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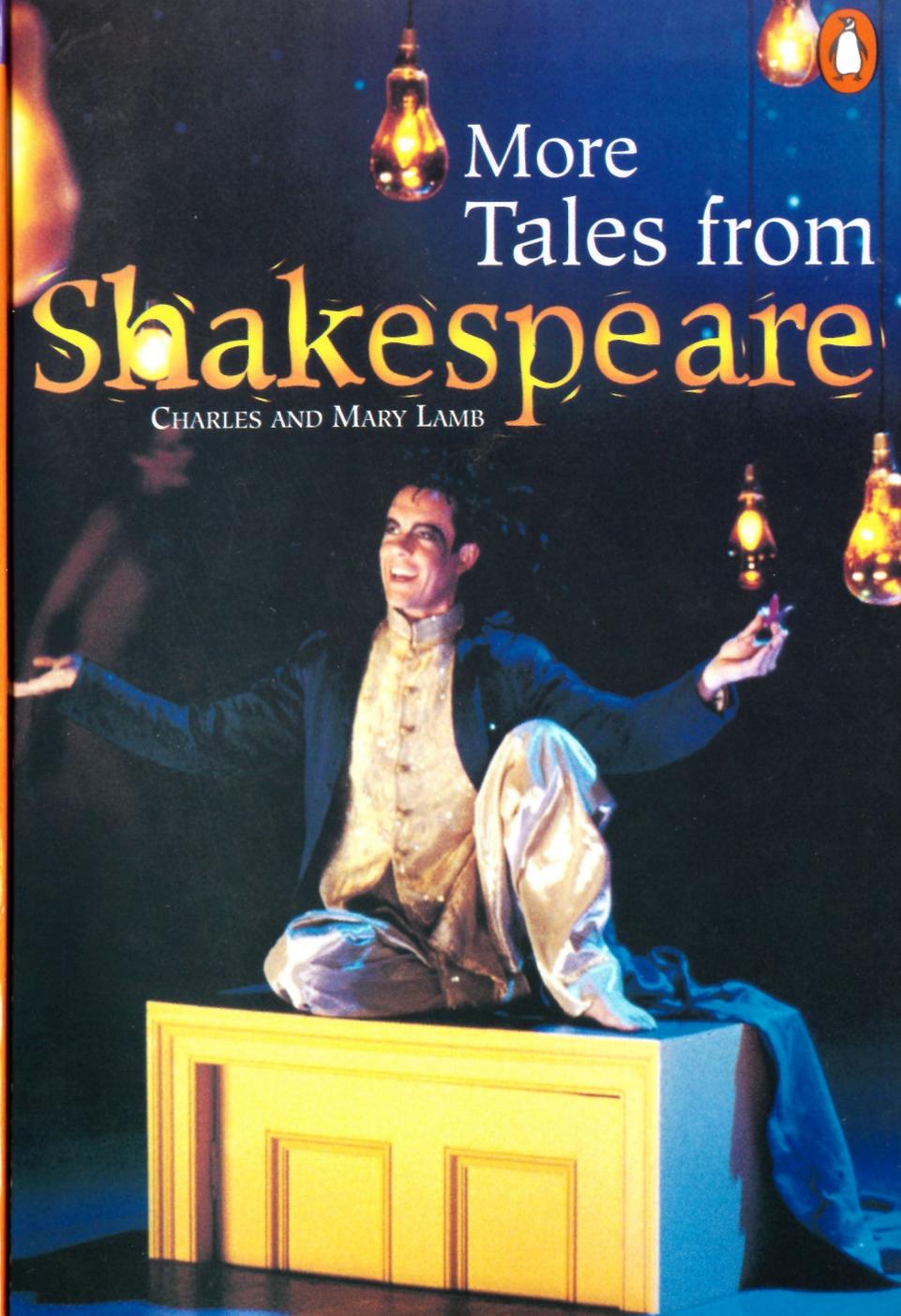
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PENGUIN READERS MORE TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

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More Tales from Shakespeare

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

*More Tales From
Shakespeare*

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

• Level 5

Retold by G. Horsley

Series Editors: Andy Hopkins and Jocelyn Potter

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Introduction

In 1807 Charles Lamb and his sister Mary Lamb were asked by their good friend, William Godwin, to write the stories from the best-known of Shakespeare's plays in a form that children could easily understand. The stories were intended as an introduction to Shakespeare for readers who were too young to read the plays themselves, and not as a replacement. It was suggested that girls in particular, who would not in those days be able to use libraries as freely as their brothers, would profit from them. The result was *Tales from Shakespeare*. 'I think it will be popular among the little people,' Charles wrote to a friend at the time. And he was right: the stories succeeded beyond expectation, enjoying popularity (with people of all sizes!) until the present day.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the moral tale was an important form of literature for children; stories were used mainly to teach children the difference between right and wrong. This affected the way the Lambs wrote the stories: the characters are shown as either good or bad in a way that is not so obvious in the plays, and the moral at the end of each story is very clear. The *Tales* attempt, wherever possible, to use Shakespeare's own words to retell the stories, but the language is made easier for the young reader. Some of the stories have also been made less complicated, with fewer characters than the original.

For the Lambs, whose lives until this point had not been at all easy, the *Tales* were their first success in the world of literature. Charles was born in 1775, nine years after Mary Ann. Their father was a poorly paid lawyer's clerk in London. Charles was sent to the well-known Christ's Hospital School, but Mary, as a girl, did not have the opportunity for such a good education as

her brother. For most of his life, Charles worked as a clerk at East India House, while writing in his free time. His work was not well paid, and even though Mary earned a little money from needlework, the family was poor. Mary gradually became mentally unbalanced, and then a terrible event took place that changed the brother's and sister's lives for ever. In 1796 their mother tried to stop a fight between Mary and another girl. The fight ended when Mary killed her mother with a knife. At the court case that followed, Mary was judged to be mentally ill and was sent to a mental home. But Charles managed to persuade the courts to let him take responsibility for looking after her, and she was allowed to return home after three years. Charles spent the rest of his life caring for her, and never married. Because she was known to have murdered her mother and to have been in a mental home, the pair had to move house several times. But on the whole they led a calm and happy life together and brought up a child called Emma Isola, who had no parents, as their daughter. Charles died in 1834 and Mary 13 years later.

