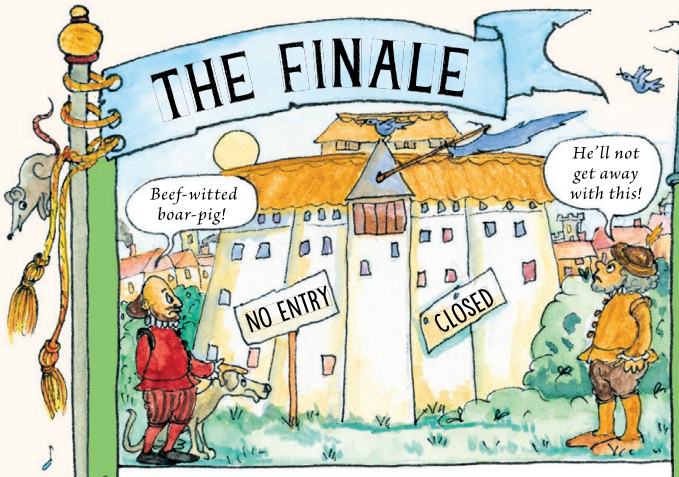
Text

Encore, Mr William Shakespeare!

Written and illustrated by Marcia Williams



Will wrote at least 37 plays. Many were performed at the Theatre, until there was a disagreement with the owner of the land, a man called Giles Allen.



Allen owned the land, but the Burbage brothers owned the Theatre. So one night, they secretly dismantled it and floated the timber across the River Thames.



They used the timber to build a new theatre on the south bank. It was named the Globe and became even more popular than the Theatre. Everyone flocked to the performances. The rich paid about five pennies for the best seats in the Lord's Rooms, and for another penny they could even rent a cushion! Audience members known as "groundlings" paid only a penny to stand in the yard beneath the open roof – come sun or rain.



In 1603, Queen Elizabeth I died and was succeeded by King James I. Like Elizabeth, James loved Will's work and became patron of his acting company. Known as the King's Men, they often performed Will's plays at court.

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Text

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Will was now so wealthy he was able to buy one of the largest houses in Stratford-upon-Avon, called New Place. Will started spending more time at home.



Eventually, Will retired from London to be with his family in their Stratford home. It was there that he wrote the epitaph that was later carved on his grave.

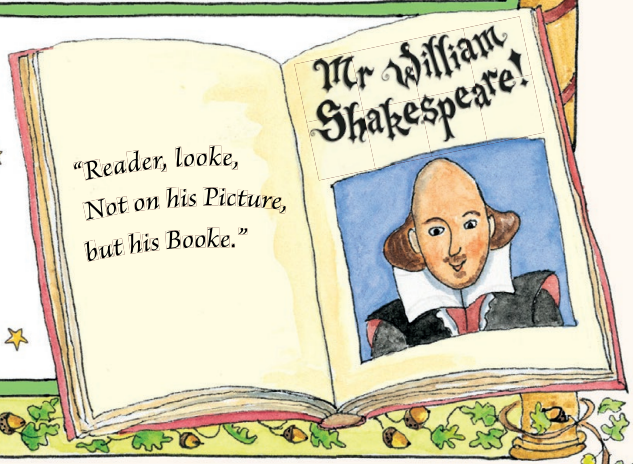


In 1616, on his 52nd birthday, Will died. Nobody knows why. A few days before, he had been entertaining his friends Ben Jonson and Michael Drayton. But as the average life expectancy at that time was around 35 years, he could be said to have lived to a ripe old age, having achieved plenty!

EPILOGUE

Seven years after Will died, two of his friends, John Heminges and Henry Condell, published 36 of his plays in a collection known as the *First Folio*, saving them for all time. Alongside a portrait of Shakespeare in the *First Folio*, Will's friend Ben Jonson reminds us that the picture can only show his likeness, not his wit.

Hundreds of years later, we still think of Mr William Shakespeare as the greatest storyteller of all time.



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