

King Lear Abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 7

Daughter to Father

Situation: Learning that Cordelia has arrived in Britain, a demented Lear runs off, only to be found by his youngest daughter, now the Queen of France. Sweetheart Cordelia does her best to comfort her father.

CORDELIA: How does the king?

DOCTOR: Madam, sleeps still.

CORDELIA: O, you kind gods, cure this great breach in his abused nature!

DOCTOR: So please your Majesty that we may wake the king?

CORDELIA: Be governed by your knowledge.

Lear enters in a chair carried by servants.

DOCTOR: Be by, good madam, when we do awake him.

CORDELIA: Very well.

She kisses her father.

Cordelia to Lear, No. 2

O, my dear father, let this kiss repair
These violent harms to their father this pair
Of sisters hath made. Your white hair required
Their pity, had you not been their father.
Is this a face to endure being jarred
By winds; to stand 'gainst dread-bolted thunder,
In the terrible, nimble stroke one sees
Of quick cross-lightening? Should mine enemy's
Dog, though he had bit me, have stood that night
Against the fire. Wast thou willing, father,
To hovel thee with rogues who'd lost all fight
In short and musty straw? 'Tis a wonder
That at once thy life and wits though now dim
Had not ended. He wakes. I'll speak to him.

CORDELIA: How does my royal lord?

LEAR: You do me wrong to take me out o' th' grave. Thou art a soul in bliss, but I am bound upon a wheel of fire, that mine own tears do scald like molten lead.

CORDELIA: Sir, do you know me?

LEAR: You are a spirit, I know. Where did you die?