Charles was a friend of many famous figures of his time, such as the poets Wordsworth and Coleridge. He was a respected and original judge of literature who also wrote poems, plays and stories. With Mary, he wrote several books for children: they retold the story of the *Odyssey* in *The Adventures of Ulysses* (1808); *Mrs Leicester's School* (1809) and *Poetry for Children* (1809) followed.

William Shakespeare, whose plays are retold here in story form, is famous around the world for both his poems and his plays, but very few solid facts are known about his life. He was born in 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, to the trader John Shakespeare and his wife Mary Arden. He probably went to Stratford Grammar School, which offered free education to local boys. In 1582 he married Anne Hathaway, and they had three children, Susanna, Hamnet and Judith. In 1592 Shakespeare was

known to be in London, acting and writing plays, but he may have worked as a schoolmaster before this. Shakespeare became an important member of a theatre company, which performed at two London theatres, the Globe and the Blackfriars. His plays were given special performances at the courts of Queen Elizabeth I and King James I and his success made him a wealthy man. We know that he bought New Place, a large and impressive house in Stratford, for his family. He rebuilt the house, moved his wife and daughters there (his son had died in 1596), and spent his later years there himself when he left London. Shakespeare died in 1616 and was buried in the church in Stratford.

The stories in this collection are taken from plays written at different times in Shakespeare's professional life. *The Taming of the Shrew* is a comedy of character, and one of the first plays that Shakespeare wrote. *The Winter's Tale* was almost his last play. It is called a comedy because the ending is happy, but the characters go through much pain and sorrow before that ending is reached. These two stories were written by Mary Lamb. The other stories were written by Charles, and are examples of Shakespeare's finest tragedies. *Romeo and Juliet* is an early play showing how the joys of young love are destroyed by the hatred of others. *Hamlet*, a terrible tale of revenge, is probably Shakespeare's most famous play. It is jealousy that leads to tragedy in *Othello*, while *King Lear* shows the shocking effects of an old man's bad judgement. This book introduces the reader to some of the most famous characters from Shakespeare's most powerful plays.

The Winter's Tale

CHARACTERS

Leontes, King of Sicily

Mamillius, Prince of Sicily

Camillo

Antigonus lords of Sicily

Cleomenes

Dion

Polixenes, King of Bohemia and friend of Leontes

Florizel, a prince, son of Polixenes

An old shepherd, believed to be father of Perdita

Hermione, wife of Leontes, Queen of Sicily

Perdita, daughter of Leontes and Hermione

Paulina, wife of Antigonus

Emilia, a lady serving Hermione

Leontes, King of Sicily, and his queen, the lovely Hermione, once lived together in the greatest happiness. The love that they felt for each other made Leontes so happy that he had nothing left to wish for, except that he sometimes desired to see again his old companion and schoolfriend, Polixenes, King of Bohemia, and to introduce his friend to his queen.

Leontes and Polixenes had been brought up together as children, but after the deaths of their fathers, each one had to rule his own kingdom. So they had not met for many years, though they often exchanged gifts, letters and loving messages.

At last, after repeated invitations, Polixenes came from Bohemia to the Sicilian court to pay his friend Leontes a visit. At first this visit gave nothing but pleasure to Leontes. He begged

the queen to show special care and attention to his dear friend and he seemed to have found perfect happiness now that he was with his old companion. They talked about old times; they remembered their schooldays and their youthful games. They told stories of these to Hermione, who always took a cheerful part in these conversations.

When, after a long stay, Polixenes was preparing to leave, Hermione, at her husband's wish, begged him to make his visit longer.

And now this good queen's sorrow began. Polixenes had refused to stay when Leontes asked him, but Hermione's gentle words persuaded him to do so. Leontes had no reason at all to doubt either the honesty of his friend Polixenes or the excellent character of his good queen, but he was immediately seized with an uncontrollable jealousy. Everything that Hermione did for Polixenes, although it was only done to please her husband, increased the unfortunate king's jealousy. Suddenly, Leontes changed from a true friend, and the best and most loving of husbands, into a wild and cruel creature. He sent for Camillo, one of the lords of his court, and told him of his suspicions about his wife's unfaithfulness. Then he ordered Camillo to poison Polixenes.

Camillo was a good man, who knew that there was no truth in Leontes' suspicions. So, instead of poisoning Polixenes, he told him about his master's orders and agreed to escape with him from Sicily. Polixenes, with Camillo's help, arrived safely in his own kingdom of Bohemia. From that time, Camillo lived in the king's court and became his chief friend and adviser.

The escape of Polixenes made the jealous Leontes even more angry. He went to the queen's rooms, where her little son Mamillius was just beginning to tell his mother one of his best stories to amuse her. Taking the child away, the king sent Hermione to prison.

Though Mamillius was only a very young child, he loved his mother dearly. When he saw her treated so badly and realized that she had been taken away from him, he became very unhappy. Gradually he lost his desire to eat and sleep, until it was thought that his sadness would kill him.

When the king had sent his queen to prison, he commanded Cleomenes and Dion, two Sicilian lords, to go to Delphos and ask the oracle at the temple of Apollo if his queen *had* been unfaithful to him.

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After Hermione had been in prison for a short time, she gave birth to a daughter. The poor lady was comforted by the sight of her pretty baby, and she said to it: "My poor little prisoner, I have done as little wrong as you have."

Hermione had a kind friend, Paulina, who was the wife of Antigonus, another Sicilian lord. When Paulina heard that the queen had given birth to a child, she went to the prison where Hermione was kept and said to Emilia, a lady who served Hermione, 'I pray you, Emilia, tell the good queen that if she will trust me with her baby, I will carry it to the king, its father. His heart may soften when he sees his little child.'

'My lady,' replied Emilia, 'I will tell the queen of your offer. She was wishing today that she had a friend who would dare to show the child to the king.'

'And tell her,' said Paulina, 'that I will speak to Leontes in her defence.'

