

# William Shakespeare

## Life

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-on-Avon, Warwickshire on April 23, 1564, the son of a prosperous wool and leather merchant. Very little is known of his early life. From parish records we know that he married Ann Hathaway in 1582, when she was eighteen and she was twenty-six. They had three children, the eldest of whom died in childhood.

Between his marriage and the next thing we know about him, there is a gap of ten years. Probably he became a member of a theatrical company of actors. By 1592 he had settled in London and had earned a reputation as an actor and playwright.

Theaters were then in their infancy. The first (called *The Swan*) was built in 1576. Two more followed as the taste for theater grew: *The Curtain* in 1577 and *The Rose* in 1587. The demand for new plays naturally increased. Shakespeare probably earned a living adapting old plays and working in collaboration with others on new ones. Today we would call him a "freelance," since he was not permanently attached to one theater.

In 1594, a new company of actors, The Lord Chamberlain's Men, was formed, and Shakespeare was one of the shareholders. He remained a member throughout his working life. The company regrouped in 1603 and was renamed The King's Men, with James I as its patron.

Shakespeare and his fellow-actors prospered. In 1598 they built their own theater, *The Globe*, which broke away from the traditional rectangular shape of the inn and its yard (the early type of traveling bands of actors). Shakespeare described it in *Timon of Athens* as "this wooden O," because it was circular.

Like other theaters were built by investors eager to profit from the new enthusiasm for drama. *The Hope*, *The Fortune*,

*The Red Bull* and *The Swan* were all open-air "public" theaters. There were also many "private" (or indoor) theaters, one of which (*The Blackfriars*) was purchased by Shakespeare and his friends because the child actors who performed there were dangerous competitors. (Shakespeare denounces them in *Hamlet*.)

After writing some thirty-seven plays (the exact number is something which scholars argue about), Shakespeare retired to his native Stratford, wealthy and respected. He died on his birthday, in 1616.

## His plays

Shakespeare's plays were not all published in his lifetime. None of them comes to us exactly as he wrote it.

In Elizabethan times, plays were not regarded as either literature or good reading matter. They were written at speed (often by more than one writer), performed perhaps ten or twelve times and then discarded. Fourteen of Shakespeare's plays were first printed in Quarto (17cm x 21cm) volumes, not all with his name as the author. Some were authorized (the "good" Quartos) and probably were printed from prompt copies provided by the theater. Others were pirated (the "bad" Quartos) by booksellers who may have employed shorthand writers or bought actors' copies after the run of the play had ended.

In 1623, seven years after Shakespeare's death, John Hemming and Henry Condell (fellow-actors and shareholders in The King's Men) published a collected edition of Shakespeare's works - thirty-six plays in all - in a Folio (21cm x 34cm) edition. From their introduction it would seem that they used Shakespeare's original manuscripts ("we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers") but the Folio volumes that still survive are not all exactly alike, nor are the plays printed as we know them today, with act and scene divisions and stage directions.

as fashionable to maintain this regular beat from the  
the play till the last.

care conformed at first and then experimented.  
his early plays contain whole scenes in rhyming  
in *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, there is extensive  
ne, and as if to show his versatility, Shakespeare even  
nnet into the dialog.

e matured, he sought greater freedom of expression  
e allowed. Rhyme is still used to indicate a scene  
to stress lines which he wishes the audience to  
Generally, though, Shakespeare moved toward the  
everyday speech. This gave him many dramatic  
which he fully and subtly exploits in terms of  
; character, emotion, stress and pace.

Shakespeare's poetic imagery, however, that most dis-  
his verse from that of lesser playwrights. It enables  
etch the imagination, express complex thought-  
memorable language and convey a number of  
leas in a compressed and economical form. A study  
are's imagery – especially in his later plays – is often  
full understanding of his meaning and purposes.

ier extreme is prose. Shakespeare normally reserves  
nts, clowns, commoners and pedestrian matters  
messages and letters.

# The Tempest

## Date

The first recorded performance of *The Tempest* was in 1611, when The King's Men presented it at Court. In February 1613, the play was one of a number chosen to be part of the celebrations in honor of the marriage between James I's daughter, Elizabeth, and the Elector of Palatine. It is not known whether the texts used were identical. There is considerable evidence to support the theory that changes were made to make the play more suitable for a wedding. Some scholars think that the masque in *Act IV Scene 1* was added, and that the play was shortened elsewhere to make room for it. This could explain Prospero's lengthy exposition in *Act I Scene 2*: it might well be a summary of several scenes that had to be deleted. However, all the many theories about cuts and additions are purely speculative.

## Source

No one source has been traced for the plot of *The Tempest*. The origins of some of the characters and episodes are traceable to a variety of works which would have formed part of Shakespeare's general readings. Some Italian comedies of the period have similar features; a German play has many parallels; several Spanish stories are remarkably similar; a number of history and travel books – particularly one describing a shipwreck in the Bermudas – have revealed coincidences in expression. Echoes of two passages from Montaigne's essays have been identified. It is possible that Shakespeare reworked a lost play, or dramatized a story which has not survived in print, but more probably he wrote the play as an original piece, his inspiration having the benefit of a well-read person's range and sensibility.

