

Cymbeline

3.5

[Flourish.] Enter Cymbeline, the Queen, Cloten, Lucius, and lords

CYMBELINE *(to Lucius)*

Thus far, and so farewell.

LUCIUS

Thanks, royal sir.

My emperor hath wrote I must from hence;
And am right sorry that I must report ye
My master's enemy.

CYMBELINE

Our subjects, sir,

Will not endure his yoke, and for ourself 5
To show less sovereignty than they must needs
Appear unkinglike.

LUCIUS

So, sir, I desire of you

A conduct over land to Milford Haven.

(To the Queen) Madam, all joy befall your grace, *[to Cloten]*

and you.

CYMBELINE

My lords, you are appointed for that office. 10
The due of honour in no point omit.
So farewell, noble Lucius.

LUCIUS

Your hand, my lord.

CLOTEN

Receive it friendly, but from this time forth
I wear it as your enemy.

LUCIUS

Sir, the event

Is yet to name the winner. Fare you well. 15

CYMBELINE

Leave not the worthy Lucius, good my lords,
Till he have crossed the Severn. Happiness.

Exeunt Lucius and lords

QUEEN

He goes hence frowning, but it honours us
That we have given him cause.

CLOTEN

'Tis all the better.

Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it. 20

CYMBELINE

Lucius hath wrote already to the Emperor
How it goes here. It fits us therefore ripely
Our chariots and our horsemen be in readiness.
The powers that he already hath in Gallia
Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves 25
His war for Britain.

QUEEN 'Tis not sleepy business,
But must be looked to speedily and strongly.

CYMBELINE

Our expectation that it would be thus
Hath made us forward. But, my gentle queen,
Where is our daughter? She hath not appeared 30
Before the Roman, nor to us hath tendered
The duty of the day. She looks us like
A thing more made of malice than of duty.
We have noted it. Call her before us, for
We have been too slight in sufferance.

Exit one or more

QUEEN

Royal sir, 35

Since the exile of Posthumus most retired
Hath her life been, the cure whereof, my lord,
'Tis time must do. Beseech your majesty
Forbear sharp speeches to her. She's a lady
So tender of rebukes that words are strokes, 40
And strokes death to her.

Enter a Messenger

CYMBELINE

Where is she, sir? How

Can her contempt be answered?

MESSENGER

Please you, sir,

Her chambers are all locked, and there's no answer
That will be given to th' loud'st of noise we make.

QUEEN

My lord, when last I went to visit her 45
She prayed me to excuse her keeping close,
Whereto constrained by her infirmity,
She should that duty leave unpaid to you
Which daily she was bound to proffer. This
She wished me to make known, but our great court 50
Made me to blame in memory.

CYMBELINE

Her doors locked?

Not seen of late? Grant heavens that which I
Fear prove false.

Exit

QUEEN Son, I say, follow the King.

CLOTEN

That man of hers, Pisanio, her old servant,
I have not seen these two days.

QUEEN

Go, look after.

55

Exit Cloten

Pisanio, thou that stand'st so for Posthumus!
He hath a drug of mine. I pray his absence
Proceed by swallowing that, for he believes
It is a thing most precious. But for her,
Where is she gone? Haply despair hath seized her, 60
Or, winged with fervour of her love, she's flown
To her desired Posthumus. Gone she is
To death or to dishonour, and my end
Can make good use of either. She being down,
I have the placing of the British crown. 65

Enter Cloten

How now, my son?

CLOTEN 'Tis certain she is fled.

Go in and cheer the King. He rages, none
Dare come about him.

QUEEN All the better. May

This night forestall him of the coming day.

Exit

CLOTEN

I love and hate her. For she's fair and royal, 70
And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite
Than lady, ladies, woman±±from every one
The best she hath, and she, of all compounded,
Outsells them all±±I love her therefore; but
Disdaining me, and throwing favours on 75
The low Posthumus, slanders so her judgement
That what's else rare is choked; and in that point
I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed,
To be revenged upon her. For when fools
Shall±±

Enter Pisanio

Who is here? What, are you packing,

sirrah? 80

Come hither. Ah, you precious pander! Villain,
Where is thy lady? In a word, or else
Thou art straightway with the fiends.

PISANIO O good my lord!

CLOTEN

Where is thy lady?±±or, by Jupiter,
I will not ask again. Close villain, 85
I'll have this secret from thy tongue or rip
Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthumus,
From whose so many weights of baseness cannot
A dram of worth be drawn?

PISANIO Alas, my lord,

How can she be with him? When was she missed? 90
He is in Rome.

CLOTEN Where is she, sir? Come nearer.
No farther halting. Satisfy me home
What is become of her.

PISANIO O my all-worthy lord!

CLOTEN All-worthy villain, 95
Discover where thy mistress is at once,
At the next word. No more of `worthy lord'.
Speak, or thy silence on the instant is
Thy condemnation and thy death.

PISANIO Then, sir,

This paper is the history of my knowledge 100
Touching her flight.
He gives Cloten a letter

CLOTEN Let's see't. I will pursue her
Even to Augustus' throne.

PISANIO [aside] Or this or perish.
She's far enough, and what he learns by this
May prove his travel, not her danger.

CLOTEN Hum!

PISANIO (aside)

I'll write to my lord she's dead. O Innogen, 105
Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again!

CLOTEN

Sirrah, is this letter true?

PISANIO Sir, as I think.

CLOTEN It is Posthumus' hand; I know't. Sirrah, if thou
wouldst not be a villain but do me true service, undergo
those employments wherein I should have cause to use 110
thee with a serious industry±±that is, what villainy
soe'er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and truly±±I
would think thee an honest man. Thou shouldst neither
want my means for thy relief nor my voice for thy
preferment. 115

PISANIO Well, my good lord.

CLOTEN Wilt thou serve me? For since patiently and
constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that
beggar Posthumus, thou canst not in the course of
gratitude but be a diligent follower of mine. Wilt thou 120
serve me?

PISANIO Sir, I will.

CLOTEN Give me thy hand. Here's my purse. Hast any of
thy late master's garments in thy possession?

PISANIO I have, my lord, at my lodging the same suit he 125
wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

CLOTEN The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit
hither. Let it be thy first service. Go.

PISANIO I shall, my lord.

Exit

CLOTEN Meet thee at Milford Haven! I forgot to ask him 130
one thing; I'll remember't anon. Even there, thou
villain Posthumus, will I kill thee. I would these
garments were come. She said upon a time±±the
bitterness of it I now belch from my heart±±that she
held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect 135
than my noble and natural person, together with the
adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my
back will I ravish her±±first kill him, and in her eyes;
there shall she see my valour, which will then be a
torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech 140
of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my
lust hath dined±±which, as I say, to vex her I will
execute in the clothes that she so praised±±to the court
I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath
despised me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge. 145

Enter Pisanio with Posthumus' suit

Be those the garments?

PISANIO Ay, my noble lord.

CLOTEN

How long is't since she went to Milford Haven?

PISANIO She can scarce be there yet.

CLOTEN Bring this apparel to my chamber. That is the second thing that I have commanded thee. The third¹⁵⁰ is that thou wilt be a voluntary mute to my design. Be but duteous, and true preferment shall tender itself to thee. My revenge is now at Milford. Would I had wings to follow it. Come, and be true.

Exit

PISANIO

Thou bidd'st me to my loss, for true to thee 155
Were to prove false, which I will never be
To him that is most true. To Milford go,
And find not her whom thou pursuest. Flow, flow,
You heavenly blessings, on her. This fool's speed
Be crossed with slowness; labour be his meed. 160

Exit