



Shakespeare Survives the Apocalypse in Hale's *My Name Is Monster* (2019): A Third Millennium Commentary on *The Tempest* (1611)

Shakespeare survit à l'Apocalypse dans *My Name Is Monster* (2019) de Hale : un commentaire du troisième millénaire sur *La Tempête* (1611)

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Abstract: The following scholarly endeavour, while not pertaining to be exhaustive, yet well targeted, in many respects, has sought to delve into the dynamic interplay, to be detected, between Katie Hale's *My Name Is Monster* and William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* with particular focus on the novel's second part. The bard's last play, I suggest, has been revisited, in a quite different spatiotemporal context, through Hale's text, the aspect which has allowed her to recreate, reinvent and comment on, though in a subtle way, the four-centuries-old account in a post-apocalyptic setting. The theoretical background, following this thread, selected to underpin my designs and the analysis that would follow, emanate from Gérard Genette's studies imbedded in textual relationship; from the panoply of concepts, the French theorist has developed and coined, I have appealed to the one he has dubbed 'metatextuality'. I argue, all along this research paper, that *My Name Is Monster* might be read, beyond the surface layer, as a metatext of *The Tempest*. The former, in this way, is examined as a work that has not only commented on but has also criticised the latter recasting it, from a new angle; the Prospero and Caliban opposition with the entire authority, it entailed, balance of power and ability to craft language, to carve a discourse in one's favour,

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have all been shifted, in the course of their, then colonial but now post-apocalyptic, relationship from the invader to the native.

Keywords: *My Name Is Monster*; *The Tempest*; comment on; metatextuality; criticise.

Résumé: L'étude qui suit, sans prétendre être exhaustive mais bien ciblée à bien des égards, a cherché à approfondir l'interaction dynamique, décelable, entre *My Name Is Monster* de Katie Hale et *La Tempête* de William Shakespeare, en mettant l'accent plus particulièrement sur la deuxième partie du roman. La dernière pièce du barde, je suggère, a été revisitée, dans un contexte spatiotemporel tout à fait différent, à travers le texte de Hale, aspect qui lui a permis de recréer, de réinventer et de commenter, bien que de manière subtile, le récit vieux de quatre siècles dans un contexte post-apocalyptique. Le contexte théorique, suivant ce fil conducteur, choisi pour étayer mes conceptions et l'analyse qui suivra, émane des études de Gérard Genette ancrées dans la relation textuelle ; parmi la panoplie de concepts que le théoricien français a développés et inventés, j'ai fait appel à celui qu'il a surnommé « métatextualité ». Tout au long de cet article de recherche, je soutiens que *My Name Is Monster* peut être lu, au-delà de la couche superficielle, comme un métatexte de *La Tempête*. Le premier, de cette manière, est examiné comme une œuvre qui a non seulement commenté mais aussi critiqué le second en le remodelant sous un angle nouveau ; l'opposition entre Prospero et Caliban avec toute l'autorité qu'elle impliquait, l'équilibre des pouvoirs et la capacité à façonner le langage, à façonner un discours en sa faveur, ont tous été déplacés, au cours de leur relation, alors coloniale mais aujourd'hui post-apocalyptique, de l'envahisseur à l'indigène.

Mots clés : *My Name Is Monstre*; *La tempête*; commentaire sur; métatextualité; critiquer;

