SHAKESPEARE'S SEA CREATURES

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Abstract: This dissertation analyzes Shakespeare's oceanic characters in *The Comedy of Errors*, *Twelfth Night*, *Pericles*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. Using three distinct categories of aquatic creatures, I investigate Shakespeare's conception of the sea as both a vast, physical body and a complex symbol of renewal, possibility, and transformation. Those I identify as "sea creatures" in Shakespeare's dramatic works are not animal, but human characters with an intimate connection and understanding of the ocean. These sea creatures—sea dogs, mermaids, and amphibians—symbolically bring the sea with them as they navigate their respective plays, and they contribute to the concept of the sea as not only a paradoxical and transformative space like Shakespeare's forests, but a space of supernatural and divine power.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Th'imperious sea breeds monsters . . .

—*Cymbeline*

The sea has been an integral part of English culture, long before William Shakespeare wrote *The Tempest* in 1610. The bodies of water surrounding the British Isles, which include the English Channel, Irish Sea, Celtic Sea, North Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean, have been passages for travel, trade, invasion, recreation, and war. The histories of these bodies of water have long been documented and discussed, but within the past several decades, early modern scholars have created a poetic history of the ocean (Mentz xi). In early modern English culture, this history begins with Genesis, as the sea was created after the heavens, separated with firmament, named "sea," and filled with creatures (Gen. 1:1-1:21).[1] Sea creatures have been a subject of fascination for English audiences, and their roots begin with their spiritual purpose. Leviathan epitomizes the mysterious, deadly power of the sea from its first description in Job 3:8: "Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to rouse up leviathan."[2] Leviathan symbolizes

a space of chaos, danger, and the unknown. In the Hebrew tradition, Leviathan prevented world-threatening floods. During the Slavonic Apocalypse, "Leviathan is depicted as the foundation of the world" and "served as the cosmic dam against turbulent waters" (Orlov 52). In the Book of Jonah, the monstrous whale is an agent of divine power. Jonah receives the Word of God while in the belly of the whale, the first sea creature created (Gen. 1:21). The Lord speaks "unto the fish" (Jon. 2:10), which contains Jonah, and within the "belly of hell," the "waters compassed [Jonah] about, *even* to the soul" (Jon. 2:2-5). What is truly "hell" is not the whale's belly, but Jonah's uncleansed soul. The compassing water is the purifying force.

Biblical sea stories greatly influenced the literature and drama produced during Shakespeare's career. The story of Jonah inspired plays like Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene's *A Looking Glass for London and England* (1589/90). Recounting the story of the monstrous whale and the fall of Nineveh, *Looking Glass* dramatically depicts Jonah spiritually changed, having emerged from the belly of the sea beast. In Shakespeare's time, the ocean was depicted as a source of divine power, fate, possibility, and renewal. Greek romances of the early Christian era also contributed to the representation of the sea in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. Carol Gesner explains that "Heliodorus, Longus, Achilles Tatius, and *Apollonius of Tyre* all were published in English translations between 1483 and 1597" (2). *Apollonius* is a direct source for Shakespeare's *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* (1608), which may have been a collaborative work with George Wilkins. In both the original play and Shakespeare's adaptation, the sea is the agent of destruction and rebirth, as it separates lovers and frames the romantic journey.

In the age of increased exploration and trade, sea travelers contended with harsh waters and terrible creatures before reuniting with family; in literature, seafarers engage in struggles that mirror the jagged voyages of life. The Greek romances like *Apollonius* and the *Babylonica* of Iamblichus provide the now-accepted conventions of romances structured on the protagonist's journey, which may be on land or sea (Gesner 5). As Gesner remarks, Shakespeare's romances "describe a vision beyond the scope of tragedy, a vision which accepts the tragic and evil elements in life, but refuses to admit them as final" (81). Shakespeare's romances portray the sea as a seemingly endless mass that separates family, inspires action, demands endurance, and ultimately transforms the body and soul.

Ancient epics also inspired early modern English representations of the ocean. Translations of Homer's *Odyssey* by Arthur Hall (1581) and George Chapman (1616) describe an ancient sea that, on the surface, resembles the biblical ocean. However, beneath Homer's ocean lies sea creatures that prove fatal upon close contact. Scylla, Charybdis, the Sirens, and Poseidon are all formidable enemies of Odysseus and his men. The appearance of each creature signifies a test that Odysseus must overcome to demonstrate his fortitude on the ten-year return voyage after the Trojan War. Like Jonah, Odysseus will be restored if he can survive the perilous ocean. The Anglo Saxon's contribution to representations of seafarers and their creaturely encounters is most famously told through Beowulf, a mariner who swims for days and fights deadly sea creatures, including Grendel's mother at the bottom of a lake. By retelling his exploits at sea and recounting the stories of sea monsters, Beowulf seeks to establish his prowess among the Danes. The Renaissance conception of the sea encompasses classical,

mythological, and biblical oceans to represent the challenges, both internal and external, that seafarers face on their journeys.

Many other oral stories in the early English tradition describe sea creatures as representations of heavenly authority on earth, but gradually portray them as subjects to be analyzed beyond their spiritual or allegorical purpose. The Exeter Book (960-990 AD) includes such works as *The Bestiary*, a collection of animal poems that include rich descriptions of land and sea creatures and an appropriate moral lesson. Of these poems, "The Whale" is especially compelling as it describes its subject's size and shape:

> Is þæs hiw gelic hreofum stane
> swylce worie bi wædes ofre
> sondbeogrum ymbseald særyrica mæst
> swa þæt wenaþ wægliþende
> þæt hy on ealond sum eagum wliten (8-12)

(His form is like a rough stone, as if the largest of reed-beds, surrounded by sand-dunes, were floating about by the shore of the sea, so that voyagers think that they are gazing at an island with their eyes.) The poet compares the whale's shape and texture to that of *hreofum stane*, a rough stone, and the whale's mass is so large that seafarers would think they were looking at an *ealond*, rather than an animal. This optical illusion seals their fate, as the poet describes the voyagers taking refuge on the "island," only to be drowned as the whale sinks to the bottom of the sea. Chet Van Duzer explains that "The myth that whales could be mistaken for islands goes back to the *Physiologus*," a book on animals, plants, and "magic stones" composed between the second and fourth centuries. (48) This myth characterized the whale as a foreboding creature that could go seemingly

undetected by seaman. By the seventeenth-century, however, English explorers had often encountered polar whales on the search for a passage to India, and these creatures proved harmless for sea navigators (Ellis 204). Thus, as Richard Ellis explains, "some of the mysteries began to diminish" regarding the sea's most feared creatures. (204) However, what is fascinating about the Bestiary poem, "The Whale," is how it poetically compares the whale's physical aspects to other parts of nature while simultaneously creating a proto-scientific profile that includes such details as skin texture and size. Though the poem retained its function to give a moral lesson, it also anticipated the more analytical observations of sea creatures published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

It was not until the Renaissance that the creatures of the deep became extensively documented outside of biblical contexts, and this movement was influenced by natural histories like Conrad Gesner's *historiae animalium* (1551-58). Shakespeare may have read or been familiar with Edward Topsell's translation of Gesner, *Historie of foure-footed beastes* (1607), which traces aquatic creatures in art, literature, and history, and also alludes to representations of sea animals in antiquity. In many ways, natural histories like Topsell's edited translation add to the myths of creatures they document, while also informing readers about their physiological aspects. Topsell's work includes early scientific analyses, as also poetry, folklore, and collected anecdotes about sea creatures. The Renaissance natural history not only succeeds works they translate (Pliny's *Historia naturalis*, for example), but also early bestiaries that blend poetical and observational descriptions of sea creatures. The natural histories of Pliny and Bartholomew provided preachers of the Middle Ages with "moralizations of natural phenomena," John Friedman explains (182). As Friedman's study reveals, the earliest natural histories helped to

inspire cultural representations of sea creatures as divinely purposeful. But sea creatures were also part of illustrative texts like maps. Van Duzer, examining the depiction and evolution of sea creatures on Medieval and Renaissance maps, argues that the "most important and influential sea monsters on a Renaissance map are those on a nine-sheet map of northwestern Europe by Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) . . . published in Venice in 1539" (81). Magnus's map, *Carta marina et description septemtrionalium terrarium ac mirabilium* (*Nautical Chart and Description of the Northern Lands and Wonders*), served as a visual encyclopedia for the various sea creatures across the northern Atlantic.

So where does Shakespeare fit within the literary discussion of the sea and its aquatic creatures? How can scholars use Shakespeare's works to develop a poetic history of the ocean? To answer this, one can consider how his characters and plots reflect the frequency of sea travel during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Many characters in Shakespeare's works engage with the ocean: Egeon, Marina, Caliban, and several Antonios. There are also sea captains, merchants, boatswains, sailors, and pirates. Most of these briny characters appear in the playwright's late romances, which accords with the rising publication of travelogues in the seventeenth-century. First and second-hand accounts of oceanic life by traders and explorers like Richard Hakluyt, Walter Ralegh, and James Lancaster contributed to the cultural knowledge of the sea which eventually made its way into Shakespeare's plays. Raleigh's *The Discovery of Guiana* (1595) informs the language of conquest in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), and plays concerned with the Mediterranean sea trade such as *The Merchant of Venice* (1596). The writings of the East India Company may also have inspired Shakespeare's oceanic plays.[3]

Two important travel writers whose works were published during Shakespeare's lifetime were Richard Hakluyt and Michel de Montaigne. Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages Touching the Discovery of America and the Islands Adjacent* (1582), and his compilation of travel journals, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation* (1589) gave early modern society the first glimpses of brave new worlds with such creatures they had never imagined. Hakluyt's and Montaigne's published travel narratives of the Americas contain material out of which Shakespeare could have created a character like Caliban, while the real-life drama of John Rolfe, who was shipwrecked on Bermuda while travelling to Virginia in 1609, may also lie behind the plot of *The Tempest* (1610). The account of the shipwreck was published in Sylvester Jordain's *A Discovery of the Barmudas* (1610). Having lost his wife and island-born daughter, Bermuda, Rolfe built a ship and sailed to the American mainland, where he later met and married Pocahontas (Games 133). Rolfe's daughter, Bermuda, born out of the sea, shows affinities with Shakespeare's young sea-tossed heroines, Marina and Miranda.

In Shakespeare's romances, characters who gain an understanding of the sea and become intimately connected with the aquatic world discover important truths. In *Cymbeline,* a disguised Imogen lives with seafarers and condemns the false reports about them from court, acknowledging that "Th'imperious sea breeds monsters" (4.2.35). Imogen describes Cymbeline's "imperious" royal sea as a living body that births "monsters" like Cloten, while the "tributary rivers" of Wales breed "sweet fish" like Guiderius and Arviragus (36). She realizes that the nature of men is not dependent on geopolitical boundaries and that monsters can be birthed in any sea. The nature of Imogen's statement points to early modern society's irrepressible fascination with the

ocean. She confronts the myth of the wild Welsh sea by experiencing it firsthand. The sea holds mysteries, and humans will never know them unless they dive in. It is important, thus, to consider how playwrights like Shakespeare understood the mysteries of sea within a changing climate of trade, travel, and scientific discovery.

Recently, there has been a critical turn towards what Steve Mentz deems "blue cultural studies." This turn began several decades before Mentz's groundbreaking study, *At the Bottom of Shakespeare's Ocean*, but only recently has this critical approach made a significant impact on Shakespearean scholarship. "Blue cultural studies" refers to a maritime humanities that emerges when natural history, environmental science, and historical geography inform and are informed by oceanic art and literature. The histories of sea trade and travel are also intertwined in blue cultural studies. The scholarly efforts of Bernhard Klein and Gesa Mackenthun also provide a comprehensive history of the ocean that crosses disciplines and methodologies. In the introduction to their edited collection of essays, *Sea Changes: Historicizing the Ocean*, Klein and Mackenthun begin with the premise that "the ocean itself needs to be analyzed as a deeply historical location whose transformative power is not merely psychological or metaphorical . . . but material and very real" (2). Their historical work has helped shape "New Thalassology," (a term derived from the Greek *thalassa*, for the sea), a form of criticism which aims to map "the physical and cultural shapes of the oceans in world history," as Mentz explains (xi). Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell describe New Thalassology as an "area study" specifically engaging oceanic geopolitics, and their scholarship on the historical Mediterranean reflects this approach (722).[4] But their study invites other disciplines that also address oceanic change, and it is important that they consider "virtual" and

"metaphorical seas" along with the "real" sea to "suggest a new configuration of history" (723).

In a sense, this is also the task of Shakespearean critics who engage in New Thalassology, bringing together real and metaphorical seas to create a richer sense of the centrality of the sea to early English studies. Recent scholarship by Dan Brayton and Gwilym Jones creates a poetic history of the sea that identifies Shakespeare as one of many crucial voices that have shaped the modern understanding of the aquatic world. Plays like *The Tempest* are crucial to a poetic history of the ocean, inspiring works such as Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851), Huxley's *Brave New World* (1931), and Auden's *The Sea and the Mirror* (1944). This project will expand on the work of blue cultural studies by focusing on a unique character group within Shakespeare's oceanic dramas: the creatures bred from the sea.

Those I designate "sea creatures" in Shakespeare's dramatic works are not animal, but human characters with qualities that evoke the imagery, symbolism, and cultural associations of the ocean in early modern English culture. But what makes a Shakespearean character a "sea creature"? The answer is both literal and metaphorical: these characters have spent so much time in the ocean that they have become part of that environment and have adapted to it, and symbolically they carry the sea with them as they navigate their respective plays. Posthumanist scholarship over the last several decades has probed similar questions, interrogating the material and metaphorical distinctions between human, creature, and animal. In *What is Posthumanism?* Cary Wolfe explains that "'the human' is achieved by escaping or repressing not just its animal origins in nature, the biological, and the evolutionary, but more generally transcending

the bonds of materiality and embodiment altogether" (xv). To be personified, bonded, or embodied with animals is, as Wolfe explains, a condition the "human" transcends. As Joseph Campana and Scott Maisano explain, critics like Wolfe "advocate against anthropocentrism in both ethics and aesthetics" (2). Shakespeare animal studies scholars have also contributed to the shift from a human-centered understanding of the early modern world to a more lateral positioning of human and animal. For example, Laurie Shannon argues that in Shakespeare's time, animals and humans lived together in a "cosmopolity," or intermingling of species in all aspects of early modern life (7). The sea was also a part of this "cosmopolity": as trade and exploration increased in the sixteenth-century, the ocean become more populated with humans. Seafarers encountered more sea monsters and included them in oral tales, maps, and art. Shakespeare's oceanic characters like Marina are born at sea and gain a connection to the ocean from their earliest encounter. Some of Shakespeare's characters are even transformed into sea creatures after having spent much time in or near water.

One of the most influential works of Renaissance literature, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, inspired early modern culture's fascination with physical transformation, and Shakespeare drew heavily from Arthur Golding's 1567 translation. Ovidian change is inscribed in much of Shakespeare's work, and his sea plays present a unique variation on metamorphosis through the mythology and lore of the ocean. In *The Tempest*, Ariel sings a song about the unusual effects of long-term submersion, describing the "sea-change" of Ferdinand's drowned father. Ariel uses the term "sea-change" to describe the physiological transformation of a corpse after it has been submerged, and the transformation is a process of being incorporated into the sea:

Full fathom five thy father lies,

Of his bones are coral made,

Those are pearls that were his eyes

Nothing of him that doth fade,

But doth suffer a sea-change,

Into something rich and strange. (1.2.474-78)

The lifeless body changes into something aquatic and inhuman once it has been in the ocean so long that it has begun to adapt to its surroundings. The sea does not make Ferdinand's father dissolve into the sea ("Nothing of him that doth fade"), but rather, the sea mediates the metamorphosis so that the body becomes a part of the environment—bones become "coral" or coral-like, and eyes become "pearls," becoming "rich" and "strange." Death itself is a bodily change, and Shakespeare describes the nature of this transformation as a process that melds the body into its final environment, just as corpses become part of the earth after burial. Ariel's song is meant to arouse unrest in Ferdinand, and the song highlights the intense fear of drowning in *The Tempest*. However, there is a metaphoric potential of "sea-change" beyond the physiological process *post mortem*, and it is important to recognize how characters in Shakespeare's oceanic plays represent a "sea-change" that reveals the sea's dark power and compelling mysteries.

Sea-changed creatures are "rich" and "strange," and their close relationship with the ocean sometimes makes them monstrous. Ovidian figures such as Scylla are "sea-changed" in their physiognomy like the coral-boned man in Ariel's song. Scylla's story warns men not to get too close to women with water-changed parts. Ariel's description of the father, whose bones turn to coral, offers a similar warning: going into the ocean turns the natural unnatural.

If left in the water, one will become a permanent part of the ocean world, something "rich," "strange," and monstrous. As Dan Brayton argues, Shakespeare's sea, like "the woods in Dante and Spenser" is a place of "wildness always susceptible to paradox, reversal, and transformation." (67) Shakespeare's sea creatures reflect the "wildness" of the ocean and experience the world from a perspective that contrasts with landlubbers. Sea creatures have been altered by their ocean journey, and this is revealed by their physical appearance, point of view, and a deeper understanding of the natural world.

Expanding on Shakespearean blue cultural studies, this project seeks to understand Shakespeare's ocean by analyzing its oceanic mythology and how it (in)forms the playwright's sea-changed creatures. There are three categories of sea creatures that are most powerfully rendered in Shakespearean drama: sea dogs, mermaids, and amphibians. One of the ways that these figures are connected is through early visual representations of mythic and monstrous sea creatures. As Van Duzer observes, a late eleventh-century manuscript of Lucan's *Pharsalia* includes a map of the harbor of Brindisi (Italy) decorated with sea dogs and sirens. Inside the left branch of the harbor is a picture of "a fish with a dog's head which perhaps represents a hybrid aquatic dog (or seal), while a single-tailed siren rushes towards the aquatic dog with her hands held forward" (25). The sea monsters in Lucan's manuscript are not referential and were perhaps, as Van Duzer explains, included to make the map more "visually interesting" (25). In this case, the drawings of the sea dog and siren are not pragmatic; they do not warn navigators of danger like an illustration of a whale. Rather, these drawings represent the whimsy and imagination of the artist. Sea creatures are powerful artistic subjects with many functions, sometimes representing real threats for voyagers, and at other times conveying hybridity, oceanic change, and the fantastic.

In Shakespeare's oceanic plays, the sea dog, mermaid, and amphibian are character types with unique relationships to the sea, and their experiences portray the sea as a site of danger and intrigue. These characters swim rather than stay safely on land, and thus they have first-hand knowledge of the ocean; their relationship with the sea is much more powerful than a bystander's. Shakespeare's sea dogs, mermaids, and amphibians possess a knowledge of the world that is often prophetic or supernatural. These oceanic characters reinforce early modern representations of the sea as a space of dark and powerful mystery, plunging into its depths and learning its unfathomable secrets.

The sea dog refers to an older, experienced seaman and a mythic creature, part dog and part fish ("sea-dog"). The first recorded usage of "sea dog" in English appears in W. Phillip's translation of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's *Discours of Voyages into ye Easte and West Indies* (1598). Van Linschoten explains that he and his crew "found great store of Sea wolues, which wee call Sea dogges" (415). Though the word was used by seamen to describe oceanic creatures such as seals, dogfish, and even species of shark, it also explicitly referred to seafarers.[5] Elizabeth I sanctioned a group of privateers called the "Sea Dogs" to help English naval efforts against the Spanish (Clifford 2693). These men, who included Sir Francis Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh, were successful in raiding Spanish ships until the Treaty of London ended the Anglo-Spanish War in 1604 (Clifford 2693-2700).

In Shakespearean ocean drama, sea dogs are older, minor characters that tell prophetic shipwreck stories that predict—and possibly influence—the course of events in the play. These characters are valuable in framing the plot by providing context for the shipwrecks that separate a protagonist from loved ones. Sea dogs may also give protagonists crucial information and supplies that will aid them in their journey. Sea dogs are compelling

characters beyond their pragmatic function in the plays as scene-setters; they conceive the limitless ocean as a medium for gaining truth. Egeon in *The Comedy of Errors* and the older mariners in *Twelfth Night*, Antonio and the Captain, embody both meanings of the term, "sea dog," as they spend so much time on the ocean that they have become a part of that landscape, being familiar with its ecosystem and its supernatural mysteries.

Having lost his family during a tempest, Egeon seeks closure and finds himself at the mercy of nature and law. His only means of salvation rests in his own memories of the sea and its devastation. In *Twelfth Night*, Antonio also has a dangerous relationship with the sea, having gained a reputation as a pirate and outlaw in Illyria. Like Egeon, he voyages into a region which he is forbidden by law to enter and is arrested. His knowledge of oceanic travel affords him insights on Illyria's surrounding seas, and he likely views Sebastian as a capable partner with whom to share a life at sea. The Captain at the beginning of *Twelfth Night* is a storytelling sea dog like Egeon but offers considerably less background information. Still, the Captain's role as observer to Sebastian's valiant struggle in the ocean is critical in moving Viola to seek her twin brother. These older seamen have navigated turbulent waters, and their experiences symbolize humanity's struggle with nature, divine providence, and autonomy. Egeon and the Captain survive near death experiences and confront a sea that oppresses and tests as much as it offers hope for survival.

Mermaids were an integral part of early English poetic and artistic representation centuries before Hans Christian Anderson's tale, and so it is understandable that Shakespeare models several young, female heroines after these mythological sea-maidens. The modern English form of "mermaid" comes from the Old English *merewif* (water witch) and the German *meeraülin* ("mermaid"). In Shakespeare's time, mermaids were symbols associated

with the royal family, appearing in several of Elizabeth I's most striking portraits. As Tara E. Pederson explains, in "the Darnley portrait, Elizabeth wears a broach decorated with sea nymphs, and in the Armada portrait, the arm of the throne which supports Elizabeth is carved in the shape of a large mermaid" (18). Like the maids in Shakespeare's ocean romances, the mermaid represented not only nobility but honor and virtue, perhaps owing to their prominent placement at the head of ships' masts during this time (Pedersen 19).

Some of the most circulated sources on mermaids were oral stories passed from sailors after long voyages, while Topsell's translation of Pliny's *History of the World* provides more factual accounts. Early mermaid mythologies portrayed these creatures as skillful in song and dance, and their descriptions often overlap with those of sirens and sea nymphs. Richard Carrington also notes that sirens "played an important part in the growth of the mermaid legend" (8). Mermaids and sirens were also part of medieval and Renaissance maps, as Diego Gutiérrez's *Map of the Americas* in the Library of Congress includes two sirens, both holding mirrors and combs to indicate vanity. As Van Duzer points out, the vain sirens in Gutierrez's map attempt to "practise their wiles" on a ship west of the Strait of Magellan (39). Mermaid sightings were also prevalent during this time. Navigators like Captain Richard Whitbourne (1561 – 1635), who sailed to Newfoundland to look for potential English settlements in 1620, claimed to have seen a mermaid with blue streaks instead of hair (Ellis 79). These sightings and myths emphasized not only beauty but the elusiveness of these figures.

There were many different literary works on mermaids that would have provided inspiration for Shakespeare's mermaid-like heroines. Some of the most popular descriptions of mermaids, sirens, and sea nymphs appear in translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and

Homer's *Odyssey*. Chaucer's Nun's Priest tale gives a poetic description of a mermaid's song (3270-72), and writers like John Davies (1569-1626) conflate mermaids with sirens, given their shared talents of singing. In *Nosce Teipsum* (1599), Davies writes: "Did Sense perswade Vlysses, not to heare The Mermaids songs" (*Soul* 28). Davies emphasizes the power of the mermaids' song in luring Odysseus's crew into the sea, and more generally how mermaids (sirens) are supernatural creatures that work against reason, or "sense."

Mermaids, like sea dogs, are connected to strange forces, and in Shakespearean drama, they reiterate the danger and mystery of the sea. Shakespeare refers to mermaids in *Hamlet* (1595) when Ophelia drifts on the sea after death. Gertrude describes Ophelia's clothes as being "spread wide . . . mermaid-like while they bore her up" (*Hamlet* 4.7.147-8). Ophelia appears as though she has always belonged in the water. Mermaids and Shakespearean heroines are connected by an ethereal nature. Ophelia's madness seems like an otherworldly possession pulling her toward death. A similar impulse to seek the ocean compels Marina in *Pericles* when she is abducted by pirates, and later, another impulse guides her to her father. Before she recognizes Pericles, Marina feels "there is something that glows upon my cheek, / And whispers in mine ear" (21.84-85). Guided by internal forces or feelings, Shakespeare's young mermaid-like heroines are compelled to cross dangerous thresholds that mimic the crossing of adolescence to adulthood, and more generally, innocence to experience.

In Shakespeare's romances, a mermaid's sexual awakening coincides with the quest for familial restoration and the reunion of lovers. In these plays, Shakespeare emphasizes the generative power of sex, and mermaid heroines experience a metamorphosis that privileges their powerful roles in the process of familial regeneration. Two of the most mermaid-like

Shakespearean heroines in the romances are Perdita and Marina. Both have special connections to water. Both cross turbulent seas at birth and are then forced to negotiate the boundary separating adolescence and adulthood. Perdita and Marina evoke images of water, whether dancing like waves or purifying the corrupt, while navigating a world that evokes terror and passion. *The Winter's Tale* and *Pericles* are plays intimately concerned with fertility, marriage, and renewal, and the process of renewal depends in part or whole on the romantic union of the newer generation after the families are torn apart. The mermaid and ancient mermaid figures symbolically represent the process of pregnancy, renewal, and growth through the power of the sea. It is likely that representations of mermaids and mermaid-like characters in early modern culture inspired the creation of Perdita and Marina, both of whom serve to revitalize and restore their respective communities.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Perdita is whisked over the sea to a Bohemian shepherd community, where she must learn how to embody the role of Flora. The play unsubtly tasks her with inspiring new growth, and her role in restoring order invokes the revival of her mother, the reconciliation with her father, and the continuation of the family line through her marriage to Florizel. In *Pericles,* Marina begins mourning her nurse at a funeral but is soon threatened by her caregivers, kidnapped by pirates, and sold to a brothel. Marina believes that her whole life is like "a ceaseless storm" (15.71), emphasizing her sense of powerlessness against the workings of fate. However, when she begins to act on her own and refuses to sleep with her brothel clients, she gains a unique power to remind men of their honor and reject their libidinal desires. This power becomes both her means of escape and, ironically, the quality that draws her closer to her love interest, Lysimachus. When Shakespeare's mermaids cross over from virgin to bride, their change in state symbolically signals

regeneration. These moments include the marriage of young lovers, the return of mothers such as Thaisa and Hermoine from the dead, and the reunion of father and daughter through powerful recognition scenes. In fact, it is not until Leontes and Pericles see Perdita and Marina as changed women that the plots of each play return to order. The fathers recognize their daughters not just by appearance, but by the virtues that they have inherited from their mothers in their transition to adulthood.

The third and final sea creature in this study is the amphibian. Unlike the mermaid and sea dog, amphibians are not mythical or humanly. The term "sea dog," though alluding to an aquatic canine, refers also to sailors and contracted pirates, while mermaids are generally half-human, half-fish female creatures that appear on banks and shorelines. An amphibian in early modern culture involves "having two modes of existence," and, figuratively, "a doubtful nature."[6] One could be described as "amphibian" to reflect uncertainty or question authority. The scientific and cultural information on amphibians in early modern England would have come from natural histories like Topsell's *Historie of foure-footed beastes*, as well as Thomas Lupton's *A Thousand Notable Things, of Sundry Sortes* (1579) and the works of Bartholomew Anglicus (1203?-1272), particularly *De proprietatibus rerum* (1240), or "On the Properties of Things." Toads and other amphibious creatures were also associated with witchcraft, disease, and foulness. These traits and other cultural implications are inscribed in Shakespeare's amphibious characters, who also represent supernatural mystery and the dangers of living in or near water.

