

TAPESCRIPT 06

Level 3

F. LISTEN & CHOOSE

Lear speaks with his eldest daughter.

KING LEAR: *Your name, fair gentlewoman?*

GONERIL: *I beg you to understand my purposes correctly. As you are old and vulnerable, you must be wise. You keep here a hundred knights and squires, men so disordered, so corrupted and disrespectful that our court looks like a riotous inn. The shame itself claims for instant remedy. Reduce the number of your attendants, and keep those suited to your age.*

KING LEAR: *Darkness and devils! Saddle my horses; call my train together. Degenerate bastard! I'll not trouble you.*

GONERIL: *You strike my people; and your disordered attendants make servants of their betters.*

KING LEAR: *Horrible vulture! You lie! My retinue are chosen men of singular qualities, who know their duties and support with extreme care the reputation of their name! Lear! Lear! (Striking his head) Beat at this gate that let your folly in and your dear judgement out!*

GONERIL: *Stop it, sir! If your wish is to stay in my house, you'll do it with half of your retinue! Just fifty men!*

KING LEAR: *Life and death! I am ashamed that you have power to shake my manhood! Let these burning tears that break from me, make you unworthy of them! Blasts and fogs upon you! Let the deep wounds of a father's curse pierce all your senses!*

GONERIL: *Silence, father!*

KING LEAR: *I gave you everything.*

GONERIL: *And in good time you gave it!*

KING LEAR: *I made you my guardian, my trustee, but I reserved the right to be followed by a hundred knights. What, must I come with fifty? Have you said so?*

GONERIL: *Hear me, my lord. Why do you need fifty, twenty-five, or ten, in a house where the number of servants is twice yours? Why do you need even one?*

KING LEAR: *See me here, you, gods, a poor old man, as full of grief as age, wretched in both. If it's you, gods, who stir this daughter's heart against her father, do not make me so foolish as to bear it patiently; fill me with anger and don't let women's weapons, water drops, stain my man's cheeks! You think I'll weep; no, I won't weep. Before, my heart will break into a thousand fragments!*

GONERIL: *Go away from my house!*