Act 3

**SCENE II. Another part of the heath. Storm still.**

*Enter KING LEAR and Fool*

**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.

**KING LEAR**

No, I will be the pattern of all patience;  
I will say nothing.

*Enter KENT*

**KENT**

Who's there?

**Fool**

Marry, here's grace and a cod-piece; that's a wise  
man and a fool.

**KENT**

Alas, sir, are you here? things that love night  
Love not such nights as these; the wrathful skies  
Gallow the very wanderers of the dark,  
And make them keep their caves: since I was man,  
Such sheets of fire, such bursts of horrid thunder,  
Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never  
Remember to have heard: man's nature cannot carry  
The affliction nor the fear.

**KING LEAR**

Let the great gods,  
That keep this dreadful pother o'er our heads,  
Find out their enemies now. Tremble, thou wretch,  
That hast within thee undivulged crimes,  
Unwhipp'd of justice: hide thee, thou bloody hand;  
Thou perjured, and thou simular man of virtue  
That art incestuous: caitiff, to pieces shake,  
That under covert and convenient seeming  
Hast practised on man's life: close pent-up guilts,  
Rive your concealing continents, and cry  
These dreadful summoners grace. I am a man  
More sinn'd against than sinning.

**KENT**

Alack, bare-headed!  
Gracious my lord, hard by here is a hovel;  
Some friendship will it lend you 'gainst the tempest:  
Repose you there; while I to this hard house--  
More harder than the stones whereof 'tis raised;  
Which even but now, demanding after you,  
Denied me to come in--return, and force  
Their scanted courtesy.

**KING LEAR**

My wits begin to turn.  
Come on, my boy: how dost, my boy? art cold?  
I am cold myself. Where is this straw, my fellow?  
The art of our necessities is strange,  
That can make vile things precious. Come,  
your hovel.  
Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my heart  
That's sorry yet for thee.

**Fool**

[Singing]  
He that has and a little tiny wit--  
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain,--  
Must make content with his fortunes fit,  
For the rain it raineth every day.

**KING LEAR**

True, my good boy. Come, bring us to this hovel.

*Exeunt KING LEAR and KENT*

**Fool**

This is a brave night to cool a courtezan.  
I'll speak a prophecy ere I go:  
When priests are more in word than matter;  
When brewers mar their malt with water;  
When nobles are their tailors' tutors;  
No heretics burn'd, but wenches' suitors;  
When every case in law is right;  
No squire in debt, nor no poor knight;  
When slanders do not live in tongues;  
Nor cutpurses come not to throngs;  
When usurers tell their gold i' the field;  
And bawds and whores do churches build;  
Then shall the realm of Albion  
Come to great confusion:  
Then comes the time, who lives to see't,  
That going shall be used with feet.  
This prophecy Merlin shall make; for I live before his time.

*Exit*

**SCENE III. Gloucester's castle.**

*Enter GLOUCESTER and EDMUND*

**GLOUCESTER**

Alack, alack, Edmund, I like not this unnatural  
dealing. When I desire their leave that I might  
pity him, they took from me the use of mine own  
house; charged me, on pain of their perpetual  
displeasure, neither to speak of him, entreat for  
him, nor any way sustain him.

**EDMUND**

Most savage and unnatural!

**GLOUCESTER**

Go to; say you nothing. There's a division betwixt  
the dukes; and a worse matter than that: I have  
received a letter this night; 'tis dangerous to be  
spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet:  
these injuries the king now bears will be revenged  
home; there's part of a power already footed: we  
must incline to the king. I will seek him, and  
privily relieve him: go you and maintain talk with  
the duke, that my charity be not of him perceived:  
if he ask for me. I am ill, and gone to bed.  
Though I die for it, as no less is threatened me,  
the king my old master must be relieved. There is  
some strange thing toward, Edmund; pray you, be careful.

*Exit*

**EDMUND**

This courtesy, forbid thee, shall the duke  
Instantly know; and of that letter too:  
This seems a fair deserving, and must draw me  
That which my father loses; no less than all:  
The younger rises when the old doth fall.

*Exit*

Scene IV Part 1

**SCENE IV. The heath. Before a hovel.**

*Enter KING LEAR, KENT, and Fool*

**KENT**

Here is the place, my lord; good my lord, enter:  
The tyranny of the open night's too rough  
For nature to endure.

*Storm still*

**KING LEAR**

Let me alone.

**KENT**

Good my lord, enter here.

**KING LEAR**

Wilt break my heart?

**KENT**

I had rather break mine own. Good my lord, enter.

**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.

**EDGAR**

[Within] Fathom and half, fathom and half! Poor Tom!

*The Fool runs out from the hovel*

**Fool**

Come not in here, nuncle, here's a spirit  
Help me, help me!

**KENT**

Give me thy hand. Who's there?

**Fool**

A spirit, a spirit: he says his name's poor Tom.