1. Introduction: “*The Tempest* is [...] a complex document: it is a piece of poetic language, it is a narrative that tells a story even as it conveys a range of meanings and it is also a dramatic script that is realized in performance”¹. Such are Brinda Charry's, brief yet accurate, words pertaining to the multidimensionality of one, among many, of Shakespeare's most iconic works the language of which, plot and theatrical production are unparalleled; these are also the kind of claims she has fostered speaking of the, Stratford-upon-Avon originated,



bard's final expedition at conquering, once more, the Jacobean stage under the eyes of the absolutist King James the first. This masterpiece, though the outcome of its socioeconomic, cultural and political conditions, has not only outlived its dramatist, but has also exceeded the spatiotemporal constraints of its era evolving, thereby, through time, into an ineluctable authoritative text, irrespective of the reader's/viewer's critical stance, that has gone down and been echoed through the annals of time. There is, indeed, a wide range of aspects, at myriad scales, be they connected with formal, stylistic and/or thematic layers, but the thorough enumeration of which in an exhaustive fashion, herein, would be a-next-to-the-impossible undertaking, which position Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1611), to say the least, among the most spellbinding and intellectually absorbing texts with a lasting imprint through history. The fact that this artistic work, or better show of dexterity, and not any other, which might be considered as unique in many respects, has undergone numerous revisions, through ages and across cultures, is not, hence, in any way whatsoever a peculiarity. Accordingly, Prospero, Caliban, Ariel and the others, though once in a while with some compelling variations, have had, enumerable errands into times and places, often with disparate cultural, economic and political specificities, making their appearance, that way, quite incongruous in matrixes which would have been improbable even to Shakespeare himself. The two first decades of the third millennium, though they experienced a near-global inclination towards growing dependence on social media, internet and, all in all, other kinds of technical and technological advances, have neither seen, by and large, a gradual erosion of enthusiasm towards Shakespeare's plays, nor have they shown even the meagre odds of *The Tempest*, in particular, being discarded from being revisited, rewritten and revised. The relevant words, in this regards, of one critic who has asserted that "*The Tempest* is perhaps that one Shakespearean text that 'speaks' best to our own epoch,"² are not devoid of substance nor are they misleading. Katie Hale's *My Name Is Monster* (2019), which is thoroughly addressed in

this article, has been one of the modern day texts, of which there are many, that has grappled with the bard's last play re-evaluating, as such, a wide array of thorny issues contemporary readership might often find appalling.

In the light of what has, so far, been said, there is the necessity, which I deem pressing, before proceeding any further, to elucidate that this effort, with all its implications, is an attempt to delve into the ways and strategies, in action, through which Hale's twenty-first century novel has criticised and commented upon, several aspects, from Shakespeare's seventeenth century source play. *The Tempest*, with its political struggle for Milan's throne, mundane schemes, horrendous plots and unyielding philosophical discord between 'the forces of light' and 'the dark abyss,' is read, likewise, as the 'original' text, which Hale's *My Name Is Monster*, with its post-apocalyptic story, symbolism, themes and characters, has not only passively rewritten but has also actively refurbished. The ground basis, to this end, upon which this paper has been pillared, consists of Gérard Genette's theoretical insights, which he has carved, parsed and construed in his ground breaking study entitled *Palimpsests, Literature in the Second Degree* (1997); for the sake of precision, this article's bearings, therefore, emanate from his vision of the notion, he has pointed at with the term, metatextuality. The French theorist, imbedded in his worldview of textual interplay, has unravelled his perception of the potential nexus binding any ulterior text to an anterior one, and while trying to set the boundaries of this concept, he has maintained that the latter "is the relationship most often labeled "commentary""³. This kind of artistic connexion, in general, which is also quite relevant to literature, in particular, delineates textual correlation between literary works, be it manifest or latent, as one which most often entails a subsequent text, Hale's in this situation, that refers to, rebuts, denounces, revises and comments on a preceding one, Shakespeare's, the foundations of which are being attacked. To borrow his words, the theorist's assertion,

thereby, that it is “the *critical* relationship par excellence”⁴, with the key term “critical,” he has on purpose italicised, is both substantiated and not under, whatever circumstances, fallacious. There is the academic requisite condition, at the current point of progression, to affirm that, insofar as my knowledge extends, there are no prior scholarly efforts, under whatever academic shape, which have sought to probe into the inquiries this research paper explores. One of my primary contentions, I put forwards, which underpins this endeavour, is that Hale’s *My Name Is Monster* has critically re-evaluated, its alleged source, *The Tempest*, by challenging its authority, and commenting on its version of the story, and denouncing, in a nutshell, the power-based discourse it has conveyed; I embark, thus, on an investigation in which unless Hale’s novel is handled as a metatext, the way it has responded to and engaged with Shakespeare’s last play would remain beyond the reader’s capacity to fathom.

