

**SAMPLE - INCOMPLETE SCRIPT**



**A Community Shakespeare Company  
Edition of**

# *The Tempest*

**Original verse adaptation by**

**Richard Carter**



*Enriching Young Lives, Cultivating Community*

## NOTES ABOUT PRODUCTION

The author asks that anyone planning to stage one of his adaptations please contact him for permission, via the CSC website: [www.communityshakespeare.org](http://www.communityshakespeare.org). There are no performance royalties due. He does ask that scripts be purchased for every member of a cast. Discounts are available from the author on purchases of 20 scripts or more.

Frequently asked questions include, “What if my group is mostly girls?” Cross-casting (females playing male roles) is almost inevitable; once it is explained that males played all the female roles in Shakespeare’s time, this obstacle is easily overcome. Moreover, girls see that many of the “big” parts are male, so those wanting more stage time gravitate toward male roles. The author also encourages groups to take certain liberties, such as changing the sex of some roles. With little alteration of the text, a duke may become a duchess, an uncle may become an aunt.

In answer to the question, “What if I have too many (or too few) students?” some parts may be divided amongst several actors (a messenger becomes two messengers), or actors may take on more than one role. In short, do what is necessary to make the play fun and accessible for young people; the author did!

# Synopsis of the play

A storm (*tempest*) rages at sea! The Master of the vessel, the Boatswain and Mariners all struggle to keep the ship afloat, as their royal passengers from Naples crowd the deck, just before the ship splits apart. From a “desert” (deserted) island nearby, the “wizard” Prospero tells his only child, Miranda, why he raised the storm, and how they came to be the sole human inhabitants of the isle.

As the onetime Duke of Milan, Prospero immersed himself in study, becoming powerful in the ways of magic but giving his earthly powers to his brother, Antonio. Aided by Alonso, King of Naples, Antonio usurped Prospero’s dukedom, condemning Prospero and his small daughter Miranda to a leaky boat, cast adrift. Only the swift action of Gonzalo, a faithful lord who brought Prospero provisions and his precious books of magic, saved the father and toddler from death. Marooned on a “desert isle” in the Mediterranean, Prospero became lord of its only inhabitants: Ariel, an “airy spirit,” Caliban, the “monster” son of a dead witch, and other spirits that inhabit there.

After 15 years, Fate brings Prospero’s enemies within his grasp. Their ship passes the island, returning home from Africa. In the tempest the ship is wrecked, its passengers brought safely to shore by Ariel. King Alonso’s son, Ferdinand, is the first to meet Prospero and Miranda. He and Miranda fall in love at first sight, but Prospero tests Ferdinand’s character to make sure he is worthy of Miranda’s love.

Next we see Alonso, humbled by what he believes to be the drowning of Ferdinand, his only son. Gonzalo (Prospero’s savior) remains upbeat, marveling how his group came ashore alive, with their garments dry, seemingly new. His optimism is countered by the grumbling Sebastian (Alonso’s brother), who together with Antonio (Prospero’s usurping brother), begins to plot against Alonso’s life (so that Sebastian may become King of Naples). All-knowing Prospero sends Ariel to keep the Neapolitans from harming one another, until they’re within his grasp.

Finally, Shakespeare introduces the comic characters: Trinculo, a jester, and Stephano, the King’s “drunken butler.” They meet the “monster” Caliban, who is Prospero’s servant. When Stephano pours some “celestial liquor” into Caliban’s mouth, the malcontent creature brightens, and calls Stephano a “god.” He convinces Stephano to try to murder the sleeping Prospero, in order to become master of the island.