## The characters

Alonso the king of Naples  
Sebastian his brother  
Prospero the rightful duke of Milan  
Antonio his brother, the usurping duke of Milan  
Ferdinand the son of the king of Naples  
Gonzalo an honest old counsellor  
Adrian } lords  
Francisco }  
Caliban a deformed slave  
Trinculo a jester  
Stephano a drunken butler  
Captain of a ship  
Boatswain  
Sailors  
Miranda Prospero's daughter  
Ariel an airy spirit  
Iris  
Ceres } spirits  
Juno }  
Nymphs }  
Reapers }

**ro** Both, both, my girl;  
 ul play, as thou say'st, were we heaved thence,  
 blessedly help hither.

**la** O, my heart bleeds  
 ink o' th' teen that I have turned you to,  
 h is from my remembrance! Please you, farther.

**ro** My brother, and thy uncle, called Antonio –  
 thee, mark me, that a brother should  
 perfidious! – he whom next thyself  
 the world I loved, and to him put  
 anage of my state; as at that time  
 igh all the signories it was the first,  
 Prospero the prime duke, being so reputed  
 nity, and for the liberal Arts  
 ut a parallel; those being all my study,  
 overnment I cast upon my brother,  
 my state grew stranger, being transported  
 pt in secret studies. Thy false uncle –  
 ou attend me?

Sir, most heedfully.

Being once perfected how to grant suits,  
 deny them, who t'advance, and who  
 h for over-topping, new created  
 atures that were mine, I say, or changed 'em,  
 new formed 'em; having both the key  
 er and office, set all hearts i' th' state  
 t tune pleased his ear; that now he was  
 which had hid my princely trunk,  
 ked my verdure out on't. Thou attend'st not?  
 O, good sir, I do.

I pray thee, mark me.

neglecting worldly ends, all dedicated

**Prospero** Both, both, my girl. We were ejected by foul play, as  
 you said. But we were helped here by Divine Providence.

**Miranda** Oh, my heart bleeds to think of the trouble I must  
 have been to you, which I can't remember. But please, tell  
 me more.

**Prospero** My brother – your uncle – was called Antonio. Note  
 this: that a brother should be so wicked! Next to yourself, I  
 loved him more than anyone else in the world, and I  
 entrusted him with the management of my kingdom. At that  
 time, Milan was the leading state, and I was the ruling duke,  
 because of my eminence and my unequalled understanding  
 of the liberal arts. As this was my obsession, I left the  
 business of government to my brother and became a  
 stranger to my own court, being carried away and engrossed  
 in my secret studies. Your deceitful uncle – *[he breaks off]*  
 Are you listening to me?

**Miranda** Sir, most attentively.

**Prospero** – once he'd learned how to grant favors and how  
 to refuse them, who to promote and who to cut down to  
 size – won over my supporters, or replaced them, or  
 changed their allegiance. Having both personal power and  
 control of officials, he could call the tune in my kingdom.  
 He'd become the parasitic ivy that hid my princely status  
 from view and drained away my power. You're not  
 listening!

**Miranda** Oh sir, I am!

**Prospero** Take careful note. Being dedicated to study and the

closeness and the bettering of my mind  
 that which, but by being so retired,  
 prized all popular rate, in my false brother  
 revealed an evil nature; and my trust,  
 in a good parent, did beget of him  
 falsehood in its contrary, as great  
 my trust was; which had indeed no limit,  
 confidence sans bound. He being thus lorded,  
 not only with what my revenue yielded,  
 but what my power might else exact, like one  
 coming 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' th' substitution,  
 and executing th' 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 played  
 and him he played 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,  
 to dry he was for sway, wi' th' King of Naples  
 to give him annual tribute, do him homage,  
 subject his coronet to his crown, and bend  
 his dukedom, yet unbowed – alas, poor Milan! –  
 most ignoble stooping.

**Miranda** O the heavens!

**Prospero** Mark his condition, and th' event; then tell me  
 his might be a brother.

improvement of my mind with things more valuable than  
 popular esteem, in my seclusion I neglected worldly matters.  
 This brought out the evil side of my false brother's  
 character. My trust, which had no limits – my confidence  
 was absolute – generated an equal and opposite deceit in  
 him: as when a good parent has a wicked child. Being  
 ennobled in this way, and made rich with my income (plus  
 what my power enabled him to extort), he began to  
 think – like a man who believes his own lies – that he was  
 indeed the duke, because we'd switched places, and he  
 was carrying out my royal duties, with all the corresponding  
 privileges. He therefore grew ambitious – Do you hear what  
 I say?

**Miranda** Your story, sir, would cure deafness.

**Prospero** – and aspired to be the *real* duke of Milan, so  
 there'd be no difference between the impersonator and the  
 one for whom he was standing in. As for me, poor man, my  
 library was all the dukedom I required. He now believes me  
 to be incapable of handling worldly affairs. He allies himself  
 with the king of Naples, so eager is he for power. He agrees  
 to pay him annual protection money, to defer to his leader-  
 ship, to surrender his autonomy, and subject the duke-  
 dom, hitherto proudly independent – alas, poor Milan! – to  
 ignoble humiliation.

