

Once upon a time, long ago and far away, in the sunny land of Italy there was a happy and prosperous city – Milan – which was ruled by a wise Duke named Prospero. Everyone loved Prospero, and they also loved his beautiful wife. When the couple had a daughter, Miranda, the whole city was delighted for them. A huge celebration took place, with Prospero making sure that everyone had a wonderful time. A feast was provided: the freshest of fruit, the most flavoursome vegetables, the most succulent of roast meats, fragrant ices..... there was wonderful drink and great entertainment. It seemed that life could not get any better. And that was true...it could only get worse! Which it did, when Prospero's wife died.

A great sadness fell over the city, and a greater over Prospero himself. He locked himself away in the library, deep inside his palace, talking to no-one. One day, his brother, Antonio came to him: "Prospero, you MUST stop this. The city needs you. Nobody is ruling, no one is making decisions. You have to become Duke again."

Prospero sat silent, unspeaking, till, at last he whispered; "No. You do it....."

So Antonio did. Secretly, he was delighted. He'd always been jealous of his brother: the power that he wielded and the respect that he had.

Inside that library Prospero fell in love again: but not with any living creature. No. In that library was a small collection of books, their spines glimmering with golden letters, their pages dancing with strange images – books of magic. And it was the magic within those pages that captured his heart.

At the same time, Antonio was finding that the people of Milan did not respect him in the same way that they did Prospero. He was infuriated! He was doing all the work! And yet they still loved Prospero.

And so Antonio went to his old friend, King Alonso of Naples, and the two came up with a wicked plan to get rid of Prospero.

One night, the gates to the city were left open. In came King Alonso, together with a small army of his troops. In the very dead of that night, they grabbed Prospero, roughly thrust his daughter into his arms, and set them inside a small leaky boat, which they pushed away from the docks of Milan. Antonio was sure that the boat would sink before it had passed the horizon and that he would never hear from Prospero again.....

And that would have happened, had not an old, kind advisor of Prospero's - Gonzalo - hidden three crucial things on board that boat, under an old piece of sailcloth.

Prospero found that Gonzalo had left him food, water and – most important of all – his spell book. With Miranda crying in his arms, and the water already rising within the boat, Prospero hurriedly turned the pages. At last he found it: the spell of healing. He muttered under his breath, and with his finger, lightly touched each of the holes in the hull of the boat. He repeated the spell, this time using it to mend the rips in the sail. Lastly, he turned the pages of the ancient book to find one more incantation. Gently, he blew into the mended sail. It filled with a strong, but gentle, wind that blew them over the sea until, at last, they landed on a small island, halfway between Italy and Africa....

1. What word tells us that Prospero was an intelligent man?

2. What does it mean to be popular?

3. Which of these is a **synonym** for popular?

hated

loved

unimportant

disliked

4. What word tells us the city and all its people were happy that Prospero and his wife had a baby daughter?

5. Shakespeare made up the name of Prospero's daughter's-Miranda. It is derived from the Latin *mirandus*. What do you think *mirandus* means? Tick two words below.

admirable

sad

wonderful

quiet

shy

6. What phrases tell us the celebration was full of delicious food?

7. "Prospero, you **MUST** stop this. The city needs you. Nobody is ruling, no one is making decisions. You have to become Duke again."

Why is 'MUST' in capital letters?

8. Why do you think Antonio was jealous of his brother, Prospero?

9. Was Antonio right to feel infuriated?

10. Why did Antonio go to Alonso for help to '*get rid of Prospero*'?

11. Why was Gonzalo a good and faithful advisor to Prospero? (use evidence from the text to support your answer)

12. Why do you think Miranda was 'crying in his arms'?

13. Why do you think Antonio is 'resentful' of Prospero

14. Where had the boat Prospero and Miranda were on been going to?

15. Do you think it is easy to be a King or Ruler in charge? Justify your answer using evidence from the text