Ariel works tirelessly to do Prospero’s bidding: bringing Ferdinand within Miranda’s view; confusing and taunting the drunken trio; gradually leading Alonso and his compatriots to meet Prospero, who reveals himself as the rightful Duke of Milan. In return, Prospero frees Ariel from servitude, and prepares to board the ship which is magically “tight and yare,” waiting in the island’s harbor to take everyone back to Italy. Prospero then asks the audience for *his* freedom –

*“ . . . release me from my bands with the help of your good hands.  
As you from crimes would pardoned be, let your indulgence set me free.”*

## ABOUT THE SONGS IN THE PLAY

Melodies for most of the songs used in this script can be found in Shakespeare's Songbook, by Ross W. Duffin, pub. 2004 by W. W. Norton & Company, NY, NY, ISBN 0-393-05889-1, along with information about Shakespeare's music, and the process of tracking down appropriate tunes. Users may find the original songs unwieldy for young actors, in which case they are encouraged to write or find their own tunes.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

### ON BOARD THE SHIP

ALONSO	King of Naples
SEBASTIAN	his brother
FERDINAND	his son
ANTONIO	Prospero's brother, usurping Duke of Milan
GONZALO	an honest old councillor
ADRIAN, FRANCISCO	lords
TRINCULO	a jester
STEPHANO	a drunken butler
MASTER	of the king's ship
BOATSWAIN	of the ship
MARINERS	on the ship

### ON THE ISLAND

PROSPERO	the rightful Duke of Milan
MIRANDA	his daughter
ARIEL	an airy spirit
CALIBAN	a savage and deformed slave
IRIS	messenger of the gods
CERES	goddess of fertility (personated by spirits)
JUNO	queen of the gods
SPIRITS	of the island

*This play should run approximately one hour and ten minutes without intermission.*

## **ACT I, Scene 1**

*After the first scene on board a ship at sea, the action takes place in different parts of a desert island.*

(A TEMPESTUOUS NOISE OF THUNDER AND LIGHTNING HEARD. ENTER A SHIP-MASTER AND A BOATSWAIN)

### **MASTER**

Boatswain! Boatswain!

### **BOATSWAIN**

Here, master. What cheer?

### **MASTER**

Speak to the mariners. Bestir, bestir!  
Fall to it yarely,\* or we run ourselves aground.  
(Pronounced “yar-ly” meaning “quickly”)

(EXIT MASTER. ENTER MARINERS)

### **BOATSWAIN**

(TO THE MARINERS) Cheerly, my hearts! Tend to the sound  
Of the master’s whistle. Yare, yare!\* (Pronounced “yar,” meaning “quick”)  
(TO THE STORM) Blow till thou burst, you’ll not blow us far!  
(TO THE MARINERS) Take in the topsail!

(ENTER ALONSO, SEBASTIAN, ANTONIO, FERDINAND, GONZOLO)

### **ALONSO**

Boatswain, where’s the master?

### **BOATSWAIN**

I pray you, keep below; you’ll cause a disaster!  
Keep to your cabins, you do assist the storm!

### **GONZALO**

Nay, good, be patient.

### **BOATSWAIN**

You mar our form!

### **GONZALO**

Yet remember whom thou hast aboard.

**BOATSWAIN**

None I love more than myself, rest assured!  
What care these elements for the name of a king?  
If you can command them, let your voice ring!  
If not, go below and make yourselves ready!  
(TO THE MARINERS) Cheerly, good hearts! Yare! Hold her steady!

**GONZALO**

(TO THE COURTIERS, INDICATING THE BOATSWAIN)  
I've great comfort from this fellow, look you on him:  
Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him.

(EXEUNT ALONSO AND FERDINAND. ENTER MARINIERS, WET)

**MARINER 1**

All lost! To prayers!

**MARINER 2**

To prayers! All lost!

**BOATSWAIN**

Must our mouths be cold, in this tempest tossed?

**MARINER 3**

Mercy on us! We split, we split!

**MARINER 1**

Farewell my brother! This is it!

**MARINERS 1-2-3**

We split! We split! We split! Farewell!

(EXEUNT MARINERS AND BOATSWAIN)

**ANTONIO**

Let's go sink with the king, Sebastian!

**SEBASTIAN**

Oh, swell!

