

The Tempest Summary: A Magical Storm

The Tempest begins on a boat, tossed about in a storm. Aboard is Alonso the King of Naples, Ferdinand (his son), Sebastian (his brother), Antonio the usurping Duke of Milan, Gonzalo, Adrian, Francisco, Trinculo and Stefano.

Miranda, who has been watching the ship at sea, is distraught at the thought of lost lives. The storm was created by her father, the magical Prospero, who reassures Miranda that all will be well. Prospero explains how they came to live on this island: they were once part of Milan's nobility – he was a Duke and Miranda the baby princess. However, Prospero's brother (Antonio) exiled them – they were placed on a boat and banished, never to be seen again.

Prospero summons [Ariel](#), his servant spirit. Ariel explains that he has carried out Prospero's orders: he destroyed the ship and dispersed its passengers across the island. Prospero instructs Ariel to be invisible and spy on them. Ariel asks when he will be freed and Prospero chastises him for being ungrateful, promising to free him soon, when his work is done.

Caliban: Man or Monster?

Prospero decides to visit his other servant, [Caliban](#), but Miranda is reluctant, describing him as a monster. Prospero agrees that Caliban can be rude and unpleasant, but is invaluable for the menial tasks he performs for them.

When Prospero and Miranda meet Caliban, we learn that he is native to the island, but Prospero turned him into a slave raising issues about [morality and fairness](#) in the play.

Love at First Sight

Ferdinand stumbles across Miranda and they fall in love and decide to marry. Prospero warns Miranda off and decides to test Ferdinand's loyalty.

The rest of the shipwrecked crew are celebrating their survival and grieving for lost loved ones. Alonso believes that he has lost his beloved son, Ferdinand.

Caliban's New Master

Stefano and Trinculo (Alonso's gluttonous servants) discover Caliban in a glade. Caliban decides to worship Stefano and make him his new master in order to escape Prospero's [power](#). Caliban describes Prospero's cruelty and persuades Stefano to murder him by promising that Stefano can marry Miranda and rule the island.

The other shipwreck survivors have been trekking across the island and stop to rest. Ariel casts a spell on Alonso, Sebastian and Antonio and derides them for their treatment of Prospero. Gonzalo and the others think that the spellbound men are suffering from the guilt of their past actions and promise to ensure their safety.

Prospero finally concedes and agrees to the marriage of Miranda and Ferdinand and goes off to foil Caliban's murderous plot.

Prospero's Forgiveness

Prospero assembles his enemies: Alonso, Antonio and Sebastian. After chastising them for their past treatment of him and his daughter, he forgives them. Alonso discovers that his son Ferdinand is still alive and in love with Miranda. Plans are made to return to Milan. Prospero also forgives Caliban and grants Ariel his freedom.

Prospero learns that "the rarer action is in virtue than in vengeance." He decides to give up his magic and return unto the world of men.