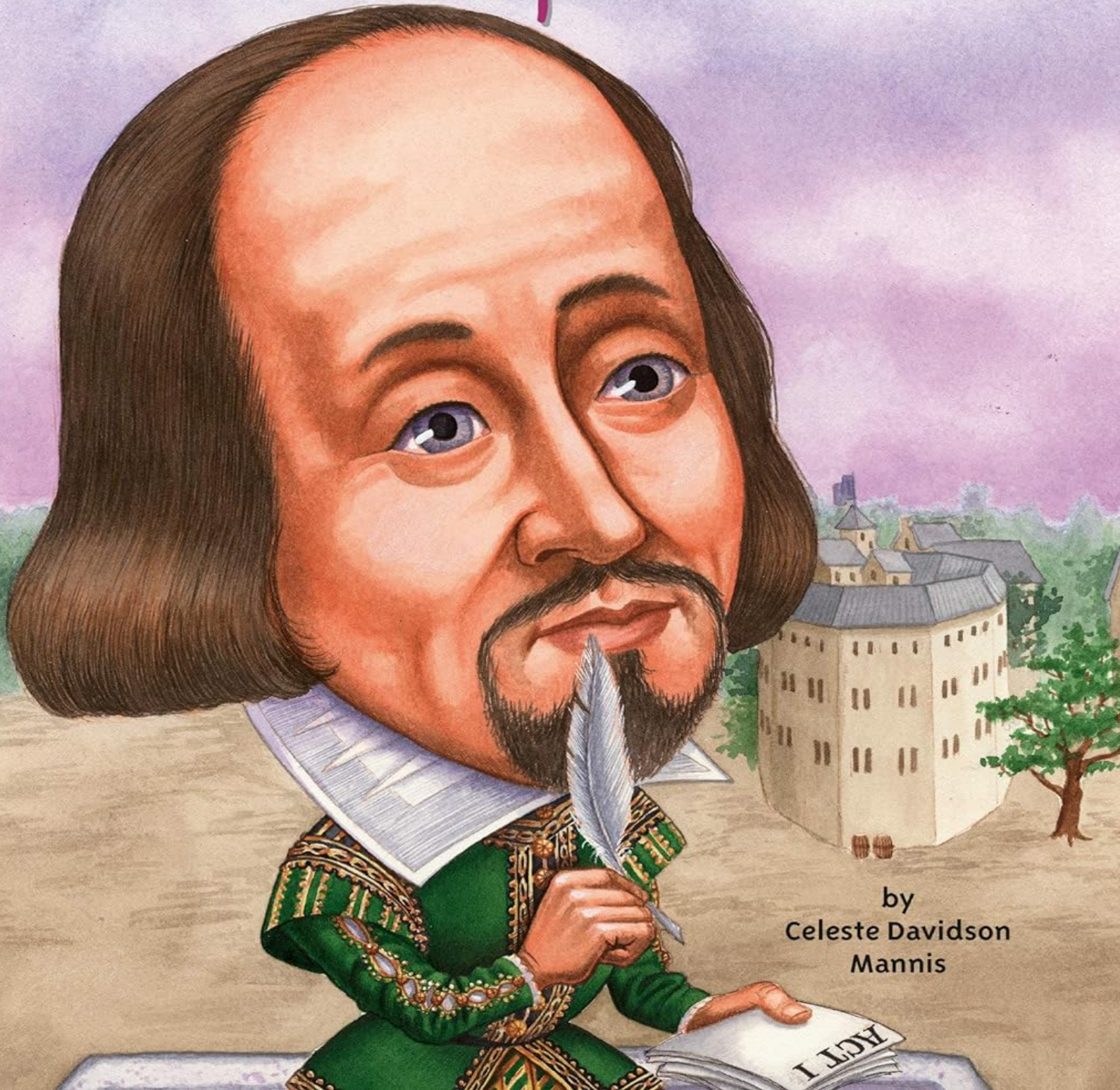


The #1 New York Times Best-Selling Series



Who Was William Shakespeare?



by
Celeste Davidson
Mannis

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By Celeste Davidson Mannis

Illustrated by John O'Brien

Grosset & Dunlap

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To Sammie, of course!—C.D.M.
To Tess—J.O.