**Miranda** Oh, in the name of heaven!

**Prospero** Note the terms of the treaty and its results; then  
 tell me if he was any kind of brother . . .

ere the King on 't, what would I do?

be being drunk for want of wine.

ommonwealth I would by contraries

ings; for no kind of traffic

; no name of magistrate;

not be known; riches, poverty,

ice, none; contract, succession,

of land, tilth, vineyard, none;

l, corn, or wine, or oil;

; all men idle, all;

o, but innocent and pure;

' -

Yet he would be king on 't!

fter end of his commonwealth forgets the

ngs in common Nature should produce

or endeavour: treason, felony,

ife, gun, or need of any engine,

ve; but Nature should bring forth,

all foison, all abundance,

ocent people.

arrying 'mong his subjects?

man; all idle; whores and knaves.

d with such perfection govern, sir,

lden Age.

Save his Majesty!

ive Gonzalo!

And - do you mark me, sir?

no more: thou dost talk nothing to me.

**Gonzalo** - and were its king, what would I do?

**Sebastian** [*aside*] Avoid being drunk through lack of wine!

**Gonzalo** I'd do everything by opposites in my perfect state. I'd

allow no trade. There'd be no such thing as a magistrate.

Learning would be unknown. No wealth, poverty, or slavery.

No contracts, inheritances, boundaries, fences, cultivation

of land, or vineyards. No use of metal, corn, wine, or oil.

There'd be no occupations. All men would be idle: all of

them. And all women too, but innocent and pure. There'd

be no monarchy -

**Sebastian** [*aside*] Yet he said he'd be the king!

**Antonio** [*aside*] The final details of his system contradict

those at the beginning!

**Gonzalo** Nature would produce all things without effort or

labor, for the common good. I'd have no treason, law-

breaking, swords, spears, knives, guns, or artillery. Nature

would provide, by reproduction, all crops and harvests to

feed my sinless people.

**Sebastian** [*aside*] Will there be no marrying among his

subjects?

**Antonio** [*aside*] None, man; everyone idle: all prostitutes and

villains.

**Gonzalo** So perfectly would I govern, sir, I'd surpass the

Golden Age.

**Sebastian** [*saluting sarcastically*] God save His Majesty!

**Antonio** Long live Gonzalo! [*They laugh in derision*]

**Gonzalo** And - are you listening sir?

**Alonso** Please. No more. You are talking nonsense.

Thou dost snore distinctly;  
 I grieve in thy snores.

More serious than my custom: you  
 will heed me; which to do  
 I fear.

Well, I am standing water.  
 I show you how to flow.

Do so: to ebb  
 I instructs me.

O,  
 how you the purpose cherish  
 I mock it! How, in stripping it,  
 I spit it! Ebbing men, indeed,  
 I see near the bottom run  
 of war or sloth.

Prithee, say on:  
 I shine eye and cheek proclaim  
 I see; and a birth, indeed,  
 I see much to yield.

Thus, sir:  
 I word of weak remembrance, this,  
 I 'as little memory  
 I had, hath here almost persuaded –  
 I of persuasion, only  
 I persuade – the King his son's alive,  
 I dole that he's undrowned  
 I see here swims.

I have no hope  
 I drowned.

O, out of that 'no hope'  
 I see have you! No hope that way is

**Sebastian** Your snoring is articulate. There's meaning in the  
 way you snore . . .

**Antonio** I'm more than usually serious. So must you be, if you  
 take my advice. If you do, you'll be three times the man you  
 are now.

**Sebastian** Well, I'm like still water – inclined neither one way  
 nor the other.

**Antonio** I'll teach you how to flow . . .

**Sebastian** Please do. Being naturally lazy, I know how to ebb.

**Antonio** Oh, if you only knew the relevance of that flippant  
 remark! How your self-analysis points to a solution! Fear and  
 laziness always keep you "ebbers" down.

**Sebastian** Please go on: by the look in your eye and your  
 flushed cheeks, there's something you've just got to say.  
 You'll burst if you don't say it.

**Antonio** It's this, sir. [*Nodding toward Gonzalo*] Although  
 this forgetful old lord here – who'll be forgotten himself  
 when he's dead and buried – has almost persuaded the king  
 that his son is still alive (it's his job to persuade, so he does  
 so out of duty), it is just as impossible to suppose he's not  
 drowned as it is to imagine that this fellow sleeping here is  
 actually swimming.

**Sebastian** I have no hope of his survival.

**Antonio** Oh, what great hope stems from that "no hope"! No

ly so high a hope, that even  
cannot pierce a wink beyond,  
discovery there. Will you grant with me  
Ferdinand is drowned?

He's gone.

Then tell me,  
next heir of Naples?

Claribel.

She that is Queen of Tunis; she that dwells  
far beyond man's life; she that from Naples  
cannot note, unless the sun were post –  
th' moon's too slow – till new-born chins  
are razorable; she that from whom  
the sea-swallowed, though some cast again,  
by destiny, to perform an act  
that's past is prologue; what to come,  
I'll my discharge.

What stuff is this! How

my brother's daughter's Queen of Tunis;  
heir of Naples; 'twixt which regions  
I'll me space.

A space whose every cubit  
I'll you out, 'How shall that Claribel  
return back to Naples? Keep in Tunis,  
'till Sebastian wake.' Say this were death  
that hath seized them; why, they were no worse  
than they are. There be that can rule Naples  
that sleep; lords that can prate  
and unnecessarily  
Gonzalo; I myself could make  
of a deep chat. O, that you bore

hope in that direction is, from another point of view, so *high*  
a hope that even ambition can't look that far ahead, it's so  
mind-boggling. Do you concede that Ferdinand is drowned?

