I'm not a robot

In King Lear Shakespeare delivers a play with many enduring quotes. As with so many of his plays Shakespeare brings the characters to life with memorable dialogue and some fantastic quotes, many in the form of thought-provoking sayings, such as How sharper than a serpents tooth to have a thankless child. Read our selection of the very best and most well-known King Lear quotes below, along with speaker, act and scene. Lear, Act 1, Scene 1 France, Act 1, Scene 1 Edmund, Act 1, Scene 2 Lear, Act 1, Scene 4 Fool, Act 1, Scene 4 Lear, Act 1, Scene 4 Fool, Act 1, Scene 5 Kent, Act 2, Scene 2 Edgar, Act 3, Scene 1 Lear, Act 3, Scene 2 Lear, Act 3, Scene 2 Lear, Act 3, Scene 2 Lear, Act 3, Scene 4 Fool, Act 3, Scene 4 Edgar, Act 3, Scene 6 Gloucester, Act 4, Scene 1 Edgar, Act 4, Scene 1 Albany, Act 4, Scene 2 Lear, Act 4, Scene 6 Gloucester, Act 4, Scene 6 Lear, Act 4, Scene 6 Edgar, Act 5, Scene 2 Regan, Act 5, Scene 3 Edgar, Act 5, Scene 3 Lear, Act 5, Scene 3 Are any of your favourite King Lear quotes missing from the above list? Let us know in the comments below. They told me I was everything; tis a lie p236Of Gloucesters treachery and the loyal service of his son [Edmund] p.217 inversion of the truth and justice.Regan about Gloucester Blind traitor p229Gloucester to Regan Unmerciful lady as you are, I am true p206Ancient love p214Goneril and Regan betrayal: We shall further think ont. / We must do something, and I th heat. P116Kent: A very honest hearted fellow and as poor as the kingGood KentCordelia: No blown ambition doth our arms incite, but love, dear love and our aged fathers right p227Reconciliation Lear and Cordelia: When thou dost ask me blessing, Ill kneel down and ask of thee forgiveness; so well live poignant tragedy bound to die.Edmund forgives Edgar for killing him, an attempt at reconciliation If thou beest noble, I do forgive theePray now, forget and forgive p250 But I have a son, sir by order of law, some year elder than this, who yet is no dearer in my account. Though this knave came something saucily to the world before he was sent for, yet was his mother fair, there was good sport at his making, and the whoreson must be acknowledged. Do you know this noble gentleman, Edmund? William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. Gloucester makes a lewd and cruel joke to Kent about his bastard son Edmund arriving "saucily" into the world. He says he had "good sport" with his "fair" mother at Edmunds making. The tactless Earl associates lust with love and is also blind to the feelings of Edmund who is standing beside him, calling him a "whoreson." Gloucester also tells Kent that he has another legitimate son Edgar, although he doesnt love him any more than Edmund. This passage is foreshadowing of the family conflict to come as Gloucester is punished by a resentful Edmund. Thou, Nature, art my goddess. To thy law My services are bound. Wherefore should I Stand in the plague of custom, and permit The curiosity of nations to deprive me For that I am some twelve or fourteen moonshines Lag of a brother? why "bastard"? Wherefore "base," When my dimensions are as well compact, My mind as generous and my shape as true As honest madams issue? Why brand they us With "base," with "baseness," "bastardy," "base," "base," Who, in the lusty stealth of nature, take More composition and fierce quality Than doth within a dull, stale, tired bed Go to th creating a whole tribe of fops Got tween asleep and wake? Well then, Legitimate Edgar, I must have your land. Our fathers love is to the bastard Edmund As to th legitimate. Fine word, "legitimate." Well, my legitimate, if this letter speed And my invention thrive, Edmund the base Shall top th legitimate. I grow, I prosper. Now, gods, stand up for bastards! William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. In this soliloquy Edmund says that the only laws he shows loyalty to are the laws of nature, exposing him as a moral nihilist and one of the plays evil villains. The proud and resentful Edmund laments his "base" status as the bastard son of the Earl of Gloucester. He questions the injustice of customs that deprive bastards like him of the birthright given to legitimate sons like his half-brother Edgar. Edmund, who does not feel bound by legal rules, shows his determination to set things right regarding this. Scheming for power, he plots to take Edgars legitimate inheritance of "land" the Gloucester property and position. The letter referred to in his "bastard" speech is one Edmund forged implicating Edgar in a plot against Gloucester and which Edmund is about to present to father to trick him. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. The Machiavellian Edmund has a lot in common with Lears villainous daughters Goneril and Regan the capacity for duplicity! While the sisters fool Lear with deceptive expressions of love, Edmund forges a letter to trick his father the Earl of Gloucester and falsely accuse his innocent abrother Edgar. Edmund notes that his father loves him as much as his legitimate son, but he is unhappy that as a bastard he stands to inherit nothing. However, Edmund pledges that through his scheme to discredit his brother he will enjoy prosperity, triumph over the honest Edgar and take his inheritance. Edmund feels no loyalty to his family and believes he is entitled to the Gloucester wealth and title. I beseech you, sir, pardon me. It is a letter from my brother, that I have not all oer-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your oer-looking. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. Edmund sets out to deceive Gloucester by pretending to hide a letter that he claims is from his brother Edgar. Gloucesters curiosity is around, he takes the bait, and demands to see the letter. It is actually written by Edmund to incriminate Edgar. Edmund pretends to have conflicting loyalties his brother and father, when he puts on a show of first hiding the letter, then letting Gloucester discover it. But he is loyal to neither. GLOUCESTER [Reads]: "This policy and reverence of age makes the world bitter to the best of our times; keeps our fortunes from us till our oldness cannot relish them. I begin to find an idle and fond bondage in the oppression of aged tyranny; who sways, not as it hath power, but as it is suffered. Come to me, that of this I may speak more. If our father would sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue for ever, and live the beloved of your brother, Edgar." Hum? Conspiracy? "Sleep till I waked him, you should enjoy half his revenue," My son Edgar! Had he a hand to write this? a heart and brain to breed it in? When came this to you? Who brought it? William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. The letter forged by Edmund and purporting to come from Edgar proposes that the brothers kill their father so that they can enjoy his "revenue" (wealth). Although Edgar is Gloucesters son and heir so they must have a close and caring relationship, Gloucester appears a little too ready to believe that he is involved in a diabolical murder plot. But Gloucester is too blind to see through Edmunds wicked subterfuge and recognize Edgars innocence of any betrayal of his father. O villain, villain! His very opinion in the letter. Unnatural, detested, brutish villain! Worse than brutish! Go, sirrah, seek him; Ill apprehend him: abominable villain! Where is he? William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. Gloucester labels son and heir Edgar an unnatural, brutish and abominable villain and demands to know where he is. But he is too hasty to fall for the manipulating Edmunds deception and lies, which he swallows hook, line and sinker. So Gloucester plays the blind fool and condemns his true son Edgar without ever giving him a chance to defend himself. So much for Gloucester family justice! William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. At the end of Act 1, Scene 2. Edmund says this to himself after Edgar exits. If he cannot have Edgars "lands" inheritance of property, wealth, title by birthright, then he will seek to get them by cunning. There is no denying Edmunds manipulative and persuasive skills in pursuit of his evil plan to inherit the Gloucester wealth and position. He is successful in creating division between his father Gloucester and brother Edgar. He admits doing this by exploiting Gloucesters "credulous" ways (gullible and too ready to believe Edmunds deceptions) and the "foolish honesty" of his "noble" brother Edgar. In philosophical terms, Edmund was centuries ahead of his time. How proud Nietzsche, the 19th century German father of nihilism, would be of Edmunds nihilistic sentiments expressed in the last line, where he says that he can adapt his amoral nature to fit his own purposes. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 2, Scene 1. Edgar has fled his father Gloucesters castle after being tricked by Edmund. Gloucester vows that Edgar will be caught and executed if found. The Earl has been duped by Edmund into believing that Edgar was involved in a murder plot against his father. But Edgar is innocent and hasnt betrayed his father, who is simply blinded by Edmunds lies. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 2, Scene 3. Having fled his fathers castle and hearing himself declared an outlaw, Edgar has fled to the wilderness and realizes that no port or road is safe for him. He may seem gullible and a bit of a fool, having been so easily duped by brother Edmund, but Edgar the fugitive quickly finds a smart solution to his problem. He plans to save himself by taking on the disguise of a fool and a beggar. He will reinvent himself as the filthiest, lowliest beggar that was ever hated by man, he says. My face Ill grime with filth, Blanket my loins, elf all my hairs in knots, And with presented nakedness outface The winds and persecutions of the sky. The country gives me proof and precedent Of Bedlam beggars who with roaring voices Strike in their numbed and mortifid arms Pins, wooden pricks, nails, sprigs of rosemary, And, with this horrible object, from low farms, Poor pelting villages, sheepcotes, and mills, Sometime with lunatic bans, sometime with prayers, Enforce their charity. "Poor Turlygod! Poor Tom!" Thats something yet. "Edgar" I nothing am. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 2, Scene 3. In the woods Edgar plans to disguise himself as a deranged inmate of Bedlam hospital called Poor Tom. He will smear his face with mud, strip himself, wear only a blanket and brave the wind, bad weather and natural elements almost naked. He has seen beggars from insane asylums mutilate their arms with pins and nails, pray and shout insane curses, forcing poor villagers and farmers to give them alms. Poor Tom, they call themselves. He is no longer Edgar, he announces, renouncing his family identity. A servingman, proud in heart and mind, that curled my hair, wore gloves in my cap, served the lust of my mistress heart and did the act of darkness with her, swore as many oaths as I spake words and broke them in the sweet face of heaven; one that slept in the contriving of lust and waked to do it. Wine loved I deeply, dice dearly, and in woman out-paramoured the Turk. False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. Let not the creaking of shoes nor the rustling of silks betray thy poor heart to woman. Keep thy foot out of brothels, thy hand out of plackets, thy pen from lenders books, and defy the foul fiend. Still through the hawthorn blows the cold wind; says suum, mun, nonny. Dolphin my boy, boy, sessa! Let him trot by. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Disguised as mad beggar Poor Tom, this is Edgars response to Lears question, "What hast thou been?" In a wildly fictitious account of his past life, Edgar speaks of committing catalogue of sins from pride to lust, greed, drinking excessively, oath-breaking, being false-hearted and untrustworthy. He also tells us that the "fiend" is after him, a reference to his scheming villain of a brother Edmund. Edgars mad speech is ironic, because in his real past life he was the exact opposite to how he portrays himself here noble, honest and innocent (as described by brother Edmund in Act 1, Scene 2). False of heart, light of ear, bloody of hand; hog in sloth, fox in stealth, wolf in greediness, dog in madness, lion in prey. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Edgar, disguised as the Bedlam beggar Poor Tom, answers Lears question, "What hast thou been?" With the use of metaphors from the world of nature, he speaks of the animal qualities he displayed during his different roles in life. Is man no more than this? Consider him well. Thou owest the worm no silk, the beast no hide, the sheep no wool, the cat no perfume. Ha! heres three on s are sophisticated! Thou art the thing itself: unaccommodated man is no more but such a poor, bare, forked animal as thou art. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Astonished at the sight of Poor Tom (Edgar), who is practically naked and wearing just a blanket to cover his loins, Lear shows considerable sympathy for him. In one of the biggest and most profound questions of the play, Lear asks, is this all a man is? Looking at Edgar, the man without possessions, "a poor, bare, forked animal," Lear then proceeds to tear off his own clothes and be on the same level as a beggar, identifying with Poor Tom. This scene shows how far Lear has fallen from his high social status and powerful position as King. There is a nihilistic tone of hopelessness to Lears words and mood here, as he sees man (and himself) stripped of possessions and family and reduced to a poor naked animal. In the line before this quote he says you would be better off dead than face the violent storm with just your naked body "Why, thou wert better in thy grave than to answer with thy uncovered body this extremity of the skies." The storm of course being a symbol of Lears inner turmoil. Poor Tom, that eats the swimming frog, the toad, the tadpole, the wall-newt and the water, that in the fury of his heart, when the foul fiend rages, east cow-dung for sallets, swallows the old rat and the ditch-dog, drinks the green mantle of the standing pool; who is whipped from tithing to tithing and stock-punished, and imprisoned; who hath had three suits to his back, six shirts to his body, Horse to ride and weapon to wear; But mice and rats, and such small deer, Have been Toms food for seven long year. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Asked by Gloucester to identify himself, Poor Tom (Edgar) makes this speech listing his strange diet (frogs, cow dung, pond scum), punishments (whippings, put in stocks, imprisoned) and nomadic lifestyle, as befits a wandering lunatic. Toms mad speech is in answer to Gloucesters question, "What are you there?" He is trying to conceal his true identity as Gloucesters son. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Edgar plays to his role of the strange beggar Tom OBedlam with these rambling comments about the old English fairy tale Childe Rowland. But there is sanity and meaning in his seemingly insane and meaningless rhyme. What appears to be a harmless rhyme carries in it a serious threat. In speaking of Child Rowland smelling the blood of a British man, Edgar is making a social commentary on the way children in the play seek to violently wrest power from their fathers. As in the case of Lears Fool, there is wisdom and insight behind the words of this seeming madman. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. Cordelia speaks candidly here about her loyalty and bond to Lear. She says that Lear fathered, raised and loved her, and in return she will obey, love and honor him. But hopefully when she gets married, she will give half her love and duty to her husband. She questions how her married sisters can claim to love their father only when they have husbands to love. She is suggesting that Regan and Goneril are being disloyal to their husbands. Cordelia vows that she will never marry like them to "love my father all" and leave no love for her husband. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. In this passage Kent shows his immense loyalty to and love for King Lear, saying that he has always loved him like he was his father (simile). Kent will prove this love throughout the play and remain steadfastedly devoted to the king. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. Using a bent bow and shaft as a metaphor to warn off Kent from challenging his decision to banish Cordelia, Lear tells the Earl that he is angry and ready to snap. Kent replies that Lear should let his anger fall on him even if its sharpness pierces his heart. Kent, as always, tries to be Lears honest and loyal adviser. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. Kent says that he has never valued his own life except as a pawn (metaphor) Lear could use against his enemies. He pledges that he would protect Lear with his life. But Kents protest at Lears disowning of Cordelia falls on deaf ears due to Lears obstinate pride and failure to see reality. Lear tells the honest and devoted Kent to shut up and get out of his sight. In yet another act of blind folly Lear banishes his most loyal servant and selfless advisor. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 1. Lear shows great disloyalty to his devoted and loyal courtier Kent by banishing him from the kingdom under pain of death. The King is so blinded by his own pride that he cannot see Kents true qualities. Kent pays dearly for his outspoken protest, as Lear gives him five days to gather provisions to shield him from the "disasters of the world." But as he shuts the gates on Kent, Lear fails to see own homelessness coming, even though his words to Kent foreshadow it. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. The Machiavellian Edmund has a lot in common with Lears villainous daughters Goneril and Regan the capacity for duplicity! While the sisters fool Lear with deceptive expressions of love, Edmund forges a letter to trick his father the Earl of Gloucester and falsely accuse his innocent abrother Edgar. Edmund notes that his father loves him as much as his legitimate son, but he is unhappy that as a bastard he stands to inherit nothing. However, Edmund pledges that through his scheme to discredit his brother he will enjoy prosperity, triumph over the honest Edgar and take his inheritance. Edmund feels no loyalty to his family and believes he is entitled to the Gloucester wealth and title. I beseech you, sir, pardon me. It is a letter from my brother, that I have not all oer-read; and for so much as I have perused, I find it not fit for your oer-looking. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 2. Edmund sets out to deceive Gloucester by pretending to hide a letter that he claims is from his brother Edgar. Gloucesters curiosity is around, he takes the bait, and demands to see the letter. It is actually written by Edmund to incriminate Edgar. Edmund pretends to have conflicting loyalties his brother and father, when he puts on a show of first hiding the letter, then letting Gloucester discover it. But he is loyal to neither. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 4. Kent is no longer servant to his beloved Lear, as hes been banished, so he comes up with the extraordinary idea of disguising himself as "Caius" so he can still serve his King. The ever loyal Kent still loves his master and believes that if he can disguise his voice as well as his appearance his plan will work perfectly. