Baker Street Readers

Great reads for all ages

A storm, a shipwreck, an enchanted island...

A violent storm shipwrecks the King of Naples and his noblemen on what appears to be an uninhabited island. What the king doesn't know is that they have been brought here by powerful magic.

Prospero, the mysterious ruler of the island, has a plan, but will he use his magic for good or bad against the castaways? His daughter, Miranda, has never seen another man except her father. What will she think of the stranger who stumbles into her life? Prospero's monstrous servant, Caliban, sees a chance to overthrow his master. Will he succeed?

Enchantment and treachery are everywhere on the island – which will prove the stronger?

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Word count: 4,583

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"Miniature masterpieces"
- BBC R4, Open Book

THE TEMPEST

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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TEACHER EDITION ONLY

Baker Street Readers

www.bakerstreetreaders.co.uk

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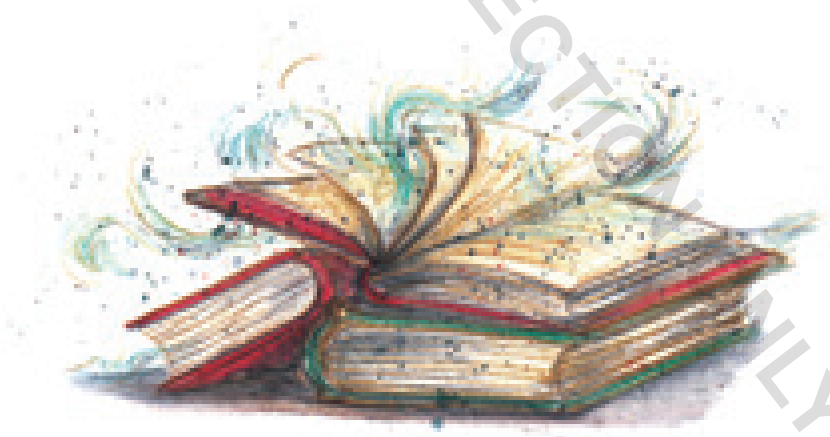
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THE CHARACTERS



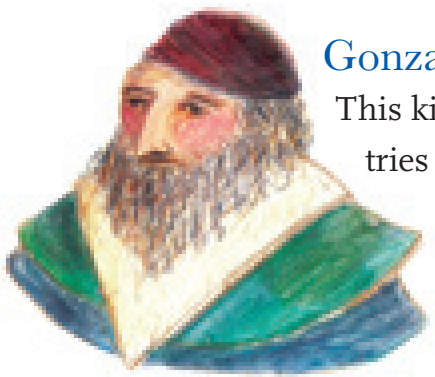
Prospero and Miranda

Prospero's powerful magic creates a storm. What does he plan for the survivors who wash ashore on his island? And what surprises will the storm bring to Miranda, his daughter?

Alonso and Ferdinand



Alonso, King of Naples, and his son Ferdinand, both think the other has drowned in the storm. Will father and son find each other again?



Gonzalo

This kind-hearted counsellor tries to look on the bright side. Will his good nature lead him into danger, or will it save his life?



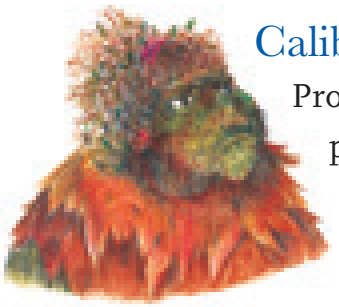
Stephano and Trinculo

These two drunkards want to take over the island, but can they stop drinking long enough to carry out their plan?

Antonio and Sebastian



Long ago Antonio, now Duke of Milan, betrayed his brother Prospero and stole his dukedom. Will he persuade Sebastian to steal *his* brother Alonso's kingdom?

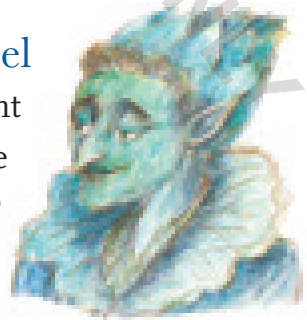


Caliban

Prospero's slave must bear the punishments his master gives him. Will he find someone to help him carry out his desperate plan?

Ariel

Ariel is a spirit, and a faithful servant to Prospero, but he yearns for one thing – his freedom. Will he earn it?



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THE TEMPEST

ACT ONE, SCENE ONE

ON BOARD THE KING OF NAPLES' SHIP, IN A STORM

Master
Bosun!

Bosun
Here, Master.

Master
Bestir the mariners, and look lively, or we run ourselves aground.

Bosun
Jump to, me hearties! Take in the top sail. Blow till thou burst, thou wind.

Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo come on deck.

Alonso
Good Bosun, where's the Master?

Bosun
I pray you now, keep below.

Antonio
Where is the Master, Bosun?

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Bosun
Do you not hear him? You mar our labour.
Keep to your cabins.

Gonzalo
Nay, be patient.

Bosun
When the sea is! Enough! To your cabins and trouble us not.

Gonzalo
Good man, yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

Bosun
None that I love more dearly than myself.
You're a counsellor. If you can make peace with this storm, I'll not do a thing more. If you cannot, then give thanks you have lived so long. Now, out of our way, I say!

Alonso, Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo go below.

Down with the topmast! Lower away!

Shouts from below.

A plague upon this howling: they are louder than the weather.

Sebastian, Antonio and Gonzalo come back on deck.

Yet again? What do you want now?
Shall we stop our labours and drown?
Have you a mind to sink?

Sebastian
Mind your tongue, you good-for-nothing dog!

Bosun
Work you then.

Antonio
You insolent noisemaker! We are less afraid to be drowned than thou art.

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

Some bedraggled sailors enter.

Sailors
All's lost! Say your prayers!

Gonzalo
The King and Prince are saying theirs. Let's join with them.

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thirty-seven plays that we know of, and many sonnets.

The very first theatres were built around the time that Shakespeare was growing up. Until then, plays had been performed in rooms at the back of inns or pubs. The Elizabethans loved going to watch entertainments such as bear-baiting and cock-fighting as well as plays. They also liked to watch public executions, and some of the plays written at this time were quite gruesome.

The Globe, where Shakespeare's company acted, was a round wooden building that was open to the sky in the middle. 'Groundlings' paid a penny to stand around the stage in the central yard. They risked getting wet if it rained. Wealthier people could have a seat in the covered galleries around the edge of the space. Some very important people even had a seat on the stage itself. Unlike today's theatre-goers, Elizabethan audiences were noisy and sometimes fighting broke out.

There were no sets or scene changes in these plays. It was up to the playwright's skill with words to create thunderstorms or forests or Egyptian queens in the imagination of the audience.

Shakespeare wrote mostly in blank verse, in unrhymed lines of ten syllables with a *te-tum te-tum* rhythm. But unlike most writers of his time he tried to make his actors' lines closer to the rhythms of everyday speech, in order to make it sound more naturalistic. He used poetic imagery, and even invented words that we still use today.

His plays are mostly based on stories or old plays that he improved. *The Tempest* may be based on an earlier German play which tells of a magician prince who has a spirit attendant, and an only daughter who falls in love with the son of her father's enemy. There is also a true story from 1609 of a miraculous escape from a shipwreck onto a desert island by a ship's crew sent out from England to America. The news of this event reached England in 1610, a year before *The Tempest* was written.

Finding out more

We recommend the following books and websites to gain a greater understanding of William Shakespeare and Elizabethan England:

Books

- Marcia Williams, *Mr William Shakespeare's Plays*, Walker Books, 2009.

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