe, of course, had written one of the most popular plays about demonology, *Dr. Faustus.* James may have seen it.

Macbeth also took place in Scotland, and many of the names in it were familiar to James: Ross, Lennox, Fife, Glamis, Angus, all of which must have congered up in his mind memories of the past. It is believed that Marlowe had gone to Scotland on a mission for the Cecils when the young king was enthralled by his French cousin, Esme, who had been sent to Scotland by the Duke of Guise to convert James from Protestantism to Catholicism.

But back to the play. Scene 2 takes us to Macduff's castle at Fife. Ross is trying to comfort Lady Macduff and her son. She cannot understand why her husband deserted them, leaving his family unprotected. Ross tries to console her, saying that her husband is "noble, wise, judicious, and best knows the fits o' the season."

After he leaves, a messenger arrives and tells Lady Macduff of the approaching danger. He tells her to flee with her little ones immediately. He then quickly leaves. But she cannot understand why she must leave. "Whither should I fly? I have done no harm." Just then the Murderers enter and kill her and her son.

Scene 3 takes us to King Edward's palace in England where Duncan's son Malcolm is conversing with Macduff who wants the heir to become king of Scotland after getting rid of the tyrant Macbeth. Malcolm argues that although England has offered its help in overthrowing Macbeth, he, Malcolm, may not be much better than Macbeth as king. He lists all of his faults: intemperance, avarice, lust—all of which lead to tyranny. In expounding his philosophy of kingship, he claims that he has none of the king-becoming graces. But then he finally confesses that what he said about himself was totally untrue and that he will follow Macduff.

> *Malcolm.* My first false speaking
> Was this upon myself. What I am truly
> Is thine and my poor country's to command;
> Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
> Old Siward with ten thousand warlike men,
> Already at a point, was setting forth.
> Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
> Be like our warranted quarrel. Why are you silent?
> *Macduff.* Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
> 'Tis hard to reconcile.

A Doctor enters.

> *Malcolm.* Well, more anon. Comes the king forth, I pray you?
> *Doctor.* Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
> That stay his cure; their malady convinces
> The great assay of art. But, at this touch,
> Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
> They presently amend.
> *Malcolm.* I thank you, doctor. [*The doctor leaves.*]
> *Macduff.* What's the disease he means?
> *Malcolm.* 'Tis call'd the evil.
> A most miraculous work in this good king,

Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do.

He then relates of the faith-healing power of the king:

With this strange virtue,
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.

The Notes in the Yale edition state: "Edward the Confessor was thought to be able to heal 'the king's evil' (scrofula) by his touch. The passage is presumably an indirect compliment to James I, who claimed the same healing power."

In other words, this play was tailor-made for James's enjoyment at every level.

Ross then enters and brings news from Scotland. At first he is reluctant to tell Macduff what has happened to his wife and children. But finally he speaks:

Your castle is surpris'd; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughter'd. To relate the manner
Were, on the quarry of these murther'd deer,
To add the death to you.

Macduff is grief-stricken and enraged by what he has heard. He is determined to kill Macbeth with his own sword. The scene ends as they prepare to return to Scotland.

Act V, Scene 1, takes us to Macbeth's Castle at Dunsinane. A Doctor of Physic is speaking with a waiting Gentlewoman. She tells him that she has seen Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep. Lady Macbeth then enters, sleepwalking and carrying a candle.

Doctor. You see her eyes are open.
Gentlewoman. Ay, but their sense is shut.
Doctor. What is it she does now? Look how she rubs her hands.
Gentlewoman. It is an accustomed action with her, to see thus washing her hands. I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.
Lady Macbeth. Yet here's a spot.
Doctor. Hark, she speaks! I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.
Lady Macbeth. Out, damned spot! Out, I say! … What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our pow'r to accompt? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?…Here's the smell of the blood still. All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.

Scene 2 takes us to the country near Dunsinane. Enter Menteith, Caithness, Angus, Lennox, Soldiers. They are waiting for Malcolm, Macduff, and Siward to join them with the English force. Macbeth has heavily fortified Dunsinane castle. They all march toward Birnam.

In Scene 3, Macbeth is with the Doctor and Attendants. Angrily he speaks:

> Bring me no more reports; let them fly all!
> Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane
> I cannot taint with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
> Was he not born of woman?

A servant enters and tells Macbeth that an army of ten thousand soldiers, the English force, has come. Macbeth angrily chides the servant, who then leaves. He calls for Seyton, his attendant, who enters. Macbeth calls for his armor. He is ready to fight. He asks the doctor about his wife, and he is told that "she is troubled with thick-coming fancies / That keep her from rest."

> *Macbeth.* Cure her of that!
> Canst thou not minister to a mind diseas'd…
> And with some sweet oblivious antidote
> Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff
> Which weighs upon the heart?
> *Doctor.* Therein the patient
> Must minister to himself.
> *Macbeth.* Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.

Macbeth then puts on his armor and prepares for the coming battle.

Scene 4 finds all of Macbeth's enemies in place: Malcolm, Siward, Macduff, etc. They are in Birnam Wood, and Malcolm orders the soldiers to camouflage themselves with boughs from the trees so that Macbeth will be unable to see them.

In Scene 5, Macbeth, girding for battle, is informed that Lady Macbeth is dead. He is greatly moved and reflects on the meaning of life with the most famous soliloquy of the play:

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more. It is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

This is Marlowe telling us like it is. It is his own reflection on the futility of life as seen from his exiled viewpoint. It is probably the most profound cry of human despair to be found in all of literature. Yet, four hundred years later the statement is as powerful today as when it was first written.

A messenger then enters and tells Macbeth that he looked toward Birnam, and it seemed as if the wood were moving. Macbeth calls him a liar. But the messenger insists that he saw a "moving grove." Macbeth remembers what the witches told him, "Fear not, till Birnam wood / Do come to Dunsinane." He realizes that the end is near.

In Scene 6 we find Malcolm, Siward, Macduff, and their Army wearing boughs. They are now near enough to Dunsinane, and Malcolm orders them to throw down their screens and enter battle.

In Scene 7, Macbeth encounters Young Siward and kills him. Meanwhile, Macduff tries to find Macbeth. They enter the castle. Macduff encounters Macbeth who refuses to yield. But Macduff kills him and brings his head to Malcolm, hailing the young heir as the new King of Scotland. The play ends with Malcolm acknowledging his new royal responsibilities.

Chapter Forty-Seven

The First Folio (Part XI)

Antony and Cleopatra

Antony and Cleopatra is a complicated love story in which two sophisticated, jaded adults, with heavy political baggage, manage to create romantic electricity on the stage. Antony is the same protagonist who avenged the murder of Julius Caesar by defeating and killing Cassius and Brutus. He is now the most celebrated general in Rome, a member of the Triumvirate that rules the Empire. Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt, who was once mistress to Pompey the Great and also lover of Julius Caesar and bore a son by him, has fallen in love with Antony who has come to Alexandria seeking support for his campaigns in the east.

But Antony, who shares power with Octavius Caesar and Aemilius Lepidus in the Triumvirate, is in decline as we learn in the opening lines of the play spoken by Philo, one of his soldiers, speaking to a fellow soldier, Demetrius:

> [He] is become the bellows and the fan
> To cool a gypsy's lust. Look where they come:
> Take but good note, and you shall see in him
> The triple pillar of the world transformed
> Into a strumpet's fool.

Neither Philo nor Demetrius are capable of understanding or sympathizing with the kind of illogical passion that has brought the two lovers together.

Cleopatra's character is revealed in her opening line spoken to Antony:

> If it be love indeed, tell me how much.
> *Antony.* There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.
> *Cleopatra.* I'll set a bourn [limit] how far to be beloved.
> *Antony.* Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

The idea of "new heaven, new earth" is taken directly from Revelation 21, in which St. John writes, "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth." Marlowe's intimate knowledge of the Bible provided him with an unlimited source of great, inspired lines, which he often inserted in his plays.

In that first dialogue between the lovers, we find the perennial dueling between feminine illogic and male logic. Women love men in ways different from how men love women even though they may be both politically powerful and motivated.

Kenneth Muir, in *Shakespeare's Sources,* names Plutarch's Life of Antonius as the main source of the play:

> Shakespeare's portrait of his hero is very close to Plutarch's, much closer, indeed, than his Antony in the earlier play. He made use of almost every incident in the later years of Antony's life, except the long, absorbing, but irrelevant account of the Parthian campaign. (p.201)

Marlowe's genius was in his ability to transform Plutarch's story into a living drama of two passionate, adult lovers caught in the political turmoil of their day. But what is even more interesting, and confirms our view that Marlowe wrote the play, is what Muir tells us about the Countess of Pembroke:

> There is some evidence that Shakespeare [Marlowe] consulted the Countess of Pembroke's translation of Garnier's *Marc Antoine.* The clearest parallel has been pointed out by Professor J. Dover Wilson. In the Argument, Antony's marriage is described in these terms:
>
>> Who for knitting a straiter bond of amitie betweene them, had taken to wife *Octavia.*
>
> Agrippa in Shakespeare's play uses a similar phrase in proposing that Antony should marry Octavia:
>
>> To hold you in perpetuall amitie,
>> To make you Brothers, and to knit your hearts
>> With an un-slipping knot, take *Antony,*
>> *Octavia* to his wife.
>
> In a later scene Enobarbus prophecies:
>
>> You shall finde the bande that seems to tye their friendship together, will be the very strangler of their Amity.
>
> The links between the two writers are substantial: knitting-knit, bond-band, amitie, taken to wife *Octavia*— take *Octavia* to his wife.

Equally interesting is what Muir tells us about the influence of Samuel Daniel's work on the author. Daniel, of course, was the Countess of Pembroke's protégé, who lived in her house at Wilton and was tutor to her son William. He has been identified as the rival poet in the Sonnets. Muir writes (p.209):

There is stronger evidence that Shakespeare made use of Daniel's *Cleopatra* and his *Letter to Octavia*. The latter poem, which first appeared in 1599, has an Argument prefixed containing an account of Antony's marriage to Octavia.

> For *Antonie* hauving yet vpon him the fetters of *Aegypt*, layd on by the power of a most incomparable beauty, could admit no new Lawes into the state of his affection, or dispose of himselfe, being not himselfe, but as hauing his heart turned Eastward, whither the poynt of his desires, toucht with the strongest allurements that ambition, and a licentious soueraignty could draw a man vnto.

So, in the play, Antony exclaims (I. ii. 113):

> These strong Egyptian Fetters I must breake,
> Or loose my selfe in dotage....

It is probable that Shakespeare had read the early version of *Cleopatra*. There are a number of details common to both plays, which are not to be found in Plutarch.

What does all of this mean? It means that "Shakespeare" was acquainted with both the Countess of Pembroke's translation of Garnier's *Marc Antoine* and also Daniel's *Cleopatra* and *Letter to Octavia*. There is nothing in Shakespeare's biography to suggest that he knew the Countess or Samuel Daniel. Also, we read in A. L. Rowse's *The Annotated Shakespeare* (p.2007):

> In 1607 Daniel considerably revised his *Cleopatra* in the light of Shakespeare's play, trying to make it more dramatic. Earlier he had been influenced by *Richard II* in revising his account in the *Civil Wars*, to which Shakespeare in turn was indebted.

But Muir questions Rowse's assumption. He writes (p.215):

> The evidence that Daniel revised his play after seeing a performance of Shakespeare's is much less conclusive. The date of the latter is not known, and it may have been written after the 1607 edition of Daniel's play.

The inability to establish the exact date that *Antony and Cleopatra* was written makes it impossible to determine for sure which poet was influenced by whom. Although it was never published in quarto form before its publication in the First Folio, the Shakespeare play was apparently entered in the Stationers' Register in May 1608.

A likely theory is that the Countess of Pembroke influenced both Marlowe and Daniel and urged them to write historical dramas in the manner of Garnier. Her translation of *Marc Antoine* was published in 1592. But obviously the Countess, Marlowe and Daniel had read the original in French well before 1592.

There are other indications that *Antony and Cleopatra* was written by Marlowe. Muir writes (p.217):

> Finally it may be mentioned that Miss Ethel Seaton has pointed out some curious echoes of the book of *Revelation* in *Antony and Cleopatra.* Some of these are in the scene in which Antony falls on his sword.... A second parallel is to be found in the image of the falling star....One of Octavius's speeches seems to echo
>
> > I will shew thee the damnation of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters, With whom have committed fornication the kings of the earth . . .
> >
> > > He hath given his Empire
> > > Up to a Whore, who now are levying
> > > The Kings o' th' earth for Warre.
>
> Cleopatra's description of Antony in the last scene may likewise be based on another passage from *Revelation.*

And, of course, we find in the play Marlowe's usual fingerprint, Dido and Aeneas. Antony has just been brought the false news of Cleopatra's death. He cries out:

> I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
> Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
> All length is torture: since the torch is out,
> Lie down, and stray no farther....
> Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
> And with our sprightly port make ghosts gaze:
> Dido and her Aeneas shall want troops,
> And all the haunt be ours.

He then calls Eros, his attendant, and orders him to kill him. But Eros cannot bear the idea of killing his master, and so Eros kills himself.

This is quite a complex play, covering a period of eleven years. It begins shortly after *Julius Caesar* ends. At the beginning of the play Cleopatra is 29 years old and Antony is 41. Forty-two scenes later, Cleopatra is 40 and Antony is 53. A good, short summary of the play is given by A. L. Rowse in the *Annotated Shakespeare* (p.2003):

> The play has not the dramatic intensity of the other high tragedies: its action is more dispersed and various, and its interest is almost as much political as it is amorous. Whole scenes are devoted to the political issue between Octavius Caesar and Antony; Antony and Caesar's noble sister, Octavia, loyal and sensible, whom Antony deserts for 'his Egyptian dish'; discussions among the rival followings and battles in the field. It is not until the end that the action speeds into the grand finale; or, rather, there are two of them, Antony's downfall and

> defeat—his death is postponed for a last meeting with Cleopatra—and her unique and unparalleld way to death.

There is no record of the play's performance or publication before its appearance in the First Folio. It is believed that the text in the First Folio was derived from an original manuscript copy that Ed Blount was able to obtain.

An additional source of the play is Sir Thomas North's *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes,* published in 1579. This was an English translation of a French translation of the original Greek of Plutarch's Lives. Henrietta Bartlett writes (p.108):

> Shakespeare is indebted to North for the plots of all his Roman plays and for suggestions in many others. He founded *Julius Caesar* on Plutarch's lives of Caesar, Brutus, Antony, and Cicero; *Antony and Cleopatra* on the life of Antony; *Coriolanus* on the life of Coriolanus; *Timon of Athens* on the lives of Alcebiades and Antony.

It is obvious that Garnier, the Countess of Pembroke, Samuel Daniel, and Christopher Marlowe were all well acquainted with Plutarch's Lives either in the French or English translations. Also, Daniel's sonnet sequence, *Delia, with the complaint of Rosamund,* was published in 1592. Henrietta Bartlett writes (p.120):

> Shakespeare was much influenced by *Rosamund* and traces of it appear in *Lucrece, A Lover's Complaint* and *Romeo and Juliet.* The subjects are of the same nature and are treated in much the same manner. Shakespeare's sonnets also owe a great deal to Daniel, especially to *Delia,* and there are lines in *Twelfth Night* which are an echo of that poem.

That Daniel was the rival poet in Shakespeare's Sonnets becomes increasingly obvious the more we learn of that small coterie around the Countess of Pembroke, all writing on the same subject of Antony and Cleopatra.

Harold Bloom writes (p.556, 564):

> After *Antony and Cleopatra,* something vital abandons Shakespeare.... The poet of *Antony and Cleopatra* neither loves nor hates the world, nor the theater; he has begun to weary of them both.

Could it be that in Antony's decline and fall Marlowe saw a pessimistic reflection of his own aging? Perhaps he had hoped that after the death of Burghley in 1599 and the death of Elizabeth in 1602, he might be resurrected from the dead. But that was not to be as long as Robert Cecil, Thomas Walsingham, Ed Blount, and other confederates continued to live. And so he must continue to write, which was the only reason for continuing to live.

Bloom writes further (p.560):

> *Antony and Cleopatra,* as a play, is notoriously excessive, and keeping up with it, in a good staging or a close reading, is exhilarating but exhausting. Teaching the play, even to the best of classes, is for me a kind of glorious ordeal. [There are no resting places.] *Antony and Cleopatra* surges on, prodigal in its inventiveness, daemonic in the varied strength of its poetry. Critics rightly tend to agree that if you want to find everything that Shakespeare was capable of doing, and in the compass of a single play, here it is.... A drama with a remarkable quantity of scene shifts, *Antony and Cleopatra* seems to have no minor or dispensable episodes or sequences, even when neither Antony nor Cleopatra is on stage.

Was Marlowe trying to demonstrate to the Countess that he was the better of the two poets?

For all of the reasons stated by Bloom, a knowledge of the political and historical context of the play is essential for its full enjoyment. Isaac Asimov, in his *Guide to Shakespeare* gives the reader that historical background. It is well worth perusing before reading or seeing a performance of *Antony and Cleopatra.*

Coriolanus

Coriolanus is a very strange play and for that reason alone it should be attributed to Christopher Marlowe. According to what we know about William Shakespeare, he was too normal, too much the businessman, too pedestrian to have written this unusual play, or any other play in the First Folio.

D. A. Traversi, in *An Approach to Shakespeare* (1954) writes (p.216):

> *Coriolanus* has rarely satisfied the critics. Most of them have found it frigid and have even suggested that Shakespeare's interest flagged in the writing of it; on the other hand, an important minority—including T. S. Eliot and J. Middleton Murray—have been considerably attracted by the play, and have even found an important place for it in the development of their own experience. The only point upon which there seems to be agreement is that *Coriolanus* is difficult and that its artistic quality is peculiar.

