



The Duchess of Malfi and Other Plays

John Webster

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John Webster's "The Duchess of Malfi" is a macabre and tragic play written between 1612 and 1613. Misuse of power, revenge, deception, cruelty, and corruption are among the many themes that run throughout this work. The work is set in the court of Malfi, in reality Amalfi in Italy, and concerns the story of the titular Duchess who is recently widowed and falls in love with Antonio, a lowly steward. However the Duchess' family, wishing her to not split up her inheritance, forbids the union. Also included in this volume are three other plays by John Webster. "The White Devil" is a revenge tragedy loosely based on the murder of Vittoria Accoramboni in Padua on December 22, 1585. "The Devil's Law Case" is the story of Romelio, a prominent merchant of Naples, and Contarino, a young nobleman indebted to the merchant, who hopes to marry Romelio's sister Jolenta. Lastly in "A Cure for a Cuckold" we have a work co-authored by John Webster and William Rowley. The story takes place at the wedding of Justice Woodroff's daughter Annabel with her suitor Bonvile, whose wedding night is interrupted when Bonvile's friend Lessingham asks Bonvile to second him in a duel. This collection brings together the best works of English Jacobean dramatist and Shakespearean contemporary John Webster.



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