

For Immediate Release

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The Shakespeare Chronicles: A Novel

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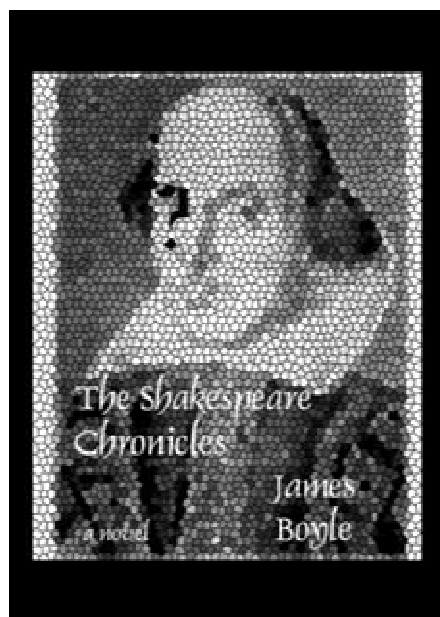
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Literary Mystery Asks “Who Really Wrote Shakespeare’s Works?”

Durham NC: November 6th, 2006: Nineteen years ago, Shakespeare was on trial, on national television and in front of three Supreme Court Justices. Professor James Boyle was the “lawyer” for William Shakespeare of Stratford on Avon in a public mock trial. The claim? That Shakespeare was a fraud. He had not really written the works attributed to him. Boyle, now William Neal Reynolds Professor of Law at Duke, and a columnist for the Financial Times online, found the issue fascinating. “What I found were conspiracies to put *The Da Vinci Code* to shame, claims of plagiarism, of a cover-up, obsessive attempts to prove that the true author was someone other than good old Will. There was murder and espionage, there were secret plots and coded messages in the plays. There were even accusations of royal entanglement, heresy and rebellion.” But just as interesting to Boyle were the contemporary struggles of those who do not believe in Shakespeare and who have devoted their lives to a passionate crusade to prove their case – whether by writing books, decoding the plays or even by attempting to break into Shakespeare’s tomb. “I decided that all this was not just material for a history book. It needed a novel.”



For nearly twenty years Boyle researched and wrote. During that period he published many other things. He wrote a highly regarded book on the information age with Harvard University Press. His newspaper articles were published in the New York Times, Newsweek, The Washington Times, The International Herald-Tribune, The Times Literary Supplement and the Financial Times. His scholarship won him the World Technology Network Award for Law in 2003. He even co-authored a comic book called *Bound By Law* that explains intellectual property law to artists and film-makers. But he always came back to the novel.

The Shakespeare Chronicles tells the story of Professor Stanley Quandary, an English professor who starts to have the most realistic dreams, dreams that seem to expose a glaring literary fraud. Jumping back and forth between Elizabethan England and a contemporary love affair, the book plunges into the conspiracies around the question “who wrote Shakespeare?” At the same time it explores why we care so deeply about the answer.

William Shakespeare from Stratford won in the mock trial. What about in the novel? Naturally enough, Boyle insists we must buy the book to find out