**Sebastian** He's dead.

**Antonio** Then tell me: who's next in line to the throne of  
Naples?

**Sebastian** Claribel.

**Antonio** She who is queen of Tunis, who lives more than a  
life time away; . . . who can't get news from Naples in less  
than fourteen years, unless the sun acts as postman – the  
man in the moon's too slow! The selfsame Claribel from  
whom we were going when we were shipwrecked. Some of  
us were cast ashore, destined to play a part in a drama.  
The prologue is past history. The plot is to be acted out by  
you and me.

**Sebastian** What nonsense is this? How do you mean? It's true  
my brother's daughter is queen of Tunis; she is heir to the  
throne of Naples, too; and there's a great distance between  
both places . . .

**Antonio** Every inch of which seems to cry "How can that  
Claribel make the journey back to Naples? So stay in Tunis,  
and let Sebastian wake up!" Suppose they had just been  
struck dead; they'd be no worse than they are now. There's  
someone who could rule Naples as well as the one who's  
sleeping here. There are plenty of lords who can prattle as  
long-windedly and unnecessarily as this Gonzalo. I could  
train a jackdaw to speak at his level. Oh, if only you thought

## Act three

### Scene 1

*Prospero's Cell. Enter Ferdinand, bearing a log*

*In front of Prospero's cave. Ferdinand enters, carrying a log.*

There be some sports are painful, and their labour  
 them sets off: some kinds of baseness  
 undergone; and most poor matters  
 ends. This my mean task  
 is heavy to me as odious, but  
 is which I serve quickens what's dead,  
 my labours pleasures. O, she is  
 more gentle than her father's crabbed,  
 composed of harshness. I must remove  
 bands of these logs, and pile them up,  
 injunction: my sweet mistress  
 when she sees me work, and says, such baseness  
 like executor. I forget:  
 sweet thoughts do even refresh my labours,  
 just when I do it.

**Ferdinand** Some sports are strenuous, but the effort is offset  
 by the pleasure they give. Some humble labor has dignity.  
 Most mundane occupations have worthwhile purposes. My  
 menial task would be as tedious to me as it is unpleasant, if  
 it were not for the mistress I work for. She enlivens what  
 would otherwise be boring, and makes my toil a pleasure.  
 Oh, she's ten times gentler than her father is: he is  
 harshness through and through. I have to move thousands  
 of these logs and pile them up under threat of punishment.  
 My sweet mistress weeps when she sees me work and says  
 no such laboring was ever done by one so noble. I'm day-  
 dreaming: these pleasant thoughts give me renewed energy.  
 I work at my hardest when my mind's occupied elsewhere.

*Miranda; and Prospero, at a distance, unseen]*

*[Miranda enters, followed at a distance by Prospero, whom  
 she cannot see. Ferdinand is struggling with a large log]*

Alas now, pray you,  
 hard: I would the lightning had  
 these logs that you are enjoined to pile!  
 down, and rest you: when this burns,  
 for having wearied you. My father  
 today; pray, now, rest yourself:  
 these three hours.

**Miranda** Alas, don't work so hard, I beg you! I wish the  
 lightning had set fire to these logs you've been ordered to  
 pile up! Please, put that one down and take a rest. When  
 this burns, it will cry for having tired you out. My father is  
 busy studying. Please, do rest yourself. He's safe for the  
 next three hours.

O most dear mistress,  
 set before I shall discharge  
 strive to do.

**Ferdinand** O dear mistress, it will be sunset before I've  
 completed my task.

I do not know  
 no woman's face remember,  
 glass, mine own; nor have I seen  
 't call men than you, good friend,  
 her: how features are abroad,  
 but, by my modesty,  
 'dower, I would not wish  
 in the world but you;  
 ation form a shape,  
 to like of. But I prattle  
 wildly, and my father's precepts  
 et.

I am, in my condition,  
 da; I do think, a King –  
 and would no more endure  
 every than to suffer  
 ow my mouth. Hear my soul speak:  
 t that I saw you, did  
 our service; there resides,  
 ve to it; and for your sake  
 t log-man.

Do you love me?

aven, O earth, bear witness to this sound,  
 : I profess with kind event,  
 hollowly, invert  
 led me to mischief! I,  
 of what else i' th' world,  
 honour you.

I am a fool

I am glad of.

Fair encounter  
 : affections! Heavens rain grace  
 reeds between 'em!

**Miranda** I do not know another woman. I can't recall a woman's face, except my own that I see in my mirror. Nor have I seen another real man besides you, good friend, and my dear father. What people look like in the world in general, I do not know. But upon my modesty – my most precious possession – I wouldn't wish any other companion in the world but you. Nor can my imagination conceive of anyone to like more than I do you. But I'm prattling away rather too wildly and therein forgetting my father's instructions.

**Ferdinand** In rank, Miranda, I'm a prince. Probably a king, though I wish I were not. I would no more tolerate this wood-carrying slavery than I'd let a blowfly foul my mouth. Hear my soul speak: I loved you at first sight. I am your slave. For your sake, I'm this patient log carrier.

