## Meaning of names in The Tempest

The meaning of a name is a powerful tool. Shakespeare shows this through the names of the characters in his play The Tempest. In this essay I will tell you about the meaning the characters' names and how they fit with that character archetype. There are 10 characters total and there will be a paragraph for each of them. By the end of this essay you will think of names a bit differently.

Prospero is the first character that I will talk about. His name means prosperous or successful. His personality fits his name. In the beginning of the play Prospero is the wronged duke of Milan who was usurped of his title and cast away to an island. He was certainly prosperous. In the 12 years he lived there he practically became king of the island! He thrived on that island with his power and got his daughter married. Thus his name suits his character.

The next character is Miranda, Prospero's daughter. Her name means admired. It even shows it in Act 3, Scene 1! Her meaning of name is so structured with her character that without it the character would crumble. She is admired by Ferdinand and is sown admiration from Caliban. It only makes sense that her name would be Miranda! I mean she is admired throughout the play. Now you know about Miranda.

The third character I will talk about is Ferdinand. His name means protection and courage. His name fits pretty well with his persona. He is very courage in a whole bunch of ways. He takes on the burden of being a servant just to be with Miranda. He wants to impress Prospero so he can marry Miranda. That is very brave. But I can't see the part where he is protective.

Now I will talk about Caliban. The dastardly villain whose name means savaged or deformed slave. Considering his looks and social status, his name fits the bill. His grotesque, revolting mug is what gives him that name. That is the best name I could probably think of for a character like him. The slave part is quite correct. He is the slave of Prospero and does his every bidding. His grotesqueness is also true. Everyone calls him a monster and beast. He is also called savage. That is probably the truest thing to his name. As it says in act 1, scene 2, verse 350 he tried to rape Miranda. Now you know about Caliban.

Next we have the drunken butler, Stephano. His name means crown or garland. This is very hilarious because he thinks of himself as a god. So does Caliban. He is very gullible with his friend Trinculo. He never really thought ahead of things like a real king would. He wanted Miranda to. Caliban Even promised him he would have her in the big plot. It was totally ridiculous. So before I go off on a rant let me finish this paragraph by saying, now you know about Stephano.

Trinculo is the next character on the list. His name means jester. This happens to be his occupation. He was King Alonso's jester before the storm. He is good friends with Stephano and is hilarious. His name fits really well with his character. Though the name should mean crybaby, this meaning is good to. I only say this because Trinculo does turn out to be a bit of a crybaby. Still, it does truly represent Trinculo.

King Alonso's name means ready and noble in any situation. This is not true. He is a total train wreck when Ferdinand goes missing. So his name only matches with his outer-self. He is human. As far as I know there is barely anyone who can live up to that name meaning. Also a true noble would not help overthrow someone of their dukedom and send the late duke's child with them to an island! So as far as being noble goes, he is the exact opposite. Also no one can be prepared for any situation in life. Now there was Alonzo.

Next we have Sebastian. He was Alonso' brother. His name means revered or majestic. Sebastian happens to be far from revered or majestic. The fact that he got this name puzzle's me. He isn't even a king. Nor a duke. A revered man to me would not try to kill his brother. When you are revered you should be a role model. I do not get his name whatsoever. Now you know about Sebastian.

Antonio is next on the list. His name means highly praised. This happens to be true. He is praised by Sebastian. He is also a duke. So, he is honored by the people of where he is duke. Antonio is a person who seems ok on the outside but when you get to know him he is rude and cruel. That is what Antonio means.

The next character we have is Ariel. His name means crazy and adventurous. His name fits well with his persona. He is energetic and very perky. He is also very dramatic. He says he flamed amazement in act 1, Scene 2. Talk about dramatic. He is also a bit of a coward. Ariel is a spirit so the name is a good name for him.

So now you know the names and meanings of the characters in the tempest. So do you think about names a bit differently? I know I do. Now you know why certain names are used for certain character. You also know how names are used to show character and persona in a work of literature. This was my essay.

