The Storm in and out in Shakespeare’s King Lear
In Act 3 of the play, Lear escapes away from a fight with his daughters into a raging storm. This is one of the most famous scenes in the play. The storm here has a symbolic significance. In general, the literal storm is an external representation of Lear's internal mental state.
King Lear

Lear has just left a fight with his daughters, and is both enraged and furious, and on the precipice of madness, which is paralleled by the raging lightning and thunder. The storm outside is howling, screaming loud, heavy pouring rain and an angry wind reflect the chaotic mental state of Lear.
King Lear

Water Symbolism here is crystal clear as water is often linked to change. The rain symbolizes both Lear’s change from loving to loathing his daughters and the rapid progression of Lear’s madness. Further more, rain is sometimes cleansing and it suggests clarity or understanding. So, this highlights that Lear now comprehends the true nature of the heavy rain is obscuring his vision
King Lear

Lightning here stands for enlightenment and illumination and it signifies that finally Lear understands the true intentions of his daughters. They are considered as flashes of lightning, not a steady source that would improve his vision.
King Lear

The strong wind is often signifies rapid movement. In this case, the wind represents Lear’s mobility from one place into another. There is no home for him anymore. Just like the wind, he changes his location throughout the play.
Cold weather here suggests isolation and loneliness. Lear feels cold and isolated after his argument with his daughters.
King Lear

Consequently, the storm is one of the most important symbols in the play as the fool says “this cold night will turn us all to fools and madmen” the storm highlights the characterization of Lear and his journey into madness.
King Lear

Thank you
King Lear