2. Caliban and Prospero Today: A Duality Revisited:

You taught me language, and my profit on’t
Is, I know how to curse.⁵

These words fraught with defiance, quoted in the above epigraph, which are Caliban’s, have been uttered in act one, scene two, right from the play’s onset, showing the native in not only the apogee of his insurrection, but also the zenith of his wrath against the coloniser, Prospero, whose language, the instrument of his power, is belittled and debunked. These exact words, from Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, are, in fact, the same ones Katie Hale has deployed, without any alteration, to inaugurate the second part of *My Name Is Monster*. This appeal to the bard’s text, with its massive purport and connotation, is not, by any means, the fruit of hazard nor is it coincidental since it unleashes in the reader’s mind a series of textual and cultural references which engage the latter in a metatextual interplay with the former through Caliban’s threatening, and to put it pointedly, aggressive statements which vehicle his utter rejection of his ‘self-proclaimed’ master’s language. The metatextual process, which could be at whatever layer, begins, on the

spot, and the contemporary novelist's intentions to comment on and criticise the source text are, thenceforth, established. After this opening reference, though the only one, the two texts, Hale's and Shakespeare's, are sealed in an intricate, but dynamic, fusion rendering the twenty-first century novel's path, almost in a fated way, the possible analysis it might evoke, and the entire meaning to be generated from it, quite intertwined with the seventeenth century play. Hale's two protagonists, Mother and Monster, might be associated following this thread of argument with Shakespeare's key figures, Prospero and Caliban, with the tendency reversed, in a metatextual fashion, in the third millennium towards the Caliban-like Monster.

Now, the kernel of the account, Hale has told, is connected with the survival of the two female heroines, above mentioned, in a post-apocalyptic world with humanity already extinct; it depicts the kinds of ongoing battles they have been compelled to wage, on a regular basis, in order to stay alive amidst widespread destruction, disease, hunger, thirst, and, to cut it short, dystopia and despair. As this backbone of Hale's story might suggest, there is, at least, on the surface layer, no discernible tie, of any kind, to be drawn, between *My Name Is Monster* and *The Tempest*; a meticulous and well targeted reading of both works, however, might disentangle the strata at the level of which they converge and diverge. The most significant metatextual subversion, Hale has enacted in *My Name Is Monster*, which is even vital to the native figure, might be located at the level of narrative point of view. The title of each work, which might be seen as the threshold for each author's realm, is crucial since it comprises a vision, either the novelist's or the playwright's, of the narrative perspective through which the plot unveils to the readers. Shakespeare's Jacobean last play, entitled *The Tempest*, is a reference to Prospero's authority as he has been endowed with the extraordinary power to be omniscient and omnipresent, to orchestrate not only the storm but also the quasi-totality of the tale's events. The rightful duke of Milan, in this way, from whose first person point of view perspective the story is imparted, though there are a few scenes beyond his reach, has been the 'master' who "engineer[ed] all events, [and] the play is essentially his [Prospero's]

plot, with Caliban reduced to the status of subplot”⁶. The native is, consequently, silenced with the only role of the antagonist, wicked or evil creature, in store, to be attributed to him, almost at whim. Hale’s novel, the title of which is *My Name Is Monster*, on the other hand, is taken from the first sentence the narrator-young-girl, Monster, has articulated, while introducing herself to the reader, at the beginning of the story’s second part. One must not lose sight, at this point, of the latter’s opening epigraph, quoted from the bard’s last play, the novelist has used, which in itself marks a shift in narrative point of view from the coloniser-Prospero-Mother to the native-Caliban-the young girl. It is, likewise, Caliban’s-Monster’s first person point of view which has prevailed reconfiguring the dynamics of gaze which have been toppled from the coloniser to the colonised; Hale’s account is, therefore, recounted from the eyes of the Caliban-like Monster whose perspective, gaze, mindset and worldview dominated the second part.

