**ACT 1 SCENE 1 L.81-114**

**LEAR** A third more opulent than your sisters? Speak.

**CORDELIA**Nothing, my lord.

**KING LEAR**Nothing!

**CORDELIA**Nothing.

**KING LEAR**Nothing will come of nothing: speak again.

**CORDELIA**Unhappy that I am, I cannot heave  
My heart into my mouth: I love your majesty  
According to my bond; nor more nor less.

**KING LEAR**How, how, Cordelia! mend your speech a little,  
Lest it may mar your fortunes.

**CORDELIA**Good my lord,  
You have begot me, bred me, loved me: I  
Return those duties back as are right fit,  
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  
Half my love with him, half my care and duty:  
Sure, I shall never marry like my sisters,  
To love my father all.

**KING LEAR**But goes thy heart with this?

**CORDELIA**Ay, good my lord.

**KING LEAR**So young, and so untender?

**CORDELIA**So young, my lord, and true.

**KING LEAR**Let it be so; thy truth, then, be thy dower:  
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,  
Propinquity and property of blood,  
And as a stranger to my heart and me  
Hold thee, from this, for ever. The barbarous Scythian,  
Or he that makes his generation messes  
To gorge his appetite, shall to my bosom  
Be as well neighbour'd, pitied, and relieved,  
As thou my sometime daughter.

**ACT 1 SCENE 2 L.1-35**

*EDMUND*   Thou, nature, art my goddess; to thy law  
My services are bound. Wherefore should I  
Stand in the plague of custom, and permit  
The curiosity of nations to deprive me,  
For that I am some twelve or fourteen moon-shines  
Lag of a brother? Why bastard? wherefore base?  
When my dimensions are as well compact,  
My mind as generous, and my shape as true,  
As honest madam's issue? Why brand they us  
With base? with baseness? bastardy? base, base?  
Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take  
More composition and fierce quality  
Than doth, within a dull, stale, tired bed,  
Go to the creating a whole tribe of fops,  
Got 'tween asleep and wake? Well, then,  
Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land:  
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund  
As to the legitimate: fine word, -- legitimate!  
Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed,  
And my invention thrive, Edmund the base  
Shall top the legitimate. I grow; I prosper:  
Now, gods, stand up for bastards!

    [*Enter GLOUCESTER*]

*GLOUCESTER*   Kent banish'd thus! and France in choler parted!  
And the king gone to-night! subscribed his power!  
Confined to exhibition! All this done  
Upon the gad! Edmund, how now! what news?

*EDMUND*   So please your lordship, none.

    [*Putting up the letter*]

*GLOUCESTER*   Why so earnestly seek you to put up that letter?

*EDMUND*   I know no news, my lord.

*GLOUCESTER*   What paper were you reading?

*EDMUND*   Nothing, my lord.

*GLOUCESTER*   No? What needed, then, that terrible dispatch of  
it into your pocket? the quality of nothing hath  
not such need to hide itself. Let's see: come,  
if it be nothing, I shall not need spectacles

**ACT 1 SCENE 2 L.90-120**

*GLOUCESTER*   These late eclipses in the sun and moon portend  
no good to us: though the wisdom of nature can  
reason it thus and thus, yet nature finds itself  
scourged by the sequent effects: love cools,  
friendship falls off, brothers divide: in  
cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in  
palaces, treason; and the bond cracked 'twixt son  
and father. This villain of mine comes under the  
prediction; there's son against father: the king  
falls from bias of nature; there's father against  
child. We have seen the best of our time:  
machinations, hollowness, treachery, and all  
ruinous disorders, follow us disquietly to our  
graves. Find out this villain, Edmund; it shall  
lose thee nothing; do it carefully. And the  
noble and true-hearted Kent banished! his  
offence, honesty! 'Tis strange.

    [*Exit*]

*EDMUND*   This is the excellent foppery of the world, that,  
when we are sick in fortune, -- often the surfeit  
of our own behavior, -- we make guilty of our  
disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as  
if we were villains by necessity; fools by  
heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and  
treachers, by spherical predominance; drunkards,  
liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of  
planetary influence; and all that we are evil in,  
by a divine thrusting on: an admirable evasion  
of whoremaster man, to lay his goatish  
disposition to the charge of a star! My  
father compounded with my mother under the  
dragon's tail; and my nativity was under Ursa  
major; so that it follows, I am rough and  
lecherous. Tut, I should have been that I am,  
had the maidenliest star in the firmament  
twinkled on my bastardizing. Edgar --

    [*Enter EDGAR*]

    And pat he comes like the catastrophe of the old  
comedy: my cue is villanous melancholy, with a  
sigh like Tom o' Bedlam. O, these eclipses do  
portend these divisions! fa, sol, la, mi.