And that is because of the character of Coriolanus himself, a strange character that must have attracted the playwright as a fitting subject for a highly dramatic play. Tucker Brooke, in the Yale edition of the play writes:

> The chief and almost sole source of *Coriolanus,* as of Shakespeare's other Roman plays, is North's translation of Plutarch's *Lives,* which was first printed in 1579 and reached its third edition in 1603. About 550 lines of North's prose are woven into the text of *Coriolanus,* and the verbal adherence of the poet to the translator is even closer than it is in the earlier Plutarchan plays of *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra.* The two principal characters, Coriolanus and Volumnia, owe

> most to Plutarch, though Shakespeare has given to each of them distinguishing traits hardly implied by his original….
>
> The most famous declamatory passages in *Coriolanus* are precisely those in which Shakespeare has most closely reproduced the prose of North.

All of which means that the poet found in Plutarch a gold mine of stories for the stage. And the probable reason he chose to write about Coriolanus is that he found in the story an unrelenting, life-and-death struggle between Caius Martius, later known as Coriolanus, and the common citizens, or plebeians, of Rome. Marlowe knew how to engage an audience by stating the conflict in the very opening of his play. We see that technique used in the very opening lines of *Coriolanus:*

> *1. Citizen.* Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.
> *All.* Speak, speak.
> *1. Citizen.* You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?
> *All.* Resolved, resolved.
> *1. Citizen.* First, you know Caius Martius is chief enemy to the people.
> *All.* We know 't, we know 't.
> *1. Citizen.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our price. Is 't a verdict?
> *All.* No more talking on 't; let it be done. Away, away!

Thus begins the tragic conflict between the stubborn, proud warrior-hero and the plebeians, a conflict that leads to the hero's own destruction. The audience, of course, is totally taken in by the desire to know what comes next. Thus, the play opens on a political note in which Caius Martius, Rome's most celebrated soldier, becomes the target of the rebellious mob because he represents the thinking of the Patricians, the ruling class in Rome.

Caius Martius had been raised by his mother Volumnia to become a fearless, brave soldier for Rome. And he became exactly that. But in the process he acquired an arrogant and superior sense of self, which rankled the common people, for whom he had nothing but contempt. This character flaw is the subject of virtually everything that takes place in the play. Harold Bloom calls Coriolanus "the greatest killing machine in all of Shakespeare." He bemoans the fact that the hero of the play is not another Hamlet, that he is empty, without the least introspection, inwardly barren. "He is so oddly original a character that description of him is very difficult….Caius Martius himself has very little mind, and no imagination whatsoever." Today, we might call him autistic.

Yet, the playwright does such a superb job of elevating this emotionally crippled warrior to heroic status, that four hundred years later we still read about him. Traversi writes (p.217): "The mastery displayed in the verse of *Coriolanus* does not suggest declining powers or lack of interest…. It is sufficient to suggest that *Coriolanus* is a great play." Thus, it is the poet who made Coriolanus immortal.

After returning victoriously from battling the Volsces, Caius Martius is named Coriolanus by the Roman Senate after ransacking Corioli, the main city of the Volsces. Cominius, a general who fought alongside Coriolanus, describes the latter's heroic deeds:

His pupil age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: he stopped the fliers,
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was tim'd with dying cries: alone he enter'd
The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
Corioli like a planet.

The Senate, duly impressed, then decides to honor Coriolanus with the high post as Consul. But in order to become consul, Coriolanus must also get the vote of the people. The tradition was for the candidate to dress himself in modest clothes and to permit the common people to examine his wounds. Coriolanus is appalled at the idea. He tells his patrician friend Menenius:

I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you
That I may pass this doing.

But the people will have it no other way. And so, Coriolanus puts on the gown of humility and reluctantly conforms to the ancient custom. He gains the approval of the average citizen. But the tribunes of the people who oppose him manage to get the citizens to change their minds. Coriolanus then quarrels with the tribunes only to antagonize them further. They call him traitor and call for his immediate death. However, Menenius persuades the tribunes to hold a trial. Of Coriolanus, he says:

His nature is too noble for the world:
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth:
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent;
And, being angry, does forget that ever

He heard the name of death.

The trial is held and the tribunes sentence Coriolanus to banishment. Brutus, one of the tribunes, speaks:

There's no more to be said but he is banish'd,
As enemy to the people and his country.
It shall be so.
All. It shall be so, it shall be so.
Coriolanus. You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcasses of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you;
And here remain with your uncertainty!
Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts!
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders; till at length
Your ignorance, which finds not till it feels,
Making but reservation of yourselves,
Still your own foes, deliver you as most
Abated captives to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back;
There is a world elsewhere.

Thus, from being honored by the Senate to being called a traitor and banished by the plebeians, Coriolanus's pride has suffered too much. He is bursting with the need for revenge. He goes to his hated enemy, Aufidius, leader of the Volsces, and offers to help him take Rome. Aufidius embraces him and they both lead the Volsces' army to Rome. But at the gates of the city, Coriolanus is met by his mother who pleads with him to spare Rome. He tells her:

Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not
To allay my rages and revenges with
Your colder reasons.

But Volumnia prevails. She tells her son that if he conquers Rome, he will go down in history as the man who destroyed his own country, and that his name will be reviled. Coriolanus cannot take his mother's total rejection, and he capitulates:

Coriolanus. O, mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,

The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother! Mother! O!
You have won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son, believe it, O believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But let it come.
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less, or granted less, Aufidius?
Aufidius. I was mov'd withal.
Corolanus. I dare be sworn you were:
And sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part,
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you: and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause. O mother! Wife!

Here we are reminded of the motto on Marlowe's painting: "Quod me nutrit, me destruit." That which nourishes me, destroys me.

Coriolanus does indeed return to Corioli with Aufidius. There he is quickly assassinated on orders of Aufidius.

It is Coriolanus's physical presence that dominates the play. In that respect he reminds us of Tamburlaine. But he has none of Tamburlaine's mature independence. He is too much his mother's son, always in need of her approval. Ironically, it is Aufidius's serving men who are more impressed with the Roman hero than the people of Rome themselves:

1. *Serv.* What an arm he has! He turned me about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.
2. *Serv.* Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him: he had, sir, a kind of face, methought—I cannot tell how to term it.

Another description of Coriolanus is given by Cominius, the Roman general, who tells the tribunes how their banished hero has been received by the Volsces:

He is their god. He leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.

It is not difficult to understand why Coriolanus has his admirers. He is not only a fierce warrior but a hater of the mob that seeks to destroy its betters. Thus, he had a political instinct that his flawed character could not use to his advantage.

The Volsces lords are shocked by Coriolanus's murder. They point an accusing finger at Aufidius:

> *Aufidius.* My lords, when you shall know—as in this rage,
> Provok'd by him, you cannot—the great danger
> Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
> That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours
> To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
> Myself your loyal servant, or endure
> Your heaviest censure.
> *1. Lord.* Bear from hence his body;
> And mourn you for him! Let him be regarded
> As the most noble corse that ever herald
> Did follow to his urn….
> *Aufidius.* My rage is gone,
> And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up:
> Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.
> Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully;
> Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
> Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
> Which to this hour bewail the injury,
> Yet he shall have a noble memory.

On that sorrowful note, the play ends, and Coriolanus becomes history. As for the composition of the play, it appears to have been written after *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1608 or 1609. There is no evidence that it was ever performed before the Restoration. The first inkling we have that the play existed is found in the licensing of a group of sixteen uncopyrighted plays by Shakespeare, entered at the Stationers' Company on November 8, 1623 by Ed Blount and Isaac Jaggard, publishers of the First Folio. The fact that *Coriolanus* had not been copyrighted before 1623 probably indicates that it had not been performed prior to that date. Concerning the First Folio text, Tucker Brooke writes:

> The manuscript upon which the Folio text of *Coriolanus* was based appears to have been carefully prepared. The play is accurately divided into acts, though not into scenes, and contains rather full and explicit stage directions….
>
> Our actual knowledge of the production of *Coriolanus* in any form begins with 1682, when Nahum Tate adapted the tragedy for the Theatre-Royal under the title, *The Ingratitude of a Commonwealth; or, The Fall of Caius Martius Coriolanus.*

Is it possible that the manuscript of this play came directly from Marlowe when Blount was gathering the plays for the First Folio? Perhaps, some day we shall find the answer to that question.

Timon of Athens

Timon of Athens is a very bitter and cynical play, which has troubled critics and scholars of Shakespeare because of its deep pessimism. It is about money, debt, and hypocritical friendship and how they affect human relations. Nothing in Shakespeare's known biography can account for the writing of this play. Harold Bloom writes (p.589):

> Several scholars have emphasized Timon's uniqueness in Shakespeare: he has no family connections. Without father, mother, wife, or child, or even a mistress, Timon also has no origins.

Which simply indicates that the playwright was not interested in creating a character, but in simply using Timon as a mouthpiece to express his own bitterness and cynicism. And that may be why the play was never staged: it would have offended the audience. Yet, four hundred years later it is being played, albeit rarely, as the subjects of money, debt and hypocritical friendship are probably more universally experienced now than when the play was written.

The plot is quite simple. Timon, a wealthy Athenian, lavishes gifts and dinner parties for his friends in high places. He is so generous and mindless in spending that he doesn't realize that Flavius, his servant, has had to borrow money to maintain the pace of his master's munificence. When Timon is made aware that he is totally broke, he is besieged by creditors. Believing that his friends will lend him the money he needs to get out of this fix, he sends his servants to get financial help. But not one of his so-called friends is willing to help. Their excuses are a study in human hypocrisy.

Timon becomes so embittered that he invites them all to another feast in which he serves them warm water and rocks under a covered dish. When they see what they have been served, Timon rails against them and throws the water in their faces and the rocks after them as they hurriedly leave the house. He curses them all:

> Live loath'd, and long,
> Most smiling, smooth, detested parasites,
> Courteous destroyers, affable wolves, meek bears,
> You fools of fortune, trencher-friends, time's flies,
> Cap-and-knee slaves, vapours, and minute-jacks!
> Of man and beast the infinite malady
> Crust you quite o'er.

He then storms out of Athens, banishing himself and cursing the city. Standing outside the walls of the city, he says:

Let me look back upon thee. O thou wall,
That girdlest in those wolves, dive in the earth,
And fence not Athens! Matrons, turn incontinent!
Obedience fail in children! Slaves and fools,
Pluck the grave wrinkled senate from the bench,
And minister in their steads!... Son of sixteen,
Pluck the lin'd crutch from the old limping sire;
With it beat out his brains!... Lust and liberty
Creep in the minds and marrows of our youth,
That 'gainst the stream of virtue they may strive,
And drown themselves in riot!

He then takes to the woods and lives out of a cave near the sea-shore. He denounces all of mankind and now prefers to live as a hermit. In digging for roots to eat, he comes upon gold. But he refuses to use it to regain his former lifestyle. He says:

What is here?
Gold? Yellow, glittering, precious gold? No, gods,
I am no idle votarist: roots, you clear heavens?
Thus much of this will make black white, foul fair,
Wrong right, base noble, old young, coward valiant....
This yellow slave
Will knit and break religions; bless the accurs'd;
Make the hoar leprosy ador'd; place thieves,
And give them title, knee, and approbation,
With senators on the bench....Come, damned earth,
Thou common whore of mankind, that putt'st odds
Among the rout of nations. I will make thee
Do thy right nature.

Alcibiades, an Athenian soldier who has been banished by the city's senators, encounters Timon in the woods. He has brought two prostitutes with him. Timon tells him:

I am 'Misanthropos,' and hate mankind.
For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,
That I might love thee something.

He then advises Timandra, the prostitute:

Be a whore still; they love thee not that use thee;
Give them diseases, leaving with thee their lust.

Alcibiades sympathizes with Timon and offers him some gold. But Timon replies: "Keep it, I cannot eat it." Alcibiades then tells Timon that he has declared war against Athens. Timon encourages him to destroy the city without mercy. After Alcibiades and the prostitutes leave, Timon continues to dig for roots.

Apemantus, described as a "churlish philosopher," comes to see Timon. He asks:

> What wouldst thou have to Athens?
> *Timon.* Thee thither in a whirlwind. If thou wilt,
> Tell them there I have gold; look, so I have.
> *Apemantus.* Here is no use for gold.
> *Timon.* The best and truest;
> For here it sleeps, and does no hired harm….
> *Apemantus.* The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends: when thou wast in thy gilt and thy perfume, they mocked thee for too much curiosity; in thy rags thou know'st none, but are despised for the contrary….
> *Timon.* What wouldst thou do with the world, Apemantus, if it lay in thy power?
> *Apemantus.* Give it the beasts, to be rid of the men….

Timon answers in a way that would befuddle some of today's environmentalists.

> *Timon.* A beastly ambition, which the gods grant thee t' attain to! If thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee: if thou wert the lamb, the fox would eat thee; if thou wert the fox, the lion would suspect thee, when peradventure thou wert accused by the ass: if thou wert the ass, thy dulness would torment thee, and still thou livedst but as a breakfast to the wolf: if thou wert the wolf, thy greediness would afflict thee, and oft thou shouldst hazard thy life for thy dinner:…wert thou a bear, thou wouldst be killed by the horse: wert thou a horse, thou wouldst be seized by the leopard: wert thou a leopard, thou wert german to the lion, and the spots of thy kindred were jurors on thy life.

Hardly a benevolent view of the natural world. After Apemantus leaves, Timon is visited by three bandits. But Timon talks them out of their professions by sermonizing his philosophy of thievery. After they leave, Flavius, Timon's steward, enters seeking his former master. Flavius is motivated by genuine, unselfish Christian love and is bringing to Timon his meager savings. When Timon fails to recognize him, he says:

> I beg of you to know me, good my lord.
> To accept my grief and whilst this poor wealth lasts
> To entertain me as your steward still.

Timon then acknowledges him as "one honest man," and tries to send him away. But Flavius is determined to stay.

The Poet and Painter now enter the woods, in search of Timon. They have heard about his generosity with gold.

> *Painter.* Certain: Alcibiades reports it; Phrynia and Timandra had gold of him: he likewise enriched poor straggling soldiers with great quantity: 'tis said he gave unto his steward a mighty sum.

Timon engages them in dialogue. He knows they have come for gold. But they insist they've come out of friendship. He taunts them, but then gives them gold and sends them packing.

Two Senators then come to the woods and ask Flavius to take them to Timon and persuade him to meet with them. When Timon agrees to see them, they plead with him to return to Athens. They apologize for the way they treated him and want him to take the captainship and wield absolute power so that they can drive back Alcibiades. But Timon tells them that he doesn't care what happens to Athens.

> If Alcibiades kill my countrymen,
> Let Alcibiades know this of Timon,
> That Timon cares not.

The Senators leave, saying:

> Let us return,
> And strain what other means is left us
> In our dear peril.

Alcibiades reaches the walls of Athens with his troops. The Senators confer with him from atop the walls. They agree that if Alcibiades will spare the city, they will permit him to punish his enemies.

> *Alcibiades.* Then there's my glove;
> Descend, and open your uncharged ports:
> Those enemies of Timon's and mine own,
> Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof,
> Fall, and no more.

A Messenger then informs Alcibiades:

> My noble general, Timon is dead;
> Entomb'd upon the very hem o' the sea;
> And on his grave-stone this insculpture, which
> With wax I brought away, whose soft impression
> Interprets for my poor ignorance.

Alcibiades reads the epitaph:

> 'Here lies a wretched corse, of wretched soul bereft:
> Seek not my name: a plague consume you wicked caitiffs left!
> Here lie I, Timon; who, alive, all living men did hate:
> Pass by, and curse thy fill; but pass and stay not here thy gait.'
> These well express in thee thy latter spirits:
> Though thou abhorr'dst in us our human griefs,

> Scorn'dst our brain's flow and those our droplets which
> From niggard nature fall, yet rich conceit
> Taught thee to make vast Neptune weep for aye
> On thy low grave, on faults forgiven. Dead
> Is noble Timon, of whose memory
> Hereafter more. Bring me into your city,
> And I will use the olive with my sword,
> Make war breed peace, make peace stint war, make each
> Prescribe to other as each other's leech.

And thus this peculiar play ends. Did Marlowe write it? It certainly applies more to Marlowe's life than Shakespeare's. The theme of banishment reminds us of Marlowe's own predicament. His views on gold and economics no doubt concurred with Burghley's. His lack of family is a reflection of his inability to visit his own family and make himself known to his relatives. Marlowe could only socialize with a few individuals who maintained his hidden identity. Also, Timon's choice of a cave in a wooded area near the seacoast as his new home may actually indicate where Marlowe was living in exile, in Kent near the seacoast?

Concerning the sources of the play, Stanley T. Williams writes in the Yale edition of the play:

> The basic legend of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* began in antiquity. Early in the fifth century B. C., Timon's picturesque misanthropy was a theme of Greek comic poets....Definite references to Timon occur in the comedies of Aristophanes, Plato, and Antiphanes. He is later mentioned by Roman writers, notably Cicero, Seneca, the Elder Pliny, and Strabo. Strabo was the first to allude to Timon's early life of affluence. It is quite certain that the legend had general currency.

Also, the story of the misanthrope in Plutarch's *Life of Antonius,* and Lucian's comic dialogue, *Timon the Misanthrope,* are probably sources of the play. Williams writes: "Of basic principles and ideas Plutarch is the source; for other episodes and character portraiture the responsibility is elsewhere."

It is believed that the play was written between 1606 and 1610. Theatrical annals record no performance of the play until the close of the 18^{th} century. It was entered in the Stationers' Register on November 8, 1623, when Ed Blount and Isaac Jaggard sought to gain copyrights for previously unpublished plays being included in the First Folio. Where did Blount find a copy of the manuscript? Did Marlowe supply it from his inventory of unpublished and non-performed plays? The fact that the play was neither performed nor published in a quarto before 1623, would clearly indicate that the manuscript used in the First Folio came directly from the hands of the playwright. Since Shakespeare had died in 1616, the only other possible owner would be Marlowe.

Pericles, Prince of Tyre

Scholars generally agree that the text of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre,* reveals the hands of two writers. The fact that it was entered in the Stationers' Register in 1608 by Edward Blount, Marlowe's executor, but was neither published by him nor included in the First Folio of 1623 has led scholars to believe that there was a problem with the play. Nevertheless, it was published a year later, 1609, by Henry Gosson in two quarto editions. Other editions followed in 1611, 1619, 1630 and 1635. It was finally included in the second printing of the Third Folio of 1664 and the Fourth Folio of 1685.

