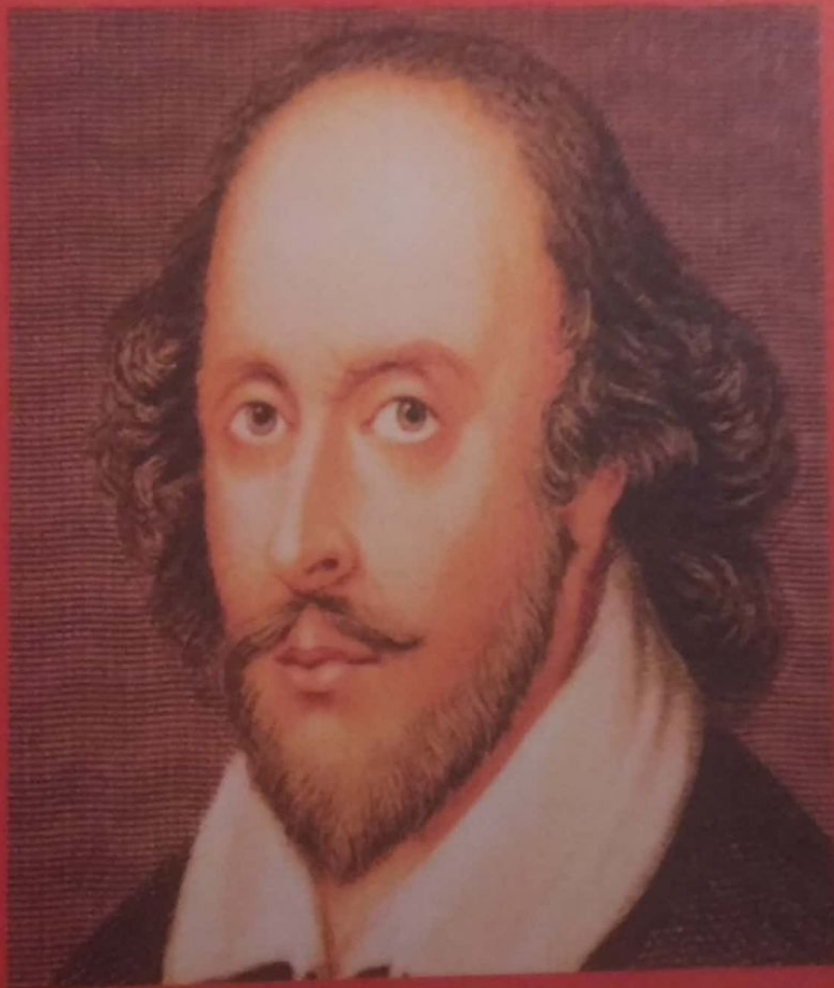


SHAKESPEARE FOREVER

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CONTENTS

- 1 "Deep Down In Dejungle" : Re-Articulating
Gloria Naylor's *Mama Day* And Shakespeare's
The Tempest 1
Dr. A. Roselin Mary
- 2 The Flowers In The Garland of Shakespeare 11
Dr. A. Muthu Meena Losini
- 3 Shakespeare's Gendered Chaos: Male Dominance
And Female Exploitation 22
Dr. Fancy Paul
- 4 Shakespeare - The Meridian Glory 28
Dr. Gomez Sophia
- 5 A Scanning Of Feminist Trait Through Family
Relationships In Shakespeare's "The Winter's
Tale" 35
Dr. Sylvia Flavia
- 6 Macbeth's Damnation Through "The Instruments
Of Evil" 40
Mrs. T. Uma Rani
- 7 Universal Shakespeare 48
Mrs. G. Vijayalekshmi
- 8 Shakespeare's Women Characters: An Example
Of A Living Society 53
D. Sarulatha

SHAKESPEARE THE MERIDIAN GLORY

Dr. GOMEZ SOPHIA

When Learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
First rear'd the stage, immortal Shakespeare rose
Each change of many coloured life he drew
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new"

- Garrick

Reading Shakespeare is a collective experience. His Tragedies astonish, comedies excite, Reading his dramatic masterpieces delights – Life flows through his plays as blood under the skin, He captivates our heart with worthy pastimes and amusements. His works stand alone as grains of gold in a sand dune. His volumes are bearers of all that is best dearest and wonderful, cultivating a taste for thinking.

