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Manga Shakespeare: The Merchant Of Venice



Synopsis

The Merchant of Venice, one of the Bard's most enduring plays, explores themes of forgiveness, prejudice, and fairness, all of which remain vital topics today. In the Manga Shakespeare version, the setting and themes of the play take on new meaning as adapted by the artists guiding the series. Whether readers are fans of the Bard or of manga, this is a story that will captivate and engage, even after four hundred years.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Shakespeare's play The Merchant of Venice has gotten a new perspective in an OEL manga. Some things are changed--like the fact that the characters have elfish looks with long ears--but more often than not, the graphic novel sticks with its source material. When I first saw the elfish look, I thought this version might have tossed out the religious aspects in order to avoid the play's anti-Semitism, and instead showed the differences in characters through mystical means. That's not the case. It's never said why the characters look the way they do. It still takes places in Venice, and Shylock is still Jewish. The dialogue is not modern. It lifts directly from the Shakespeare, or it trims down lines, or it slightly reworks it. For instance, the play opens with Antonio saying, "In sooth I know not why I am so sad./ It wearies me, you say it wearies you./ But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,/ What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,/ I am to learn." The graphic novel opens with Antonio saying. "I know not why I am so sad. How I came by it, I am to learn." It's the same story, of course. Antonio agrees to borrow money from Shylock so he can help his friend Bassanio have the funds to court

Portia. Portia deals with her other suitors, and Shylock's daughter, much to his anger, elopes with a Christian man. When Antonio loses his ships (and therefore money), Shylock wants a pound of his flesh in return, and Portia saves the day in a courtroom scene. This is not meant to be a replacement read for the play, but a guide to help readers understand it. It doesn't get into all the nitty-gritty details or explain the meaning of every word and phrase. There are different books for that. It does, however, give a good overview and feel of the story.

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