**ACT 1 SCENE 4 L.217-248**

*KING LEAR*

    [*To GONERIL*]    Detested kite! thou liest.  
My train are men of choice and rarest parts,  
That all particulars of duty know,  
And in the most exact regard support  
The worships of their name. O most small fault,  
How ugly didst thou in Cordelia show!  
That, like an engine, wrench'd my frame of nature  
From the fix'd place; drew from heart all love,  
And added to the gall. O Lear, Lear, Lear!  
Beat at this gate, that let thy folly in,

    [*Striking his head*]

    And thy dear judgment out! Go, go, my people.

*ALBANY*   My lord, I am guiltless, as I am ignorant  
Of what hath moved you.

*KING LEAR*   It may be so, my lord.  
Hear, nature, hear; dear goddess, hear!  
Suspend thy purpose, if thou didst intend  
To make this creature fruitful!  
Into her womb convey sterility!  
Dry up in her the organs of increase;  
And from her derogate body never spring  
A babe to honour her! If she must teem,  
Create her child of spleen; that it may live,  
And be a thwart disnatured torment to her!  
Let it stamp wrinkles in her brow of youth;  
With cadent tears fret channels in her cheeks;  
Turn all her mother's pains and benefits  
To laughter and contempt; that she may feel  
How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is  
To have a thankless child! Away, away!

    [*Exit*]

*ALBANY*   Now, gods that we adore, whereof comes this?

*GONERIL*   Never afflict yourself to know the cause;  
But let his disposition have that scope  
That dotage gives it.

**ACT 1 SCENE 5 L.6-38**

***Fool***   If a man's brains were in's heels, were't not in  
danger of kibes?

*KING LEAR*   Ay, boy.

*Fool*   Then, I prithee, be merry; thy wit shall ne'er go  
slip-shod.

*KING LEAR*   Ha, ha, ha!

*Fool*   Shalt see thy other daughter will use thee kindly;  
for though she's as like this as a crab's like an  
apple, yet I can tell what I can tell.

*KING LEAR*   Why, what canst thou tell, my boy?

*Fool*   She will taste as like this as a crab does to a  
crab. Thou canst tell why one's nose stands i'  
the middle on's face?

*KING LEAR*   No.

*Fool*   Why, to keep one's eyes of either side's nose; that  
what a man cannot smell out, he may spy into.

*KING LEAR*   I did her wrong --

*Fool*   Canst tell how an oyster makes his shell?

*KING LEAR*   No.

*Fool*   Nor I neither; but I can tell why a snail has a house.

*KING LEAR*   Why?

*Fool*   Why, to put his head in; not to give it away to his  
daughters, and leave his horns without a case.

*KING LEAR*   I will forget my nature. So kind a father! Be my  
horses ready?

*Fool*   Thy asses are gone about 'em. The reason why the  
seven stars are no more than seven is a pretty reason.

*KING LEAR*   Because they are not eight?

*Fool*   Yes, indeed: thou wouldst make a good fool.

*KING LEAR*   To take 't again perforce! Monster ingratitude!

*Fool*   If thou wert my fool, nuncle, I'ld have thee beaten  
for being old before thy time.

*KING LEAR*   How's that?

*Fool*   Thou shouldst not have been old till thou hadst  
been wise.

*KING LEAR*   O, let me not be mad, not mad, sweet heaven  
Keep me in temper: I would not be mad!

**ACT 2 SCENE 1 L.55-84**

***GLOUCESTER***

   Let him fly far:  
Not in this land shall he remain uncaught;  
And found -- dispatch. The noble duke my master,  
My worthy arch and patron, comes to-night:  
By his authority I will proclaim it,  
That he which finds him shall deserve our thanks,  
Bringing the murderous coward to the stake;  
He that conceals him, death.

