



## Nothing can come of nothing

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**Lear:**

"Nothing can come of nothing: speak again."

[King Lear \(I, i, 92\)](#)

Old King Lear has decided to retire and divide his kingdom among his three daughters. They are required to come forward and flatter him. His two eldest daughters, Regan and Goneril, flatter and deceive the old king, and receive their rewards. The youngest, Cordelia, who loves him most, cannot find the words to articulate this love. He asks her to speak up and praise him more than her sisters have just done. When asked 'what do you have to say?' Cordelia responds "Nothing." He repeats this answer as a question. She responds the same. Lear is outraged and tells her that "nothing will come of nothing," and banishes her without money, title, or any part of his kingdom.

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