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Sommario/riassunto	Ben Jonson was the greatest of Shakespeare's contemporaries. In the century following his death he was seen by many as the finest of all English writers, living or dead. His fame rested not only on the numerous plays he had written for the theatre, but on his achievements over three decades as principal masque-writer to the early Stuart court, where he had worked in creative, and often stormy, collaboration with Inigo Jones. One of the most accomplished poets of the age, he had become - in fact if not in title - the first Poet Laureate in England.

Jonson's life was full of drama. Serving in the