If Caliban who is silenced, in Shakespeare’s ‘original,’ is the ilk of flat characters that stand as an archetype of the native who is ‘deformed,’ ‘disproportionate,’ ‘monstrous,’ ‘vile,’ ‘wicked’ and ‘immoral,’ Hale’s Monster, in contrast, though she possesses some of the native’s diverse positive physical and mental traits, has been endowed with the capacity to be a full human being. The son of Sycorax is stigmatised and dehumanised, by the invaders, throughout *The Tempest*, with a vocabulary which ranges from “[f]ilth”⁷ and “misshapen knave”⁸, to a “strange fish, [with] fins like arms”⁹ —all have delineated the portrait of an ambiguous creature which is in every aspect a beast, devoid of humanity. While Shakespeare’s Caliban is a monster, about whom early modern English spectators could do nothing, but find abhorrent, repugnant and loathsome, in every aspect, Hale’s young Monster, in stark contrast, despite the challenging post-apocalyptic setting engulfing her, has been a round character imbued with human attributes. The jargon with which her physique is described, though somehow quite Calibanesque, is imbedded in humanity; she states, for instance, “[m]y name is Monster. I am small and bony like a blackbird. My feet turn in when I walk and there is nearly always dust in my knuckles. My hair is thick and dark. When I sweat it sticks down the

back of my neck and I can feel it clinging there”¹⁰. One might find, under the form of vestiges, the echo of *The Tempest* in these passages, which though reminiscent of Caliban’s unsophisticated and slovenly outward appearance, are denotative, in the novel’s realm, of the physical features of a famished young human-Caliban who has been stranded and left alone to cater to her own needs in a post-apocalyptic matrix. The fact that this Caliban-like figure has been given the opportunity, nowhere to be found in the source, to speak for herself, since she is the narrator of the tale’s second part, constitutes a massive asset through which she has plunged the reader in her world with her memories disclosed and her innermost psychological turmoil, desires, feelings and anxieties expressed. Unlike Caliban, whose life prior to Prospero is an unsolved mystery, Monster has, on numerous occasions, wondered into her past displaying, as such, her memories and revealing aspects about her existence before she meets the heroine; in one scene of relevance, in this context, Monster has carried the reader to a distant era when her biological mother was still alive saying, “I remember a woman [...] I remember holding her hand, and how her hand felt warm and happy in mine. And I remember that she was beautiful”¹¹. The memories, feelings and desires, voiced, at intervals with nuanced and thorough elaboration, are meant to serve a twofold purpose: to get the novel’s audience, first of all, immersed in a Caliban-like survivor’s plight and ground her, in the second position, as a human being par excellence to whom anybody might relate. Hale has revised the play’s disparaging depiction of the native, in brief, commenting on *The Tempest*, through her metatextual approach, revamping it, hereby, to blend in an era where traditional colonialism is no longer in vogue, from Caliban’s worldview, the aspect which has allowed her to redeem him, through Monster, from a four hundred years old defamatory discourse.