As for the sources of the play, the story appears to have originated as a pagan Greek romance, which was later translated into Latin. John Gower, an English poet, contemporary with Chaucer, included the story in his *Confessio Amantis,* written about 1390. The fact that Gower is the narrator in *Pericles* and that the play opens with an acknowledgment of him as its literary father, indicates that Gower was indeed the chief source of the play.

But in all of the earlier publications of the story, the hero is known as Apollonius. How did he become Pericles? Alfred R. Bellinger, editor of the Yale edition of the play, provides an important clue: (p.114):

> [I]t seems more likely that the name was suggested by Pyrocles, the hero of the romance, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia written by Philippe Sidnei,* published in 1590. There are other instances of similarity…which make it probable that Sidney's book was fresh in the playwright's mind.

It would also indicate that Marlowe started writing the play much earlier in his career, while he was still part of the Countess's coterie, and finished it later. The title page of the 1609 quarto reads (in modern spelling):

> The Late, And much admired Play, Called Pericles, Prince of Tyre. With the true Relation of the whole Histories, adventures, and fortunes of the said Prince: As also, The no less strange, and worthy accidents, in the Birth and Life, of his Daughter Mariana. As it hath been divers and sundry times acted by his Majesty's Servants, at the Globe on the Bank-Side. By William Shakespeare. Imprinted at London for Henry Geffon, and are to be sold at the sign of the Sovereign Pater-noster row, &c. 1609.

It would seem that the publication of the play and its sale to His Majesty's Servants provided the playwright with the cash needed to maintain himself, and that it was Blount who managed all of that as an agent for his exiled author.

The story begins with Pericles seeking the hand of Antiochus's beautiful daughter. He has travelled from Tyre to Antioch where the king has offered his daughter to the man who can discover the meaning of a riddle. If he cannot, he dies. Pericles, to his horror, discovers that the secret in the riddle is the fact that Antiochus has had an incestuous relationship with his daughter. Pericles escapes and returns to Tyre only to hear that Antiochus has sent an assassin to kill him. His advisor, Helicanus, urges him to leave Tyre at once and travel to places where he cannot be found. Pericles'ship takes him to Tarsus, which is in a state of famine. He provides the governor Clean and his wife Dionyza with enough corn to alleviate the famine, and thus wins their favor.

Pericles then leaves Tarsus and is involved in a shipwreck. He swims ashore at Pentapolis, where he encounters three fishermen who tell him that the king has a fair daughter Thaisa, "and tomorrow is her birthday; and there are princes and knights come from all parts of the world to joust and tourney for her love."

Fortunately, Pericles' armor is washed ashore, and he decides to attend the king's festivities wearing his armor. After all the jousting, and the presentation of all of the knights, Thaisa falls in love with Pericles, and he with her, and they are married. They board a ship to return to Tyre, but a storm rises, during which Thaisa gives birth to a daughter, which Pericles names Marina. Meanwhile, it appears that Thaisa has died. Her body is put into a sealed coffin and dropped overboard. Pericles decides to return to Tarsus where he leaves his infant daughter with Clean and his wife, to be brought up by them.

Meanwhile, Thaisa's coffin is washed ashore at Ephesus, where Lord Cerimon's servants discover it. They bring it to their master who opens it and finds a letter from Pericles describing the circumstances of her death. But Cerimon notices how fresh Thaisa looks, and she revives.

> *Cerimon.* She is alive! Behold,
> Her eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels
> Which Pericles hath lost,
> Begin to part their fringes of bright gold.... Live,
> And make us weep to hear your fate, fair creature,
> Rare as you seem to be.
> *Thaisa.* O dear Diana!
> Where am I? Where's my lord? What world is this?

Believing that she will never see Pericles again, she then enters the Temple of Diana to become a nun. In Act Four, Gower tells us:

> Now to Marina bend your mind,
> Whom our fast-growing scene must find
> At Tarsus, and by Cleon train'd
> In music, letters; who had gain'd
> Of education all the grace,
> Which makes her both the heart and place
> Of general wonder.

But this beauty and talent arouse the jealous heart of Cleon's wife, Dionyza, who engages Leonine, an assassin, to murder Marina. The dialogue between Leonine and Marina reminds us immediately of those dialogues between murderers and their victims that Marlowe was expert at. He recognized the dramatic and psychological power such a dialogue had on the audience and used it well. But before Leonine can kill her, pirates come ashore and take Marina prisoner. They take her to Mitylene where she is sold to a brothel.

The scenes in the brothel are some of the funniest in all of Shakespeare. Marina manages to fend off all potential customers, to the great chagrin of Boult, Pandar, and Bawd, the owners of the establishment. They paid a thousand pieces for her and have become totally frustrated. Bawd comments: "she would make a puritan of the devil if he should cheapen a kiss of her." They finally persuade the governor, Lysimachus, to try to seduce her. But after listening to Marina he tells her:

> Thou art a piece of virtue, and,
> I doubt not but thy training hath been noble.
> Hold, here's more gold for thee.
> A curse upon him, die like a thief,
> That robs thee of thy goodness! If thou dost
> Hear from me, it shall be for thy good.

Marina gives Boult the gold, and he places her in an honest house where she can teach, weave, sew among honest women.

Meanwhile, Pericles' ship has anchored off Mitylene. He has been living in a state of reclusive grief, unwilling to speak to anyone. Lysimachus, the governor, comes on board. He tells Helicanus that he knows of a lovely young lady who may be able to rouse Pericles from his morbid state. She is sent for and brought on board. Slowly but surely she awakens Pericles to the point where he finally recognizes her as his long-lost daughter, whom he assumed was dead. This is certainly one of the happiest scenes in all of Shakespeare.

They then sail to Ephesus to pay homage to Pericles' lost wife at the Temple of Diana. He speaks to a Lady at the Temple:

> *Pericles.* Hail, Dian! To perform thy just command,
> I here confess myself the King of Tyre;
> Who, frighted from my country, did wed
> At Pentapolis the fair Thaisa.
> At sea in childbed died she, but brought forth
> A maid-child call'd Marina; who, O goddess!
> Wears yet thy silver livery. She at Tarsus
> Was nurs'd with Cleon, whom at fourteen years
> He sought to murder; but her better stars
> Brought her to Mitylene, 'gainst whose shore

Riding, her fortunes brought the maid aboard us,
Where, by her own most clear remembrance, she
Made known herself my daughter.

After hearing this story, the Lady faints. Cerimon tells Pericles that the Lady is his wife Thaisa. He explains how her coffin was washed up on shore, and how she revived. This idea of supposed death and resurrection is much like what happened to Marlowe, who was supposedly murdered and was resurrected with another identity, using the name Shakespeare as his cover.

Because of its joyous, happy ending, *Pericles* became a very popular play. But it also has several Marlowe clues. In the jousting scene, where the knights are contending for Thais's hand, the fourth knight states his motto as: "Qui me alit me extinguit," which is another form of "Quod me nutrit me destruit." Also, Thaisa's father, the King, questions Pericles:

King. Sir, you are music's master.
Pericles. The worst of all her scholars, my good lord.

Was Marlowe referring to his days at the King's School where students were admitted because of their ability to sing? The conversation continues:

King. Sir, my daughter thinks very well of you;
Ay, so well that you must be her master,
And she will be your scholar: therefore look to it.
Pericles. I am unworthy for her schoolmaster.
King. She thinks not so.

Was Marlowe thinking of the days he tutored Arabella at the behest of Lord Burghley? There are many questions that will only be answered by continued research. The basic facts about Marlowe's life have been slowly gathered by scholars. We know about his life at Cambridge, his work in the Secret Service, the charges made against him by Baines, the Coroner's Inquest discovered by Harvard Professor Leslie Hotson in the early 1920s, and other substantive documents. But far more research has been done on William Shakespeare by an army of scholars who have come up with nothing related to the man as a professional writer. We suspect that there is a great deal more waiting in the archives to be uncovered about Marlowe.

Cymbeline

There is so much exile, banishment, disguise, mistaken identities, and dirty tricks in *Cymbeline,* that one is tempted to believe that the only author who could have written it must have experienced some of it. Shakespeare's humdrum life as businessman, part theatre owner and actor cannot account for a tenth of what goes on in this complex and chaotic play. The plot is so preposterous that Dr. Johnson wrote of it:

> To remark the folly of the fiction, the absurdity of the conduct, the confusion of the names, and manners of different times, and the impossibility of the events in any system of life, were to waste criticism upon unresisting imbecility, upon faults too evident for detection, and too gross for aggravation.

Harold Bloom writes (p.615):

> Nothing fits, anything goes in this wild play, where Shakespeare really does seem to let himself range.

Historically, the play takes place between 33 B.C. and 40 A.D. when Britain was ruled by the Romans. It opens with two gentlemen conversing at court, giving us some background of the plot to come. They reveal that King Cymbeline had two sons who were kidnapped twenty years earlier and have not been seen since. His daughter, Imogen, the remaining child, is heir to the throne. It had been expected that she would marry Cloten, the son of the king's second wife, her stepmother. Instead, she secretly marries Posthumus, an orphan who had been brought up with her as the king's ward. As punishment for this disobedience, the king banishes Posthumus.

Posthumus goes to Rome to live in exile at the home of his father's ancient friend, Philario. What is peculiar is that this Rome is of the Renaissance, not ancient Rome, and this use of two different historical eras in the same play has always puzzled scholars. But we suspect that the playwright was following his different plot sources and didn't care about this discrepancy.

In Rome Posthumus is introduced to Iachimo who insists that no woman can resist him. He even bets Posthumus that he can seduce Imogen. Posthumus accepts the bet. Iachimo travels to the British court and through a series of dirty tricks manages to get hold of Imogen's bracelet and a peek at a mole on her left breast while she is soundly asleep. He brings this evidence back to Rome where Posthumus is crushed. He sends a letter to his servant at court, Pisanio, ordering him to kill Imogen.

Meanwhile, the wicked stepmother Queen has asked her physician to provide her with a box of poisonous compounds. The physician, not trusting the Queen, provides her with sedatives that will put people to sleep but not kill them. The Queen gives the box to Pisanio, which will be used by Imogen in a later scene.

From here on, the play becomes quite complicated. Henry N. Hudson, in *Shakespeare: His Life, Art, and Characters,* writes (p.420):

> In its structure, *Cymbeline* is more complex and involved than any other of the Poet's dramas. In includes no less than four distinct groups of persons, with each its several interests and course of action. First, we have Imogen, Posthumus, Pisanio, and Iachimo, in which group the main interest is centred; then, the King, the Queen, and Prince Cloten, the Queen's shrewd blockhead of a son, who carry on a separate scheme of their own; next, the Imperial representative, Lucius, who

> comes first as Roman Ambassador to reclaim the neglected tribute, and then as general with an army to enforce it; last, old Belarius and the two lost Princes, who emerge from their hiding-place to bear a leading part in bringing about the catastrophe.

Yet, the playwright manages to pull the whole thing off quite brilliantly. Schlegel called *Cymbeline* "one of Shakespeare's most wonderful compositions." Bloom has a different view, when he says, "You can say of *Cymbeline* that nothing works or that everything does, because the play is a large ellipsis with too much left out." He goes on later to say (p.635):

> Shakespeare cannot stop himself, in his run-on self-parodies.... Compulsive self-parody does not exist elsewhere in Shakespeare; in *Cymbeline* it passes all bounds. Shakespeare probably cannot stop, or if he will not stop, that hardly alters the critical question: Why is the self-travesty so unrelenting?

It probably has more to do with Marlowe's state of mind at that time than with Shakespeare's. Scholars keep trying to find in the man William Shakespeare what is not there. If we simply recognize that the name Shakespeare is a cover for Marlowe, then we can go to the real source of the unrelenting self-travesty. Bloom seems to put his finger on it when he draws our attention to Act V, Scene iv, in which Posthumus is put in prison. Alone he speaks:

> Most welcome, bondage! for thou art a way,
> I think, to liberty. Yet am I better
> Than one that's sick o' the gout, since he had rather
> Groan so in perpetuity than be cur'd
> By the sure physician death, who is the key
> To unbar these locks.

It was Lord Burghley, Marlowe's boss, who suffered greatly from the gout. Posthumus then falls asleep and has a weird dream in which his family appears and circle round him. In poetic chant they describe what has happened to Posthumus. They call for Jupiter to appear, which he does and predicts future happiness for Posthumus. The dream then ends. Posthumus awakes. He says:

> 'Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen
> Tongue and brain not; either both or nothing;
> Of senseless speaking, or a speaking such
> As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,
> The action of my life is like it, which
> I'll keep, if but for sympathy.

Was Marlowe himself becoming schizophrenic? Bloom writes (p.636):

> Through Posthumus, I hear Shakespeare observing that the action of our lives is lived for us, and that the desperate best we can do is to accept ("keep") what happens as if we performed it, if but for ironic sympathy with ourselves. It is another of those uncanny recognitions in which Shakespeare is already beyond Nietzsche.

The businessman William Shakespeare was hardly the type to go beyond Nietzsche. We can only find the answer in Marlowe. Did Marlowe suffer depression when writing these last plays? Another question that begs to be answered.

The final scene of the play is the reconciliation scene to end all reconciliation scenes. It begins with the announcement that the wicked queen is dead. Cymbeline is told that she confessed that she never loved him and married him to advance her son. Imogen and Posthumus are reconciled but not before he knocks her down. They are also reconciled with the King. Iachimo describes his villainy, admits his dirty tricks and repents. The King's abducted sons are revealed for who they really are, and their abductor, Belarius, is forgiven by the King, who exclaims, "Thou art my brother; so we'll hold ever." And Cymbeline is reconciled with Rome. Cymbeline's closing speech might well have been titled "all's well that ends well."

> Laud we the gods;
> And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
> From our bless'd altars. Publish we this peace
> To all our subjects. Set we forward: let
> A Roman and a British ensign wave
> Friendly together; so through Lud's town march:
> And in the temple of great Jupiter
> Our peace we'll ratify; seal it with feasts,
> Set on there. Never was a war did cease,
> Ere bloody hands were wash'd, with such a peace.

Are there any Marlowe clues in the play? We find out through Iachimo that Imogen had been reading the story of Tereus in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* before she fell asleep. That is the very same book that Lavinia refers to in *Titus Andronicus* in order to reveal what had been done to her.

> *Titus.* Lavinia, shall I read?
> This is the tragic tale of Philomel,
> And treats of Tereus' treason and his rape;
> And rape, I fear, was root of thine annoy.

Many scholars believe that *Titus Andronicus* was written by Marlowe. Is it not interesting that Imogen should be reading the same story in the same book as referred to by Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus?* Also, Ovid was Marlowe's favorite poet. And in Act III, Scene iv, Imogen refers to "false Aeneas," a reference to the story of Dido, Queen of Carthage, the subject of Marlowe's earliest play, of which we find references throughout the plays in the First Folio. We can easily identify the reference to Dido as Marlowe's personal code.

As for sources, elements of the complex plot were taken from Holinshed, early French romances, and Boccaccio's novels. The French romances had to read in French, and Boccaccio had to be read in Italian. Marlowe could read both. Only King Cymberline was historically real. All the other characters were fabrications of the playwright.

The Winter's Tale

The Winter's Tale is a play based on a novel, *Pandosto,* by Marlowe's old friend Robert Greene who died in 1592. Greene, born in 1558, attended St. John's College at Cambridge from 1575 to 1578. He is best remembered for his diatribe, *A Groatsworth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance,* written during his final illness and edited by Henry Chettle. Scholars assume he was referring to Shakespeare when he wrote of "an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers...and in his own conceit the only Shake-scene in the country." Greene was actually referring to Edward Alleyn, the actor, who was the great Shake-scene of the time and hated by Greene. In 1592, William Shakespeare was a complete unknown.

Frederick E. Pierce, editor of the Yale edition of the play, writes (p.128):

> The novel—or novelette, for it can be read in an hour—from which Shakespeare drew most of the plot of his *Winter's Tale* was *Pandosto: the Triumph of Time*...which first appeared in 1588 and was a 'best-seller' for years before Shakespeare dramatized it.

In other words, the playwright took an inferior novel and, after making considerable improvements, turned it into a successful play that has survived four centuries. It was first staged in the Spring of 1611.

The play is fast moving, with an easy-to-follow plot, without the cross-weaving of several subsidiary plots as in *Cymbeline.* At the opening we are told that Leontes, King of Sicily, and Polixenes, King of Bohemia, were raised together as children and have become close lifelong friends. Prolixenes has been on an extended visit to Sicily and now is anxious to return home. But Leontes urges him to stay a week longer. Polixenes protests that he must leave. Leontes then asks his wife, Hermione, to use her powers to persuade Prolixenes to stay. The Bohemian king finally gives in and agrees to stay another week.

But when Leontes sees his wife, acting the good hostess, go off with Polixenes to make sure that he is well entertained, Leontes begins to suspect that the two are having an affair. His paranoid nature quickly erupts into raving sexual jealousy bordering on the psychotic. He orders his loyal adviser, Camillo, to poison Polixenes. But Camillo is too moral to carry out the order and urges Polixenes to leave Sicily immediately. Polixenes persuades Camillo to go with him to the awaiting ships, which he does.

When Leontes is told that Polixenes and Camillo have set sail for Bohemia, he is furious. He confronts Hermione, calls her an adulteress and orders her to prison. Lord Antigonus warns Leontes:

> Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice
> Prove violence: in the which three great ones suffer,
> Yourself, your queen, your son.

But Leontes refuses to be dissuaded. But in order to appease the Lords, he tells them:

> I have dispatch'd in post
> To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,
> Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know
> Of stuff'd sufficiency. Now, from the oracle
> They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had,
> Shall stop or spur me.

Meanwhile, after twenty-three days in prison Hermione gives birth prematurely to a little daughter. Paulina, the Queen's lady, insists that the King be made aware of the new-born child. She brings the child to Leontes who calls it a bastard, "the issue of Polixenes," and orders Antigonus, Pauline's husband, to get rid of it:

> We enjoin thee,
> As thou art liegeman to us, that thou carry
> This female bastard hence; and that thou bear it
> To some remote and desert place quite out
> Of our dominions; and that there thou leave it
> Without more mercy, to its own protection,
> And favour of the climate.