Caliban is Shakespeare's strangest fish and also the most amphibious character. Born without a human shape and cursed to live on the margins of the island, Caliban lives like a domesticated sea creature, or an entombed toad. His creaturely ambiguity makes him all the

more threatening, and he is denied freedom under Prospero's rule. In short, Caliban represents the foulest aspects of sea life, and he symbolizes the sea's power at its most hellish. He has a connection to the sea by birth, and his experience with ocean life gives him the appearance (and smell) of an ocean-dweller. Seeing Caliban, Trinculo exclaims, "What have we here, a man or a fish? Dead or alive?—A fish, he smells like a fish" (2.2.25). Trinculo's befuddled response echoes the feelings other characters have about Caliban and his affinities with humans. Miranda describes Caliban as "a thing most brutish" (1.2.355-58) before he learns human speech, and he is frequently linked to sea creatures, calling his humanity into question. Caliban is called "a freckled whelp," (1.2.283), a "tortoise" (1.2.314), and a "fish" (1.2.25). Caliban retreats like a tortoise when faced with danger, but is by nature poisonous and plotting. Like a toad, he is also the product of a witch, and following his mother's path, threatens to conjure up Sycorax's demonic power and use it against Prospero. His foul, or 'crabby,' mood also suggests (in early modern culture) a bodily imbalance related to his animalistic features, which he has either inherited or developed from his surroundings. Like the sea dog and the mermaid, Caliban represents the concept of "sea-change" invoking a human and aquatic monster, one that hovers from one to the other, after being in the water too long.

Using these three different categories of aquatic creatures, this project investigates Shakespeare's representation of the sea, both as a vast, physical body and a complex symbol of renewal and possibility. Shakespeare's sea dogs, Egeon, Antonio, and the Captain of *Twelfth Night*, all seek and ultimately find truth by witnessing shipwrecks and their aftermaths. Their experience gives them a prophetic insight that predicts the restoration of the protagonists' families. Shakespeare's mermaids, Perdita and Marina, are representations of

the fertile space between virgin and bride, adolescence and adulthood, and human and magical creature. Perdita and Marina share mythological characteristics of mermaids through their connection to the natural world and their ability to heal and bring fertility. They are also characterized by a mermaid-like fluidity that at times resists expectations of womanhood and extreme representations of female sexuality. Caliban, Shakespeare's amphibian, is trapped on the margins of land and sea and represents the insidious and mutative power of the ocean. Sea dog, mermaid, and amphibian characters reveal the early modern period's conception of the sea as a space of fathomless mystery, but more broadly, they symbolize the relationship between humans and the natural world. By analyzing these characters as representations of oceanic change, it is possible to understand Shakespeare's ocean not only as a paradoxical and transformative space (like his forest settings) but also as a space that offers insight into the powers of the unknown.

CHAPTER II

SEA DOGS, SHIPWRECKS, AND PROPHECY IN *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS* AND *TWELFTH NIGHT*

In Edmund Waller's (1606-1687) panegyric to Charles I, "To the King, On his Navy," the poet describes the English fleet surviving the second Flood in an apocalyptic scene:

> Should nature's self invade the world again,
> And o'er the centre spread the liquid main,
> They power were safe, and her destructive hand
> Would but enlarge the bounds of thy command;
> Thy dreadful fleet would style thee lord of all,
> And ride in triumph o'er the drowned ball (19-24)

Though Waller describes the fleet "rid[ing] in triumph," this positive image is contrasted with the "drowned ball," the world submerged after an inevitable flood. Nature wields a "destructive hand," wiping away everything from the surface except the ship. As Gerald Hammond explains, "the sea and ships often have this effect upon poets, pushing them

toward symbolic narratives" (160). In the epic tradition, foreboding tales of ocean navigators from Odysseus to Aeneas demonstrate that a traveler's fate depended on divine or supernatural forces beyond their control. For both Waller and Shakespeare, the ocean is a space of chaos and disaster, so it is unsurprising that an apocalyptic tone also looms over Shakespeare's sea plays. This sense of doom and ambiguous melancholy sets the tone for Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (1600) for example, when Antonio muses why he is "so sad" (1.1.1) as he waits for the return of his sea vessel. His friend, Solanio, admits, "Misfortune to my ventures out of doubt / would make me sad" (21-2), and Shylock's prophetic statement, "ships are but boards, sailors but men" (1.3.21-2), only heightens the sense of disquiet. The journals and travelogues produced during Shakespeare's career as a playwright, from Hakluyt's *Divers Voyages* to Raleigh's narratives on the journey to Guinea, reiterate the perils of sea venturing. Storms were arguably some of the greatest and most constant perils, and though maritime technology had advanced in the early modern era, sea travel was still an unpredictable venture and relied almost entirely on the weather. Sir William Monson writes about the constant endurance of "the fury of all winds and weather" during Elizabethan England's eighteen-year war with Spain, a fury that was "never out of motion" for even "three, four, five, or six months" at a time. (263) Storms were so massive and continuous that they were often described as tests of endurance.

Shakespeare's storms convey the sense of insurmountable danger as told in travel journals, and they follow a predictable pattern of inevitable disorder. As G. Wilson Knight argues, it is "always the same tempest" in every Shakespearean play (16). This sense of recursiveness with Shakespeare's tempests is owed in part to the conventions of

Greek romance; the sea storm is the central to the separation of lovers in works like *Apollonius of Tyre*, which Shakespeare would use to furnish the plot of *Pericles*. But sea storms are also powerful examples of uncontrollable disorder and forces of which humans have no control. Sea storms are apt metaphors for the daily circumstances that unbalance our lives. As Knight concludes, Shakespeare's storms demonstrate the playwright's "intuition of discord at the heart of existence" (16). Douglas L. Peterson expands on Knight's argument, positing that "tempests are frequently symbolic of temporality" and simultaneously symbolic of "time as duration" (45-6). Characters like Marina in *Pericles* view the world as "a ceaseless storm" (15.71), thus making life a perpetual flux without order. It is this notion that inspires Peterson's claim that time itself is "tempestuous" (46); the "persistent dissonances" that result from disruptions always appear after the "harmonious union of reason and the appetites" (45). In other words, discord is inevitable, and its inevitability and cyclical nature make time itself "tempestuous."

But what exactly is the role of tempestuous time in Shakespeare's sea plays? How does Shakespeare contain chaotic time within the framework of sea disasters? That the Fall is emblazoned in the description of the sea storm is not surprising; what is unique about Shakespeare's sea is that it not only resists the confines of time but also the confines of biblical and classical oceanic mythology. This chapter will interrogate the ways that the symbolic narrative of the Fall and supernatural prophecy are reconstructed when told by characters who are intuitive about the movement of the ocean.

Shakespeare's shipwreck plays written near the beginning of his career take on what Gonzalo calls the "theme of woe" in *The Tempest*. The "theme of woe" is a

predictable pattern of melancholy in seamen's lives, particularly as their occupation requires a near-constant embattlement with sea storms. As Gonzalo reiterates, few "miracle[s]" occur in the aftermath of shipwrecks, which affect merchants, their masters, and their wives (2.1.6). Though this theme seems suitable for tragedy, Shakespeare uses this "theme of woe" in his early shipwreck comedies to emphasize the realities of sea life, set up the comic plots, and introduce thematic elements relating to time as a cyclical process. In *The Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*, the shipwreck has a predictable sequence of events: the calm, the storm, and the aftermath or "miracle." Egeon's lengthy account of the disaster to Duke Solinus of Ephesus frames the plot of *The Comedy of Errors* and establishes the play's main conflict—separation. Egeon arrives in Ephesus in a desperate state; the trade war between Ephesus and Syracuse places Egeon in peril. He has lost his sons, and he does not have a thousand marks to escape a death sentence, having landed in Ephesus illegally.

In *Twelfth Night*, the Captain of a ship from Elysium washes up on Illyria's shore after a great storm, and afterward he tells Viola how their ship "did split" (1.2.9) and how she and her twin brother separated. Though Viola experiences the shipwreck, only the Captain witnesses her brother holding tightly to a mast and being carried "like Arion on the dolphin's back" (1.2.14) along the waves, presumably landing on the coast of Illyria. This striking image parallels that of Egeon and his wife fastening themselves and their children to the masts, which "seafaring men provide for the storms" (1.1.80). The seafaring pirate Antonio, also in *Twelfth Night*, is a sea dog with a criminal past, and like Egeon, he enters prohibited waters and is vulnerable to a duke's punishment. Antonio is well acquainted with the dangers of the ocean, and rather than sailing from Illyrian waters

and avoiding imprisonment, he seeks companionship in Sebastian, who he revives to health after the shipwreck. Shakespeare's shipwrecks entertain his audience, but their function within the play is pragmatic. These events spur the play's main action so that the survivors may reunite with their families. In Shakespeare's comedies, the sea, like the framing shipwreck plot, is cyclical. The shipwrecks enable the narrative to go from order to chaos to order, and they ensure the reunion of separated characters.

The sea is a space of apocalyptic disaster in *The Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*, and its survivors serve a prophetic role. Egeon and the Captain are first-hand witnesses to powerful sea storms reminiscent of the biblical Flood, and in the aftermaths of the storms families seek to reunite. Steve Mentz argues that Shakespeare's sea narratives often rely on the "shipwreck with spectator" motif, which "insists that the storm generates philosophical insight" (21). Mentz explains that "watching a storm from the safety of land provides a privileged point of view from which insight is possible" (21). Characters who swim, rather than stay safely on land have first-hand knowledge of the ocean, and their connections to the sea are much more powerful than a bystander's. Considering this, I will refer to the merchant Egeon and the Captain and Antonio in *Twelfth Night* as "sea dogs." The word "sea dogs" refers to older, experienced seamen, but the word also literally refers to a mythic beast, part dog, part fish. The first recorded usage of the term in English appears in W. Phillip's translation of Jan Huyghen van Linschoten's *Discours of Voyages into ye Easte and West Indies* (1598). Van Linschoten explains that he and his crew "found great store of Sea wolues, which wee call Sea dogges" (415). Egeon, the Captain, and Antonio all embody both meanings of "sea dog,"

as they spend so much time on the ocean that they have become a part of that landscape, being familiar with its ecosystem and its supernatural mysteries.

Shakespeare's sea dogs prophesize a restoration of order after tragedy, suggesting that the ocean is a place from which people return changed, or with a changed vision of the world, expanding on what Ariel describes as "sea change." When weary travelers like Egeon, the Captain, and Antonio recount their experiences, they bring the sea with them, both in their memory and their physical appearance, which has been altered by their ocean journeys. In Shakespeare's early comedies, the sea represents instability and impending chaos; its world-weary survivors have a glimpse of the apocalyptic power of nature when it is enraged. The sea is also a powerful symbol of fate in early modern culture, and accordingly, sea dogs in shipwreck plays understand fate more intimately than other characters.

More recent critics have discussed the ocean in relation to the individual self, the ocean surface acting as a mirror for human existence. Dan Brayton explains that "Nautical metaphors appear at unlikely moments in [Shakespeare's] tragedies, often to liken human existence to a sea voyage" (65). Mentz believes that Shakespeare, unlike the Romantics, "finds in the ocean reflections of both world and self" (6). This does not seem to be entirely the case in early shipwreck comedies; the sea fractures families and symbolically fractures the identities of its separated twins. Though early modern oceanographers like Lukas van Waghenaer attempted to demystify the sea in compendiums for navigators, sea stories from Egeon, the Captain, and Antonio represent a conception of the ocean as a place shrouded in frightening ambiguity.

Shakespeare's sea dogs are modeled after the travelled seamen who were invaluable to England's major expeditions. As Alison Games explains, voyages by the East India Company were typically performed by those with prior experience at sea, rather than young upstarts. (94) Captain and crew depended on the experienced traveller's invaluable wealth of knowledge—and keen intuition—about the ocean and its movements. Similarly, Shakespeare's sea dogs have a knowledge so powerful it resembles divine insight. They realize the extent to which time is a "tempest" and how to predict storms by the waves, winds, and tides. As a result of their maritime skills, sea dogs may overturn the authority of his social superiors who have little knowledge in comparison. Sir William Monson, who produced naval tracts on his voyages, explains that sea dogs are naturally "stubborn and perverse when they perceive their commander is ignorant of the discipline of the sea, and cannot speak to them in their own language" (326). Monson explains that there is a language of the sea that can only be acquired through experience, and that the respect of the commander depends on how well they are acquainted with maritime navigation, wind direction, the tides, and nautical jargon to expedite their work. Sea dogs know that the ocean requires discipline, and Shakespeare's characterization of sea dogs presses the point that the sea is imperious; it directs seamen to action, rather than vice versa.

Nature's disruption of royal authority—and of human governance, more generally—is the source of conflict at the beginning of *The Tempest*. The Boatswain's knowledge of the sea and experience in maritime labor usurp the authority of the King of Naples. After Gonzalo reassures him to "be patient," (1.1.15), the Boatswain responds, "When the sea is. Hence! What cares these roarers for the name of king? . . . if you can

command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more" (16-24). These "roarers" are the roaring ocean waves, described as human-like forces that riot and rail. The Boatswain is somewhere between those with no knowledge of the sea and those who actually can "command these elements to silence," like Prospero. Rather than commanding the sea, sailors can only read its movements and navigate around it. As Philip du Vair states, "The sailor groweth to be a Pilote amongst tempests and stormes: and man becomes not a man indeed, that is constant and courageous, but in adversity. It is affliction makes him know his strength" (91). The notion of a sailor as "Pilote" challenges the authority of "councillor[s]" (to use the Boatswain's term) in the face of the seemingly impossible task of survival.

The Boatswain asserts authority through his knowledge and experience of maritime matters, destabilizing traditional hierarchies of power in England, specifically those of lineage, honor, and wealth. This is an important moment for showing how the sea, despite being 'ruled' and chartered by kings, is unable to be marked by human law. Sea dogs respect the sea because it is *not* defined by human law, and their authority lies directly to nature and the divine. Greg Dening offers a way to understand this unique power relation:

> True authority on a ship comes only from experience, not from birth, or gift, or wealth, or Admiralty appointment. A seaman who has gone where others have not been—beyond that point, beyond that cape, beyond that sea—had knowledge into which all others had to be initiated. *To be baptized* was the sailors' phrase for this initiation. It was a ritual for civilizing the sea. (25)

The idea of maritime initiation as a "baptism" emphasizes the role of ritual for sailors' lives, but it also implies that diving in to uncharted waters is an act of spiritual renewal. To be an initiated sailor, one needed to leave the familiar and civilized; the closer towards the unknown, the closer a sailor may reach the darkest and most mysterious parts of nature. Thomas Jackson's theological essay *The Raging Tempest Still'd* (1623) compares the Christian journey towards salvation to travelling on tempestuous waters on a metaphorical ship. Jackson's essay, as indicated by the full title, depicts Christ's journey with his disciples over the Sea of Galilee. Whether the sailors' journey is figured as a "baptism," or whether the Christian journey is figured as a sea voyage, these ventures depict the ocean as a veritable space for growth and renewal.

Shakespeare's sea dogs listen to the ocean and rely on their own instincts and intuition, rather than the commands of others. These older seamen subscribe to a higher power because they have been "baptized" into oceanic life and are thus more acquainted with disaster. They have been tested in ways that the other crew members have not. Shakespeare's sea dogs in early shipwreck comedies are prophetic figures who have a critical role in framing the play's action due to their relationship to the sea. As Dening and other historians have asserted, the sea has many languages, cultures, and narratives which have been continually retold through performance. (18-21) The sea dog transmits the language, culture, and accumulated knowledge of the ocean, reiterating the sea traveler's power over landlubbers. Egeon, Antonio, and the Captain are all closely associated with classical, biblical, and dramatic characters who perceive the ocean as a medium for gaining truth. These characters also portray the human struggle to accept the

existence of divine forces in nature by portraying the sea as an agent that paradoxically oppresses, or 'tests,' as much as it offers the hope of freedom.

EGEON IN *THE COMEDY OF ERRORS*

Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* is inspired by Plautus's *Menaechmi*, published in 1595. *Menaechmi* tells the story of twin brothers separated after one of the boys, Menaechmus, gets lost in a crowd during a trip with Mochus to Tarentum. Menaechmus's father dies of grief after the loss of his son. The other son, Sosicles, is renamed Menaechmus and journeys with his slave, Messenio, to find his brother. Shakespeare keeps much of the same plot points, but one of his most dramatic additions is the sea storm, which frames the play and establishes the main conflict. The inclusion of the tempest and the frame narrative of a grieving, sea-battered father in *Comedy of Errors* adds a complex emotional dynamic to the original plot. In Shakespeare's version, the sea is both the agent of peril and the force that inspires substantial growth and change.

The Comedy of Errors begins with a series of cataclysmic disasters. A Syracusan merchant, Egeon, is held captive due to a trading war between Syracuse and Ephesus, where he has been washed ashore. In order to escape imprisonment and death, he has to recall the most devastating event in his life: surviving a shipwreck twenty-five years ago. Egeon has been "baptized," or initiated into sea life and acquainted with oceanic danger, but he has lost faith in the world. The sea storm has haunted Egeon for decades, and he still struggles to accept that his family will be gone forever. Critics often discuss the beginning of the play in context with tragedy. As Stephen Greenblatt explains, the play is "structured around the countdown to an execution, [just as] the executioner's ax casts a

grim shadow across *Richard III* and other histories" (*Will* 276). Shakespeare uses tragic elements to describe the sea as a space of apocalyptic disaster and fated disruption.

Egeon's function within the play is complex. He reinforces divine authority in his act of lawful defiance to the Duke's order. The seas, after all, do not belong to the Duke as much as they belong to nature and God. Egeon also reminds the audience of the biblical fall by telling a story that invokes the prophecies in the Book of Revelation. Shakespeare begins with, as Greenblatt phrases it, "a countdown to execution," which stresses the significance of time in the play; time dictates the resolution of the comic plot and determines whether Egeon is executed. Egeon hopes that the Duke will be overcome with sympathy and release him, and thus the sea dog begins his story by highlighting the plight of sea travelers, who face the ocean with uncertainty: "by misfortunes was my life prolonged / To tell sad stories of my own mishaps" (1.1.119-20). Egeon prepares the audience for the more severe implications within the play and also to introduce the play's message that everyone is mastered by someone or something—ocean, monarch, time, fate, God, or any other powerful force that surrounds its subjects.

Egeon depicts the sea as a symbol of chaos that has disrupted his spirit and his family. Borrowing from biblical and classical tradition, Shakespeare presents Egeon's plight as a predictable one in the brutal cycle of tempestuous time. Egeon tells his narrative to the Duke in hopes of salvation, and wearily, he admits to the power of forces beyond his control and comprehension. The feeling of dread and hopelessness in his story conveys a struggle to accept divine fate, and returning to Waller's apocalyptic metaphor, reinforces the cultural associations of the sea as a space representing finality. Egeon's survival suggests the interference of a greater power—God or Nature—and his story acts

as powerful testimony. Egeon tells his story in a manner that recalls Judgment Day. By retelling his experience, he demonstrates how he has become part of the ocean while trying to find truth within it.

Egeon arrives in Ephesus with a death warrant, and he believes that all of his pains on earth will soon end, telling the Duke, "this is my comfort: when your words are done, / My woes end likewise with the evening sun" (1.1.26-7). The Duke entreats Egeon to explain how he came to Ephesus, and thus the merchant recalls his painful past to deliver what may be his last words:

> A heavier task could not have been imposed
> Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable:
> Yet, that the world may witness that my end
> Was wrought by nature, not by vile offence,
> I'll utter what my sorrows give me leave. (1.1.31)

Egeon's prefatory remarks emphasize the burdening task of describing his woes, and Shakespeare gives considerable gravity to Egeon's "unspeakable" griefs. Harry Levin notes that Egeon "contributes an emotional tension" to what would otherwise be a conventional comic plot by using the "expository narrative—a specimen of the rhetoricians' *narratio*" (125). The *narratio* is a statement of facts following the *exordium* (introduction) in classical oration, explained in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (1470). Egeon's language is also self-referential, calling attention to the fact that he is delivering a speech ("I to speak my griefs," "I'll utter what my sorrows give me leave") and that it is being received by an audience ("the world may witness"). This is a rhetorical feature of oral morality tales from the earliest Anglo-Saxon poets. In "The Seafarer," the author

begins by saying that he "can tell the true riddle of my own self, and speak of my experiences—how I have often suffered times of hardship in days of toil . . . and the terrible surging of the waves" (1-5). The "Seafarer" poet refers to the story of his life as the "riddle of my own self," as though his life were a poem in the Exeter book. Similarly, Egeon intends to share the mysteries of his life, one "wrought by nature, not by vile offence."

By attributing his life's woes to nature, Egeon emphasizes the power of external forces. Egeon's extraordinary life defies logical explanation; it reiterates the continuing force of divine power, even if that power remains inexplicit in his story. As Levin points out, "nowhere else in Shakespeare can a whole pattern of incidents be so directly traceable to sheer unmitigated contingency" (125). But rather than letting Fortune take the credit for such a jarring sequence of events, the play suggests that this is part of a divine plan that allows Egeon the possibility of spiritual restoration. The sea story allows Egeon to take stock of his life, just as it is for the "Seafarer" poet. It can even be read as an elegy. Egeon's description of the ocean characterizes it as a watery grave, but as he crosses the sea to search for his son, the ocean becomes baptismal.

Egeon's speech does not follow the traditional elegiac structure of poems that represent the three stages of loss (grief, praise, and solace). However, it still conveys such themes iambic pentameter. After describing how he met his wife and their initial joys of raising their sons, Egeon proceeds to the fated shipwreck:

> A league from Epidamnum had we sail'd,
> Before the always-wind-obeying deep
> Gave any tragic instance of our harm:

> But longer did we not retain much hope;
> For what obscured light the heavens did grant
> Did but convey unto our fearful minds
> A doubtful warrant of immediate death; (1.1.63-9)

Egeon emphasizes that the sea never brings with it any sign of warning; it is ruled by the wind and thus any "tragic instance of … harm" is always hidden. Although the sea is a grave for many sailors, it is also controlled by a more powerful force, the wind. For seafarers, learning to read the wind was a crucial skill, and this ability coincided with other predictors of weather change, such as the color of the sky and position of the clouds. As Alexander Falconer explains, the mariner "names the 'winds of all the corners' by the thirty-two points of the compass," and sea dogs like Egeon are able to read such ominous signs. As Trinculo says in *The Tempest*, "another storm brewing: I hear it sing I' the wind" (2.2.19). The storm in Egeon's explanation, however, is more sinister than usual—not because of its appearance, or its sound, but because the signs that tell of its arrival do not appear until it is too late.

Like the coming apocalypse in Revelation, sea disasters are most jarring to those most unprepared; the storm in Egeon's story comes like an immediate revelation, and its victims do not have time to ready themselves. Shakespeare often uses the ocean as a mirror to humans' inward struggles, which is appropriate given the ocean's effect to mirror what it sees when it is calm. Shakespeare's storms are mysteries to be solved in their aftermaths, but while they rage, they "obscure light" and prevent seamen like Egeon from discovering its secrets. Only by plunging into the ocean does Egeon gain an understanding of the tremendous power of forces beyond his control, specifically those in

"the heavens." In a way, this is a kind of paradox: Egeon must enter into a hellish environment to better understand the "heavens." Like Jonah, he enters the sea with "fearful mind," and the plunge becomes a test of Egeon's spiritual stamina. By knowing the sea at its darkest, he can emerge fully "baptized."

Egeon and the ocean have a symbolic relationship, beginning with the merchant's namesake. Egeon's name likely derives from the Aegean Sea, which rests between Greece and Turkey and was named for the mythic King Aegeus of Athens, father to Theseus. The framework for Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* is also inspired by Plutarch's story of Aegeus in his Life of Theseus, which tells of Aegeus giving his son a scarlet sail to hoist upon their safe return from Crete. When Theseus forgets Aegeus's instructions and hoists the black sails instead, the King commits suicide by throwing himself into the ocean, afterward named for him. In both Plutarch and Plautus, the grieving father ends his life after assuming his son has died. In Shakespeare, however, the father's emotional turmoil is reflected by the sea story, which dramatically reunites him with his son. The sea story also serves to avoid the suicide-by-drowning plot that is a convention of tragedy: most notably, this is the fate of Ophelia, who drifts "mermaid-like" in death, returning to the sea in a reiteration of the cycle of life and death.

In comedy, however, Shakespeare allows Egeon to dwell on the matter of self-determination, rather than mere impulse. Brayton argues that the sea "catalyzes the action [in Shakespearean drama] and provides a reservoir of metaphor for reflecting on the contingencies of human life" (64). Like the "always-wind-obeying deep" that Egeon describes in his tale (1.1.63), he and his family are pulled violently toward a fate over which they have no control. Egeon depicts the sea as a dangerous space where anything

may happen, as though it were a living representation of Murphy's Law. The ocean is politically dangerous and houses the war between Ephesus and Syracuse. Though it seems boundless, the ocean contains invisible boundaries based on restricted trade routes. But more than a political hotbed, Egeon's sea functions foremost as a place of discovery and reclamation. Altering Plutarch's narrative, Shakespeare gives Egeon a chance to reclaim what was lost at sea after the shipwreck.

Egeon depicts the sea in a significant way as a symbol and powerful example of humans' subservience to the unknown. Sea dogs understand much more than landlubbers how the sea can take away their sense of autonomy. Elizabethan Sea Dogs, the pirates and privateers contracted to raid Spanish ships, often invoke biblical narrative in their travel journals to describe their turmoil at sea. While navigating the southernmost coast of South America, Francis Drake expresses the power of God in ensuring their safety, comparing his experience to Jonah being delivered from the whale. He recounts that "the same God of mercy which delivered Ionas out of the Whales belly, and heareth all those that call vpon him faithfully in their distress, looked downe from heauen, beheld our teares, and heard our humble petitions . . . [and] did so wonderfully free vs, and make our way open before vs" (86). Drake's biblical allusion to Jonah allows him to describe the work of God divinely guiding sea travellers toward their destination, and it is clear that he considers his voyage as a part of God's plan. In the shipwreck plays, Shakespeare evokes similar images conveying Jonah's turmoil, particularly when Egeon uses language associated with biblical narratives that depict God's intervention in a violent sea.

Egeon's separation-by-storm and subsequent survival convey the sea and natural forces as tests of strength and stamina that push him to the limits of human capacity.

Drake's narrative describes the deliverance of those who trust in God after experiencing devastation at sea, but Egeon still needs to hold on to his faith that he will be reunited with his family; the sea becomes just one of several tests. The sea test is "wrought by nature," and while Egeon personifies the natural world as a threatening entity, he recognizes the turbulent ocean as an agent of divine power:

> We were encountered by a mighty rock,
> Which being violently borne upon,
> Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst,
> So that in this unjust divorce of us
> Fortune had left to both of us alike
> What to delight in, what to sorrow for. (1.1.102-7)

As Egeon tells his tale, he and his family are the objects, not the subjects, of the action. He uses the passive voice to emphasize their helplessness during the storm, explaining that he and his crew "were encountered by a mighty rock," which split his ship. Though the rock never moves, it is described as the agent of peril. In Egeon's description, the rock pursues the merchants, rather than the other way around. Randall Martin argues that "Shakespeare stages shipwreck as much as a (mis)fortune to be embraced as a catastrophe to be lamented . . . ensur[ing] clear new imaginative spaces for personal and cultural rediscovery" (128). Egeon's experience allows for a biblical interpretation of divine power as a mediator, implied in the description of the "mighty rock" that crashes the ship and tests Egeon's faith. The "mighty rock" may be interpreted as the God of Psalm 62:2: "God alone is the mighty rock / that keeps me safe / and the fortress / where I

am secure." If interpreted this way, Egeon encounters God (as a mighty rock), and like Sir Francis Drake and the "Seafarer" poet, he experiences a test of faith through the storm. In Egeon's speech, nature becomes synonymous with providential deities—God and Fortune. However, Fortune is "unjust" in "divorc[ing]" the family. Shakespeare frames the play with the question of what causes confusion and distress, and the playwright contemplates whether humans have any control at all in preventing unforeseen disaster. Shakespeare's ocean is not a true mirror of the world, as it does not give Egeon the answers he seeks to find. Egeon must immerse himself in the water, and then pursue his family on a journey, where he must struggle not only to accept fate, but also his lack of control within the world.

