

King Lear and His Three Daughters

(Adapted for Grade 6 – modern English)

Characters:

- **King Lear** – An old king, proud and ready to retire.
 - **Goneril** – His eldest daughter.
 - **Regan** – His second daughter.
 - **Cordelia** – His youngest and kindest daughter.
 - **Kent** – A loyal nobleman.
 - **Messenger / Servant** – Optional role for transitions or scene setup.
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[A grand hall in the royal palace. King Lear enters with his three daughters and his court.]

Lear:

Today, I will divide my kingdom.
I'm old and tired.
I want peace in my last years,
and my daughters shall rule after me.

But before I give my land,
I want to know: **which of you loves me most?**
Speak honestly, and I'll give the largest part to the one who loves me best.

[He turns to Goneril.]

Lear:

Goneril, my eldest — speak first.

Goneril (smiling proudly):

Father, I love you more than words can say.
More than eyesight, more than freedom,
more than life itself!
You are everything to me.

Lear (pleased):

Ah, wonderful words!
You shall have a rich part of my kingdom.

[He turns to Regan.]

Lear:

Now, Regan — what do you say?

Regan (bowing):

Father, I am the same as Goneril — only more so!
No joy in the world compares to my love for you.

Lear (smiling proudly):

Excellent! You speak with great heart.
You shall have an equal share beside your sister.

[He turns to Cordelia, his youngest and favorite.]

Lear:

And now, my gentle Cordelia —
what can you say to win the richest third?
Speak from your heart.

Cordelia (calmly):

Nothing, my lord.

Lear (shocked):

Nothing?

Cordelia:

Nothing.
You raised me, loved me, and gave me life.
I love you as any daughter should —
no more, no less.
When I marry, my husband will have part of my love,
and you will have the rest.

Lear (angrily):

Nothing will come of nothing!
Speak again!

Cordelia:

I cannot say I love you more than truth itself.
I will not flatter you, father.

Lear (furious):

Then be gone!
I give your share to your sisters.
They know how to speak their love!

Kent (stepping forward):

My king, please!
You wrong your youngest daughter.
She speaks the truth — the others only flatter you.

Lear (roaring):

Peace, Kent!
Come not between the dragon and his rage!
You love her too — get out of my sight!

[Kent sadly exits.]

Cordelia (softly, near tears):

You have my heart, father,
even if you take away my land.
Farewell.

[She exits with quiet dignity.]

Lear (to Goneril and Regan):

You two — my loving daughters —
shall rule my kingdom between you.
I'll live with each of you, one month at a time.

Goneril and Regan (smiling slyly):

Of course, dear father. You shall be honored always.

[Lear exits proudly. When he's gone, Goneril and Regan turn to each other.]

Goneril:

He's getting old and foolish.
We'll control him soon enough.

Regan (smirking):

Yes — once he's given us everything,
we'll show him who truly rules.

[They laugh quietly. Thunder rumbles in the distance.]

Narrator or Messenger (optional):

And so, the old king gave away his crown —
but also lost his peace.
What began in pride would soon turn to sorrow.

[Curtain closes.]