Antigonus swears to do so, and departs with the child, after which the King is told that the emissaries to Delphos have returned with the sealed oracle.

In Act III, Scene Two, Hermione's trial takes place. She defends herself eloquently against Leontes' accusations of adultery and conspiracy:

> I do confess
> I lov'd him as in honour he requir'd,
> With such a kind of love as might become
> A lady like me; with a love even such,
> So, and no other, as yourself commanded:
> Which not to have done I think had been in me
> Both disobedience and ingratitude
> To you and toward your friend, whose love had spoke,
> Even since it could speak, from an infant, freely
> That it was yours.

She also denies knowing why Camillo decided to leave with Polixenes.

> *Hermione.* Sir,
> You speak a language that I understand not:
> My life stands in the level of your dreams,
> Which I'll lay down.

Finally, the sealed Oracle of Delphi is opened and read. It says:

> 'Hermione is chaste; Polixenes blameless; Camillo a true subject; Leontes a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe truly begotten; and the king shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found.'

Leontes rejects the Oracle as false. "There is no truth at all i' the oracle." Just then a servant enters and tells the King that his son is dead. Hermione swoons and Leontes orders her to be carried out and tended to. He has a sudden change of heart and begs Apollo for forgiveness:

> Apollo, pardon
> My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!
> I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,
> New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,
> Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy....

Paulina then enters and tells the King that the Queen in dead. Leontes is overwhelmed with guilt and grief.

In the next scene, Antigonus and the Babe have landed on the desert coast of Bohemia. He has dreamed that Hermione has named the child Perdita, the lost one. He lays down the Babe with a bundle and exits, "pursued by a bear." A shepherd, looking for some lost sheep, comes across the Babe and the bundle. Meanwhile, his son, Clown, has witnessed what happened to Antigonus, who was attacked by the bear, called for help, but was killed by the bear.

The Shepherd shows his son the abandoned baby:

> Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth for a squire's child! Look thee here: take up, take up, boy; open 't. So let's see: it was told me, I should be rich by the fairies: this is some changeling.—Open 't. What's within, boy?
> *Clown.* You're a made old man: if the sins of your youth are forgiven, you're well to live. Gold! all gold!
> *Shepherd.* This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so: up with 't, keep it close: home, home, the next way. We are lucky, boy; and to be so still, requires nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go. Come, good boy, the next way home.

Act Four opens with Time telling us that sixteen years have passed and Perdita is now a beautiful young lady. Meanwhile, at Polixenes' palace, Camillo is anxious to return to Sicily. Leontes, the penitent King, has sent for him. But Polixenes has become so dependent on Camillo's skillful services, that he begs Camillo to remain. He also expresses his concern over his son, Florizel.

> *Polixenes.* I have this intelligence, that he is seldom from the house of a most homely shepherd; a man, they say, that from very nothing, and beyond the imagination of his neighbours, is grown into an unspeakable estate.

The King proposes that he and Camillo go to the shepherd's house in disguise to see what Florizel has been up to.

In Scene Three, a new character enters, Autolycus, a petty thief and balladeer, who once served Prince Florizel, and is now out of service. Kenneth Muir writes of him (p.248):

> In the scenes in Bohemia Shakespeare recreates a lost world of innocence, which is prevented from being unreal or sentimental by the introduction of Autolycus, 'the snapper-up of unconsidered trifles', who might have stepped out of any of the pamphlets by Greene or Dekker, exposing the iniquities of the criminal underworld.

Greene had indeed written pamphlets on cony-catching and described in detail how pick pockets and cut-purses would use ballad singing as a means of drawing a crowd and then announce that someone had lost his purse, so that the bystanders would put their hands exactly where their purses were. Muir writes:

> It is curious that Shakespeare should be able to combine in a single play the two totally different kinds of work written by Greene—the romantic, unrealistic novel and the sordid documentaries of the seamy side of Elizabethan London.

This is another indication that the writer of *The Winter's Tale* was Marlowe, who knew Greene, had read his works, and knew how to adapt them for the stage. There is no indication that Shakespeare ever knew Greene, who died in 1592.

We get an idea of how Autolycus operates by the technique he uses to pick the pocket of Clown. This scene certainly amused and informed the audience by dramatic demonstration on how pick pockets worked. The audience would have taken pains to secure their own purses.

In Scene Four, we find Florizel and Perdita engaged in romantic dialogue before the Shepherd's cottage, where a sheep-shearing feast is about to take place and guests are beginning to arrive. Among those entering the scene are the Shepherd, Polixenes and Camillo in disguise, Clown, Mopsa, Dorcas, and Others. Perdita welcomes the disguised king and they have a lovely conversation on flowers and horticulture as Camillo stands by and listens.

There is then an interlude of dancing and singing. Autolycus enters and tries to sell Mopsa and Dorcas his ballads in print, much like the song-sheets of the 1930s.

Presently, Polixenes engages Florizel in friendly conversation. The subject turns to his love for Perdita, and he tells his disguised father:

> [W]ere I crown'd the most imperial monarch,
> Thereof most worthy, were I the fairest youth,
> That ever made eye swerve, had force and knowledge
> More than was ever man's, I would not prize them
> Without her love: for her employ them all;
> Commend them and condemn them to her service
> Or to their own perdition.

Polixenes then asks Florizel about his father. "Knows he of this?" Florizel replies that he has no intention of telling his father. They argue about this, and finally Polixenes becomes so angry that he removes his disguise, denounces his son and tells him that unless he give up Perdita,

> --we'll bar thee from succession;
> Not hold thee of our blood, no, not our kin,
> Far than Deucalion off: mark thou my words:
> Follow us to the court. Thou, churl, for this time,
> Though full of our displeasure, yet we free thee
> From the dead blow of it.

As for the Shepherd, he is not to allow Florizel to enter his house, or else: "I will devise a death as cruel for thee As thou art tender to 't." He then storms out.

Camillo, present at the scene, advises Florizel not to see his father while he is in this angry state. But Florizel tells him:

> Not for Bohemia, nor the pomp that may
> Be thereat glean'd, for all the sun sees or
> The close earth wombs or the profound sea hides
> In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
> To this my fair belov'd....
> I am put to sea
> With her whom here I cannot hold on shore;
> And most opportune to our need, I have
> A vessel rides fast by, but not prepar'd
> For this design. What course I mean to hold
> Shall nothing benefit your knowledge, nor
> Concern me the reporting.

While Florizel is conferring with Perdita, Camillo thinks to himself:

> He's irremovable,
> Resolv'd for flight. Now were I happy if
> His going I could frame to serve my turn,
> Save him from danger, do him love and honour,
> Purchase the sight again of dear Sicilia
> And that unhappy king, my master, whom
> I so much thirst to see.

Camillo then tells Florizel that rather than set out on "unpath'd waters" and "undreamed shores," they ought to go to Sicilia, where Leontes would welcome the son of the man whose forgiveness he deeply seeks. There the lovers may prosper. Camillo then tells the prince how to act when he gets there:

> I'll write you down:
> The which shall point you forth at every sitting
> What you must say; that he shall not perceive
> But that you have your father's bosom there
> And speak his very heart.

Florizel agrees. Camillo adds:

> Besides, you know
> Prosperity's the very bond of love,
> Whose fresh complexion and whose heart together
> Affliction alters.

While Camillo and Florizel talk aside, Autolycus enters. He boasts to himself of the success he had in picking the pockets of the guests as the feast. On seeing Autolycus, Camillo persuades him to change his clothes with those of Florizel, in order that the prince may well disguise himself. After the exchange, Florizel remarks: "Should I now meet my father He would not call me his son." After the lovers and Camillo leave, Autolycus then sees Clown and Shepherd who are discussing their own predicament. He overhears them speak of the secret things that were found with the abandoned baby.

Autolycus, dressed in Florizel's splendid clothes, removes his false beard, and approaches the rustics, and asks where they are going. To the palace, they reply. He suggests that he be their go-between, an advocate at court. He then asks about the fardel and what might be in it.

> *Shepherd.* Sir, there lies such secrets in this fardel and box which none must know but the king; and which he shall know within this hour if I may come to the speech of him.

But Autolycus tells the shepherd that the king is not at his palace. He is on board ship to "purge melancholy and air himself." He then persuades Clown and Shepherd not go personally before the king alone, lest they be tortured and hanged. He is willing to go with them as their advocate. They offer him gold "to undertake the business for us," which Autolycus, the enterprising con artist, gladly accepts.

Act Five takes us to Leontes' palace in Sicilia, where the king has lived in "saint-like sorrow" since the loss of his wife and son. Lord Cleomenes pleads with the king to forgive himself, that he has "paid down More penitence than done trespass."

> *Leontes.* Whilst I remember
> Her and her virtues, I cannot forget
> My blemishes in them, and so still think of
> The wrong I did myself; which was so much,
> That heirless it hath made my kingdom, and
> Destroy'd the sweet'st companion that e'er man
> Bred his hopes out of.

Although the Lords want the king to marry again, Paulina reminds everyone of what the Oracle predicted, that King Leontes would not have an heir until his lost child was found. And Leontes vows to Paulina that he will never take another wife. "We shall not marry till thou bidd'st us."

Just then a servant enters and announces the arrival of Florizel, son of Polixenes, with his most beautiful princess. When they enter Leontes is struck by Florizel's resemblance to his father and the beauty of the princess, whom he calls a goddess.

Florizel explains that his father sent him to Sicilia with his greetings. Leontes asks about the princess, and Florizel tells him that she came from Libya. Leontes accepts the story. But then a Lord enters and tells Leontes that Florizel has fled his father with a shepherd's daughter. He has learned this from the girl's father and brother who came to Sicilia in the same boat with Autolycus and the lovers. Florizel believes that Camillo has betrayed him. Nevertheless, Leontes supports the lovers and agrees to help them.

Scene Two takes place outside the Palace where Autolycus is speaking with a Gentleman.

> *Autolycus.* Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation?
> *Gentleman.* I was by at the opening of the fardel, heard the old shepherd deliver the manner how he found it: whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all commanded out of the chamber.

At that point a second Gentleman enters with astonishing news:

> Nothing but bonfires: the oracle is fulfilled; the king's daughter is found; such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it.

Just then Paulina's steward enters. The Second Gentleman asks: "Has the king found his heir?"

> *Third Gentleman.* Most true....Did you see the meeting of the two kings?
> *Second Gentleman.* No.
> *Third Gentleman.* Then have you lost a sight, which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of.... Our king, being ready to leap out of himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries, 'O, thy mother, thy mother!' then asks Bohemia forgiveness; then embraces his son-in-law; then again worries he his daughter with clipping [embracing] her; now he thanks the old shepherd, which stands by like a weather-bitten conduit of many kings' reigns.

He then goes on to explain what happened to unlucky Antigonus and how the shepherd's son was able to salvage a handkerchief and rings from the dead man, which Paulina recognized as belonging to her husband. He then tells of the very moving moment when Perdita asked the king about her mother's death. When she heard of her mother's statue kept in a chapel in Paulina's house, she asked if she could see it. The Second Gentleman remarks about Paulina:

> I thought she had some great matter there in hand, for she hath privately twice or thrice a day, ever since the death of Hermione, visited that removed house.

The inference is that Hermione was still alive, secretly provided with food and necessities by Paulina. The Gentlemen leave, and Autolycus enters. He explains how he brought the shepherd and his son aboard the boat, told the prince that he heard them talk of a fardel, which they brought with them. And now they are all Gentlemen.

> *Clown.* ...for the king's son took me by the hand and called me brother; and then the two kings called my father brother; and then the prince my brother and the princess my sister called my father father; and so we wept: and there was the first gentleman-like tears that ever we shed.

In Scene Three Leontes, Polixenes, Florizel, Perdita, Camillo, Paulina, Lords and Attendants all enter the Chapel in Paulina's house where Hermione's statue stands. When Paulina draws back a curtain and reveals the statue, Leontes remarks that when Hermione died sixteen years before she "was not so much wrinkled; nothing So aged as this seems."

The life-like statue begins to move, and to the amazement of all, Paulina orders the statue to descend. And she does. Leontes embraces her. "O! she's warm," he exclaims. Paulina then tells Perdita to kneel before her mother and ask for her blessing. Hermione then thanks Paulina for preserving her so that one day she might see her daughter again. And finally, Leontes persuades Camillo to marry Paulina, the widowed wife of Antigonus. He then ends the play by telling Paulina:

Lead us from hence, where we may liesurely
Each one demand and answer to his part
Perform'd in this wide gap of time since first
We were dissever'd: hastily lead away.

This delightful happy ending certainly left the audience in a good mood. It is believed that it was first staged on May 15, 1611, since a record of that performance was made by Dr. Simon Forman who wrote of the play and gave an analysis of the plot. It seems to have become a favorite at James's court. No quarto editions of it exist, and apparently its first appearance in print is in the First Folio of 1623.

This is a play full of disguises, hidden identities, an individual kept secretly hidden for sixteen years so that a resurrection could take place. It also has escapes by sea which Marlowe undoubtedly experienced when he left Deptford in 1593. The fact that Robert Greene's novel was the basis of the play indicates that Marlowe was very familiar with Greene's work and found *Pandosta* eminently adaptable for the stage.

Harold Bloom writes (p.639):

> *The Winter's Tale* surges with Shakespeare's full power, though changed altogether from any of its earlier displays.... [It] is a vast pastoral lyric.... "Pastoral romance" increasingly seems a very odd description of *The Winter's Tale,* "grotesque comedy" is much apter. Again, Shakespeare writes no genre; extravagance, a wandering beyond limits, is his truest mode. He will not be confined by any convention or by any intellectual enterprise. (p.660)

Which accounts for the tremendous scope of the poet's vision and his ability to write in so many different moods. Such genius required the kind of education that Marlowe had, the many books he had to have read in Latin, French, Italian, and the kind of extraordinary knowledge of human nature he possessed. He created a world of immortal characters who remain vital and alive four hundred years after their creation.

Chapter Forty-Eight

The First Folio (Part XII)

The Tempest

Few of the plays attributed to Shakespeare have been as difficult to analyze as *The Tempest.* It is considered the poet's last play, and therefore a kind of swan song. Of its source, Robert Langbaum, editor of the Signet edition of the play, writes (p.125):

> There is no known source for the plot of *The Tempest.* As far as we know, *The Tempest* and *Love's Labor's Lost* are Shakespeare's two original plots.... If there is no source for *The Tempest,* there are documents that are relevant to it. The names of many of the characters probably derive from Thomas' *History of Italy* (1549), and the name "Setebos" derives from Robert Eden's *History of Travaile* (1577), which mentions the "great devill Setebos" worshiped by the Patagonians. Shakespeare paraphrases a passage from John Florio's translation (1603) of Montaigne's essay on the American Indians, "Of the Caniballes" (Caliban's name may derive from "cannibal"); and he paraphrases a speech of the witch Medea in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*—using Arthur Golding's translation (1567), which he apparently checked against the Latin original.

The idea of a ship damaged in a storm and taking shelter off a tropical island was probably suggested by Sylvester Jourdain's *A Discovery of the Barmudas,* published in 1610. The island manages to feed and sustain the survivors until they can repair their ship and continue to Virginia.

Harold Bloom confesses to being puzzled by certain aspects of the play. He writes (pp.662):

> The play is fundamentally plotless; its one outer event is the magically induced storm of the first scene, which rather oddly gives the play its title....It is a wildly experimental stage comedy, prompted ultimately, I suspect, by Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus.* Prospero, Shakespeare's magus, carries a name that is the Italian translation of Faustus, which is the Latin cognomen ("the favored one") that Simon Magus the Gnostic took when he went to Rome. With Ariel, a sprite or angel (the name is Hebrew for "the lion of God"), as his familiar rather than Marlowe's Mephistopheles, Prospero is Shakespeare's anti-Faust, and a final transcending of Marlowe.

Bloom is certainly right in finding an affinity in the play between Shakespeare and Marlowe, although the latter was supposed to have been dead for eighteen years. He writes further (p.674):

> Authority seems to me the play's mysterious preoccupation. I say "mysterious" because Prospero's authority is unlike anyone else's in Shakespeare.

And that's because Prospero is Marlowe! Indeed, if we see the play as having been written by Marlowe, it begins to make sense, for it is Marlowe who speaks through Prospero.

The play opens with a violent tempest and a shipwreck on the coast of an island in the Mediterranean between Tunis and Italy. The island has only three inhabitants: Prospero, his daughter Miranda, and Caliban, their misshapen servant. Prospero and his daughter were exiled from Milan by his brother Antonio, who usurped Prospero's position as Duke of Milan.

Prospero, a very scholarly man, loved his books more than he loved power, and so he let Antonio run the Dukedom. Eventually, Antonio, tired of playing second fiddle, sent Prospero and little Miranda into exile at this remote island where they found adequate shelter in a large cave. They only found one other human being on the island, Caliban, a savage, the son of the witch Sycorax, who had been exiled from Argier in North Africa to the island and died there.

When Prospero found Caliban, he took him into his dwelling, taught him language with Miranda's help, treated him as one of the family until Caliban "didst seek to violate the honor of my child." From then on Caliban would be treated as a servant and slave.

Already, we have the beginnings of Marlowe's own situation. He had been living in a state of exile since 1593 and it is possible that he had a daughter living with him. But what is Prospero? He is an author, who creates characters, events, and the world they live in. Miranda knows that her father has these creative powers and tells him:

> If by your art, my dearest father, you have
> Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them....
> O! I have suffered
> With those that I saw suffer: a brave vessel
> Who had no doubt some noble creature in her—
> Dash'd all to pieces....
> *Prospero.* Be collected:
> No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart
> There's no harm done.

