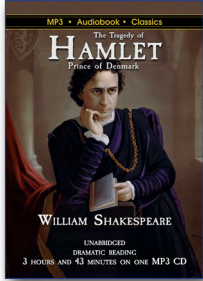


Plays of William Shakespeare

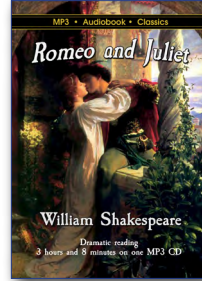


The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 3 hours 43 minutes
Genre: Plays, Drama

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, usually referred to as *Hamlet*, is a tragedy by William Shakespeare that is his longest and probably his most popular work, leading the list of performances of the Royal Shakespeare Company for over 100 years and second only to *Cinderella* as the most filmed story in the world. Set in the Kingdom of Denmark, the play dramatizes the revenge Prince Hamlet is visited by the ghost of his father, King Hamlet, and directed to exact revenge for his murder by his brother, Hamlet's uncle Claudius, who subsequently seized the throne and married his widow, Hamlet's mother Gertrude. Hamlet agrees and decides to feign madness, and has doubts about the ghost. The plot proceeds with intrigue, betrayals and tragic errors, with Hamlet staging a play for the court enacting a death of a king by a usurper, and culminating in a deadly sword fight. Memorable characters include the elderly advisor Polonius, his son Laertes, his daughter Ophelia, and Hamlet's friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and the skull of "poor Yorick", a jester from Hamlet's childhood.

Catalog: DB-1122
UPC: 0683422134432
MSLP: \$10.99

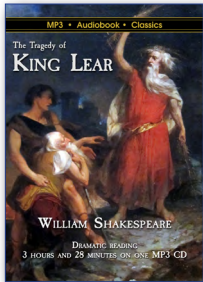


The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 3 hours 8 minutes
Genre: Plays, Drama

Rome and Juliet are the archetypes for star-crossed lovers. There is a feud between their families, the Capulets and Montagues. Romeo and Juliet meet by chance, fall in love at first sight and pledge themselves to one another. Juliet's cousin Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel, Romeo refuses, his friend Mercutio accepts in his stead and is killed in a mishap. Romeo slays Tybalt and is exiled from Verona. Juliet's father betroths her to Count Paris. She resists and seeks help from Friar Laurence, who gives her a sleeping potion so she can feign death and sends a message to Romeo about the plan. The message never arrives, Romeo is grief-struck, kills Paris at Juliet's tomb in a case of mistaken identity, drinks poison and dies. Juliet awakes, finds Romeo dead, and stabs herself to death. The families arrive to find all three dead and reconcile. The elegy by the Prince says it all: "For never was a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo." Written early in his career, *Romeo and Juliet* is one of the earliest tragedies, one of his most popular during his lifetime, and one of the most frequently performed to this day.

Catalog: DB-1125
UPC: 0683422134463
MSLP: \$10.99

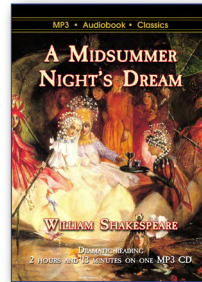


The Tragedy of King Lear

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 3 hours 43 minutes
Genre: Plays, Drama

The Tragedy of King Lear depicts the descent of the title character into madness after retiring from power and disposing of his kingdom. He promised the larger share to the one who loves him most. The older two of his three daughters, Goneril and Regan, flatter him with superficial affection and respect and are awarded accordingly. Cordelia, his seeming favorite, tells him there is nothing to which her love can be compared, that there are no words to express it. Lear misunderstands and, infuriated, disinherits her, the first of numerous blunders which lead to tragic endings. Based on the legend of Leir of Britain, a mythological Celtic king from pre-Roman times, the play is considered one of Shakespeare's finest works. Scholars believe Lear was first written in 1603 and first performed in 1606. The role of Lear is one of the most challenging and has been played by many of the world's most accomplished actors. Playwright George Bernard Shaw wrote, "No man will ever write a better tragedy than Lear".

