

## Shades of Shakespeare's King Lear

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### Abstract

King Lear is a tragedy written by Shakespeare. It is an emotional, vast and complicated story, Journey from madness to wisdom. What we know Shakespeare's wide reading and powers of assimilation seems to show that he made use of all kinds of material, absorbing contradictory viewpoints positive and negative, religious and secular, as it to ensure that King Lear would offer no single controlling perspective, but this story be open to, indeed demand, multiple interpretations. This play has different shades of human nature. Though, it is a tragedy it spread beauty of all emotions strongly.

### About Writer-

William Shakespeare's life is sketchy. Mostly mere surmise based upon court or other clerical records. His parents John and Mary were married about 1557. William the eldest son was born in 1564 probably on April 23. <sup>1</sup> At the age of eighteenth (1582) William Shakespeare Married with Anne Hathway, a local farmers daughter eight years his senior.

Shakespeare probably left school of fifteenth, which was the norm, and took some sort job, especially since this was the period of his father's financial difficulties. At some point during the dark years, Shakespeare began his carrier with a London theatrical company perhaps in 1589 for he was already an actor and play write of some note in 1592. Shakespeare apparently wrote and acted for Pembroke's men as well as numerous others, in particular strange's men, which later become the chamberlain's men, with whom he remained for the rest of his career.

Amid all of his success, Shakespeare suffered the loss of his only son, but his career continued unabated, and in London in 1599 he become one of the partner in the new 'Globe Theatre' built by the chamberlain's men. This group was a remarkable assemblage of excellent actors who were also business partners and close friends including Richard Burbage who all worked together as equals. When queen Elizabeth died (1603) and her cousin James Became king; the chamberlain's men was remained the king's men and Shakespeare's productivity and popularity continued uninterrupted. He invest in London real estate, purchased a second theatre named 'Black Gatehouse'

In short Shakespeare's life can be divide in to three periods, the first twenty years in Stantfort which include his schooling, early marriage and fatherhood. The next twenty five years as an actor and play write in London. And the last few years in retirement, back in Stantfort where he enjoyed moderate wealth gained from his theatrical success.

William Shakespeare was a well-known poet, actor, play write of Elizabethan theatre. More them five centuries people enjoyed his plays. his almost all plays are translated in so many languages. He wrote 36 plays in his 25 years career. His plays are divided in to three parts 1<sup>st</sup> Historical plays. 2<sup>nd</sup> comedy plays, 3<sup>rd</sup> Tragedy plays2. Henry IV, V, VII, Reachard II, III are his

historical plays. Comedy of errors , The Taming Of The Shru, The wives Of Vindsar, Mid Summer Night In Dream , As You Like It, Twelfth Night, are comedies and Romio and Juliet, Hamlet, Julies Sesor, Mackbeth, Atthello, King Lear, These are the famous tragedies of Shakespeare .

In India his Kind Lear got tremendous popularity among people. This play has different shades. Many people studied and wrote on this play but there is something in this play which always attracts to write.

Let's have a look on important characters of King Lear in short before going towards main part.

Lear – King of Britain

Goneril – Lear's Eldest daughter

Regan – Lear's Second daughter

Cordelia – Lear's youngest daughter

Edmund – Gloucester's illegitimate son.

Fool – Lear's fool.

### **About Shakespeare's King Lear-**

To understand the nature of characters and how these characters behave, there is need to know this story in short .The story is begun in Britain. Lear, King of Britain, had three daughters, Goneril, wife to the duke of Albany, Regan wife to the duke of Cornwall, and Cordelia, a young daughter, for whose love the king of France and duke of Burgundy were joint suitors and were at this time making stay for that purpose in the court of Lear.

The old king, worn out with age and the fatigues of Government, he being more than fourscore years old, determined to take no further part in state affairs, but to leave the management to younger strengths , that he might have time to prepare for death, which must at no long period ensure .with this intent he called his three daughters to him , to know from their own lips which of them loved him best that he might part his kingdom among them in such proportions as their affection for him should seem to deserve.

Goneril , the eldest, declared that she loved her father more than words give out, that he was dearer to her than the light of her own eyes, dearer than life and liberty. The King, delighted to hear from her own mouth this assurance of her love and he bestow her and her husband one third of his kingdom.

Then calling to him his second daughter, he demanded what she had to say. She declared that what her sister had spoken came short of the love which she professed to bear for his highness; in so much that she found all other joys dead in comparison with the pleasure which she took in the love of her dear king and father. Lear blessed himself in having such loving children and he bestow third of his kingdom upon her and her husband equal in size to that which he had already given away to Goneril.

Then turning to his youngest daughter cordelia whom he called his joy he asked what she had to say, thinking no doubt that she would glad his ears with the same loving speeches which her sisters had uttered or rather that her expressions would be so much stronger than theirs, as she had always been his darling, and favored by him above either of her sisters.

Cordelia then told her father that he's her father that he had given her breeding and loved her, that she returned those duties back as was most fit and did obey him, love him, and most honour him. But that she could not frame

her mouth to such large speeches as her sister has done or promise to love nothing else in the world. Why had sisters husband, if they had no love for anything but their father ?if she should ever wed, she was sure the lord to whom she gave her hand would want half love, half of her care and duty .she should never marry like her sisters to love father all.

The King, shocked with this appearance of ingratitude in his favorite child and Kick her out form his kingdom.