(EXEUNT)

**GONZALO**

Thy wills be done above the sky,  
But I would fain die a death that's dry!  
(EXIT)

## **ACT I. Scene 2**

(THE ISLAND. ENTER PROSPERO AND MIRANDA)

### **MIRANDA**

If by your art, dearest father, you have set  
The wild waters in this roar, allay them, for as yet  
I have suffered with those I saw suffer on the water:  
A brave vessel wrecked; some noble creature slaughtered.  
O, the cry did knock against my heart;  
Poor souls, they perished, the good ship torn apart.

### **PROSPERO**

Be collected. Tell your heart there's no harm done.  
I've done nothing but in care of thee, my own dear one:  
My daughter, who art ignorant of what thou art,  
Naught knowing of thy father, nor how our tale did start.

### **MIRANDA**

You've oft begun to tell me what I am, but then stopped short.

### **PROSPERO**

'Tis time I should inform thee farther in this report.  
Lend thy hand, pluck my magic garment from my back.  
(MIRANDA HELPS HIM TO DISROBE)  
Lie there, my art. (TO MIRANDA) Have comfort, for the wreck  
Which even now hath touched compassion in thy heart  
Was so safely ordered by provision in mine art  
That not so much as a hair on any head  
Was lost by man or beast; no soul aboard is dead.  
Can'st thou remember a time before we came unto this isle?

### **MIRANDA**

Certainly I can, though it's been a long, long while.  
Had I not five women to attend me withal?

### **PROSPERO**

Thou hadst, and more. What else do you recall?  
For thy father was Duke of Milan, a prince of power.

### **MIRANDA**

Sir, are *you* not my father?

### **PROSPERO**

Thy mother, bless her bower,  
Was a piece of virtue, and she said thou wast my child,

The only heir to Milan, and a princess fair and mild.

**MIRANDA**

What foul play had we that we came from thence?

**PROSPERO**

My brother, called Antonio, was the one who sent us hence;  
Whom next to thyself, I loved best of all.

I gave him manage of my state; thus began my fall.

For being rapt in secret studies, transported by my art,  
To my state I grew a stranger, and a stranger to his heart.  
Thus awaked an evil nature in my brother, and my power  
Fueled his royal ambition, growing stronger by the hour.  
Dost thou hear?

**MIRANDA**

Your tale, sir, would cure deafness, truth be told.

**PROSPERO**

Hear a little further; the present business will unfold.  
The King of Naples, being mine enemy, next did conspire  
With my brother to depose me, and now our state was dire.  
They set us aboard a boat, a rotten carcass with no sail,  
The very rats had quit it; our end thus could not fail.

**MIRANDA**

How came we then ashore?

**PROSPERO**

By providence divine;  
A noble Neapolitan and faithful friend of mine,  
Gonzalo, gave us food and garments, and knowing I loved my books,  
He furnished me with volumes from the deepest shelves and nooks  
Of mine own library; books I prize above my state. (HE RISES)  
Sit still and hear the last of our sea-sorrow, for it grows late.  
In this island we arrived, here thy schoolmaster have I been.

**MIRANDA**

Heavens thank you for it. Now I pray you to begin  
To tell me – for still 'tis beating in my mind,  
Your reason for raising the sea-storm that did seem so unkind.

**PROSPERO**

Know thus far forth: by accident most strange,  
Fortune hath brought mine enemies here within my range.  
My zenith doth depend upon a most auspicious star,

Whose influence if I court not, my fortunes it will mar.  
Here cease more questions; thou art inclined to sleep.  
I know thou canst not choose: give way to slumbers deep.  
(MIRANDA SLEEPS. PROSPERO PUTS ON HIS CLOAK, CALLS OUT)  
Approach, my Ariel. Come.

(ENTER ARIEL)

**ARIEL**

All hail, great master, hail!  
I come to answer thy pleasure: you know I will not fail,  
Be it to fly, to swim, or to dive into fire,  
Ariel and all his quality will answer to thy desire.

**PROSPERO**

Hast thou, spirit, performed the tempest that I bade?

**ARIEL**

To the letter. I boarded the king's ship, seeming of fire made:  
Now on the beak, now in the waist, in cabins and on deck,  
I *flamed* amazement in every eye, till the fools cried, "What the heck!"  
Sometimes I would divide and burn in many places:  
On the topmast, the yards; you should have seen their faces!

