

LEAR

Howl, howl, howl ! O, you are men of stones.
Had I your tongues and eyes, I'd use them so
That heaven's vault should crack. She's gone for ever.
I know when one is dead, and when one lives.
She's dead as earth. Lend me a looking glass.
If that her breath will mist or stain the stone,
Why then she lives.

KENT Is this the promised end ?

EDGAR

Or image of that horror ?

ALBANY Fall and cease.

LEAR

This feather stirs ; she lives ! If it be so,
It is a chance which does redeem all sorrows
That ever I have felt.

KENT O my good master.

LEAR

Prithee away.

EDGAR 'Tis noble Kent, your friend.

LEAR

A plague upon you murderers, traitors all ;
I might have saved her ; now she's gone for ever.
Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little. Ha,
What is't thou say'st ? Her voice was ever soft,
Gentle, and low – an excellent thing in woman.
I killed the slave that was a-hanging thee.

(Viii : 258-275)

LEAR

And my poor fool is hanged : no, no, no life ?
Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
And thou no breath at all ? Thou'lt come no more,
Never, never, never, never, never.
Pray you undo this button. Thank you, sir.
Do you see this ? Look on her ! Look her lips,
Look there, look there –

He dies.

EDGAR He faints. My lord, my lord –

KENT

Break, heart, I prithee break !

EDGAR Look up, my lord.

KENT

Vex not his ghost. O, let him pass ! He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough world
Stretch him out longer.

(Viii : 306-316)