

RESOURCES

THE STORY IN 20 MINUTES

1.

PROSPERO and his daughter MIRANDA live on an island together. They have lived there since she was three years old and they had to run away from Prospero's brother ANTONIO, but Miranda doesn't know what happened or remember anything before they came to the island. They live there with ARIEL – a spirit - and CALIBAN – a creature, who Prospero has made his servants using magic.

2.

The play begins with a terrifying storm. By chance the boat carrying all Prospero's former enemies has passed near the island, at last within the reach of his magic powers. The storm threatens the life of all. Chaos ensues and those on board are separated as they are washed ashore.

Confused noise within

**Mercy on us! – We split, we split!”
Farewell my wife and children! –
Farewell bother – We split, we split, we split!**

3.

On the ship are Prosper's brother Antonio, now Duke of Milan, and Alonso with his son **FERDINAND** and **SEBASTIAN**, Alonso's brother. Also on board are **GONZALO**, an honest old councillor; **TRINCULO**, a jester, and **STEPHANO**, a drunken butler. Trinculo and Stephano provide much of the comedy in the play. For one thing they sing silly drunken songs:

**The master, the swabber, the boatswain and I,
The gunner and his mate
Loved Mall, Meg and Marian and Margery,
But none of us cared for Kate**

4.

On the island Miranda suspects the storm is the work of her father and she pleads with him to calm the tempest. He assures her that no one has come to harm and, for the first time in her life, he tells her the full story of their past.

PROSPERO: **Canst thou remember
A time before we came unto this cell?
I do not think thou canst, for then thou wast not**

But three years old

5.

Prospero uses Ariel to guide the movements of the shipwrecked men. Ariel starts by taking Ferdinand, separated by the others and feared drowned, to Prospero and Miranda. Miranda and Ferdinand fall in love at first sight.

MIRANDA: **This is the third man that e'er I saw, the first
That e'er I sighed for...**

FERDINAND: **I'll make you ... the Queen of Naples**

6.

Meanwhile, on another part of the island the main party, except Antonio and Sebastian, have fallen into a strange sleep, brought on by Ariel's music. Antonio suggests that Sebastian could become King of Naples and the two plot to kill Alonso and Gonzalo. Ariel warns Gonzalo

Ariel sings in Gonzalo's ear
**If of life you keep a care,
Shake off slumber and be aware
Awake, awake!**

7.

On yet another part of the island Trinculo stumbles across Caliban, then they meet up with Stephano. In the confusion Stephano gives Caliban alcohol, winning Caliban's devotion. A drunken Caliban promises to show them the island, which Stephano will rule once they've murdered Prospero.

CALIBAN: **Thou mayst brain him,
Having first seized his books**

8.

Meanwhile Prospero has set Ferdinand to work, moving a pile of logs. Unseen he watches as Miranda offers to help Ferdinand and the two promise to marry each other. Prospero is moved at this and resolves to support them

MIRANDA: **Do you love me?**
FERDINAND: **O heaven, O earth ... I
Beyond all limit of what else I' the world
Do love, prize, honour you.**
PROSPERO: **Fair encounter
Of two most rare affections!**

9.

Prospero, with Ariel's help, creates a magical banquet in front of Alonso and his party. Ariel, disguised as an enormous bird, makes the banquet disappear, and tongue lashes Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio for their crime against Prospero. They leave in confusion. Prospero thanks Ariel for his good work.

ARIEL: **You are three men of sin, whom Destiny
Hath caused to belch up. I have made you mad.**

10.

Prospero and Ariel now turn to Ferdinand and Miranda. Prospero uses his magic to lay on a celebration for them. Suddenly he remembers the plot of Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo to kill him; he stops the celebration to deal with them.

PROSPERO: **I had forgot that foul conspiracy
Of the beast Caliban and his confederates
Against my life**

11.

Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban are outside Prospero's cell, preparing to kill him. *A noise of yelping dogs is heard. A group of Spirits shaped like hounds rush in to chase away the three clowns. Prospero and Ariel have set them on the fools.*

ARIEL: **Silver! There it goes!**

PROSPERO: **Fury, fury! There, tyrant, there! Hark, hark!**

12.

Now that he has total control Prospero decides to free his enemies from his magic powers and, moreover, to give up these powers altogether. He reveals himself to Alonso and his party and reunites Alonso with his son Ferdinand.

PROSPERO: **I'll break my staff
And deeper than did ever plummet sound
I'll drown my book**

13.

Prospero finally gives Ariel his freedom. Alonso expresses regret for his part in Prospero's overthrow twelve years before. Prospero promises to go with Alonso back to Naples, where Ferdinand and Miranda will be married.

ARIEL: *Aside to Prospero* **Was't well done?**
PROSPERO: **Bravely. Thou shalt be free.**

14.
The play ends as Prospero asks the audience to free him with their applause.

PROSPERO: **As you from crimes would pardon'd be,
Let your indulgence set me free**