'May God reward you,' said Emilia, 'for your kindness to our gentle queen!'

Emilia then went to Hermione, who joyfully gave her baby into Paulina's care.

Paulina took the child and forced her way into the presence of the king, although her husband, Antigonus, who feared the

king's anger, tried to prevent her. She laid the baby at its father's feet, and made a noble speech to the king in defence of Hermione. She criticized him for his cruelty and begged him to have pity on his wife and child, who had done no wrong. But Paulina's words only increased Leontes' anger, and he ordered Antigonus to take her away.

When Paulina went away, she left the little baby at its father's feet. She thought that when he was alone with it, he would look at it and feel pity for it.

The good Paulina was wrong. As soon as she left, the cruel father ordered Antigonus to take the child out to sea and leave it on some empty shore to die.

Antigonus was not like the good Camillo; he obeyed the orders of Leontes too well. He immediately carried the child on board a ship and sailed out to sea, intending to leave it on the first lonely shore that he could find.

The king was so sure that Hermione was guilty that he did not wait for the return of Cleomenes and Dion from Delphos. While the queen was still weak and miserable at losing her much loved baby, she was brought before all the lords and nobles of his court for a public trial. When that unhappy lady was standing in front of them as a prisoner to receive their judgement, Cleomenes and Dion entered. They told the King that they had the oracle's answer.

Leontes commanded that the words of the oracle should be read aloud, and these were the words:

'Hermione is not guilty, Polixenes blameless, Camillo a true servant, Leontes a jealous and cruel king, and Leontes shall live without an heir unless that which was lost is found.'

The king refused to believe the words of the oracle. He said that the message was a lie invented by the queen's friends, and he asked the judge to continue with the case against the queen. But while he was speaking, a man entered and told him that Prince

Mamillius had died of grief and shame, hearing that his mother was being tried for her life.

When Hermione heard about the death of this dear, loving child who had lost his life because of his grief at her misfortune, she fainted. Leontes himself was made miserable by the news and began to feel pity for his unhappy queen. He ordered Paulina to take her away and help her. Paulina soon returned and told the king that Hermione was dead.

When Leontes heard that the queen was dead, he felt deeply sorry for all his cruelty to her. Now that he thought his treatment of her had broken Hermione's heart, he no longer believed that she was guilty. He also thought that the words of the oracle were true. He realized that 'unless that which was lost is found' (which he believed to be his young daughter), he would be without an heir, now that the young Prince Mamillius was dead. He was prepared to give his kingdom to get his lost daughter back. With such sad thoughts as these, Leontes passed many years in grief and sorrow.

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The ship in which Antigonus had carried the baby princess out to sea was driven by a storm on to the coast of Bohemia, the kingdom of the good King Polixenes. Here Antigonus landed, and here he left the little baby.

Antigonus never returned to Sicily to tell Leontes where he had left his daughter, because as he was going back to the ship, a bear came out of the woods and tore him to pieces.

The baby was dressed in rich clothes and jewels, since Hermione had made her look very fine when she sent her to Leontes. Antigonus had tied a piece of paper to her coat, on which he had written the name "Perdita" and words which indirectly suggested her noble birth and misfortune.

The poor baby was found by a shepherd. He was a kind man,

and he carried little Perdita home to his wife, who nursed her lovingly. But the shepherd was poor and so, in order to hide the rich prize which he had found, he left that part of the country. Then, with some of Perdita's jewels, he bought large numbers of sheep and became wealthy. He brought up Perdita as his own child, and she did not know that she was not in fact a shepherd's daughter.

Little Perdita grew up to be a lovely girl. She had no better education than that of a shepherd's daughter, but the noble qualities she had got from her royal mother shone through so clearly that no one would have known she had not been brought up in King Leontes' court.

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Polixenes had an only son whose name was Florizel. One day, as this young prince was hunting near the shepherd's home, he saw the girl who was said to be the old man's daughter, and her beauty and noble manner made him fall in love with her immediately. Soon, under the name of Doricles, and dressed as a private gentleman, he became a frequent visitor to the old shepherd's house. Florizel's absences from court made Polixenes anxious, so he ordered people to watch his son and he soon discovered Florizel's love for the shepherd's fair daughter.

Polixenes then sent for Camillo, the same faithful Camillo who had kept him safe from the anger of Leontes, and asked him to go with him to the shepherd's house.

Both Polixenes and Camillo changed their appearances so that they would not be recognized, and arrived at the shepherd's house just as a feast was taking place. Though they were strangers, every guest was made welcome at such a time and they were invited to walk in and join the celebrations. Everyone was happy and joyful. Tables were full of things to eat and drink, and young men and girls were dancing on the grass in front of the house.

Florizel and Perdita were sitting quietly together in a corner, seeming more pleased with each other's conversation than with the games and amusements of those around them.

The king, knowing that he could not be recognized, went near enough to hear their conversation, and was surprised by the simple but graceful manner in which Perdita talked to his son.

'This is the prettiest lowborn girl I have ever seen,' he said to Camillo. 'Everything she does or says seems too noble for this place.'

Then the king turned to the old shepherd and said, 'Tell me, my good friend, who is that young man talking with your daughter?'

'They call him Doricles,' replied the shepherd. 'He says he loves my daughter; and, to tell the truth, it is difficult to know which loves the other best. If young Doricles can win her, she will bring him what he does not dream of. By this he meant the rest of Perdita's jewels, which he had carefully saved to give her on her wedding day.'

Polixenes then spoke to his son. 'Young man,' he said, 'your heart seems full of something that takes your mind away from feasting. When I was young, I used to bring presents for my love, but you seem to have brought nothing for your girl.'

The young prince, who did not know that he was talking to his father, replied, 'Sir, she does not value such things. The gifts which Perdita expects from me are locked up in my heart.'

Then Florizel turned to Perdita and said, 'O hear me, Perdita, before this ancient gentleman who, it seems, was once himself a lover.'