*EDMUND*

   When I dissuaded him from his intent,  
And found him pight to do it, with curst speech  
I threaten'd to discover him: he replied,  
'Thou unpossessing bastard! dost thou think,  
If I would stand against thee, would the reposal  
Of any trust, virtue, or worth in thee  
Make thy words faith'd? No: what I should deny, --   
As this I would: ay, though thou didst produce  
My very character, -- I'ld turn it all  
To thy suggestion, plot, and damned practise:  
And thou must make a dullard of the world,  
If they not thought the profits of my death  
Were very pregnant and potential spurs  
To make thee seek it.'

*GLOUCESTER*

   Strong and fasten'd villain  
Would he deny his letter? I never got him.

    [*Tucket within*]

    Hark, the duke's trumpets! I know not why he comes.  
All ports I'll bar; the villain shall not 'scape;  
The duke must grant me that: besides, his picture  
I will send far and near, that all the kingdom  
May have the due note of him; and of my land,  
Loyal and natural boy, I'll work the means  
To make thee capable.

**ACT 2 SCENE 2 L.60-94**

***CORNWALL***   Peace, sirrah!  
You beastly knave, know you no reverence?

*KENT*  Yes, sir; but anger hath a privilege.

*CORNWALL*  Why art thou angry?

*KENT*   That such a slave as this should wear a sword,  
Who wears no honesty. Such smiling rogues as these,  
Like rats, oft bite the holy cords a-twain  
Which are too intrinse t' unloose; smooth every passion  
That in the natures of their lords rebel;  
Bring oil to fire, snow to their colder moods;  
Renege, affirm, and turn their halcyon beaks  
With every gale and vary of their masters,  
Knowing nought, like dogs, but following.  
A plague upon your epileptic visage!  
Smile you my speeches, as I were a fool?  
Goose, if I had you upon Sarum plain,  
I'ld drive ye cackling home to Camelot.

*CORNWALL*   Why, art thou mad, old fellow?

*GLOUCESTER*   How fell you out? say that.

*KENT*   No contraries hold more antipathy  
Than I and such a knave.

*CORNWALL*   Why dost thou call him a knave? What's his offence?

*KENT*   His countenance likes me not.

*CORNWALL*   No more, perchance, does mine, nor his, nor hers.

*KENT*   Sir, 'tis my occupation to be plain:  
I have seen better faces in my time  
Than stands on any shoulder that I see  
Before me at this instant.

*CORNWALL*   This is some fellow,  
Who, having been praised for bluntness, doth affect  
A saucy roughness, and constrains the garb  
Quite from his nature: he cannot flatter, he,  
An honest mind and plain, he must speak truth!  
An they will take it, so; if not, he's plain.  
These kind of knaves I know, which in this plainness  
Harbour more craft and more corrupter ends  
Than twenty silly ducking observants  
That stretch their duties nicely.

**ACT 2 SCENE 3**

[*A wood.*]

    [*Enter EDGAR*]

*EDGAR*

   I heard myself proclaim'd;  
And by the happy hollow of a tree  
Escaped the hunt. No port is free; no place,  
That guard, and most unusual vigilance,  
Does not attend my taking. Whiles I may 'scape,  
I will preserve myself: and am bethought  
To take the basest and most poorest shape  
That ever penury, in contempt of man,  
Brought near to beast: my face I'll grime with filth;  
Blanket my loins: elf all my hair in knots;  
And with presented nakedness out-face  
The winds and persecutions of the sky.  
The country gives me proof and precedent  
Of Bedlam beggars, who, with roaring voices,  
Strike in their numb'd and mortified bare arms  
Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary;  
And with this horrible object, from low farms,  
Poor pelting villages, sheep-cotes, and mills,  
Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers,  
Enforce their charity. Poor Turlygod! poor Tom!  
That's something yet: Edgar I nothing am.

    [*Exit*]

**ACT 2 SCENE 4 L.249-279**

***KING LEAR***   Those wicked creatures yet do look well-favour'd,  
When others are more wicked: not being the worst  
Stands in some rank of praise.

    [*To GONERIL*]

    I'll go with thee:  
Thy fifty yet doth double five and twenty,  
And thou art twice her love.

*GONERIL*   Hear me, my lord;  
What need you five and twenty, ten, or five,  
To follow in a house where twice so many  
Have a command to tend you?

