

Cymbeline

3.2

Enter Pisanio, reading of a letter

PISANIO

How? Of adultery? Wherefore write you not
What monster's her accuser? Leonatus,
O master, what a strange infection
Is fall'n into thy ear! What false Italian,
As poisonous tongued as handed, hath prevailed 5
On thy too ready hearing? Disloyal? No.
She's punished for her truth, and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take in some virtue. O my master,
Thy mind to hers is now as low as were 10
Thy fortunes. How? That I should murder her,
Upon the love and truth and vows which I
Have made to thy command? I her? Her blood?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable. How look I, 15
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to? *(Reads)* 'Do't. The letter
That I have sent her, by her own command
Shall give thee opportunity.' O damned paper,
Black as the ink that's on thee! Senseless bauble, 20
Art thou a fedary for this act, and look'st
So virgin-like without?

Enter Innogen

Lo, here she comes.

I am ignorant in what I am commanded.

INNOGEN How now, Pisanio?

PISANIO

Madam, here is a letter from my lord. 25

INNOGEN

Who, thy lord that is my lord, Leonatus?
O learned indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his characters±±
He'd lay the future open. You good gods,
Let what is here contained relish of love, 30

Of my lord's health, of his content±±yet not
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him.
Some griefs are med'cinable; that is one of them,
For it doth physic love±±of his content
All but in that. Good wax, thy leave. Blest be 35
You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers
And men in dangerous bonds pray not alike;
Though forfeiters you cast in prison, yet
You clasp young Cupid's tables. Good news, gods!

She opens and reads the letter

`Justice and your father's wrath, should he take me in 40
his dominion, could not be so cruel to me as you, O
the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with
your eyes. Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford
Haven. What your own love will out of this advise you,
follow. So he wishes you all happiness, that remains 45
loyal to his vow, and your increasing in love,
Leonatus Posthumus.'

O for a horse with wings! Hear'st thou, Pisanio?
He is at Milford Haven. Read, and tell me
How far 'tis thither. If one of mean affairs 50
May plod it in a week, why may not I
Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio,
Who long'st like me to see thy lord, who long'st±±
O let me bate±±but not like me±±yet long'st
But in a fainter kind±±O, not like me, 55
For mine's beyond beyond; say, and speak thick±±
Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing,
To th' smothering of the sense±±how far it is
To this same blesseÁd Milford. And by th' way
Tell me how Wales was made so happy as 60
T'inherit such a haven. But first of all,
How we may steal from hence; and for the gap
That we shall make in time from our hence-going
Till our return, to excuse; but first, how get hence.
Why should excuse be born or ere begot? 65
We'll talk of that hereafter. Prithee speak,
How many score of miles may we well ride
'Twixt hour and hour?

PISANIO

One score 'twixt sun and sun,

Madam, 's enough for you, and too much too.

INNOGEN

Why, one that rode to 's execution, man, 70
Could never go so slow. I have heard of riding wagers
Where horses have been nimbler than the sands
That run i'th' clock's behalf. But this is fool'ry.
Go bid my woman feign a sickness, say
She'll home to her father; and provide me presently 75
A riding-suit no costlier than would fit
A franklin's housewife.

PISANIO

Madam, you're best consider.

INNOGEN

I see before me, man. Nor here, nor here,
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them
That I cannot look through. Away, I prithee, 80
Do as I bid thee. There's no more to say:
Accessible is none but Milford way.

Exeunt