Florizel then called on the stranger to be a witness to a promise of marriage which he made to Perdita, but at that point, the king made himself known to his son and criticized him for daring to promise to marry this lowborn girl. He called Perdita disrespectful names, and threatened that if she ever allowed his

son to see her again, he would put her and the old shepherd to a cruel death.

The king left them then in great anger, and ordered Camillo to follow him with Prince Florizel.

When the king had gone, Perdita, whose royal nature was excited by Polixenes' angry words, said, 'Though our hopes are now destroyed, I was not much afraid. Once or twice I was going to speak, and to remind him that the same sun that shines on his palace also shines on our small house.'

Then she added sadly, 'But now I am woken from this dream. Leave me, sir; I will go to my sheep and cry there.'

The kind-hearted Camillo was greatly affected by Perdita's behaviour. He saw that the young prince was too deeply in love with her to give her up at the command of his royal father. So he thought of a way to help them both and, at the same time, to put into action a plan which he had in his mind.

Camillo had known for a long time that Leontes, the King of Sicily, was truly sorry for all he had done; and though Camillo was now the favourite adviser of King Polixenes, he could not help wishing to see his old master and his home once more. He therefore suggested to Florizel and Perdita that they should go with him to the Sicilian court, where he promised that Leontes would protect them. Then, with his help, they could obtain forgiveness from Polixenes and his agreement to their marriage.

They joyfully agreed to this plan, and Camillo also allowed the old shepherd to go with them.

The shepherd took with him the rest of Perdita's jewels, her baby clothes, and the paper which he had found tied to her coat.

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After a successful journey, Florizel, Perdita, Camillo and the old shepherd arrived safely at the court of Leontes. The king,

who still felt deep grief for his dead wife and his lost child, received Camillo with great kindness, and gave a warm welcome to Prince Florizel. But it was Perdita, whom Florizel introduced as his princess, who seemed to attract all his attention. He saw that she looked like Hermione, and he said that his own daughter might have been such a lovely creature if he had not so cruelly destroyed her.

'And then, too,' he said to Florizel, 'I lost the society and friendship of your father, whom I now desire more than my life to see again.'

When the old shepherd heard how much notice the king had taken of Perdita, and how he had lost a daughter when she was only a baby, he began to compare the time when he had found the little Perdita, and the way in which she had been left to die. From all of this, the jewels and other signs of her high birth, he was forced to believe that Perdita was the king's lost daughter.

Florizel and Perdita, Camillo and the faithful Paulina were all present when the old shepherd told the king how he had found the child, and how he himself had seen Antigonus die.

He showed them the rich coat, in which Paulina remembered that Hermione had wrapped the child. He produced a jewel which Paulina remembered that Hermione had tied around the child's neck, and he gave up the paper on which Paulina recognized her husband's writing. It could not be doubted that Perdita was Leontes' own daughter.

Paulina was torn between sorrow for her husband's death and joy that the king's long-lost daughter had been found. When Leontes understood that Perdita was his daughter, his misery that Hermione was not alive to see her made him unable to say anything for a long time, except 'O your mother! Your mother!'

Paulina now told Leontes that she had had a statue made of Hermione which looked exactly like the queen. They all went

with him to look at it. The king was anxious to see the statue of his Hermione, and Perdita was eager to see what her mother had looked like.

When Paulina pulled back the curtain which hid this statue, it looked so perfectly like Hermione that all the king's sorrow came back to him at the sight. For a long time he lost the power to speak or move.

'I like your silence, my lord,' said Paulina. 'It shows the strength of your feelings more than any words can. Is this statue not very like your queen?'

At last the king said, 'Oh, she stood like this when I first loved her. But, Paulina, Hermione was not as old as this statue looks.'

'Then the man who made the statue is a great artist,' Paulina replied, 'since he has made Hermione as she would have looked if she were living now. But let me pull the curtain, sir, in case soon you think it moves.'

The king then said, 'Do not pull the curtain. See, Camillo, do you not think it breathed? Her eye seems to have movement in it.'

'I must close the curtain, my lord,' Paulina said. 'You will persuade yourself the statue lives.'

'O, sweet Paulina,' said Leontes, 'I would like to believe that. But what instrument can cut breath from stone? Let no man laugh at me, for I am going to kiss her.'

'Stop, my lord!' said Paulina. 'The red on her lips is wet; you will mark your own with paint. Shall I close the curtain?'

'No, not for 20 years,' said Leontes.

All this time Perdita had been kneeling and looking, in silent admiration, at the statue of her mother. Now she said, 'And I could stay here for just as long, looking at my dear mother.'

'Either let me close the curtain,' said Paulina to Leontes, 'or prepare yourself for another surprise. I can make the statue move from where it stands and take you by the hand. But then you will think that I am helped by some evil powers, which I am not.'

'I am happy to watch what you can make her do,' said Leontes. 'It is as easy to make her speak as move.'

Paulina then ordered some slow music to be played, and to everyone's surprise, the statue came down and threw its arms around Leontes' neck. The statue then began to speak, praying for her husband, and her child, the newly found Perdita.

It was not surprising that the statue hung on Leontes's neck, and prayed for her husband and her child, because the statue was actually Hermione herself, the real and living queen.

Paulina had falsely reported to the king that Hermione was dead, thinking that it was the only way to save her life. Ever since then, Hermione had lived with the good Paulina. She had not wanted Leontes to know that she was alive until she heard that Perdita had been found; although she had forgiven the wrong that Leontes had done to her, she could not forgive his cruelty to his own baby daughter.

With his dead queen returned to life and his lost daughter found, Leontes could hardly bear the greatness of his own happiness.

Nothing but warm words and loving speeches were heard on all sides. The happy parents thanked Prince Florizel for loving their daughter when she had seemed to be of such low birth, and they thanked the good old shepherd for looking after their child. Camillo and Paulina were filled with joy because they had lived to see such a satisfactory end to all their faithful services.

And to complete this strange and unexpected joy, King Polixenes himself now entered the palace.

When Polixenes had first missed his son and Camillo, he had guessed that Camillo might have returned to Sicily. Following as quickly as he could, he arrived by chance at this, the happiest moment of Leontes' life.