*REGAN*   What need one?

*KING LEAR*   O, reason not the need: our basest beggars  
Are in the poorest thing superfluous:  
Allow not nature more than nature needs,  
Man's life's as cheap as beast's: thou art a lady;  
If only to go warm were gorgeous,  
Why, nature needs not what thou gorgeous wear'st,  
Which scarcely keeps thee warm. But, for true need, --   
You heavens, give me that patience, patience I need!  
You see me here, you gods, a poor old man,  
As full of grief as age; wretched in both!  
If it be you that stir these daughters' hearts  
Against their father, fool me not so much  
To bear it tamely; touch me with noble anger,  
And let not women's weapons, water-drops,  
Stain my man's cheeks! No, you unnatural hags,  
I will have such revenges on you both,  
That all the world shall -- I will do such things, --   
What they are, yet I know not: but they shall be  
The terrors of the earth. You think I'll weep  
No, I'll not weep:  
I have full cause of weeping; but this heart  
Shall break into a hundred thousand flaws,  
Or ere I'll weep. O fool, I shall go mad!

    [*Exeunt KING LEAR, GLOUCESTER, KENT, and Fool*]

    [*Storm and tempest*]

**ACT 3 SCENE 2 L.1-34**

***KING LEAR***

   Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!  
You cataracts and hurricanoes, spout  
Till you have drench'd our steeples, drown'd the cocks!  
You sulphurous and thought-executing fires,  
Vaunt-couriers to oak-cleaving thunderbolts,  
Singe my white head! And thou, all-shaking thunder,  
Smite flat the thick rotundity o' the world!  
Crack nature's moulds, an germens spill at once,  
That make ingrateful man!

*Fool*

   O nuncle, court holy-water in a dry  
house is better than this rain-water out o' door.  
Good nuncle, in, and ask thy daughters' blessing:  
here's a night pities neither wise man nor fool.

*KING LEAR*

   Rumble thy bellyful! Spit, fire! spout, rain!  
Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:  
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness;  
I never gave you kingdom, call'd you children,  
You owe me no subscription: then let fall  
Your horrible pleasure: here I stand, your slave,  
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man:  
But yet I call you servile ministers,  
That have with two pernicious daughters join'd  
Your high engender'd battles 'gainst a head  
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!

*Fool*

   He that has a house to put's head in has a good  
head-piece.  
The cod-piece that will house  
Before the head has any,  
The head and he shall louse;  
So beggars marry many.  
The man that makes his toe  
What he his heart should make  
Shall of a corn cry woe,  
And turn his sleep to wake.  
For there was never yet fair woman but she made  
mouths in a glass.

**ACT 3 SCENE 4 L.6-36**

**KING LEAR**

   Thou think'st 'tis much that this contentious storm  
Invades us to the skin: so 'tis to thee;  
But where the greater malady is fix'd,  
The lesser is scarce felt. Thou'ldst shun a bear;  
But if thy flight lay toward the raging sea,  
Thou'ldst meet the bear i' the mouth. When the  
mind's free,  
The body's delicate: the tempest in my mind  
Doth from my senses take all feeling else  
Save what beats there. Filial ingratitude!  
Is it not as this mouth should tear this hand  
For lifting food to't? But I will punish home:  
No, I will weep no more. In such a night  
To shut me out! Pour on; I will endure.  
In such a night as this! O Regan, Goneril!  
Your old kind father, whose frank heart gave all, --   
O, that way madness lies; let me shun that;  
No more of that.

*KENT*

   Good my lord, enter here.

*KING LEAR*

   Prithee, go in thyself: seek thine own ease:  
This tempest will not give me leave to ponder  
On things would hurt me more. But I'll go in.

    [*To the Fool*]

    In, boy; go first. You houseless poverty, --   
Nay, get thee in. I'll pray, and then I'll sleep.

    [*Fool goes in*]

    Poor naked wretches, whereso'er you are,  
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,  
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,  
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you  
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en  
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;  
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,  
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,  
And show the heavens more just.

**ACT 3 SCENE 4 L.132-166**

**GLOUCESTER**   Go in with me: my duty cannot suffer  
To obey in all your daughters' hard commands:  
Though their injunction be to bar my doors,  
And let this tyrannous night take hold upon you,  
Yet have I ventured to come seek you out,  
And bring you where both fire and food is ready.

