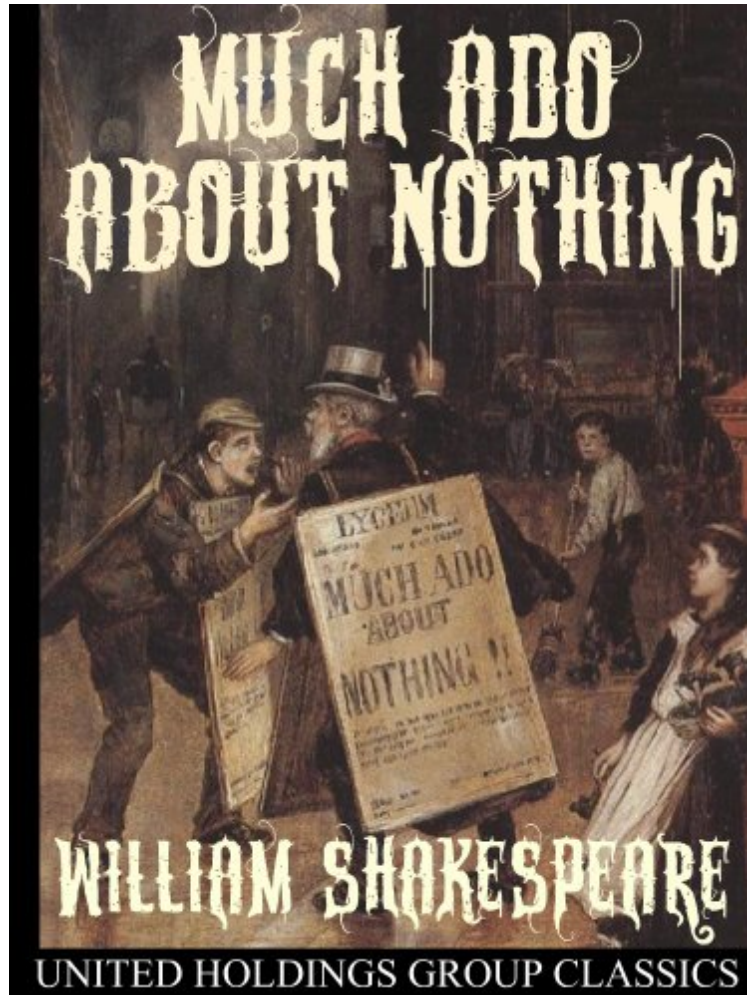


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Much Ado About Nothing (English Edition)

Von William Shakespeare

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Von William Shakespeare : Much Ado About Nothing (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Much Ado About Nothing (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Much Ado About NothingVon KundeLove the introduction with the extra notes. Totally helped me get ahead in my English class. The layout was nice and easy to read. Plus, it looks pretty on the shelf. Gotta love penguin classics!0 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. SchullektreVon NShakespeare in der Schule... wer es mag - andere mssen es lesen ;) Buch kam schnell und einwandfrei. Da ich kein groes Shakespeare-Fan bin ist die Story fr mich okay.2 von 3 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. "Daughter, remember what I told you: If the prince do solicit you in that kind, you know your answer." (II, 1)Von Tristram ShandyAnd so do we, even though the prince, as comes out later, did not woo fair Hero for himself, but for his friend Count Claudio. Yet, Hero also knows the answer

