

The Tempest abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 1

Ruthlessness

Situation: The shipwrecked men are talking among themselves when Ariel, the spirit with special powers, enters. He causes most of the men to fall asleep, but Antonio and Sebastian remain awake. The two of them use the opportunity to conspire to kill Alonso and Gonzalo, both asleep. Their thought is that if they can get rid of these two, they can then maybe take over as leaders when they get back to Italy.

Antonio to Sebastian

I am more serious than my custom.
Because of fear, receding men often
Seek the bottom. 'Tis as impossible
That the king's son is undrowned as he that
Sleeps here swims, and with that great hope is full
For you. And is not Queen Claribel at
Tunis too far away? Therefore, what's past
Is prologue; what's to come is yours at last
And mine to discharge. O, that you bore my
Mind. What a fine sleep for Alonso when
You are to advance. Gonzalo must die
Too. As for the others, each will listen
As a cat laps milk; they'll say it is our
Time for all that we say befits the hour.

ANTONIO: And how does your pleasure regard your own good fortune?

SEBASTIAN: I remember you did supplant your brother Prospero.

ANTONIO: True, and look how well my garments sit upon me.

SEBASTIAN: But, for your conscience?

ANTONIO: Ay, sir, where lies that? Here lies your brother, no better than the earth he lies upon.

SEBASTIAN: Thy case, dear friend, shall be my precedent: as thou got'st Milan, I'll come by Naples. Draw thy sword. One stroke shall free thee from the tribute which thou payest, and I the King shall love thee.

ANTONIO: Draw together, and when I rear my hand, do you the like to fall it on Gonzalo.

They draw their swords. Ariel enters and whispers in Gonzalo's ear: awake, awake!