

Magic is the most important tool in the play
To what extent to you agree?

Magic is a prominent theme throughout the *Tempest*, employed by Shakespeare to explore the duality of man, and thus highlighting the illusions and corruption created as an effect of power. These pitfalls are perhaps a test of each character's stamina, and ability to accept and abide by other character's needs. Shakespeare utilises a wide range of language devices to accentuate the breakdown in moral and conscientious attitudes of particular characters, and in turn, allowing the audience to identify the ambivalence and emotion evoked through magic in the play. Over the years, various critics have distinguished between the use of Prospero's power, and through the acquisition of this power, begins to be used selfishly, or wisely.

Prospero is at first, portrayed as a dominant and authoritative character who has control over the island. When Miranda addresses her father over the *Tempest* he instructed, the audience become aware of her sympathetic and innocent perspective of reality, "my dearest father, if by your art you have put the wild waters in this roar, allay them". According to the literary semiotic theory, the word "allay" has quite harsh signifiers, as it connotes something being forcefully diminished or retracted. This highlights how she wants him to stop inflicting chaos, and longs for a pain-free civilisation where nobody suffers, as opposed to the harsh destruction which Prospero is imposing through the help of Ariel. Therefore, it is indicative of Miranda's emotional outlook, and suggests she has the simplicity and directness to speak what's on her mind. In a way, Prospero almost uses his magic as a cushion to protect Miranda from her powerless and vulnerable state, and seeing as this is the first demonstration of his power that the readers are introduced to, Shakespeare's portrayal of him grants a sense of superiority and control, and even at this early stage allows the audience to forebode the inevitable manipulation of every other character on the island.

Later on in the play, when Prospero asks for Ariel's service, the spirit responds inquisitively and defiantly, stating "all hail, great master". The adjective "great" puts emphasis on Ariel's admiration and belonging, as if he feels by applauding and praising his master, it will contribute to the ultimate freedom he is pleading for and hopes he will gain in the end. Ariel goes on to explain that he will assist Prospero with anything "be it to fly, to swim, to dive into the fire, to ride on the curled clouds", which conveys his sense of desire and allows the audience to infer that, even though he is begging for liberty, he seems to take great pleasure and satisfaction in his work. The succession of plosives and commas also puts emphasis on the pace and forcefulness at which the spirit is speaking, which further highlights his over-whelming willingness and inclination to assist Prospero in seeking retribution over his enemies. This sense of obedience and commitment is what allows Prospero to manipulate Ariel, and in turn, patronisation combined with genuine affection preserves both their relationship and the consensual agreement and is what allowed him to achieve what he needs achieving. The readers can also infer that Ariel was intelligently targeted by Prospero, because he acknowledged his skillset and ability to control the weather, therefore strategically employing Ariel to assist him in controlling the island, along with everyone else in his grasp. Shakespeare may have done this to portray Prospero as the director who has everyone on strings, and it is the collective set of abilities that both Ariel and Prospero share that allows them to bond, and dictate what happens on the island.

When the audience are introduced to Prospero's colonised slave Caliban, we learn that he is a feral and deformed beast who is animalised to appear stubborn and childish in his refusal to accept his own fate. This is evident through his aggressive remark, "I must obey: his art is of such power". During this outrage of soliloquising dread, a plethora of inferiority is addressed through imperatives such as "must". This suggests a sense of realisation, and in a way, there is a sense of admiration of his colonisers power. He is aware of the futility of arguing with superior members of the island, and he has learnt to obey one who has more power than he does. Having said this, he displays zero signs of repentance or scrupulousness, therefore it is solely the weight of fear that is forcing him to metaphorically retreat and respect his boundaries. According to Alejandro Carpio, the name Caliban