

CLASS XII ENGLISH LITERATURE

THE TEMPEST ACT IV SCENE -1 (Part –II)

Assignment- 5

In the first part of Act IV, we have seen that the masque is going on after the betrothal of Ferdinand and Miranda. Goddesses from the Greek and Roman mythologies are present to bless the newly wedded couple. Iris- the goddess of rainbow, Ceres- the goddess of prosperity and abundance, Juno- the queen of all goddesses wish them prosperity, abundance, love, riches and happiness, and long life in marriage. Ferdinand is really awe-stricken and wonders whether all these are spirits at all. Prospero tells him that they are really spirits and they are confined to carry out Prospero's fanciful designs. At this point of time Juno and Ceres send Iris to call nymphs called Naiads- denizens of the running stream to arrange a country dance.

The second part of the scene starts when Prospero recollects suddenly the conspiracy on his life by Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo. He calls an abrupt end to the festivities and the spirits vanish. Miranda is in great shock to see her father so distracted and angry. Ferdinand is unsettled by Prospero's change in his behaviour. Prospero reassures him saying that an end must come to all things. The masque is over and those who took part in it have returned to the spirit-world from where they came. Here Shakespeare shares a great thought through the words of Prospero that everything that we see today will give way for new things. Towers rising high into their skies, magnificent palaces of the great, sacred edifices of the universe and all that is in it shall vanish utterly; and nothing will remain, not a trace of the past glory. Life is but a dream, a momentary interval of movement in unending sleep, and we ourselves are as phantoms we behold in our slumber. Prospero reminds Ferdinand that nothing is permanent in this world. We human being have an existence which is as unreal as dream and our short life ends in death. We do not know anything about our existence before this life nor do we know anything about our future existence. Before and after are the two spells of sleep. In between these, there is a dream which is our life.

Then he consoles Ferdinand not to get disturbed by what he sees. He is troubled with old memories. Then Prospero asks the newly wedded couple to go and take rest in his cave.

He, then, calls Ariel- his faithful servant and enquire the whereabouts of Caliban. Ariel informs him that they – Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo were heavily drunk and looked so full of valour under the effect of wine. Even intoxication do not deter them from the determination of killing Prospero. Ariel has charmed their ears with music and they followed the music like a young horse who has never been ridden and they moved through pricking shrubs and thorns which pierced their unprotected skins as a calf follows the lowing of its mother through all obstacles. At last Ariel left them beyond Prospero's cell in a pool, which is covered with filthy coating of duckweed and scum, where they are dancing wildly. Prospero appreciates Ariel's good work and asks him to fetch the shining apparel from his house to deceive them like a prey or bait to catch the birds.

Prospero opines about Caliban that he is a devil, whose nature was from the very first devilish, off whom, education slips off/ glides as water glides off a smooth surface without adhering at all. As Caliban grows old and cankered, his mind becomes as crooked as his body.

Prospero decides to torture them all until they roar with pain. He now orders Ariel to hang some glitzy garments on a time-tree to divert the attention of the conspirators. They arrive with the intention of murdering Prospero. Stephano and Trinculo are feeling very unhappy over the loss of their wine bottles which they dropped in the pond. Caliban again and again reminds them of their

project they have to execute. Just at that time Trinculo catches sight of the splendid wardrobe hanging on the tree. He draws Stephano's attention to it. They are both fascinated by this splendid display. They get busy in grabbing as many garments as they can lay their hands upon. Caliban repeatedly urges them not to waste their time, instead go ahead with the plot to murder Prospero. But Stephano and Trinculo pay little attention to the appeals of Caliban. At this stage, a number of spirits appear in the shape of dogs and hounds. Under Prospero's direction, these dogs and hounds chase away the conspirators who take their heels in a state of confusion. Prospero then gives an order to his spirits to torment the conspirators in every way possible.

Assignment

I told you, sir, they were red-hot with drinking;
So full of valour that they smote the air
For breathing in their faces; beat the ground
For kissing of their feet; yet always bending
Towards their project.
Then I beat my tabor;
At which, like unback'd colts, they prick'd their ears
Advanced their eyelids, lifted up their noses
As they smelt music: so I charm'd their ears
That calf-like they my lowing follow'd through
Tooth'd briers, sharp furzes, pricking goss and thorns,

Read the lines given above and answer the questions that follows:

1. Identify the Speaker and state the context.
2. Who were red hot with drinking?
3. How were they bending towards their project? Which project ?
4. Who played on his drum? What effect did it have on other people?
5. Where were 'they' finally left by the speaker?