3. Authority Relocated: From Prospero to Caliban: The contention put forth by one critic asserting that “*The Tempest* is a play about the respect of authority [and that] [d]isorder is created by the refusal to submit to it”¹² is not cursory nor is it dismissive of truth. There is textual



evidence, which is substantiation enough, grounding Hamm's claim as one not bereft of veracity since, in Shakespeare's imagination, as in his early modern English audience's, disorder and order are all concomitant with either rebellion against or compliance to the authority of Prospero or the monarch, James the first; this aspect might confirm that "the play is utterly absolutist and governed by the assumptions of divine right"¹³. The available textual evidence, throughout *The Tempest*, is compelling enough to corroborate the current point that authority, under all its forms —be it political, social, economic, military or moral— has been vested in Prospero with nobody to dare challenge his decisions, actions and version of truth nor question his, sound or even unsound, judgement. These are, on the other hand, the basic constituents Katie Hale has commented on, with consequential preset-day politically correct adjustments, four centuries later in *My Name Is Monster* where authority has been revised shifting it from the coloniser-self, Prospero, to the colonised-other, Caliban. This contemporary metatext of the bard's last play, though subtle at times, has commented on and criticised Prospero's absolutist jurisdiction showing, thereafter, the rejection of the white man's domineering power, through the Caliban-like Monster, as a positive aspect from which bright horizons, not disorder, might emerge.

The foremost issue deserving attention, at this stage, is the violence of naming which both Caliban and Monster have been subjected to and compelled to endure since their names have been attributed, without their consent, to them by the white coloniser, Prospero and Mother respectively. What might strike a chord with Hale's contemporaries, at the ostensible layer, in this context, is the fact that both names, Caliban and Monster, entail an inimical connotation with detrimental purport that might slander, on a large magnitude, the indigenous populations. If the former's name, beyond the literary scope, is read as "an anagram of "cannibal""¹⁴, the latter's negative meaning has been reconfigured with a positive implication, in a post-apocalyptic world where the two survivors have had to struggle not only for their

lives, but also to renegotiate and redefine, the once stable, linguistic boundaries. *Monster*, either as a word or a name, which imposes inhuman traits and involves, therefore, the dehumanization of whatever subject to which it is applied, has been refurbished from a different angle in Hale's twenty-first century metatextual rewriting; from this perspective, the young girl, *Monster*, has thought the following, "I like that my name means survivor. I like that I am someone who can keep going, who can plant and reap and scavenge and not become one of the dead people"¹⁵. What used to be, in this way, the 'other' which stood for inhumanity, during high time colonialism, Shakespeare's epoch, has been cast from a new positive light as the emblem of humanity, or even better, the only hope to which the human species has to cling to for continuity, if it desired any, four hundred years afterwards, with Hale's era.

The next crucial issue, in the metatextual interplay being studied, that warrants further attention, while juxtaposing *My Name Is Monster* with *The Tempest*, is the critique Hale has cast upon Prospero's omniscience and omnipotence which has not only consolidated, in the source text, his command over the island, but has also solidified his unwavering dominion over its inhabitants, his subjects. Prospero has been granted the power, through Ariel, other spirits and magic, to attain infinite insight into his surrounding, grasping, likewise, the truth of any pending schemes his enemies orchestrated against him allowing him, accordingly, to intervene before even their plots are carried to the fullest. Prospero has, for instance, prepared to quell the rebellion Caliban has planned with Stephano and Trinculo, ahead of their schedule, which gave him the ascendance over their designs of murdering him; the moment they reached his cell, he has already taken action against them, and while they have been unknowing of the hostilities targeting them, Miranda's father ordered Ariel "[l]et them [the plotters] be hunted soundly. At this hour/ Lies at my mercy all mine enemies"¹⁶. On the flip side, Hale's Prospero-like figure, Mother, in *My Name Is Monster*, has not been gifted with these supernatural faculties and Caliban, in return, has been invested, through a wide range



of strategies, with the power to resist the coloniser's influence. There is a scene, of interest, at this stage, with the two female characters having their comfortable seats, one night, by the fire during which Monster has been contemplating the flickering flames; she thought about all the things she could discern, out of pure imagination, by just looking at the fireplace with the Prospero-like figure, Mother, unaware of what is roaming in her brain. She has even thought about the fish, she discovered in the stream, "Mother doesn't know about the fish – she thinks the stream is only for water [...] I keep what I know hidden inside me"¹⁷. The all knowing Prospero, in the original, has been diminished in this passage, which reduced him to an ignorant survivor, who despite the availability of fish, which could have been integrated into his meagre diet, a few yards only from the farmhouse where they lived, has been unable to make the best use, for survival's sake, of the scarce resources in his environment.

