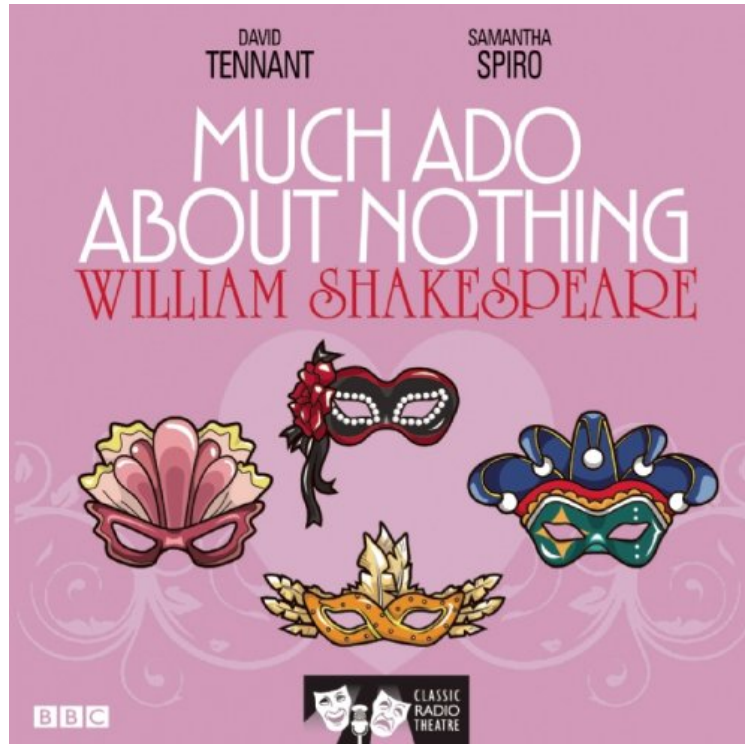


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Much Ado About Nothing: Classic Radio Theatre

William Shakespeare

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Much Ado About Nothing is one of Shakespeare's greatest love stories and a comic tour de force. Exploring the eternal themes of love, jealousy, and honor, it focuses on two pairs of very different lovers and their trials and tribulations en route to the altar. Claudio and Hero are in love and soon to be married. As they await the wedding, they decide to play a trick on their friends Beatrice and Benedick, two confirmed singletons who scorn marriage and enjoy nothing more than expressing their mutual disdain. Can they persuade Benedick that Beatrice is in love with him and vice versa? Meanwhile, the evil Don John plots to destroy Claudio and Hero's love. Shakespeare's delightful play sparkles with the wonderful verbal sparring of Beatrice and Benedick, as high comedy and melodrama mix in a magical combination. Featuring a star cast including Emilia Fox, Chiwetel Ejiofor, and Julian Rhind-Tutt, and with specially-composed music, this witty, fast-paced comedy is sure to enchant all listeners. 2 CDs. 2 hrs 14 mins.

About the Author William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon in Warwickshire, and was baptized on April 26, 1564. His father was a glove maker and wool merchant and his mother, Mary Arden, was the daughter of a well-to-do local land owner. Shakespeare was probably educated in Stratford's grammar school. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, and the couple had a daughter the following year and twins in 1585. Shakespeare's theatrical life seems to have commenced around 1590. We do know that he was part of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, which was renamed the King's Company in 1603 when James I succeeded to the throne. The Company acquired interests in two theaters in the Southwark area of London, near the banks of the Thames: the Swan Theatre and the Swan Theatre. Shakespeare's poetry was published before his plays, with two poems appearing in 1593 and 1594, dedicated to his patron Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Most of Shakespeare's sonnets were probably written at this time as well. Records of Shakespeare's plays begin to appear in 1594, and he produced roughly two a year until around 1611. His earliest plays include *Henry VI* and *Titus Andronicus*. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *Richard II* all date from the mid to late 1590s. Some of his most famous tragedies were written in the early 1600s; these include *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. His late plays, often known as the Romances, date from 1608 onwards and include *The Tempest*. Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 and was buried in Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.