Polixenes joined in the general joy. He forgave his friend Leontes for his unfair jealousy and they loved each other again

with all the warmth of their early friendship. And now, of course, he was quite ready to agree to his son's marriage to Perdita, the future queen of Sicily.

So Hermione was rewarded for her long period of suffering. That excellent lady lived for many years with her Leontes and her Perdita, the happiest of mothers and of queens.

King Lear

CHARACTERS

Lear, King of Britain

King of France

Duke of Burgundy

Duke of Cornwall

Duke of Albany

Earl of Kent

Edgar, lawful son of the Earl of Gloucester

Edmund, natural son of the Earl of Gloucester

A Fool

Goneril

Regan daughters of King Lear

Cordelia

Lear, King of Britain, had three daughters — Goneril, wife of the Duke of Albany, Regan, wife of the Duke of Cornwall, and Cordelia, the youngest. The King of France and the Duke of Burgundy each wanted Cordelia for his wife, and at the time of this story they were staying at Lear's court.

The old king was over eighty years old and tired of government. He had decided to take no further part in state affairs, but to leave younger people to manage it. He called his three daughters to him to find out from their own lips which of them loved him best, so that he could divide his lands and money among them according to their love for him.

Goneril, the oldest, declared that she loved her father more than words could tell; that he was dearer to her than the light of her

own eyes, dearer than life itself. Such talk is easy to pretend where there is no real love, but the king was very pleased to hear it. Thinking that her heart went with her words, he gave her and her husband one-third of his large kingdom.

Regan, his second daughter, who was as worthless as her sister, declared that the love which she felt for her father was much greater than her sisters. She found all other joys dead compared with the pleasure which she took in the love of her dear king and father.

Lear felt so happy to have what he thought were such loving children that he gave Regan and her husband another third of his kingdom, equal in size to the share which he had already given to Goneril.

Then turning to his youngest daughter, Cordelia, whom he called his joy, he asked what she had to say. He thought no doubt that she would please his ears with the same loving speeches as her sisters, or even that hers would be stronger than theirs, as she had always been his favourite. But Cordelia was upset by the claims made by her sisters, which she knew were only intended to persuade the king to give them part of his country. So she only answered that she loved her father according to her duty, neither more nor less.

The king was shocked at these words from his favourite child, and asked her to consider her words carefully and to improve her speech so that it did not spoil her fortunes.

Cordelia then told the king that she loved, obeyed and honoured him because he was her father and he had brought her up and loved her. But she could not make such grand speeches as her sisters had done or promise to love nothing else in the world. Why did her sisters have husbands if (as they said) they had no love for anything except their father? If she ever married, she was sure that her husband would want at least half of her love, half of her care and duty.

Cordelia really loved her father almost as much as her sisters pretended to do. At any other time, she would have told him so in stronger and more loving words. But when she saw how her sisters' deceitful words had won such rich prizes, she thought the best thing she could do was to love and be silent. This showed that she loved him, but not for what she could obtain, and her words, simple as they were, had much more truth and sincerity in them than those of her sisters.

Old age had made Lear so unwise that he could not tell truth from untruth, nor a brightly painted speech from words that came from the heart. He was so angry at Cordelia's plainness of speech, which he called pride, that he shared the third part of his kingdom equally between Cordelia's two sisters and their husbands, the Dukes of Albany and Cornwall. He now called them to him, and, in the presence of all his court, he gave them his kingdom to share, together with all the powers of government. He kept only the title of king for himself, and it was agreed that he, and a hundred soldiers to serve him, should live month by month in each of his daughters' palaces in turn.

Such an unbelievably foolish division of his country, made more in anger than by reason, filled all his nobles with shock and sorrow. But none of them had the courage to act except the Earl of Kent. He was beginning to speak for Cordelia when the angry Lear commanded him to stop or he would have him put to death. To this the good Kent paid no attention. He had always been faithful to Lear, whom he had honoured as a king, loved as a father and followed as a master. He had been ready to give his life in war against the king's enemies or when the king's safety was in danger. Now that Lear was his own greatest enemy, this faithful servant argued with him for Lear's own good.

He begged the king to follow his advice, as he had so often done in the past, and to undo what he had so unwisely done. Kent said that he would die rather than let Lear believe that his

youngest daughter loved him less than her sisters did. As for Lear's threats, they could not frighten a man whose life was already at the king's service. That should not prevent him from speaking the truth.

The honest words of this good Earl of Kent only made the king more angry. Like a madman who kills his own doctor, he ordered this true servant to leave the country, and gave him only five days to prepare to do so. If, on the sixth day, he was found within the borders of Britain, he would be put to death.

So Kent said goodbye to the king, but before he went he called on the gods to protect Cordelia. He only hoped that her sisters' fine speeches would be followed by acts of love; and then he left, as he said, to carry his old life to a new country.

The King of France and the Duke of Burgundy were now called in to hear what Lear had decided about his youngest daughter, and to see whether they still wanted to marry Cordelia, now that she had nothing but herself to bring them. The Duke of Burgundy refused to have her as his wife under such conditions, but the King of France understood why she had lost her father's love. He took her by the hand and said that her goodness was worth more than a kingdom. He told her to say goodbye to her sisters and to her father, even though he had been unkind to her, and said that she should go with him and be his queen and rule over a fairer kingdom than her sisters.

Then, with tears in her eyes, Cordelia said goodbye to her sisters and begged them to love their father well. They told her that they knew their duty, and advised her to try to make her husband happy, for he had taken her almost as a beggar. And so Cordelia left, with a heavy heart, because she knew the deceit of her sisters and she wished that her father could be in better hands than theirs.

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As soon as Cordelia had gone, her sisters began to show their true characters. Even before the end of the first month, which Lear spent with his oldest daughter Goneril, the old king began to find out the difference between promises and actions. Once she had got from her father all that he had to give, the ungrateful woman now began to dislike the few small signs that showed he was still king. She could not bear to see him and his hundred soldiers. Every time she met her father, she was angry with him. When the old man wanted to speak to her, she pretended to be sick, so she did not have to see him. It was plain that she thought his old age a useless continuation of his life, and his soldiers an unnecessary cost. She stopped showing any respect to the king and, following her example and even her orders, her servants also began to ignore him; they refused to obey his orders or pretended not to hear him.

