

The Tempest

Act I, sc. 2 (line 82 - intercut)

PROSPERO

My brother and thy uncle, call'd Antonio--
I pray thee, mark me--that a brother should
Be so perfidious!--he whom next thyself
Of all the world I loved and to him put
The manage of my state; as at that time
Through all the signories it was the first
And Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed
In dignity, and for the liberal arts
Without a parallel; those being all my study,
The government I cast upon my brother
And to my state grew stranger, being transported
And rapt in secret studies. Thy false uncle--
Dost thou attend me?

MIRANDA

Sir, most heedfully.

PROSPERO

Being once perfected how to grant suits,
How to deny them, who to advance and who
To trash for over-topping, new created
The creatures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,
Or else new form'd 'em; having both the key

Of officer and office, set all hearts i' the state
To what tune pleased his ear; that now he was
The ivy which had hid my princely trunk,
And suck'd my verdure out on't. Thou attend'st not.

MIRANDA

O, good sir, I do.

PROSPERO

I pray thee, mark me.

I, thus neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated
To closeness and the bettering of my mind
With that which, but by being so retired,
O'er-prized all popular rate, in my false brother
Awaked an evil nature; and my trust,
Like a good parent, did beget of him
A falsehood in its contrary as great
As my trust was; which had indeed no limit,
A confidence sans bound. He being thus lorded,
Not only with what my revenue yielded,
But what my power might else exact, like one
Who having into truth, by telling of it,
Made such a sinner of his memory,
To credit his own lie, he did believe
He was indeed the duke; out o' the substitution
And executing the outward face of royalty,

With all prerogative: hence his ambition growing--

Dost thou hear?

MIRANDA

Your tale, sir, would cure deafness.

PROSPERO

To have no screen between this part he play'd

And him he play'd it for, he needs will be

Absolute Milan. Me, poor man, my library

Was dukedom large enough: of temporal royalties

He thinks me now incapable; confederates--

So dry he was for sway--wi' the King of Naples

To give him annual tribute, do him homage,

Subject his coronet to his crown and bend

The dukedom yet unbow'd--alas, poor Milan!--

To most ignoble stooping.

MIRANDA

O the heavens!

PROSPERO

Mark his condition and the event; then tell me

If this might be a brother.

MIRANDA

I should sin

To think but nobly of my grandmother:

Good wombs have borne bad sons.

PROSPERO

Now the condition.

The King of Naples, being an enemy

To me inveterate, hearkens my brother's suit;

Which was, that he, in lieu o' the premises
Of homage and I know not how much tribute,
Should presently extirpate me and mine
Out of the dukedom and confer fair Milan
With all the honours on my brother: whereon,
A treacherous army levied, one midnight
Fated to the purpose did Antonio open
The gates of Milan, and, i' the dead of darkness,
The ministers for the purpose hurried thence
Me and thy crying self.

MIRANDA

Alack, for pity!

*I, not remembering how I cried out then,
Will cry it o'er again: it is a hint
That wrings mine eyes to't.*

PROSPERO

Hear a little further
And then I'll bring thee to the present business
Which now's upon's; without the which this story
Were most impertinent.

MIRANDA

Wherefore did they not

That hour destroy us?

PROSPERO

Well demanded, wench:

My tale provokes that question. Dear, they durst not,
So dear the love my people bore me, nor set
A mark so bloody on the business, but

With colours fairer painted their foul ends.
In few, they hurried us aboard a bark,
Bore us some leagues to sea; where they prepared
A rotten carcass of a boat, not rigg'd,
Nor tackle, sail, nor mast; the very rats
Instinctively had quit it: there they hoist us,
To cry to the sea that roar'd to us, to sigh
To the winds whose pity, sighing back again,
Did us but loving wrong.

MIRANDA

Alack, what trouble

Was I then to you!

PROSPERO

O, a cherubim

Thou wast that did preserve me. Thou didst smile.
Infused with a fortitude from heaven,
When I have deck'd the sea with drops full salt,
Under my burthen groan'd; which raised in me
An undergoing stomach, to bear up
Against what should ensue.

MIRANDA

How came we ashore?

PROSPERO

By Providence divine.
Some food we had and some fresh water that
A noble Neapolitan, Gonzalo,

Out of his charity, being then appointed
Master of this design, did give us, with
Rich garments, linens, stuffs and necessaries,
Which since have steaded much; so, of his gentleness,
Knowing I loved my books, he furnish'd me
From mine own library with volumes that
I prize above my dukedom.

MIRANDA

Would I might

But ever see that man!

PROSPERO

Now I arise:

Resumes his mantle

Sit still, and hear the last of our sea-sorrow.
Here in this island we arrived; and here
Have I, thy schoolmaster, made thee more profit
Than other princesses can that have more time
For vainer hours and tutors not so careful.

MIRANDA

*Heavens thank you for't! And now, I pray you, sir,
For still 'tis beating in my mind, your reason
For raising this sea-storm?*

PROSPERO

Know thus far forth.

By accident most strange, bountiful Fortune,
Now my dear lady, hath mine enemies
Brought to this shore; and by my prescience

I find my zenith doth depend upon
A most auspicious star, whose influence
If now I court not but omit, my fortunes
Will ever after droop. Here cease more questions:
Thou art inclined to sleep; 'tis a good dulness,
And give it way: I know thou canst not choose.