Furthermore, the castigation levelled at Prospero's authority, across the breadth of *My Name Is Monster*, has been encompassed in resisting not only the colonial gaze, with the vision it often imposes on the native, but also the coloniser's control machinations. It is in a fashion akin to Prospero's, since he spared no effort to mould Caliban into the persona and identity he desired him to embody, that Mother has sought to craft Monster the way she envisioned. This finds resonance in a concrete example, from the novel, where the young girl has thwarted and parried every endeavour to constrain her within a predefined identity paradigm; The narrator has countered, following this thread, Mother's not only viewpoint but also gaze wherein she posited that she is to be compared to water, asserting that,

Mother says I am like water [...] It fills the shape of whatever bowl or cup or tin you put it in. I think what Mother means when she says that I am like water is that I am good at filling the shape I am supposed to fill. What I mean is, Mother cups her hands and I lay myself in them and *she thinks that is the shape I am. And I do*

*try to be that shape, the way Mother wants me to be. I try, but I am not very good at it.*¹⁸

This excerpt, with heightened emphasis placed on the words I have italicised, with deliberate intent, might suggest Monster's rejection of any ascribed framework which might knead her identity in accordance with the coloniser's, or any body's, whims the aspect which might, thereupon, restrict not only her identity and freedom but also, by and large, her entire horizons. The third millennium Caliban, under the guise of Monster, is not the kind of docile subjects, Shakespeare's contemporaries might have wished for, who would respect Prospero's authority and be submissive to his judgement; as the last sentence is proof enough, the harder she strives to comply to Mother's expectations, the more her failure, at such a design, is quite inevitable.

There is another prominent scene, where Monster has been told, by Hale's Prospero-like character, that the way she laughs sounds as if someone shatters glass into smithereens, to which she has responded, with the coming contentions, casting this slanderous comment from a different scope, "I think it's a wonderful thing to have a laugh like breaking glass. It means that when I laugh, it's like breaking into a room full of treasures, it's like a whole possibility for better things, like light in the darkness"¹⁹. In addition, Prospero's desire, akin to an obsession, to have absolute control, in his grand scheme of things, over and above all the living creatures on the island, has been brought, in a metatextual way, into the surface. Monster, with her child's perspective, which offered her the potential to counter Prospero's authoritative discourse, has found, as such, an exercise of power, in the transfer of the herd of sheep from a far area to a closer one to the farmhouse. She reported, in this vein, Mother's justification that they did so in order to "keep an eye on them"²⁰; the narrator has construed this move as a pretext, any coloniser might advance, to be "able to make sure they only do things that Mother wants them to do"²¹. These words do not only criticise Prospero's yearning to have uncontested mastery over anything that might revolve around his fulcrum's vicinity, but it might also amount



to a stark mockery of this obsessive, almost compulsive, colonial mode of action and mindset.