**Miranda** Do you love me?

**Ferdinand** Heaven and earth be witness to my words. If I'm speaking the truth, may my vows be crowned with success. If I'm lying, may any happiness that's due to me become misfortune! I love, value, honor you more than anything else in the world!

**Miranda** [*wiping a tear*] I'm a fool to weep at what's so good to hear.

**Prospero** [*aside*] A joyous meeting of two kindred souls! May good fortune be theirs in their union!

Wherefore weep you?

ine unworthiness, that dare not offer  
to give; and much less take  
ie to want. But this is trifling;  
re it seeks to hide itself,  
lk it shows. Hence, bashful cunning!  
re plain and holy innocence!  
if you will marry me;  
our maid: to be your fellow  
me; but I'll be your servant,  
will or no.

My mistress, dearest;  
noble ever.

My husband, then?

, with a heart as willing  
r of freedom: here's my hand.

nine, with my heart in 't: and now farewell  
r hence.

A thousand thousand!

[*Exeunt Ferdinand and Miranda, severally*]

ad of this as they I cannot be,  
sed with all; but my rejoicing  
be more. I'll to my book;  
per-time, must I perform  
appertaining.

[*Exit*]

**Ferdinand** Why are you crying?

**Miranda** At my unworthiness. [*She blushes and answers the question indirectly out of modesty*] I daren't offer you what I'd like to give. Far less can I take what I can't live without. [*She pauses, then decides that conundrums don't suit the occasion*] This is silly. The more I try to hide things, the more obvious they seem. No more bashful riddles! The truth, pure and simple! I'll be your wife, if you will marry me. If not, I'll die unmarried. You can reject me as your partner. But I'll be your servant whether you want me or not.

**Ferdinand** My wife, dearest! [*He kneels*] Yours, evermore!

**Miranda** My husband, then?

**Ferdinand** Yes, as willingly as a slave seeks freedom. Here is my hand.

**Miranda** And mine, and with it my heart. And now, farewell till half an hour from now.

**Ferdinand** A thousand, thousand farewells!

[*They go their separate ways*]

**Prospero** I can't be as overjoyed at this as they: it took them by surprise. But nothing could give me greater pleasure. I must return to my magic book. Before suppertime, I've a lot of things to do.

[*He leaves*]

thou afeard?

o, monster, not I.

not afeard; the isle is full of noises,  
sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not.  
A thousand twangling instruments  
out mine ears; and sometime voices,  
when I had wak'd after long sleep,  
to sleep again: and then, in dreaming,  
the methought would open, and show riches  
upon me; that, when I wak'd,  
I dream again.

This will prove a brave kingdom to me, where I  
may have music for nothing.

When Prospero is destroyed.

That shall be by and by: I remember the story.

The sound is going away; let's follow it, and after do

Follow, monster; we'll follow. I would I could see this  
drummer. Wilt come?

Follow, Stephano.

[*Exeunt*]

**Caliban** Are you afraid?

**Stephano** [*Shivering, but not admitting it*] No, monster, not  
I.

**Caliban** Don't be afraid. The island is full of noises, sounds,  
and sweet tunes that give delight and don't hurt. Some-  
times the sound of a thousand twangling instruments will  
hum in my ears, and sometimes voices, which, if I awaken  
after a long sleep, will put me to sleep again. Then, in my  
dreams, the clouds seem to open and reveal riches ready to  
fall on me, so that when I wake, I cry to dream again.

**Stephano** This will be a splendid kingdom for me. I'll have  
free music!

**Caliban** When Prospero is destroyed . . .

**Stephano** That will be soon. I haven't forgotten the story.

**Caliban** The sound is going away. Let's follow it, and do our  
work afterwards.

**Stephano** Lead on, monster. We'll follow you. I wish I could  
see this drummer. He has a good beat. [*To Trinculo*] Are  
you coming?

**Trinculo** After you, Stephano!

[*They leave*]

What harmony is this? My good friends, hark!

Marvelous sweet music!

Ye us kind keepers, heavens! What were these?

A living drollery. Now I will believe

There are unicorns; that in Arabia

There is a tree, the phoenix' throne; one phoenix

Is reigning there.

I'll believe both;

Who else want credit, come to me,

Who sworn 'tis true: travellers ne'er did lie,

Who are at home condemn 'em.

If in Naples

Report this now, would they believe me?

As I say, I saw such islanders –

And these are people of the island –

Although they are of monstrous shape, yet, note,

Their manners are more gentle, kind, than of

Any generation you shall find

Or almost any.

[*Aside*] Honest lord,

As I said well; for some of you there present

Are more than devils.

I cannot too much muse

At such gesture, and such sound, expressing –

They want the use of tongue – a kind

Of dumb discourse.

[*Aside*] Praise in departing.

They vanished strangely.

No matter, since

They left their viands behind; for we have stomachs.

What is your taste of what is here?

**Alonso** What's this music? Good friends, listen.

**Gonzalo** Marvelous, sweet music!

**Alonso** May we be granted guardian angels! What were they?

**Sebastian** A living puppet show. Now I'll believe in unicorns,  
and that there's a tree in Arabia especially for the phoenix,  
on which a phoenix sits right now.