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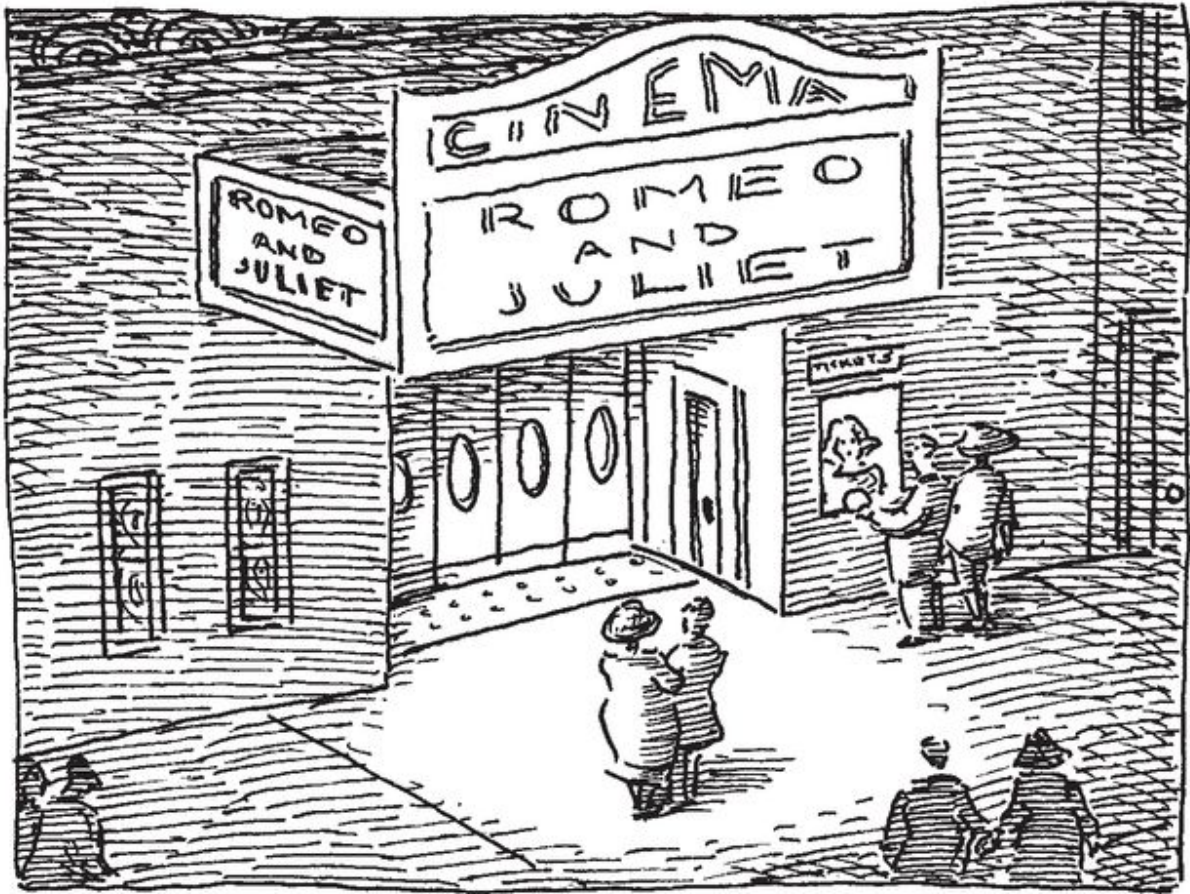
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Who Was William Shakespeare?



William Shakespeare—you probably know his name even if you haven't read anything by him yet. He lived four hundred and fifty years ago, wrote at least thirty-five plays, and more than one hundred and fifty poems. Many people think Shakespeare is the greatest playwright who ever lived.

Everything Shakespeare wrote has been translated into dozens of languages, from Spanish to Japanese to Swahili. People all over the world still watch performances of his plays. Movies and Broadway musicals have been based on many of them, such as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, and *Hamlet*. Hundreds of words and phrases we use every day were invented by him—words like cold-blooded, quarrelsome, and love letter. His language, ideas, and stories are all around us.



Although William Shakespeare is very famous, we don't know a lot about him. Much of his personal life remains a mystery. Back in the 1500s, not many records were kept for the average person. We know Shakespeare began his life as the son of a glove-maker in the small town of Stratford-upon-Avon. He ended it as a rich and famous London playwright. But what happened in between? We know when he married and when he had children. We know he didn't live with his family for many years. Instead, he went to London, where he became an actor, playwright, and a director of plays. He built and bought theaters. He wrote and acted in plays for the Queen of England. He made friends with powerful noblemen.

But what about Shakespeare's day-to-day life? What kind of man and father was he? What made him write plays?

WORDS AND...

HUNDREDS OF WORDS AND PHRASES "COINED" BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE ARE STILL USED TODAY. HERE ARE JUST A FEW.

AMAZEMENT
BIRTHPLACE

COLD-BLOODED
DAWN
EYEBALL
FASHIONABLE
GENEROUS
ILL-TEMPERED
JADED
LOVE LETTER
MAJESTIC

OUTGROW
PUPPY DOG
QUARRELSOME
RASCALLY
SCHOOLBOY
TRANQUIL
USEFUL
VULNERABLE
WELL-BEHAVED
YELPING
ZANY

PHRASES

“ALL THE WORLD’S A STAGE, AND ALL THE MEN AND WOMEN MERELY PLAYERS . . .”

—AS YOU LIKE IT

“KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK! WHO’S THERE?”

—MACBETH

“NEITHER A BORROWER, NOR A LENDER BE . . .”

—HAMLET

“. . . PARTING IS SUCH SWEET SORROW . . .”

—ROMEO AND JULIET

“NEITHER RIME NOR REASON . . .”

—THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

“TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE . . .”

——HAMLET

“TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING . . .”

——AS YOU LIKE IT

“WILD-GOOSE CHASE”

——ROMEO AND JULIET