

**KING LEAR, NO. 1, OF THE
EDVIN FORREST EDITION
OF SHAKESPEARIAN AND
OTHER PLANS**

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King Lear, No. 1, of the Edwin Forrest Edition of Shakespearian and other Plays by William Shakespeare

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WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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Portrait

KING LEAR.

No. 1

OF THE

EDWIN FORREST EDITION

OF

Shakspearian and other Plays,

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WM. A. MOORE & C. S. BERNARD.

NEW YORK, 1880.

KING LEAR

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*An Anti-chamber in King Lear's Palace.*

Enter EDMUND, R.H.

Edm. Thou, Nature, art my goddess ; to thy law
My services are bound : why am I then
Depriv'd of a son's right, because I came not
In the dull road that custom has prescrib'd ?
Why bastard ? Wherefore base ? when I can boast
A mind as gen'rous, and a shape as true
As honest madam's issue ? Why are we
Held base, who in the lusty stealth of Nature
Take fiercer qualities than what compound
The scanted births of the stale marriage-bed
Well, then, legitimate Edgar, to thy right
Of law I will oppose a bastard's cunning.
Our father's love is to the bastard Edmund
As to the legitimate Edgar ; with success
I've practis'd yet on both their easy natures.—
Here comes the old man, chaf'd with the information
Which last I forg'd against my brother Edgar ;
A tale so plausible, so boldly utter'd,
And heighten'd by such lucky accidents,
That now the slightest circumstance confirms him,
And base-born Edmund, spite of law, inherits.
(Retires a little, R.H.)

Enter KENT and GLOSTER, L.H.

Glost. Nay, good my lord, your charity
O'ershoots itself, to plead in his behalf ;

You are yourself a father, and may feel
The sting of disobedience from a son
First-born and best-belov'd.—O, villain Edgar!

Kent. Be not too rash; all may be forgery,
And time yet clear the duty of your son.

Glost. Plead with the seas, and reason down the winds,
Yet shalt thou ne'er convince me: I have seen
His foul designs through all a father's fondness.

Edm. It works as I could wish; I'll shew myself.

(*Aside, Advances.*)

Glost. Ha, (*Crosses to Edmund, R.H.*) Edmund! welcome, boy.—O Kent! see here
Inverted nature, Gloucester's shame and glory:
This bye-born, the wild sally of my youth,
Pursues me with all filial offices;
Whilst Edgar, begged of heaven, and born in honor,
Draws plagues upon my head, that urge me still
To curse in age the pleasure of my youth.
Nay, weep not, Edmund, for thy brother's crimes.
O generous boy! thou shar'st but half his blood,
Yet lov'st beyond the kindness of a brother;
But I'll reward thy virtue. Follow me.
My lord, you wait the king, who comes resolv'd
To quit the toils of empire, and divide
His realms amongst his daughters. Heaven succeed it!
But much I fear the change.

Kent. I grieve to see him
With such wild starts of passion hourly seiz'd,
As render majesty beneath itself.

Glost. Alas! 'tis the infirmity of his age:
Yet has his temper ever been unfixt,
Chol'ric, and sudden.

(*Flourish of Trumpets and Drums, R.H.*)

Hark, they approach.

[*Flourish.—Exeunt, R.H.*]

Enter Cordelia, L.H. EDGAR, following.

Edg. Cordelia, royal fair, turn yet once more,
And, ere successful Burgundy receive
The treasure of thy beauties from the king,
Ere happy Burgundy for ever fold thee,
Cast back one pitying look on wretched Edgar.

Cord. Alas ! what would the wretched Edgar, with
The more unfortunate Cordelia ?
Who, in obedience to a father's will,
Flies from her Edgar's arms to Burgundy's.

(A Flourish sounds and continues until the Scene changes.)

[Exeunt ; Cordelia, R.H., and Edgar, L.H

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Palace.*

(Flourish of Drums and Trumpets, R.H.)

KING LEAR upon his Throne, ALBANY, CORNWALL, BURGUNDY, KENT, GLOSTER, GONERIL, REGAN, CORDELIA, Captain of the Guard, three Knights, two Pages, two Gentlemen with the Map, two Gentlemen with the Crown, Physician, Herald, Banners and Guards, Lords, Ladies, &c., &c., discovered.

Lear. Attend, my lords of Albany and Cornwall,
With princely Burgundy.

Alb. We do, my liege.

Lear. Give me the map.—*(The Gentlemen who hold the Map, L.H., advance a little, and unroll it.)*—Know, lords, we have divided,

In three our kingdom, having now resolv'd
To disengage from our long toil of state,
Conferring all upon your younger years.
You, Burgundy, Cornwall, and Albany,
Long in our court have made your amorous sojourn,
And now are to be answered.—Tell me, my daughters,
Which of you loves us most, that we may place
Our largest bounty with the largest merit.
Goneril, our eldest born, speak first.

Gon. Sir, I do love you more than words can utter,
Beyond what can be valu'd rich or rare ;
Nor liberty, nor sight, health, fame, or beauty,
Are half so dear ; my life for you were vile ;
As much as child can love the best of fathers.

Lear. Of all these bounds, e'en from this line to this,
With shady forests, and wide skirted meads,
We make thee lady ; to thine and Albany's issue

Be this perpetual. What says our second daughter,
Regan, wife to Cornwall ?

Reg. My sister, sir, in part, express my love ;
For such as her's, is mine, though more extended ;
Sense has no other joy that I can relish ;
I have my all in my dear lieges love.

Lear. Therefore, to thee and thine hereditary,
Remain this ample third of our fair kingdom.

*(Whilst Cordelia is speaking, Lear, assisted by Kent,
L.H., and Gloster, R.H., descends from the throne
and comes forward into the centre ; Kent goes be
low Burgundy, L.H., and Gloster remains at Lear's
R.H., a little behind him.)*

Cord. Now comes my trial.—How am I distrest,
That must with cold speech tempt the chol'ric king,
Rather to leave me dowerless, than to condemn me
To Burgundy's embraces. *(Aside.)*

Lear. Speak now, our last, not least in our dear love,—
So ends my task of state,—Cordelia, speak :
What canst thou say to win a richer third,
Than what thy sisters gained ?

Cord. Now must my love, in words, fall short of their's,
As much as it exceeds in truth—*(Aside.)*—Nothing, my lord,

Lear. Nothing ?

Cord. Nothing.

Lear. Nothing can come of nothing ; speak again.

Cord. Unhappy am I that I can't dissemble :
Sir, as I ought, I love your majesty,
No more, nor less.

Lear. Take heed, Cordelia ;
Thy fortunes are at stake ; think better on't,
And mend thy speech a little.

Cord. O my liege !
You gave me being, bred me, dearly loved me,
And I return my duty as I ought,
Obey you, love you, and most honor you.
Why have my sisters husbands, if they love you all ?
Haply when I shall wed, the lord, whose hand
Shall take my plight, will carry half my love ;
For I shall never marry like my sisters,
To love my father all.