

King Lear. I.i. *Enter one bearing a coronet, then KING LEAR, then the DUKES OF ALBANY and CORNWALL, next GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, with followers*

Lear. Attend the lords of France and Burgundy, Gloucester.

Glou. I shall, my lord. *Exeunt* [GLOUCESTER and EDMUND]. 16

Lear. Meantime we shall express **our** darker purpose.
Give me the map there. Know that **we** have divided
In three **our** kingdom; and 'tis **our** fast intent
To shake all cares and business from **our** age, 20
Conferring them on younger strengths, while **we**
Unburden'd crawl toward death. **Our** son of Cornwall,
And **you, our** no less loving son of Albany,
We have this hour a constant will to publish 24
Our daughters' several dowers, that future strife
May be prevented now. The Princes, France and Burgundy,
Great rivals in **our** youngest daughter's love,
Long in **our** court have made their amorous sojourn, 28
And here are to be answer'd. Tell **me, my** daughters,—
Since now **we** will divest **us** both of rule,
Interest of territory, cares of state,—
Which of **you** shall **we** say doth love **us** most, 32
That **we our** largest bounty may extend
Where nature doth with merit challenge? Goneril,
Our eldest-born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, **I** love **you** more than word can wield the matter; 36
Dearer than eye-sight, space, and liberty;
Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honour;
As much as child e'er lov'd, or father found; 40
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable:
Beyond all manner of so much I love **you**.

Cor. [*Aside.*] What shall Cordelia speak? Love and be silent.

Lear. Of all these bounds, even from this line to this, 44
With shadowy forests and with champains rich'd,
With plenteous rivers and wide-skirted meads,
We make **thee** lady. To **thine** and Albany's issues
Be this perpetual. What says **our** second daughter, 48
Our dearest Regan, wife of Cornwall? Speak.

Reg. **I** am made of that self metal as **my** sister,
And prize **me** at **her** worth. In **my** true heart
I find **she** names **my** very deed of love; 52
Only **she** comes too short, that **I** profess
Myself an enemy to all other joys
Which the most precious square of sense possesses;
And find **I** am alone felicitate 56
In **your** dear Highness' love.

Cor. [Aside.] Then poor Cordelia!
 And yet not so; since, **I** am sure, **my** love's
 More ponderous than **my** tongue. 60

Lear. To **thee** and **thine** hereditary ever
 Remain this ample third of **our** fair kingdom;
 No less in space, validity, and pleasure,
 Than that conferr'd on Goneril. Now, **our** joy, 64
 Although **our** last and least, to whose young love
 The vines of France and milk of Burgundy
 Strive to be interest'd, what can **you** say to draw
 A third more opulent than **your** sisters? Speak. 68

Cor. Nothing, my lord.
Lear. Nothing!
Cor. Nothing.
Lear. Nothing will come of nothing. Speak again. 72

Cor. Unhappy that **I** am, **I** cannot heave
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, 76
 Lest **you** may mar **your** fortunes.

Cor. Good my lord,
You have begot me, bred me, lov'd me: I
 Return those duties back as are right fit; 80
 Obey **you**, love **you**, and most honour **you**.
 Why have my sisters husbands, if they say
 They love **you** all? Haply, when I shall wed,
 That lord whose hand must take my plight shall carry 84
 Half my love with him, half my care and duty.
 Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters
 [To love my father all].

Lear. But goes **thy** heart with this? 88
Cor. Ay, my good lord.
Lear. So young, and so untender?
Cor. So young, my lord, and true.
Lear. Let it be so; **thy** truth, then, be **thy** dower! 92

For, by the scared 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; 96
 Here **I** disclaim all **my** paternal care,
 Propinquity and property of blood,
 And as a stranger to **my** heart and **me**
 Hold **thee**, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian, 100
 Or he that makes his generation messes
 To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom
 Be as well neighbour'd, pity'd, and reliev'd,
 As thou my sometime daughter. 104