

GLOUCESTER

I am tied to th' stake, and I must stand the course.

REGAN

Wherefore to Dover?

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 buoyed up  
And quenched the stellèd fires.  
Yet, poor old heart, he help the heavens to rain.  
If wolves had at thy gate howled that stern time,  
Thou shouldst have said, 'Good porter, turn the key.'  
All cruels else subscribe. But I shall see  
The wingèd 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. Th' other too.

(III vii: 54-71)

REGAN

Give me thy sword. A peasant stand up thus?  
*[She takes a sword and runs at him behind,] kills him.*

I. SERVANT

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

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. *Exit [one] with Gloucester.*

(III vii: 80-94)

EDGAR

Yet better thus, and known to be contemned,  
Than still contemned and flattered. 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.

(IV i: 1-9)

OLD MAN

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'd 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.

(IV i: 17-26)