In other words, he had the power to create the tempest, wreck the ship, and save its passengers. And that is the same inventive power Marlowe had since he started writing plays with characters that have become immortal. In a sense, the playwright is the god of his own universe, creating a world of people from his own creative powers, fictional characters who have had as much influence on mankind as historical persons. George H. Morrison, in his book *Christ in Shakespeare,* understands that power of creation very well. He explains (p.13):

> It is one mark of a great dramatist that he loses himself in the beings he creates. He does not make them speak; it is rather as if he listened to them speaking. Dickens used to laugh heartily at the comical things Sam Weller said, as though he were hearing them for the first time.
>
> You can get at Dante or Milton through their poems: you cannot get at Shakespeare. He creates, and then his characters go their way, speaking and acting as they will. They are not marionettes, controlled by strings which are jerked by an external hand; they are free and self-determined beings. The things they say spring from what they are. They betray nothing of what Shakespeare is.

Prospero is helped in his creative labors by Ariel, his creative spirit, whom Prospero sends among his characters, to listen to them and see what they are up to. Although Prospero has created them and put them in place and time, they have their own autonomy. Some are good, some are evil, and they are as real as historical human beings. Who can deny the reality of Hamlet, or Othello or Lear or Juliet? Marlowe must have realized that there was something supernatural about his poetic genius. He could write as no one else had ever written or would ever write after him. To have that genius within him was both a great blessing and a curse. And therefore, he had no choice but to write.

Prospero explains to Miranda why they are on this island.

> 'Tis time
> I should inform thee farther: Lend thy hand
> And pluck my magic garment from me. So,
> Lie there, my art. Wipe thou thine eyes; have comfort;
> The direful spectacle of the wrack which touch'd
> The very virtue of compassion in mine art
> So safely order'd that there is no soil,
> No, not so much perdition as an hair,
> Betid to any creature in the vessel
> Which thou heard'st cry, which thou saw'st sink.

Obviously, Miranda sees her father as a man with magical powers, in that he has created a universe peopled with characters who owe their lives to him. All of that is pure magic. Prospero explains to Miranda the circumstances of their exile. He relates how her uncle conspired with the King of Naples to dethrone him. "Me, poor man, my library was dukedom large enough." They were sent into exile on a rotting ship, but were saved by "providence divine" which led them to this desolate island.

> Some food we had, and some fresh water, that

A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo,
Out of his charity—who being then appointed
Master of this design—did give us, with
Rich garments, linens, stuffs, and necessaries
Which since have steaded much; so of his gentleness,
Knowing I lov'd my books, he furnish'd me
From mine own library with volumes that
I prize above my dukedom.

The above could easily be seen as how Marlowe was helped when he was required to live in exile, probably in a cottage in Kent, near the sea. There he would continue to turn our plays, which were taken to Shakespeare at the Globe theatre.

As for books, if anyone truly loved them and needed them for his work, it was Marlowe, who had haunted the booksellers at St. Paul's, where he probably met Ed Blount, who was to play a crucial role in his life. Marlowe's library would have included Holinshed, Plutarch's Live, Ovid, Vergil, John Florio, Montaigne, the Geneva Bible, and all other sources of his plays. As for William Shakespeare, according to his will, he had no library and no books, not even a Bible. Prospero tells Miranda:

Prospero. Here in this island we arriv'd, and here
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit
Than other princess can, that have more time
For vainer hour and tutors not so careful.

Was Marlowe thinking of the time he tutored Arbella, who gained a reputation for being very well educated? But Miranda still wants to know why her father raised this tempest. He explains:

Know thus far forth:
By accident most strange, bountiful fortune—
Now my dear lady—hath mine enemies
Brought to this shore; and by my prescience
I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop—here cease more questions.
Thou art inclined to sleep; 'tis a good dullness,
And give it way—I know thou canst not choose.
Come away, servant, come! I am ready now.
Approach, my Ariel. Come!

He caused the tempest in order to bring his enemies to these shores. Ariel enters. He is clearly Prospero's creative spirit and carries out the creator's wishes. He has been to the shipwreck where the passengers escaped by leaping into the water and swimming ashore.

> *Prospero.* But are they, Ariel, safe?
> *Ariel.* Not a hair perished:
> On their sustaining garments not a blemish,
> But fresher than before; and as thou bad'st me,
> In troops I have dispers'd them 'bout the isle.
> The king's son have I landed by himself,
> Whom I left cooling of the air with sighs,
> In an odd angle of the isle, and sitting,
> His arms in this sad knot.

Ariel then relates how he dispersed the other ships in the fleet heading toward Naples and put the king's ship safely in harbor in a deep nook where it is hidden. Prospero is very pleased.

Ferdinand, the king's son, has been separated from the rest of the people aboard the ship and thinks they are all dead. Ariel, through music, brings the prince to Miranda. They meet and fall in love. Prospero is delighted.

> At the first sight
> They have chang'd eyes!

This is Marlowe's well-known dictum of love at first sight. But because they are so truly paired, Prospero creates an artificial dispute because he is afraid that their happiness will come too easily. But what it does is bring out from Ferdinand a stronger determination to win Miranda.

In Act Two, Scene One, we find the survivors of the shipwreck, King Alonso of Naples; Sebastian, his brother; Antonio, Prospero's brother and usurping Duke of Milan; Gonzalo, an honest old councilor who helped Prospero when he was sent into exile; Adrian and Francisco, Lords; and others. They are discussing their predicament, with most of them bewailing their loss. But Gonzalo, optimistic by nature, sees their preservation as a miracle. To him, the glass is half-full, while the others see the glass as half-empty. Alonso tells them to stop bickering. Adrian comments:

> Though this island seem to be desert… Uninhabitable and almost inaccessible…. It must needs be of subtle, tender, and delicious temperance…. The air breathes upon us here most sweetly….
> *Gonzalo.* Here is everything advantageous to life…. How lush and lusty the grass looks! How green!…That our garments being—as they were—drench'd in the sea, hold, notwithstanding, their freshness and glosses, being rather new-dy'd than stain'd with salt water…. Methinks our garments are now as fresh as when we put them on first in Afric, at the marriage of the king's fair daughter Claribel to the King of Tunis.
> *Sebastian.* 'Twas a sweet marriage, and we prosper well in our return.
> *Adrian.* Tunis was never grac'd before with such a paragon to their queen.
> *Gonzalo.* Not since widow Dido's time.

Antonio. Widow? A pox o' that! How came that widow in? Widow Dido!
Sebastian. What if he had said 'widower Aeneas' too? Good lord, how you take it!
Adrian. 'Widow Dido' said you? You make me study of that. She was of Carthage, not of Tunis.
Gonzalo. This Tunis, sir, was Carthage.
Adrian. Carthage?
Gonzalo. I assure you, Carthage....
Sebastian. Bate, I beseech you, widow Dido.
Antonio. Oh, widow Dido? Ay, widow Dido!

Why all this badinage about Dido? This was Marlowe's code, inserted and used in many of the plays, to identify its true author.

Alonso. Would I had never
Married my daughter there, for coming thence
My son is lost and—in my rate—she too,
Who is so far from Italy remov'd
I ne're again shall see her. O thou mine heir
Of Naples and of Milan, what strange fish
Hath made his meal on thee?

But as we know, his son Ferdinand is not lost, but in love with Miranda. Meanwhile, Gonzalo speculates on what a utopia he would create on this island were he king of it. The others find his plan laughable.

Ariel then enters playing solemn music that puts them all to sleep except Alonso, Sebastian, and Antonio. Alonso then falls asleep having been assured by Sebastian and Antonio that they would guard him. Antonio then talks Sebastian into a plan to kill his brother the king and become king of Naples himself. They also decide to kill Gonzalo. Ariel then enters with music and song and looks at sleeping Gonzalo:

My master through his art foresees the danger
That you, his friend, are in and sends me forth—
For else his project dies—to keep them living.

Ariel sings into Gonzalo's ear and wakens him. Seeing Sebastian and Antonio with swords drawn, Gonzalo immediately wakens King Alonso. Surprised, Sabastian and Antonio pretend that they heard the loud sounds of wild animals and therefore drew their swords. But neither Alonso nor Gonzalo heard such sounds, and they decide to leave that place and search for Ferdinand.

Scene Two opens with Caliban complaining about Prospero, whose spirits are constantly tormenting him, driving him crazy. Trinculo, a jester, then enters. He sees Caliban:

What have we here, a man? or a fish? dead or alive? A fish. He smells like a fish—a very ancient and fishlike smell—a kind of, not of the newest, poor-john—a strange fish! Were I in England now—as once I was—and had but this fish painted, not a holiday fool there but would give a piece of silver; there would this monster make a man: any strange beast there makes a man! When they will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar, they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian.

Just then, a thunderstorm breaks out, and Trinculo, seeking shelter, crawls under Caliban's garment. Stephano, the king's drunken butler then enters singing. He sees four legs under Caliban's garment.

Stephano. This is some monster of the isle with four legs, who hath got—as I take it—an ague. Where the divel should he learn our language.... If I can recover him and keep him tame, and get to Naples with him, he's a present for any emperor that ever trod on neat's leather.

Caliban believes that Stephano is another of Prospero's spirits. Trinculo, still hiding under Caliban's garment, recognizes Stephano's voice.

Stephano. Four legs and two voices—a most delicate monster!... If all the wine in my bottle will recover him, I will help his ague.

Stephano recognizes Trinculo's voice and pulls him out from under Caliban's garment. When Caliban sees the two men, he says:

These be fine things and if they be not sprites! That's a brave god, and bears celestial liquor. I will kneel to him.

Caliban asks Stephano if he was heaven sent. Stephano says he is the man in the moon, which Caliban believes. He swears to be his ever loyal subject.

Trinculo. A most ridiculous monster, to make a wonder of a poor drunkard.

Caliban then asks his new god if he would come with him. Stephano replies, "lead the way."

In Act Three, Scene One we see the wonderful interaction between Ferdinand and Miranda. He is carrying logs to help her father. Miranda offers to help him. He replies:

No precious creature,
I had rather crack my sinews, break my back,
Than you should such dishonor undergo
While I sit lazy by.

Prospero is behind Miranda unseen, observing the two. Ferdinand confesses the depth of his love by telling Miranda:

For several virtues
Have I lik'd several women, never any
With so full soul, but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest of graces she ow'd
And put it to the foil. But you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best....
The very instant that I saw you did
My heart fly to your service, there resides
To make me slave to it and for your sake
Am I this patient log-man.

Prospero is most pleased and impressed by the young man and the vows that the two lovers exchange. When they leave, he says:

So glad of this as they I cannot be
Who are surpris'd with all, but my rejoicing
At nothing can be more! I'll to my book,
For yet ere supper time must I perform
Much business appertaining.

Scene Two finds Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo drinking themselves silly. Caliban, totally subservient to Stephano, can find no other way to express his love than by licking his shoes. He then persuades Stephano to kill Prospero and make himself king of the island.

Caliban. As I told thee before, I am subject to a tyrant, a sorcerer, that by his cunning hath cheated me of the island....I say by sorcery he got this isle
From me he got it. If they greatness will,
Revenge it on him—for I know thou dar'st
But this thing dare not.

Meanwhile, Ariel has entered invisibly and listens to their plotting.

Caliban. Why, as I told thee, 'tis a custom with him
I' th' afternoon to sleep; there thou mayst brain him,
Having first seiz'd his books, or with a log
Batter his skull, or paunch him with a stake,
Or cut his wezand with thy knife. Remember
First to possess his books, for without them
He's but a sot, as I am, nor hath not
One spirit to command: they all do hate him
As rootedly as I. Burn but his books.

He then tells Stephano of Prospero's beautiful daughter and that Stephano will have her when Prospero is killed.

> *Stephano.* Monster, I will kill this man! His daughter and I will be king and queen, save our Graces! And Trinculo and thyself shall be viceroys! Dost thou like the plot, Trinculo?
> *Trinculo.* Excellent.

These are characters in rebellion against their author, for Prospero has given them autonomy, and that is why Ariel is needed to help the author maintain his plot and exert control over his runaway characters. Caliban urges Stephano to burn Prospero's books, because he knows that books are the source of the author's creative power.

Scene Three is full of humor and fantasy. Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio, Gonzalo, Adrian and Francisco are all weary from their fruitless search for Ferdinand. But that doesn't stop Antonio and Sebastian from conspiring to carry out their plan to murder Alonso when he is asleep.

Suddenly, they are all surprised to hear music. Prospero, invisible, watches from above. There then appear several strange shapes bringing in a banquet table and dancing around it "with gentle actions of salutations," inviting the king and others to eat. They then depart.

Everyone is astounded by the unreality of it all. Gonzalo remarks:

> If in Naples
> I should report this now, would they believe me?
> If I should say I saw such islanders—
> For certes these are people of the island—
> Who though they are of monstrous shape yet, note
> Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of
> Our human generation you shall find
> Many, nay almost any.
> *Prospero.* [*Aside.*] Honest lord,
> Thou hast said well: for some of you there present
> Are worse than divels.

However, just as the king and the others are to partake of the banquet, we hear thunder and lightning. Ariel enters "like a harpy, claps his wings upon the table, and with a quaint device the banquet vanishes." He then speaks to them:

> You fools! I and my fellows
> Are ministers of fate; the elements
> Of whom your swords are temper'd may as well
> Wound the loud winds, or with bemock'd-at stabs
> Kill the still closing waters as diminish

One dowl that's in my plume!...
...you three
From Milan did supplant good Prospero,
Expos'd unto the sea—which hath requit it—
Him and his innocent child; for which foul deed
The powers, delaying—not forgetting—have
Incens'd the seas and shores, yea all the creatures
Against your peace....

Ariel then vanishes in thunder. Then, to soft music, the strange shapes enter again, dance and carry out the banquet table. Prospero, still invisible, comments:

Bravely the figure of this harpy hast thou
Perform'd, my Ariel; a grace it had, devouring.
On my instruction hast thou nothing bated
In what thou hadst to say....
And these, mine enemies, are all knit up
In their distractions; they now are in my power,
And in these fits I leave them, while I visit
Young Ferdinand—whom they suppose is drown'd—
And his and mine lov'd darling.

And so, with the help of Ariel, the author has regained control of his characters.

In Act Four, Scene One, Prospero addresses Ferdinand and Miranda. He gives his daughter to Ferdinand, but warns that he must not "break her virgin knot" before they are married "with full and holy rite." In other words, he takes a very dim view of premarital sex. Ferdinand replies that his love will "never melt Mine honor into lust." When the lovers sit apart, Prospero greets Ariel who has just arrived, seeking new instructions. Prospero praises him for his last service and says:

Go bring the rabble—
Ore whom I give thee power—here to this place.
Incite them to quick motion, for I must
Bestow upon the eyes of this young couple
Some vanity of mine art: it is my promise
And they expect it from me.

Ariel asks, "Do you love me, master?" Prospero replies, "Dearly, my delicate Ariel! Do not approach Till thou dost hear me call."

The relationship between Prospero and Ariel is the key to understanding the author's creative process. He sees his creative power as a spirit that can, among other things, bring mythical gods into reality, for the author has the power to not only manipulate and control the human characters he has created, but also bring to life the world of gods and goddesses. And so Ariel brings Iris, messenger of the gods, Ceres, the goddess of agriculture and marriage, and Juno, the wife of Jupiter, to entertain and bless the couple with song and sweet verses, and celebrate "A contract of true love." Ferdinand asks Prospero:

> This is a most majestic vision and
> Harmonious charmingly; may I be bold
> To think these spirits?
> *Prospero.* Spirits which by mine art
> I have from their confines call'd to enact
> My present fancies.

His art as poet and playwright gave him the power, at will, to create immortal characters as real as any human beings, or bring forth the mythological gods and goddesses that existed only in the imagination of the ancients.

When the entertainment is ended, Prospero reminds himself:

> I had forgot that foul conspiracy
> Of the beast Caliban and his confederates
> Against my life. The minute of their plot
> Is almost come.

He then tells Ferdinand:

> Our revels now are ended: these our actors—
> As I foretold you—were all spirits and
> Are melted into air, into thin air;
> And like the baseless fabric of this vision
> The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve
> Like this insubstantial pageant faded
> Leave not a rack behind: we are such stuff
> As dreams are made on, and our little life
> Is rounded with a sleep.

When Ferdinand and Miranda leave, Ariel enters. Prospero tells him, "Spirit, We must prepare to meet with Caliban." Ariel has already left his mark on them:

> I told you, sir, they were red hot with drinking,
> So full of valor that they smote the air
> For breathing in their faces, beat the ground
> For kissing of their feet, yet always bending
> Towards their project. Then I beat my tabor,
> At which like unback'd colts they prick'd their ears
> Advanc'd their eyelids, lifted up their noses

As they smelt music; so I charm'd their ears
That calflike they my lowing follow'd through
Tooth'd briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss, and thorns,
Which ent'red their frail shins. At last I left them
I' th' filthy-mantled pool beyond your cell,
There dancing up to th' chins, that the foul lake
Orestunk their feet.

Prospero is very pleased with Ariel's report. He then thinks of Caliban:

A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick, on whom my pains,
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost,
And, as with age, his body uglier grows,
So his mind cankers.

Was it the playwright who originated the "Nature versus Nurture" argument? In any case, Ariel returns with "glistening apparel" which he hangs on a line. Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo then enter, all wet. The scene that follows is one of the funniest in all of Shakespeare, at the end of which a loud noise is heard and spirits in the shape of dogs and hounds enter, scaring the three conspirators who quickly escape the scene.

In Act Five, Scene One, Prospero enters wearing his magic robes. An author who can, out of nothing, create a drama filled with characters, gods and goddesses, fairies and elves is indeed a magician. He can even raise the dead. That is the mystery of story telling, of narrative invention, of fictional dialogue. Out of nothing something, very much like Genesis in which God creates the universe and its first humans out of the void and darkness.

Prospero. Now does my project gather to a head;
My charms crack not, my spirits obey, and Time
Goes upright with his carriage. How's the day?
Ariel. On the sixt hour, at which time, my lord,
You said our work should cease.
Prospero. I did say so
When first I rais'd the tempest. Say, my spirit,
How fares the king and's followers"?
Airel. Confin'd together
In the same fashion as you gave in charge,
Just as you left them; all prisoners, sir,
In the line grove which weather-fends your cell;
They cannot budge till your release....