In Egeon's narrative, the sea becomes a space of fatalistic disaster and mystery, blurring Christian and classical interpretations. Egeon describes Fortune as a force that influences what he has "to delight in" and "what to sorrow for" (1.1.107). The statement depicts Fortune's fickle nature and recalls the wheel upon which human fates move. Like Fortune's wheel, the ocean moves continuously but never promises a predictable outcome. Falconer also notes that Egeon's account "has more incident than is found in [other shipwreck stories]" (44). Such "incident[s]" can be read both as divine tests or the movements of Fortune's wheel. Egeon credits "delight" and "sorrow" to Fortune, which appears to have power over nature. Egeon suggests that only through the impossible task of predicting the ocean and its movements can seafarers become masters of their fates. Peterson argues that Shakespearean comedies, the romances in particular, portray Fortune as a "pilot" for characters on both literal and allegorical journeys (51-2). He explains that in drama, there exist two orders of being from which one has freedom to choose: "the one

in which he remains servile to time and to circumstance or 'fortune'; the other in which he may achieve constancy and shape time" (24). These two modes underscore the tension between notions of autonomy in early modern thought.[1] Egeon's story struggles to differentiate between Fortune and God. The prevailing feature of Fortune is that, although blind, she makes mistakes; God, on the other hand, does not. Yet, they both create similar outcomes.

One of Egeon's most important functions is to introduce the play's concern with freedom and its paradoxical relationship to subservience. Everyone is mastered—by God, men, and nature. Egeon is a servant to the laws of his country, and a prisoner to the Duke. The comic plot clearly highlights the implications of the master-servant relationship. Antipholus of Syracuse, mistaking Dromio of Ephesus for his servant, beats him for not returning a sum of money borrowed. This moment and many others reinforce the power of social position and its connection to the body. Adriana takes a more philosophical approach, describing the Great Chain of Being in declamatory fashion. In her first scene, she muses over the foibles of "headstrong liberty":

> Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd with woe.
> There's nothing situate under heaven's eye
> But hath his bound, in earth, in sea, in sky:
> The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls,
> Are their males' subjects and at their controls:
> Men, more divine, the masters of all these,
> Lords of the wide world and wild watery seas,
> Indued with intellectual sense and souls,

Of more preeminence than fish and fowls,

Are masters to their females, and their lords:

Then let your will attend on their accords. (2.1.15-25)

Adriana reiterates conventional social hierarchies, particularly female subservience to husbands. She also makes a series of claims that, based on Egeon's sea story, prove false. Adriana asserts that men, being "more divine" than women, are "Lords of the wide world and wild watery seas." In a historical sense, men were bound to the sea, whereas women were generally excluded from seafaring and maritime life, with some exceptions. However, Egeon makes it very clear who is lord of whom. Having been violently tossed by the tide, Egeon is no lord of the "wild watery seas," even if his rank is higher than sea creatures. Though her speech perpetuates traditional patriarchal ideals through the Great Chain (positioning women at a lower rank than men), Adriana overemphasizes the power that men have over nature. Saying that men have preeminence over all "fish and fowls" ignores the realities of maritime life that Egeon experiences. In response to Adriana's scorn of "headstrong liberty," her sister Luciana replies, "This servitude makes you to keep unwed . . . Ere I learn love, I'll practice to obey" (2.1.26-29). Through what would be an otherwise unremarkable exchange, Shakespeare presents two sides in the argument for autonomy; one describes freedom as perversity against nature, the other presents it as liberation from "love" and the rule of a husband.

Although Shakespeare's comedies inevitably end in a union of lovers or a wedding ceremony, he focuses on the question of individual freedom. The playwright shows that when we love someone, we naturally remove any sense of autonomy. Egeon shows how autonomy is removed from human lives when he reflects on his relationship

with the turbulent ocean, and his experience reveals how the sea's continuous flux constitutes evidence of supernatural power, through God, fortune, nature, or love. Of these forces, love resonates most powerfully in Egeon's story, particularly when he describes the emotional turmoil of ensuring his family's safety. After his ship collides with the "mighty rock," he and his wife secure their children for the arduous journey. His wife weeps when it occurs to her that she must fasten her children to the masts "such as seafaring men provide for storms" (1.1.80). The children, meanwhile, are "ignorant what to fear" (1.1.73) while their parents secure them for the ocean voyage. Self-preservation is secondary to their children's safety. Egeon emphasizes powerlessness as he and his wife desperately fix themselves to the ship's mast and swim in the seemingly boundless ocean towards land:

> The children thus disposed, my wife and I,
> Fixing our eyes on whom our care was fix'd,
> Fasten'd ourselves at either end the mast;
> And floating straight, obedient to the stream,
> Was carried towards Corinth, as we thought. (1.1.83-7)

Egeon emphasizes a loss of control when he describes being "obedient to the stream" as he and his wife swim towards land. As Mentz explains, when Shakespearean characters swim, it "calls up a vision of human insufficiency" (36). In Shakespeare's sea plays, the ocean determines two ways characters move: horizontally or by means of the ebb and flow of the tide. These movements affect the other, as the stream is the inflow and outflow created by the rise and fall of the tides. (73) In the passage from Egeon, the steadfastness of his gaze towards his family is juxtaposed with the steadfast stream and

their movement towards what they believe to be Corinth. Egeon's eyes represent his love for his wife and sons, as well as his unwavering loyalty to preserve the family unit when threatened by the tide.

Egeon describes the sea as both an act of God and an act of fortune, but ultimately, the play privileges a biblical reading of Egeon's experience for the promise of salvation. Egeon's "sea-change" evokes the experience of merchants in the biblical sea. Psalm 107 declares, "Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story—those he redeemed from the hand of the foe." Within this group of storytellers are men like Egeon who "went out on the sea in ships . . . merchants on the mighty waters" who "saw the works of the LORD, / His wonderful deeds in the deep." These men are witnesses to divine power, voyaging across "mighty waters" that present danger and uncertainty while bearing the burden of their survival. Yet, those dangerous waters also contain the Lord's "wonderful deeds," including the plant and animal life that exist within it. In passage from Psalm 107, the word "wonderful" emphasizes the sense of sublime awe of witnessing a dangerous sea creature or a fierce storm.

Shakespeare's ocean tests Egeon's faith in the presence of benevolent spiritual forces that allow for growth and renewal. The biblical ocean reminds its voyagers of the power of prayer in times of distress, just as it does for Jonah, St. Paul the Apostle, and the merchants in the Psalms. In Acts 27:27, St. Paul is shipwrecked on Malta, having been driven across the Adriatic Sea. The sailors feign lowering anchors while trying to escape the ship, but Paul tells them that unless they stay with the ship, they cannot be saved. A recurring theme in both biblical and Shakespearean shipwrecks is constancy. When seafarers are constant to their true mission, they will be restored. Egeon remains constant,

but just barely; he is weary, and his "sea-change" is a transformation of the spirit, rather than the body. His bones do not turn to coral, as Ariel's song describes, but his soul is in peril and risks being turned into a lifeless object. Egeon's fate is echoed again in Psalm 107, which describes the toil of sea merchants:

> For [the LORD] spoke and stirred up a tempest
> That lifted high the waves.
> They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths;
> In their peril their courage melted away.
> Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble,
> And he brought them out of their distress.

The seafarers cry out and admit their powerlessness, and their admission of mortality ultimately saves them—they must recognize the power of God in nature. Like the example in the Psalms, Egeon's fate underscores a major Christian principle reiterated in the Protestant Reformation: in order to achieve salvation, one must encounter the works of God and admit their fallen state. Martin Luther's *Ninety-five Theses* (1517) was an invaluable text in the early modern era in its position that salvation could be achieved by faith alone, without papal mediation. Shakespeare's characters are inspired by a similar path, one in which they have direct access to the powers of God or a ruling divine force. Egeon experiences the power of nature at its most brutal and is tested by his faith and constancy.

In *The Comedy of Errors*, the sea represents a world of turmoil, but also a fallen world that will be reckoned and reconciled by God. Egeon's journey is a testament to the Christian idea that the path toward salvation requires self-examination and an admission

of one's dependency on the divine for guidance. In Henry Hawkins's (1577-1646) poem, "The Star," the speaker describes "sailing in a stormy dangerous Main" and "suffer[ing] shipwrack, where the freight's my Soul" (3-5). The speaker relies on a "Star, fixed near the Pole" (6) to navigate through the turbulent sea, and that Star (God) allows him to stay on course and find the Sun. Similarly, Egeon describes "the benefit of [the sun's] wished light" that appeared when the "seas wax'd calm" (1.1.91-2). This image reiterates that the journey through chaos will eventually end in peace. *The Comedy of Errors* emphasizes that people are inept when they follow their own flawed senses. One of the prevailing themes in the play is human fallibility, as characters constantly mistake others' identities, demonstrating the ways the senses deceive. The characters of Shakespeare's comedy demonstrate their ineptitude to the comic delight of the audience, but we cannot ignore the way that Egeon calls attention to the more serious implications of being fallible, particularly as he falls into overwhelming despair.

Shakespeare invites the question: can we restore order after error? In the play, error can be traced to three sources: Satan (briefly mentioned), Fortune or Chance, and human fallibility. It does not, at first, seem plausible to attribute human fallibility to Egeon's troubles, as he did not cause the shipwreck (unlike Prospero in *The Tempest*). Egeon insists that his faults were "wrought by nature, not by vile offence" (1.1.34), and yet he is in a position of desperate penance. A way to interpret his paradoxical position is to present him as a man who is flawed by nature, or specifically, by man's fallen nature. Egeon tells Antipholus of Ephesus, believing him to be his own son, "O, grief hath changed me since you saw me last, / And careful hours with time's deformèd hand / Have written strange defeatures in my face" (5.1.298-300). His despair is written on his face,

revealing his imperfect state. Egeon has experienced a "sea-change" physically and spiritually. In the beginning of the play Egeon appears to be on the verge of ending his own life, or living without any hope or desire, as he laments, "Hopeless and helpless doth Egeon wend, / But to procrastinate his lifeless end" (1.1.158-9). Shakespeare portrays the sorrow of losing a child as one of the most devastating tragedies of human life, but here Egeon is also in a state of total despair, anxious to achieve a "lifeless end."

Egeon's sea story and expository speech allow him the opportunity for salvation while also ensuring that the denouement is emotionally resonant as the family reunites and Egeon is granted freedom. Ecclesiastes 7:17 reminds early modern society that sorrow and guilt manifest themselves in terrible ways: "Why should you die before your time?" Those familiar with the narrative of King Aegeus may see Egeon as following the same path towards self-destruction. Plautus and Plutarch describe fathers who are so overcome with grief that they kill themselves over the loss of their sons, but Egeon manages to avoid this fate, surviving and reuniting with his sons at the end of the play. Through the somber framing narrative, the play privileges divine power and justice over the powers and laws of man. J. Dennis Huston argues that "discontinuity" is the force in the play that overthrows "the very laws which govern the movement of things in space and time" (26). Duke Solinus disregards his country's rules when giving Egeon an additional day before execution because he recognizes the humanity in others. Solinus's leniency demonstrates Shakespeare's privileging of the Christian virtue of mercy over contractual agreements (which also occurs in *The Merchant of Venice*). In *The Comedy of Errors*, the laws of man are always subject to divine law, represented most explicitly by the Abbess, who appears at the play's most crucial moments. Shakespeare's inclusion of

the Abbess, like the inclusion of the sea, is a unique addition to previous versions of the classical lost-twin narrative. In Shakespeare's play, the Abbess brings the twins together to show the others, thus symbolically presenting the miracle after chaos as a God-given act.

The restoration of order at the end of *Comedy of Errors* is a significant conclusion to the sea dog Egeon's framing sea narrative that expands the play's expression of biblical prophecy. However, critics often consider the ending a simple comic plot device. Huston argues that the ending "reinforces a comic pattern established but not recognized in Egeon's story—the pattern of sudden miraculous deliverance from imminent death" (25). Huston considers "miraculous" events in Egeon's tale as phenomenal but not necessarily biblical, even as Shakespeare "turns literally and figuratively towards the Church" in the end. (27) Yet, focusing on the ending solely for its performative purpose undermines the implications in the Abbess's dramatic presentation of the twins. This moment brings peace and order to madness, but it also reminds audiences that a higher power ensures stability.

Egeon represents the thematic rise, fall, and rise of humans, reflecting the biblical rite of passage for sinners once they have accepted God's power. Egeon's knowledge of the world comes from an experience of suffering. Boethius describes this process in his *de consolatione philosophiae* (523 AD), wherein Philosophy teaches him in the final book that God controls the order of things, ensures the prosperity of good individuals, and enables human reasoning to aspire (though not completely obtain) divine intelligence (5.5.13-17). Like Boethius, Egeon is a prisoner who looks bleakly upon his past, present, and future while attempting to understand the purpose of his suffering. Shakespeare uses

his story to demonstrate the mysterious nature of divine knowledge. Such knowledge is best expressed by the limitless, expansive ocean, which holds secrets and mysteries. Giving himself up to divine prophecy, Egeon is renewed and reunites with his family. As he encounters the one whom he believes to be his son, he says, "Yet hath my night of life some memory / My wasting lamps some fading glimmer left" (5.1.315-6). After enduring years of hardship and ache, Egeon still has a "glimmer left," something that Egeon did not have at the beginning of the play.

Egeon receives salvation by surviving grief and regaining hope after enduring a weathered life at sea. His reunion completes the comic ending but also completes the arc of apocalyptic prophesy by allowing him the hope of renewal and the benefits of true judgement—that which is given by God. The play's question, "can we restore order after error?' is also to ask, "Can we achieve something that seems impossible?" While humans cannot reverse the Fall in the biblical sense, Egeon's experience suggests that humans can return to a degree of social equilibrium. As Levin reminds us, "to err is human; and if to forgive be divine, then at least it can be the temporary prerogative of the gallery gods" (113). God's task, like Shakespeare's, is to restore order after human error, in what seems to be an impossible set of circumstances. For Shakespeare, the sea offers a meaningful way to engage these questions by symbolizing an impossible task that by its very nature exists only to confound and disrupt. The sea story, then, becomes its own complex mystery, in both a literary and biblical sense. Egeon's sea story offers the possibility of sanctuary, and it prophesizes the miracle of the reunion at the end of the play. The story also allows Shakespeare to delve into the philosophical turmoil of grief. Egeon is not a figure in a tragic play but is a tragic figure that needs reconciliation with the events of his

past. He serves to show how "error," in whatever form it appears, is an essential part of human existence.

THE SEA DOGS OF *TWELFTH NIGHT*

Twelfth Night also begins with an elegiac tale of a shipwreck and battered travelers. The play's two sea dogs, the Captain and the pirate, Antonio, are tasked with guiding the way for the twins, Sebastian and Viola, who are separated after a shipwreck. All four characters enter the play on a seashore, a symbolic space signifying new opportunities and rites of passage. Viola and Sebastian arrive on the shores of Illyria disoriented after surviving the brutal sea, and they depend on their older companions to help familiarize themselves with their new location. The sea dogs act as loyal servants and knowledgeable companions before parting ways with the twins. Having experienced the worst of nature's wrath at sea, the Captain and Antonio pass on their experience to their young protégés. Symbolically, the sea inspires growth and change for shipwrecked characters, but sea dogs also have an important role in instigating this transformation. The Captain and Antonio give Viola and Sebastian resources and direction—and for Viola, a disguise—before the twins begin their journey to Duke Orsino to reunite with their siblings. Most importantly, the Captain and Antonio give the twins hope, which becomes their most valuable entity as they navigate their new home.

The importance of the Captain and Antonio as individual characters may not seem very great in the play. Unlike Egeon, they do not frame the plot or have a direct stake or familial relation with the twins that anticipates a dramatic reunion. They merely operate as guides. While Antonio's love for Sebastian indicates an intimate relationship, the

extent to which he can express his love, whether romantic or homosocial, is impeded by the imperative of a heterosexual union, among other things. While the sea dogs of *Twelfth Night* are minor characters with limited action, what little action they do have is monumental to the play's outcome. Together, the Captain and Antonio represent the historic and symbolic changes that ritually occur in the ocean. Historically, these characters represent the sea navigators, both contracted and self-appointed, that inhabited the waters during Elizabeth's reign. The Elizabethan Sea Dogs were contracted pirates who were tasked to raid Spanish naval ships, and the most famous Sea Dogs included Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Walter Raleigh. These men would have been familiar with cosmopolitan port cities and countries similar to Shakespeare's fictional Illyria, which, as Mentz notes, alludes to Ottoman Turkey and is positioned "squarely within Shakespeare's exotic eastern Med" (52). The sea dogs of *Twelfth Night* represent what the ocean also signified in early modern culture: hope, change, and possibility. Both the Captain and Antonio have landed on many shores, survived many storms, and witnessed spectacles that could only be seen at sea. They impart their stories and seafaring savvy to help the twins find their footing so that they may eventually find 'themselves,' both in exacting their purposes in Illyria and reuniting with the person who serves as their mirror.

Believing her brother is in "Elysium" (2.1.4), or Heaven, Viola travels through a land perhaps representing the inverse of that heavenly place, as Illyria is a setting of confusion, contradiction, and turbulence. Viola finds love, but not before experiencing what Brayton calls an oceanic "crisis of identity," which leaves her disoriented on the shoreline (Brayton 143). The Captain lifts Viola's spirits by telling her the fantastic tale

of her brother's survival. The accuracy of the Captain's account is secondary to the fact that Viola believes his story and is inspired to pursue Sebastian and disguise as a eunuch after hearing the sea tale. The Captain may be a prophetic visionary, a keen observer, or an excellent storyteller. As is the case with Egeon, the Captain's persuasive power lies in his ability to tell his experience and describe the supernatural power that exists at sea. On the Illyrian shore, the Captain gives Viola hope that she may be reunited with Sebastian. He intends to "comfort [her] with chance" (1.2.7) so that she will not drown in despair. His use of the word "chance" and "perchance" indicates possibility, which in many ways is what the fathomless, expansive sea represents. Before Viola leaves the violent waves of her past and starts a new life posing as male, the Captain gives her a detailed account of Sebastian's valiant struggle against the turbulent sea. As Viola tries to acquaint herself with her new setting, she questions the Captain as to what brought her to Illyria. The Captain's response is enigmatic and prophetic:

VIOLA What country, friends, is this?

CAPTAIN This is Illyria, lady.

VIOLA And what should I do in Illyria?

My brother he is in Elysium.

Perchance he is not drown'd: what think you, sailors?

CAPTAIN It is perchance that you yourself were saved. (1.2.1-5)

The Captain suggests that Viola was saved "perchance," and that the powers of Chance, Fortune, or random probability were responsible for her survival. Viola echoes the Captain's language, exclaiming, "O my poor brother, and so perchance may he be [saved]" (1.2.6). It is uncertain whether the Captain truly knows who or what saved

Sebastian or Viola, hence the use of "perchance." The Captain's use of "chance" suggests the workings of Fortune, which is often depicted as blind and rotating a wheel. As Lady Philosophy explains to Boethius, fame and wealth are transitory, and Fortune will inevitably forsake mortal beings; the true constant is divine knowledge (2.4.20-24). Viola's survival seems to be part of a process where events occur in a random or cyclical process without a moral imperative or spiritual purpose. Yet, the Captain's word, "saved," signifies biblical salvation, and Viola's shipwreck survival may be part of a predetermined process of spiritual restoration. The Captain's language is vague enough to suggest either interpretation, but there is ample evidence to consider "saved" in terms of biblical salvation when we also recall Egeon's jarring encounter with the "mighty rock," and his miraculous survival.

Through the trial of the shipwreck, Shakespeare suggests that human self-determination is never enough to survive nature at its most brutal. There is something secretive in nature or outside of nature that protects the protagonists. What separates *Twelfth Night* from *Comedy of Errors* as a shipwreck comedy is the spectacle of the shipwreck. While Egeon describes the storm in his firsthand account, the audience is allowed to witness the aftermath in *Twelfth Night*, though no one except the Captain can give testimony. As Gwilym Jones points out, "Spectatorship is the achievement of the storm of separation." (9) In *Twelfth Night*, the audience members are "late witnesses" to the storm, to quote Jones, but we are witnesses nonetheless (9). But even as Shakespeare's shipwreck plays increasingly allow for storms to be more prominently displayed, there is still a sense of mystery around the phenomena itself and the survival of

the twins. Is survival of a storm a providential miracle guaranteed by God? Or is the survival the workings of Fortune or Chance?

The storm itself only brings confusion and questions for Viola, but the Captain serves as a guide to give Viola a sense of constancy, stability, and hope. In a geographic sense, he gives her direction by pointing the way to Illyria, but he also gives direction by reviving her spirits through his fantastic account of Sebastian's endurance through the storm. The Captain also inspires Viola's change, both physically from outwardly female to male, but also a change within. Having emerged from the waters "baptized," as seafarers would term oceanic experience, the metamorphosed Viola seeks constancy and restoration.

The struggle to achieve constancy amid uncontrollable forces rests at the heart of the conflict in *Twelfth Night*, and this theme is dramatically expressed in the Captain's description of Sebastian. Like Egeon, the Captain extols the virtues of a man who withstands the forces of nature and becomes one with the sea. He gives Viola his first-hand account of Sebastian's struggle "to comfort [her] with chance" (1.2.8). The Captain does not explicitly give Viola direction, but he asserts himself as a reliable witness to catastrophe and gives testimony not only to the power within nature, but the power of human fortitude. The sea dog depicts Sebastian as the prototypical man of constancy, adept in survival skills and virtuous in spirit. However, the Captain also emphasizes the extraordinariness of the twins' survival:

> after our ship did split,
> When you and those poor number saved with you
> Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother,

> Most provident in peril, bind himself,
> Courage and hope both teaching him the practise,
> To a strong mast that lived upon the sea;
> Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,
> I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
> So long as I could see. (1.2.9-17)

The Captain's description resonates with Christian imagery, and his phrase "provident in peril" is prophetic, subtly alluding to divine providence. The expected outcome of Sebastian's death is overturned by an unknown force; like Egeon's story of surviving the sea, the Captain's account is one that suggests the interference of supernatural forces in the natural world. This convention was common in Greek romances, such as *Daphnis and Chloe*, wherein the god Pan saves Chloe from raiders. Shakespeare, who had been familiar with Greek romances like *Apollonius of Tyre*, describes a similar plot in the Captain's tale of Sebastian's miraculous survival. Sebastian is a gifted seaman, but there may be miraculous forces at work.

The Captain alludes to divine intervention with the phrase "provident in peril," but he also refers to other secular myths, such as that of the ancient poet, Arion, who was alleged to have been kidnapped by pirates and saved by dolphins. The Captain's allusion to Arion's myth reveals the power of sea-myths to relate to contemporary circumstances. The Arion myth also perpetuates the idea that human and nature are intrinsically connected and work together for the common good. Martin describes Sebastian—or at least, the Captain's portrayal—as a man "merging mythically with the sea" (130), referring specifically to the description of Sebastian riding the waves like Arion on the

dolphins. In the Captain's story, Sebastian is not only a man who can work with nature for survival, but is also a character signifying infinite possibility. In the most chaotic environments, Sebastian can adapt to the sea and ride the waves, literally and figuratively, to shore. Mentz describes this scene as Shakespeare's "aquaman fantasy of a human life amid the waters" (54). Modern versions of the "aquaman," such as the twentieth-century superhero created by Paul Norris and Mort Weisinger, live in harmony with the ocean and use the sea to fight forces that disturb the waters. The image of Sebastian riding the waves like the poet Arion evidences this, as Sebastian can (according to the Captain) tame the sea like Arion could tame the creatures within it.

The Captain's description of Sebastian's valor, whether exaggerated or true, also emphasizes that the sea is a space that tests the strength and fortitude of those caught in its hellish waves. To survive "Hell," one must have constancy and gain an intimate relationship with the sea and its creatures. The Captain's phrase, "those poor number saved with you," recalls Revelation 7:4, wherein the "poor number" of survivors (those servants of God whose fates have been sealed on their forehead) is calculated to 144,000. There is something exceptional about Sebastian due to his constancy. The Captain's language emphasizes both the miracle of Sebastian's survival and the strength within him that fought the testing waves. The Captain asserts that Sebastian's "Courage and hope" teach him "the practise" of maritime survival, and these virtues are described as more valuable than nautical knowledge. While Sebastian responds quickly by binding himself to the mast, it is his endurance that keeps him tightly held.

Critics have also associated Sebastian's survival skills with an archetype of constancy—as Peterson calls him, "the constant man" (48). Peterson explains that "The

constant man is unshaken even at that moment when the tempest is about to capsize his ship" (48). This notion is echoed ironically by Feste, who tells the capricious Orsino that he "would have men of such / constancy put to sea, that their business might be / every thing and their intent every where" (2.4.75-7). Orsino is an obvious foil for Sebastian, and his changeability is marked in contrast. Feste's comical conclusion that inconstancy "makes a good voyage of nothing" (78) emphasizes that men like Orsino need direction and steadiness to sail their ships, so to speak. Unlike Sebastian, Orsino is taken with the idea of love, which proves to be infatuation and throws him off course. Shakespeare portrays the constant seaman as a foil for those like Orsino, metaphorically adrift and searching futilely for love without a compass.

The Captain's image of Sebastian holding tightly to the mast recalls the beginning of Egeon's dramatic narrative, as he and his wife strap themselves and their children to the mast before being separated. Both the Captain and Egeon depict the sea as a hell space that creates despair, coinciding with the popular nautical colloquialism, "betwixt the devill and the deep sea" (Monro 55). The saying first appears in Robert Monro's travel journal published in 1637, but the same saying likely appeared in different forms many years earlier. The sea is hell in shipwreck comedies, and its function is pragmatic; it confuses the seafarer and creates chaos from which he must emerge and recollect answers. Monro's saying reiterates the similarities in the depictions of hell and ocean, as both are vast, chaotic, and disorienting. An instrument of the landed world that conveys stability, constancy, and hope for survival, the mast becomes a means by which the confused seafarer can stay afloat—it represents the struggles of faith ("Courage and hope

both [teach] him the practise"). When seafarers are "baptized" into the ocean, they must still cling to the mast for survival and constancy.

What Dening describes as a "baptism," or a rite of passage for sailors, is a way to understand the spiritual struggle men experience when taking their first plunge. Shakespeare's sea dogs are themselves constant men, as they have had to develop not only the practical skills to navigate ships to port, but more importantly, the spiritual constancy to keep pursuing their course when all seems lost. For Sebastian and Viola, this constancy of spirit is demonstrated by sea dogs, but it is internalized through first-hand experience. The Captain, and later Antonio, recognizes Sebastian's constancy and determination, traits that help the young man resist the surging of the ocean waves. At least in the beginning of the play, Viola also demonstrates these qualities. If the twins survive the tempest for a reason and are thus chosen to survive, then we must identify the contributions of the Captain and Antonio for their roles as guides, counsellors, storytellers, caretakers, and models of constancy. Sebastian's transformation into the constant man, or the "aquaman," even if this change exists solely in the Captain's imagination as he comforts Viola, also describes the act of going beyond the limits of human capacity. By riding the waves as if they were dolphins, Sebastian quite literally "civilizes the sea," to quote Dening. Sebastian's ability to civilize nature reflects English colonial ambitions, as well. By turning the sea into a cooperative force rather than something to scorn, Sebastian tames the waters and epitomizes the baptized sailor and man of steadfastness and strength.

Antonio, the second sea dog in *Twelfth Night*, has considerable knowledge and experience concerning the ocean's disruptive currents, and in Act 2 he replaces the

Captain as the play's knowledgeable sea navigator. Like Egeon, Antonio is a trespasser and a criminal under the law of a duke. For both men, the sea is a space of natural, supernatural, and political dangers. While Antonio's offense is "not of such a bloody nature" (3.3.30), it marks him in Illyria and forces him to navigate the land with caution. Antonio, like Egeon and the Captain, also instills a sense of hope, possibility, and constancy on a younger protégé with the potential to do great things. Egeon hopes that his son, Antipholus, thrives in his absence, while the Captain hopes for Viola's sake that Sebastian embodies the "constant man" archetype. Antonio, similarly, puts his hopes in Sebastian, snatching him "out of the jaws of death" (3.4.372), but he also expresses a deep love for Sebastian and his well-being.

