

The Tempest abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 1.1

Love

Situation: Having from the time of the shipwreck been separated from the other men, Ferdinand, the prince of Naples, stumbles across Prospero and Miranda, having been guided along by Ariel. He instantly falls for Miranda, saying “if you be maid or no” and “I’ll make you queen of Naples.” But Prospero, happy as he is to see him, is going to test Ferdinand’s character and spirit.

Ferdinand enters carrying a log.

Ferdinand to himself

The pain of sporting games one often finds
Is offset by the games’ joy, and some kinds
Of men’s base activities are nobly
Undertaken, and then some poor tasks be
Rich indeed. This task would be as heavy
As it is odious were it not she
The mistress I serve who makes these labors
Pleasures, she more gentle than her father’s
Crabbed harshness. Strict command demands that I
Remove all these logs till I be too sore
To enjoy his game. My mistress doth cry,
Saying I’m this works’ best executor.
But for her to my mind sweet thoughts are sent
When I undertake this work assignment.

Miranda enters. Prospero stands off at a distance, unobserved.

MIRANDA: Alas now, pray you, work not so hard. Pray, set it down and rest you. My father is hard at study. He’s safe for these three hours.

FERDINAND: O most dear mistress, the sun will set before I shall discharge what I must strive to do.

MIRANDA: Pray, give me that. I’ll carry it to the pile.

FERDINAND: No, precious creature, I had rather break my back than you should such dishonor undergo while I sit lazy by.