Lear could not help noticing this change in his daughter's behaviour, but he shut his eyes to it for as long as he could, just as most people do not wish to believe the unpleasant effects of their own mistakes.

All this time, the good Earl of Kent had chosen to stay in Britain as long as there was a chance of being useful to his master, although he knew that if he was discovered he would be put to death. Dressed as a servant, he offered his services to the king. The latter did not recognize him as Kent in his new dress, but was pleased with his direct speech and honesty; and so an agreement was made, and Lear took his favourite adviser back into his service under the name of Caius.

Caius quickly found a way to show his loyalty to his royal master. That same day one of Goneril's servants was disrespectful to Lear and spoke rudely to him, as no doubt he was secretly encouraged to do by Goneril herself. Caius quickly knocked him down, and Lear was grateful for his support.

Caius was not the only friend Lear had. It was the custom of

kings at that time to keep a fool to make them laugh after finishing more serious business. The poor fool who had once lived in Lear's palace stayed with him after he had given away his kingdom, and often made him happy, although the man often laughed at Lear for his foolishness in giving away everything to his daughters.

Goneril now plainly told the king that he could not continue to stay in her palace if he still wished to keep his hundred soldiers. She said that such a number was both expensive and useless, and only filled her court with noise and feasting. She asked him to reduce the number and to keep only the old men, men like himself and suitable for his age.

At first Lear could not believe his eyes or ears. He could not believe that his own daughter would speak to him so unkindly.

But when she repeated her demand, the old man became angry and said she was lying. It is true that she was; the hundred soldiers were all men of polite behaviour and excellent manners who were not in the habit of making a noise.

Lear decided to go to his other daughter, Regan, taking his hundred soldiers with him, and he ordered his horses to be prepared. He spoke of Goneril's ungratefulness and prayed that she might never have a child, or, if she did, that it might live to show her the disrespect that she had shown to him. Then she would know that a thankless child is worse than the bite of a snake. The Duke of Albany began to make excuses for any share which Lear might think he had in the unkindness, but Lear refused to listen to him. He set out with his followers for Regan's house. He thought to himself how small Cordelia's fault (if it was a fault) now seemed, compared with her sister's, and he cried. Then he was ashamed that such a creature as Goneril had enough power over him to make him cry like this.

Regan and her husband were living in great style at their palace. Lear sent his servant Caius with letters to his daughter to

prepare her for his arrival, while he and his soldiers followed. But Goneril too sent letters to her sister, saying that her father would do nothing he was asked and was bad-tempered, and advising Regan not to receive him with such a large number of followers.

This messenger arrived at the same time as Caius, and it was the servant whom Caius had formerly knocked down for his rude behaviour to Lear. Caius suspected what he had come for, and spoke angrily to him. He asked him to fight, but the servant refused. Caius then gave him a good beating, but when Regan and her husband heard of this, they ordered Caius to be publicly beaten and tied up in the square for everyone to see, even though he was a messenger from the king and should have been treated with respect. So the first thing the king saw when he entered the castle was his servant sitting in that shameful situation.

This was a bad sign of how he might expect to be received, but a worse one followed. When he asked for his daughter and her husband, he was told that they were very tired after travelling all night, and could not see him. He was angry and demanded to see them, but when at last they came to greet him, the hated Goneril was with them. She had come to tell her own story and set her sister against the king, her father.

The old man was very upset by this sight, and even more so when he saw Regan take Goneril by the hand. He asked Goneril if she was not ashamed to look at his white beard. Regan advised him to go home again with Goneril and live with her peacefully, sending away half his soldiers and asking her forgiveness. She said that he was old and lacking in good sense, and must be ruled by persons who had more wisdom than himself.

Lear asked if he should go down on his knees and beg for food and clothes from his own daughter. He said that he would never return with her but would stay with Regan, he and his hundred soldiers, for she had not forgotten the half of the kingdom which he had given her, and her eyes were not cold

like Goneril's, but gentle and kind. He also said that rather than return to Goneril with only half his soldiers, he would go to France and beg help from the king who had married his youngest daughter when she had nothing.

But he was mistaken in thinking that he would receive kinder treatment from Regan than he had done from her sister Goneril. She now declared that she thought 50 soldiers were too many to wait on him, and that 25 were enough. Then Lear, nearly heartbroken, turned to Goneril and said that he would go back with her, for her 50 was double 25, and so her love was twice as much as Regan's. But Goneril excused herself and asked why he needed so many as twenty-five, or even ten, or even five, when her own servants or her sister's could look after him.

So these two ungrateful daughters each tried to be more cruel than the other to their old father, who had been so good to them. Their aim was gradually to rob him of all his soldiers and of all the respect that was left to show that he had once been a king. It was hard to change from a king to a beggar, and it was his daughters' ungratefulness which hurt this poor king so much. His mind began to become unbalanced and, though he did not know what he was saying, he promised that these unnatural creatures should be punished.

While he was threatening what his weak arm could never perform, night fell, and a fearful storm of thunder, lightning and rain began. His daughters still refused to let his followers enter, and Lear called for his horses, saying that he would rather face the greatest anger of the storm outside than stay under the same roof as these ungrateful daughters. Reminding him that the actions of foolish men bring their own just punishment, they let him go and shut their doors on him.

The wind was high, and the rain and the storm increased when the old man went out to struggle against them. For many miles there was hardly a bush for shelter. On a stretch of

wasteland, King Lear wandered about, shouting in anger against the wind and the thunder. He commanded the wind to blow the earth into the sea, or to make the waves so big that they drowned the earth, so that no sign remained of such an ungrateful animal as man. The king was now left with no other companion than the fool, who still stayed with him. He tried to cheer the king up with his amusing words: he said it was a bad night for swimming, and that the king had better go and ask for his daughters' help.