**Antonio** I'll believe both; and whatever else is incredible, trust  
me to swear it's true. Travelers never lie, in spite of the  
fools at home who scorn them!

**Gonzalo** If I reported this now in Naples, would they believe  
me? Or if I said I saw such islanders – undoubtedly they *are*  
natives of this island – and that grotesque though they  
appeared, they were notably more gentle and kind than  
many, or indeed any, of us human beings?

**Prospero** Well said, honest lord. Some of you here are worse  
than devils.

**Alonso** I can't stop marveling at the way these strange  
spirits, with mime and music, are able to communicate so  
well: a kind of sign language!

**Prospero** [*aside*] Hold on to your praise till you've seen more!

**Francisco** They disappeared mysteriously.

**Sebastian** That doesn't matter. They've left the food behind.  
We're hungry. [*Deferring to the King*] Would you like to try  
it?

Not I.

With, sir, you need not fear. When we were boys,  
I did believe that there were mountaineers  
as big as bears, whose throats had hanging at 'em  
like flesh? or that there were such men  
whose heads stood in their breasts? which now we find  
that five for one will bring us  
nothing of.

I will stand to, and feed,  
no matter, since I feel  
no past. Brother, my lord the duke,  
and do as we.

*Thunder and lightning. Enter Ariel like a Harpy; he claps his wings over the table; and, with a quaint device, the banquet vanishes.*

These three men of sin, whom Destiny –  
As instrument this lower world  
Doth use in 't – the never-surfeited sea  
Hath belch'd up you; and on this island,  
Which doth not inhabit – you 'mongst men  
Unfit to live. I have made you mad;  
With such-like valour men hang and drown  
Their selves.

*Alonso, Sebastian, etc. draw their swords]*

You fools! I and my fellows  
Are ministers of Fate: the elements,  
Whose swords are tempered, may as well  
Kill a man as a wild fowl; the loud winds,  
Or with bemock'd-at stabs  
The ever-closing waters, as diminish  
That's in my plume: my fellow-ministers  
Are invulnerable. If you could hurt,

Alonso Not I.

**Gonzalo** Indeed, sir, you needn't worry. When we were  
children, who would have believed that there were  
mountain dwellers with pendulous chins like the throats of  
bears? Or that there were strange people with no heads and  
with their eyes and mouths in their chests? Things which  
every "putter-out of five for one" tells us about  
nowadays . . . [*A reference to the practice by travelers of  
buying "insurance" against their return from voyages*]

**Alonso** I'll buckle down and eat: if it's my last meal it doesn't  
matter, as I feel I've had the best of my time. Brother, my  
lord the duke: follow my example and eat.

*[Thunder and lightning. Ariel enters looking like the fabled Harpy – a foul monster with a woman's face and body, and the wings and claws of a bird. He spreads his wings over the table and the banquet vanishes]*

**Ariel** You are three sinful men. Providence (that has this world  
and what is in it as its tool) has made the ever-hungry sea  
disgorge you upon this uninhabited island, you being of all  
men the most unfit to live. I have made you mad, and your  
kind of desperate courage makes men hang and drown  
themselves.

*[Alonso, Sebastian, and the others draw their swords]*

You fools! I and my companions are the ministers of Fate.  
We are the elements of which your swords are made, so you  
might as well wound howling gales, kill the ever-closing sea  
by stabbing it, as try to hurt the smallest feather in my  
plumage. My fellow spirits are equally invulnerable.

Well, I conceive.

[Exit]

Look thou be true; do not give dalliance  
to the rein: the strongest oaths are straw  
to th' blood: be more abstemious,  
and good night your vow!

I warrant you, sir;

as cold virgin snow upon my heart  
as ardour of my liver.

Well.

Go, my Ariel! Bring a corollary,  
I don't want a spirit: appear, and perty!  
All eyes! Be silent.

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most bounteous lady, thy rich leas  
of rye, barley, vetches, oats, and pease;  
thy grassy mountains, where live nibbling sheep,  
thy pastures thatched with stover, them to keep;  
thy corn with pioned and twilled brims,  
thy spring April at thy best betrimms,  
thy old nymphs chaste crowns; and thy broom-groves,  
thy low the dismissed bachelor loves,  
thy garden orn; thy poll-clipt vineyard;  
thy salt-marshes, sterile and rocky-hard,  
thyself dost air; the queen o' th' sky,  
thy airy arch and messenger am I,  
I live these; and with her sovereign grace,

Ariel I understand.

[He goes]

**Prospero** [to Ferdinand] See you keep your word. Don't let  
your feelings run away with you. Passion is a great destroyer  
of promises. Exercise more self-control, or else you can say  
good night to your vow!

**Ferdinand** I can assure you, sir, that my loved one's snow-  
white chastity cools my ardor.

**Prospero** Good. Now, come Ariel! Let's have too many  
performers rather than too few! Come, and be brisk! No  
talking! Attention, everybody! Silence!