The author has created his characters who have autonomy, and he uses Ariel as the means of fashioning and maintaining the plot. For, although the characters are autonomous, there is no anarchy in the world created by the author. Ariel adds:

Your charm so strongly works
That if you now beheld them, your affections
Would become tender.
Prospero. Dost thou think so, spirit?
Ariel. Mine would, sir, were I human.

Prospero is so deeply affected by what Ariel tells him, that he orders Ariel to release them, so that "they shall be themselves." He then thinks of his own limitless power as author:

I have bedimm'd
The noontide sun, call'd forth the mutinous winds,
And 'twixt the green sea and the azur'd vault
Set roaring war; to the dread, rattling thunder
Have I given fire, and rifted Jove's stout oak
With his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory
Have I made shake and by the spurs pluck'd up
The pine and cedar. Graves at my command
Have wak'd their sleepers, op'd and let 'em forth
By my so potent art.

But on reflection he decides that it is time to end all of that, to "break my staff" and "drown my book."

Ariel then returns, bringing with him Alonso, Gonzalo, Sebastian, Antonio, Adrian and Francisco. They form a circle and gaze at Prospero, who then speaks to them. He praises Gonzalo as "My true preserver," accuses Alonso of aiding his brother in usurping his dukedom, excoriates his brother and Sebastian for having planned to kill Alonso. But then forgives them all. He then sends Ariel to bring him his hat and rapier so that they will all recognize him as the Duke of Milan. When Alonso realizes who Prospero really is he says, "Thy dukedom I resign and do entreat Thou pardon me my wrongs."

Addressing Sebastian, Prospero says:

For you, most wicked sir, whom to call brother
Would even infect my mouth, I do forgive
Thy rankest fault—all of them—and require
My dukedom of thee, which perforce I know
Thou must restore.
Alonso. If thou beest Prospero
Give us particulars of thy preservation,
How thou hast met us here who three hours since
Were wrack'd upon this shore, where I have lost—
How sharp the point of this remembrance is—
My dear son Ferdinand.

Prospero replies that he too has suffered a loss, his daughter. He goes on to assert that he is that very duke who was expelled from Milan and came upon this island where he is lord. He invites Alonso to rest in his cell. But just then, Prospero discovers Ferdinand and Miranda playing at chess. The sight of his son makes Alonso believe that a miracle has taken place. Miranda is surprised to see so many people and says:

> O wonder!
> How many goodly creatures are there here!
> How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world
> That has such people in't.

"Brave new world" has become a commonly used phrase in modern times to denote a utopian society that is neither brave nor new.

Alonso asks Ferdinand who the young lady is: "Is she the goddess that hath sever'd us And brought us thus together?" Ferdinand replies: "Sir, she is mortal, But by immortal Providence she's mine."

Alonso and Gonzalo are moved and impressed by the two young couple. Just then, Ariel enters with the Master and Boatswain, who brings them all good news: "Our ship, Which but three glasses since we gave out split Is tight and yare, and bravely rigg'd as when We first put out to sea." The author has performed another "miracle." He congratulates Ariel on his performance.

> *Alonso.* This is as strange a maze as ere men trod,
> And there is in this business more than nature
> Was ever conduct of!...
> *Prospero.* Sir, my liege,
> Do not infest your mind with beating on
> The strangeness of this business;...I'll resolve you...of every
> These happen'd accidents; till then by cheerful...
> Come hither, spirit.
> Set Caliban and his companions free:
> Untie the spell.

Caliban, Stephano, and Trinculo are brought in by Ariel. Prospero describes how the three plotted to kill him. Alonso recognizes Stephano as his drunken butler. Alonso, seeing Caliban, comments: "This is a strange thing as ere I look'd on."

> *Prospero.* He is as disproportion'd in his manners
> As in his shape! Go, sirrah, to my cell;
> Take with you your companions—as you look
> To have my pardon, trim it handsomely.
> *Caliban.* Ay, that I will! And I'll be wise hereafter
> And seek for grace! What a thrice-double ass

> Was I to take this drunkard for a god
> And worship this dull fool!

Prospero then invites Alonso to spend the night in his abode where he will tell him the story of his life and in the morning bring him to his ship. After having forgiven everyone, he will also return to Dukedom in Milan. Ferdinand and Miranda will become King and Queen of Naples. And as his last gesture, Prospero gives Ariel his freedom.

Which means that he will give up his role as creator of a fictional universe where he is godlike. Prospero says as much in his Epilogue:

> Now my charms are all o'erthrown,
> And what strength I have's mine own,
> Which is most faint....
> As you from crimes would pardon'd be
> Let your indulgence set me free.

Why did Marlowe decide to stop writing plays? Probably because it was extremely hard work, even for a genius. He had been writing plays and poetry nonstop for 20 years since his days at Cambridge. It is also significant that William Shakespeare retired from acting at about this time, 1611.

King Henry VIII

King Henry VIII has all of the hallmarks of a Marlowe play. The conflict between the nobles and Cardinal Wolsey is dramatically stated in the opening scene, the dialogue throughout is brilliant, the characters come alive, and the plot moves ahead in a tight, logical way. We know that it was first performed, on June 19, 1613, because a cannon used in the play accidentally caused a fire that burnt down the entire Bankside theatre. The text that has come down to us is from the First Folio of 1623.

Some scholars are of the opinion that playwright John Fletcher (1579-1625) had a helping hand at writing the play because the writing style is not of Shakespeare's later period but of an earlier period. Peter Alexander, in his Introduction to the Heritage Press edition of play, writes (p. 893):

> All the features in the verse attributed to Fletcher can be found in Shakespeare's own earlier plays.

This suggests that *King Henry VIII* may have been written at an earlier time, but was put aside because it dealt with Queen Elizabeth's parents, the divorce of her father from his first wife, Katherine of Aragon, who is treated quite sympathetically by the playwright. Henry's meeting with Anne Boleyn (spelled Bullen in the play) at Cardinal Wolsey's banquet, the secret marriage, the extravagant coronation of the new Queen, and the birth and baptism of Elizabeth, future Queen of England, are important events in this great royal drama.

Another reason why we can believe that the play was written much earlier than its first performance in 1613 is the fact that the playwright had ended his writing career in 1611, when *The Tempest,* his farewell play, was written. Thus, although *Henry VIII* may have been written earlier, it may not have been performed until 1613.

In any case, we know that the playwright used the same sources for this play that he used for his other histories: Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587), Foxe's *Acts and Monuments* (1597), and Hall's *Chronicles: The union of the two noble and illustre Families of Lancaster and York,* first published in 1548. According to E. M. W. Tillyard (*Shakespeare's History Plays,* pp. 40-41):

> [Hall's] active career is entirely within the reign of Henry VIII, except that he just survived into Edward VI's, to whom he dedicated his history. He was lucky not to live on into the reign of Mary, for his uncompromising Protestantism and his unshaken support of Henry VIII in all his acts would have brought him persecution. As it was, his book was burnt. Anyhow he lived under Henry VIII and was the true spiritual child of that age....Hall's *Chronicle* deals with English history from Henry IV to Henry VIII; and the reign of Henry VIII is nearly half the whole book.

According to R. A. Foakes, editor of the Arden Edition of *King Henry VIII,* the marriage of King James's daughter Elizabeth to Prince Frederick, the Elector Palatine of Germany, on February 14, 1613, may have been the occasion for the production of the play, which was probably first performed between February and June of 1613. Concerning the playwright's working methods, Foakes writes (p.xxxvi):

> Many passages in the text give an impression that Shakespeare was reading two or three histories at the same time, and taking ideas from more than one.... In places, the sources were very closely followed, and some speeches are little more than Holinshed or Foxe versified....Not only did Shakespeare transfer material from one time and person to another, he also amalgamated stories from different sources, or took a phrase or an idea from a source not otherwise followed in the particular context.

In other words, the complexity of the playwright's working style, which combined intensive research with the poetic skills of a literary genius, was beyond anything the actor-businessman Shakespeare was capable of. Writing good plays was hard work even for a genius. As for the quality of the First Folio text, Foakes writes:

> The text is a very good one....It seems to have been taken from a fair copy, possibly made by a meticulous scribe, of the author's manuscript.

The question then arises: what happened to the original manuscript? Indeed, what happened to all the manuscripts of the thirty-six plays in the First Folio? This is a question that has puzzled Shakespearean scholars for centuries. Since twenty of the plays in the First Folio had never before been published, where did Ed Blount find them? And what did he and the Pembroke brothers do with the manuscripts when the Folio was finally published? Were they destroyed or hidden? Shakespeare made no mention of any manuscripts in his will drawn up shortly before his death in 1616.

Concerning the text, A. L. Rowse writes (p.1349):

> The text of *Henry VIII*, as it appeared in the Folio, was a tidy one, with many more detailed stage-directions than usual, consistent with the dramatist being retired in the country and giving full instructions for production.

It wasn't as if Shakespeare, in retirement at Stratford, could lift up the phone and tell his colleagues in London how the play should be staged. It was probably Marlowe who provided the play with its detailed stage-directions for production in 1613, and then further helped prepare the text for publication in 1623. And it was probably Ed Blount who was the go-between in all of these activities.

The play opens with a Prologue, preparing the audience for the seriousness of what is to follow:

> I come no more to make you laugh; things now
> That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
> Sad, high, and working, full of state and woe;
> Some noble scenes as draw the eye to flow
> We now present.

The first scene opens with the Dukes of Buckingham and Norfolk and Lord Abergavenny in the palace in London discussing the extravagant meeting in France between Henry VIII and the King of France resulting in a treaty between the two nations. The two kings—"Those sons of glory, those two lights of men"—had met in the valley of Andren, some eight miles south of Calais, in the Spring of 1520. The magnificence of the meeting was such that it has come down in history as "the Field of the Cloth of Gold."

Norfolk informs his two friends that all of these elaborate arrangements had been made by Wolsey, the Cardinal of York.

> *Buckingham.* The devil speed him: no man is freed
> From his ambitious finger....
> *Norfolk.* Like it your grace,
> The state takes notice of the private difference
> Betwixt you and the Cardinal....
> You know his nature,
> That he's revengeful, and I know his sword
> Hath a sharp edge....

As in Marlowe's other plays, the conflict is stated in the very first scene, raising suspense and anticipation in the audience.

Cardinal Wolsey then enters with his entourage, fixes his eye on Buckingham, then continues on his way. Shortly thereafter, Buckingham is arrested and taken to the Tower. He is being framed by a former servant:

> *Buckingham.* My surveyor is false: the o'er-great cardinal
> Hath show'd him gold; my life is spann'd already:
> I am the shadow of poor Buckingham….

It should be noted that this 3rd Duke of Buckingham, Edward Stafford, was the eldest son of the Buckingham who helped Richard III gain the throne, then rebelled against him, which resulted in his execution. Henry VII restored his father's titles and land to young Edward. One of Henry VIII's first acts was to make Buckingham Lord High Constable.

Wolsey, being of common ancestry, had managed to attain great power and wealth as a churchman through his ability to influence the king. He enjoyed lauding it over the nobility with his "spider-like" power.

Scene Two takes us into a Council Chamber of the palace where King Henry, Wolsey, the Nobles, and Sir Thomas Lovell have convened to take up the case against Buckingham. But the Queen enters with a petition to abolish the taxes, or exactions, that the Cardinal has imposed on Henry's subjects. The Cardinal blames it all on the judges, but the King orders him to remove the exactions. Wolsey tells his secretary: "let it be nois'd That through our intercession this revokement And pardon comes."

The Surveyor, with the help of Wolsey, then enters and testifies against Buckingham, asserting that his former employer was scheming to become sovereign. He had been dismissed by Buckingham because of corruption.

> *Surveyor.* First, it was usual with him—every day
> It would infect his speech—that if the King
> Should without issue die, he'll carry it so
> To make the scepter his.

This was a sore point with Henry. Katherine had not been able to provide him with a male heir. Although Katherine had given birth to four girls and two boys, only one child—Mary—survived, and she would become Queen in 1553.

The Surveyor's very damning testimony may not have been entirely true, but it was enough to persuade the King that Buckingham was guilty of treason.

In Scene Three, Lord Chamberlain and Lord Sands in a room at court are criticizing the way Englishmen have apishly borrowed French fashions since the Field of the Cloth of

Gold. English disapproval of the French and their ways was always a popular amusement in the theater. The two men then proceed to Wolsey's banquet.

It is in Scene Four, during Wolsey's banquet, that the King meets the beauteous Anne Bullen. The King, one of the masquers, is dressed as a shepherd and chooses Anne to dance with:

> *King.* The fairest hand I ever touch'd: O beauty,
> Till now I never knew thee.

Thus begins Henry's love affair with Anne Bullen. He asks the Lord Chamberlain to tell him who she is:

> *Chamberlain.* An't please your grace, Sir Thomas Bullen's daughter,
> The Viscount Rochford, one of her highness' women.

The King then exits, wishing everyone merriment and joy.

In Act Two, Scene One, we find two Gentlemen discussing Buckingham's trial. When Buckingham is brought forth from his arraignment, he speaks:

> All good people,
> You that thus far have come to pity me,
> Hear what I say, and then go home and lose me.
> I have this day receiv'd a traitor's judgment,
> And by that name must die; yet heaven bear witness,
> And if I have a conscience, let it sink me,
> Even as the axe falls, if I be not faithful.

He then forgives Sir Thomas Lovell and wishes blessings on the King. This is followed by a farewell speech in which he gives a short history of the fortunes of the Buckinghams:

> When I came hither I was Lord High Constable
> And Duke of Buckingham: now poor Edward Bohun;
> Yet I am richer than my base accusers,
> That never knew what truth meant: I now seal it,
> And with my blood will make 'em one day groan for't.
> My noble father Henry of Buckingham,
> Who first rais'd head against usurping Richard,
> Flying for succour to his servant Banister,
> Being distress'd, was by that wretch betray'd,
> And without trial fell; God's peace be with him.
> Henry the Seventh succeeding, truly pitying
> My father's loss, like a most royal prince
> Restor'd me to my honours; and out of ruins

Made my name once more noble. Now his son,
Henry the Eighth, life, honour, name and all
That made me happy, at one stroke has taken
For ever from the world. I had my trial,
And must needs say a noble one; which makes me
A little happier than my wretched father:
Yet thus far we are one in fortunes; both
Fell by our servants, by those men we lov'd most:
A most unnatural and faithless service.
Heaven has an end in all; yet you that hear me,
This from a dying man receive as certain:
Where you are liberal with your loves and counsels,
Be sure you be not loose; for those you make friends
And give your hearts to, when they once perceive
The least rub in your fortunes, fall away
Like water from ye, never found again
But where they mean to sink ye....

He then bids them all farewell and exits the scene. The two gentlemen, witnesses to all of this, continue their conversation. There are rumors abroad that the King and Katherine are separating. Wolsey considers the Queen an enemy, and, comments one of the gentlemen, "The cardinal Will have his will, and she must fall."

Scene Two takes place in a room at court. The Lord Chamberlain has received a letter from a servant who had been ordered to prepare some beautiful horses for the King. But a man from Wolsey came with a commission to take possession of the horses for the Cardinal, which he did. This infuriates Chamberlain, but there is nothing he can do about it.

The Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk enter and engage Lord Chamberlain in a discussion of the King's marital breakup.

Norfolk. This is the cardinal's doing: the king-cardinal,
That blind priest, like the eldest son of fortune,
Turns what he list. The king will know him one day....
Chamberlain. Heaven will one day open
The king's eyes, that so long have slept upon
This bold bad man.
Suffolk. And free us from his slavery.

The Lord Chamberlain exits. King Henry draws the curtain and sits reading pensively. Suffolk notices how sad he looks. The King is annoyed by the intrusion of the two Dukes, who ask for his pardon. Just then Wolsey and Cardinal Campeius, an emissary from Rome, enter. Henry greets them warmly. They request a private conference, and the King tells the Dukes to leave.

Wolsey and the Cardinal are to offer impartial judgment concerning the King's request for a divorce. The King then confers privately with his new secretary, Stephen Gardiner, who has replaced the learned Dr. Pace. Cardinal Campeius tells Wolsey that there is talk that the Archbishop envied Pace and had him replaced by a trusted man of his own. Wolsey replies, revealing his modus operandi:

> That good fellow,
> If I command him follows my appointment,
> I will have none so near else. Learn this brother,
> We live not to be grip'd by meaner persons.

The King then sends Gardiner with a note to the Queen and requests that Wolsey prepare the Black-Friars as the venue where the hearing on his divorce will be held.

Scene Three takes us to a room in the Queen's apartment where Anne Bullen is conversing with an Old Lady. Anne expresses her sympathy for the Queen and avers that she "would not be queen….not for all the riches under heaven." The Lord Chamberlain enters and tells Anne that King Henry has made her Marchioness of Pembroke with an annual stipend of a thousand pounds. Anne is overwhelmed by this honor and bids the Lord convey her deep gratitude to King.

Scene Four takes place at the Black-Friars. All are assembled to hear the King's case for a divorce. When Katherine is called, she rises from her chair and kneels before the King. She asks plaintively:

> In what have I offended you? What cause
> Hath my behavior given to your displeasure,
> That thus you should proceed to put me off,
> And take your good grace from me?…Sir, call to mind
> That I have been your wife in this obedience
> Upward of twenty years, and have been blest
> With many children by you….wherefore I humbly
> Beseech you sir, to spare me till I may
> Be by my friends in Spain advis'd, whose counsel
> I will implore.

Wolsey and Campeius advise the Queen that they must get on with the procedure without further delay. The Queen then accuses Wolsey of being the cause of the King's separation from her:

> You are mine enemy….
> You shall not be my judge. For it is you
> Have blown this coal betwixt my lord and me ….

Wolsey strongly denies that he has done any such thing. The Queen replies:

I am a simple woman, much too weak
T'oppose your cunning. Y'are meek and humble-mouth'd,
You sign your place and calling, in full seeming,
With meekness and humility: but your heart
Is cramm'd with arrogancy, spleen and pride....
I do refuse you for my judge, and here
Before you all, appeal unto the Pope,
To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness
And to be judg'd by him.

