

## Scene II: Prospero's cave at night

*High up on the island, on a rocky peak. The lightning and thunder continue relentlessly. Prospero, in magic cape, with staff and book of spells conducts the elements with glee.*

PROSPERO: There! Take that! Ha ha!

And that!

I'll teach you a lesson, Alonso! And you, Antonio. Never, ever, mess with wizards!

*One final, double-whoosh, crack and roll as Prospero swirls his magic staff through the air, then grabs a rock to sit upon.*

PROSPERO: (Cont'd) Phew. I'm getting too old for this.

*Enter Miranda.*

MIRANDA: Father! What are you doing?!

PROSPERO: Just having a little fun...

MIRANDA: You've wrecked a ship. The sailors are drowning.

PROSPERO: Oh, I don't think so, Miranda.

MIRANDA: Father - you must save them!

PROSPERO: It's not the sailors who need saving, my dear.

MIRANDA: I don't understand...

PROSPERO: Wait a moment.

*Prospero opens his magic book, flicks the pages -*

Once, twice, thrice - cease storm!

*And miraculously the storm ceases.*

There. Nothing like a good storm, eh?

MIRANDA: Father. The sailors!

PROSPERO: Don't you worry. They're safe.

MIRANDA: But I saw them drown -

PROSPERO: All part of the plan, my dear. Sit down, I'll explain.

*Miranda comes and sits with him on his rock.*

PROSPERO: Now. Do you remember how we ended up on this island?

MIRANDA: I was too little.

PROSPERO: It was a terrible time. But now you need to know.

*He clicks his fingers imperiously.*

PROSPERO: Watch this.

*A little group of sprites now enters, dressed as our key players from twelve years before: Alonso, Antonio, Gonzalo, Prospero and the baby Miranda. They carry rudimentary props to represent Milan etc and set up a 'mini-stage upon a stage'.*

PROSPERO: Don't be scared.

MIRANDA: Who are they?

PROSPERO: Just actors.

MIRANDA: And who are they playing?

PROSPERO: They're playing us, Miranda. The time is twelve years ago. The place Milan. That one - is me. Prospero.

*As each part is called, the tiny players take a bow and join in the silent drama.*

MIRANDA: You look very grand.

PROSPERO: I was a Duke. The Duke of Milan.

MIRANDA: Gosh. Who's that - the one in black?

PROSPERO: That is my brother. Antonio.

MIRANDA: I don't like the look of him.

PROSPERO: Join the club. While I was busy with my books - he stole my crown and my kingdom.

MIRANDA: I'll kick him!

PROSPERO: Time enough for that. Back to the story. You see - it was my own fault. I was too busy studying. Anyway, off he went to Naples...and made a deal with the King of Naples. They came back -

MIRANDA: With soldiers!

PROSPERO: That's right.

MIRANDA: They arrested you! But what's that you're carrying?

PROSPERO: It's you, my dear Miranda. You were just three years old.

MIRANDA: I can't bear it! What happened next?

PROSPERO: They led us out of my kingdom to the sea. Antonio wanted rid of me - for ever.

MIRANDA: They're putting us in that old boat.

PROSPERO: That's right. It was full of holes.

MIRANDA: It's got no sail. We could have died.

PROSPERO: We should have. But luckily -

MIRANDA: That old man -

PROSPERO: His name's Gonzalo. My dearest friend.

MIRANDA: He's loading the boat with food, drink -

PROSPERO: And my precious books.

MIRANDA: Now we're sailing. Look at Antonio. He's laughing!

PROSPERO: Yes. I can hear it still...

MIRANDA: The boat's almost sinking...

PROSPERO: By God's grace - it didn't. Which is how we ended up here. All alone.

MIRANDA: For twelve years.

*Prospero clicks his fingers. The little actors and their props exit.*

PROSPERO: Did you like my little device?

MIRANDA: Interesting...

PROSPERO: I thought I'd call it television. Do you think it'll catch on?

MIRANDA: I wouldn't waste any time on it, father.

PROSPERO: You're probably right.

MIRANDA: So what does this have to do with the storm?

PROSPERO: Well, as luck would have it, Alonso and Antonio, plus a few of their cronies, were sailing past our island this afternoon on their way back from a wedding in Africa. So I conjured up a little - diversion.

MIRANDA: What are you going to do to them?

PROSPERO: Punishment - possibly. Revenge - maybe. I haven't decided yet. Come, my dear. It is still night. You must sleep.

*Prospero leads Miranda over to their cave where she lies down under a blanket. He kisses her gently.*

PROSPERO: Good night, sweet daughter.