**PROSPERO**

My brave spirit!

**ARIEL**

All but the mariners ran in desperation,  
Plunged in the foaming brine to quench their perspiration.  
The king's son Ferdinand, with hair all up-staring,  
Was the first man to leap, his eyes wide and glaring.  
"Hell is empty!" he cried," and the devils all are here!"

**PROSPERO**

That's my tricky spirit! But was the shore so near?

**ARIEL**

Close by, my master

**PROSPERO**

But are they, Ariel, all well?

**ARIEL**

Not a hair perished. Not even their garments smell,  
But fresher than before; and as thou bid me,  
I've dispersed them about the isle, while to their eyes I hid me.  
The king's son I left alone, cooling the air with sighs,  
His arms in this sad knot\* (*\*arms crossed*). As for the other guys,  
The mariners under hatches, charmed, are all asleep;  
The rest are bound for Naples, their lost king they all weep.

**PROSPERO**

Ariel, thy charge exactly is performed.  
But there's more work since aboard the ship you stormed.

**ARIEL**

Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains,  
Let me remember thee, what thou promised yet remains.

**PROSPERO**

How now? Moody? What is it thou canst demand?

**ARIEL**

My liberty.

**PROSPERO**

Before the time be out? 'Tis not at hand;  
No more.

**ARIEL**

I prithee, remember, I have worthy service done.

**PROSPERO**

Dost thou forget the torment that I freed thee from?

**ARIEL**

No.

**PROSPERO**

Thou dost. Thou liest, malignant thing!  
When I found thee in torment, with thy cries this isle did ring.  
For the foul witch Sycorax, sorceress from Algiers,  
Had imprisoned thee in a tree for at least a dozen years.  
Then she died and left thee there; thy groans did make wolves howl.  
Your only company her hag-born son . . .

**ARIEL**

Caliban . . .

**PROSPERO**

With shape most foul;  
Dull thing, I say so, that growling Caliban,  
Whom now I keep in service, though he be not like a man.  
When I arrived and heard thee, no thanks to that great lout,  
I made thy pine prison gape: 'twas Prospero let thee out.

**ARIEL**

I thank thee, gentle master. I'll follow thy command,  
And do my spriting gently, at sea or here on land.

**PROSPERO**

Do so, and after two days I'll set thee free.

**ARIEL**

*That's* my noble master! What shall I do for thee?

**PROSPERO**

Go, make thyself invisible, then hither come with speed.  
(EXIT ARIEL)  
(TO MIRANDA) Awake, dear heart, awake. Thou hast slept well indeed.

**MIRANDA**

The strangeness of your story put heaviness in my brow.

**PROSPERO**

Shake it off. Come on; we'll visit Caliban now,  
Who never yields kind answer.

**MIRANDA**

'Tis a villain I love not to look on.

**PROSPERO**

He does fetch in our wood and make the fire for us to cook on.  
What ho, slave! Caliban!

**CALIBIN**

(OFF) There's wood enough within.

**PROSPERO**

Come forth, I say, thou tortoise, or I'll vex thee for thy sin.  
(ENTER ARIEL, LIKE A WATER NYMPH)  
Fine apparition, Ariel, hark in thine ear. (WHISPERS)

**ARIEL**

My lord, it shall be done, and quickly, have no fear.  
(EXIT ARIEL. ENTER CALIBAN)

**CALIBAN**

As wicked dew as e'er my mother brushed with raven's feather,  
From unwholesome fen drop on you both! May the southwest weather  
Blow on ye, and blister you all o'er!

**PROSPERO**

For this be sure thou shalt have cramps tonight to make thee sore.  
Thou shalt be pinched: each pinch more stinging than the other.