*KING LEAR*   First let me talk with this philosopher.  
What is the cause of thunder?

*KENT*   Good my lord, take his offer; go into the house.

*KING LEAR*   I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban.  
What is your study?

*EDGAR*   How to prevent the fiend, and to kill vermin.

*KING LEAR*   Let me ask you one word in private.

*KENT*   Importune him once more to go, my lord;  
His wits begin to unsettle.

*GLOUCESTER*   Canst thou blame him?

    [*Storm still*]

    His daughters seek his death: ah, that good Kent!  
He said it would be thus, poor banish'd man!  
Thou say'st the king grows mad; I'll tell thee, friend,  
I am almost mad myself: I had a son,  
Now outlaw'd from my blood; he sought my life,  
But lately, very late: I loved him, friend;  
No father his son dearer: truth to tell thee,  
The grief hath crazed my wits. What a night's this!  
I do beseech your grace, --

*KING LEAR*   O, cry your mercy, sir.  
Noble philosopher, your company.

*EDGAR*   Tom's a-cold.

*GLOUCESTER*   In, fellow, there, into the hovel: keep thee warm.

*KING LEAR*   Come let's in all.

*KENT*   This way, my lord.

*KING LEAR*   With him;  
I will keep still with my philosopher.

*KENT*   Good my lord, soothe him; let him take the fellow.

*GLOUCESTER*   Take him you on.

*KENT*   Sirrah, come on; go along with us.

*KING LEAR*   Come, good Athenian.

*GLOUCESTER*   No words, no words: hush.

**ACT 3 SCENE 7 L.55-93**

**GLOUCESTER**   Because I would not see thy cruel nails  
Pluck out his poor old eyes; nor thy fierce sister  
In his anointed flesh stick boarish fangs.  
The sea, with such a storm as his bare head  
In hell-black night endured, would have buoy'd up,  
And quench'd the stelled fires:  
Yet, poor old heart, he holp the heavens to rain.  
If wolves had at thy gate howl'd that stern time,  
Thou shouldst have said 'Good porter, turn the key,'  
All cruels else subscribed: but I shall see  
The winged vengeance overtake such children.

*CORNWALL*   See't shalt thou never. Fellows, hold the chair.  
Upon these eyes of thine I'll set my foot.

*GLOUCESTER*   He that will think to live till he be old,  
Give me some help! O cruel! O you gods!

*REGAN*   One side will mock another; the other too.

*CORNWALL*   If you see vengeance, --

*First Servant*   Hold your hand, my lord:  
I have served you ever since I was a child;  
But better service have I never done you  
Than now to bid you hold.

*REGAN*   How now, you dog!

*First Servant*   If you did wear a beard upon your chin,  
I'd shake it on this quarrel. What do you mean?

*CORNWALL*   My villain!

    [*They draw and fight*]

*First Servant*   Nay, then, come on, and take the chance of anger.

*REGAN*   Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus!

    [*Takes a sword, and runs at him behind*]

*First Servant*   O, I am slain! My lord, you have one eye left  
To see some mischief on him. O!

    [*Dies*]

*CORNWALL*   Lest it see more, prevent it. Out, vile jelly!  
Where is thy lustre now?

*GLOUCESTER*   All dark and comfortless. Where's my son Edmund?  
Edmund, enkindle all the sparks of nature,  
To quit this horrid act.

*REGAN*   Out, treacherous villain!  
Thou call'st on him that hates thee: it was he  
That made the overture of thy treasons to us;  
Who is too good to pity thee.

*GLOUCESTER*   O my follies! then Edgar was abused.  
Kind gods, forgive me that, and prosper him!

*REGAN*   Go thrust him out at gates, and let him smell  
His way to Dover.

**ACT 4 SCENE 1 L.1-37**

**EDGAR**   Yet better thus, and known to be contemn'd,  
Than still contemn'd and flatter'd. To be worst,  
The lowest and most dejected thing of fortune,  
Stands still in esperance, lives not in fear:  
The lamentable change is from the best;  
The worst returns to laughter. Welcome, then,  
Thou unsubstantial air that I embrace!  
The wretch that thou hast blown unto the worst  
Owes nothing to thy blasts. But who comes here?