This once great king was found in this condition by his ever-faithful servant the good Earl of Kent, now known as Caius. He said, 'O good sir, are you here? Creatures that love the night do not love such nights as these. This terrible storm has driven the animals to their hiding places. Man's nature cannot bear it.' But Lear reminded him that one does not feel smaller evils when there is a greater illness. When the mind is balanced, the body has time to feel ill, but the storm in his mind took away all other feeling from him. He spoke again of his daughters' disloyalty, and said it was as if the mouth tore the hand for lifting food to it; for parents were hands and food and everything to children.

Caius still continued to beg the king not to stay out in the open air, and at last persuaded him to enter a miserable little hut that they came to. The fool entered first but ran out in terror saying that he had seen a spirit. The spirit proved to be nothing but a poor beggar, who had gone into this hut for shelter and who had frightened the fool by talking about devils. When the king saw him, with only a cloth around his waist, he was sure that he was a man who had given away everything to his daughters. He believed that nothing could bring a man to such misery except unkind children.

From this, and from many wild speeches which he made, the good Caius saw clearly that Lear was not in his right mind, but that the cruel treatment he had suffered from his daughters had really made him mad.

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The Earl of Kent's faithfulness now showed itself more clearly than it had ever done before. With the help of some of the king's soldiers, he had the king taken to the castle at Dover, where most of his own friends were. Kent himself set sail for France, where he hurried to Cordelia. He told her of her father's pitiful condition and how it had been caused by the cruelty of her sisters. This loving child begged her husband to let her go to England with an army big enough to defeat these cruel daughters and their husbands. The king agreed to this, so she set out with a royal army and landed at Dover.

Lear had escaped from the care of the soldiers in whose charge Kent had left him, and he was found by some of Cordelia's soldiers, wandering about the fields near Dover in a sad condition. He was quite mad, and singing aloud to himself, with a crown on his head which he had made of grass and other wild plants that he had picked up in the corn fields. Cordelia greatly desired to see her father, but the doctors persuaded her to delay the meeting until sleep and medicine had made him better. With the help of these skilful men, to whom Cordelia promised all her gold and jewels if they helped her father back to good health, Lear was soon in a condition to see his daughter.

It was a moving sight to see the meeting between the father and daughter. Lear was torn between his joy at seeing his child again and his shame at receiving such kindness from the daughter he had sent away in his foolish pride and anger. His half-mad brain sometimes made him unable to remember where he was, or who it was that kissed him so kindly. Then he would beg those who were with him not to laugh at him if he were mistaken in thinking this lady to be his daughter Cordelia. He fell on his knees to ask his daughter's forgiveness, but she, good lady, told him it was not a suitable thing for him to do. She was only doing

her duty as she was his child. She kissed him (as she said) to kiss away all her sisters' unkindness, and said that they ought to be ashamed of themselves for turning their kind old father with his white beard out into the cold air. She would not have turned away her enemy's dog on a night like that, even if it had bitten her; it could have stayed by her fire and warmed itself.

Cordelia told her father that she had come from France to help him. He asked her to forgive and forget, since he was an old man and a foolish one and he did not know what he was doing. She certainly had good reason not to love him, but her sisters had no excuse. To this, Cordelia replied that she had no cause, and neither had they.

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We can leave this old king in the care of his loving child. With the help of sleep and medicine, she and her doctors at last succeeded in bringing some peace to that troubled mind, which was so upset by the cruelty of his other daughters. Let us now go back to say a word or two about them.

These ungrateful creatures, who had been so false to their own father, could not be expected to be more faithful to their husbands. They soon grew tired of showing even the appearance of love and duty, and made it clear that they had given their love to another man. And each of them fell in love with the same man. It was Edmund, a natural son of the dead Earl of Gloucester. By his evil actions, he had removed his brother Edgar, the lawful heir, from his possessions, and was now earl himself.

At about this time the Duke of Cornwall, Regan's husband, died. Regan at once declared her intention of marrying this Earl of Gloucester. This excited the jealousy of her sister, to whom the evil earl had spoken of his love, and Goneril killed Regan by giving her poison. But Goneril's husband discovered what she

had done and put her in prison, where she soon put an end to her own life. In this way the justice of heaven at last claimed these ungrateful daughters.

But a sad end was waiting for Cordelia, whose kindness seemed to deserve better fortune. The armies which Goneril and Regan had sent out under the command of Edmund, the bad Earl of Gloucester, were successful. They caught Cordelia and she was taken to prison and killed there. Lear did not live long after his sweet child's death.

Before the king died, the good Earl of Kent tried to tell him that it was he who had followed him under the name of Caius. Lear's troubled brain could not understand how that could be, or how Kent and Caius could be the same person, so Kent thought it unnecessary to try to explain. This faithful servant to the king died of grief soon after his master.

There is no need here to tell how the bad Earl of Gloucester was killed in a fight with his brother, or how Goneril's husband, the Duke of Albany, who had never encouraged his lady in her bad ways, became the King of England. Lear and his three daughters are dead, and our story ends with them.

The Taming of the Shrew

CHARACTERS

Baptista, a rich gentleman of Padua

Vincentio, an old gentleman

Lucentio, son of Vincentio; in love with Bianca

Petruchio, a gentleman of Verona; later, the husband of Katharine

Hortensio, a gentleman of Padua

A dressmaker

A hat-maker

Katharine, the Shrew

Bianca daughters of Baptista

Hortensio's wife

Katharine was the oldest daughter of Baptista, a rich gentleman of Padua. She was a lady with such an ungovernable temper and such a loud and angry tongue that she was known in Padua by no other name than Katharine the Shrew. It seemed unlikely, even impossible, that any gentleman would ever be found who would dare to marry this lady. So Baptista was much criticized because he refused to give his agreement to many excellent offers that were made to her gentle sister, Bianca, saying that until the oldest sister was married, young Bianca would not be free to take a husband.

But it happened that a gentleman named Petruchio came to Padua with the aim of looking for a wife. Not being discouraged by these accounts of Katharine's temper, and hearing that she was rich and beautiful, he was determined to marry this famous shrew and to tame her into a gentle wife who would obey him.