**KENT**

What art thou that dost grumble there i' the straw?  
Come forth.

*Enter EDGAR disguised as a mad man*

**EDGAR**

Away! the foul fiend follows me!  
Through the sharp hawthorn blows the cold wind.  
Hum! go to thy cold bed, and warm thee.

**KING LEAR**

Hast thou given all to thy two daughters?  
And art thou come to this?

**EDGAR**

Who gives any thing to poor Tom? whom the foul  
fiend hath led through fire and through flame, and  
through ford and whirlipool e'er bog and quagmire;  
that hath laid knives under his pillow, and halters  
in his pew; set ratsbane by his porridge; made film  
proud of heart, to ride on a bay trotting-horse over  
four-inched bridges, to course his own shadow for a  
traitor. Bless thy five wits! Tom's a-cold,--O, do  
de, do de, do de. Bless thee from whirlwinds,  
star-blasting, and taking! Do poor Tom some  
charity, whom the foul fiend vexes: there could I  
have him now,--and there,--and there again, and there.

*Storm still*

**KING LEAR**

What, have his daughters brought him to this pass?  
Couldst thou save nothing? Didst thou give them all?

**Fool**

Nay, he reserved a blanket, else we had been all shamed.

**KING LEAR**

Now, all the plagues that in the pendulous air  
Hang fated o'er men's faults light on thy daughters!

**KENT**

He hath no daughters, sir.

**KING LEAR**

Death, traitor! nothing could have subdued nature  
To such a lowness but his unkind daughters.  
Is it the fashion, that discarded fathers  
Should have thus little mercy on their flesh?  
Judicious punishment! 'twas this flesh begot  
Those pelican daughters.

**EDGAR**

Pillicock sat on Pillicock-hill:  
Halloo, halloo, loo, loo!

**Fool**

This cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen.

**EDGAR**

Take heed o' the foul fiend: obey thy parents;  
keep thy word justly; swear not; commit not with  
man's sworn spouse; set not thy sweet heart on proud  
array. Tom's a-cold.

**KING LEAR**

What hast thou been?

**EDGAR**

A serving-man, proud in heart and mind; that curled  
my hair; wore gloves in my cap; served the lust of  
my mistress' heart, and did the act of darkness with  
her; swore as many oaths as I spake words, and  
broke them in the sweet face of heaven: one that  
slept in the contriving of lust, and waked to do it:  
wine loved I deeply, dice dearly: and in woman  
out-paramoured the Turk: false of heart, light of  
ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth,  
wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey.  
Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of  
silks betray thy poor heart to woman: keep thy foot  
out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen  
from lenders' books, and defy the foul fiend.  
Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind:  
Says suum, mun, ha, no, nonny.  
Dolphin my boy, my boy, sessa! let him trot by.

*Storm still*

**KING LEAR**

Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer  
with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies.  
Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou  
owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep  
no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! here's three on  
's are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself:  
unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor bare,  
forked animal as thou art. Off, off, you lendings!  
come unbutton here.

*Tearing off his clothes*

**Fool**

Prithee, nuncle, be contented; 'tis a naughty night  
to swim in. Now a little fire in a wild field were  
like an old lecher's heart; a small spark, all the  
rest on's body cold. Look, here comes a walking fire.

Scene 4: Part 2

*Enter GLOUCESTER, with a torch*

**EDGAR**

This is the foul fiend Flibbertigibbet: he begins  
at curfew, and walks till the first cock; he gives  
the web and the pin, squints the eye, and makes the  
hare-lip; mildews the white wheat, and hurts the  
poor creature of earth.  
S. Withold footed thrice the old;  
He met the night-mare, and her nine-fold;  
Bid her alight,  
And her troth plight,  
And, aroint thee, witch, aroint thee!

**KENT**

How fares your grace?

**KING LEAR**

What's he?

**KENT**

Who's there? What is't you seek?

**GLOUCESTER**

What are you there? Your names?

**EDGAR**

Poor Tom; that eats the swimming frog, the toad,  
the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water; that in  
the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages,  
eats cow-dung for sallets; swallows the old rat and  
the ditch-dog; drinks the green mantle of the  
standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to  
tithing, and stock- punished, and imprisoned; who  
hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his  
body, horse to ride, and weapon to wear;  
But mice and rats, and such small deer,  
Have been Tom's food for seven long year.  
Beware my follower. Peace, Smulkin; peace, thou fiend!

**GLOUCESTER**

What, hath your grace no better company?

**EDGAR**

The prince of darkness is a gentleman:  
Modo he's call'd, and Mahu.

**GLOUCESTER**

Our flesh and blood is grown so vile, my lord,  
That it doth hate what gets it.

**EDGAR**

Poor Tom's a-cold.

**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.

**EDGAR**

Child Rowland to the dark tower came,  
His word was still,--Fie, foh, and fum,  
I smell the blood of a British man.

*Exeunt*