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 1, Scene 4. After Lear banishes his devoted servant Kent, the Earl finds an inventive way to get back into employment in the service of Lear, when he disguises himself as "Caius." William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 2, Scene 4. The Fool in this song uses a metaphor from nature, about rain and storm, to convey his loyalty to Lear. He is also foreshadowing the metaphorical storm to follow. He tells Kent that the person who serves for profit and puts on the appearance of loyalty will take off when it starts to rain and leave him in the storm. But the Fool will stay and let the wise man flee. The scoundrel who runs away is a fool, but this fool is no scoundrel, says the Fool. Go to; say you nothing. There is division between the dukes, and a worse matter than that. I have received a letter this night; tis dangerous to be spoken; I have locked the letter in my closet. These injuries the King now bears will be revenged home; theres part of a power already footed. We must incline to the king. I will look him, and privily relieve him. Go you and maintain talk with the Duke, that my charity be not of him perceived. If he ask for me. I am ill, and gone to bed. If I die for it, as no less is threatened me, the king my old master must be relieved. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 3. Gloucester, a loyal supporter of King Lear, plans to secretly help him. Aware of the strife between the Dukes of Cornwall and Albany, Gloucester has received a letter which promises revenge against those who have hurt the King. He also knows that a French force has landed in Dover to aid Lear. Unfortunately Gloucester confides all to his treacherous half-son Edmund, failing to see him for the schemer he is. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 3. The evil Edmunds true colors really come out here when he decides to betray his father Gloucester for political gain, after learning that he is helping King Lear against the wishes of the Duke of Cornwall. A backstabber, opportunist and selfish individual, who is willing to do anything to achieve his goals, the only loyalty Edmund knows is to himself and his self-interest. He also places no value on family. The amoral destructiveness of Edmund in plotting his the downfall of his father, after having his brother Edgar falsely accused of a murder conspiracy, shows how much of a nihilistic character he is. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. During the storm the loyal Kent is concerned about Lears safety and begs the King to enter the hovel. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. When Kent suggests to Lear to take shelter in the hovel, Lear shows some compassion and consideration for others by his response. He tells Kent and the Fool to take shelter first, saying that he wishes to stay out in the storm to pray and then sleep. Lears courteous words to his loyal Fool "In, boy; go first," not only shows a more caring and faithful side, but marks a turning point in Lears attitude to the plight of others; the poor, the homeless and the marginalized. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 4. Gloucester has come to warn that Lears daughters Regan and Goneril are plotting against their fathers life and saying that he is growing mad. This is something that "good Kent" said would happen, says Gloucester, not recognizing Kent in his peasant disguise of Caius. There is dramatic irony here as the audience knows Caius is Kent. Amid the current political upheaven, Gloucester remains loyal to Lear and risks his own life in aiding him. says this to Kent. Gloucester compares his woes to those of Lear. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 3, Scene 7. In a particularly brutal scene Cornwall blinds Gloucester, whom he has branded a "traitor" his betrayal being his support for and loyalty to King Lear. When Cornwall physically plucks out one of Gloucesters eyes, Regan calls on him to pull the other one out too. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 4, Scene 2. When Goneril returns to her palace, Oswald tells her that Albany has changed. It appears that his eyes are now opened to Gonerils villainy. Oswald says that Albany is happy the French army has landed, but not happy to know he is seeing Goneril again. When Oswald tells him of Gloucesters "treachery" and Edmunds "loyal service," Albany brands Gonerils self-seeking steward a "sot" and "turned the wrong side out." William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 4, Scene 4. Cordelia calls on the power of nature with its healing herbs and plants to help heal Lears madness. She has come a long way from her last appearance in the first act, when she was disinherited and banished by her father. She is now Queen of France with a great army behind her. But as Lears one truly loyal and loving daughter, what she is most concerned about is her fathers health and restoring his sanity. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 5, Scene 3. Albany arrests Edmund for capital treason. He has seen the letters proving an adulterous affair between Edmund and Goneril and their plot to kill Albany. Albany also arrests his disloyal wife Goneril as an accessory, branding her a "gilded serpent" (quite the appropriate metaphor). William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 5, Scene 3. Edgar reveals to Albany how Kent disguised himself as the servant Caius so that he could continue to serve Lear, even though the King had banished him. This shows Kents great loyalty to his "enemy king" and his campacity for forgiveness. LEAR: This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent? KENT: The same, Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius? LEAR: Hes a good fellow, I can tell you that. Hell strike, and quickly too. Hes dead and rotten. KENT: No, my good lord, I am the very man LEAR: Ill see that straight. KENT: That, from your first of difference and decay Have followed your sad steps. LEAR: You are welcome hither. KENT: Nor no man else. Alls cheerless, dark, and deadly. Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves, And desperately are dead. LEAR: Ay, so I think. ALBANY: He knows not what he says, and vain it is That we present us to him. EDGAR: Very bootless. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 5, Scene 3. The ever loyal Kent who is disguised as the servant Caius finally reveals his true identity to Lear. But Lear who is slipping in and out of sanity hardly recognizes his most loyal subject. He doesnt understand that Kent and Caius are the same person. Kent tells him that Regan and Goneril are dead, but Lear is not really taking it in. Albanys comments sum up Lears deteriorating situation, that he doesnt know what he is saying and its useless to try to explain it to him. Edgar confirms this. Its a very poignant moment, because Kent has given so much in service and support to his master and in the end receives no appreciation or reward for it. William ShakespeareKing Lear, Act 5, Scene 3. Albanys speech is sparked by a messenger entering and announcing that Edmund is dead. Albany treats his death as if it is of no consequence "a trifle." As sole remaining ruler in the kingdom after the battle between Cordelias army and the combined armies of Albany and Edmund, Albany is more concerned with restoring power to the rightful people. He shows his loyalty to King Lear by giving the monarch "absolute power" even though moments earlier Albany observed the old Kings deteriorated mental state, "He knows not what he says, and vain it is That we present us to him." And he restores Edgars and Kents positions and titles to them, along with extra rewards that he says they have more than earned "With boot, and such addition as your honours Have more than merited." Following a discussion this morning, I have some bullet points to provoke discussion as the exams approach.The theme of loyalty requires some identification of the message that Shakespeare might have been trying to get across rather than a list of loyal and disloyal characters or moments. Context is useful here when one considers the quantity of shifts in loyalty required of the populace in the 16 and 17th centuries, from the fall of Richard 2 onwards and all documented by Shakespeare. In recent time the loyalty of all to their God was challenged whether by Marian or Elisabethan puritanism and all would have been used to identifying these two strands of personal loyalty.The play can be said to work on family/royal and cosmic levels.You might wish to explore the different levels with regards to loyalty.Most loyal characters come to a bad end and there seems to be little to distinguish the loyal from the disloyal in terms of outcome. Why might this be? Does it link to the idea of speaking what one ought to say? If loyalty is forced upon the subject, then their feelings and freedoms are denied by the very act of loyalty which is required.Considering Act 1, the ambivalence is clear. Which of the sisters is the most loyal? I would argue certainly not good Cordelia who lets her King and father down at a public display of loyalty. She is not lying,unlike her sisters, but this is a flagrant act of disloyalty in public at both family and royal levels. Her subsequent banishment will allow her to reveal her deep loyalty in the inverted world which follows, yet she returns at the head of an army, loyal to Lear, which is in turn defeated. It seems there is scant reward for loyalty.Gloucesters loyalty to Lear is similarly destructive. His allegiance should have shifted once the abdication had taken place. It did not transfer to Cornwall and his doom is sealed. Again,.misplaced loyalty is punished.The sisters show little loyalty to their father after Act 1.1, being left on stage in that scene to discuss how best to respond to the perceived threat of Lear/father. Yet they also suffer within this framework. Disloyal to their husbands, they pursue Edmund and die in a poison-fest of their own creation.Edmund: why should he be loyal to anyone other than himself? Banished by his father for 9 years and due to removed again, Edmund shows loyalty only to himself and is the mater of his own success and downfall. His loyalty towards the new regime is amply rewarded, though based on a totally amoral world view. His death in the duel seems like divine retribution, yet what code has he broken? he is loyal to the rightful King once Lear has abdicated and owes no filial allegiance to his father.This leaves Kent and Edgar as examples of loyalty. Both show unbroken loyalty to their master/father and both suffer for it. Yet both have the chance of survival. Edgar may well become the ruler of the kingdom, but Kent chooses suicide and the continuation of loyalty beyond the grave. What message is there here? Should one be prepared to die rather than to change ones allegiance?Maybe the point is that in the utterly fractured 17th Century with a Kingdom riven with religious intolerance and now ruled by a foreign King to whom the English Lords must swear allegiance and who might be considering the division of the Kingdom himself, Shakespeare is musing on the purpose and significance of loyalty. Only Kent seems genuinely loyal to the end. Edgars final words might be used to suggest that what we feel could usher in an era devoid of blind loyalty and acceptance of the status quo. It is clear that in this world, loyalty confers no favours over and above the disloyal. A King, therefore, cannot expect and obtain loyalty simply because of his position- the subjects get nothing from this. Also if a King breaks the bond of loyalty to his subjects, he can expect no loyalty in return.Its all a little strange! A1.S2: Edgar falls into the scheme of Edmund by (foolishly) assuming that Edmund must be telling the truthSome villain hath done me wrongA2.S3: During Edgars transition into Poor TomMy face Ill grime with filthA2.S3: The dramatic end to Edgars soliloquy after changing into Poor TomEdgar I nothing amA3.S4: Edgar suggests that the devil follows him; possibly as a sign of a truth to his madness, however the image could also refer to Edmund who now haunts him as he takes his placeAway! The foul fiend follows meA3.S4: Edgar seems to preach advice that should be aimed at Goneril and Regan but also could reflect on his own situation regarding Edmund and Gloucesterobey thy parents: keep thy word justlyA3.S4: Edgar leaves the scene hanging on an ominous note possibly alluding to his role in killing Edmund. Could also make connections to the regression back to childish needsI smell the blood of a British man (British differs from english in the original tale possibly to link it to King James I who liked to be known as King of Great Brittaine)A3.S6: Edgars asides exposes his feigned madness his pity for Lear highlights Gloucesters foolishness for believing Edmund immediately[aside] My tears begin to take his part so much they mar my counterfeitingA4.S1: Edgars use of superlatives to comfort him of his own situationTo be the worst, the lowest and most dejectedA4.S1: Edgar breaks the fourth wall after seeing the terrible condition of father perhaps he cant handle the influx of emotion totally alone and so Shakespeare projects some of it onto the audienceI am worse than eer I wasA4.S1: Edgar shows real compassion for Gloucesters fateBless thy sweet eyes, they bleedA4.S6: Edgar articulates one of the more significant themes of the play of reason in madness. There is a juxtaposition that madness leads to the truthO matter of impertinency mixd! Reason in madness!A5.S3: In the battle between Edgar and Edmund, Edgar restores the natural order and accuses Edmund of his treacheryThou art a traitor: False to thy gods, thy brother and thy fatherA5.S3: Edgar reflects on the wheel of fortune and the restoring of the natural orderMy name is Edgar and thy fathers son. The gods are justA5.S3: Edgar speaks the last lines of the playThe weight of this sad time we must obey, Speak what we feel not what we ought to say. The oldest hath borne most; we that are young/Shall never see so much, nor live so long LEAR This is a dull sight. Are you not Kent? KENT The same, Your servant Kent. Where is your servant Caius?LEAR He's a good fellow, I can tell you that. He'll strike, and quickly too. He's dead and rotten. KENT No, my good lord, I am the very manLEAR I'll see that straight. KENT That, from your first of difference and decay Have followed your sad steps.LEAR You are welcome hither. KENT Nor no man else. All's cheerless, dark, and deadly. Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves, And desperately are dead.LEAR Ay, so I think. ALBANY He knows not what he says, and vain it is That we present us to him. (5.3.340-356) Loyalty? It's not rewarded in King Lear. When Kent finally reveals his true identity to Lear, it's too late.

King lear loyalty quotes. King lear edgar quotes.

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