

The Tempest abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 2

History

Situation: Alonzo, as we say, is the king of Naples. While under sail in the Mediterranean with a full crew his ship encounters a terrible storm, causing him to lose his ship and perhaps his men. This perceived tragedy at sea is the result of Prospero's exceptional powers as a magician. Prospero, the ex-duke of Milan, and his daughter Miranda live pretty much alone on a remote Mediterranean island. Seeing it all unfold, Miranda says "poor souls, they perished." She appears to be so frightened by the perceived tragedy that her father agrees to answer her when she asks him "to tell me what I am."

Prospero to Miranda, No. 1

Twelve years ago, Miranda, thy father
Was Milan's duke and a prince of power.
Thy mother was a model of virtue,
And you our only child. Antonio,
My brother, thy uncle, whom next to you
Of all the world I loved, soon became so
Disloyal to me through foul play. I had no
Equal as an arts scholar and did know
The magic of the mystic, but being
So consumed with occult matters I cast
Government on my brother who, changing
At his whim all that I had set to last,
Did surround my princely trunk with ivy
That grew too thick, drawing all strength from me.

PROSPERO: Dost thou pay attention to me?

MIRANDA: O, good sir, I do.