

King Lear abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 3

Anger

Situation: Along with his entourage of a hundred followers, King Lear has moved in with Goneril and Albany, his oldest daughter and her husband. In the doing he has created turmoil inside his daughter's household, having among other things struck her steward, Oswald.

GONERIL: Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding his Fool?

OSWALD: Ay, madam.

Goneril to Oswald

By day and night he wrongs me. Every hour
He lashes out at one or another
Of us, upsetting us all. His knights grow
Surly and he upbraids us on every
Trifle. I'll not endure it. If you go
About your duties poorer, you'll find me
Defending you. Be weary negligent,
And if he distaste it I'll have him sent
To my fair sister, who won't give in, she
And I being of one mind. Idle old
Man that would try to control that which he
Hath given away. Old fools, truth be told,
Become babes again and must be restrained
When they act as this, being delusioned.

GONERIL: Remember what I have said.

OSWALD: Well, madam.

GONERIL: And let his knights have colder looks among you. I'll write straight to my sister to hold my very course. Prepare for dinner.