Prospero's authority, in the bard's literary world, has been displayed through his proficiency at both claiming and grounding, through a crafted discourse, his possession over the island; he has declared, with the play drawing to its end, to his European fellows that once he is stranded on its shores, he has, by virtue of his logic, become "the lord on't"²². The critique's evaluation of *The Tempest*, as a text, which "explores the central themes of authority on and ownership of the island"²³ is not, by any means, void of veracity. The two themes, apart from their integral role in the play, have been intertwined, in a fashion that might seem systematic, all along the process of carving the final and finished portrait of an all-powerful necromancer, Prospero, whose reign, just like that of James the first, no living entity ought to question. Hale's metatextual re-conception of the original, from a different standpoint, has reacted against both themes of authority and ownership, in *My Name Is Monster*, swaying the power-balance, in so doing, from the white man to Caliban. There is an episode, of marked relevance, to this context, in which the narrator/young girl regurgitated, with a nuanced vision, one of the errands, she has had with the novel's Prospero-like figure, into the adjacent city. The young heroine has fostered that "Mother moves inside the Clinic the way she moves in the clothes shop or the vegetable-growing building, like the place belongs to her because she's been here before. *I don't tell her how really it belongs to me. I don't say anything. If Mother can keep things hidden, then so can I*"²⁴. The previous quote, for an in-depth analysis, might be split into two parts, with the first one, in the course of the expedition, where the narrator has dissected Mother's movements and body language, emanating out of a sense of being engrossed in one's colonial self, which denote authority through the possession of the whole area. The second part, on the other hand, the one I have italicised, has reversed Prospero's power-pillared discourse showcasing the major fallacy in his claims of possessing the island just because he has reached its soil; the young girl, on the same metatextual vein, has even deployed a vital counter-discourse that has re-established her right, which might

be, in her opinion, quite inalienable, to own the totality of the place. The same second part, above highlighted, hints at the fact that while Shakespeare's Caliban has been ill-treated, repressed and silenced, on numerous occasions, Hale's Monster has chosen silence, as a deliberate manoeuvre, to both respond and counter the dominant entity's hegemonic worldview.

Monster, the modern-day Caliban, is no longer willing to be acquiescent to Prospero's authority since she has taken advantage of the opportunities, whenever they presented themselves, to emancipate herself from her grip. If in Shakespeare's play, disorder is the, bound to happen, outcome often generated by disobeying a higher authority²⁵, Prospero and King James I, then, in Hale's novel, the narrator's denial of Mother's authority has engendered brighter future horizons imbued with creativity and good things, in store. The reader has been confronted with myriad episodes of the young girl wondering alone, at night, with the aim of probing into what she might discover either in the mountains or the ruins of the city. She has, indeed, undertaken various expeditions, in the course of which she has stumbled upon a laboratory and after comb searching the area, she has found semen, stored somewhere. Her next journey to the laboratory, is almost predictable, with the decision in advance already taken, Monster has inseminated herself again a post-apocalyptic background. Once Mother discovered the young girl's disobedience and concomitant pregnancy, much to her disillusionment, she abstained from speaking to her, for weeks. Mother has told her, after they spoke to each other, how painful it is to give birth; the narrator, in response, has contemplated these thought, "I'm glad that it'll hurt when the child comes out, because it means I'll be creating something all of my own. It doesn't matter what Mother says – I won't just be a survivor any more, I'll be a creator"²⁶. One might see, with the baby born, that Monster's refusal of Mother's authority has not resulted in chaos; it has, on the contrary, brought into life another human being, who might ward off the specie's probable extinction representing, thus, humanity's ultimate hope for ongoing existence.

4. Caliban's Words: Monster's Language and Resistance: A text such as *The Tempest*, with the snowball effect authority, it has through time acquired, "has made seminal contributions to the development of the colonialist ideology"²⁷. The power-infused rhetoric exercise, with its sometimes glaring stereotypes, and clichés, its, at other times, innuendoes, and its, with intermittence, egregious violence, it has entailed and circulated, towards the colonised, autochthonous, populations, would not only be regurgitated across centuries, but would also be codified as fact in the colonial agent's world. The following claim, one scholar has fostered, that *The Tempest* "functions as a colonial text, i.e. in its [...] language [...] reenacts colonial discourse,"²⁸ might be corroborated and upheld, in this sense, with compelling textual evidence which indubitably showcase the Elizabethan's pervasive, if not normative, attitude towards, the so thought of, 'inferior' races. Prospero's implied allegations that Caliban, prior to him has been nothing, but a speechless 'savage,' when he stated "I endow'd thy purposes/ With words that made them known"²⁹ might be construed as a quintessential model case of this kind of power-based linguistic exercise which is meant, on the one hand, to ground the coloniser's presence in overseas territories on solid bases and subjugate, on the other, the natives to his 'enlightened' logic. The third millennium, with its sensitive to political correctness issues readership, that is oftentimes considerate of the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion and mindful of the ethical implications of language use, has witnessed the publication of *My Name Is Monster*, a text which has not only commented on the coloniser's linguistic rhetoric, but has also criticised and even subverted it through Monster's reclamation of her pre-colonial linguistic identity.