    [*Enter GLOUCESTER, led by an Old Man*]

    My father, poorly led? World, world, O world!  
But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee,  
Lie would not yield to age.

*Old Man*   O, my good lord, I have been your tenant, and  
your father's tenant, these fourscore years.

*GLOUCESTER*   Away, get thee away; good friend, be gone:  
Thy comforts can do me no good at all;  
Thee they may hurt.

*Old Man*   Alack, sir, you cannot see your way.

*GLOUCESTER*   I have no way, and therefore want no eyes;  
I stumbled when I saw: full oft 'tis seen,  
Our means secure us, and our mere defects  
Prove our commodities. O dear son Edgar,  
The food of thy abused father's wrath!  
Might I but live to see thee in my touch,  
I'ld say I had eyes again!

*Old Man*   How now! Who's there?

*EDGAR*    [*Aside*]

    O gods! Who is't can say 'I am at  
the worst'?  
I am worse than e'er I was.

*Old Man*   'Tis poor mad Tom.

*EDGAR*    [*Aside*]

    And worse I may be yet: the worst is not  
So long as we can say 'This is the worst.'

*Old Man*   Fellow, where goest?

*GLOUCESTER*   Is it a beggar-man?

*Old Man*   Madman and beggar too.

*GLOUCESTER*   He has some reason, else he could not beg.  
I' the last night's storm I such a fellow saw;  
Which made me think a man a worm: my son  
Came then into my mind; and yet my mind  
Was then scarce friends with him: I have heard  
more since.  
As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods.  
They kill us for their sport.

**ACT 4 SCENE 2 L.12-47**

**GONERIL**    [*To EDMUND*]

    Then shall you go no further.  
It is the cowish terror of his spirit,  
That dares not undertake: he'll not feel wrongs  
Which tie him to an answer. Our wishes on the way  
May prove effects. Back, Edmund, to my brother;  
Hasten his musters and conduct his powers:  
I must change arms at home, and give the distaff  
Into my husband's hands. This trusty servant  
Shall pass between us: ere long you are like to hear,  
If you dare venture in your own behalf,  
A mistress's command. Wear this; spare speech;

    [*Giving a favour*]

    Decline your head: this kiss, if it durst speak,  
Would stretch thy spirits up into the air:  
Conceive, and fare thee well.

*EDMUND*   Yours in the ranks of death.

*GONERIL*   My most dear Gloucester!

    [*Exit EDMUND*]

    O, the difference of man and man!  
To thee a woman's services are due:  
My fool usurps my body.

*OSWALD*   Madam, here comes my lord.

    [*Exit*]

    [*Enter ALBANY*]

*GONERIL*   I have been worth the whistle.

*ALBANY*   O Goneril!  
You are not worth the dust which the rude wind  
Blows in your face.

*GONERIL*   Milk-liver'd man!  
That bear'st a cheek for blows, a head for wrongs;  
Who hast not in thy brows an eye discerning  
Thine honour from thy suffering; --

*ALBANY*   See thyself, devil!  
Proper deformity seems not in the fiend  
So horrid as in woman.

*GONERIL*   O vain fool!

    [*Enter a Messenger*]

*ALBANY*   What news?

*Messenger*   O, my good lord, the Duke of Cornwall's dead:  
Slain by his servant, going to put out  
The other eye of Gloucester.

*ALBANY*   Gloucester's eye!

*Messenger*   A servant that he bred, thrill'd with remorse,  
Opposed against the act, bending his sword  
To his great master; who, thereat enraged,  
Flew on him, and amongst them fell'd him dead;  
But not without that harmful stroke, which since  
Hath pluck'd him after.

**ACT 4 SCENE 3**

    [*The same. A tent.*]

    [*Enter, with drum and colours, CORDELIA, Doctor, and Soldiers*]

*CORDELIA*   Alack, 'tis he: why, he was met even now  
As mad as the vex'd sea; singing aloud;  
Crown'd with rank fumiter and furrow-weeds,  
With bur-docks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,  
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow  
In our sustaining corn. A century send forth;  
Search every acre in the high-grown field,  
And bring him to our eye.

    [*Exit an Officer*]

    What can man's wisdom  
In the restoring his bereaved sense?  
He that helps him take all my outward worth.

