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Document A :

**Victoria Sackville-West, *The Edwardians*, (first published 1930),
London, Virago Press 1983, pp.160-161.**

Margaret went to consult Viola much as she might have gone to consult a witch. Accompanied by her maid, she walked up from Curzon Street to Grosvenor Square.

5 Viola was in. She took Margaret up to her own room, having seen in the first minute that something was wrong. Margaret followed, feeling lumpish beside Viola's sleek grace; raw before Viola's quiet and reserve. How had Viola managed to do so much thinking in her eighteen years? But Viola made her sit down, and asked bluntly what was the matter.

15 Margaret's exposition was pitifully elementary and crude. Like most girls of her generation, she had always stayed in her place, her place being to believe whatever her elders told her. There had never been any freedom of discussion between them, nor had her mother, light-hearted and easy-going as she was, ever displayed the smallest interest in what Margaret thought, but took it for granted that Margaret should trail as a small tug in her wake—compliant, unobtrusive, and acquiescent. Unluckily for herself, Margaret took it for granted too, thinking herself very lucky not to have an irritable mother, as so many girls of her acquaintance had, but a lively, charming mother, who always joked and never scolded, seemed younger than the really young, and created far more

fun out of everyday life than one could possibly have created for oneself. Margaret, up to that moment, had been very well contented. But now she was surprised to see how Viola, after quietly listening, took hold of her poor little story, used it, swelled it, juggled with it, erected it into a symbol, construed it, adopted it; she was dismayed, in fact, to see her difficulty pass into the possession of a strong mind. "For what have our mothers thought of us, all these years?" said Viola; "that we should make a good marriage, so that they might feel they had done their duty by us, and were rid of their responsibility with an added pride. A successful daughter plus an eligible son-in-law. Any other possibility never entered their heads—that we might consult our own tastes, for instance. They run like trains, on rails, and if you were to elope with your painter it would amount to a railway accident in their lives."

"That's why," said Margaret, groping, "one can't."

"On the contrary," said Viola; "no one will be killed, only shaken. Don't you see that their trains are made of cardboard—put together out of every odd-and-end of prejudice and convention, decorated with a few streamers of tinsel, and labelled with pompous names? There's nothing real about them at all."

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Document B

And Furthermore by Judi Dench (St. Martin's Press, 288 pages)
Reviewed by Vinton Rafe McCabe | Released: February 15, 2011 New York
Journal of Books [http// www.nyjournalofbooks.com/review/and furthermore](http://www.nyjournalofbooks.com/review/and-furthermore)

.../ Maggie Smith perhaps aside, no other British actress has so defined her art, whether the medium be the stage, or the movie or television screen, than has Dame Judi Dench.

And now, with a lifetime of anecdotes and memories to share, she fulfills what must be her happiest obligation to the British theater—the theatrical memoir. And in doing so, she masters the medium of the printed page quite nicely, too. The yardstick for this sort of memoir—one in which the reader is given very little actual or personal information and a great deal of information on the backstage antics and the rehearsal agonies of specific well-remembered productions—is, for this reader at least, John Gielgud's *An Actor and His Time*, a gossip fest that at once honored the art of the stage and managed to reveal the clay feet of most of those who trod it. Either that or Diana Rigg's brilliant *No Turns Unstoned: The Worst Ever Theatrical Reviews*, which, while not specifically a memoir (instead it collected, as promised the most hateful and hilarious theatrical reviews ever published) managed the same special blend of honoring the theatrical art while simultaneously giving the reader a peak at the face beneath the makeup.

Dame Dench maintains the tradition very nicely here. Indeed, she credits Gielgud for having been supportive of her in her early days as an actress, to say nothing of working with Rigg in what might have been the definitive version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. And while she manages to name a good many names and tell a good many tales, she also manages upon occasion to speak directly to her reader:

“The thing I try and tell myself on the nights I don't feel like performing anything is that the audience has made the effort of going and getting the tickets, they have finished work, have cleaned up somewhere, have come to the theatre; their gesture is the first, yours must be the second, it is a gift you must return.”

This is as beautiful an explanation of a life in the theater as this reader has come upon. But to this, Dench adds: “Of course it isn't always as easy as that. There was one occasion in *The Comedy of Errors* when I didn't feel like it, so I thought, I know what I'll do, I will just play the whole thing to somebody. I knew nobody there that night, so I saw a lady in a green coat, and I thought, I'm going to do it entirely for her. So I did it absolutely a hundredfold to her, and told everybody that was who I was doing it for, and when I came back after the interval she had left.”

Such is the stuff of *And Furthermore*. And entertaining stuff it is. Does it take a yeoman's knowledge of Shakespeare to fully enjoy this book? No—but it helps, just as it helps that the reader have an active interest in theater.

Dame Dench makes it clear early on that she credits author John Miller with writing her definitive biography in his 1998 book, *Judi Dench with a Crack in Her Voice*, as well as the two subsequent books that they have worked on together. And so she felt, when asked to write her memoir, quite free to simply annotate that which has already been said. Thus the title *And Furthermore*. And thus the loose-limbed nature of the book. It is as if the reader and Dame Judi were sitting and talking over a cup of tea and she good-naturedly agreed to answer all the reader's questions.

So we are treated to many bits and pieces of information:

We learn, for instance, which one of Shakespeare's masterpieces elicits the sentence “I loathe the play.” (*The Merchant of Venice*.) We learn the identity of the British actor who insisted that Dame Judi tap on the water pipe on her dressing room wall should American actor Richard Chamberlain (then at the zenith of his looks and fame while playing TV's Doctor Kildare) come backstage after a performance of *The Promise*, so that he might casually stroll in and meet him. (Ian McKellen.) We learn how a director was able to convince Dame Dench to play as role that required nudity: “This girl used to take air baths, and I had to run across a meadow with absolutely no clothes on.” How did they do it? (“They said to me, ‘It's fine, because you can keep your wig and earrings on.’”)

We learn why Judi Dench spent so many years on stage before ever appearing on camera. (At one early screen test, she was told, “Well Miss Dench, I have to tell you that you have every single thing wrong with your face.” And so she quietly left, thinking, “There is no point going on with this.”) .../



Daniel Gardner (1750?-1805), *The Three Witches from Macbeth* (Elizabeth Lamb, Viscountess Melbourne; Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire; Anne Seymour Damer), 1775
gouache and chalk, 940 mm x 790 mm, National Gallery, London