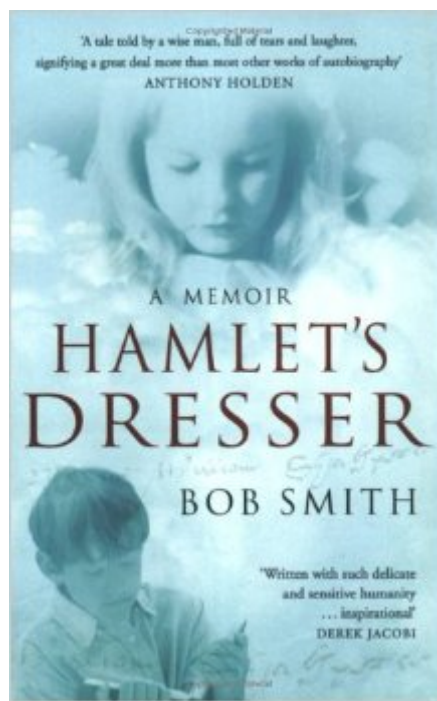


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# Hamlet's Dresser



## Synopsis

A vivid and lyrical memoir of a man damaged in childhood but redeemed by Shakespeare. 'Written with such delicate and sensitive humanity that laughter and tears are constantly interchanging. What a lovely man, with a golden gift for words and a deep understanding of human frailties and fears. The Shakespearean motif is superbly handled, never tricky or clever but true and moving. I found it inspirational; it made me look at those around me more sympathetically - especially the aged. His compassion touched me deeply'. Derek Jacobi Bob Smith was a fragile boy from a difficult household that was presided over by an unstable, depressive mother who depended on him, an unsupportive, unavailable father and a severely disabled, beautiful sister who lived at home, largely cared for by Bob. At the age of ten he stumbled upon a line from THE MERCHANT OF VENICE - 'in sooth I know not why I am so sad' - recognized himself in this poetic, melancholy language, and found a buoy that would keep him afloat for the rest of his tumultuous life. He now knows every single Shakespeare play inside and out and every week Bob teaches the play to over six hundred senior citizens. A sad, funny and inspiring account of how one man's life was saved by Shakespeare, this will be the memoir of the year.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Bob Smith's evocative writing takes me into the heart of his experiences as the actors' dresser. Smith is not shy about letting the reader get close to him, and so the reader is rewarded. An easy and satisfying read.

Smith's life was saved -- and made -- when a librarian gave him a play by Shakespeare when he was a young teenager, struggling with the responsibilities for an over-stressed family. He went on to work on productions, and immerse himself in the plays. I have recently joined a class of adults who have been studying the texts with him for two decades. For me, he has unlocked the meaning of the words and the significance of the metaphors, And with that, he has given me entree to the depth of Shakespeare's understanding of the human struggle. Recently, in class Smith described witnessing the gruesome suicide of a teenage boy. His therapy for dealing with the trauma is to read Romeo and Juliet with us. I feel so lucky to have found him.

I am one of those old people fortunate enough to be in one of Bob Smith's Shakespeare classes. He is a genius with a very wry sense of humor. Shakespeare comes alive in his class along with a wonderful background of English history of the Bards' time. This book gave me an insight into this authors' personality.

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