

KENT Is not this your son, my lord ?

GLOUCESTER His breeding, sir, hath been at my charge.

I have so often blushed to acknowledge him that now I am brazed to't.

KENT I cannot conceive you.

GLOUCESTER Sir, this young fellow's mother could ; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and had indeed, sir, a son for her cradle ere she had a husband for her bed. Do you smell a fault ?

KENT I cannot wish the fault undone, the issue of it being so proper.

GLOUCESTER But I have a son, sir, by order of law, some year elder than this who yet is no dearer in my account : though this knave came something saucily to the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund ?

(Ii: 7-23)

REGAN

I am made of that self mettle as my sister,
And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
I find she names my very deed of love ;
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
In your dear Highness' love.

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

(Ii: 69-78)

LEAR

To thee and thine hereditary ever
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom,
No less in space, validity, and pleasure
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 interest ; what can you say to draw
A third more opulent than your sisters ? Speak.

CORDELIA

Nothing, my lord.

LEAR Nothing ?

CORDELIA Nothing.

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, no more nor less.

LEAR

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

(Ii: 79-95)

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,
Conferring them on younger strengths while we
Unburdened crawl toward death.

(Ii: 36-41)

GONERIL

Sir, I love you more than word can wield the matter ;
Dearer than eyesight, space, and liberty ;
Beyond what can be valuèd, rich or rare ;
No less than life, with grace, health, beauty, honor ;
As much as child e'er loved, or father found ;
A love that makes breath poor, and speech unable.
Beyond all manner of so much I love you.

(Ii: 55-61)

LEAR

So young, and so untender ?

CORDELIA

So young, my lord, and true.

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 neighbored, pitied, and relieved,
As thou my sometime daughter.

(Ii: 106-120)

LEAR

Hear me, recreant,

On thine allegiance, hear me !
That thou hast sought to make us break our vows,
Which we durst never yet, and with strained pride
To come betwixt our sentence and our power,
Which nor our nature nor our place can bear,
Our potency made good, take thy reward.
Five days we do allot thee for provision
To shield thee from disasters of the world,
And on the sixth to turn thy hated back
Upon our kingdom. If, on the tenth day following,
Thy banished trunk be found in our dominions,
The moment is thy death.

(Ii: 166-178)