

Cymbeline

3.6

Enter Innogen, dressed as a man, before the cave

INNOGEN

I see a man's life is a tedious one.
I have tired myself, and for two nights together
Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick,
But that my resolution helps me. Milford,
When from the mountain-top Pisanio showed thee, 5
Thou wast within a ken. O Jove, I think
Foundations fly the wretched±±such, I mean,
Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me
I could not miss my way. Will poor folks lie,
That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis 10
A punishment or trial? Yes. No wonder,
When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fullness
Is sorer than to lie for need, and falsehood
Is worse in kings than beggars. My dear lord,
Thou art one o'th' false ones. Now I think on thee 15
My hunger's gone, but even before I was
At point to sink for food. But what is this?
Here is a path to't. 'Tis some savage hold.
I were best not call; I dare not call; yet famine,
Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant. 20
Plenty and peace breeds cowards, hardness ever
Of hardness is mother. Ho! Who's here?
If anything that's civil, speak; if savage,
Take or lend. Ho! No answer? Then I'll enter.
Best draw my sword, and if mine enemy 25
But fear the sword like me he'll scarcely look on't.
Such a foe, good heavens!

Exit into the cave

Enter Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus

BELARIUS

You, Polydore, have proved best woodman and
Are master of the feast. Cadwal and I
Will play the cook and servant; 'tis our match. 30
The sweat of industry would dry and die

But for the end it works to. Come, our stomachs
Will make what's homely savoury. Weariness
Can snore upon the flint when resty sloth
Finds the down pillow hard. Now peace be here,
Poor house, that keep'st thyself.

35

GUIDERIUS

I am throughly weary.

ARVIRAGUS

I am weak with toil yet strong in appetite.

GUIDERIUS

There is cold meat i'th' cave. We'll browse on that
Whilst what we have killed be cooked.

BELARIUS (*looking into the cave*) Stay, come not in.

But that it eats our victuals I should think 40

Here were a fairy.

GUIDERIUS What's the matter, sir?

BELARIUS

By Jupiter, an angel±±or, if not,
An earthly paragon. Behold divineness
No elder than a boy.

Enter Innogen from the cave, dressed as a man

INNOGEN Good masters, harm me not.

Before I entered here I called, and thought 45

To have begged or bought what I have took. Good
truth,

I have stol'n naught, nor would not, though I had
found

Gold strewed i'th' floor. Here's money for my meat.

I would have left it on the board so soon

As I had made my meal, and parted 50

With prayers for the provider.

GUIDERIUS

Money, youth?

ARVIRAGUS

All gold and silver rather turn to dirt,
As 'tis no better reckoned but of those
Who worship dirty gods.

INNOGEN

I see you're angry.

Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should 55

Have died had I not made it.

BELARIUS

Whither bound?

INNOGEN

To Milford Haven.

BELARIUS What's your name?

INNOGEN

Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy. He embarked at Milford,
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger, 60
I am fall'n in this offence.

BELARIUS Prithee, fair youth,
Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds
By this rude place we live in. Well encountered.
'Tis almost night. You shall have better cheer
Ere you depart, and thanks to stay and eat it. 65
Boys, bid him welcome.

GUIDERIUS Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom in honesty,
Ay, bid for you as I'd buy.

ARVIRAGUS I'll make't my comfort
He is a man, I'll love him as my brother.
(*To Innogen*) And such a welcome as I'd give to him 70
After long absence, such is yours. Most welcome.
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

INNOGEN

'Mongst friends
If brothers. (*Aside*) Would it had been so that they
Had been my father's sons. Then had my price
Been less, and so more equal ballasting 75
To thee, Posthumus.

The three men speak apart

BELARIUS He wrings at some distress.

GUIDERIUS

Would I could free't.

ARVIRAGUS Or I, whate'er it be,
What pain it cost, what danger. Gods!

BELARIUS Hark, boys.

They whisper

INNOGEN (*aside*) Great men
That had a court no bigger than this cave, 80
That did attend themselves and had the virtue
Which their own conscience sealed them, laying by
That nothing-gift of differing multitudes,

Could not outpeer these twain. Pardon me, gods,
I'd change my sex to be companion with them, 85
Since Leonatus' false.

BELARIUS It shall be so.
Boys, we'll go dress our hunt. Fair youth, come in.
Discourse is heavy, fasting. When we have supped
We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.

GUIDERIUS Pray draw near. 90

ARVIRAGUS
The night to th' owl and morn to th' lark less
welcome.

INNOGEN Thanks, sir.

ARVIRAGUS I pray draw near.
Exeunt into the cave