## The Tempest Summary

In the tempest it all starts in a storm. A magical storm that is. The right duke of Milan, Prospero made the storm through sorcery. It just so happens that the people who wronged him were on that boat and he washed them ashore on his deserted island. Prospero's spirit friend Ariel made the prince of Milan fall in love with his daughter Miranda.

## **Character List**

**Prospero** - The play's protagonist, and father of Miranda. Twelve years before the events of the play, Prospero was the duke of Milan. His brother, Antonio, in concert with Alonso, king of Naples, usurped him, forcing him to flee in a boat with his daughter. The honest lord Gonzalo aided Prospero in his escape. Prospero has spent his twelve years on the island refining the magic that gives him the power he needs to punish and forgive his enemies.

**Miranda** - The daughter of Prospero, Miranda was brought to the island at an early age and has never seen any men other than her father and Caliban, though she dimly remembers being cared for by female servants as an infant. Because she has been sealed off from the world for so long, Miranda's perceptions of other people tend to be naïve and non-judgmental. She is compassionate, generous, and loyal to her father.

**Ariel** - Prospero's spirit helper. Ariel is referred to through most criticism as "he," but his gender and physical form are ambiguous. Rescued by Prospero from a long imprisonment at the hands of the witch Sycorax, Ariel is Prospero's servant until Prospero decides to release him. He is mischievous and ubiquitous, able to traverse the length of the island in an instant and to change shapes at will. He carries out virtually every task that Prospero needs accomplished in the play.

**Caliban** - Another of Prospero's servants. Caliban, the son of the now-deceased witch Sycorax, acquainted Prospero with the island when Prospero arrived. Caliban believes that the island rightfully belongs to him and has been stolen by Prospero. His speech and behavior is sometimes coarse and brutal, as in his drunken scenes with Stephano and Trinculo (II.ii, IV.i), and sometimes eloquent and sensitive, as in his rebukes of Prospero in Act I, scene ii, and in his description of the eerie beauty of the island in Act III, scene ii (III.ii.130-138).

**Ferdinand** - Son and heir of Alonso. Ferdinand seems in some ways to be as pure and naïve as Miranda. He falls in love with her upon first sight and happily submits to servitude in order to win her father's approval. **Alonso** - King of Naples and father of Ferdinand. Alonso aided Antonio in unseating Prospero as Duke of Milan twelve years before. As he appears in the play, however, he is acutely aware of the consequences of all his actions. He blames his decision to marry his daughter to the Prince of Tunis on the apparent death of his son. In addition, after the magical banquet, he regrets his role in the usurping of Prospero.

**Antonio** - Prospero's brother. Antonio quickly demonstrates that he is power-hungry and foolish. In Act II, scene i, he persuades Sebastian to kill the sleeping Alonso. He then goes along with Sebastian's absurd story about fending off lions when Gonzalo wakes up and catches Antonio and Sebastian with their swords drawn.

**Sebastian** - Alonso's brother. Like Antonio, he is both aggressive and cowardly. He is easily persuaded to kill his brother in Act II, scene i, and he initiates the ridiculous story about lions when Gonzalo catches him with his sword drawn.

**Gonzalo** - An old, honest lord, Gonzalo helped Prospero and Miranda to escape after Antonio usurped Prospero's title. Gonzalo's speeches provide an important commentary on the events of the play, as he remarks on the beauty of the island when the stranded party first lands, then on the desperation of Alonso after the magic banquet, and on the miracle of the reconciliation in Act V, scene i.

**Trinculo & Stephano** - Trinculo, a jester, and Stephano, a drunken butler, are two minor members of the shipwrecked party. They provide a comic foil to the other, more powerful pairs of Prospero and Alonso and Antonio and Sebastian. Their drunken boasting and petty greed reflect and deflate the quarrels and power struggles of Prospero and the other noblemen.

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