**CALIBAN**

(ASIDE) I must eat my dinner. (ALOUD) This island's mine by Sycorax my mother,  
Which thou didst take from me, though at first you seemed my friend,  
Gave me water with berries in it. Indeed, I loved thee then,  
And show'd thee the qualities of the isle, both barren place and fertile.  
Curs'd be I that did so, for now I'm but thy turtle,  
Which first was mine own king. May the charms of Sycorax, the witch -  
Toads, beetles, bats - light on you and make *you* itch!  
For I am all the subjects that you have, and here you sty me.

**PROSPERO**

Thou lying slave, I've lodged thee well, no care did I deny thee,  
Till thou didst seek to violate the honor of my child.

**CALIBAN**

O! Would it had been done, for then this island wild  
I'd have peopled else with Calibans!

**MIRANDA**

O, most abhorréd slave:  
I pitied thee, taught thee to speak, coaxed thee from thy cave.

**CALIBAN**

You taught me language; my profit on it is I know how to curse:  
The red plague rid you for learning me your language! You people all talk in verse!

**PROSPERO**

Hag-seed, hence! Fetch us fuel, or with cramps I'll make thee roar.

**CALIBAN**

(ASIDE) I must obey. His art has such power, just thinking of it makes me sore.

(EXIT CALIBAN. ENTER FERDINAND, AND ARIEL INVISIBLE, PLAYING AND SINGING)

**ARIEL**  
(SINGS)

*Come unto these yellow sands,  
And then take hands;  
Foot it featly here and there,  
And sweet sprites bear  
The burden. Hark, hark! I hear  
The strain of strutting Chanticleer  
Cry cock a diddle dow.  
Cock a diddle dow.*

**FERDINAND**

Where should this music be? In the earth, or the air?  
It sounds no more; sure it waits on some god o' this island fair.  
Sitting on a bank, weeping again the king my father's wreck,  
This music crept by, soothing my passion for all hands lost on deck.  
Thence I have followed it; or it hath drawn me rather.  
But lo, it begins again, to soothe the loss of my father.

**ARIEL**  
(SINGS)

*Full fathom five thy father lies,  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
Nothing of him that doth fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.  
Sea nymphs hourly ring his knell  
Ding dong.  
Hark, now I hear them, ding dong bell.*

**FERDINAND**

It does remember my drownèd father; this business is nothing mortal.

**PROSPERO**  
(TO MIRANDA)

Advance thine eye and say what thou seest yond, through the fringèd portal.

**MIRANDA**

What is it? A spirit? Believe me, sir, it carries a form most brave.  
But 'tis a spirit.

**PROSPERO**

No, it eats and sleeps, and hath senses as *we* have.  
This gallant was in the wreck, and though something stained with grief,  
Thou mightst call him a goodly person.

**MIRANDA**

He's human! That's a relief.  
I might call him a thing divine, for nothing so noble I've seen.

**PROSPERO**

(ASIDE) It goes as my soul prompts it.

**ARIEL**

(ASIDE) Master, she thinks he's keen.

**PROSPERO**

(ASIDE) I'll free thee, delicate spirit, within two days for this.

**FERDINAND**

(SEEING MIRANDA)  
Most sure the goddess on whom these airs attend.

**ARIEL**

(ASIDE) Oh joy! Oh, bliss!

**FERDINAND**

(TO MIRANDA)  
My prime request – O you wonder! - is if you be maid or no?

**MIRANDA**

No wonder, sir, but certainly a maid.

**FERDINAND**

She speaks my language! Whoa!  
I am the best that speak this speech, were I but where 'tis spoken.

**PROSPERO**

How? The best? What if the King of Naples heard this token?

**FERDINAND**

He does hear me, and I weep for it, for alas, I am he,  
Who with mine eyes saw the king my father wrecked and lost at sea.

**MIRANDA**

Alack, for mercy!

**PROSPERO**

A word, good sir: I fear you've done yourself wrong.

**MIRANDA**

Why speaks my father so ungently?

(INDICATING FERDINAND) He did but follow a song.

This is the third man that e're I saw; the first that made me sigh.

Pity incline my father toward this temple.

**ARIEL**

(ASIDE) What a guy!

