



Manga Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice

Richard Appignanesi (Adapter) , William Shakespeare , Faye Yong (Illustrator)

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Manga Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice Details

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Author : Richard Appignanesi (Adapter) , William Shakespeare , Faye Yong (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Manga Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice for online ebook

Ernest says

This interesting adaptation/interpretation of The Merchant of Venice will not be for everyone. In particular, those who dislike the Manga style and those who prefer only the traditional written text will feel most unease. This is a pity for it can sometimes be difficult for readers (myself included) to get into what are some of these great writings of literature. This interesting adaptation/interpretation is generally easy to read and has shown me a story I was only vaguely familiar with. It will be interesting to see how this version has interpreted the text (which I will eventually read) and how this compares with other versions (on stage and screen).

Jennifer Wardrip says

Reviewed by Cinnamon for TeensReadToo.com

With gorgeous manga-style illustrations, this version of THE MERCHANT OF VENICE is a compelling representation of the Bard's famous play about the Jewish moneylender. The three intertwined plots - Antonio's bond with Shylock, Bassanio's suit, and Jessica's escape from her cruel father - are all brought together in an undoubtedly less intimidating way than Shakespeare's original play.

Having read and thoroughly dissected almost every single word of THE MERCHANT OF VENICE as a student recently, this manga still managed to provide me with new insights and details that might not have been noticed from reading the actual play.

An interesting aspect of the volume: word choice. It reads like Shakespeare's original, although it isn't quite the same - yes, I dug out my copy of the play and compared the two. The manga uses the same writing style, vocabulary, and similar sentence structure, but is slightly more condensed. I vastly prefer this method to a simple rewrite of the great Bard's words, as most of Shakespeare's lyricism was not lost.

This is a great introduction into Shakespeare for those who feel the urge to curl up in a fetal position each time the Bard's name is mentioned. And for Shakespeare fanatics, the volume is a fresh new look at greedy Shylock, self-sacrificing Antonio, and beautiful and cunning Portia.

Liawèn says

There's not much to say. I love the art style. It all feels like a fairytale Venice. And I love the story. The revenge plot is great and I like the fact that one else but Portia is that smart and finds a way out of it^^ quite frankly, I wouldn't have thought of it either :-D

Dalal says

?????

Shelli says

When reading Shakespeare with my daughter I always try to find several smaller picture book and graphic novel adaptations of the plays to help her understand and appreciated his beautifully wordy and antiquated writing. Sadly this was the only thing I could find at the public library to go with our *Merchant of Venice* unit. While it was beautifully illustrated and filled with expression in that exaggerated way that manga does so well, it could have been delivered to help students have a better understanding of the story, maybe with an additional panel or two or *information in the lower corner.

Marsha says

The Merchant of Venice is one of Shakespeare's most difficult plays to mount and perform and each director must feel his way carefully with interpretation. Is it comedy or drama? Is Shylock a villain or a persecuted victim demanding equal justice? What's all this nonsense about rings anyway? While the loveliness of Venice is gracefully drawn with fine architecture and lovely foliage, the people are conceived as being otherwordly creatures with pointy ears; one character is depicted with webbed fingers, black eyeballs and white pupils. Dragons are shown as winged steeds and chess pieces move like something out of Harry Potter. By removing these beings out of the realm of humanity, the illustrator would lead us to believe that Shylock's demand and Antonio's plight are therefore universal, stuck in no one time or place. Or, this may be meant as an emphasis to the magic of Venice, La Serenissima, a city like no other, one that has existed throughout the centuries, navigated by boats and floating improbably upon the waves. Whatever the reason, Faye Young has crafted a work of beauty, drama, passion and revenge. Color panels in the front of the book show the characters, giving listings helpful to the reader in sorting out who's who.

Jordana Diengdoh says

After reading Hillary's What happened, I needed a break and this manga helped me to unwind. The first time I knew about Merchant of Venice was in school in a play by artists probably from the UK. It left an indelible imprint on my mind.

Fatma Nady says

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Dazz Ross says

Yeah, like I predicted last month at the time of the review, *The Merchant of Venice* is better in manga form than it is in play form. I don't have a lot to say about this than what I've already mentioned, but I will say that the biggest positive was that there was more clarity to both the characters and the story, so much so that I could actually understand more of the play in question. It wasn't just all one big muddle. Overall, I still think Merchant has a handful of uninteresting events and characters, though.

I really enjoyed the re-imagining for this. The elf characteristics were a nice touch, and I liked the thought and care Faye Yong brought to this. Stephano and Balthazar are my favorites hands down (fraternal twin elves unite)! They had some clever designs indeed.

Overall, this was another fun journey, and I'll be interested to read more of these adaptations to see what else I'll get.

Mike Jensen says

Retelling of Shakespeare's play Manga style. The characters are rendered as elves, yet are still Christian and Other (the word Jew is not used as an insult against Shylock, though he refers to himself as Jewish), with the effect that the Christian characters seem more sympathetic than they should and their problem with Shylock may be something like his greed instead of his Jewishness. This rings the fairy tale notes in the play that are otherwise hard for us to hear today. Yong often renders the greater world of Venice, as she does in the usually intimate first scene. Here the dialog us given in the visually busy world of the canals and the rialto. The scene loses all its intimacy, and that is a loss. By doing what Shakespeare's stage did not, what Shakespeare did on stage is lost.

Some things are neutral. Antonio is not gay, and so does not seem lost at the end. Portia's servants seem uncomfortable about her racist statement regarding the Duke of Morocco. These things are neither good nor bad, but seem worth noting.

A number of typically manga touches, especially as they reveal the inner lives of the characters, are appropriate and very well rendered. Yong does visually the subtext an actor would perform on stage. I'm not sure if the world really needs this retelling of the play, but it is not without interest.

Cindy says

This review may also be found on *A Thousand Little Pages*.

With gorgeous manga-style illustrations, *Manga Shakespeare: The Merchant of Venice* is a compelling representation of the Bard's famous play about the Jewish moneylender. The three intertwined plots -- Antonio's bond with Shylock, Bassanio's suit, and Jessica's escape from her cruel father -- are all brought together in an undoubtedly less intimidating way than Shakespeare's original play.

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Book Source: Review Copy via TeensReadToo

Rachel Fortin says

I really could not be any nerdier ?
But hey, I love Shakespeare and manga so why not experience them together!?

Ben Scobie says

A better adaptation than Hamlet. Would recommend for students struggling to engage with the text.

Sarah says

I admit it, I have always loved The Merchant of Venice. I understand why people have a problem with the play, and reading this version, I shared a lot of that discomfort, but I still love the play.

The drawings in this play really played up Shylock as the villain. His character was drawn with all dark shading and heavily made-up eyes. In this version, it is very difficult to see the nuances of Shylock's character. Without those nuances, he is purely evil. I think that this makes it difficult for those who may only look at this version to understand *why* Shylock is the way he is.

Sanjana Kumar says

I really enjoyed the book! It's an easy read - I finished it in a couple of hours. Personally, I felt that it was a very good effort by the adapter to capture the essence of the original play, retain the language form and to present it all manga-style. I liked especially, the concept of the elves. The downside was that due to the fact that mangas - unlike comics - are usually not coloured, I found it difficult at times to identify certain characters (for example, to differentiate Lorenzo from Bassanio), especially in the beginning of the book. I had to keep going back to the first few pages of the book which introduce the characters through coloured illustrations to help me identify them.

