

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Swords, Scenes & Soliloquies

THE TEMPEST

Act II, scene 1: Antonio, Sebastian; Ariel, Gonzalo, Alonso

SEBASTIAN

What a strange drowsiness possesses them!

ANTONIO

It is the quality o' the climate.

SEBASTIAN

Why not then do our eyelids sink? I find not
Myself disposed to sleep.

ANTONIO

Nor I; my spirits are nimble.
What might, worthy Sebastian? O, what might?--No more:--
And yet me thinks I see it in thy face,
What thou shouldst be: My strong imagination sees a crown
Dropping upon thy head.

SEBASTIAN

What, art thou waking?

ANTONIO

Do you not hear me speak?

SEBASTIAN

I do; What is it thou didst say?

ANTONIO

I am more serious than my custom: you
Must be so too, if heed me..

SEBASTIAN

Well, I am standing water.

ANTONIO

I'll teach you how to flow.

SEBASTIAN

Do so: to ebb hereditary sloth instructs me.

ANTONIO

Will you grant with me that King Alonso's son Ferdinand is drown'd?

SEBASTIAN

He's gone.

ANTONIO

Then, tell me, who's the next heir of Naples?

SEBASTIAN

Claribel.

ANTONIO

She that is queen of Tunis; she that dwells ten leagues beyond man's life?
We all were sea-swallow'd, though some cast again,
And by that destiny to perform an act
Whereof what's past is prologue, what to come
In yours and my discharge.

SEBASTIAN

What stuff is this! how say you?
'Tis true, my brother's daughter's queen of Tunis;
So is she heir of Naples; 'twixt which regions there is some space.

ANTONIO

O, that you bore
The mind that I do! what a sleep were this
For your advancement! Do you understand me?

SEBASTIAN

Methinks I do. I remember you did supplant your brother Prospero.

ANTONIO

True: And look how well my garments sit upon me;

SEBASTIAN

But, for your conscience?

ANTONIO

Ay, sir; where lies that? Here lies your brother,
No better than the earth he lies upon,
If he were that which now he's like, that's dead;
Whom I, with this obedient steel, three inches of it,
Can lay to bed for ever...

SEBASTIAN

Thy case, dear friend,
Shall be my precedent; as thou got'st Milan,
I'll come by Naples. Draw thy sword: one stroke
Shall free thee from the tribute which thou payest;
And I the king shall love thee.

ANTONIO

Draw together;
And when I rear my hand, do you the like,
To fall it on Gonzalo.

SEBASTIAN

O, but one word.

[They talk apart, Re-enter ARIEL, invisible]

ARIEL

My master through his art foresees the danger
That you, his friend, are in; and sends me forth--
For else his project dies--to keep them living.
[Speaks in GONZALO's ear]

If of life you keep a care,
Shake off slumber, and beware: Awake, awake!

ANTONIO

Then let us both be sudden!

GONZALO

Now, good angels preserve the king!

ALONSO

Why, how now? ho, awake! Why are you drawn?
Wherefore this ghastly looking?

GONZALO

What's the matter?

SEBASTIAN

Whiles we stood here securing your repose,
Even now, we heard a hollow burst of bellowing
Like bulls, or rather lions: did't not wake you?
It struck mine ear most terribly.

ALONSO

I heard nothing.

ANTONIO

O, 'twas a din to fright a monster's ear,
To make an earthquake! sure, it was the roar
Of a whole herd of lions.

ARIEL

Prospero my lord shall know what I have done:
So, king, go safely on to seek thy son.