

REGAN AND LEAR ACT II SCENE III

REGAN I am glad to see your Highness.

LEAR

Regan, I think you are. I know what reason
I have to think so: if thou shouldst not be glad, 145
I would divorce me from thy mother's tomb,
Sepulch'ring an adult'ress. *To Kent.* O, are you
free?

Some other time for that.—Belovèd Regan,
Thy sister's naught. O Regan, she hath tied 150
Sharp-toothed unkindness, like a vulture, here.
I can scarce speak to thee. Thou 'lt not believe
With how depraved a quality—O Regan!

REGAN

I pray you, sir, take patience. I have hope
You less know how to value her desert 155
Than she to scant her duty.

LEAR Say? How is that?

REGAN

I cannot think my sister in the least
Would fail her obligation. If, sir, perchance
She have restrained the riots of your followers, 160
'Tis on such ground and to such wholesome end
As clears her from all blame.

LEAR My curses on her.

REGAN O sir, you are old.

Nature in you stands on the very verge 165
Of his confine. You should be ruled and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you
That to our sister you do make return.

Say you have wronged her. 170

LEAR Ask her forgiveness?

Do you but mark how this becomes the house:

He kneels.

“Dear daughter, I confess that I am old.
Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and food.” 175

REGAN

Good sir, no more. These are unsightly tricks.
Return you to my sister.

LEAR, *rising* Never, Regan.

She hath abated me of half my train,
Looked black upon me, struck me with her tongue 180
Most serpentlike upon the very heart.
All the stored vengeance of heaven fall
On her ingrateful top! Strike her young bones,
You taking airs, with lameness!

CORNWALL ~~Fie, sir, fie!~~ 185

LEAR

~~You nimble lightnings, dart your blinding flames
Into her scornful eyes! Infect her beauty,
You fen-sucked fogs drawn by the powerful sun
To fall and blister!~~

REGAN

O, the blest gods! So will you wish on me 190
When the rash mood is on.

LEAR

No, Regan, thou shalt never have my curse.
Thy tender-hefted nature shall not give
Thee o'er to harshness. Her eyes are fierce, but
thine 195

Do comfort and not burn. ~~'Tis not in thee
To grudge my pleasures, to cut off my train,
To bandy hasty words, to scant my sizes,
And, in conclusion, to oppose the bolt
Against my coming in. Thou better know'st~~ 200

~~The offices of nature, bond of childhood,
Effects of courtesy, dues of gratitude.
Thy half o' th' kingdom hast thou not forgot,
Wherein I thee endowed.~~

REGAN Good sir, to th' purpose.