

Pericles, Prince of Tyre

Sc.18

Enter Gower

GOWER

Thus time we waste, and long leagues make we short,
Sail seas in cockles, have and wish but for't,
Making to take imagination
From bourn to bourn, region to region.
By you being pardoned, we commit no crime 5
To use one language in each sev'ral clime
Where our scene seems to live. I do beseech you
To learn of me, who stand i'th' gaps to teach you
The stages of our story: Pericles
Is now again thwarting the wayward seas, 10
Attended on by many a lord and knight,
To see his daughter, all his life's delight.
Old Helicanus goes along. Behind
Is left to govern, if you bear in mind,
Old Aeschines, whom Helicanus late 15
Advanced in Tyre to great and high estate.
Well sailing ships and bounteous winds have brought
This king to Tarsus±±think his pilot thought;
So with his steerage shall your thoughts go on±±
To fetch his daughter home, who first is gone. 20
Like motes and shadows see them move a while;
Your ears unto your eyes I'll reconcile.

Dumb show.

*Enter Pericles at one door with all his train, Cleon
and Dionyza [in mourning garments] at the other.
Cleon [draws the curtain and] shows Pericles the
tomb, whereat Pericles makes lamentation, puts on
sack-cloth, and in a mighty passion departs,
followed by his train. Cleon and Dionyza depart at
the other door*

See how belief may suffer by foul show.
This borrowed passion stands for true-owed woe,
And Pericles, in sorrow all devoured, 25
With sighs shot through, and biggest tears o'ershow'red,

Leaves Tarsus, and again embarks. He swears
Never to wash his face nor cut his hairs.
He puts on sack-cloth, and to sea. He bears
A tempest which his mortal vessel tears, 30
And yet he rides it out. Now please you wit
The epitaph is for Marina writ
By wicked Dionyza.

He reads Marina's epitaph on the tomb

`The fairest, sweetest, best lies here,
Who withered in her spring of year. 35
In nature's garden, though by growth a bud,
She was the chiefest flower: she was good.'
No visor does become black villainy
So well as soft and tender flattery.
Let Pericles believe his daughter's dead 40
And bear his courses to be order'd
By Lady Fortune, while our scene must play
His daughter's woe and heavy well-a-day
In her unholy service. Patience then,
And think you now are all in Mytilene. 45

Exit