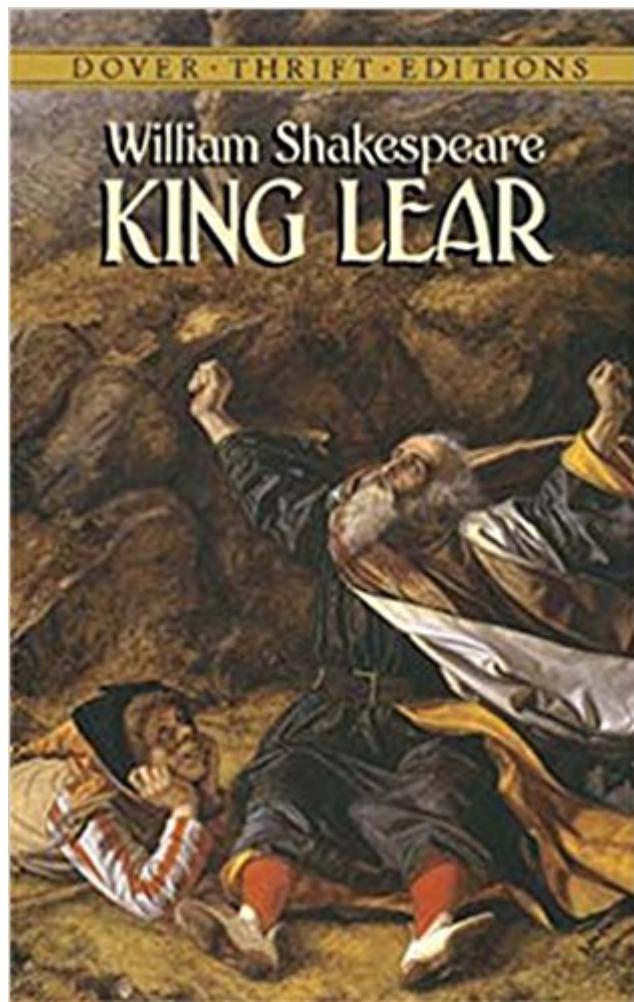


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King Lear (Dover Thrift Editions)



Synopsis

First performed about 1805, King Lear is one of the most relentlessly bleak of Shakespeare's tragedies. Probably written between Othello and Macbeth, when the playwright was at the peak of his tragic power, Lear's themes of filial ingratitude, injustice, and the meaninglessness of life in a seemingly indifferent universe are explored with unsurpassed power and depth. The plot concerns a monarch betrayed by his daughters, robbed of his kingdom, descending into madness. Greed, treachery, and cruelty are rife and the denouement of the play is both brutal and heartbreaking. In fact, so troubling is its vision of man's life that, until the mid-19th century, the play was performed most often with a non-Shakespearean happy ending, with Lear back on his throne and Cordelia, the daughter nearest his heart, happily married to the noble Edgar. But there is a dark magnificence to Shakespeare's original vision of the Lear story, and the play is performed today essentially as he wrote it, uncompromised by later "improvements." King Lear is reprinted here from an authoritative British edition, complete with explanatory footnotes.

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Customer Reviews

Like I say about all Shakespeare: the Arden versions are my favorite. I own about a third of the Canon in them already. The footnotes are my favorite parts about it, and they're great because I don't have to carry my Lexicon around everywhere. King Lear is a brilliant play, all around. Between the family ties, the love and lust, and just the crazy existential dialogue, it's just a great read all-around.

I'm a fan of the layout of Folger Shakespeare Library. The covers are also beautiful, but the play on the right, explanation of archaic terms on the left style is very helpful to the reader and makes getting into Shakespeare much easier. King Lear is a great tragedy. It is very enjoyable.

This 'interpretation' alongside the original makes for much easier reading, while making the original so readily available also gives one the 'texture' of how the original felt. There is so much meaning and so much feeling contained in this play that the interpretation is essential unless one is able to interpret all the old English terms by oneself. So, I will certainly purchase further editions by this author's interpretations for more appreciation of the many plays of Shakespeare.

Every time I read this or watch this perform I feel changed. This edition is small, beautiful, and great. I have many of the plays in this edition, though truly the play is what makes me rate this so high. An exploration of madness, family, old age, and so much more. Read it and weep.

Was an AP English summer reading assignment. Read the Sparknotes after. Not my typical choice of text, but it is a classic

This is a welcome addition to my growing Folger library at home. Thank you!

Every time I re-read Lear I'm amazed at just how much pain and sorrow we must endure in life. This Folger Library edition makes the language easily comprehensible. One can read straight through without difficulty, which restores the tension and flow to the action.

Excellent collection of essays that enable students to consider the play in its historical context.

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