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*William Shakespeare*

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**William Shakespeare : As You Like It (Pilgrim Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised As You Like It (Pilgrim Classics):

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Creditable, lucid, and practical editionBy HHThe general introduction to this Oxford edition begins appropriately with a discussion of the possible anti-Semitism of "The Merchant of Venice". The editor Jay Halio claims that the treatment of Shylock is highly ambivalent, so that the character "transcends the type, shatters the conventional image with his appeal to our common humanity, and leaves us unsettled in our prejudices, disturbed in our emotions, and by no means sure of our convictions" (p. 13). After a detailed survey of stage productions through the ages, Halio concludes, "Whether the play is itself anti-Semitic or not depends largely upon one's interpretation, on the stage as on the page" (p. 83). While this is obviously true, and while Halio properly draws attention to a range of ambiguities in the play's depiction of both Shylock and his Christian adversaries, the word "largely" raises a question to which many scholars have offered a challenging, hostile answer. The general introduction also includes: a survey of sources and analogues, enlivened by a summary of Freud's interpretation of the three caskets; a brief account of the 'myth' of Venice, particularly its reputation for impartial justice; an estimate of the play's date (1596-7); and a helpful critical analysis which gives prominence to the theme of "bondage and bonding". Halio's annotation of the text is generally proficient and admirably frank in rendering sexual double entendres and is frequently illuminating in its references to modes of staging; the lengthy note on "Nerissa's ring" is exemplary in both these respects. As with other volumes of the Oxford World's Classics Shakespeare series, there is a good range of pictorial material and a very useful index.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best versionBy Fyoder LarueBest version. Why? Because it's the closest to Shakespeare. Two Gents was never published in quarto form prior to the First Folio from whence this text comes, except this is cleaned up and in a modern font; none of those 's's that look like 'f's, not cramped into the minimum space possible because paper was hand made and expensive. Later editors would place a high value on consistency, aiming for a product that would be easily digestible by a solitary reader, with correct punctuation, flattening verse into prose where verse pops up unexpectedly. The text of the First Folio, on the other hand, still echos the spoken word, the words of a playwright writing for actors and the stage.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Exquisite lyricism coupled with absurd plot twistBy Ricardo MioI was drawn to this play after watching "Shakespeare in Love"; Early in the movie lines are recited from the play that are quite entrancing: "What is light, if Silvia be not seen? // What is joy, if Silvia be not by? // Unless it be to think that she is by // And feed upon the shadow of perfection. // Except I be by Silvia in the night, // There is no music in the nightingale; // Unless I look upon Silvia in the day, // There is no day for me to look upon." Alas, these words from Act III, and the song in Act IV, ("Who is Silvia? What is she, // That all our swains commend her?") are the highlights of a play that most critics place at or near the bottom of

the Shakespeare canon. The play is a comedy and therefore a love story, but the focus is on the friendship of two men--two buddies as it were--as in the plot of a Paul Newman/Robert Redford movie. Also, the heroine is not Silvia but Julia. The buddies are "The Two Gentlemen of Verona"---Proteus and Valentine. Proteus loves Julia and she loves him, while Valentine is destined to fall in love with Silvia. This being a comedy, Proteus falls for Silvia too, and Julia must disguise herself as a boy to win him back. If you're familiar with Shakespeare's comedies, girls disguised as boys is often part of the plot, but it was with this play where cross-dressing began. Valentine goes to Milan to be "tutor" in the world. Soon after, Proteus follows to meet up with him in the court of Milan. There, Proteus forgets about his love for Julia and falls head-over-heels in love with Valentine's girl Silvia, and to entice her affections proceeds to disparage his best friend. Nice guy, huh? This betrayal leads to Valentine's exile from the court. Determined to win him back, Julia dresses as a boy and sets off to find him. The plucky and fetching Julia; the wit of Launce, the clown, and his dog Crab can't save the plot's absurd and implausible twist wherein Valentine offers the love of his life (Silvia) to Proteus, just after Proteus was about to rape her. How's that for friendship? And how's that for love? Valentine doesn't bother to ask Silvia how she feels about being offered up to his friend as so much chattel, never mind that she would have been raped had not Valentine and Julia arrived in the nick of time. As you might expect, "Two Gentlemen of Verona" is among the bard's "problem comedies," and is not performed all that often. In the introduction to the Pelican Shakespeare, Mary Beth Rose of the University of Illinois at Chicago sums up the play with: "In the shallow story of deep lovers" (I.I. 21), about which Valentine taunts Proteus at the beginning of "The Two Gentlemen of Verona," the actual "deep lovers" is that between male friends. Indeed. She also cites the play's "exquisite lyricism" as the play's saving grace.

Presented by Fiona Shaw, this is an invaluable resource, examining various issues, including how interpretations of Shakespeare can be explored through performance and the difference between film and theatre. The video includes workshops by Fiona Shaw with student actors; extracts from the all-male Cheek by Jowl production of the play; and interviews with Cheek by Jowl's Declan Donnellan and Adrian Lester and with directors/actors Annie Castledine, Peter Sellars, Juliet Stevenson and Deborah Warner. It ends with a specially shot version of the banishment scene directed by Fiona Shaw, with Susan Lynch and Matilda Ziegler. Produced by The Open University. NOT FOR SALE IN NORTH AMERICA.

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