No one was so suitable to attempt this as Petruchio. He was as spirited as Katharine and he was an amusing and good-natured person. He was also clever and wise enough to know how to pretend to be angry and cold when he was in fact so calm that he could have laughed happily at his own ability to pretend. So Petruchio went to make love to Katharine the Shrew. First of all he begged Baptista's permission to try to win his *gentle* daughter Katharine, as Petruchio called her, as his wife. He said that, having heard of her gentle behaviour, he had come from Verona to ask for her love. Though her father wished her to be married, he was forced to admit that Katharine's character was quite different from this. What gentleness she had soon became very clear, when her music teacher rushed into the room to complain that his pupil had hit him over the head with her instrument because he had dared to find fault with her performance.

When Petruchio heard this, he said, 'What an excellent lady! I love her more than ever, and only want to talk to her.' Begging her father to agree to this, he said, 'I am in a hurry, sir; I cannot come every day to try to win her. You knew my father: he is dead, and has left me heir to all his lands and goods. Tell me, if I win your daughter's love, what money you will give with her.'

Baptista thought his manner was rather rough for a lover, but because he would be glad to get Katharine married, he answered that he would give her twenty thousand crowns and half his possessions on his death. So this strange marriage was quickly agreed to, and Baptista went to tell his shrewish daughter that she had a lover, and sent her in to Petruchio to listen to his lovemaking.

While this was happening, Petruchio was deciding on the way in which he would tell her of his love. He said, 'If she is angry with me, I will tell her that she sings as sweetly as a bird; and if she looks cross, I will say she looks as clear as roses newly washed with rain. If she will not speak a word, I will praise the beauty of

her language; and if she tells me to leave her, I will thank her as if she had asked me to stay with her for a week.'

Katharine now entered, and Petruchio spoke to her.

'Good morning, Kate, for that is your name, I hear.'

Katharine, not liking this greeting, said proudly, 'Those who speak to me call me Katharine.'

'You lie,' replied the lover, 'for you are called plain Kate, and pretty Kate, and sometimes Kate the Shrew, but, Kate, you are the prettiest Kate in all the world, and so, Kate, hearing your gentleness praised in every town, I have come to win you for my wife.'

In loud and angry words, she showed him how she had gained the name of Shrew, while he still continued to praise her sweet language. At last, hearing her father coming and intending to be as quick as possible, he said, 'Sweet Katharine, let us stop; your father has agreed that you shall be my wife, and whether you wish it or not, I will marry you.'

Now Baptista entered and Petruchio told him that his daughter had received him kindly, and that she had promised to marry him the following Sunday. Katharine said that this was untrue; she would rather see him hanged on Sunday, she said, and she blamed her father for wishing to marry her to a madman like Petruchio. Petruchio asked her father not to pay attention to her angry words, since they had agreed that she would seem against the marriage in his presence, but when they were alone he had found her very loving.

He said to her, 'Give me your hand, Kate; I will go to Venice to buy you fine clothes for our marriage. Provide the feast, Father, and invite the guests. I will be sure to bring rings and expensive dresses so that my Kate may be beautiful. And kiss me, Kate, because we will be married on Sunday.'

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On the Sunday all the wedding guests were together, but they had to wait a long time before Petruchio came. As they waited, Katharine cried, annoyed to think that Petruchio had only been making fun of her. At last he appeared, but he brought none of the fine clothes which he had promised Katharine. Nor was he himself dressed like a man about to be married, but in a strange, untidy way, as if he intended to make fun of the serious business he came to do. Even his servant and the horses they rode were clothed in the same poor and strange manner.

Petruchio could not be persuaded to change his dress. He said that Katharine was to be married to him, and not to his clothes. Finding it useless to argue with him, she went with him to church. Here, he still behaved in the same mad way. When the priest asked Petruchio if he wanted Katharine to be his wife, he said so loudly that he did that the shocked priest dropped his book; as he bent down to pick it up, this crazy man gave him such a blow that both the priest and his book fell down again. And all the time they were being married, he stamped his feet and shouted, so that the high-spirited Katharine trembled and shook with fear.

After the ceremony was over, while they were still in the church, Petruchio called for wine and loudly drank the company's health. Then he threw the rest of his drink into the face of one of the men there, giving no other reason for this strange act except that the man's beard looked thin and hungry and seemed to need the wine to make it grow. There had never been a madder wedding; but Petruchio was only pretending to be mad so that he would be more successful in the plan he had formed to tame his shrewish wife.

Baptista had provided an expensive wedding feast, but when they returned from church, Petruchio said that it was his intention to take his wife home immediately. Neither the arguments of his wife's father nor Katharine's angry words could

make him change his mind. He claimed a husband's right to do what he pleased with his wife, and hurried Katharine away, seeming so determined that no one dared attempt to stop him.

Petruchio put his wife on a thin and hungry-looking horse, which he had specially chosen for her, and he and his servant had no better ones. They travelled along rough and muddy paths, and whenever Katharine's horse seemed about to fall, he would shout at the poor tired horse, which could hardly move under its load.

At last, after a tiring journey, during which Katharine had : heard nothing but Petruchio's shouting at the servant and the horses, they arrived at his house. Petruchio welcomed her kindly to her home, but he had made up his mind that she should have neither food nor rest that night. The tables were spread and supper soon served, but Petruchio pretended to find fault with every dish. He threw the meat on the floor, and ordered the servants to take it away. All this he did, as he said, in love for his Katharine, so that she did not have to eat meat that was not well cooked. And when Katharine went to rest, tired and supperless, he found the same fault with the bed; he threw the bedclothes around the room so that she was forced to sit down in a chair. If she fell asleep, she was quickly awoken by her husband's loud voice, as he shouted at the servants for making his wife's marriage bed so badly.

The next day Petruchio continued to act in the same way. He still spoke kind words to Katharine, but when she attempted to eat, he found fault with everything that was put in front of her and threw the breakfast on the floor as he had done the supper. Katharine, proud Katharine, was forced to beg the servants to bring her food secretly, but they had already been given their orders by Petruchio and replied that they dared not give her anything without their master's knowledge.

'Oh!' Katharine said to herself. 'Did he marry me to keep me hungry? Beggars that come to my father's door are given