[Soft music plays. A masque is performed by the Spirits.  
The first appears as Iris, goddess of the rainbow and  
messenger of the gods, who addresses Ceres, goddess of  
agriculture]

**Iris** Ceres, generous lady, who makes grow  
The cereals and root crops that we sow;  
Whose grassy mountains feed the nibbling sheep,  
Whose meadows yield the fodder for their keep,  
Whose river banks with peonies are dressed,  
Which April showers bring – at your request –  
For virgins to make crowns of; and your groves  
With shadows where the jilted lover roves  
All lovesick; and your vineyards, pruned with care,  
And your seacoast, so rocky-hard and bare,  
Where you yourself will stroll. Queen of the sky,  
Juno, whose rainbow messenger am I,  
Says leave all these; and with her royal grace –

Is now are ended. These our actors,  
 told you, were all spirits, and  
 ed into air, into thin air:  
 : the baseless fabric of this vision,  
 d-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
 mn temples, the great globe itself,  
 hich it inherit, shall dissolve,  
 : this insubstantial pageant faded,  
 t a rack behind. We are such stuff  
 is are made on; and our little life  
 d with a sleep. Sir, I am vexed;  
 y my weakness; my old brain is troubled:  
 turbed with my infirmity:  
 pleased, retire into my cell,  
 e repose: a turn or two I'll walk,  
 y beating mind.

We wish your peace.

[*Exeunt*]

Come with a thought. I thank thee: Ariel, come.

iel]

thoughts I cleave to. What's thy pleasure?

Spirit,

prepare to meet with Caliban.

ny commander: when I presented Ceres,  
 to have told thee of it; but I feared  
 ht anger thee.

Say again, where didst thou leave these varlets?

! you, sir, they were red-hot with drinking;

before, were all spirits, and have melted into air, thin air.  
 And just as this was all an illusion, so lofty towers, gorgeous  
 palaces, solemn temples, the earth itself, and all, indeed,  
 who live on it, will disappear; and just as this insubstantial  
 performance faded away, likewise not even a cloud will be  
 left behind. We are made of the same stuff as dreams, and  
 our short lives are rounded off with a sleep. Sir, I'm angry.  
 Bear with my weakness. My old brain is troubled. Don't be  
 disturbed by my infirmity. Perhaps you'd retire to my cave  
 and rest there. I'll take a stroll to calm my overactive mind.

**Ferdinand** May you find peace.  
**Miranda**

[*They go*]

**Prospero** I summon you in my thoughts. Thank you, Ariel!  
 Come!

[*Ariel enters*]

**Ariel** I'm tuned to your thinking. What can I do for you?

**Prospero** Spirit, we must get ready to deal with Caliban.

**Ariel** Indeed, my commander. When I acted the part of Ceres,  
 it occurred to me to remind you about it, but I was afraid to  
 anger you with the interruption.

**Prospero** Tell me again: where did you leave those rogues?

**Ariel** I told you, sir. They were rip-roaring drunk: so full of

And mine shall,  
 which art but air, a touch, a feeling  
 afflictions, and shall not myself,  
 of their kind, that relish all as sharply,  
 as they, be kindlier moved than thou art?  
 With their high wrongs I am struck to th' quick,  
 by no nobler reason 'gainst my fury  
 than that the rarer action is  
 in virtuous men than in their enemies:  
 they being penitent,  
 the juster my affliction doth extend  
 upon them. Go release them, Ariel:  
 I'll break their senses I'll restore,  
 that they may be themselves.

I'll fetch them, sir.

[Exit]

The elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves;  
 and you that on the sands with printless foot  
 do tread the ooze of Sluggish Neptune, and do fly him  
 about his ebbs and flows, you that do make him  
 to come back; you demi-puppets that  
 by some magic do the green sour ringlets make,  
 whose pageants and blarney and quaintness  
 bewitch the senses, and you whose pastime  
 is to make midnight mushrooms, that rejoice  
 to see the solemn curfew; by whose aid –  
 I have bedimm'd the noontide sun,  
 called forth the mutinous winds,  
 and 'twixt the green sea and the azured vault  
 have done the dread rattling thunder  
 with my own voice; and rifted Jove's stout oak  
 with his own bolt; the strong-bas'd promontory  
 have I turn'd to foam; and by the spurs plucked up  
 the cedar that did grow by Jupiter's command  
 have I sent to the fire; and let their sleepers  
 awake; and let their sleepers  
 awake; and let their sleepers  
 awake. But this rough magic

**Prospero** So shall mine. If you, mere air, can experience a  
 sympathy for them in their suffering, then surely I – one of  
 their own kind, with emotions identical to theirs – must be  
 more compassionate than you are? Though I'm deeply hurt  
 by their injustices to me, I control my anger by favoring  
 that nobler quality, reason. Forgiveness is of a higher order  
 than vengeance. If they repent, then I've achieved my  
 purpose. Go and release them, Ariel. I'll break my spells,  
 restore their senses, and they'll be themselves again.

**Ariel** I'll fetch them, sir.

[He goes]

**Prospero** You elves of hills, brooks, calm lakes, and groves!  
 And you light-footed spirits that chase the ocean when it  
 ebbs, and run away from it when it flows back! You fairies  
 who make rings on village greens by moonlight, so sour that  
 ewes won't crop the grass! And you whose pastime is to  
 make the mushrooms grow at midnight, and who like to  
 hear the solemn curfew bell! With your aid, lesser spirits  
 though you are, I have dimmed the sun at noon, summoned  
 violent storms, and made the green sea and the blue sky  
 wage roaring war. I have added fireballs to fearful, booming  
 thunder, and split stout oaks – Jove's sacred trees – with  
 his own thunderbolts. I've shaken rock-solid headlands, and  
 plucked up pines and cedars by the roots. At my command,  
 graves have awakened those sleeping within, opened up,  
 and let them out, through my so powerful art. But this crude

assurance that a living Prince  
 speak to thee, I embrace thy body;  
 thee and thy company I bid  
 welcome.

