

BRAVE NEW SHAKESPEARE: BEARING WITNESS

The Tempest

By William Shakespeare

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter Ferdinand bearing a log.

Enter Miranda; and Prospero at a distance, unobserved.

MIRANDA Alas now, pray you,
Work not so hard. I would the lightning had
Burnt up those logs that you are enjoined to pile.
Pray, set it down and rest you. When this burns
'Twill weep for having wearied you. My father
Is hard at study. Pray now, rest yourself.
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 If you'll sit down,
I'll bear your logs the while. Pray, give me that.
I'll carry it to the pile.

FERDINAND No, precious creature,
I had rather crack my sinews, break my back,
Than you should such dishonor undergo
While I sit lazy by.

MIRANDA It would become me
As well as it does you, and I should do it
With much more ease, for my good will is to it,
And yours it is against.

PROSPERO, *aside* Poor worm, thou art infected.
This visitation shows it.

MIRANDA You look wearily.

FERDINAND
No, noble mistress, 'tis fresh morning with me

When you are by at night. I do beseech you,
Chiefly that I might set it in my prayers,
What is your name?

MIRANDA Miranda.—O my father,
I have broke your hest to say so!

FERDINAND Admired Miranda!
Indeed the top of admiration, worth
What's dearest to the world! Full many a lady
I have eyed with best regard, and many a time
Th' harmony of their tongues hath into bondage
Brought my too diligent ear. For several virtues
Have I liked several women, never any
With so full soul but some defect in her
Did quarrel with the noblest grace she owed,
And put it to the foil. But you, O you,
So perfect and so peerless, are created
Of every creature's best.

PROSPERO, *aside* Fair encounter
Of two most rare affections. Heavens rain grace
On that which breeds between 'em!