Antonio is not as prophetic as the storytelling sea dogs, Egeon and the Captain, but he is perhaps most like the privateering sea dogs contracted by Elizabeth to raid Spanish ships until 1604. Antonio's sense of purpose and possibility does not rest on land, but at sea, and like seafaring pirates during the Anglo-Spanish War, he is meant for a life of sea plundering and voyaging. He seeks a save haven from imprisonment in Illyria, but he also seeks Sebastian's companionship and love. For Antonio, Sebastian and the sea hold great possibilities, but he cannot have both. Antonio's display of loyalty and love serves as the play's moral center, but the play's narrative trajectory towards heterosexual union forces him to forgo a life at sea. In ways that distinguish him from Shakespeare's other sea dog characters, Antonio presents a complex paradox of love and constancy: to stay constant amidst life's tumultuous waves, he turns to Sebastian, but to affirm his love, he must go back to the chaotic sea. There is more at stake in the relationship between Antonio and Sebastian, but like the Captain, Antonio's primary role

is to send a young lover to shore to realize his purpose in the cycle of generative love and marriage. Antonio's liminal role emphasizes the necessity for young men to pursue a life among family and civilization, rather than a life with adventurers at sea.

A sea dog with tremendous heart, Antonio is hopeful about the future of his young companion and reveals the extent of his love for Sebastian in an aside at the end of Act 2, Scene 1:

> The gentleness of all the gods go with thee!
> I have many enemies in Orsino's court,
> Else would I very shortly see thee there,
> But come what may, I do adore thee so
> That danger shall seem sport, and I will go. (2.1.39-43)

There is much to his declaration that "danger shall seem sport" when choosing to act out of love for Sebastian. Antonio's occupation lends itself to danger, and though he does not give a full catalogue of his exploits, he does reveal that he has made "many enemies in Orsino's court," evidencing that he has often been acquainted with danger. That Antonio has many enemies at court and has survived unmentionable dangers suggests that though he is a risk-taker, he is also a capable seaman and strategist. Antonio also demonstrates constancy by sacrificing and steadfastly caring for Sebastian. For the many young, duplicitous, and shallow characters engaging in love-making and trickery in *Twelfth Night*, the older seaman Antonio has an important role in demonstrating how to live and love with abandon while also being able to stay on course. His assertion that "come what may, I do adore thee so / That danger shall seem sport" reiterates the idea that devotion

means making sacrifices and escaping danger, but also returning to ensure the safety of his loved one.

Antonio's tireless pursuit of Sebastian's safety and survival is evidence of his own inner constancy, and he seeks what life at sea seems to have denied him: love and meaningful companionship. Antonio, like Egeon, is a shipwreck survivor and a criminal, but like the Captain, he sees potential in a young companion. Though he is not a prophetic storyteller, Antonio is pressed by an unknown desire—love, longing, or even something more divine or supernatural—to set Sebastian on the right course. His words and actions demonstrate that his motivation for helping Sebastian is not merely out of goodwill, but a deep love. When Sebastian assumes that Antonio "makes [his] pleasure of [his] pains" (3.3.2), Antonio clarifies Sebastian's statement by describing the unexplainable impulse to help his young companion, and why this impulse moves him still:

> I could not stay behind you: my desire,
> More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth;
> And not all love to see you, though so much
> As might have drawn one to a longer voyage,
> But jealousy what might befall your travel,
> Being skilless in these parts, which to a stranger,
> Unguided and unfriended, often prove
> Rough and unhospitable. My willing love
> The rather by these arguments of fear,
> Set forth in your pursuit. (3.3.4-13)

Antonio explains that he felt a desire "More sharp than filed steel," a feeling not only of longing for Sebastian, but a genuine concern for his safety. This queer instinct is spurred by Antonio's fear of what might befall Sebastian—a kind of premonition, perhaps. If Sebastian, "stranger" to Illyria, travels without guide or friend, he is likely to be treated roughly, inhospitably, and perhaps even violently. Antonio acts out of love and devotion, but there is something more elusive about his claim that a sharp force spurred him forth, as though he is not fully in control of his own desires and impulses. Is the sharp feeling guilt, love, or something else? It seems evident by his language and actions that Antonio is moved by love, but the sea dog is also aware of the perils on both land and sea, and his instincts often correctly predict dangerous events.

Shakespeare's sea dogs remind other characters of the unexplainable impulses and forces that disrupt life's calm seas and drive individuals to action. Of these forces, love is one of the most powerful and the most constant when given unconditionally. Egeon, Antonio, and perhaps also the Captain have all lived long enough to see loved ones perish and witness nature at its most brutal; thus, they anticipate danger more immediately than the young travelers. Though Antonio's role is understated, he serves as a model for the truest and most constant forms of love. Sebastian must not only heed Antonio's warnings but also learn how to be the "constant man" that the Captain describes in his dramatic story. The Captain's story of Sebastian's survival is perhaps exaggerated for the benefit of calming Viola's inner tempest, but it also anticipates the reunion of the twins and the recognition of their constant familial love.

Shakespeare most meaningfully expresses the constancy of love through the metaphor of the storm, in both his shipwreck plays and in his poetry. Constant love is the

central theme of his Sonnet 116, which in many ways echoes the examples set by Antonio and Egeon in their journeys, both on land and sea, to find their loved ones and ensure their safety. The sonnet declares that

> Love is not love
>
> Which alters when it alteration finds,
>
> Or bends with the remover to remove:
>
> O no; it is an ever-fixed mark,
>
> That looks on tempests, and is never shaken;
>
> It is the star to every wandering bark,
>
> Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken. (2-8)

Shakespeare calls upon the ocean to dramatically represent turmoil that threatens constant love, the "ever-fixed mark" that does not bend to the force of the waves. While the poem's message can be interpreted alongside many of Shakespeare's comedies and romances, Sonnet 116 connects particularly with the plot and themes of *Twelfth Night*. In the play, there is a literal "wandering bark" of a wrecked vessel, but the twins themselves also wander Illyria like lost ships in an alien sea. Viola and Sebastian must rely on the "star" of their "wandering bark"; though they stray off course, love is the force that reunites them. Characters in the play pursue what they believe is the most ideal form of love (the "star" that leads the vessel). Those who profess to be in love, like Orsino, are merely enamored with the idea, while those who portray constant love, like Antonio, demonstrate their love through their actions. Unlike Orsino, Antonio is acquainted with one of the most inconstant forces of nature—the ocean.

IDENTITY CRISIS

In both *Twelfth Night* and *Comedy of Errors*, the link between the sea dog's role as guide and the twins' journeys is the search for identity. Viola and Sebastian are disoriented once they emerge from the ocean; without their twin, each feels lost. Similarly, Antipholus compares himself to "a drop of water / That in the ocean seeks another drop" (1.2.35). The search seems unfathomable and hopeless, but those with experience with the unfathomable are better suited to assist the young protagonists. Sea dogs in shipwreck plays help the disoriented twins, whether compelled by God or some other unknown force. Egeon is held captive, but wishes the safe return of his son, who "became inquisitive / After his brother" (1.1.125-6) and left his father "Hapless" (140), "Hopeless and helpless" (157). The Captain and Antonio, however, are able to help the separated twins and guide them back to safety and family.

One of the earliest illustrations of the sea dog (likely depicting a seal) appears on a map in Lucan's *Pharsalia* depicting the harbor of Brindisi. In the map, the sea dog swims close to its companion, a half-human siren with arms open, waiting to embrace the creature. The siren takes up more artistic space on the map and proves the more eye-catching figure of the two, but the sea dog diligently lingers by its playmate. In Shakespeare's plays, the characters identified as "sea dogs" have a similar purpose. They do not take up the most space in the play, but as supporting characters they add to the complexity of the larger picture (the play) and more specifically, Shakespeare's multifaceted depiction of the sea.

The scenes in *Twelfth Night* with the Captain and Antonio are crucial to understanding the roles of the sea dog and protagonist and the ways that older seafarers help the twins discover a lost part of themselves. Both men believe that Viola and

Sebastian hold the promise of something great, and that devoting themselves to the twins' cause is inherently right. But it is up to the twins to learn about the inconstancy of the world and use such knowledge to reexamine themselves, their passions and goals, and the restoration they initially seek. Viola discovers love for Orsino as she engages in subterfuge to find Sebastian. As she discovers the many passions and obstacles keeping her from her quest, she gets closer to being exposed and endangering herself and those she loves.

Conversely, Sebastian seeks his sister but is also anxious about his fortune and Antonio's, stating that his own stars "shine darkly over" Antonio's and that the "malignancy of [his] fate" will "distemper" that of his rescuer (2.1.3-5). Sebastian's own sense of himself is not of the "constant man," but of a tragic figure at the mercy of divine forces. The most explicit example of this sense of impending doom appears in his statement to Antonio, "If the heavens had been pleased, would we had so ended! But you, sir, altered that" (20-2). Sebastian believes that Antonio's decision to save him disrupted fate, and yet the biblical allusions in their survival stories suggest that the power of fate is not in the twins' demise, as Sebastian believes, but in the arduous journey towards renewal.

This idea is what Thomas Browne describes as the "obscure way," or the "serpentine and crooked line, whereby He draws those actions His Wisdom intends, in a more unknown and secret way" (19-20). Furthermore, Browne describes Fortune as the "meer hand of God" (20), and it is this concept that inspires the sense of providential interference in the natural world within Shakespeare's plays. In *Twelfth Night*, Fortune and God are conflated into one ruling force, working together as Browne describes this

relationship, and "God" is called upon for both prayers and oaths no less than fifteen times in the play. In these moments, God is asked to "bless" (1.5.36), "comfort" (3.4.33), "save" (226), "defend," (313), and "have mercy" (174).

Antonio's parting words to Sebastian, "The gentleness of the gods go with thee" (3.4.45), also emphasizes that divine forces are at the helm, guiding individuals, rather than securing their downfall. Sebastian believes that the heavens had fated his death, but like Egeon's journey through grief and eventual happiness, Sebastian's also takes a "serpentine and crooked" path. Once ashore, Sebastian must reconcile what he believes is his prophesized death with his new life and navigate the world without his other half. According to Martin, Sebastian "responds to the de-essentialized world of shipwreck by also adopting a transitional identity" (130). The idea of "transitional identity" is fitting for Sebastian since he (like Viola) washes upon a seacoast, the physical point of transition between the ocean and civilization. Without Antonio's advice, protection, generosity, and love, Sebastian would likely be as hapless and hopeless as Egeon. Peterson argues that for the archetypal constant man, a "shipwreck may even prove to be a blessing in disguise" (48). The shipwreck in *Twelfth Night* can be understood as a kind of "blessing" in that it ensures the recognition scene at the end and begins the chain of events leading to the triple marriage. Shakespeare's tempests force characters and audience to begin journeys toward reevaluation and revelation.

To understand how crucial Antonio is to the plot of *Twelfth Night* and to the well-being of Sebastian, we should recall Antipholus of Syracuse's soliloquy comparing himself to a drop of water in a fathomless sea. Consumed by hopelessness, Antipholus offers a powerful metaphor for lost identity. Like Viola, Antipholus has lost himself in

the ocean, at first literally and then figuratively, unable to know which direction to go. He shares Sebastian's overwhelming grief as he struggles to find himself, searching for a twin that represents a part of himself:

> I to the world am like a drop of water
> That in the ocean seeks another drop,
> Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,
> Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself.
> So I, to find a mother, and a brother,
> In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself (1.2.35-40)

Shakespeare offers an image of humanity itself as a vast, unstable ocean that accumulates drops, invoking the popular metaphor of comparing life as a voyage. Antipholus is "confound[ed]" by being a mere drop in a watery abyss because his mission seems so impossible. The drop becomes part of the sea as he falls into it, and the drops are unable to find each other in the endless mass of something that looks identical to it. In his speech, the fluidity of water is more of a burden than a saving grace, as there is nothing indistinguishable in the fathomless sea. Yet, the biblical and classical descriptions of men struggling and searching in the ocean convey this submersion as a necessary rite of passage.

Antipholus's speech explores the grief of losing the self while only presenting the anxiety of the future, rather than the hope of restoration. His perspective obscures what the ocean also promises in biblical and classical representations: renewal and rebirth. The speaker in Waller's "To the King, On his Navy" also envisions humanity as changing into a sea of drops, when "nature's self invade the world again, / And o'er the centre

spread the liquid main" (19-20). This apocalyptic vision conveys the world as inevitably self-destructive, juxtaposed with the image of the English fleet triumphing while the rest of the world drowns. Antipholus's metaphor conveys the fear of the world becoming like a drowned ball, destroying itself as water consumes it; however, Antipholus only sees the ocean's surface, rather than what may lie beneath. Like his father, Antipholus is consumed with hopelessness by viewing the sea as space of the impossible, rather than possibility, and like the Seafarer poet, he wanders aimless without a guiding compass. Sea dogs like Antonio and the Captain, however, are the compass to their directionless twins and encourage them to hope and stay the course, in spite of their young companions' inexperience and anxiety.

CONCLUSION

As prophets and guides, the three older seaman of Shakespeare's shipwreck comedies represent the sea as a space in which hopeful possibility emerges from apocalyptic disaster. Egeon's narrative is bleak, and his situation is dire, but his narrative recalls those of Jonah, the Seafarer poet, and the seafarers in the Psalms, wherein the power of the divine and supernatural emerges from the most dire and hopeless situations once the hapless Egeon experiences an inner change. The Captain and Antonio represent the sea dog as more of a practical and spiritual guide who helps point the way to the twins' lost families and ensures their safe entrance into an unfamiliar kingdom. Sea dogs like Antonio and Egeon may violate laws of the land, but they are important in reminding audiences and other characters of the laws of nature and the cycle of life and death that spurs individuals to action. Their central role, after all, is to lead the play to its

conclusion. Like the sea dog on Lucan's map, these characters do not take up much space on the play's landscape, but they illuminate the mysteries deep within the sea.

CHAPTER III

"I WISH YOU A WAVE O'THE SEA": MERMAIDS AND AQUATIC BODIES IN *THE WINTER'S TALE* AND *PERICLES*

Female bodies, like bodies of water, are subjects of fascination and mystery in Shakespearean drama. One of the most popular mythologies birthed from this fascination is the mermaid, a part-fish, part-human female sea creature. Mermaids (and mermen) have been alleged to inhabit waters from Norway to the tropics, and their mythology dates to antiquity (Carrington 5). The ancient Greek *Nērēíd-* means a sea nymph or mermaid, and as Elizabeth Barber explains, the same word was used for "bride" (17). These "divine nymphs," she observes, "epitomized female fertility" by being "on the verge of producing new life" (17). The mermaid's origins also point to male and female gods who represented healing, fertility, and the renewing of life (Carrington 6). The mermaid's ancestor, the Babylonian fish god Oannes, possessed a fish-like body with human extremities. Being "endowed with reason," Oannes gave humans insight into every art and, ironically, helped humanize them (6). Oannes's female counterpart, the moon goddess Atergatis, is also fish-like in appearance and is often identified with Aphrodite, Carrington notes (8). Pliny offers a scant description of mermaids in his

History of the World; he explains that these *nērēídes* have no "fabulous tale" and states that these creatures resemble women, while their body is "rough and scaled all over" (99).

Conjured by the imaginations of sailors, mermaids are subjects of sexual fascination, in whatever form they appear. The *Polychronicon*, an extensive chronicle of world history and religion written by Ranulf Higden (1280-1364), gives a detailed description of mermaids that emphasizes its Nērēíd-like qualities: "Poetes feyne iij meremaydes (l. sirens) to be in part virgines and in part bryddes" (369). Though mermaids have appeared in many different forms, Higden's description has influenced the mermaid's incarnations in literature. Mermaids are often depicted as young women on the cusp of sexual experience, and the narratives about them emphasize this transition. As both virginal nymph and fertile bride, mermaids represent a paradoxical nexus of female sexuality that places them ambiguously between states. Shakespeare explores mermaid-like representations of female sexuality in his late romances. In these plays, young heroines experience the jarring transition into adulthood while balancing the pursuit of romantic love and the mediation of family conflict.

Both young maidens in *The Winter's Tale* and *Pericles*, Perdita and Marina, share important characteristics with mermaids. First, they are both connected to water, and to nature, more generally. Both women are birthed near or at the sea and cross bodies of water to start their new lives. Compared to water and noted for their fluidity, Perdita and Marina possess the ability to change. This is not unlike the way that heroines in comedy "change" from female to male, disguising themselves to pursue love or escape danger. Perdita changes from shepherdess to "Flora," while Marina changes from sex worker to

healer. Secondly, mermaids are admired for their voice and their dancing. Perdita and Marina sing and dance to commemorate seasonal change, to engage with lovers, and simply because they can. Lastly, and most importantly, both women are in transitory states. Perdita and Marina are in the fearful yet energetic space between adolescence and adulthood, and they also find themselves between the positions of virgin and bride.

Perdita and Marina also have powerful connections to the sea coast, the physical strip that separates the sea from the mainland. The sea coast is an in-between space, where waves crash and then regenerate. As Botticelli's painting of Venus shows, the coast is where the goddess emerges into an adult form. Symbolically, the sea coast is also the physical median between innocence and experience. Both heroines must navigate a world that pressures them to reach sexual maturity for marriage, love, money, or a combination of the three. They mature on land, but their maturation is a wave-like dance. As they grow into adulthood, the mermaid-like women undergo a kind of "sea-change" distinct from the sea dog characters in early shipwreck comedies. The sea-change that Ariel describes—and that which sea dogs experience—is gradual. By contrast, Perdita and Marina experience sea-change that is rapid and sometimes violent.

In *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare gives Perdita mermaid-like qualities by comparing her to water. Florizel describes Perdita's body as "A wave o'the Sea," wishing that she "might ever do / Nothing but [dance]" (4.4.141-42). Perdita is thus a force of nature that moves just as other natural forces do, and yet, paradoxically, operates against the laws of nature by moving only to appeal to Florizel's desire. Florizel's description of her is supernatural, altogether neglecting the powers of "great creating nature" to fulfill his imaginative desires, just as sailors create tales of mermaids. In this instance,

Shakespeare describes waves not as they are but how they are imagined by an onlooker. Shakespeare's waves are described from the point of view of the gazer, whose intention is not to represent a wave scientifically, but to reconstruct it according to the gazer's feelings about the wave, or the person who is being compared to a wave. Florizel describes Perdita as a wave not as it exists in the present, but rather, as he imagines waves to move and dance.

In *Pericles*, the sea-born Marina is also acquainted with waves and pressured to become a never-ending dancer of sorts. Pericles takes her to Tarsus, where she later becomes the target of a murder plot and is then kidnapped by pirates and sold to a brothel. Like Perdita, she endures the separation of her father and death of her mother and is forced to survive in a wild world once she reaches sexual maturity. Mentz describes Marina as the most "sea drenched character in all of Shakespeare's plays . . . Neither sailor nor fish," for she embodies an "ocean-born Loose-ness" reminiscent of a fish freshly caught. (74-5) Like a fish, Marina squirms in alien surroundings, desiring to return to the sea. Marina's maidenhead is her most precious commodity, as it is for Perdita, Hermione, and many other Shakespearean heroines. Marina is constantly faced with danger, and thus it is imperative for her to escape and move constantly. Like other storm-tossed characters, Marina is forced to swim and search—for truth, family, love, and survival.

Perdita and Marina's mermaid-qualities are appropriate given the plays' focus on supernatural transformation. Their mothers, Hermione and Thaisa, rise from death and ensure resolutions in their respective plays. However, the mothers' fall from humanity looms over the fates of their daughters, who are forced to deal with parental loss and

develop without maternal guidance. To understand how Perdita and Marina embody the attributes of mermaids, attention must be paid to the ways that dualism is historically inscribed on the female body, especially the transitional stages before and after a woman's fertile period. Monika Karpinska explains that virginal and pregnant female characters in early modern literature often "embody a greater power than themselves" (427). Mermaids carry similar "powers," especially considering Homer's *theai nyphai* (divine nymphs) and other water nymphs who resemble women on the verge of bearing children. The power that Karpinska speaks of is more broadly represented in the folklore of female supernatural beings. Early modern fairies, for example, held the "dual promise of bliss and terror," as one critic observes (Purkiss 4).

In early modern literature, women's bodies also hold the same "dual promise" of outward beauty and secret horror. This binary is represented by beautiful and monstrous figures in Ovid (Scylla, for example) as well as metamorphosing women like Duessa in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. In the Christian tradition, Eve holds the same promise of birth and destruction; created by God but taking in the apple, she is both a vehicle for God's will and a fallible target of Satan's temptation. Moreover, Eve's decision affects the fates of other women's bodies. Through the Genesis myth, early modern women are implicated in the fall of mankind and must suffer the pain of childbirth, making reproduction both a gift and curse. The births of Marina and Perdita, for example, come at the loss of their birth mothers' bodies—at least temporarily. Similarly, the bodies of mermaids are both generative and destructive. Mermaids have been described as bringing new growth to the communities they visit, yet they have also led sailors to their deaths.

The mermaid's dual powers of death and renewal are related to another mythological figure—the "earth mother." The earth mother has generative abilities but also destructive tendencies: she loves her children but also devours them. (Karpinska 429) This terrifying depiction of female power, Kapinska argues, is revisited in plays like *The Winter's Tale*, where Hermione and Perdita are both in powerful in-between states (pregnancy and maidenhood), where they are in control of their bodies in ways that men cannot engage in, control, or figure out (429). Perdita and Marina have a relationship with nature that portrays them as "earth mothers," which is bestowed to them from their own 'earth' mothers, Hermione and Thaisa. Both young women have a great deal of knowledge about the natural world, and they both have important connections to water, the substance which creates and destroys life.

Shakespeare's mermaids, Perdita and Marina, are powerful representations of the states between virgin and bride, adolescence and adulthood, and human and magical creature. Through their connection to the natural world, their fluidity through various environments, and their ability to restore order, Perdita and Marina inhabit the same mythological space of the mermaid. Yet, they also complicate traditional notions of womanhood and extreme representations of female sexuality in Christian and classical traditions. Perdita and Marina confront masculine energies in the form of patriarchal authority and male sexual desire, both which seek control of their bodies. Male characters often situate Perdita and Marina in rigid categories of female sexuality, even to the extent of describing them as pure forces of energy (waves). However, the young women's mermaid qualities allow them to be more fluid in their sexuality, challenging the binaries of the Madonna and whore, the innocent and experienced, and the virgin and bride. The

connections between the young maids in Shakespearean romance and the mermaids of ancient lore highlight the power of fluid females in early modern narratives but also the prevalence of representing female sexuality in a supernatural form. Mermaids like Perdita and Marina are caught between the limitless sea and the limited land, and they use their healing powers to forge connections between divided worlds.

PERDITA'S WAVE DANCE

The Winter's Tale centers on seasonal change and fertility. The word "fertile" is mentioned both by Leontes, who scorns the liberty of "fertile bosom" (1.2.115) that turns friendship into passion, and Cleomenes, who remarks on the "fertile" Sicilia, with its "sweet" air and "delicate" climate (3.1.2). Leontes's definition of "fertile" is colored by his assumption of Hermione's adultery, whereas Cleomenes uses "fertile" more objectively. "Fertile" is thus presented in two opposing ways: delicate and devious. These two contradictory terms also relate to the two distinct categories of female sexuality within the play. Devious sexuality, or that which acts outside the bounds of marriage and reproduction, is characterized as destructive. Its inverse, procreative sexuality, serves as the play's model for growth and restoration. Even the play's plot, Peterson argues, is shaped by contradictory forces that mirror nature's life cycle: the "destructive action" and the "renewing action" (161, 168). These opposing actions guide the play to its resolution, but they also reiterate Shakespeare's emphasis on the process of seasonal growth. The destructive action (Leontes's false accusation) is self-generated, while the renewing action, Peterson explains, is achieved through the union of Perdita and Florizel. (168) The

couple holds the promise of regeneration, but they must first deal with all of the baggage inherited by their families.

Perdita is mermaid-like because of her connection to nature, her ability to sing and dance, and her restorative function in the play. Though Perdita diverges from mermaids in the sense that she is not part-fish, she has a unique role in mediating worlds ruled by human law and natural law. Perdita tells Polixenes about the powers of "great creating nature" (4.4.88), a force that operates without the influence of kings, or even a Creator God. The play's interest in nature is evident in its pastoral setting, the appearance of the Oracle, Perdita's debate on nature with Polixenes, and the dramatic "miracle" scene (or *deus ex machina*) when Hermione stirs from her statuesque pose. In the play's imaginative world, supernatural power not only coexists with nature but also helps nature reach its true potential. Perdita is most connected to "great creating" nature, and her relationship with nature gives her the power to bridge the diverging worlds.

Perdita is introduced in the play in a most mermaid-like sense: she is seen as an omen of disaster and is delivered to the shore by a mariner. British sailors often told stories of mermaids leading men to their deaths through their beauty. Perdita is delivered to the shores of Bohemia by Antigonus during the play's transition from tragic to comic action. As is customary for sea plays, a tempest approaches and destroys his ship. The storm operates as a literal representation of renewal-through-destruction, and it also marks a break in the plot that ends one phase and begins another. The tempest frames the story of the child's journey as it does in plays like *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*. Before being pursued by a bear, Antigonus cries, "The storm begins; poor wretch, / That for thy mother's fault art thus exposed / To loss and what may follow!" (3.3.48-50).

Perdita's fate is inherited from her mother, having been charged of adultery despite the Oracle's declaration of innocence. Antigonus laments how women's woes pass down to their daughters, leaving them "exposed" to loss and "what may follow," ominously predicting the dangers Perdita will have to confront if she is left to survive on her own. Having been "exposed to loss," it is Perdita's fate to restore.

Perdita's relationship with the sea is not as obvious or as central to her character as Marina's, but her mermaid-like associations with water, nature, and fertility are all interconnected. Perdita brings life to her pastoral community just as water brings fertility to nature. She demonstrates her affinity with nature during the sheepshearing festival, an occasion that celebrates seasonal change in all of its forms: sheep shearing, flowers blooming, and young lovers courting. Florizel tells her: "These your unusual weeks to each part of you / Do give a life: no shepherdess, but Flora / Peering in April's front" (4.4.1-3). Perdita arrives in the play like the fully-formed Venus emerging from the foam. "Peering in April's front," she brings the springtime to the village, both as "Flora" and the festival hostess. Florizel calls the sheep-shearing festival "a meeting of the petty gods, / And [Perdita] the queen on't" (4-5). Shakespeare depicts Perdita as an amalgam of traditional female types: mermaid, goddess (Flora), earth mother, and the "Queen of curds and cream" (4.4.160). These types are all related to nature and bounty, and each signifies a degree of power. When Perdita takes these forms, it is always with caution due to her lowly upbringing.

Perdita is continually between states. She is "Flora" for a festival but continually reminds the audience that she is a shepherdess and certainly not a "Queen." At one point, she compares her performance to "Whitsun pastorals" (4.4.134). Whitsun (Whitsunday)

was an English springtime celebration ("May-game") in which a "king" and "queen" would be crowned ("Whitsunday"). Perdita's understanding of her state belies her noble status, and so there remains a dissonance between her actual and ideal self. Trapped in Bohemia while in love with the heir to Sicilia's throne, Perdita is like a mermaid unsure of which side of the ocean she belongs. In Tina Packer's analysis of the play's female archetypes (mother, witch, and virgin) she explains that the virgin is the only one who can "travel, cross boundaries, cultures, and class systems" (288). Perdita's ability to shift and transform comes from her mermaid status. She never embodies one complete form, which gives her considerable more freedom than the "mother" (Hermione) and the "witch" (Paulina), who also remain distanced from nature.