Whether thou be'st he or no,  
 enchanted trifle to abuse me,  
 have been, I not know: thy pulse  
 of flesh and blood; and, since I saw thee,  
 tion of my mind amends, with which,  
 madness held me: this must crave –  
 be at all – a most strange story.  
 dom I resign, and do entreat  
 don me my wrongs. But how should Prospero  
 and be here?

First, noble friend  
 embrace thine age, whose honour cannot  
 red or confined.

Whether this be  
 I'll not swear.

You do yet taste  
 delities o' the isle, that will not let you  
 things certain. Welcome, my friends all!  
**Sebastian and Antonio**] But you, my brace of lords,  
 minded,  
 and pluck his highness' frown upon you,  
 y you traitors: at this time  
 to tales.

[*Aside*] The devil speaks in him.

No.  
 most wicked sir, whom to call brother  
 in infect my mouth, I do forgive  
 st fault – all of them; and require

indeed speaking to you, I embrace you. [*He holds Alonso to him*] To you and your company I bid a hearty welcome.

**Alonso** Whether you are Prospero or not, or some kind of  
 magic trick like the others that have deluded me recently, I  
 don't know. Your pulse beats like a normal man's. Since  
 seeing you, the madness is cured from which, I fear, I have  
 suffered. If this is all real, it's part of a most remarkable  
 story. I will no longer extort tribute money: and I beg you to  
 pardon the wrongs I have done you. But how can Prospero  
 be alive and living here?

**Prospero** [*turning to Gonzalo*] First, noble friend, let me  
 embrace your old self. Your honor is beyond measure or  
 limit.

**Gonzalo** [*dazed*] Whether this is really happening or not, I  
 can't say.

**Prospero** You are still influenced by the island's magical  
 qualities, which stops you from believing in realities.  
 Welcome, my friends, one and all! [*Aside to Sebastian and  
 Antonio*] But you, my fine pair of lords, if I were so inclined I  
 could expose you before the king and prove you are traitors.  
 Right now, I'll tell no tales. . . .

**Sebastian** [*aside*] It's the devil speaking!

**Prospero** No! [*To Antonio*] As for you, you wicked man,  
 whom to call "brother" would soil my mouth, I forgive the  
 foulest of your deeds. Nay, all of them. I require my

Was Milan thrust from Milan, that his issue  
 become Kings of Naples? O, rejoice  
 a common joy! And set it down  
 on lasting pillars: in one voyage  
 Claribel her husband find at Tunis;  
 Ferdinand, her brother, found a wife  
 when he himself was lost; Prospero his dukedom  
 on a poor isle; and all of us ourselves  
 when our man was his own.

**[To Ferdinand and Miranda]** Give me your hands:  
 and sorrow still embrace his heart  
 who does not wish you joy!

Be it so! Amen!

**[Ariel with the Master and Boatswain amazedly]**

Sir, look, sir! Here is more of us:  
 died, if a gallows were on land,  
 how could not drown. Now, blasphemy,  
 our first grace o'erboard, not an oath on shore?  
 and no mouth by land? What is the news?

The best news is, that we have safely found  
 our ship and company; the next, our ship –  
 split into three glasses since, we gave out split –  
 and bravely rigged, as when  
 we first put out to sea.

**[To Prospero]** Sir, all this service  
 we owe you since I went.

**[Aside to Ariel]** My tricky spirit!

These are not natural events; they strengthen  
 our magic to stranger. Say, how came you hither?

**Gonzalo** Was the duke of Milan expelled from Milan so that  
 his grandson should be king of Naples? Oh, such  
 extraordinary happiness! Inscribe it in gold on granite pillars:  
 "On one voyage, Claribel found a husband in Tunis;  
 Ferdinand, her brother, found a wife when he himself was  
 lost; Prospero found his dukedom on a poor island; and all of  
 us found ourselves when we were all misguided."

**Alonso** **[to Ferdinand and Miranda]** Give me your hands. May  
 he who does not wish you joy suffer grief and sorrow  
 evermore!

**Gonzalo** So be it! Amen!

**[Ariel returns with the Captain and Bosun, both thoroughly  
 bewildered]**

Oh, look sir, look sir! Here's more of us. I prophesied this  
 fellow couldn't drown while gallows stood on land! Now, Mr  
 Blasphemy, who threw the grace of God overboard with his  
 swearing, have you no oaths now you're on shore? Silent,  
 are you, now you're on land? What's the news?

**Bosun** The best news is that we have found our king and our  
 passengers; the next best, that our ship – which only three  
 hours ago we said was split – is in one piece, shipshape  
 and trimly rigged, as when we first put out to sea.

**Ariel** **[aside to Prospero]** Sir, I've done all this since I last left  
 you.

**Prospero** **[aside to Ariel]** That's my clever spirit!

**Alonso** This is all quite uncanny. What's strange gets  
 stranger. Tell me, how did you get here?