

The History of King Lear

Sc.18

Enter Queen Cordelia, a Doctor, and others

CORDELIA

Alack, 'tis he! Why, he was met even now,
As mad as the racked sea, singing aloud,
Crowned with rank fumitor and furrow-weeds,
With burdocks, hemlock, nettles, cuckoo-flowers,
Darnel, and all the idle weeds that grow 5
In our sustaining corn. The centuries send forth.
Search every acre in the high-grown field,
And bring him to our eye.

[Exit one or more]

What can man's

wisdom

In the restoring his bereave'd sense,
He that can help him 10
Take all my outward worth.

DOCTOR There is means, madam.

Our foster-nurse of nature is repose,
The which he lacks. That to provoke in him
Are many simples operative, whose power 15
Will close the eye of anguish.

CORDELIA All blest secrets,

All you unpublished virtues of the earth,
Spring with my tears, be aidant and remediate
In the good man's distress!±±Seek, seek for him,
Lest his ungoverned rage dissolve the life 20
That wants the means to lead it.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER News, madam.

The British powers are marching hitherward.

CORDELIA

'Tis known before; our preparation stands
In expectation of them.±±O dear father,
It is thy business that I go about; 25
Therefore great France
My mourning and important tears hath pitied.

No blown ambition doth our arms incite,
But love, dear love, and our aged father's right.
Soon may I hear and see him!

Exeunt