Catalog: DB-1124
UPC: 0683422134456
MSLP: \$10.99

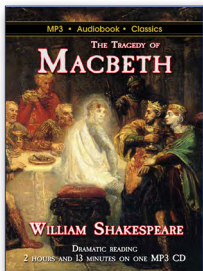


A Midsummer Night's Dream

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 2 hours 13 minutes
Genre: Plays, Drama

A Midsummer Night's Dream, one Shakespeare's most popular plays, weaves four intertwined plots around the themes of love, magic, and dreams. The play is framed by an extended celebration of the wedding of Theseus, Duke of Athens, and Hippolyte, Queen of the Amazons. At the same time, four young Athenians attempt to fulfill their romantic destinies, which conflict with the intentions of the elders and judgment of Theseus. On another level there is a tiff between Oberon, king of the fairies, and Titania, his queen, over an Indian boy. Throughout Puck, Oberon's "shrewd and knavish sprite", dispenses love potions to guide the course of various romances for better and for worse. Lastly, there is the comic relief of a crew of craftsmen in the woods rehearsing a wretched version of "Pyramus and Thisbe" to perform at the Duke's wedding. After an evening of mishaps and turnabouts in the woods with the fairies, attachments come into alignment; all awake and agree that they must have been dreaming.

Catalog: DB-1127
UPC: 0683422134487
MSLP: \$10.99

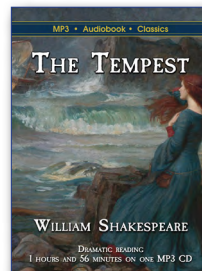


The Tragedy of Macbeth

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 2 hours 13 minutes
Genre: Plays, Tragedy

The Tragedy of Macbeth dramatizes the consequences of the naked lust for power and the devious workings of the mind: its willingness to believe and fulfill a prophecy, to see what it wants to see and overlook what it needs to overlook, and how the power of guilt can lead to paranoia and desperation acts. Macbeth is seen first as a victorious general rewarded by a grateful king, an act mysteriously forecast by Three Witches, along with the prediction of his eventual kingship. Lady Macbeth convinces him to fulfill the destiny immediately by killing King Duncan in his sleep and pinning it on his chamberlains. They do so, and guilt, remorse, paranoia soon follow. Macbeth becomes a vicious tyrant, ruthlessly eliminating threats from rivals real and imagined. Lady Macbeth sleepwalks, washing her hands incessantly and babbling her regrets before taking her own life. Macbeth seeks comfort in the further prophecies of the Three Witches but misinterprets their meanings and falls to the campaign of his avenging enemies. Double, double, toil and trouble, indeed.

Catalog: DB-1123
UPC: 0683422134449
MSLP: \$10.99



The Tempest

Author: William Shakespeare
Read by: Multiple Readers
Format: MP3 CD in DVD case
Length: 1 hour 56 minutes
Genre: Plays, Drama

Neither tragedy nor comedy, but a romance, *The Tempest* (1610-11) is believed to be the last play written in entirety by William Shakespeare. Prospero and his daughter Miranda have lived on a remote island for twelve years with native spirit Ariel as servant and the monstrous Caliban as slave. Prospero's brother, Antonio, conspired with Alonso, King of Naples, to depose him as Duke of Milan. Prospero, a sorcerer, divines that they are passing by and conjures a tempest to maroon them on the island. Prospero separates the survivors into several groups, and several plots unfold. Caliban plots with two drunkards to undo Prospero and fails. Prospero tests Alonso's son Ferdinand, who passes and is rewarded with the hand of Miranda. Alonso's brother Sebastian conspires with Antonio to kill Alonso and gain the kingdom of Naples, and is foiled by Ariel, working under Prospero's guidance. With his powers in full sway, Prospero ends by forgiving the conspirators, freeing Ariel, pardoning Caliban, breaking his magic staff and drowning his magic book.

Catalog: DB-1128
UPC: 0683422134494
MSLP: \$10.99