The Queen then begins to leave. Campeius calls her obstinate and stubborn, and the King calls her back. But she refuses to be judged by them and leaves with her attendants. The King is impressed:

Go thy ways Kate;
That man i' th'world who shall report he has
A better wife, let him in nought be trusted,
For speaking false in that....she's noble born,
And like her true nobility she has
Carried herself towards me.

Wolsey then asks the King if he, the Cardinal, has done or said anything to prejudice the case against the Queen. Henry replies at length that it was his own fear of not having a male heir that caused him to think of divorcing Katherine and marrying someone who could provide the desired heir. It is then decided to adjourn the court. The scene ends with Henry feeling distrustful of the cardinals and deciding to bring back his "well-beloved servant Cranmer."

Act Three, Scene One, takes place in the Queen's apartment where Katherine and her women are at work. She asks one of them to play a song on her lute to take away her sadness. A gentleman enters informing the Queen that the two cardinals, Wolsey and Campeius, would like to speak with her. She agrees to hear them. They enter and ask for a private audience. The Queen objects:

There's nothing I have yet o' my conscience
Deserves a corner....

Wolsey then speaks to her in Latin. But she replies, "O good my lord, no Latin." She does not want her women to think that she has something to hide or be ashamed of. Wolsey tells her that his only intention is "to know How you stand minded in the weighty difference Between the king and you." Campeius assures the Queen of Wolsey's good intentions in offering his "service and counsel."

She thanks the cardinals but asks for time to think things over. She wishes to seek counsel among her friends in Spain. But Campeius urges her to come to terms with the king and avoid a trial and save her from disgrace. The King is "loving and most gracious," he argues.

"Is this your Christian counsel," asks Katherine. She prefers the judgment of God.

> *Campeius.* Your rage mistakes us.

But the Queen will not yield to their sinful advice.

> *Wolsey.* If your grace
> Could but be brought to know our ends are honest,
> You'd feel more comfort....
> I know you have a gentle, noble temper,
> A soul as even as a calm; pray think us
> Those we profess, peace-makers, friends and servants.

The Queen finally gives in:

> Do what ye will, my lords; and pray forgive me;
> If I have us'd myself unmannerly,
> You know I am a woman, lacking wit
> To make a seemly answer to such persons.
> Pray do my service to his majesty;
> He has my heart yet, and shall have my prayers
> While I shall have my life.

In Scene Two we find the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, Lord Surrey, and Lord Chamberlain in a room at court discussing Wolsey and how they can bring him down.

> *Chamberlain.* My lords, you speak your pleasures:
> What he deserves of you and me I know;
> What we can do to him (though now the time
> Gives way to us) I much fear. If you cannot
> Bar his access to th'king, never attempt
> Any thing on him; for he hath a witchcraft
> Over the king in's tongue.

But then Norfolk reveals the startling news that the King has seen the letters the Cardinal sent to the Pope urging him to stay the divorce. In fact, it now appears that the King has already married Anne Bullen and is planning her coronation. Meanwhile, Wolsey, unaware that the King has read his letters, has sent Cardinal Campeius to Rome as his agent. Suffolk also reveals that Cranmer has been returned and has given his blessings to the marriage:

> Katherine no more
> Shall be call'd queen, but princess dowager,

And widow to Prince Arthur.

Prince Arthur was King Henry's older brother, to whom Katherine had been married. But Arthur never lived to sit on the throne. He died of illness at age 15, a year after the marriage. Thus, after the divorce, Katherine would not be known as Henry's ex-wife but as Arthur's widow.

Wolsey and his assistant Cromwell then enter. The four men stand aside and observe the two.

> *Wolsey.* The packet Cromwell, gave't you the king?
> *Cromwell.* To his own hand, in's bedchamber.
> *Wolsey.* Look'd he
> O' th'inside of the paper?
> *Cromwell.* Presently
> He did unseal them, and the first he view'd.
> He did it with a serious mind; a heed
> Was in his countenance. You he bade
> Attend him here this morning.
> *Wolsey.* Is he ready
> To come abroad?
> *Cromwell.* I think by this he is.
> *Wolsey.* Leave me awhile. [*Cromwell exits.*]
> [*Aside*] It shall be to the Duchess of Alencon,
> The French king's sister; he shall marry her.
> Anne Bullen? no; I'll no Anne Bullens for him....speedily I wish
> To hear from Rome.

He calls Anne "a spleeny Lutheran, and not wholesome to Our cause." He is also concerned with Cranmer's return:

> Again, there is sprung up
> An heretic, an arch-one, Cranmer, one
> Hath crawl'd into the favour of the king
> And is his oracle.

The King enters. He is angry and upset. Wolsey, by mistake, had included a confidential inventory of his accumulated wealth among the papers given to the King. He asks Norfolk if he had seen the Cardinal. Norfolk replies that the Cardinal seemed vexed. As for the misplaced inventory, he tells the King:

> *Norfolk.* It's heaven's will;
> Some spirit put this paper in the packet
> To bless your eye withal.

The King then takes his seat, whispers to Lovell, who goes to the Cardinal. Wolsey then approaches the King, still unaware that he has read his letters to the Pope as well as his inventory. The ensuing conversation puzzles the Cardinal who asks himself, "What should this mean?" But it isn't until the King rises to leave and hands him the papers that Wolsey suddenly realizes what has happened:

> This paper has undone me: 'tis th'accompt
> Of all that world of wealth I have drawn together
> For mine own ends (indeed to gain the popedom
> And fee my friends in Rome). O negligence!
> Fit for a fool to fall by: what cross devil
> Made me put this main secret in the packet
> I sent the king?... What's this? 'To th'Pope'?
> The letter, as I live, with all the business
> I writ to's holiness. Nay then, farewell:
> I have touch'd the highest point of all my greatness,
> And from that full meridian of my glory
> I haste now to my setting. I shall fall
> Like a bright exhalation in the evening,
> And no man see me more.

The Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the Earl of Surrey, and the Lord Chamberlain, who exited with the King, return to Wolsey and demand that he render to them the great seal of his office. He refuses, arguing that only the King can take away his seal. Surrey then releases a litany of the Cardinal's sins, against which Wolsey justifies everything he has done.

> *Surrey.* By my soul,
> Your long coat, priest, protects you, thou should'st feel
> My sword i'th'life blood of thee else. My lords,
> Can ye endure to hear this arrogance?...
> *Wolsey.* Speak on sir,
> I dare your worst objections: if I blush,
> It is to see a nobleman want manners....
> *Suffolk.* Lord cardinal, the king's further pleasure is,
> Because all those things you have done of late
> By your power legative within this kingdom
> Fall into th'compass of a praemunire;
> That therefore such a writ be sued against you,
> To forfeit all your goods, lands, tenements,
> Chattels and whatsoever, and to be
> Out of the king's protection. This is my charge.
> *Norfolk.* And so we'll leave you to your mediations
> How to live better. For your stubborn answer
> About the giving back the great seal to us,
> The king shall know it, and (no doubt) shall thank you.

They then leave Wolsey alone who contemplates how far he has fallen: "O how wretched Is that poor man that hangs on princes' favours!" His assistant Cromwell then enters, at a loss of words.

> *Cromwell.* How does your grace?
> *Wolsey.* Why well;
> Never so truly happy, my good Cromwell;
> I know myself now, and I feel within me
> A peace above all earthly dignities,
> A still and quiet conscience. The king has cur'd me,
> I humbly thank his grace....

Cromwell then informs Wolsey of the king's displeasure with him, his appointment of Sir Thomas More to replace him, that Cranmer has been made Archbishop of Canterbury and that plans for the coronation of Anne, whom the king married in secrecy are well underway.

> *Wolsey.* There was the weight that pull'd me down. O Cromwell,
> The king has gone beyond me: all my glories
> In that one woman I have lost for ever.

He then advises Cromwell to serve the king well and provide for his own future safety.

> *Wolsey.* Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition,
> By that sin fell the angels; how can man then,
> The image of his maker, hope to win by it?...
> O Cromwell, Cromwell,
> Had I but serv'd my God with half the zeal
> I serv'd my king, he would not in mine age
> Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Only Marlowe could have written such searing lines. In Act Four, Scene One, two gentlemen meet in a street and discuss the events that have recently taken place and one event that has just happened: the Coronation of Anne Bullen. They watch the royal procession from the Abbey in all its pomp and magnificence. A third gentleman, who was in the Abbey, joins them and gives a rich, detailed picture of what took place inside. It is the colorful pageantry of that procession that gives the play an almost Broadway or Hollywood texture. The London audience was dazzled by such theatrical extravagance.

The third gentlemen also tells his friends of the changes King Henry has made after the downfall of Wolsey. York-place has become Whitehall, Gardiner has been made Bishop of Winchester, and Cromwell has been made master of the jewel-house and a member of the Privy Council. Cromwell and Cranmer were strong advocates of the Reformation in England.

Scene Two takes us to Kimbolton where Katherine Dowager, ill, is aided by her Gentleman Usher Griffith and her woman Patience. She had been told by Griffith that Cardinal Wolsey was dead, and she asks how he died. He describes Wolsey's last moments at an abbey in Leicester where, full of repentence, tears and sorrow, he died. Katherine gives her own views of Wolsey:

> He was never
> (But where he meant to ruin) pitiful:
> His promises were as he then was, mighty,
> But his performance, as he is now, nothing....
> *Griffith.* Noble madam,
> Men's evil manners live in brass, their virtues
> We write in water.

Griffith then chronicles the life of Wolsey, pointing out his positive achievements, which impresses Katherine. Although she hated the man in life, she now wishes him peace in death. She then asks for music, "celestial harmony," and falls asleep, during which she has a glorious vision: Six personages clad in white dance around her and hold a garland over her head. They then vanish, carrying the garland with them. She awakens. "Spirits of peace, where are ye?" she asks. But Griffith and Patience have seen nothing.

She then has a visitor. The King has sent Lord Capuchius to see her. He has come as an ambassador from the emperor, her nephew, and brings the good wishes of the King who "grieves much for your weakness." She then gives Capuchius a letter to the King expressing concern for the future of their daughter Mary and concern for the welfare of the women and men who served her. She then tells the emissary, "Remember me In all humility unto his highness: Say his long trouble now is passing Out of this world." She then addrsses Patience:

> I must to bed....
> When I am dead, good wench,
> Let me be us'd with honour; strew me over
> With maiden flowers, that all the world may know
> I was a chaste wife to my grave....although unqueened, yet like
> A queen, and daughter to a king inter me.
> I can no more.

On that sad note the scene ends, with the audience, no doubt, in tears. Marlowe knew how to squeeze every bit of pathos from the tragic predicaments of his characters.

Act Five, Scene One, takes place after midnight in a gallery at court. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, with his Page carrying a torch, are met by Sir Thomas Lovell. Gardiner has just had a meeting with the King and the Duke of Suffolk. He wants a word with Lovell, who tells him that the Queen is in labour and they fear for her life.

> *Gardiner.* Hear me Sir Thomas, y'are a gentleman

Of mine own way.... It will ne'er be well...
Till Cranmer, Cromwell, his two hands, and she
Sleep in their graves.

The war between Catholics and Reformers is now joined in earnest, and Gardiner is determined to destroy the Lutheran heretics. He and the Page then leave. The King and Suffolk enter. The King wants news about his wife. Lovell is waiting to hear from the Queen's woman. Suffolk retires for the night.

Sir Anthony Denny then enters. He has brought the Archbishop of Canterbury with him as requested by the King. Cranmer enters and Lovell and Denny leave. The King then tells Cranmer that he has had many serious complaints regarding the Archbishop and that Cranmer must stay in the Tower until he is acquitted of the charges in the hearing to take place in the morning. Cranmer's reply: "I fear nothing that can be said against me."

The King assures Cranmer of his friendship and gives him a ring which his accusers will look at and think twice of overruling their King. Cranmer leaves, the King remarking,"He has strangled His language in his tears."

The old Lady and Lovell enter. She informs the King that the Queen has given birth to a girl. He had hoped for a male heir, but accepts this new fact of life.

In Scene Two, Cranmer enters the antechamber of the council-chamber and asks to be allowed to enter. But the doorman tells the Archbishop that he must wait among the boys, grooms and lackeys until he is called for. Dr. Butts, the King's physician, on his way to see the King, notices this insult to the Archbishop and mentions it to the King when he meets him. The King is furious. "By holy Mary, Butts, there's knavery....We shall hear more anon."

After waiting a half hour, Cranmer is called into the chamber. The Lord Chancellor begins by accusing him of teaching "new opinions, Divers and dangerous; which are heresies, And not reform'd, may prove pernicious." Gardiner mentions the commotions these heresies are causing in Germany.

Cranmer requests that his accusers "stand forth face to face, And freely urge against me." But Suffolk points out that since the Archbishop is a councillor, "no man dare accuse you."

Gardiner. My lord, because we have business of more moment,
We will be short with you. 'Tis his highness' pleasure
And our consent, for better trial of you,
From hence you be committed to the Tower,
Where being but a private man again,
You shall know many dare accuse you boldly,
More than (I fear) you are provided for.
Cranmer. ... I see your end,

'Tis my undoing.

The exchange between the two antagonists becomes bitter and sarcastic. Finally, Cranmer asks:

> Is there no other way of mercy
> But I must needs to th'Tower, my lords?
> *Gardiner.* What other
> Would you expect? You are strangely troublesome:
> Let some o' th'guard be ready there.

But Cranmer then pulls his trump card. He shows them the King's ring:

> Look there my lords;
> By virtue of that ring, I take my cause
> Out of the gripes of cruel men, and give it
> To a most noble judge, the king my master.

After they all acknowledge, in astonishment, that it is the King's ring, the King himself enters. He takes his seat and berates them all for what they have tried to do to the Archbishop. Gardiner tries to squirm out of his embarrassing predicament, but the King sees through it all. He tells the Bishop:

> You play the spaniel,
> And think with wagging of your tongue to win me;
> But whatso'er thou tak'st me for, I'm sure
> Thou hast a cruel nature and a bloody.

He then scolds the lords for making the Archbishop of Canterbury "wait like a lousy footboy at the chamber door." Then, having reduced the councillors to quivering jelly, he asks the good Archbishop Cranmer to officiate at the baptism of his new daughter: "I long To have this young one made a Christian."

In Scene III, the entrance to the court is crowded with common folk who want to see the christening of the new Princess.

> *Lord Chamberlain.* Mercy o' me; what a multitude are here!
> They grow still too; from all parts they are coming,
> As if we kept a fair here: where are these porters,
> These lazy knaves?...We shall have
> Great store of room no doubt, left for the ladies,
> When they pass back from the christening.

Scene IV takes place at court where all are assembled to take part in the christening. Four noblemen bear the canopy, under which the Duchess of Norfolk, godmother, bears the child richly habited in a mantle, etc. The King enters and Cranmer kneels before him.

King. What is her name?
Cranmer. Elizabeth.

The King then bids Cranmer to stand up and kisses the child.

King. With this kiss take my blessing: God protect thee,
Into whose hand I give thy life.

Cranmer then addresses the King:

Let me speak, sir,
For heaven now bids me; and the words I utter,
Let none think flattery, for they'll find 'em truth.
This royal infant (heaven still move about her)
Though in her cradle, yet now promises
Upon this land a thousand thousand blessings,
Which time shall bring to ripeness....
She shall be lov'd and fear'd: her own shall bless her....
In her days every man shall eat in safety
Under his own vine what he plants, and sing
The merry songs of peace to all his neighbours....
Peace, plenty, love, truth, terror,
That were the servants to this chosen infant,
Shall then be his, and like a vine grow to him;
Wherever the bright sun of heaven shall shine,
Is honour and the greatness of his name
Shall be, and make new nations....our children's children
Shall see this, and bless heaven.
King. Thou speakest wonders.
Cranmer. She shall be, to the happiness of England,
An aged princess....but she must die,
She must, the saints must have her; yet a virgin,
A most unspotted lily shall she pass
To th'ground, and all the world shall mourn her.
King. O lord archbishop,
Thou has made me now a man; never before
This happy child did I get anything.
This oracle of comfort has so pleas'd me,
That when I am in heaven I shall desire
To see what this child does, and praise my maker.

And so the play ends with the prediction that Elizabeth will become the great Virgin Queen, the greatest monarch in English history. She had to wait until the death of her sister Mary who, as the Catholic Queen burned Cranmer at the stake, before she could ascend the throne and establish the dominance of the Protestant church in England.

Harold Bloom makes an interesting observation in his essay on *Henry VIII* (p.691):

> I cannot solve the puzzle of *Henry VIII,* and I have trouble responding to the rapture and exultation of Cranmer's concluding prophecy concerning the infant Elizabeth. Dead at fifty-two, Shakespeare never experienced old age, and yet the style of old age dominates *Henry VIII.*

Shakespeare may have not experienced old age, but we have every reason to believe that Marlowe did. The text that has come down to us was first published in 1623, when Marlowe was 59, which was old in those days. But Marlowe was capable of creating convincing characters of any age: witness King Lear.

A recent biography of Shakespeare has advanced the theory that the Bard was a secret Catholic. But it is apparent that the author of *Henry VIII* was far more sympathetic to the Reformers than the Catholics who later burnt Cranmer at the stake. Only a Protestant could have written the dialogue between Gardiner and Cranmer at the latter's trial. And only a Protestant could have written Cranmer's oracle concerning the future of the Virgin Queen of England.

We also know that the author of the thirty-six plays in the First Folio almost always used the Geneva Bible when making reference to anything Biblical. The Geneva Bible was the work of those Protestant exiles who took refuge in Calvin's Geneva during the reign of Elizabeth's older sister, the Catholic Queen Mary, daughter of Catherine of Aragon. It was Gardiner who wished Anne Bullen dead, and it was Elizabeth who, as Queen, waged a tireless war against the Catholic recusants during her entire reign.

It should also be noted that Marlowe wrote the very anti-Catholic play, *The Massacre at Paris,* which made him many enemies among Catholics.

Chapter Forty-Nine

The Marlowe-Shakespeare Code

Did Christopher Marlowe use a special code to provide evidence to future generations of readers and playgoers that he was the author of the thirty-six plays in the First Folio? We believe that, indeed, he did. And it is obvious that the code he used had to be carefully inserted in the plays, lest it might lead to the discovery that he continued to live after his reported murder at Deptford in May 1593. Such revelation would be fatal to himself and his protectors. But four hundred years later, it doesn't matter.