*Doctor*   There is means, madam:  
Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,  
The which he lacks; that to provoke in him,  
Are many simples operative, whose power  
Will close the eye of anguish.

*CORDELIA*   All blest secrets,  
All you unpublish'd virtues of the earth,  
Spring with my tears! be aidant and remediate  
In the good man's distress! Seek, seek for him;  
Lest his ungovern'd rage dissolve the life  
That wants the means to lead it.

    [*Enter a Messenger*]

*Messenger*   News, madam;  
The British powers are marching hitherward.

*CORDELIA*   'Tis known before; our preparation stands  
In expectation of them. O dear father,  
It is thy business that I go about;  
Therefore great France  
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.  
No blown ambition doth our arms incite,  
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right:  
Soon may I hear and see him!

    [*Exeunt*]

**ACT 4 SCENE 5**

**KING LEAR**   What, art mad? A man may see how this world goes  
with no eyes. Look with thine ears: see how yond  
justice rails upon yond simple thief. Hark, in  
thine ear: change places; and, handy-dandy, which  
is the justice, which is the thief? Thou hast seen  
a farmer's dog bark at a beggar?

*GLOUCESTER*   Ay, sir.

*KING LEAR*   And the creature run from the cur? There thou  
mightst behold the great image of authority: a  
dog's obeyed in office.  
Thou rascal beadle, hold thy bloody hand!  
Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip thine own back;  
Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that kind  
For which thou whipp'st her. The usurer hangs the cozener.  
Through tatter'd clothes small vices do appear;  
Robes and furr'd gowns hide all. Plate sin with gold,  
And the strong lance of justice hurtless breaks:  
Arm it in rags, a pigmy's straw does pierce it.  
None does offend, none, I say, none; I'll able 'em:  
Take that of me, my friend, who have the power  
To seal the accuser's lips. Get thee glass eyes;  
And like a scurvy politician, seem  
To see the things thou dost not. Now, now, now, now:  
Pull off my boots: harder, harder: so.

*EDGAR*   O, matter and impertinency mix'd! Reason in madness!

*KING LEAR*   If thou wilt weep my fortunes, take my eyes.  
I know thee well enough; thy name is Gloucester:  
Thou must be patient; we came crying hither:  
Thou know'st, the first time that we smell the air,  
We wawl and cry. I will preach to thee: mark.

*GLOUCESTER*   Alack, alack the day!

*KING LEAR*   When we are born, we cry that we are come  
To this great stage of fools: this a good block;  
It were a delicate stratagem, to shoe  
A troop of horse with felt: I'll put 't in proof;  
And when I have stol'n upon these sons-in-law,  
Then, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, kill!

**ACT 4 SCENE 6 L. 49-82**

**KING LEAR**   Where have I been? Where am I? Fair daylight?  
I am mightily abused. I should e'en die with pity,  
To see another thus. I know not what to say.  
I will not swear these are my hands: let's see;  
I feel this pin prick. Would I were assured  
Of my condition!

*CORDELIA*   O, look upon me, sir,  
And hold your hands in benediction o'er me:  
No, sir, you must not kneel.

*KING LEAR*   Pray, do not mock me:  
I am a very foolish fond old man,  
Fourscore and upward, not an hour more nor less;  
And, to deal plainly,  
I fear I am not in my perfect mind.  
Methinks I should know you, and know this man;  
Yet I am doubtful for I am mainly ignorant  
What place this is; and all the skill I have  
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not  
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;  
For, as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia.

*CORDELIA*   And so I am, I am.

*KING LEAR*   Be your tears wet? yes, 'faith. I pray, weep not:  
If you have poison for me, I will drink it.  
I know you do not love me; for your sisters  
Have, as I do remember, done me wrong:  
You have some cause, they have not.

*CORDELIA*   No cause, no cause.

*KING LEAR*   Am I in France?

*KENT*   In your own kingdom, sir.

*KING LEAR*   Do not abuse me.

*Doctor*   Be comforted, good madam: the great rage,  
You see, is kill'd in him: and yet it is danger  
To make him even o'er the time he has lost.  
Desire him to go in; trouble him no more  
Till further settling.

*CORDELIA*   Will't please your highness walk?

*KING LEAR*   You must bear with me:  
Pray you now, forget and forgive: I am old and foolish.