

Cymbeline

2.2

*A trunk [and arras]. A bed is [thrust forth] with
Innogen in it, reading a book. Enter to her Helen, a
lady*

INNOGEN

Who's there? My woman Helen?

HELEN

Please you, madam.

INNOGEN

What hour is it?

HELEN

Almost midnight, madam.

INNOGEN

I have read three hours then. Mine eyes are weak.

Fold down the leaf where I have left. To bed.

Take not away the taper; leave it burning, 5

And if thou canst awake by four o'th' clock,

I prithee call me. Sleep hath seized me wholly.

[Exit Helen]

To your protection I commend me, gods.

From fairies and the tempters of the night

Guard me, beseech ye. 10

She sleeps.

Giacomo comes from the trunk

GIACOMO

The crickets sing, and man's o'er-laboured sense

Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus

Did softly press the rushes ere he wakened

The chastity he wounded. Cytherea,

How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! Fresh lily, 15

And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch,

But kiss, one kiss! Rubies unparagoned,

How dearly they do't! 'Tis her breathing that

Perfumes the chamber thus. The flame o'th' taper

Bows toward her, and would underpeep her lids, 20

To see th'encloseÁd lights, now canopied

Under these windows, white and azure-laced

With blue of heaven's own tinct. But my design±±

To note the chamber. I will write all down.

He writes in his tables

Such and such pictures, there the window, such 25
Th'adornment of her bed, the arras, figures,
Why, such and such; and the contents o'th' story.
Ah, but some natural notes about her body
Above ten thousand meaner movables
Would testify t'enrich mine inventory. 30
O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her,
And be her sense but as a monument
Thus in a chapel lying. Come off, come off;
As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard.

He takes the bracelet from her arm

'Tis mine, and this will witness outwardly, 35
As strongly as the conscience does within,
To th' madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole, cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I'th' bottom of a cowslip. Here's a voucher
Stronger than ever law could make. This secret 40
Will force him think I have picked the lock and ta'en
The treasure of her honour. No more. To what end?
Why should I write this down that's riveted,
Screwed to my memory? She hath been reading late,
The tale of Tereus. Here the leaf's turned down 45
Where Philomel gave up. I have enough.
To th' trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning
May bare the raven's eye! I lodge in fear.
Though this' a heavenly angel, hell is here. 50

Clock strikes

One, two, three. Time, time!

*Exit into the trunk. [The bed and trunk are
removed]*