to that one, and as a dutiful daughter she tends to speak only when addressed to, or when she is wearing a mask. "Much Ado About Nothing" is generally considered to rank among Shakespeare's finest comedies, and in addition to this I would see it as one of his grimmest ones, too,* as the action frequently borders on the tragic. The story is about two pairs of lovers, who, after some good-natured and some ill-natured plots, are finally united. There are, first of all, Beatrice and Benedick, who wage a "merry war" against each other, flinging smarting witticisms and provocations the one versus the other, while in reality they seem to feel quite a lot of mutual attraction. In fact, Benedick seems to have courted and jilted Beatrice some time before (cf. II,1, II.211-13). This "merry war" affords great opportunities of admiring Bea's repartee, because her quicksilver answers often come down on glib Benedick like so many coups d'pe. One of my favourite scenes is when Don Pedro reports to Benedick how Bea retorted each of his attempts at singing Benedick's praise by turning the prince's words into something negative: "I said thou hadst a fine wit, true said she, a fine little one: no said I, a great wit: right, says she, a great gross one: nay said I, a good wit: just said she, it hurts nobody [...] nay said I, he hath the tongues: that I believe said she, for he swore a thing to me on Monday night, which he foreswore on Tuesday morning, there's a double tongue [...]" This hell of a torrent is truly Shakespearean, forsooth. The other couple is a more conventional one: Count Claudio, a loyal friend of the prince's, falls in love with Hero, the only daughter of the prince's follower Leonato. As I suggested in the title, Hero is an obedient daughter, who only talks when talked to and who knows her place ("So says the prince, and my newly trothd lord."). When the prince's illegitimate brother, Don John, starts scheming against her in order to get his revenge on Claudio, Hero suddenly finds her virginity doubted, and Claudio publicly insults and renounces her in front of the nuptial altar. This is the point when the whole play seems to diverge into tragedy, but for the serendipitous blundering of the night watchmen, led by the addle-brained Dogberry. It is this frustrated wedding that I think the strongest scene of the whole play, because it reveals the gruesome logic of a male chauvinist society: Claudio, who has repeatedly professed his love for Hero to his friends, on the grounds, mind, that she is "a modest** young lady", is so enraged when he finds himself confronted with Hero's lecherousness that he resolves to expose her in public and ruin her reputation in order to restore his honour, and also the prince follows suit. What is even more, Hero's father Leonato, at hearing Claudio's unfeeling insults against the young lady ("Give not this rotten orange to your friend"), does not think of siding with his daughter at first, but rashly joins the diatribes of his social superiors and indulges in self-pity ("Grieved I, I had but one [daughter]? Chid I for that at frugal nature's frame? Oh one too much by thee! Why had I one? Why ever wast thou lovely in my eyes?") It is only later, talked into reason by the clergyman, Beatrice and Benedick, that he begins to think better of his misgivings about his daughter's innocence. Can one imagine how Hero must have felt at that moment, when her own father joined the slander against her? Characteristically, Hero does not utter any word of defense or reproach, but swoons, thus proving a fine young lady again. I would like to think that a great man such as the Bard would have wanted the audience to see these male, honour-obsessed brutes, who let no opportunity to indulge in bawdy jokes about cuckold husbands and slutty wives pass, with a critical eye, but then I am not too sure whether, quite a child of his own time, Billy Shakes would not have joined them. We should not forget that Beatrice's brilliant repartee, which probably makes her one of the most popular and interesting Shakespearean characters, is completely missing in the final act, when she has agreed to marry Benedick - of course, after extracting from him the promise to kill his friend Claudio for humiliating Hero. Mulier taceat in ecclesia, and especially in matriminio. Maybe this was also Shakespeare's view. All in all, this grim comedy will give you quite a lot of food for thought. One does not even have to like it for that.* Together with "The Merchant of Venice".** Also meaning "innocent" and "virginal" here.

Kurzbeschreibung Much Ado About Nothing is a comedy by William Shakespeare. First published in 1600, it is likely to have been first performed in the autumn or winter of 1598-1599, and it remains one of Shakespeare's most enduring and exhilarating plays on stage. Stylistically, it shares numerous characteristics with modern romantic comedies including the two pairs of lovers, in this case the romantic leads, Claudio and Hero, and their comic counterparts, Benedick and Beatrice. de Like Love's Labours Lost, Much Ado about Nothing shows Shakespeare moving into a more complex and darker terrain through his exploration of an apparently harmless comical romance. The play revolves around the adventures of the two gallants Claudio and Benedick at the court of Sicily. Claudio falls in love with the governor's daughter Hero, and is eager for his more misanthropic friend Benedick to also find love. Benedick is introduced to the fiery, independent Beatrice, and sparks soon fly as they banter with each other in a more wittier version of Kate and Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew. Beatrice has some wonderful ripostes to marriage asking why should a woman marry "a clod of wayward marl", whilst Benedick grumbles that "She speaks poniards and every word stabs". Meanwhile, the jealous Don John convinces Claudio that Hero has in fact been unfaithful to him. When Claudio rejects Hero on their wedding day, she faints and is taken for dead. In the hectic final scenes the play moves towards reconciliation between Claudio and Hero, and the tentative admission of the love between Benedick and Beatrice. Famously filmed by Kenneth Branagh in the Tuscan countryside with a cast that included Keanu Reeves, Much Ado about Nothing remains one of Shakespeare's most successful comedies. --Jerry Brotton.co.uk Like Love's

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