

CORDELIA AND LEAR I.I

LEAR

To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure 90
Than that conferred on Goneril.—Now, our joy,
Although our last and least, to whose young love
The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
Strive to be interested, what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters'? Speak. 95

CORDELIA Nothing, my lord.

LEAR Nothing?

CORDELIA Nothing.

LEAR

Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again.

CORDELIA

Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave 100
My heart into my mouth. I love your Majesty
According to my bond, no more nor less.

LEAR

How, how, Cordelia? Mend your speech a little,
Lest you may mar your fortunes.

CORDELIA Good my lord, 105

You have begot me, bred me, loved me.
I return those duties back as are right fit:
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands if they say
They love you all? Haply, when I shall wed, 110
That lord whose hand must take my plight shall
carry

Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
Sure I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all. 115

LEAR But goes thy heart with this?

CORDELIA Ay, my good lord.

LEAR So young and so untender?

CORDELIA So young, my lord, and true.

LEAR

Let it be so. Thy truth, then, be thy dower, 120
For by the sacred radiance of the sun,
The mysteries of Hecate and the night,
By all the operation of the orbs
From whom we do exist and cease to be,
Here I disclaim all my paternal care, 125
Propinquity, and property of blood,
And as a stranger to my heart and me
Hold thee from this forever. The barbarous
Scythian,

Or he that makes his generation messes 130
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
Be as well neighbored, pitied, and relieved
As thou my sometime daughter.