Perdita brings fertility to the Bohemian pastures like a sea-birthed goddess of bounty. The old shepherd tells Perdita that her "good flock shall prosper" (4.4.70). The "flock" refers to her sheep, but it also alludes to the "flock" of future children. Perdita's role compares to those of Venus, Juno, and Ceres, as the festival's mirth and dancing encourages love, marriage, and consummation. Perdita shares an unlikely similarity with eastern European mythological women, as well. Elizabeth Barber describes the myth of the mermaid-like *rusalki*: young, beautiful women who dwell in the woods and primarily in the river, often "in some deep eddy" (13-14). Barber describes their fertility ritual as such: "At night, under the moon . . . they swing in the branches, call to each other, and lead line dances [*khorovoki*], with singing, games, and other dances [*plyaski*]. Where they have run and romped, there the grass grows thicker and greener, there the grain grows more abundantly" (19). Perdita crosses a similar watery threshold and leads a ritual dance to bring life to the flora of Bohemia. Polixenes' comment that Perdita is "the prettiest

low-born lass that ever / Ran on the green-sord" (4.4.156-7) evokes a similar image of the sea nymphs running and romping to produce new growth.

Like a beautiful mermaid, Perdita is also under constant watch, particularly by men. She has an obligation as Queen of the Festival to be the center of attention, and she is often gazed at not only because of her appearance, but also because of her vitality, energy, and noble appearance. Polixenes comments that "nothing [Perdita] does or seems / But smacks of something greater than herself" (4.4.157-58). Seeing Florizel and Perdita talking, Camillo tells Polixenes that the young wooer "makes her blood look out," and deems Perdita, "The Queen of curds and cream" (4.4.159-60). Few characters are able to describe Perdita in a way that ignores her sexual attractiveness or physical appearance, and yet she carries herself nobly, despite her humble upbringing. Elizabeth Bieman argues that "Although Perdita's behavior is totally chaste, her ardor is never in doubt from the moment she appears as the figure of 'Flora,' a goddess who represents sexuality in most of her Renaissance manifestations" (82). Hovering between honorable and sexually energetic (though not sexually "loose"), Perdita unwittingly becomes a mystery for men to figure out.

The water imagery connected to Perdita has overt sexual connotations and is associated with the transitory state between innocence and experience. Perdita describes watery thresholds as places related to love-making and lying. She calls upon the image of a river bank, which like a seashore separates the land from water. Perdita uses the metaphor while passing out flowers to the festival-goers, discovering that she does not have the flowers to make Florizel a garland. The two engage in flirtatious banter:

PERDITA

O, these [flowers] I lack

To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,

To strew him o'er and o'er.

FLORIZEL

What, like a corpse?

PERDITA

No, like a bank, for love to lie and play on (4.4.127-130)

The bank can be interpreted as a symbol of the threshold of sexual experience. Perdita's description of the bank evokes the image of lovers lingering romantically by the water before taking an inevitable plunge. As Grace Tiffany argues, the sea voyage in both Shakespeare and Greek romances serves to initiate the "marriage quest" but also "signifies the protagonist's openness to risk and availability for erotic transformation" via an "alterior personality" (70). Such instances of this appear in Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe*, Achilles Tatius's *Leucippe and Clitophon*, as well as *The Winter's Tale*. Perdita's new life after crossing the sea to Bohemia focuses on her transition to adulthood and her introduction to romance and sexuality. This scene shows the extent of Perdita's "erotic transformation" as she inhabits the role of Flora. Perdita is especially forward when she says Florizel needs "not to be buried, / But quick, and in mine arms" (4.4.130-32). Perdita quickly recants her bold statement, saying that "sure this robe of mine / Does change my disposition" (134-5). As "Flora," Perdita finds the confidence to tell Florizel her feelings. Despite Perdita's embarrassment, her invitation to strew flowers "o'er and o'er" and lie a bank to "play on" is unsubtle. For Venus, the sea is the womb from which her sexual

power emerges; the classical narrative of emerging from water as a fully sexual being is also a major aspect of Perdita's journey.

Florizel (either jokingly or mistakenly) alludes to the strewing of flowers for the dead, responding, "What, like a corpse?" This line subtly alludes to the fate of the tragic Shakespearean mermaid, Ophelia. Like Ophelia, Perdita is a maid in love who sings and distributes flowers ceremoniously. The image of Ophelia floating on the river, "mermaid-like" in death, is recalled in Florizel's image of a corpse being strewn flowers near the river. But where Florizel evokes tragedy, Perdita arouses romance by describing the bank as a space where lovers may lie and play, creating a more sexually-charged tone.

Perdita is the romantic equivalent of the tragic mermaid: Ophelia. Both mermaids return to nature, but rather than plunging into the water to escape her worldly fate, Perdita uses water (imagery) to heighten the romantic mood. Perdita "lack[s]" flowers for garlands, but the sexual connotation of "lack" is evident within the passage—what she lacks is Florizel. This lack is two-fold; Perdita's feelings for Florizel are forbidden, and their love cannot be consummated without serious consequences. Yet, as Peterson explains, the point of their prenuptials is not to envision a marriage ceremony but simply to "speak with certainty about their feelings" (174). Having sworn their love, they continue to talk in sexual double entendre and move the play toward its romantic objective.

Beautiful, chaste, and unmarried, Perdita represents early modern society's quandary with female sexuality and women's sexual freedom. Her mere existence during a time of seasonal change makes other characters anxious. Perdita cannot be too demure during the pre-nuptial spring awakening (especially as "Flora"), nor can she be sexually

active before marriage. This, however, contrasts with the openness that Perdita conveys concerning her sexual feelings about Florizel. Marjorie Garber argues that Shakespeare's women are "frequently outspoken about their sexual feelings, as well as about the quality of their love," showing themselves to be "wiser and more capable than their lovers and husbands" (127). Perdita expresses her feelings on sexuality quite frankly, but she also imbues her language with the frustration of being one of "Nature's bastards," which she calls carnations and gillyflowers (4.4.83). Perdita is full of the sexual energy to lay with and produce children with Florizel, but with the restrictions of her assumed shepherd lineage, she can only dance alone, like a wave dancing continuously.

Shakespeare looks to the ocean to describe Perdita's energy, both sexual and vital. As Perdita gives out spring flowers to the shepherds and shepherdesses, Florizel lavishes praise on her by describing her as a wave that dances forever with the same rhythm. His wish echoes Camillo's to "only live by gazing" at Perdita (4.4.110-12). However, Florizel does not describe what he wishes to do after witnessing Perdita's beauty, but rather, describes a fantasy that would render her beauty eternal:

> When you do dance, I wish you
> A wave o'the Sea, that you might ever do
> Nothing but that: move still, still so:
> And owne no other Function (4.4.140-3)

Florizel projects an image of Perdita dancing continuously to his desire just as he wishes she could do when speaking and singing. As a wave that dances forever, Perdita is not quite human, not quite a wave. In Florizel's imagination, Perdita could "move still, still so; / And owne no other Function." This is what Simon Palfrey describes as theatre's

"modal realism," which "is always creating worlds that go well beyond the human . . . [giving] to these things (waves) their quiddity" (254). In other words, by imagining Perdita as possessing wave-like qualities, Florizel's description tells us more about the (speculative) essence of a wave than it says anything about Perdita. Palfrey believes that Perdita "doesn't so much own [the wave], as one might a quality, as she becomes it" (254). This latter description, the transformation into a wave, is most striking. Florizel wishes that Perdita could turn into something that possesses qualities that are like hers, but are not entirely hers. By projecting Perdita as a wave with only one function, Florizel makes her something paradoxical—a force that is in control of its own movements while simultaneously being controlled by nature. In Genesis, God controls the waves. In early modern science, the moon and lunar cycles affect the movement of waves. But now Florizel is the gazer. Florizel recognizes Perdita's power over nature, not merely as "Flora" but as Perdita. He describes her as more than the object of sexual fantasy, but as a force that moves water. Perdita is pure energy.

As Florizel's wave metaphor demonstrates, Shakespeare invokes waves to represent not only movement but desire. It is an apt metaphor, as Florizel's libido, like the tides, rises to climax when he sees Perdita dance. Other male characters use watery metaphors to describe Perdita and her role in the springtime ritual of love-making. After the festival dancing, the shepherd tells a disguised Polixenes about Florizel's feelings for Perdita. His observation on their romantic love uses a metaphor ripe for Shakespeare's sonnets:

> He says he loves my daughter:
> I think so too; for never gaz'd the moon

Upon the water as he'll stand and read

As 'twere my daughter's eyes (4.4.171-4).

The shepherd describes Perdita as "water" to Florizel's "moon," the "gaz'd" object of love. The shepherd's image is a compelling one, if also troubling. Perdita, as water, is the reflection of the moon's gazing light, shimmering and glowing in response. Through the moon's penetrating gaze, the two become the same image, reflected back at each other with intensity, just as Florizel's eyes burn passionately into Perdita's deep pools. But in the shepherd's description, Perdita is not the bright object, but rather, a mirror of it. Her light is only activated with Florizel's gaze. This conceit coincides, to some extent, with Florizel's description of Perdita as a wave. If Perdita becomes a wave, controlled by lunar movement, she is also a receptive object of the moon's gaze. Whether wave or water, Perdita's actions are described through Florizel's. In the shepherd's metaphor, Florizel-as-moon lives and exists outside of the earth while being able to influence the earth's movements. Perdita, on the other hand, is fixed to the earth. If Perdita were the mermaid-goddess Atergatis, she would have power over the moon, as well as fertility. However, as a mere mortal and shepherdess, Perdita's power is dependent upon her own fertility.

Autolycus's "true" ballad of a woman turning into a fish after denying a lover's advances continues to pursue the play's thesis that sex is a vital part of the community. Autolycus tells the synopsis to festival goers, describing a transformation that is both Ovidian and mermaid-like. In this case, the female body metamorphoses from human to aquatic, a consequence that can be avoided with active love-making. While mermaids represent the transition from innocence to experience, Autolycus's ballad only presents two options: to be sexually active, or to be a fish:

> Here's another ballad of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was thought she was a woman and was turned into a cold fish for she would not exchange flesh with one that loved her. (4.4.277-83).

The ballad's "moral" warns that if women avoid sex, they will transform into something not human, a creature that craves water, rather than flesh. The implications are obvious but crucial: if women do not assert their sexuality by receiving a lover's advances (which may be forced upon them), the woman loses not only her sexuality, but also her humanness. Autolycus's sea ballad is not the first time in the play where humans are said to take the shape of animals. Florizel tells Perdita, for example, that gods "have taken / the shapes of beasts," citing Jupiter, Neptune, and Apollo's animal forms (4.4.26-7). His ballad expands on the play's Ovidian theme of human metamorphosis while making a statement on women's sexual expectations, which have been been established immediately in the second half of the play. Florizel and Perdita's nuptial ceremony, for instance, is staged shortly after baby Perdita is dropped to shore. The fish-woman's transformation adds to the play's sense of urgency regarding sex; just as the spring lasts only a short time, so also do lovers' impulses and desires.

This fish-woman ballad represents a form of misogyny that the play both criticizes and endorses. That the ballad is told by Autolycus discredits the story's truth and intention. There is little doubt that a song about the dangers of refusing temptation coincides with Autolycus's objectives—to con women out of money and sex. However, the fish-woman ballad is yet another instance in the play where women are described

using water imagery. When women are figured as watery beings or forces, their power is contrasted with male sexual energy. As Tiffany argues, "verbal reiterations of water images" emphasize the "sea voyage and romantic encounter," both of which center on the female protagonists' erotic transformation (70). Tiffany's argument is directed particularly to the androgynous transformations of Viola, Rosalind, Portia, and Imogen (70). However, this is also apparent in *The Winter's Tale*, where water imagery connoting sexual transformation affects all women, including Perdita. But rather than transforming into men, the women in the play transform into sea creatures or beings that represent their role within the romantic encounter. As fish, women unnaturally seek water over flesh; as waves, women move like water; as water itself, they reflect the male gaze. Whether to praise women or to condemn them for not being more sexually promiscuous, the play conveys its wonder and anxiety of the female body through water.

What makes water so desirable a metaphor for men to describe women? The first reason is scientific. The principles of the Galenic humors was still prevalent in Shakespeare's time, and as Gail Kern Paster reiterates, "men as a sex were hotter and drier than women," and of the four humors, phlegmatics most often included women to emphasize their inconstancy (13). Some of Shakespeare's female characters are (often wrongfully) described as slippery. When these women seemingly slip out of men's grasp, they become to their husbands like fish unable to be caught, as well as "slippery" in a devious sense. For example, Leontes asks Camillo rhetorically, "Is my wife slippery?" (1.2.275) The question does not seek an answer as much as it implicates Hermione in adultery. Male characters describe women's slippery movement as motion that makes them sexually attractive (as Florizel's wave speech demonstrates), capricious, and

sexually deviant. Slippery mermaids and sirens can also lure sailors to their deaths, their slipperiness giving them power over men.

As a mermaid figure, Perdita represents the problematic shoreline between virgin and bride, a space of anxiety for men who, like Autolycus, only view female sexuality in a definitive binary. In the ballad, mermaids do not exist; in the play, Shakespeare allows room. Mentz, adapting a quote from Melville, calls Marina a "Loose fish" because of her constant escape from danger and her instinctual attraction to the ocean. Here, Mentz's definition of "loose" is not explicitly related to sex, but implies an inability to be caught. The term can also apply to Perdita. On the one hand, Perdita is "caught" in the throes of love, but on the other, her unwed status gives her much more freedom, especially compared to her mother. Like a loose fish, Perdita is unclassifiable due to her mermaid qualities.

Perdita's fluidity helps illustrate her mermaid status: she is goddess-like but not a goddess, she possesses courtly traits but is not a lady, she has grown out of adolescence but is not quite a woman, she is carried from sea to land by a mariner but is not a fish, and she dances with wave-like movements but is not a wave. Men try to keep women on land, or grounded, through conventional notions of sexual responsibility, and yet, Perdita embraces love and freely explores its possibilities. While none of the play's women, Packer notes, have the "inside track" to change the "mechanisms that make the world work," Perdita presents a way of viewing the world where possibilities occur (288). As a mermaid, Perdita is a figure of imaginative inspiration for the artist, a character that offers a medium for change and rebirth, if only those who have access to the world's mechanisms can open themselves to such power.

Like Botticelli's Venus and the mermaids imagined by sailors, Perdita inspires creation. This goes well beyond the bounds of the play, something that Shakespeare is likely alluding to during Perdita's famous dialogue on nature with Polixenes. Doubtful of her future with Florizel, she laments on the "bastard" nature of flora and fauna without a true or noble stock. But Polixenes assures her of the art in blending the "gentler scion" with the "wildest stock":

PERDITA I have heard it said
There is an art which in their piedness shares
With great creating Nature.
POLIXENES Say there be;
Yet Nature is made better by no mean
But Nature makes that mean; so, over that art
Which you say adds to Nature, is an art
That Nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conscience a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race. This is an art
Which does mend Nature, change it rather, but
The art itself is Nature (4.4.86-97)

Polixenes's point is that nature gives the art that changes it. As a "great creating" force, Nature is both the divine action and the finished product. Perdita agrees with Polixenes, but when he advises to make her own garden "rich in gillyflowers," she hesitates (98). Peterson explains Perdita's uncertainty: "A gardener may nurture nature . . . but maidens'

gardens are subject to higher laws," as the art that changes the nature of flowers only changes the appearance of humans (178). But if we take Polixenes's view, that the "art itself is Nature," it would be possible for Perdita to merge both worlds and procreate with someone of a higher rank. Certainly, this is not Polixenes's point; he would not allow the union to take place. But within Polixenes's argument that Perdita is born the way she is, Shakespeare allows for a discussion of hybridity as a natural occurrence, even if this is not Polixenes's intention.

In the artist's imaginative space, where species of different types can procreate, mermaids are examples of the most extreme, and most fascinating, hybrid creatures of "great creating Nature." In art, they appear on coastlines, inviting viewers to engage with them. Mermaids inspire the artist in ways that carnations inspire the gardener with their piedness. Polixenes's speech about the marriage between "gentler scion" and "wildest stock" suggests that nature's art of piedness creates other crossbred creatures, like mermaids. Just as Botticelli's Venus represents the purest form of love and beauty, mermaids in art and poetry represent the epitome of nature's potential. John William Waterhouse famously painted mermaids, as well as Shakespearean women at their most sea-tossed. In 1852, Waterhouse first portrayed Ophelia, "mermaid-like" while drifting along the sea in death, and in 1875, he portrayed Miranda looking toward the stormy ocean in a prophetic scene. For artists, mermaids present a glimpse into Nature's most transcendent. Florizel imagines Perdita as a force in nature that also changes it; as a wave, she is the natural energy that alters the composition of water. In the Shepherd's speech, Perdita is a pool of water that functions as a reflective mirror, projecting

Florizel's light back towards it. In each of her watery manifestations, Perdita is a symbol of artistic inspiration.

As a watery mirror, Perdita functions exactly how art itself functions. Samuel Johnson famously describes Shakespeare's drama as "the mirrour of life" (14). Johnson's notion of art-as-imitation, M.H. Abrams explains, pleases the audience because they identify themselves within it (Abrams 19, 39). Is this also, perhaps, why Florizel gazes at Perdita, as though he were Narcissus? Their relationship compares with that of artist and viewer; Florizel projects his own interpretation of perfect beauty (dancing waves) onto Perdita's body, thus satisfying his own imaginative desires. According to the Shepherd, Florizel is a moonbeam that projects light towards his own mirror (Perdita). There is much to be extracted from this metaphor, especially if one considers Dr. Johnson's view of Shakespeare's art. It is possible to see this relationship form between lovers—they see themselves within the other, just as they would be able to see their own fortunes or misfortunes when watching a play. This is not necessarily Florizel's perception of his relationship with Perdita, but his artistic imagination cannot help but view Perdita as a work of art.

Nature is also the artful reflection of divine power, as Polixenes explains in his conversation with Perdita. As Queen of the Festival, Perdita already has a role in mediating nature and human, art and artists. Perdita continually projects what others want her to be: a Queen, "Flora," a wave, a mirror pool, and so on. It is only until her true identity is revealed that she can also use her gifts to heal familial bonds, rather than being resigned as a prize for Florizel. As Packer argues, Shakespeare's female characters "ameliorate power structures" by using "time, nature, and art as the means of

redemption" (287). Packer's point speaks to the play's focus on the marriage of art and nature, as well as how art "redeems," or restores. In *The Winter's Tale*, redemption through art occurs when fractured familial relationships are mended when art is realized as the form it is intended to represent. This occurs when Hermione is restored from an artistic statue of a women to a real woman, capable of feeling and desire and the human qualities that Leontes had scorned. She becomes, as Packer says, a "Phoenix," and an artist, rather than the art. (268) Shakespeare's mermaids struggle to break free of being defined as art, and they are only able to accomplish such a task when they use their own arts to heal, rather than to merely entertain or enchant.

MARINA THE MERMAID

Marina is in many ways Shakespeare's quintessential mermaid. Her connection to the ocean is evident by her namesake. Like Venus and the mermaids of ancient legend, Marina is birthed from a foamy, disruptive sea. Crossing many thresholds in her escape from murderers and brothel-owners, Marina confronts a series of dangerous obstacles predicated on male sexual desire, which she transforms into something greater. Marina's plight begins at birth, when the waves were at their worst:

> Ay me, poor maid,
> Born in a tempest when my mother died,
> This world to me is but a ceaseless storm
> Whirring me from my friends. (15.69-72)

Marina's birth story is prophetic and ominous, recalling the shipwreck narratives in *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night*. Marina is a character caught in Fortune's waves;

the only constancy in her life is turbulence. She tells Leonine that when she was born, "Never was waves nor wind more violent" (110). Her description of nature's violence predicts the troubles in her adulthood. Her story produces images of rape, as she is continually snatched ("whirr[ed]") from her loved ones, forced to move constantly. Marina moves like a wave, but unlike Perdita, she moves for survival.

Being born "in a tempest," Marina is inextricably connected to danger, which follows her from the moment she first appears. Marina encounters danger first through the sea storm. As many critics have argued, the sea in Pericles becomes a character in itself, characterized by its violent temperament. Gwilym Jones argues: "just as the characters continue to use the diction of the sea, so they consistently identity with its oragious character and ensure that the waves are never still" (123). Marina's violent relationship with the sea mirrors her human interactions, which often leave her bewildered and desperate to find stability. Pericles leaves Marina in the care of Dionyza and Cleon, who plan to murder Marina because her beauty outshines that of their daughter, Philoten. Pirates kidnap Marina, incidentally saving her from Leonine, the hired murderer. Leonine says, "There's no hope she will return. I'll swear she's dead, / And thrown into the sea." (15.147-8). Returning to sea often seems to be Marina's fate, yet she remains on land. Rather than being "thrown into the sea," or entering the sea after death as her nurse, Lychorida, and Ophelia do, Marina brings the ocean wherever she goes.

Marina shares three central traits of mermaids: a connection to nature (especially water), a transitory state, and the ability to inspire through song and dance. When she escapes the brothel, for example, she is able to sing "like one immortal" and dance

"goddess-like to her admirèd ways" (20.3-4). Like Perdita, Marina also has the power to heal the hearts of men and reunite with her long-lost family. Marina's connection to nature informs her chaotic experiences, and to a degree serves to justify them. She finds beauty and peace on land, contrasting with her experiences with the sea. Yet, Marina is continually drawn to water, and her most important encounters happen near the sea, particularly in a coastal area. Her constant proximity to and familiarity with water makes her a kind of half-fish, half-woman, swimming and searching for her true home. When she is caught in the pirates' net, Marina is thrust into a world that commodifies her and assesses her value based on her appearance and maidenhood.

Though Marina remains virtuous, she hovers between virginity and sexual experience. When she begins to enact goodness in the brothel and then escapes, she hovers between human and goddess. In all of these half-forms, Marina reminds the audience that appearances belie truth, and that inner constancy can come out of a tempestuous life. Like Perdita, Marina is pressured to take on roles she is not ready to perform, and she must engage with the demands of a world that values her for what she can offer sexually. By escaping the brothel and developing her other gifts, Marina resists the expectations of a world that changes women from flesh to currency.

Marina has a profound connection to the natural world, and this connection remains mainly in her psyche, rather than in the material world of the play. Her prophetic statement that the world is "but a ceaseless storm" (15.71) rationalizes events through nature, and it displays her own sense of her movement in the world. Marina portrays herself as a "whirr[ing]" object in the path of a storm, rather than a character in control of her fate. Like Marina, Pericles is helpless against nature's wrath, surviving several storms

that interrupt his journeys. Peterson notes that Pericles's future "depends precariously upon the elemental forces of nature and the benevolence of others" (91). Marina can only rely on the former before finally finding an "honest house" (20.2), as the people she encounters are trying to kill her, sell her, or have sex with her. In Marina's birth story, the storm is both literal and symbolic, and it serves as a reflection and catalyst for life's chaos. Marina perceives the event of her birth as an omen, inferring that the sea storm will follow her the rest of her life. By carrying her birth story, Marina also carries the ocean and all of its associations—the cycle of life and death, the unknown, the divine and prophetic, and the mutable.

Like sea dogs, Marina has a knowledge of maritime language. She calls sailors "canvas-climbers" (15.112) and also seems to possess supernatural insight about the world through her relationship with the sea. It is assumed that Marina's nurse, Lychorida, told her that "the wind was north" and "Never was waves nor wind more violent" during her birth (15.102, 110). Yet, Marina recounts the details of her birth with striking awareness, or as Jones phrases it, a "sense of impossible recollection" (122). Though Marina experiences the force of the violent waves at birth, she presents an intimate portrait of the sea that suggests that she has always been aware of the sea's power. Marina uses her powers of "impossible recollection" not only to receive sympathy from the listener (and audience), but to rationalize her plight.

Marina's description of the sea as an ominous force drives the action in the second half of the play, from Dionyza's murder plot to being kidnapped by pirates. Marina's woes begin with the death of Lychorida. Like Perdita, Marina enters the play with an assortment of flowers to strew ceremoniously:

I will rob Tellus of her weed

To strew thy grave with flow'rs. The yellows, blues,

The purple violets, and marigolds,

Shall as a carpet hang upon thy grave,

While summer-days do last. (15.65-9)

Marina performs the act of scattering flowers on Lychorida's watery grave, recalling Florizel's response, "What, like a corpse?" as he and Perdita discuss the springtime flower ritual. In *Winter's Tale*, distributing flowers is an observance of nature's renewal. The seaside funeral in *Pericles* directly contrasts the pastoral festival, but both occasions signify temporality and the cycle of death and regeneration. Marina spreads the seasonal flora on a corpse while "summer-days do last." This moment comes just before Marina's life changes, as well; as she spreads flowers on her nurse's grave, her caretakers plot to have her killed.

The funeral scene recalls Gertrude's description of Ophelia and her "mermaid-like" clothes. After falling in the "weeping brook" (4.7.147), Ophelia looks like "a creature native and indued / Unto that element" (151-2). Ophelia is perhaps not dying, but rather, returning to the place she belongs; in her study on early modern mermaids, Tara E. Pedersen makes a case that Ophelia, as a mermaid, is where she belongs. (131-6) Such a case can be made for Marina as she recalls the sea that "almost burst the deck" of her birthplace aboard ship (15.107). Like the sea in *Hamlet*, the sea in *Pericles* is a space of inexplicable danger, particularly for young women. The image of Ophelia as a "creature native" to the water coupled with images of Thaisa and Lychorida convey the female body as one inextricably drawn to water. Laertes says with morbid wit, "Too much of

water hast thou, poor Ophelia" (4.7.183), expressing a similar idea in Autolycus's fish ballad: if women do not experience the pleasures of earth, they will permanently remain in the ocean.

The Shakespearean mermaid represents what men fear most—women who yearn for too much water. In *Pericles*, water is a constant presence, tossing characters to and fro to different shores. The sea is a grave for Thaisa and Lychorida (though for Thaisa, temporarily), and the women enter a symbolic space where mortal pleasures disappear and human life deteriorates. Ophelia becomes a "mermaid" for the same reason that the woman turns into a fish in Autolycus's ballad; among other notable reasons, Ophelia returns to the sea because she does not receive her lover's affection. As Marina grieves and spreads flowers for her nurse, she is taken by the idea that she, too, is destined for a life with "too much of water." A similar narrative exists in eastern European folklore, where the mermaid-like *rusalki* are also said to have jumped into the sea when they were human after being thrown over for another woman. Barber gives one such tale from Simbirsk: "a young and beautiful widow named Marina fell desperately in love with the handsome Ivan Kurchavïy, and, on the day of his wedding with another bride, she threw herself into the Volga" (25). It was then that Marina transformed into a *rusalka* and walked the bank at night. (25) The similarities in name, description, and theme show that stories of young women who choose water over men have existed in many regions and time periods. Unlike the distraught *rusalka* in legend, however, Shakespeare's Marina survives her frightening encounters with men without reentering the sea. Though Marina walks the bank of the same sea that birthed her, she stays on land and brings life to it.

Marina's positioning between land and sea places her in a constant transitory state. It is on the coast that she experiences terror, first by Leonine and then by pirates. Her mermaid-like proximity to water also serves as a symbolic representation of sexual awakening. Marina is a virgin, yet she is on the cusp of sexual experience. The seacoast is the most prevalent space for the play's action because it demonstrates the ocean's formidable power when it crashes onto the shore in the form of sea storms and pirates. Both of these moments prepare Marina for a life that seems to punish her for her appearance and allure. In each of Marina's episodes, her virginity is the most vulnerable aspect of her being, and yet it is revealed to be the most constant.

There are multiple ways to interpret Marina's movement within the play. She can first be understood as constant, perhaps even representing constancy itself, while the outside world moves violently, shifting her from place to place. This interpretation corresponds with her notion that the world to her is a constant storm. However, Mentz attributes Marina's survival and continual movement to her characterization as a "Loose-fish," or one "who can only partly be understood and never really caught" (83). Mentz pulls this term from *Moby-Dick*, wherein Melville writes, "A Loose-Fish is fair game for anybody who can soonest catch it" (373). Mentz's description of Marina as a "Loose-Fish" effectively shows how she loses agency and power when turned into a sought-after commodity.