There are myriad episodes, though from a child's perspective, yet quite authoritative, which evince the narrator in the metatextual process of rejecting and deconstructing, with historical legitimacy and cogent logic, Prospero's colonial claims of 'superiority' which have been pillared on grounds of linguistic imperialism. The passage, I would quote, at this stage, in which the young girl has countered Prospero's

above assertion, of bestowing his language on him, is indicative of Monster's stance that has stamped his words as a fallacious discourse; she has maintained, "Mother thinks all my words belong to her. I know this, because when she tells me a word, she does it like she's giving me something [...] new. *But sometimes the words she gives me are more like things that used to be mine already, so really all Mother is doing is giving them back*"³⁰. The words such as "thinks," and "new," she has deployed hither, have been tailored to land with the desired effect; in this regards, the reader might grasp, ahead of anything else, the subtext, with the latent purport, that it is not because Mother has considered Monster's words as hers, that this is, by virtue of her logic, the truth. Prospero's allegations are, thereby, nothing but a one sided or dimensioned power rhetoric the coloniser/Prospero has resorted to, throughout *The Tempest*, to establish the 'self' as the 'civilised' and the 'other' as the 'savage'. The statement, I have above emphasised, has reversed power dynamics and empowered Monster to be in a position of power and control as the dominant force through which she has reclaimed possession of language before the colonial entity's grapple to seize control of the island. The same tone of criticism, besides, might be spotted in another scene, but with a striking subversive candour, on this occasion, through which the narrator/Monster has wrecked Prospero's colonial discourse. She has argued, to frame it in her distinctive voice, that Mother's, "words [...] carry lies"³¹; she has elaborated, staying aligned with the same line of reasoning, that "Mother says lies are something you can fall for, and I know what she means because Mother is empty and emptiness is something you can tumble into. She is not my creator. She is not kind"³². Shakespeare's Prospero has been drained of all substance and the world he has crafted, four hundred years earlier, based on language, as his major frontline weapon, has crumbled with, the Caliban-like, Monster reducing his version of the events and, all in all, 'truths,' he has constructed, into spurious and deceptive narratives.

5. Conclusion: The diverse array of texts, under quite different literary forms and genres, which sought to rewrite, revise, criticise and



comment on Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, in the second decade of the third millennium, among which Katie Hale's *My Name Is Monster* (2019), are part of a universal tendency, though accentuated in the English speaking hemisphere, to safeguard the bard's enduring cultural legacy in observance of the four centennial of his death (1616-2016). Taking this into consideration, this research, to cut to the chase, has been undertaken with the possibility, in mind, of a literary bond that might trace Hale's text back to Shakespeare's last play. The theoretical framework, which has been adopted, consisting of Gérard Genette's metatextuality, has revealed that *My Name Is Monster* has both commented on and criticised a wide range of aspects at the level of its source. The modern-day novel, subject to study, has reinvented the Prospero and Caliban eternal duality, in keeping with the spirit of nowadays' standards, since the native has been given space, in the entire second part, to retell the story from his worldview. The authority, which has been the coloniser's privilege, in the early modern literary sphere, has been deflected, with full awareness, from Prospero and inflected, in turn, towards the account's once silenced 'other'. Finally, the metatextual approach, Hale implemented, has made it possible to reconfigure, with a subversive purport, at times, the use of language which has been wielded, by Monster, the Caliban-like heroine, as a tool of resistance responding, in this fashion, to four centuries-old degrading allegation.

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