**FERDINAND**

(TO MIRANDA) If your affection has not gone forth, of Naples I'll make you Queen.

**PROSPERO**

(ASIDE) They're in each other's powers.

**ARIEL**

(ASIDE) It's the worst case I've ever seen!

**PROSPERO**

(ASIDE) This swift business I must make uneasy, lest too light the winning  
Make the prize too light. (ALoud) One word, sir a word before beginning:  
I charge thee: thou dost usurp the name of Naples thou own'st not,  
And hast put thyself here to spy, to win my island; may you rot!

**FERDINAND**

No, as I am a man!

**MIRANDA**

No ill spirit can have so fair a house.\*

(\**Ferdinand's spirit must be fair because his shape is*)

**PROSPERO**

Speak not for him, Miranda; he's a traitor. Come, you louse.  
I'll manacle thy neck and feet; seawater shalt thou drink.

**FERDINAND**

I will resist till mine enemy has more power.

**ARIEL**

(ASIDE) Ha! Ya think?

(FERDINAND DRAWS, AND IS CHARMED FROM MOVING)

**MIRANDA**

O dear father, make not too rash a trial for this good man.  
He's gentle, not fearful.

**PROSPERO**

Silence!

**MIRANDA**

Sir, have pity if you can.

**PROSPERO**

One word more shall make me chide thee, if not hate thee, wench.  
Having seen but him and Caliban, you cannot smell his stench.  
To the most of men, *this* is a Caliban.

**MIRANDA**

My affections are then most humble.  
I've no ambition to see a goodlier man.

**PROSPERO**

Down from your pedestal he'll tumble:  
(TO FERDINAND) Put up thy sword, traitor, for I can here disarm thee,  
And make thy weapon drop; with this stick I charm thee.  
(HE WAVES HIS STAFF; FERDINAND DROPS HIS SWORD)  
Thy nerves are in their infancy again.

**FERDINAND**

So they are. My spirits are bound up.

**PROSPERO**

(ASIDE) Thou hast done well, fine Ariel, bringing me this pup.

**FERDINAND**

My father's loss, the wreck of my friends, are but light to me, I'd say,  
Might I behold this maiden through my prison once a day.

**MIRANDA**

Be of comfort. My father's of a better nature than he appears by speech.

**PROSPERO**

Come. Miranda, follow. Speak not for this leach.  
(TO ARIEL) Thou shalt be as free as mountain winds if you exactly do  
All points of my command.

**ARIEL**

To the syllable. I'm with you!

## About the Author – Richard Carter

Richard Carter grew up in Portland, Oregon, the son of a doctor and a dancer. Since 1986 he has made his home in the San Juan Islands, between the Olympic Peninsula and mainland of Washington State.

Richard graduated from Vassar College and received his MFA in Playwriting from the University of Washington. His play, *Blood and Iron*, won the Jumpstart New Play Competition and was the first non-Shakespeare play ever presented by the Seattle Shakespeare Company. It was subsequently produced at the Tristan Bates Theatre in London in 1998. His musical play, *Winds In The Morning* premiered in the Seattle Fringe Festival, and was selected to inaugurate the Wooden Boat Festival in Port Townsend, Washington in 2000. Since 2006, in addition to publishing his Shakespeare adaptations, Richard has written and directed traveling one-man shows based on the lives of Mark Twain and Albert Einstein.

Richard offers his talents in many venues. As Co-Founder/Director of the Community Shakespeare Company, he is one of the few playwrights with the audacity to work *with* Shakespeare. Writing in rhyming couplets, updating some of the language, he delivers the best of the Bard for performance by young actors or Shakespeare-shy adults.

Richard's unique adaptations motivate and enchant actors from elementary school on up. His leadership skills engage parents, mentors and artists to support and encourage their youth. The result is a dynamic model that can be used in schools, clubs, camps, and other communities. His workshop for teachers, *Shakespeare Applied*, has been presented at national conferences throughout the United States and in Canada.

Richard and his wife Jeanna live on a small farm where they have raised their children and practiced sustainable agriculture since 1988.