

Sebastian's eyes widened and he sombrely nodded. His silent consent encouraged Antonio to go on.

"Take a look at me. By taking the throne from my brother Prospero, servants are no longer my equals. Now they work for *me*. This is the moment for you to do the same."

"And what about your conscience?"

Antonio snorted and continued matter-of-factly.

"Yes. Where exactly is that? I have no awareness of a conscience in any part of me. Look at your brother sleeping. He'd be no better than the earth he is lying on if he were dead. And my sword can easily fix that, while your sword can take care of *that* old piece of flesh over there, *Sir Prudence*. With Gonzalo out of the way, the rest of the men will do whatever we say."

A calculating glint passed over Sebastian's eyes as he gently wrapped his palm around the hilt of his sword.

"I'll get Naples, like you got Milan. Draw your sword. One stroke with it will free you from the tribute you pay Alonso now. And as the new king, I will love you forever."

"Let's do it together. I'll strike Alonso at the same time you strike Gonzalo."

The two conspirators pulled out their swords and crept towards their blissfully sleeping victims. But before they could raise their weapons, Ariel appeared next to Gonzalo in a flash. Prospero had foreseen the danger and sent him to warn his old friend. The loyal spirit gently knelt down and sang a song of warning in the old man's ear, which broke the sleeping spell.

Gonzalo opened his eyes and let out a scream when he saw the two accomplices with their weapons raised.

"Save the King!"

Alonso woke up, startled.