He is one of the mightiest motive forces of culture and art. He is a strong grain of life in the stream of time hallowed by the banner of victory. His works enlighten ennoble and appeal to the senses. Our mind gets fortified by reading this great thinker. His works impress and illuminate the mind, they never lie neglected upon the table. He has provided mankind with great models which would perpetuate for hundreds and thousands of years.

Shakespeare loved his country that he sunk his roots of knowledge in the native soil. His name is engraved in human heart and his fame retains its relevance. His language is terse, condensed picturesque and musical. With his poetic lines the

inner flame of all talents, burns warms and illumines. His thirty six plays smite our hearts as we read avidly with delight and wonder.

The dramatic hand of Shakespeare with a deep spring of impulse and passion has been able to draw the issues of life. His love for literature and life in art, led him to the road of success and his unique distinction as a dramatist has made him matchless. His capabilities enabled him to overcome all the playwrights who went before him. Only Shakespeare could create a sportive childish treble of Mamilius, the pleading boyish tones of Prince Arthur, the taunted Macbeth, the suspicious moor Othello, the tortured spirit of senior Hamlet and the pathetic King Lear. He breathes perfection into all his characters, from kings down to peasants.

Mathew Arnold has paid a very high tribute to the unique nature of Shakespeare's genius, He compares Shakespeare and his genius to a lofty mountain. The height of the mountain seem to touch the stars in the sky. One can only climb to the lower regions and explore only those regions. The higher regions remain unexplored. In the same way there is something profound and mysterious about Shakespeare's personality and genius and we cannot hope to understand it fully.

He drew his character from all walks of life, be it an innocent Antonio, Vivacious Rosalind, wise Portia, Romantic Romeo, Miserly shylock or lovable Lorenzo. Every character shoots its eminence in myriad shapes and guises. Nobody could fathom him or criticise him. His knowledge of the passions, humour and sentiments of mankind has been perfectly

expressed. Shakespeare's heroines are Intelligent, beautiful witty, affectionate sacrificing and highly resourceful and adventurous young girls. His heroes too are equally loving devoted, valiant and steadfast. Shakespeare delights in taking his lovers to an atmosphere of romance, enchantment pastoral woodland world of music and imaginative idealism.

Shakespeare grew steady in fame and wealth. The richness of Shakespeare's imagination reveals his genius, his felicity of expression and sweetness of language is highly praised. The endless variety of the imagery in his sonnets is highly appreciated. He is renowned for his comprehensive knowledge of almost every subject under the sun. No body except Shakespeare would have given a full artistic expression to human pain and sufferings in his tragedies. He is one who is proficient and has a deep knowledge of the various legends and histories of various countries and heroes. Such a Bard is looked upon with rapt attention, the work of such a virtuous soul never fades or dies. This experience of bringing out the focuses on Shakespeare is a memorable spring which will last forever. He enjoys eternal bliss and great reputation. His touch intensifies the texture of his plays amazingly and vividly. His poetic lines skillfully and artistically enchant and fascinate us in numerous ways. He has kindled the fire of literary thirst and taste for drama. His contribution is something propound and important for all readers. May this son of England under the sun be perpetuated!

