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"Personality, in our sense, is a Shakespearean invention, and is not only Shakespeare's greatest originality but also the authentic cause of his perpetual pervasiveness." So Harold Bloom opines in his outrageously ambitious *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*. This is a titanic claim. But then this is a titanic book, wrought by a latter-day critical colossus--and before Bloom is done with us, he has made us wonder whether his vision of Shakespeare's influence on the whole of our lives might not be simply the sober truth. Shakespeare is a feast of arguments and insights, written with engaging frankness and affecting immediacy. Bloom ranges through the Bard's plays in the probable order of their composition, relating play to play and character to character, maintaining all the while a shrewd grasp of Shakespeare's own burgeoning sensibility.