It was obvious to those in positions to know, that the name William Shakespeare was being used to hide the identity of the true author. But apparently, there was no urgent need in those days to know who the true author was. During that time, many works were published without authors' names on them. There were no drama critics writing for daily newspapers. There were no public libraries where a reader might peruse quarto editions of various plays. Before the publication of the First Folio in 1623, the name William Shakespeare only appeared on the unauthorized quartos of nine plays. His name first appeared in print in September 1593, several months after the alleged death of Marlowe, on the dedication page of *Venus and Adonis.* His name was not on the title page. The same is also true for *Lucrece,* published a year later with his name appearing on the dedication page, not the title page.

From 1594 to 1597 his name appeared nowhere. Then in 1598 it appeared on the title page of a quarto of *Love's Labour's Lost* as "Newly corrected and augmented by W. Shakespere." In that same year, a 600-page volume entitled *Palladis Tamia* was published in which the author, Francis Meres, credited Shakespeare with having written twelve plays and revealed the existence of his "sugar'd sonnets" being circulated among his friends.

How many people read Meres' *Palladis Tamia?* It was a large book containing anecdotes and quotations under a hundred or more different categories. It also mentions every English poet of the time. Therefore, it was probably read by every poet mentioned in the book, a rather small circle of literary men, each one struggling to further his own career as a writer.

By 1598, therefore, Christopher Marlowe was long forgotten and there was no suspicion that he was still alive, living and writing under another name. Therefore, he felt safe in inserting his clues where they would be passed over as normal text, particularly if the reader or playgoer was not familiar with his early works. It should also be noted that writers were producing hundreds of plays that were being staged daily by theatres that needed new plays as badly as today's cinemas need new movies. They didn't have time to wonder about who was writing the plays under the name William Shakespeare. Bernard Beckerman writes in *Shakespeare at the Globe*, 1962 (p.8):

> In the total winter season from August 25, 1595, through February 28, 1596, of which we have considered four weeks, the company gave one hundred and fifty performances of thirty different plays. Eighty-seven performances, or 58 per cent of the total, were of the fourteen new plays produced that season. Five performances, 3.3 per cent, were of one play, *The Jew of Malta,* revived that season.... Only twelve performances, 8 per cent, were of the seven plays which were more than a year old. This distribution, which is similar for all seasons covered by Henslowe's records, emphasizes how dependent the company was on the continuous addition of new plays to its stock in order to maintain itself in London.
>
> The sheer volume of production is staggering. How strenuous the demands must have been upon the actors!... In the three-year period from June 5, 1594, to July 28, 1597, a leading actor of the Lord Admiral's company, such as Edward Alleyn or Thomas Downton, had to secure and retain command of about seventy-one different roles, of which number fifty-two or fifty-three were newly learned....
>
> Although the names of a large number of playwrights appear in Henslowe's records, most of the new plays performed by the Admiral's men came from the pens of less than a dozen men.

Obviously, poets and playwrights writing for the theatre, actors and producers staging so many new plays had no time to think about who wrote what under Shakespeare's name. And by the time the First Folio was published in 1623, virtually everyone who had known Marlowe was dead, including William Shakespeare. But the most important individuals—Ed Blount, Sir Thomas Walsingham, The Earl of Pembroke—were still alive.

What we have uncovered in our review of the plays in the First Folio is the code that Marlowe used to indicate his authorship. And you have to have read Marlowe's works to be able to detect the code, which consists mainly of references to the plays and poems published under his own name.

Marlowe also inserted biographical data that would go undetected by a reader unfamiliar with the poet's life: for example, in *Julius Caesar,* the character of the cobbler was modeled after his own father; in *King Lear* the way to Dover and the view from the cliffs was based on Marlowe's own childhood when he and his mother walked or rode from Canterbury to Dover to visit his mother's relatives; also the mention of the Catholic Seminary at Rheims in *The Taming of the Shrew* refers us to the spy mission he was sent on by Walsingham and Burghley; in *Measure for Measure* we have a body-switching scene much like what must have taken place at Deptford; and in *Romeo and Juliet* there is a duel scene that reminds us of the actual fight in which Watson saved Marlowe's life by slaying Bradley. And it may be in commemoration of that incident that Marlowe put the name of Watson (TWATSO) in the first letters of lines 4-9 in Sonnet 76.

It should be noted that *Julius Caesar, Measure for Measure,* and *The Taming of the Shrew* were not even in print until 1623 so that their hidden clues would not have been known to anyone before that time.

The most frequently used code word by Marlowe was Dido, from his earliest play, *Dido: Queen of Carthage*. We found such references in *Titus Andronicus*, *The Taming of the Shrew, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, King John, The Merchant of Venice, Hamlet, Cymbeline,* and *The Tempest*.

We found references to *Hero and Leander* in *Two Gentlemen of Verona, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Merchant of Venice, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It,* and *Twelfth Night*.

Tamburlaine is referred to in *King Henry IV (Part Two),* and *All's Well That Ends Well*. Dr. Faustus is directly or indirectly referred to in *The Merry Wives of Windsor, Hamlet,* and *Troilus and Cressida*.

Marlowe's motto, found on his portrait, *Quod me nutrit, me destruit* is reiterated in Sonnet 73, *Measure for Measure,* and *Pericles: Prince of Tyre*. His famous dictum from *Hero and Leander*: "Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?" is either repeated or alluded to in *The Taming of the Shrew, Romeo and Juliet, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, The Tempest,* and *King Henry VIII*.

The themes of exile and banishment, the use of disguises, faked deaths, and mistaken identities can be found in *Richard II, As You Like It, Twelfth Night, Measure for Measure, King Lear, Coriolanus, The Winter's Tale, All's Well That Ends Well* and *Cymbeline*. Obviously, Marlowe, who was forced to live in exile and banishment and whose death was faked, could write about all of this from experience. He also, no doubt, used disguises to hide his identity. We know that he used the name Thomas Shelton for his translation of *Don Quixote*, which was published by his executor Ed Blount.

Hamlet, the most famous play ever written, is full of Marlowe clues. The same can be said of *As You Like It*. These are just the more obvious examples that we have found in the First Folio plays. A more intense search will no doubt enable us to uncover many more clues.

Another important indication that Marlowe wrote the works attributed to Shakespeare is the enormous amount of biblical references one finds throughout the plays. Marlowe's education at the King's School and Corpus Christi gave him an intimate knowledge of Holy Scripture, and according to Park Honan's new biography of Marlowe, the poet in his works "refers to biblical passages over a thousand times." And in the works Marlowe wrote under the name William Shakespeare will be found even more biblical references.

Whole books have been written citing these references. Marlowe's father owned a Bible. But Shakespeare, in his will, revealed that he owned not a single book, let alone a Bible.

We have not even mentioned the sources of plays that clearly indicate Marlowe's authorship: *The Winter's Tale* based on a novel by his friend Robert Greene, or *Antony and Cleopatra,* with its Pembroke-Daniel connection.

Another proof that Calvin Hoffman cites confirming Marlowe's authorship of the First Folio plays is the work performed in the late 19th century by Dr. Thomas C. Mendenhall, professor at a college that later became Ohio State University. The professor devised a purely mechanical method of determining the writing style of an author by simply counting the letters in each word of that author's published works. With the use of graphs he was able to show that each author had his own peculiar characteristics in the use of words.

Mendenhall hired several women to count the letters in the two million words written by Ben Jonson, John Fletcher, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Joseph Addison, and others. One day, a wealthy Boston believer in the Baconian theory engaged Mendenhall to count the letters in the works of Francis Bacon and compare them with the works of Shakespeare. When the counting was completed, the graphs of the two writers revealed no possibility of similitude. However, when Mendenhall analyzed Marlowe's works, he wrote in 1902:

> It was in the counting and plotting of the plays of Christopher Marlowe, however, that something akin to a sensation was produced among those actually engaged in the work. In the characteristic curve of his plays Christopher Marlowe agrees with Shakespeare as well as Shakespeare agrees with himself.

What does all of this do for the average reader, the lover of Shakespeare? It reveals the plays in a new light and explains what has hitherto been unexplainable. The Sonnets begin to make sense. Some of the characters, dialogues, and events in the plays begin to make more sense. What does it do for the biographers and historians of the future? It opens new vistas about the past, and provides an insight into the greatest literary mind in all of human history, who was forced to live and endure his own tragic drama in silence.

There is nothing in all of literature, in all of history, that can match this story. But in the world of Elizabethan England, with its incredible array of personalities involved in a life-and-death religious struggle, the most bizarre conspiracy in all of history could take place.

For over a century, the authorship question has plagued us because of the great doubt that Shakespeare's biography poses. In 1909, Mark Twain wrote in *Is Shakespeare Dead?* (p.33):

> The will mentioned not a play, not a poem, not an unfinished literary work, not a scrap of manuscript of any kind. Many poets have died poor, but this is the only one in history that has died this poor; the others all left literary remains behind.

The need and yearning to know the truth is what has kept this problem alive for so long. We believe that we have at last found the truth, so that future generations will understand how strange history can be, and how the author of the greatest plays ever written suffered a fate even stranger than those of his own heroes.

Chapter Fifty

A Summing Up

Irwin Leigh Matus, in his 1994 book *Shakespeare in Fact*, writes (p.10):

> I will confess that my most memorable evening of theater was at an off-Broadway production of Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus.* I must agree with my dear friend, Roy Kendall, that if this play had Shakespeare's name on it, it would be one of the most performed of classical dramas.

Thus, the whole issue of "what's in a name?" is at the center of the authorship problem. Was Marlowe thinking of his own predicament when he wrote, "A rose by any other name is still a rose." Had he resigned himself to "Che sera sera"? And thus, while the name of Christopher Marlowe is hardly known today, even among university students, we believe that the "Muse's Darling" wrote the works that fall under the name of William Shakespeare.

The year 2001 saw the publication of Diana Price's excellent and extremely well-researched book, *Shakespeare's Unorthodox Biography.* In it, the author examined all of the documents related to the Bard of Avon, unearthed by literary scholars during the last 300 years, and came to the conclusion that William Shakespeare, better known as William Shakspere, was not a writer. "These documents," wrote Price, "account for the activities of an actor, a theatre shareholder, a businessman, a moneylender, a property holder, a litigant, and a man with a family, but they do not account for his presumed life as a professional writer."

In contrast to Price's picture of Shakespeare based on documentary evidence, we have Caroline Spurgeon's very different view of the poet-playwright. In her book, *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us,* published in 1935, Spurgeon came to the conclusion that the author is "in many ways in character what one can only describe as Christ-like, that is, gentle, kindly, honest, brave and true, with deep understanding and quick sympathy for all living things."

Obviously, we are faced with two very different people: Price's actor/businessman and Spurgeon's Christ-like poet, who resembles Christopher Marlowe far more than he does Shakespeare. Indeed, neither Francis Bacon nor the Earl of Oxford could be considered "Christ-like."

Of course, Diana Price was not the first scholar to do a book-length study Shakespeare's life and conclude that he was not the author of the works attributed to him. Probably the most incisive and urbane book of that genre was *The Shakespeare Problem Restated* by George G. Greenwood, Member of Parliament, "of the Middle Temple, Barrister-at-Law, sometime scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge," published in 1908. It was in that book that Greenwood made the distinction between the actor-businessman from Stratford, who signed his name William Shakspere, and the name William Shakespeare used as a *nom de plume* for the true author of the works. On Thomas Thorpe's edition of the Sonnets, the name is hyphenated as "Shake-speare."

Considering that there is no documentary evidence of Shakspere's education, Greenwood found it impossible to believe that works of so great a genius could suddenly emerge from this Stratford actor. He writes (p.66):

> If *Venus and Adonis* is an extraordinary poem, so also is *Love's Labour's Lost* an extraordinary play.... But besides containing some beautiful poetry, it coruscates with ingenious wit, and is full of quips and quiddities, quibbling, repartee, and word-play. Its author must have been not only a man of high intellectual culture, but one who was intimately acquainted with the ways of the Court, and the fashionable society of his time, as also with contemporary foreign politics.... The names of the chief characters are drawn from the leaders in the civil war in France, which was in progress between 1589 and 1594, and was anxiously watched by the English public.

Of course, Marlowe had written about that war in *The Massacre at Paris.* In sum, Greenwood completely demolishes the Shakespeare legend, however, without offering an alternative candidate for authorship. Nevertheless, he believed that Marlowe wrote some of the earlier plays attributed to Shakespeare. He wrote (p.156):

> Malone asserts (and gives arguments in proof) that 'there are certainly very good grounds for believing that the First Part of the Contention of the Two Houses of York and Lancaster, etc., and The True Tragedie of Richarde Duke of Yorke were written by the author or authors of the old King John printed in 1591." He at first thought that Greene and Peele (both University men, it may be remembered) were the joint authors of the two old quarto plays, or that Greene was the author of one and Peele the other. Subsequently, however, he came to the conclusion that Marlowe was the author of King John.

One hundred years later, we can state that Malone's assertions were correct. But the big question has always been, if Shakespeare didn't write the works, who did? The first American to seriously doubt Shakespeare's authorship was Delia Bacon, a brilliant woman who made a successful career as a lecturer on history. Some of her students considered her a genius.

Born in 1811 in Tallmadge, Ohio, Delia turned her interest to literature in 1852, reading all of Shakespeare and coming to the very unorthodox conclusion that the plays in the First Folio revealed a well-hidden comprehensive philosophy which could have only been written by several philosophers—including Francis Bacon, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others. She decided to pursue her research and writing in England.

She remained in England five years, corresponding with Emerson, Carlyle, and Hawthorne, spending her last months in sickness and near poverty in Stratford-on-Avon where she had hoped to be able to open Shakespeare's tomb. She wrote in one of her letters: "The archives of this secret philosophical society are buried somewhere, perhaps in more places than one."

Her obsession with the authorship mystery led to insanity, and she was brought back to the United States in April 1858. The opening chapter of her projected book had been published by Putnam's Monthly in January 1856, but when the book itself was published, it was largely ignored. She died in September of 1859.

The next important milestone in pursuit of the true author of the works attributed to Shakespeare was a book written by Thomas J. Looney (pronounced Loney), *"Shakespeare" Identified as Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford,* published in 1920. Of this book, Charlton Ogburn wrote in his massive tome, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* (p.145):

> Looney did what no one had done before. He approached the quest for the author systematically, and with a completely open mind….He deduced seventeen characteristics of the author and then set out to comb through the annals of the Elizabethan age to see who would come closest to possessing them.

The man, in Looney's opinion, who fit all of the characteristics was none other than Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford. Looney's work was so impressive that Hamilton Basso, in an article in The New Yorker of April 8, 1950, wrote:

> He is an earnest level-headed man who has spent years trying to solve the world's most baffling literary mystery…. If the case were brought to court, it is hard to see how Mr. Looney could lose.

Thus was born the Oxfordian theory, which has spurred the publication of many books and articles on the subject. Among them was *Shakespeare: The Man Behind the Name* by Dorothy Ogburn and Charlton Ogburn, Jr., published in 1962, *The Mysterious William Shakespeare* by Charlton Ogburn in 1984, and more recently, Joseph Sobran's *Alias Shakespeare,* published in 1997.

However, the main problem with the Oxford thesis are the dates: he was born in 1550 and died in 1604. Shakespeare died in 1616, and the First Folio, with twenty unpublished plays, came out in 1623. Oxford's dates badly throws off the chronology of the plays, a chronology that has been generally accepted by most scholars. For example, the earliest of the First Folio plays is believed to have been written in 1590, when Oxford was 40, and the latest in 1612, eight years after the Earl's death. In fact, thirteen of the plays were written after Oxford's death.

Also, there is no indication that Oxford had the kind of genius found in the plays and poems attributed to the Bard of Avon. Oxford himself was a talented poet, but not a genius. He did not leave a legacy of works under his own name that could be considered works of genius. However, Marlowe did. Not only was Marlowe an extraordinary genius, but the dates fit like a glove.

But wasn't Marlowe murdered in 1593? It is our contention that he wasn't. And it was Calvin Hoffman who first advanced that theory in his seminal book *The Murder of the Man Who Was Shakespeare*. His book was published in 1955, and an article in Esquire magazine about it caused a bit of a stir.

At that time I was an editor of Grosset & Dunlap's Universal Library, a quality paperback line. It was my job to find good books to reprint. One day Calvin Hoffman came to my office in the hope of getting us to reprint his book. I had read several Shakespeare plays in high school and college, but had no knowledge of the authorship question. I didn't even know that there was such a problem. I assumed like so many other college graduates that Shakespeare's authorship had been solidly established and verified by documentary evidence. But after reading Hoffman's book, I realized that such was not the case. In fact, it was the reading of that book that turned me into a Marlovian.

It was Hoffman's reading of both Marlowe's and Shakespeare's plays that brought him to believe that Marlowe must have survived his supposed death. In reading both canons, Hoffman found so many parallelisms, so many echoes of Marlowe in Shakespeare, that he began to wonder whether or not Marlowe was actually killed in 1593. His research led him to some remarkable coincidences. For example, Both Marlowe and Shakespeare were the same age, both born in 1564, but Shakespeare's career as a writer begins at age 30 just as Marlowe's allegedly ends at 30. Attempts to find out what Shakespeare was doing for the first 29 years of his life have led to a pile of documents having nothing to do with his education or literary career.

In this book, I have carried on where Calvin Hoffman left off. It has not been my aim to disparage William Shakspere or Shakespeare or the legend that has grown up around his alleged authorship. All of that has been well done by Delia Bacon, Sir Greenwood, Thomas Looney, the Ogburns, Sobran, Price, and others. My purpose has been to offer an alternative story that provides logical and rational explanations of what took place during the years when the plays and poems were written. The more recently published biographies of Shakespeare and Marlowe have essentially added nothing to the basic orthodox views accepted by orthodox scholars. Thus, the need to challenge this orthodoxy is greater than ever if we want future generations to understand what these greatest works of literary genius are all about and how they can add enjoyment, knowledge, and spiritual enhancement to our lives.