Shakespeare stands high in Tragedies. His four major tragedies stir our hearts. They are stories of human suffering

intensely leading to the character's death. The hero's physical mental moral and spiritual agony is highlighted. The heroine also dies in the same process. His heroes are men of high order - great Emperor, King and General. He is basically good, but a tragic flaw in his character brings him down. The tragic hero arouses pity and fear in us. Shakespeare adds supernatural powers such as the Ghosts, Witches, Apparitions omens and superstitions – They operate in a peculiar way where the hero stumbles. The witches in *Macbeth* and the ghost in *Hamlet* belong to the above mentioned world which is uncanny and mysterious. Further Shakespeare intensifies the tragic atmosphere with tempests, rains, hailstorms, earthquake and meteors. Madness overtakes Hamlet. He has been more than four centuries dead. But he lives unrivall'd still.

“Revolving years have flitted on
Corroding time has done its worst,
Pilgrim and worshipper have gone
From Avon's shrine to shrines of dust;
But Shakespeare lives unrivall'd still
And unapproached by mortal mind
The giant of Parnassus' hill
The Pride, the monarch of mankind”

Shakespeare stands firm and strong as a fort, a beacon light shedding rays of wisdom to generations. His fame has broadened his genius which has been universally felt. His muse soared to the stars. His heart is in every word he writes and his plays gives him tremendous power. It could be said that the wealth of his plays are by and large a literary mirror reflecting

life. His works acquaint readers with the life and struggle of people, helps them to understand the characters feeling thoughts and strivings, thereby enabling them to draw comparisons to know and understand the world around. By reading his works we encompass, many ages, they awaken good thoughts. He has the quality of stimulating thought about what is just, what is beautiful and what is useful to people. Shakespeare makes us feel stronger wiser and purer. His radiant characters live today as flesh and blood realities. His fairies carry a charm. This Silver Tongued Sweet Swan of Avon, mellifluous. Honey tongued Bard's characters are immortalised - a Cleopatra for beauty, a shylock for miser, a Deesdemona for innocence a Rosalind for Vivaciousness, a Romeo for Romance, a Mark Antony for astounding speech. Shakespeare was the only dramatist who had so much command over multitudes.

His Sonnets are remarkable. They have been described by Walter Ralieggh as 'The Cave of Mystery'. However some series of sonnets record the moral chaos and spiritual suffering of the poet. His Romantic comedies are stories of romance beauty and love leading finally to happy marriage. In the path of love Shakespeare puts in hindrances, complications cross - wooings and transfer of affections. But towards the end all the knots are cut the path becomes smooth leading to wedlock. The happy union takes place with love joy and youthful gaiety.

Some of the features of the mature comedies of Shakespeare are an atmosphere of optimism very little of satirical elements, predominance of young lovers pastoral elements charmingly and enchantingly portrayed. Almost all the

comedies open with a delightful note. The mood of the opening scene is one of joy and hope. When the lovers confront serious problems they have excessive confidence and never give way to gloomy thoughts. In *Twelfth Night*, Duke Orsino expresses the sweet sadness thus

“If music be the food of love, play on,
Give me excess of it; that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken and so die
That strain again; - it had a dying fall;
O, it came o’er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour.”

I i 1 - 7

Shakespeare’s maturity as a playwright shows its best in his characterisation of Fools in comedies. The Fools not only exhibit fun and mirth, they seem to have been endowed with experiences which are very deep and wide when expressed. They too have a keen insight into people around them. Feste in *Twelfth Night* is innocent but could see through Olivia’s vanity in her mourning and the Duke’s tilting moods. Touch stone who wears the conventional ‘motley’ of a jester is shrewd,

Shakespeare’s tragic heroes are men of outstanding accomplishments. They are far beyond the scale of the common man and their experiences are so extreme that we cannot regard them as ordinary men. The tragic hero of Shakespeare suffers internally and externally, he struggles with a threatening chaos. Shakespeare’s psychological insight has transformed *Hamlet* into a work of great genius.

Shakespeare genius is so profound that we cannot fully understand it. He did not have any formal education. His comprehensive knowledge of almost every subject had made his works immortal. Nobody could fully realize the greatness of this genius.

Flowers never bloom without sun

Happiness never thrive without love

Literature can never exist without Shakespeare

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