The term "loose," like "slippery," refers pejoratively to sexual behavior. Shakespeare is familiar with this connotation, as Iago calls Cassio a man "loose of soul" to implicate him in adultery (3.3.421). Melville's application of the term is not related to sexual deviance, but he uses the term to represent a passive subject pursued by active

explorers and conquerors: "What was America in 1492 but a Loose-Fish, in which Columbus struck the Spanish standard by way of waifing it for his royal master and mistress?" (375) For Melville, "Loose-Fish" are elusive conquests. Women have long been described in these terms, where men are the conquerors to claim them. Marina experiences this power dynamic when she is caught in the middle of sea trade and commoditized by pirates and brothel owners.

In sea literature, the pursuit of women's maidenhead likens to sailors' attempt to encounter a rare sea creature. Mermaids and maidenheads are valued for their rarity and temporality. As *Pericles* demonstrates, sexuality dictates women's price of exchange. Marina is snatched up and turned into tradeable goods by pirates before Leonine can go through with his orders to kill her. She continually evades death and escapes her traps by fortune, but her virginity becomes more vulnerable—and consequently more valuable—with each of fortune's rotations. Marina's maidenhead, the bawd remarks, is "no cheap thing if men were as they have been" (16.57-8). The bawd's statement is proven in two key instances: the pirate capture and Lysimachus's payment to Marina for her virginity and honesty. While Lysimachus sees Marina as a savior goddess, the pirates see her as a "loose fish." When the rogues first encounter Marina, they do not even describe her in terms that are remotely human:

> PIRATE 1: Hold, villain!
>
> PIRATE 2: A prize! a prize!
>
> PIRATE 3: Half-part, mates, half-part.
>
> Come, let's have her aboard suddenly. (15.142-5)

The second pirate's description of Marina as a "prize" shows explicitly how women are figured in economic exchange, particularly if they are young and beautiful. The third pirate's repeated phrase, "Half-part," likely refers to the splitting of money in halves. However, "half-part" carries other meanings related to marital unions. In *King John*, Shakespeare refers to an unwed man as the "half part of a blessed man," who is "left to be finished" by a woman (2.1.438-9). The pirates in *Pericles*, having been at sea for a length of time, likely see the beautiful mermaid-like Marina as their "half-part." In any case, Marina is turned into both captive and commodity by men who intend to "have her aboard suddenly" like a freshly-caught fish. While it is inferred that they intend to "have" Marina sexually in an act of rape, she is saved from this possible outcome by her virginal appearance. When the pirates tell the Pandar (pimp) and his servants that Marina is a virgin, saying, "we doubt it not," her value goes up considerably (16.40). The pirates care nothing about Marina's moral state, or the spiritual implications of her being "had," but they resist raping her to preserve her valuable maidenhead when they sell her to the brothel owners.

Marina's string of misfortunes causes her not only to lose her innocence but also to desire returning to the sea. Once Marina crosses the threshold into the pirates' ship and becomes a "prize," she wishes for death like Ophelia and longs to go back to her birthplace to join Thaisa and Lychorida. She hopes "that these pirates . . . had but o'erboard thrown me / To seek my mother" (16.62-4). As Marina's childhood ends, she becomes like a mermaid seeking the ocean to end her troubles on land. Marina longs to either swim or drown; with the ability to swim, she could escape, but her longing to be thrown overboard recalls Ophelia's fate before she became truly "mermaid-like." Unlike

Ophelia, Marina must confront a series of tasks that test her constancy during her transition into adulthood. Mentz observes that "Rupture punctuates Marina's life, and at each turn disaster arrives by sea. Her birth comes during a storm; pirates, men of the sea, end her childhood" (76). This idea is voiced by Marina herself, who views the world as a never-ending storm. Marina's pirate-captors threaten her virtue, and her subsequent journey to the brothel house acts as a test of her own inner strength and will. While Marina holds tightly to the past, the events that rupture her life force her to reconfigure her future.

Marina's harrowing experience in the brothel house forces her to engage with clients sexually, but she instead seeks to heal morally corrupted men while preserving her maidenhead. In this space, she finds her voice and uses it to change her path, rather than letting fortune, nature, or human continue to interrupt her life and take away her freedom. In the brothel house, Marina's actions and voice are initially dictated by the Bawd and Pander, who view her only for what she can offer sexually to clients. The Bawd intends to "instruct her what she has to do, that she may not be raw in her entertainment" (15.52-3) and says that "the gods have done their part in you" (67). The audience is made aware that the bawd's observation is ironic, as it inadvertently points to Marina's honorable qualities. The gods have "done their part" by endowing her with constancy, virtue, and rhetorical skill. In an exchange with the Bawd, Marina vows that no matter what torments she endures, including drowning, she will remain chaste:

MARINA

If fires be hot, knives sharp, or waters deep,

Untied I still my virgin knot will keep.

Diana, aid my purpose!

BAWD

What have we to do with Diana? Pray you, will you go with us?

(16.142-5)

Even when her clothes are "untied," Marina keeps her "virgin knot" secure, and her determination to keep her virginity secure is one of the central themes of the second half of the play. Though her experiences may seem disjointed with her father's exploits, the theme of constancy ties both sections together. Marina's constancy is contrasted with the fury of immoral men and women that enter her life. Bieman argues that "Marina, strong, beautiful, strikingly virtuous, is still characterized . . . by her relationships with men" (82). As is common for heroines in Shakespearean comedy, Marina's major scenes involve men— Pericles searches for her, Leonine tries to kill her, Valdez's pirates sell her, Pander employs her, and Lysimachus tries to have sex with her and falls in love with her. However, it is the appearance (or reappearance) of virtuous women in the play that signifies Marina's virtuous state and helps her discover her true potential. Marina's prayer to Diana is an example of this, as it characterizes a resistance to engage with men and an adherence to keep her virtue intact. Women like Bawd attempt to teach Marina how to engage with men only by way of sex, but the spiritual presence of Diana throughout the play keeps Marina from making decisions that compromise her virtue. Marina's birth stories and knowledge of the world are bequeathed to her by Lychorida, whose funeral scene marks her impact and importance. Another influential female

presence surrounding Marina is that of her virtuous mother, Thaisa. Her desire to return to her assumed grave (the sea) shows that Marina is pulled as much by the women, or spiritual presences of them, to make her decisions. Marina's connections to the spirits of her mother, nurse, and patron goddess Diana help Marina confront the pressures to give up her maidenhood.

Marina follows Diana's footsteps by resisting male sexual desire, but the young maid also 'heals' this desire, both to preserve her virginity and also to prevent the proliferation of deviant behavior encouraged by the brothel. Water has thought to have been a healing property, and Marina's role in *Pericles* makes the connections between water and divine restoration more overt. The purifying properties of water trace back to biblical narrative and baptismal ritual. This spiritual rite of passage symbolizes regeneration. Shakespeare alludes to healing waters as 'regenerative' properties throughout his plays, sometimes in a tongue-in-cheek fashion. When Dromio of Syracuse bemoans the wooing of a kitchen wench, his master Antipholus kiddingly tells him, "That's a fault that water will mend," to which Dromio responds, "No, sir, 'tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it" (3.2.106-9). The mending "water," in this instance, alludes simultaneously to baptism and Dromio's semen, conflating the spiritual with sexual pun on the act of regeneration. In the brothel, Marina asserts herself as a healer in the spiritual sense, rather than sexual.

Marina, like spiritual water, heals and restores the men in the brothel by expressing the value of virtue and seeking such virtue within others. For Marina, spreading seed is not act that restores unless it is achieved honorably and is sanctified by heavenly authority. Her experience with Lysimachus in the brothel is the first of several

instances where she uses her healing powers to show men how they might better themselves. She tells Bawd that she wishes to "honourably know him" (19.56-7), with "know" signaling her supposed intention to have sex with him. Yet, this is a ruse, as she reveals to Lysimachus, "My life is yet unspotted; / My chastity unstanèd ev'n in thought" (109-110). Lysimachus is the country's governor and possesses the force to break through Marina's "virginal fencing" (62). However, Marina challenges his power by effectively making a case that worldly authority and honor are not mutually exclusive:

> Let not authority, which teaches you
> To govern others, be the means to make you
> Misgovern much yourself.
> If you were born to honour, show it now; (19.98-101)

Marina argues that in order to exhibit authority, a governor should also exhibit restraint. She demands that he prove himself to her as ruler, rather than allowing him to prove herself as a sex worker. Marina's healing powers come from a boldness of speech that positions herself not as a passive subject, but an active spiritual guide.

REEMERGENCE AND RESTORATION

It is only until Leontes and Pericles see Perdita and Marina as changed women that the plays return to order. The fathers not only recognize their daughters by appearance, but they recognize their daughters' transition to adulthood. As "mermaid" figures, Perdita and Marina allow for a reexamination of men's attitudes towards the female body; their maturation symbolically engenders the restorations of their mothers from ideal representations to their natural forms. No longer are women ghosts or statues,

but flesh and blood. This change is more explicit in *The Winter's Tale* with Hermione's restoration to "warm life" (5.3.35). For Hermione, the initial transformation from human to artful representation allows her only to be viewed in one way. Her statuesque form, though having a "natural posture" (5.3.23), is not natural, for as Polixenes explains, "the art itself is nature" (4.4.97), not vice versa.

Hermione's transformation evokes similarities to Ariel's song in *The Tempest* describing the body of Ferdinand's father undergoing a "sea-change" (1.2.477), his eyes changing to "pearls" (476) and his bones changing to lifeless "coral' (475). As the drowned body changes from warm life to cold death, it becomes something "rich" and "strange" (478). Contrarily, Hermione is already the "perfect woman" (5.1.15), and her transformation into a lifeless statue is a perversity of nature that must be undone. When Hermione is accused of adultery, she says that she possesses "honourable grief," which "burns / Worse than tears drown" (2.1.110-11). She tells her women not to cry, and only to "abound in tears" if she truly deserves her sentence (119). Hermione resists the urge to "drown," a testament to her noble spirit emphasized by her visibly pregnant body. She imagines herself burning with grief, perhaps on a sacrificial pyre, or burning like grass in fields. Hermione's burned body anticipates the flourishing of new growth—both in the form of her child and the discovery of truth; she will rise from the ashes once this truth is revealed.

In *Pericles*, Thaisa's fate of returning to nature is much more literal. Once she is assumed dead, her body is sacrificed to the ocean, experiencing a "sea-change" like that of Ferdinand's father. The sailors aboard Thaisa's vessel are superstitious, and their justification for tossing the coffin overboard is that "the sea works high, the wind is loud,

and will not lie / till the ship be cleared of the dead" (11.48-9). Thaisa's body becomes a material part of the ocean. Both Hermione and Thaisa sacrifice their bodies so that their daughters continue to live and grow. Perdita and Marina emerge from the sea and wash up on unknown shores, bringing with them the images of water and pregnancy that symbolize change, growth, and circular movement and following in the tradition of 'mermaid' figures who emerge from water with life-bringing power: Venus, Atergatis, the *rusalki*, the *nērēídes*, and female water nymphs. Their growth into women recalls the promises of their mothers and demonstrates how female power is configured through pregnancy and the taking in and releasing of water, from consummation to the point at which the amniotic sac ruptures, or when a woman "breaks water."

In both plays, the anxieties of female transformation and the hopes of familial reconciliation converge into their final moments, when fathers and daughters are reunited and mothers are brought to life. Both Leontes and Pericles are pushed to the bounds of their grief, wandering aimless about. Leontes wanders psychically, tormented by having "killed" (5.1.16) his wife. When Leontes first sees daughter, he exclaims, "fair princess—goddess!" (5.1.130) and admits his "folly" (134) that lost his wife and nearly lost the young couple, Perdita and Florizel, standing before him. Paulina awakens Hermoine, and in the process, restores the feeling of youthful romance. However, the scene builds up more dramatically to the recognition between mother and daughter than it does to father and daughter or the reunion of husband and wife. After Hermione is brought to life, Paulina entreats her to acknowledge Perdita, who has not only been found (121), but is now "grown in grace" (4.1.24) and bears her mother's likeness. Hermione's primary concern after being restored is her daughter's well-being, and the only time she speaks is

to know more about Perdita's life, specifically how she emerged and developed into womanhood: "Where has thou been preserved? Where lived? How found / Thy father's court?" (5.3.125-6) Hermione preserves herself not with the promise of reconciliation with Leontes, but the promise of knowing Perdita's good fortune (126-9).

In *Pericles*, the recognition scene between father, daughter, and mother is even more emotionally affecting and emphasizes the power of women in the processes of renewal and self-discovery. After wandering throughout Tyre in a sack-cloth and overgrown beard, Pericles meets Marina without knowing her identity, then weeps when realizing that his wife, Thaisa, "was like this maid" (21.96). Marina tells her life story once again, this time recounting all of the events from her first appearance; with a "great sea of joys rushing upon [him]" (180), Pericles realizes Marina is his daughter. This revelation signals the arrival of celestial music and the appearance of Diana, who then informs Pericles of Thaisa's true fate. As Garber argues, the "greatest discovery here is perhaps the place of the human being—humankind—within the cycle," even as humankind "transcends it" (775). The tearful ending, with Marina telling her mother that her heart "Leaps to be gone into [her] bosom" (22.67), and the invocation and descent of Diana, virgin goddess of fertility, make a case that *Pericles* privileges the virtues of women in humankind's cycle more than any other Shakespearean romance.

Like the *rusalki*, Perdita and Marina ensure that "Where they have run and romped, there the grass grows thicker and greener" (Barber 19). They carry the sea with them on their journey from their turbulent births, and their restorative power is what centers the plays and allows them to reach their foreseeable endings. But as they navigate their environments, experience love, and reconcile desire and duty, both heroines must

confront the realities of being constantly gazed and assessed, or as Marina puts it, "gazed on like a comet" (21.75). Whether in a brothel or springtime festival, Perdita and Marina are viewed as objects of sexual desire before they are regarded as healers, storytellers, or even simply, human beings. As they discover their place within a family unit, they figuratively leave the shoreline separating the waters of their birth and their landed futures. In T.S. Eliot's poem, "Marina," the poet reimagines the journey of life through the narrative of Pericles's search for his daughter:

> What seas what shores what grey rocks and what islands
>
> What water lapping the bow
>
> And scent of pine and the woodthrush singing through the fog
>
> What images return
>
> O my daughter
>
> . . .
>
> What is this face, less clear and clearer
>
> The pulse in the arm, less strong and stronger—
>
> Given or lent? More distant than stars and nearer than the eye. (73)

Without his daughter, he can only search and swim, eternally seeking answers. Nature torments Pericles with the memory of Marina as woodthrushes sing like her and water reflects her image. Craig Raine argues that the poem "charts the shared border between]the old and the new, exploring the shared tissue joining the end of one thing with the beginning of something else" (37). Eliot conveys a paradoxical image of Marina being both more distant than the stars and nearer to the eye, clear and less clear, strong and less strong. This contradictory image not only conveys the helplessness not only of finding a

daughter, but the helplessness that accompanies a daughter's growth into womanhood. In Shakespeare's play, Pericles wants to find his daughter, but he must accept that Marina is also trying to discover herself. Both Marina and Perdita navigate the wild shore between virgin and bride not only to realize their roles within the cycle of fertility, but to discover their virtues and capacities, and most importantly, to find their own voices in nature.

CHAPTER IV

STRANGE FISH: CLASSIFYING CALIBAN

When Trinculo sees Caliban for the first time in *The Tempest*, he cannot fully determine whether Caliban is human or animal, or whether the nebulous shape in front of him even belongs on land:

> What have we here, a man or a fish? Dead or alive?—A fish, he smells like a fish; a very ancient and fish-like smell; a kind of not-of-the-newest poor-john. A strange fish! Were I in England now, as once I was, and had but this fish painted, not a holiday-fool there but would give a piece of silver. There would this monster make a man. Any strange beast there makes a man. (2.2.25-31)

Trinculo attempts to use deductive reasoning, but his first question proves to be the most difficult. In England, Caliban would have been a sideshow performer begging for silver, but on the island, he is part of the environment. As Trinculo inspects Caliban, he becomes increasingly more confused, and as his language describing Caliban oscillates between human and animal: "man," "fish," "poor-john," "strange fish," and "monster." Trinculo's juxtaposing words suggest that Caliban inhabits all possibilities of species. Initially,

Trinculo only gets close enough to Caliban to perceive his outward shape and fishy smell. To recognize Caliban, Trinculo must be able to classify him, but in order to do this, he needs to get closer to his "strange bedfellow" (39).

Trinculo's first encounter with Caliban is, to some degree, a farce on the work of travel writers and natural historians, who began publishing their observations on native communities, plant life, and animal species at the time the play was produced in 1610. Pliny's *History of the World*, translated by Edward Topsell as *Historie of Foure-footed beasts* (1607), and Florio's translation of Montaigne's essay, *Of the Canibales* (1603), offer Shakespeare inspiration for the island setting, its species, and its culture. As Noel Cobb and Ania Loomba argue, Montaigne's essay is especially influential (Cobb 75, Loomba 165). As Cobb reiterates, "It is quite possible that Shakespeare actually lifted much material from it," and his suggestion is confirmed by Loomba, who points to nearly identical passages by Montaigne and Gonzalo. (75) Gonzalo conjures a vision of 'commonwealth' where there is no "riches, poverty, / And use of service," nor "use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil" (2.1.156-9). This is also Montaigne's vision of the New World, a place with "no custom of servitude, no riches or poverty . . . no use of wine or wheat" (162, 153). Loomba argues, "If Gonzalo conjures up Montaigne's view, Caliban personifies the other, more common approach; he is, Prospero alleges, 'a born devil, on whose nature / Nurture can never stick" (4.1.188-9). He is a 'natural' man who simply cannot be civilized or assimilated into culture" (163).

Yet, if Caliban is the "natural" man destined for a life estranged from society and civility, it is unusual that he continues to engage with those who define him and categorize him. By seeking to serve Stephano, Caliban rejects his bondage under

Prospero, thereby committing treachery. Yet, Caliban only reaffirms his subservient role, thus replicating the social hierarchy of civilization. In Dale Peterson and Jane Goodall's *Visions of Caliban: On Chimpanzes and People* (1993), the frontispiece features two juxtaposing images: Charles A Buchel's painting *Caliban* (1904), and Geza Teleki's photograph, *Chimpanzee* (n.d.). This visual metaphor of Caliban and primate helps to represent, as both authors assert, "the master-slave relationship between humans and chimpanzees" (Peterson and Goodall).[1] Caliban has long been associated with slaves, and animal slaves, in particular. Caliban defies Prospero by participating in a farcical version of the master-slave relationship with Stephano, but Caliban can never leave his servant role. It is not that Caliban is not "assimilated"—after all, he speaks his master's language and has been trained to serve others. A postcolonial reading identifies Caliban as an island native oppressed by Prospero, while a posthumanist reading considers Caliban as a possible representation of animal species. Coinciding with both views, it is also likely Shakespeare created Caliban to reaffirm categorical hierarchies which situate the most animalistic beings at the lowest rung.

These hierarchies begin with the Great Chain of Being, derived from Plato and Aristotle.[2] As Page DuBois explains, the lowest animal creatures within the Great Chain, and those furthest from Heaven, are sedentary sea creatures: oysters, clams, and barnacles. (136) Thus, it is with fear that Caliban warns Trinculo and Stephano: "we shall lose our time, / And all be turn'd to barnacles, or to apes / With foreheads villanous low" (4.1.246-8). Prospero has the power to turn humans into animals and "strange stuff" (233), demoting them below their status. Although Caliban's fear of being turned into a barnacle or ape indicates that he is already more human than either of these creatures, he

may also be afraid of returning to one of these forms. There is also a certain irony in Caliban's fear of being "ma[de] into strange stuff," for being a "monster," the sea-changed Caliban is already quite strange.

Whether or not Caliban is forcibly assimilated, it is still worth asking: does Caliban belong at the rung of human slave or domesticated creature-pet? What if Caliban was, in fact, a sea creature that was taught language and magically transformed into a human-like state? In the upside-down world of Prospero's island, such an interpretation may be supported. There is an evident animalism inscribed in Caliban's character, from his daily rituals to the animal names given to him. Caliban has undergone a "sea change" that threatens to make him barnacle-like, sedentary, and more creaturely. Regardless of Caliban's "true" category, Shakespeare describes him explicitly as a sea creature more than any of the play's other characters.

Caliban is fishy in the sense that he is fish-like and fish-smelling but is also a strange and dubious character. The word "fishy" did not (in print, at least) acquire the definitions of "unusual" and "debauch" until the nineteenth-century, according to the Oxford English Dictionary ("fishy").[3] However, the common colloquialism of humans being "as slippery as a fish" was available to Shakespeare. In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes, believing Hermione is guilty of adultery, asks Camillo, "Is my wife slippery?" (1.2.275) Those who are "slippery" are devious and seek freedoms that break social law. Caliban, in spite of his slipperiness, cannot deceive Prospero, nor leave the island. Mentz describes Caliban as "the fish that never gets away," or the physical representation of the exploits caught by fishermen and sea traders. (66) Caliban's attempts to escape, however, put him on the furthest edge of the island, where "crabs grow" (2.2.166) and fish dwell. Caliban is

a rare sea creature in captivity, forced to dwell in an artificial rendering of his native home.

Caliban is amphibious, as he resides so often among fish that he acquires their smell, and so often among the other sea creatures that he knows their habitats and tendencies. When Caliban offers to show Trinculo where crabs grow, do we credit Caliban as a naturalist? When he offers to dig pignuts and instruct Trinculo how to "snare the nimble marmoset" (169), do we call him ingenious? A survivalist? Or is Caliban a creature who has resided among sea animals so long that he has become one of them? I would answer the latter question in the affirmative. But determining exactly what kind of sea creature Caliban identifies with is also challenging. Darwin famously argues in *Origin of Species* (1859) that Natural Selection allows species to continue existing when the conditions of life encourage reproduction (77). Yet, Caliban seems to be the last of whatever 'kind' he is, desperate to "people" the island "with Calibans" (1.2.353). For Caliban, survival is imperative to continue his genealogical line.

Caliban remains a compelling figure because he invites so many interpretations of his "true" category. He does not often let us enter his mind through soliloquy like Shakespeare's more brooding characters, and so it is clearer to know what other characters think of Caliban rather than what Caliban thinks of himself and the world around him. But if the language describing Caliban is messy, does that, by extension, make him messy, as well? By merely existing, he demonstrates the ineffectualness of his masters' language to define himself in the world; neither Trinculo, Stephano, Prospero, nor any other character settles on one clear delineation. Caliban's own wish is to create more of himself by procreating with a woman outside of his undefined racial or species

category. The descriptions of Caliban as part-animal, part-man allude to inbreeding and bestiality, threatening the progress of species, from Prospero's perspective. Caliban's offspring would, in effect, create an additional category. It is the blurring and adding of categories (racial and/or species) that this play finds most disturbing.

If one relies solely on the play's signifiers, Caliban may be categorized as sea creature. I am more confident that Caliban represents amphibian species. He displays the physical, behavioral, and metaphorical features of animals that reside on both land and water, as documented by travel writers, natural historians, and folklorists. This chapter will first examine Caliban's critical history from "monster" to sociopolitical symbol to sea-changed creature. I will focus on three specific types of sea creatures closely related to Caliban**:** toads, tortoises, and crabs. While tortoises and crabs are not classified as "amphibious" by modern science, it is important to consider these creatures as part of an early modern category of animal life that coexists between land and sea. Of these sea creatures, it is most likely that he would have been modelled after the toad. It may also be possible that Caliban is part-toad. Like the poisonous amphibian, Caliban is trapped on the outmost margins of his environment, closely connected to witchcraft, and vengeful by nature. These features, among others, suggest that Shakespeare created Caliban as a representation of sea-change.

MONSTROUS BIRTH

Of the terms Trinculo uses in his first encounter with Caliban, "monster" is easily the most nebulous and dehumanizing. At forty-six times, it is also one of the most prominently-used words in the play. Stephano and Trinculo address Caliban exclusively

as “monster,” and with many different compound forms, including “servant-monster” (3.2.3), “man-monster” (12), and “bully-monster” (5.1.261). Yet, Shakespeare makes Caliban Trinculo’s “strange bedfellow” during the storm. For Shakespeare’s audience, this moment portrays the discomfort of the dominant race and species forming intimate relationships with “monsters.” Caliban, the offspring of a “blue-eyed hag” (1.2.270) is, according to Prospero, “not honour'd with / A human shape” (284-5). Echoing the sentiments in Montaigne’s essay, Caliban conveys European society’s fears of native islanders, as well as the interbreeding of English travelers and indigenous peoples. Stephano, seeing Trinculo and Caliban converged in a shapeless mass, declares, “This is some monster of the isle with four legs” (2.2.65). The comic visual of Trinculo and Caliban transforming into a four-legged animal materializes the play’s anxieties of interbreeding. It is not simply the rape of Miranda that the play finds corrupt, but Caliban’s desire to make more of himself (1.2.421).

The word “monster” has stayed with Caliban, beginning with the play’s earliest critical reception. Dryden refers to Caliban as “the Monster in the *Tempest*,” “a person which was not in Nature,” and even a “Centaur” born from Shakespeare’s imagination (77-8). Yet, Dryden acknowledges that Caliban has been furnished “with a person, a Language, and a character” (77). Dryden defers the question of Shakespeare’s act of creating Caliban to the “Philosophers,” but he is quick to call Caliban “the product of unnatural Lust” (77). For early critics inspired by humanist thought, Caliban represents vice that separates beasts from humans. In distinguishing him from civilization, the Romantics emphasized Caliban’s lack of conscience, reason, and mental faculties, rather than his appearance. Samuel Taylor Coleridge describes Caliban as

> all earth, all condensed and gross in feelings and images; he has the dawnings of understanding without reason or the moral sense, and in him, as in some brute animals, this advance to the intellectual faculties, without the moral sense, is marked by the appearance of vice. For it is in the primacy of the moral being only that man is truly human. (104)

Coleridge's argument is rooted in the idea that "moral being" defines humanity, and thus Caliban, lacking reason or morals, is inherently marked as a "brute animal." Coleridge is careful in defending Shakespeare's artistic license while acknowledging that Caliban defies the bounds of nature, admitting that the playwright may be "gross," but is "always moral and modest" (104).

With the advent of psychoanalysis, twentieth-century critics began to conceive Caliban as a result of his relationship with Prospero, rather than a figure born of vice. Cobb, for example, argues that Caliban is the result of an "entire psychological complex" formed from his upbringing by Sycorax and Prospero (76). Cobb further states that "we come closest to understanding Caliban if we see him in ourselves" (76). Caliban's vices allow the audience to identify with him, rather than giving distance from which to judge. If Caliban is "one of the most touching characters that Shakespeare ever created," as Cobb argues, the audience must instead judge Prospero and Sycorax for their role in raising Caliban and teaching him unnatural desires (76).

In the twentieth-century, scholars made Caliban a sociopolitical symbol, both as "monster" and victim. In the backdrop of World War I, José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900) portrays Caliban as an oppressive symbol of the United States, contrasting with Ariel and Prospero's European quest for truth, virtue, and beauty (Vaughan 249). Rodó carefully

constructs Caliban to represent the negative aspects of humanity: treachery, materialism, and greed (89-123). In the mid twentieth-century, however, Caliban's image shifted as writers identified him not as oppressor, but as a member of the oppressed and enslaved populations under European colonialism. This association seems like an inevitable turning point, and it was not birthed from a literary argument, but rather, a psychological one (Vaughan 261). Octave Mannoni's *La psychologie de la colonization* and its 1956 translation, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization*, reversed Rodó's representations of magician and slave by showing how Caliban symbolizes the American and African slave populations, while Prospero the oppressive European colonizers.

