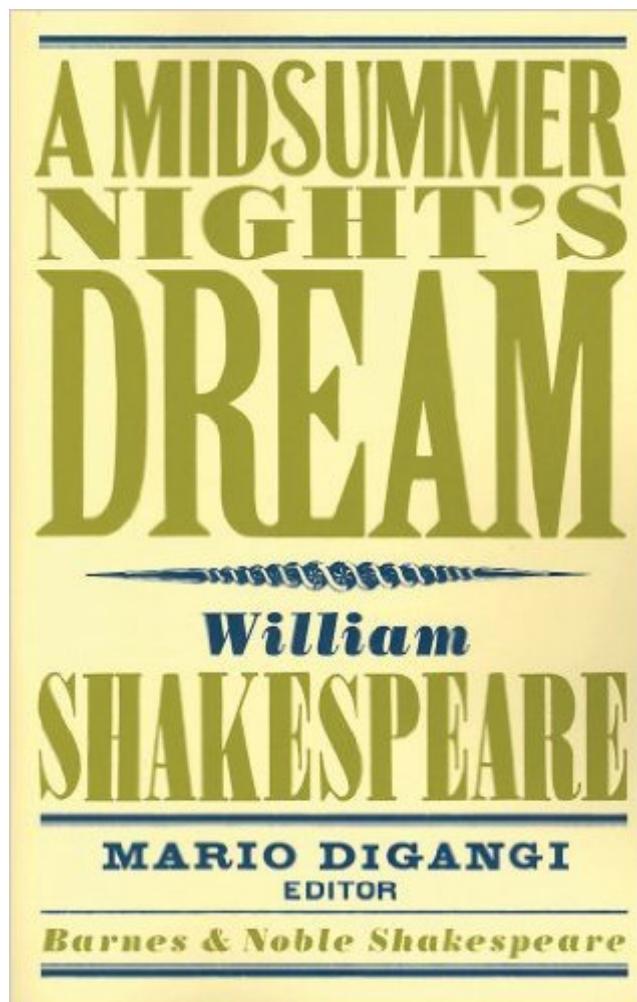


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A Midsummer Night's Dream (Barnes & Noble Shakespeare)



Synopsis

A Midsummer Night's Dream, by William Shakespeare, is part of the Barnes & Noble Shakespeare series. This unique series features newly edited texts prepared by leading scholars from America and Great Britain, in collaboration with one of the world's foremost Shakespeare authorities, David Scott Kastan of Columbia University. Together they have produced texts as faithful as possible to those that Shakespeare wrote. Each volume in the Barnes & Noble Shakespeare includes: New Scholarship; Premiere scholars introduce each play with contemporary scholarship. An essay on editing the text provides an in-depth look at the quartos and folios used in the edition. Contextualizing Essays; Essays on Shakespeare's England, language, and life, along with essays on performing Shakespeare and significant performances frame the play in both historical and theatrical context for readers. A look at the lasting influence of the play on music, art, film, and dance creates an interdisciplinary framework with which to approach the play. Better Notes; Through one-word margin definitions, facing-page glosses, and longer end notes after the play, our innovative approach to notes pulls readers away from the text fewer times while providing them with more information and comprehensive analysis. Further Reading; An annotated bibliography of titles, hand-selected by the introduction author, takes readers beyond the edition for further reading. Shakespeare's hilarious though often unnerving story of desire, confusion, and magic has delighted audiences for 400 years. The editor, Mario DiGangi, provides a set of notes rich in insight into the play's many literary and cultural points of reference.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

There are many reasons for the popularity of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream", not the least among them is the almost unique joining of the humorous misuse of language (by the tradesman actors) and the utter beauty of language and expression (by Puck, Oberon, and Titania). One usually gets a farce of language or an attempt at the sublime. Here the music of the two enriches both. How can one put together these four disparate plotlines into such a wonderful whole? The quartet of lovers and their mixed and varied attentions forms the basis of the plot in the comedy and it is a delightful enough farce. The squabble of Demitrius and Lysander over Hermia while Helena pines over Demitrius, Oberon and Titania's argument over one of her servants and Oberon's use of Puck to manipulate Titania's affections including Puck's mistaken application of Oberon's potion to Lysander's eyes, the pending marriage of Thesus and Hippolyta, and the wonderfully, magically awful play being put on by the tradesman for the nobles. Putting all this into a wonderful whole is an achievement that I believe is unmatched. I do want to say that this play has suffered a great deal in our sex obsessed age. We have foisted on this play an eroticism that it does not claim for itself nor display. While the "adult" couples (Thesus & Hippolyta, Oberon & Titania) interact and talk in ways that include that aspect of their lives, the youthful couples always talk and act in ways that are concerned with propriety and modesty. Bottom is hardly the lust blinded brute depicted in modern productions. He is much more interested in eating and chatting with his Fairy friends than Titania.

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