Very soon he realized for having so foolishing giving away kingdom. The coolness and falling off of respect which Lear had began to pursive, were not all which this foolish fond father was to suffer from his daughters. Within very little time he forgot that he had ones been a king Who commanded a kingdom.

For sudden joy did weep..  
And he for sorrow sung..  
That such a king should play bo peep..  
And go the fools among 3

Giving all away to his daughter at which time, as rhyminly expressed of King Lear was no longer king, but the shadow of king, for which free speeches he was once or twice threatened to be whipped. King Lear pursues disrespect. He could get things if he go down on his knees and beg of his own daughters for food and rainment, he feel disgusted and he argued against such an unnatural dependence and declaring his resolution that he never turn with her. His daughters ill usage had really made him go mad. From king to bagger is hard change for him from commanding millions to be without one attendant: and it was the ingratitude in his daughters denying it, more than what he would suffer by the want of it, which pierced this poor King to the heart.

Suddenly he feels the wind were high, and the rain and storm increases, when the old man sailied forth to combat with the element, less sharp than his daughters unkindness, for many miles about there was scare a bush and there upon health, exposed to the fury of the storm in a dark night, did King Lear wonder out, and defy the winds and the thunder and he bid the winds to blow the earth in to sea, or swell the waves to the sea till they drowned the earth, that no token might remain of any such ungrateful animal as man.

I'll tell thee, life and death..  
I am ashamed that thou hast power..  
To shake my manhood thus..

Such lines desperately express his situation, his broken heart, his helplessness.

King Lear got mad and wonder below wide open sky, his younger daughter came to him ,that proved She love him more than others. But destiny is destiny, we can say. She got killed and Lear again become lonely and died below the dark open sky. "Kashacha Nash Jhala Ya Peksha Kashache srujan Jhale ,He Sokantiket Mahatwache aste"<sup>4</sup>. King Lear is a biggest example of it.

### **Features of Shakespeare's King Lear -**

This king Lear story is emotional and complicated story form madness to wisdom. What we know Shakespeare's wide reading and powers of assimilation seems to show that he made use of all kind of materials absorbing contradictory viewpoints , positive and negative, religious and secular, as it no ensure that king Lear would offer no single controlling perspective, but be

open to, indeed demand , multiple interpretations. King Lear's character's having various shades. He is Responsible, he is sensitive, he is short tempered, and He is strong, this character having self respect, showing helplessness, Loneliness and many more.

Along with this there are two strong contrasting views of human nature in this play that of the Lear's side that -Lear, Gloucester, Albany , Kent etc. explaining the philosophy as Bacon and Hooker and that of the Edmund side - Edmund, Cornwall, Goneril, Regan etc. Akin to the views later formulate Hobbes. This play is being help one to study the various shades of human nature .This characters produce various emotions like sadness, happiness, love, hate ,very strongly. We cannot say it is a best play of Shakespeare but we must say that it has been one of the Shakespeare's best plays. It is a great Masterpiece in the logic of passion that they contain the highest examples not only of the force of individuals but of its dramatic vicissitudes and striking effects arising from the different circumstances and character of the person speaking. It is true chronic History of life and death of King Lear and his three daughters.

### **King Lear & Human Nature -**

- 1<sup>st</sup>- King Lear thought he got old and he better have to transfer his kingdom to his daughters. It is Natural thought of a father. He took a decision with unnecessary condition. He staggering between the weights of attachment hurried movements of passion.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>- He trusted that person who was not able trust .It is also human nature, that we pleased by few good words. He delighted to hear from his daughters own mouth that she love him more than anything else, that words didn't come from heart such professing stuff, which is easy to counterfeit where there is no real love or affection only a few fine words delivered with confidence being wanted in that case. He blindly believes his daughters. Didn't think their heart went far from their lips. Believe that her heart went with it, and fail to understand selfishness of his daughters.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>- He got angry easily: it is human nature to get angry easily .when cordelia express her emotions towards him he thought that, plain expressions. He didn't able to find her feeling was stronger than her words uttered.
- The tragedy of Lear's lack of understanding of the consequences of his demands and action is often observed to be like that of a spoiled child and it has been noted that his behavior is equally likely to be seen in parents who have never adjusted to their children having grown up.
- This play is all about the father who had given all away to his daughter and bring himself endless dark night... nothing he though could bring a man to such wretchedness but the having unkind daughters.
- In this story while the eyes of all men were upon this event admiring the justice displayed in their desired death, the some eyes were suddenly taken off from their sight to admire at the Mysterious ways of the same power in the melancholy fate of the young and virtuous daughter, the lady Cordelia whose good deed seem to deserve a more fortunate conclusion. But it is an awful truth that innocence and piety are not always success in this world.

The character of Lear itself is very finely conceived for the purpose, it is the only ground on which such story could be built with the greatest truth. In attempt to give description of the play itself or of its effect upon the mind is

mere impertinence. William Shakespeare died on Apr. 23, 1616 .The passion which he has taken as his subject is that which strikes its root deepest in to the human heart. V.V. Shirwadkar introduce King Lear in Marathi as Natasamrat .four writers translated King Lear under five different titles and presented in seven unique ways in hindi.This thing Shows the popularity or craze of Shakespeare's King Lear in India.

#### **conclusion**

We automatically come to a conclusion by some meaningful thoughts, comes from this character's nature and behavior.

- Love cannot be measured by words it can be feel.
- Love cannot compare by anything in this world.
- To love and be silent.
- Don't give away everything of yours.
- There are some bad and some good people around you every time.
- Think twice while making any decision
- Character is destiny.

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