Caribbean writer George Lamming offered what is perhaps the most salient argument on Caliban's historical ancestry. Lamming identifies himself as Caliban, and Caliban as representative of indigenous and black slave populations in the Americas. Lamming's argument inspired a decades-long discourse on Caliban and Prospero as opposing symbols of colonial oppression. Fernández Retamar credits Lamming as being "the first writer in our world to assume our identification with Caliban" (12). Expanding on Lamming's argument, Retamar posits that *mestizos* also identify as Caliban, since "Prospero invaded the islands, killed our ancestors, enslaved Caliban, and taught him his language to make himself understood" (14). There is, as one critic explains, a "universality of the new Caliban metaphor" that invites many discussions of global relationships (Vaughan 261). Miranda's scorn for Caliban's "vile race" (1.2.359) suggests that Caliban may be a native of Algerian ancestry oppressed by colonial rule and given animal names to emphasize his racial baseness.

Language is one of the most crucial components to the Prospero-Caliban relationship, one that has also affected its afterlife. Postcolonial writers regard Prospero's imposition of language on Caliban as a violation. Lamming argues that language becomes Caliban's "prison," and that the process of teaching language is "the first important achievement in the colonising process" (109). He emphasizes the power of language as a means of expressing personal identity, calling it "a necessary avenue toward areas of the self which could not be reached in any other way" (109). Those who have power over language (i.e. colonizers) have power over the concept of the "self" (109).[4] Stephen Greenblatt's study on Caliban and "linguistic colonialism" expands on Lamming's work by positing that once the native is forced to learn a foreign tongue (the colonizers'), there is no hope for recovery. He concludes that "the people of the New World will never speak to us," and are "lost to us forever" (*Learning to Curse* 32). Though Greenblatt's critics argue that he idealizes the salvaging of native culture and portrays natives as virtually resourceless, his interpretation has become one of the most influential.[5] But as Shakespeare studies moves beyond postcolonialism, or even post-postcolonialism, Caliban is increasingly regarded by critics as a figure representing not only alternate races, but alternate species.

Posthumanist scholarship of the last several decades has allowed for a compelling interpretation of characters like Caliban, who defy traditional categories of the "human" by their animalistic behavior and appearance. While an argument on Caliban's racial status remains imperative to the discussion about his character, posthumanist critics suggest that there is another equally compelling argument that characters like Caliban represent alternative species. As Michel Foucault argues in *The Order of Things: An*

Archaeology of the Human Sciences (1966), "As the archaeology of our thought easily shows, man is an invention of recent date. And one perhaps nearing its end" (387). Foucault, Ihab Hassan, Donna Haraway, Cary Wolfe, and many posthumanist critics have considered, developed, and complicated the idea of that "man" is an invention, and an ephemeral one.

A critical trend of Shakespearean animal studies calls for a consideration of Animalia's coexistence with early modern society and culture. In *Man and the Natural World* (1983), Keith Thomas argues that in early modern England, "the official concept of the animal was a negative one, helping to define, by contrast, what was supposedly distinctive and admirable about the human species" (40). Shakespearean characters with animalistic behaviors like Caliban encourage comparisons with their rational, more civilized counterparts. Recent studies by Bruce Boehrer and Laurie Shannon analyze the roots of Shakespeare's animal references while situating them within broader historical and cultural shifts. Boehrer's work is crucial in the discourse of early modern representations of anthropomorphism. He underscores the challenges anthropomorphism presents in an age of "anthropocentrism," or the general belief that humans are inherently superior to nature—and are given the liberty to use plant and animal life to their own purposes.

Caliban is a creature that challenges the notion of human superiority given his monstrous appearance. Caliban is deemed "monster" because, Boehrer argues, he "refuses to conform to kind" (27). Boehrer states that it is problematic to justify Caliban's monstrous figure based on his actions; rather, Caliban is inspired by the major principles of anthropomorphism, which emphasize "humankind's animal nature and unique capacity

of human beings to sink below type" (27). In other words, humans carry the threat of devolving or going against God's intended plan. (Boehrer 28) Boehrer suggests that a moralizing audience will (or should) accept Caliban's humanity and figure his actions within a postlapsarian world.

Boehrer's argument does not clarify the source of Caliban's "degeneracy," whether nature, nurture, or a mixture of both. Boehrer recognizes the tension between anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism within *The Tempest*. However, his attempt to reconcile these two dissimilar perspectives presents even more conflict. Boehrer rejects Caliban as an animal based on his ability to "reason and speak and learn" (30). Caliban, he charges, "obviously resists classification," and yet, Caliban is also "less than perfectly human" (30). Boehrer identifies Caliban's animalism, but that is where his point ends. Beyond the conclusion that Caliban is animalistic, and beyond the idea that his animalism challenges early modern anthropocentrism, there are important characteristics, behaviors, and features of specific animals that Shakespeare gives to his "monster."

Shakespeare's language makes it clear that Caliban does not exist wholly in either the human or animal world, but this should not encourage scholars to view Caliban as simply a shapeless mass. Caliban is described in nebulous, inhuman terms not only because he fails to resemble other human characters but mainly because the play's language is not able to place him anywhere but the most outward margins. Caliban is human, animal, and creature all. Critics who engage in blue cultural studies also identify Caliban as an embodiment of "sea-change," the process that occurs when the ocean transforms human life into something "rich," "strange," and inhuman. I would also agree that Caliban resembles sea creatures more than any other taxonomic category. As

Brayton argues, Caliban "embodies what is alluring and baffling about the play's maritime setting" and yet is a "perpetual stranger" (57-8). In moving beyond the nebulous term, "monster," I seek to examine Caliban's creaturely qualities in more specific terms to identify taxonomically which sea creatures served as useful inspiration for Shakespeare.

I propose that Caliban represents an amalgamation of lower-ranking sea creatures that are defined by amphibiousness, vengefulness, and sinister magic. The cultural narratives of New World animalism and specifically the ways that animals and natives interact are all represented through Caliban's toady and crabby personae. Prospero's power of anthropomorphizing offers the argument that Caliban may be a degenerate human transformed into an animal-like creature for his master's servitude. The play's use of the ambiguous term "monster" for Caliban allows such an explanation. But it is equally possible to read Caliban as a sea creature by birth, one acquiring human abilities through the teachings of Prospero and Miranda. Caliban is a tadpole mothered by a witch and "endowed . . . with words" (359).

TOADY CALIBAN

Shakespeare looks to the amphibious toad as a model for Caliban, particularly the way that Caliban navigates between land and sea but is inevitably trapped. Caliban is also called "poisonous" (1.2.382) and described in terms that are nearly identical to those used for toads, from their vengeful natures to their connections with witchcraft and Satanic ritual. It is necessary to address this argument's first point of contention: How can an Algerian woman give birth to a toad, or toad-like creature? We should first think about

the ancient mythology of sea creatures and reproduction. As Debra Hassig explains, fish as represented in the medieval bestiary "were believed to reproduce in various ways, in some cases, without copulation, and those that wer understood to copulate were never observed to do so in an 'unnatural manner.' In all cases, fish were believed reproduced without semen" (76). The exception of fish in the natural reproductive cycle is only one instance of sea creatures' historical unnaturalness; the sea contains creatures like the whale, who in early bestiaries was also a symbol of the devil (Hassig 76). Sea creatures are historically represented as deviant—biologically and spiritually—and thus when characters like Caliban are compared to sea creatures, it is often on the basis of a similar deviance from the norm.

In *The Tempest*, magic, mythos, and possibility hold precedent over reality. The absent Sycorax represents a bygone use of magic, one that is more earthy and dubious. Furthermore, the question of Sycorax's race can be misleading, for as Leah Marcus explains, "a blue-eyed Algerian Sycorax would have failed to fit our racial stereotypes" (6). Both Marcus suggests that while a reference to race might be implied, Sycorax's ethnicity cannot be clearly defined; although Sycorax was born in Algiers, her parentage is not known. (6-8) This ambiguity, like that of Caliban's species category, encourages readers to think of Sycorax more as a character symbolically representing seventeenth-century lore of black magic, a dangerous magic that gives birth to monsters.

Caliban is amphibious, and his amphibiousness is central to his character and his function as the play's toady scapegoat. He moves between land and water, and navigates the shoreline more than other characters. His tasks of fishing and gathering water allow him to be close to sea creatures. Caliban exists solely on the margins, pushed to the edges

of society by his master, who deems him unworthy of interacting with other humans. As a consequence, Caliban assumes that his plots will be undetected if he plans them on the furthest reaches of the island. Caliban's toady characteristics are part of his personality as much as they are part of his ambiguous species category. Caliban is described as poisonous; he resides between water and land; he is implicated in witchcraft and Satanic ritual; he invokes representations of toads in folklore; he is characterized by treachery; he is "toady" and sycophantic; and he is described as perpetually captive.

There were three texts produced in Shakespeare's time that provided scientific, religious, and cultural knowledge of toads and frogs: Edward Topsell's *History of Serpents* (1608), the Geneva Bible (and the King James Version in 1611), and King James's *Daemonologie* (1597), which is generally believed to have influenced *Macbeth* (1606). Topsell's entry on toads describes two kinds, "the one called *Rubeta palustris*, a Toad of the fens, or of the waters; the other *Rubeta terrestris*, a Toad of the earth" (730). After listing the characteristics of each, Topsell describes the cultural history of toads, noting with special interest how "The Women-witches of ancient time which killed by poysoning, did much use Toads in their con|fections." (730) Toads' poison is a powerful agent for practitioners of magic and medicine. In early modern representations of witchcraft, toads are boiled in pots for potions, and generally included in witches' magical properties. Topsell includes the following excerpt from Pliny's original work in his translation, *The History of Serpents*:

> *Occurrit Matrona potens, quae molle Calenum*
>
> *Porrectura viro, miscet sitiente rubetam.*
>
> (There came a rich Matron, who mixed Calen Wine,

With poyson of Toads to kill her Spouse, O deadly crime.) (730)

Topsell's story demonstrates the cultural narratives of toads as accessories to murders of rich men. Toads carry out their witch-mothers' plans by secreting poison, served in wine. Many similar narratives in Shakespeare's time, as well as the occasion of the Scottish witch trials in the late sixteenth-century, helped perpetuate the myth that toads were an integral part of vengeful plots that relied on the creatures' poison. Topsell also offers his readers a helpful resource for treatment, but the extensive description of toads as part of ancient tales of witchcraft reveals the extent to which toads were generally despised. As Keith Thomas explains, the "witch's familiar" was the most unconventional pet: toads, flies, weasels, and monkeys (40). Of these, toads were designed to provoke horror and disgust (40). Toads and frogs were some of the vilest creatures in English culture, to the extent that the English began calling the French "frog-eaters," shortened to "frogs," to express their disgust at the idea of eating them ("frog"). Frogs and toads simply did not have a place in the English domestic sphere, as pets or cuisine. They represented disease and filth. Even when toads were tamed or did not excrete poison, they were nonetheless regarded as abhorrent creatures and connected to witchcraft.

In *The Tempest*, there is only one explicit reference to toads, wherein Caliban makes a list of witches' creaturely charms. In his speech to Prospero, Caliban conjures the memory of his mother and the life that he would have lived had not Prospero taken control of the island. He curses Prospero and wishes that he would have Sycorax's powers to plague the magician with toads:

This island's mine by Sycorax, my mother

Which thou tak'st from me . . .

Cursed be I that did so! All the charms

Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you,

For I am all the subjects that you have (1.2.332-43)

This speech is one of the play's most powerful, in that it presents the creaturely Caliban as a character capable of feeling and even worthy of sympathy, though much of this sympathy has been attributed to twentieth-century criticism. Caliban invokes his mother's memory by describing the frightening extent of her power, and he declares his right to rule after being forcibly demoted. This is a common theme in Shakespeare's later plays, especially *King Lear*. Caliban shares connections to both the castoff son, Edgar, and the plotting, bastard son, Edmund. Edgar's statement, "Edgar I nothing am," (2.3.21) shares Caliban's feelings of emptiness, having been demoted to nothing; as Edgar is forced to live as "Poor Tom," Caliban is "cursed" to live as a slave. But like Edmund (and Richard III), Caliban seeks vengeance to restore what he believes he is owed. His instinct to seek revenge upon Prospero is also, ironically, an instinct which the play uses to dehumanize Caliban. Caliban's obstructions to the throne are not merely the questions of his legitimacy as ruler, but even more generally, the question of his humanness.

Any monster could make a man, but how could a "monster" ever make a ruler? Unlike his powerful mother, Caliban is not able to conjure toads and bats, thus ensuring Prospero full control. Caliban also calls attention to the different ways Prospero and Sycorax use magic. While Prospero uses spells from his book, Sycorax uses creatures and elements in nature to perform her tasks. This difference also signals the social divide between educated male demonologists and female, lower-class magical practitioners; having a "book" signals a form of magical literacy which a character like Sycorax is

denied access. Caliban is the last of Sycorax's creatures, the last toad, or animal familiar, in her collection of magical properties that will plague Prospero and poison his plans.

Prospero's language continually portrays Caliban as Satanic offspring, as well as a venomous creature. Prospero summons Caliban by saying: "Thou poisonous slave, got by the devil himself / Upon thy wicked dam, come forth!" (1.2.382-3). Shakespeare describes treacherous characters as "toads" in other plays, as well, most notably *Richard III*. Richard, hunchback and treacherous, is the butt of series of remarks personifying him as toady and treacherous. Anne remarks, "Never hung poison on a fouler toad" (1.2.147), Margaret calls Richard "poisonous bunch-backd toad" (1.3.244), and Elizabeth has a variant on Margaret's description, "foul bunch-back'd toad" (4.4.81). Both Richard and Caliban display their evil by their misshapen outward form, and like Richard, Caliban is called "poisonous," alluding to toads subtly. But also like Richard, Caliban is also compared to the "devil," as Prospero deems him Satanic offspring. The characterizations are connected, as Caliban's monstrous birth, vengeful nature, and connection to Satan are related to early modern representations of toads and other poisonous creatures.

Serpents, toads, and frogs were synonymous with Satan in early modern culture, and thus part of many similar narratives about the powers of Hell. The toad's connection to Satan is even more explicit in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, wherein the poet describes him "Squat like a Toad, close at the eare of Eve; / Assaying by his Devilish art to reach / The Organs of her Fancie" (IV.800-3). As Satan transforms into various animals, his most diabolical are the most venomous, and by positioning himself "like a Toad," he prepares to do his worst to poison Eve's imagination. Caliban is regarded as a similar influence on

Miranda, attempting to rape her in hopes of producing offspring and reclaiming Prospero's paradise.

Caliban's connections to Satan and treachery also coincide with the fact that the sea itself is a hell space surrounding the island in *The Tempest*. The concept of the sea as Hell was a common trope for seafarers, and Robert Monro notably uses an adage conveying this idea in his travel journal (1637): "betwixt the devill and the deep sea." (55) Monro's quote speaks volumes on the way that English culture depicts the sea as a hellish space. Shakespeare characterizes the sea as a fierce hell space by staging the opening storm, and the connection between hell and the sea is made more explicit by characters' constant fear of drowning and the language they use to convey going deeper into "Hell." Ariel recounts Ferdinand's cry, "'Hell is empty / And all the devils are here.'" (1.2.215-16). Trinculo, believing that Stephano is drowned, believes the voices around him are those of "devils" (2.2.88). Stephano, seeing Trinculo and Caliban huddled together, exclaims: "This is / a devil, and no monster" (2.2.96). The seafaring courtiers are plagued with thoughts of being victims of swirling devils, as well as the ocean's wrath. The greatest fear is that they will plunge below the earth. The sea itself is a gaping, monstrous mouth leading to Hell, and those who are sea-swallowed are changed into a coral reef, like Ferdinand's father.

If the sea is a hell space that instigates a monstrous "sea-change," it makes sense that Caliban is modelled after one of sea's most vengeful creatures. Prospero famously describes Caliban as:

> A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
>
> Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains,

Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost;

And as with age his body uglier grows,

So his mind cankers. (4.1.188-92)

Prospero insists that all of his "pains" were lost on Caliban, the "born devil," shifting the blame on Caliban's evil from nurture to nature. His insistence on Caliban's natural evil presents problems with Shakespeare's theodicy. After all, if Caliban is a "born devil," why would God allow such a creature to exist? Prospero has the power to transform humans into lesser forms and contain them, but he is not able to raise Caliban, nor keep him from plotting against his master. Caliban is the malefactor in Prospero's utopian kingdom, a serpent in Creation that influences two ignorant humans (Prospero and Trinculo) to violate law and order and thus defy the Creator. Just as Satan's body is able to change to suit his desire, so too does Caliban's "body uglier grows." Like the drowned body of Ferdinand's father, Caliban's body changes more monstrously and unnaturally as time progresses.

To Prospero, Caliban functions as an inept Satan within the garden he has planted, literally and figuratively. Caliban is unable to conceive or appreciate his master's work, his mind "canker[ed]", or infected, with hate. Shakespeare's representation of Caliban as satanic offspring coincides with Caliban's creaturely and subhuman characteristics. Caliban is trapped on the island, and but he represents amphibian possibility, or the sense of being able to traverse multiple environments. Symbolically, Caliban-as-toad emerges from sea to land, Hell to creation, and witch's womb to Edenic island. Caliban's multiple associations with the term "poisonous" (as toad-like, vengeful, plotting, and satanic) also

allows for a much more clearer understanding of the way Shakespeare incorporates biblical allegory within the play's anxieties of the New World.

The representation of frogs as devils or agents of wickedness has a well-known history in biblical narrative. Frogs and toads have long been implicated in the work of Satan and the punishment of humankind. In Exodus 8:1, frogs are part of God's plague, infesting homes and coming into their beds. In Revelation, frogs are one of the Devil's disguises: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." (Rev. 16:13-14). The image of frogs swarming out of the dragon's mouth like "unclean spirits" characterizes them as eternally impure. In early modern culture, toads were also blamed for the ruination of Christianity through the Catholic Church. Within his scientific entry on toads, Topsell refers to the story of the Whore of Babylon and the frogs and locusts she expels to explain the "conjoyned birth of Men and Serpents" in Rome. (728) No matter the practitioner, toads were the common ingredient in the plot against humanity.

Natural histories and travel writing contain descriptions of toads that resemble biblical narratives. Topsell discusses the behavioral characteristics of toads in the Americas while including stories of the amphibians' plague-like residence among the native communities. Toads are so prevalent in the New World that they intervene in women's birthing processes:

> In the *New World* there is a Province called *Dariene,* the air whereof is wonderful unwholesome, because all the Countrey standeth upon rotten marishes. It is there observed . . . that women conceiving with childe, have

> likewise conceived at the same time a Frog, or a Toad, or a Lizard, and therefore *Platearius* saith, that those things which are medicines to provoke the menstruous course of women, do also bring forth the Secondines. (728)

Topsell goes on to discuss women who, in one example "[bring] forth four little living creatures like Frogs" instead of children. (728) If we place *The Tempest* in a historically representative region not unlike Darien, it is possible to imagine a similar scenario; rather than producing a child, Sycorax gives birth to a toad, or a half-human, half-toad. Topsell also explains how the native women abort their amphibious children with herbal medicines (728). In many ways, Caliban is described and treated like these mutant offspring from the New World. We might even think of Caliban as a toad who survived abortive herbal medicine and was never really meant to leave Sycorax's womb. Prospero claims that Caliban was "got by the devil himself / Upon thy wicked dam" (1.2.382-3), proposing that his very existence is a mistake of nature, or an omen signifying the devil's work.

Supernatural narratives about toads pervaded early modern English culture and influenced the associations between toads and witchcraft. King James I and VI played a major role in first major Scottish witch-hunt, an event which James Sharpe explains "resulted in mass trials and numerous executions in 1590-1" (48). These witches were accused of producing storms while the King and Queen were at sea and engaged in satanic rituals. In *Daemonologie,* King James I describes the trial of one Agnis Tompson, who was reported to have hung a black toad "by the heeles, three daies, and collected and gathered the venome as it dropped and fell from it in an Oister shell, and kept the same

venome close couered, vntill she should obtaine any parte or peece of foule linnen cloth" (95). Like the rich matron in Topsell's poem who killed her husband with poisoned Calen wine, Agnis uses toad poison in her ritual but keeps it secured in an oyster shell and "kept the same venome close couered" until securing cloth. Interestingly, Agnis used oyster shells to keep the poison secured. Oysters, abundant on Scottish shores, are also among the sedentary sea creatures that, with toads and urchins, occupy the very lowest rung of the Great Chain (DuBois 136). Those that are furthest from Heaven in the natural hierarchy are most vulnerable to the workings of witches in satanic rituals, as they are perhaps the dullest of creatures and easy prey. Oysters are less common in witch narratives than toads, at least in Shakespeare's time, but they are nonetheless vital to witches' poisonous plots.

Like Agnis Tompson, Shakespeare's witches also use toads prominently in their potions. Caliban's quote lists "toads, beetles, [and] bats" (1.2.342) as vital creatures in Sycorax's collection. Other plays, notably *Macbeth*, demonstrate how toads are important ingredients in witches' brews. In what seems like a reenactment of James I's narrative in *Daemonologie*, the First Witch chants:

> In the poison'd entrails throw.
> Toad, that under cold stone
> Days and nights has thirty-one
> Swelter'd venom sleeping got,
> Boil thou first i' the charmed pot. (4.1.5-9)

It is important that toads are the first ingredient in the pot. In a sense, they act as a catalyst for the brew. In order for toads to be ready for the potion, they have to be "under

cold stone" for a month, allowing its poison to eke out of its body. As Thomas Pennant explains, "superstition gave [the toad] preternatural powers, and made it a principal ingredient in the incantations of nocturnal hags" (15). The witches dance while holding up the toad's "poison'd entrails" in a similar manner that Agnis Tompson holds up the toad "by the heeles" to allow its poison to ooze into the oyster shell. Caliban's description of his mother's creaturely magic corresponds with the foul rituals in *Macbeth* and *Daemonologie*. Sycorax relies on various animals and animal parts to enact her "mischiefs manifold and sorceries terrible" (1.2.265). Caliban mentions the "wicked dew" brushed with "raven's feather" (1.2.323), as well as the "charms" of "toads, beetles, [and] bats" (341-2), which Sycorax uses to deadly effect. Caliban does not have power over these creatures as his mother or Prospero does, but he believes that he is an inheritor of this same kind of magic. While he invokes his mother's memory in his threats to Prospero, he cannot summon her power.

An especially striking description of witches' use of toads comes from Bartholomew's *de proprietatibus rerum*, specifically in Book XVIII when he describes the importance of the toad's "privy bone" in the art of witchcraft. The "privy bone" was believed to be the chief object which makes toads cold blooded, so potent that it may cool boiling water when thrown into a pot (Seager 307). Additionally, boiling a toad's poison was known to create a remedy for various maladies. The following description of toad bodies as witches' tools comes from Herbert West Seager's translation of Bartholomew:

> The Toad loveth stinking places and dirty, and . . . in the right side of such a frog is a privy bone, that cooleth somedeal seething water, if it be thrown therein, —and the vessel may not heat afterward, but if the bone be first

> taken out; and witches use that bone to love and hate. And be that worm never so venomous, yet by burning he loseth the malice of venom, and taketh most virtue of medicine, and ashes thereof help wonderfully to recover flesh and skin that is haply lost, and to make sadness and sinews, and to healing and salvation of wounds, if the ashes be used in due manner. (XVIII.17)

Bartholomew's description demonstrates how early modern natural histories entertain readers with the cultural mythology while incorporating the more pragmatic intention of educating readers on how to heal wounds. Like Pliny and Topsell, Bartholomew balances the two objectives while perpetuating the idea that toads are creatures to be both feared and extracted. Just as "witches use [the Privy] bone to love and hate," so too are toads caught between the curative and supernatural goals of early modern medicine. As Bartholomew's passage reveals, toads were thought to be most useful when they were burning, thus losing their venom and becoming better for use of practical medicine, healing the skin with their ashes.

It is possible to read Caliban as embodying the dual relationship of toads as agents of both pain and healing. As a witch's offspring, Caliban is born into the role of helping his mother pursue "mischiefs manifold." However, if Caliban's venom was removed, by boiling or drowning, his remains (or literal 'ashes') would signify the healing of the island. This grim narrative is familiar to natives of the Americas who were targeted, captured, and exterminated by European colonizers. But more generally, Caliban represents a deviant and ancient form of magic that must be destroyed. He threatens to "blister" Prospero with the southwest winds and call upon toads and other creatures to

light upon him, like a plague (1.2.325-42). The only way that the plague may be stopped is to burn the book, so to speak. Prospero does just that at the very end of the play, renouncing his charms and releasing himself from the island's "spell," which acts as bands on him. But until this moment, he is forced to use the venomous properties and creatures that come with the magical arts.

Even early modern myths without witches describe toads as agents of supernatural power. Thomas Lupton explains one such myth in *A Thousand Notable Things of Sundry Sortes* (1579), informing readers that if they "put a Toad in a new earthen pot, and the same be covered in the ground in the midst of a corn-field, there will be no hurtful tempests or storms there" (54). If toads could be held captive and controlled, they would be able to influence the generation of crops and deter turbulent weather. Toads in folklore assumed many of the same functions as magical properties, but in *The Tempest*, it is Prospero, not the toad, who has total control of the weather. And Prospero does not want to prevent turbulent weather, but to create it, conjuring the titular storm to shipwreck his brother and family on the island. Prospero cannot use his 'toad' Caliban to enact his magical plots like an animal familiar, as he does with Ariel and the other spirits; instead, he makes Caliban complete menial tasks.

As a magician with influence over nature, Prospero's power rivals that of the witches in *Macbeth* and is far more sensational than any narrative from James I's *Daemonologie*. Appealing to James's fondness of witches and magic, Shakespeare may have also modeled Prospero on the male witches of Normandy, who were convicted between 1564 and 1660. These witches, like those in the reports from the Scottish witch trials, used venomous creatures in their spells. These magical practitioners, like the

witches in *Macbeth*, notably used toad venom. William Monter gives a description of the typical male witch in his study on the male witches of Normandy:

> In Normandy, the archetypical witch was not an old woman, but a shepherd who might be either an old man or a teenager; the most feared witches' spells were likely to involve toad venom; and the most powerful witches' magic was per- formed with stolen Eucharists. (563)

Monter gives several examples of male witches caught with poisonous toads and "dangerous looking box[es]" (578). The appearance of toads, powders, and the "devil's mark" would out the witch and in most cases bring a death sentence. Prospero, however, is ruler of the island, and his sole source of magic lies in his book. Caliban does not assist Prospero in his magical purposes as toads assist witches, but perhaps that is why Caliban has an array of menial, non-magical tasks, such as gathering wood. Prospero has no use for Caliban in creating the world he wants to live in. He has given up on the role of nurturer and is fully committed to being a ruler and creator.

Caliban is not only connected to toads by the creatures' deep cultural ties to witchcraft, but also by exhibiting the toad's behavior. He is a stereotypical toad in the sense that he flatters outwardly but holds secret poison, or plots, within. To be "toady" is to be a groveler, a sycophant, and a flatterer. Caliban is all of these things, but his toady behavior is a performance that will, as he hopes, give him a new lease on life. While Caliban seeks a master who will treat him better than Prospero, he believes that serving the drunkard Stephano will bring him "freedom" (2.2.185). The subplot buffoonery with Stephano, Trinculo, and Caliban farcically replicates the ruler-ruled dynamic, with Stephano as king, Trinculo as citizen, and Caliban as slave. Within this comic plot,

Shakespeare presents Caliban as a character willing to engage in any behavior in order to secure his treasonous plans.

In *The Tempest*, the fear of being trapped, drowned, and punished is manifest, as nearly every character is contained in some way. There are layers of irony within Caliban's notion that he will secure "freedom" by changing masters, as he will never escape his social status, nor will he be freed from Prospero's omniscient rule over the island. In spite of this, Caliban drunkenly sings his freedom song:

> No more dams I'll make for fish,
>
> Nor fetch in firing
>
> At requiring,
>
> Nor scrape trenchering, nor wash dish.
>
> 'Ban, 'ban, Cacaliban
>
> Has a new master.—Get a new man! (2.2.179-84)

Caliban gleefully releases himself from the daily chores of building dams for fish, fetching firewood, cleaning plates, washing dishes, unaware that his words and actions are surveyed. Though he refuses the chores Prospero would have him do, Caliban still cannot escape the work of a slave, nor can he escape the term "monster," which his "new man," Stephano, uses to define his new slave. Regardless of getting a "new man," Caliban is still under Prospero's rule, and Prospero maintains an omniscient view of his whereabouts. Regardless of what Caliban believes, nothing has changed, nor will it change as long as Prospero remains in control.

All of the characters in the play are trapped on the island, and while Prospero has more power than any of the other characters, he claims that his magic has shackled him,

rather than given him freedom, as he entreats the audience to "release [him] from [his] bands" (Ep.10). He lashes out against humanity by taking away the freedoms of those who wash ashore, as he does when he threatens Ferdinand:

> I'll manacle thy neck and feet together:
> Sea-water shalt thou drink; thy food shall be
> The fresh-brook muscles, wither'd roots and husks
> Wherein the acorn cradled. (1.2.464-7)

Prospero's punishment would turn Ferdinand into a sea creature: he would only drink salt water and consume the basest plants and sea-life, and his body would be manacled, limiting his mobility. Prospero intends to make Ferdinand his slave, or a new Caliban to replace the one who ran away, and Shakespeare replicates the image of Caliban carrying wood in Act 2, Scene 2 with Ferdinand in Act 3, Scene 1. To put it another way, Prospero is a fisherman, and Ferdinand is the freshly-caught prized fish, a creature to use, display, or exchange.

In Shakespeare's plays and early modern cultural narratives, toads are described as creatures in captivity, and the accusation of being a 'toad' suggested that one was trapped. Caliban is trapped under Prospero's oppressive rule, and he seeks unobtainable freedoms by getting a "new man." Like toads in early modern narrative, Caliban is subject to the whims of witches and magicians, enslaved in filthy conditions, and forced to do his masters' dirty work. Toads are kept in witches' pots, earthen pots beneath the ground, pregnant bellies and bellies of men, and in damp places without fresh air. Toads must be constantly contained, or else they threaten to contaminate, poison, and breed.

Shakespeare invokes the metaphor of being trapped as a toad in several plays, but no more prominently does this metaphor figure than in *Othello*. The sea creature metaphors in *Othello* and *The Tempest* compare humankind to animal in unfavorable ways, emphasizing that to be animalistic or creaturely is to stray from humanity's true path. To be a trapped toad, metaphorically, is to be the most loathed and most imprisoned. After being convinced that Desdemona is unfaithful, Othello views the world as though there is no true path. He is, to quote Monro, "betwixt the devill and the deep sea." The amphibious toad reiterates this trapped existence, as it is unable to live in the sea but is spurned by both human and land animal. *Othello* contains two pointed references to toads as captive creatures that demonstrate this conceit. In both examples, Othello describes himself as a toad while lamenting on Desdemona's alleged adultery:

> I had rather be a toad,
> And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
> Than keep a corner in the thing I love
> For others' uses. (3.3.274-7)

In a jealous rage, Othello wishes that he were a toad imprisoned in a dank dungeon instead of having only "a corner" of Desdemona. Othello's angry metaphor coincides with Leontes's question of Hermione's "slipperiness"; in both cases, allegedly slippery women are contrasted with steadfast or sedentary examples. Othello wishes to be a toad in a foul dungeon than be willing to accept only part of Desdemona for himself. Othello uses toad imagery again when accusing Desdemona of adultery, saying that she should keep the "current" of his love as "a cistern for foul toads / To knot and gender in!" (4.2.63-4) Othello's greatest fear is that the "current" of his lineage will dry up, or

worse—become a breeding ground for toads. Toads represent not only foulness and disease, but a mixed breeding that depraves the metaphorical fountain, which refers to the family line and Desdemona's sexual parts. This fear of poisoning the family line is akin to Prospero's fear of Caliban peopling the isle "with Calibans" (1.2.353). His toady, Calibanesque offspring would overrun the isle, outnumbering the English courtiers and ensuring the longevity of Caliban's (and Sycorax's) family line.

For Shakespeare, Caliban represents nearly every historic and symbolic representation of the toad, being: filthy, repulsive, poisonous, sycophantic, treacherous, trapped, and vulnerable to the whims of witches. Caliban is more "toad" than any other sea creature and reiterates a number of cultural myths on the degeneracy of toady creatures and their susceptibility to Satan. The sea harbors comparisons to Hell in early modern English culture, and these deep cultural ties affect Shakespeare's portrayal of Caliban as an amalgamation of the basest sea creatures, those with appearances and behaviors representing the most degenerative. Yet, Caliban's multifaceted animalism also makes him Shakespeare's most fluid character, one who reveals the expansiveness of human existence by representing the blurry threshold of human and animal.

CRABBY CALIBAN

Shakespeare also emphasizes Caliban's animalism by drawing on imagery of shelled and crustaceous sea creatures. Caliban keeps to the coast like tortoises and crabs, and he frequently has to cover himself under various 'shells' to defend himself from Prospero's punishment and nature's wrath. In early modern culture, shelled sea creatures were also known for their sedentariness, sloth, and hostility. To Prospero, Caliban

represents all of these traits, and he calls Caliban "tortoise" for being slow at bringing wood (1.2.318). Caliban's sea creature monikers emphasize his baseness, but when Prospero calls Caliban "tortoise," known to dwell on islands near the Americas, it offers potential insight into how Shakespeare figures Caliban as less than human. As Ariel's song demonstrates, "sea-change" is a process that occurs when a body succumbing to death loses all mobility, the body reformed figuratively into coral and pearls at the bottom of the ocean. Caliban is somewhere in between human and "sea-changed." Shakespeare portrays Caliban's turtle-like lethargy and crab-like hostility as inherent qualities that separate him from other characters, which allows characters with agency all the more reason to punish, berate, and dehumanize the hapless slave. This section will demonstrate how Caliban takes on (and is described as having) the behaviors and physiognomy of shelled sea creatures.

Topsell describes the sea tortoise, which Pliny calls *Mus Marinus,* or "Mouse of the Sea," as a creature "black in colour" and "stronger in their feet and nails, then are the claws of the Lion" (798). Shakespeare never makes explicit that Caliban is black, but it is clearly established that Miranda resents his "vile race" (1.2.359). Most of the physical details about Caliban come from his own descriptions of himself; for example, he tells Stephano that he can use his "long nails" to dig pignuts, echoing Topsell's entry (2.2.167). When Caliban hides under his gabardine during the second storm, he evokes a shelled sea creature. The gabardine itself is a piece of clothing that indicates baseness and low social standing, as it is the clothing of Jewish society. As characters like Shylock are aware, those who wear gabardines are also called by animal names. Caliban covers himself with the gabardine to hide from Trinculo, who he believes is another of

Prospero's spirits sent to torment him in the guise of other animals. Trinculo encounters Caliban, who "smells like a fish," yet is not a fish, and drunkenly deliberates the species of the covered creature. The image of Caliban in a gabardine 'shell' is played to comic effect by the inclusion of Trinculo under the garb, who both appear to Stephano like a four-footed "monster" (2.2.65). But aside from the comic routine, Caliban's connection to the tortoise is arguably less physiognomic and more symbolic.

Tortoises in folklore and early modern narratives are described as lethargic, confined, and punished by nature. A Roman myth, which Topsell includes in *Serpents*, tells the origin of the shell as the tortoise's punishment for arriving late to Jupiter's banquet or marriage celebration (Topsell 795). The tortoise was sentenced to wear her home on her back,; similarly, while Caliban is berated for his slackness, thus bearing the name "tortoise." Shakespeare portrays Caliban as slow in movement and mind, which early modern culture attributed as inherited from nature, specifically the humors. Tortoises and other shelled creatures are associated with the phlegmatic humor. In her book, *Humoring the Body*, Gail Kern Paster explains that humans and animals are all subject to humoral conditions, and during Shakespeare's time the nature of tortoises was attributed to the proportion of phlegm (135). Paster refers to the woodcuts and accompanying poems of Henry Peacham, who, in his illustration of the phlegmatic man, includes a tortoise (Peacham 129). Prospero claims that nature is more influential than any of his work in raising Caliban; thus, the tortoise serves as an apt representation for Caliban's perceived sloth and phlegmatic nature.

On several occasions, Caliban also exhibits the physical characteristics of tortoises by constantly carrying heavy objects at the direction of higher-ranking

characters. For example, he enters Act 2, Scene 2 carrying a "*burden of wood*," indicating his class as the island's slave but also emulating the punished tortoise forced to carry her home on her back. In Act 4, Stephano and Trinculo find a hoard of garments, and the stage direction indicates that they "*load Caliban with apparel*" (5.253). This again comically portrays Caliban as a tortoise carrying his burden. Between his sluggishness, his captivity, and his constant burden, Caliban perpetuates the physical, behavioral, and symbolic characteristics of the hapless tortoise.

Of tortoises and crabs, Caliban is perhaps least like the latter, but recent scholarly inquiry on the relation between Caliban and crustaceans puts their similarities in sharp relief. While Mentz views Caliban as a caught fish and the epitome of a sea-snatched treasure (66), Brayton takes a much more ecological and material approach in his analysis of Caliban, crabs, and "sea-change." Brayton's chapter in *Shakespeare's Ocean*, "Consider the Crab," identifies Caliban as being like a sea-changed shellfish. Before making his case, Brayton identifies the reclamation of the phrase "sea change" by Sylvia Earle as a change that occurs to the ocean by human involvement, rather than a change to humans by the transformative power of the ocean (as Ariel's song conveys). Brayton argues, however, that Ariel's song "cannot help but evoke historical questions about the European ventures at sea in early modernity," and he thus analyzes the passage to point out the extent to which humans in *The Tempest* gain control or agency over nature, particularly colonizers like Prospero (54). Characters who represent "European ventures" are able to master not only nature, but native species.

Brayton concludes "Consider the Crab" with the question I posit at the beginning of this chapter: "Is [Caliban] a sea creature or a creature of the land? Perhaps, like a crab,

he is something of both." (58) Caliban invites readings of creatures of both land and sea, but as my project shows, Caliban's sea-creaturely forms offer the greatest insights on the sea as a divine and transformative space. Ariel uses the language of "sea-change" to explain how the sea hardens the skin, makes human subhuman, and creates "strange[ness]," (1.2.404), and thus this language is particularly appropriate for a "strange fish" (2.2.27) like Caliban. Caliban has been hardened both by his natural environment and the intrusion of Prospero and other European explorers. He has become, like his father, "crabbed" (3.1.8).

There are two references to crabs in *The Tempest*. The first describes crabs as part of the island ecosystem and Caliban's diet. The second reference to crabs, which closely follows the first, is used in a figure of speech wherein Ferdinand refers to Prospero as "crabbed" compared to "gentle" Miranda (3.1.8). The two references emphasize several important connections between Caliban and crabs; Caliban lives and works near these shelled sea creatures and is familiar with their habitat and behaviors. This fact does not immediately claim Caliban as part-crab; however, considering his "long nails" and "monstrous" form, it makes a case that he shares physiognomic traits with crabs that help him survive similar environments. The second connection, which I will explain in more detail, is that "crabbiness" was part of early modern vernacular indicating a foul mood, similar to the distortion of humors.

Crabs, along with a menagerie of other island fauna, are what Caliban traps for food. He tells Trinculo and Stephano the various ways he catches these animals, as well as his talents for picking various nuts:

I prithee, let me bring thee where crabs grow;

And I with my long nails will dig thee pignuts;

Show thee a jay's nest and instruct thee how

To snare the nimble marmoset; I'll bring thee

To clustering filberts and sometimes I'll get thee

Young seamews from the rock. Wilt thou go with me? (2.2.166-71)

Caliban describes himself as a hunter-gatherer, but there are ambiguities in his description of fruits, nuts and animals. For example, the Folio uses "scamel" instead of "seamew," or seagull, which editors of the Oxford Shakespeare have replaced for what may be a type-setter's error or an entirely different word. Regarding Caliban's "crabs," it is not explicit what kind of crab he is referring to, or whether or not these crabs are animals or fruit. As Brayton notes, "crabs" also refers to "the sour apples that were eaten roasted or boiled," and Shakespeare makes reference to both crustacean and sour fruit in his works (60). Shakespeare's use of the word "grow" rather than "breed" suggests either kind of crab, but Caliban's crabby physical features, coupled with the word "crabbed" less than thirty lines after suggests the crustacean.

What did it mean to be "crabby" in the early modern era? What did being crab-like essentially mean insofar as one's mood? The word is traced to the fourteenth-century middle English word *crabbid,* which the Oxford English Dictionary defines as having a "disagreeably froward or wayward disposition," or being "perverse" ("crabbed").[6] Caliban enters the play in a "crabbed" mood, acting indignant and rebellious at having to serve Prospero. No amount of "nurture," Prospero argues, can cure Caliban's nature. And yet, it is not Caliban who is called "crabbed," but Propsero (3.1.8). When Ferdinand uses

the word "crabbed" to describe Prospero in the beginning of Act Three, he carries logs like Caliban before him and bemoans how the father of his true love is "composed of harshness" (9). One of the play's recurring fascinations is the material composition of its characters: Is Caliban man or fish? Are the animals on the island spirits? Is a four-legged creature really two men? It is interesting, then, that Ferdinand's language refers to "harshness" as a kind of physical matter, like a hard shell.

Both Caliban and Prospero have bones to pick and deep-seated anger harbored by the fact that they were both dethroned from a position that they claim as rightfully theirs. Relegated to positions they feel unfit to serve, Caliban and Prospero quest for freedom, albeit of radically different degrees. The world to them becomes like its own kind of shell; like the fabled tortoise, their home is their island, and they are forced to carry its weight. Prospero is weight down by his exile and estrangement from his brother, even as he possesses limitless power. Caliban is weighed by his familial right to the island and the lineage which is cursed to die with him, rather than flourish on the island. Unable to flee the island, both characters are bound to their shells like sunken sea creatures. As a result of their confinement, they become "crabbed" or "crabby." The word "crabby" (also "crabbye"), derived from "crabbed," is defined as crab-like, or taking on not only the temperament of crabs but also mimicking their gait and physical movement.[5] Like the crab, which traverses the shoreline and the spaces between land and sea, Caliban is a character forced on the literal and symbolic margins. During Shakespeare's time, the crab was also characterized by vengeance. Topsell's translation of Pliny describes "sea-crabs" or *cancer* as creatures who make "earnest" enemies, particularly to serpents. (614) Similarly, Caliban seeks revenge against his master, adopting the crab's prickly nature.

CONCLUSION

Caliban shares the cultural and symbolic characteristics, taxonomic challenges, and mythological (or demonological) narratives associated with amphibious and crustaceous sea creatures in the early modern period. He exists between the civilized world and a world of possibility, just as toads, turtles, and crabs exist between land and sea. Embodying multiple types of creatures, Caliban is an animal amalgam perhaps not unlike the ambiguous monster-men in England Trinculo describes. Caliban is a "strange fish," and he challenges what it means to be "human." He presents the idea that humans may be animal, or animal may become human. He is a subhuman character with considerable ambition, but is also trapped like a toad between the devil and the endless ocean. His very existence undermines Prospero's order of things, as well as the play's sense of taxonomic structure. Caliban represents sea creatures which early modern natural historians and observers view with disgust and contempt, whether because of their appearance, behavior, or their perceived uselessness. Yet, Caliban, like the reviled toad, has a function and a place.

Caliban is a reminder of the discord between objective taxonomy and subjective judgment of species. He is, in a sense, a kind of chimera, a mythical being with the extremities of both land and sea creature. The chimera appears in many works during Shakespeare's time, including Book 16 of Homer's *Iliad*, Book 5 of Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Books 6 (339) and 9 (648) of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In Book 5 of the *Aeneid*, for example, the ship of Gyas is called the Chimaera. Caliban embodies the behaviors, traits, and cultural associations of many different animals, and he is given the names of many

types of creatures: “fish,” “tortoise,” “monster,” and even “whelp” (1.2.284). Rather than reading these terms as merely pejoratives, or part of a sinister language that does not exactly know how to describe or categorize Caliban, it is just as possible to identify him as a chimeric character without bounds of classification. This is not to say that Caliban is chameleon-like; contrarily, he always sticks out in whatever environment he is in. Even while hiding, he comes across as both monstrous and physically ambiguous.

Even Caliban’s language subverts Prospero’s sense of civility and humanness. His first words on stage are curses directed to Prospero, setting the tone for how Caliban uses language to unleash anger, rather than engage in discourse. Just as Ariel’s groans “make wolves howl and penetrate the breasts / Of ever angry bears” (1.2.289-90), Caliban’s cries and curses are also emotionally resonant. Prospero describes Ariel’s cries as having the power to penetrate the hearts of the angriest beasts, but he does not afford Caliban this same sense of sympathy. Caliban tells Prospero, “You taught me language; and my profit on't / Is, I know how to curse” (1.2.365-6). For Caliban, the curse is an act of defiance against Prospero’s forced assimilation, and many critics, notably Greenblatt, have read Caliban’s curse as representing the reaction of natives whose cultures are destroyed by colonial interference (*Learning to Curse* 32).

Caliban’s curses, cries, groans, and other subversive forms of language undermine Prospero’s mission to civilize, or “humanize,” an inhuman land and people. Caliban’s curse calls upon his mother’s power, reminding Prospero of Sycorax’s “mischiefs manifold” too terrible to “enter human hearing” (1.2.265-6). Conversely, Alonso calls the islanders’ language “excellent dumb discourse,” likely because they also “want the use of tongue” (3.3.37-8). Islanders are characterized as lacking, rather than possessing, a

language and a culture of their own. This idea is most prominent in *Troilus and Cressida* when Thersites says, "What think you of this man that takes me for the general? He's grown a very land-fish, languageless, a monster" (3.3.254-6) Those who are described as "fish"-like in Shakespeare's plays are distinguished by lack—they lack a human language and a human form. If the language of Caliban's birthright is inherently inhuman, Caliban curses not only to subvert the language he was taught, but perhaps to return to his former language, the memory of which may not be completely destroyed.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: SHAKESPEARE AND THE (SEA) CREATURELY

The sea dog, mermaid, and amphibian are creatures of lore and oceanic history, and they each illuminate knowledge and ideas known firsthand to seafarers. Drawing from the language and imagery of these creatures, Shakespeare creates characters conveying oceanic mystery, prophecy, metamorphosis, and regeneration. Egeon, the Captain, Antonio, Perdita, Marina, and Caliban have all been born or baptized in the sea, and these characters are representative of an oceanic transformation, or a kind of "sea-change," that is not necessarily a process after death, which Ariel describes, but a process that occurs with long term contact with the ocean. The three categories I have used as models for these characters are hybrid sea creatures which were part of scientific and cultural discourses in early modern England. Whether discussed as biblical, folkloric, or scientific subjects, the sea dog, mermaid, and amphibian embody the ocean as a strange and transformative space. By studying these characters as representations of the sea's power, Shakespeare scholars can also probe questions about character motivations, plot devices, recurring motifs, and oceanic symbols with considerable depth and clarity.

The characterizations I have proposed will help expand Shakespearean "blue cultural studies" and further a more humanities-centered New Thalassology by looking holistically at the ways that knowledge about the ocean impacted Shakespearean drama, and vice versa. By analyzing oceanic folklore, history, and culture in Shakespeare's sea comedies, we can map of the kinds of available texts that comprise a working history of the ocean in the Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. The scientific discourse of sea creatures in the early modern era was formed in part by natural histories from Aristotle, Pliny, Gessner, Lupton, and Topsell, among others; by revealing the behaviors and physiognomy of sea creatures of lore, these histories solved or gave new insight to many of their mysteries. But the early natural histories also depend upon folklore and myth to illuminate truths about the ocean.

In many ways, the imagination was a more powerful tool to explain the ocean rather than the kind of analytical language modern scholars associate with scientific discourse. The travel literature by Hakluyt and Drake clarifies the odd happenings in the ocean and the strange creatures who dwell below its surface, but they also acknowledge the mysteries and power of the ocean in their journals. Early European maps similarly blend the imagination with reason when presenting sea creatures for both pragmatic and artistic purposes. On the one hand, sailors and navigators needed to know the location of whales, but scenes with Jonah and other biblical characters not only forewarned dangers but told stories, as well.[1] Oral stories passed down from ancient bestiaries and seafaring adventures were also part of the complex knowledge of sea creatures during Shakespeare's lifetime.

Egeon, the Captain, and Antonio convey attributes of both aquatic sea dogs and Elizabeth's privateering Sea Dogs: they are creatures of the sea who guide and assist protagonists with their knowledge of sea life and their skills of navigation and foresight. As Mentz argues, "Being in the sea creates submission, loss, and unexpected wisdom" (36). These older seamen are aware of the potential dangers and risks around them, from both nature and humans, which may lead to disaster if one does not take precaution and forethought. Like the seafarers of biblical and classical mythology, Shakespeare's sea dogs also know the devastating nature of the sea and have an intimate understanding of the immediacy of death. Having been "baptized" into maritime life, they have been trialed and tested by the brutal ocean, and they attempt to either rejoin or aid a younger generation of shipwrecked navigators, who find themselves entangled in love affairs and comic misunderstandings. From moments of chaos the sea dogs attempt to restore stability and order, and they invoke the perilous trials of their past through storytelling to anticipate or ensure the wellbeing of young travelers.

Egeon's plight in trying to locate his twin sons after surviving a lifetime of misfortune echoes the bleakness of Jonah's initial spiritual trial, which he overcomes not only by telling the Duke of his misfortunes, but also demonstrating an inner constancy and determined nature despite the unknown dangers as he stands before the Duke as a trespasser. By trusting in forces greater than him, Egeon is set free and restored to his family. The Captain and Antonio are also well acquainted with dangers at sea, and they each guide one half of a set of twins to ensure their reunion. Though his role is contingent on the play's comic plot, Antonio surpasses the limitations of similar minor characters by developing strong feelings for Sebastian, reentering the play to keep watch over his

young companion and defending him when he is faced with danger. Both sea dogs in *Twelfth Night* anticipate the upward rotation of fortune's wheel after the shipwreck, and yet they both perpetuate the constancy required to survive a chaotic life at sea.

Shakespeare's mermaids, Perdita and Marina, are powerful representations of the states between virgin and bride, adolescence and adulthood, and human and magical creature. While they are tasked with roles of goddess and whore, respectably, they break the rigid mold of female sexuality as a binary of innocence and experience by challenging patriarchal authority and male sexual desire. Though the young women are forced to make difficult decisions about their futures, they choose love and freedom without compromising their virtues and consequently discover powers of healing and regeneration to unite with their families. While male characters in *The Winter's Tale* and *Pericles* characterize women as "slippery" fish, beautiful commodities, or reflections of their desire, Perdita and Marina privilege their own sense of self-worth, rather than dutifully conforming to every man's expectation. They must walk a fine line between the plays' stark characterizations of "fertile" women, but by using the power of their voice and virtues, they are able to freely love, reunite with their restored mothers, and convene with other powerful female characters like Paulina and Diana.

Caliban, Shakespeare's most amphibious character, embodies the most reviled sea creatures, the toads and tortoises and crabs who skirt the shore of land and sea, unable to claim one environment as their home. Caliban evokes the characteristics and cultural signs of these three diminutive creatures, which are known, separately or collectively, for being poisonous, treacherous, lethargic, and antagonistic. Caliban, like the toad, is a tool for sinister magic and sorcery, and though he is under the constant rule of Prospero, he

has the power to disrupt order merely by existing. As both amphibian and a chimera with the features of land and sea creature, Caliban suggests the potential of anthropomorphism in a world where transformative power is restricted to all but Prospero. Not quite monster, human, or animal, Caliban exists in part to question a sense of taxonomic order and species boundaries where nature had been allowed to overgrow and thrive without human interference.

Shakespeare's sea creatures question what it means to be human, and in their own unique ways, they blur the categorical divisions of human and magical creature, natural and unnatural, and known and unknown. They represent the changes that occur when humans discover the sea's power. But in other, more practical ways, these characters are also representative of common, but powerful, changes to the human body that have invited speculation for centuries. How do older people become more intuitive about the weather? Is it affected by vocation? What internal bodily forces provoke the transition from adolescence to adulthood, and how is this transition emotionally jarring? How does environment affect changes in perspective and behavior? Does it instigate physical change? These questions appear at the outset of these characters' stories, and Shakespeare leaves them open-ended by the end of the five plays. The connection in all of these questions is change, and as scholars probe these plays for their representations of the creaturely, it is imperative to begin with the question of how change defines human and creature.

NOTES

Introduction

1. All biblical quotations correspond to the Oxford Authorized King James Version, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997).
2. Job 3:8 in the Tanakh reads: יוֹם-אֹרְרֵי יְקֻבֵּהוּ; הָעֲתִידִים, לִוְיָתָן עֹרֵר, translated in the Oxford King James to "Let them curse it that curse the day, who are ready to rouse up leviathan."
3. In *Merry Wives*, Falstaff famously calls Mistress Page "a region in Guiana, all gold and bounty" (1.3.59).
4. Also see Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 2000.
5. The Oxford English Dictionary lists several early modern texts in the etymology of "sea dogs," including a translation of Pliny's *History of the World* (1601) and Samuel Purchas's *Purchas his Pilgrimage* (1613), the latter which describes the sea dog as a type of fish (401). Eighteenth and nineteenth century publications more explicitly designate the sea dog as a variation of a known sea creature. For example, the travel journal of John Bulkeley and John Cummins, *Voyage to the South-Seas, in the Years 1740-1* (1743), refers to a sea dog as a "large Seal" (132).
6. The Oxford English Dictionary traces the etymological origins of "amphibian" in this sense to George Gillespie's *Dispute against Eng.-Popish Ceremonies* (1637), which refers to "A certaine Amphibian brood, sprung out of the stem of Neronian tyranny" (195).

Chapter II

1. A number of European writers published works that contributed to a "providence-questioning climate" in the sixteenth-century, and English writers ardently defended their position on providence using Christian principles. Thomas Cooper's *An Admonition to the People of England* (1589) and Henry Roberts' *A Defiance to Fortune* (1590) attack writers who believe Fortune supersedes divine providence.

Chapter IV

1. The quote appears on the back cover of Peterson and Goodall's *Visions of Caliban* in the reprint from 2000.

2. As Arthur O. Lovejoy points out, the “great chain of being” traces back to Plato. (35) Aristotle’s *History of Animals* contributed to this concept by identifying the major classes of animal life and discussing them systematically.
3. "fishy, adj.". OED Online. December 2016. Oxford University Press. The entry notes the first recorded example regarding those “Of dubious quality, unreliable, questionable, [or] ‘shady’” as appearing in John Pendleton Kennedy’s *Quodlibet* (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1840): “I do not scruple to name the house —that of Jesse Ferret—Jesse being at this time a little amphibious in his politics, or, in Mr. Fog's expressive language, rather fishy.” (75)

4. As Lamming explains, “Prospero has given Caliban Language; and with it an unstated history of consequences, and unknown history of future intentions. This gift of Language meant not English, in particular, but speech and concept as a way, a method, a necessary avenue towards areas of the self which could not be reached in any other way. It is this way, entirely Prospero’s enterprise, which makes Caliban aware of possibilities. Therefore, all of Caliban’s future—for future is the very name for possibilities—must derive from Prospero’s experiment which is also his risk.” (109)
5. See Jonathan Goldberg, *The Generation of Caliban: The 2001 Garnett Sedgewick Memorial Lecture*, (Vancouver: Ronsdale Press, 2002): 10.
6. As the Oxford English Dictionary points out, the word “crabbye” appears in works such as Richard Stanyhurst’s 1582 translation of Virgil’s *Aeneid*, in Book III.57.

Conclusion
1. Van Duzer’s book shows a number of scenes with Jonah in maps depicted by cartographers from medieval to early modern eras, including Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmographia* (1540) and John Speed’s *As it was Possessed Both in Abraham and Israel’s Days* (1595), which portray Jonah in the sea or being cast overboard. (38-9)

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