

Cymbeline

1.1

Enter two Gentlemen

FIRST GENTLEMAN

You do not meet a man but frowns. Our bloods
No more obey the heavens than our courtiers
Still seem as does the King.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

But what's the matter?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

His daughter, and the heir of 's kingdom, whom
He purposed to his wife's sole son±±a widow 5
That late he married±±hath referred herself
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman. She's wedded,
Her husband banished, she imprisoned. All
Is outward sorrow, though I think the King
Be touched at very heart.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

None but the King? 10

FIRST GENTLEMAN

He that hath lost her, too. So is the Queen,
That most desired the match. But not a courtier±±
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the King's looks±±hath a heart that is not
Glad of the thing they scowl at.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

And why so? 15

FIRST GENTLEMAN

He that hath missed the Princess is a thing
Too bad for bad report, and he that hath her±±
I mean that married her±±alack, good man,
And therefore banished!±±is a creature such
As, to seek through the regions of the earth 20
For one his like, there would be something failing
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an outward and such stuff within
Endows a man but he.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

You speak him far.

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I do extend him, sir, within himself; 25
Crush him together rather than unfold

His measure duly.

SECOND GENTLEMAN What's his name and birth?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

I cannot delve him to the root. His father
Was called Sicilius, who did join his honour
Against the Romans with Cassibelan 30
But had his titles by Tenantius, whom
He served with glory and admired success,
So gained the sur-addition `Leonatus';
And had, besides this gentleman in question,
Two other sons who in the wars o'th' time 35
Died with their swords in hand; for which their father,
Then old and fond of issue, took such sorrow
That he quit being, and his gentle lady,
Big of this gentleman, our theme, deceased
As he was born. The King, he takes the babe 40
To his protection, calls him Posthumus Leonatus,
Breeds him, and makes him of his bedchamber;
Puts to him all the learnings that his time
Could make him the receiver of, which he took
As we do air, fast as 'twas ministered, 45
And in 's spring became a harvest; lived in court±±
Which rare it is to do±±most praised, most loved;
A sample to the youngest, to th' more mature
A glass that feated them, and to the graver
A child that guided dotards. To his mistress, 50
For whom he now is banished, her own price
Proclaims how she esteemed him and his virtue.
By her election may be truly read
What kind of man he is.

SECOND GENTLEMAN I honour him

Even out of your report. But pray you tell me, 55
Is she sole child to th' King?

FIRST GENTLEMAN His only child.

He had two sons±±if this be worth your hearing,
Mark it: the eld'st of them at three years old,
I'th' swathing clothes the other, from their nursery
Were stol'n, and to this hour no guess in knowledge 60
Which way they went.

SECOND GENTLEMAN How long is this ago?

FIRST GENTLEMAN Some twenty years.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

That a king's children should be so conveyed,
So slackly guarded, and the search so slow 65
That could not trace them!

FIRST GENTLEMAN Howsoe'er 'tis strange,
Or that the negligence may well be laughed at,
Yet is it true, sir.

SECOND GENTLEMAN I do well believe you.

Enter the Queen, Posthumus, and Innogen

FIRST GENTLEMAN

We must forbear. Here comes the gentleman,
The Queen and Princess. 70

Exeunt the two Gentlemen

QUEEN

No, be assured you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most stepmothers,
Evil-eyed unto you. You're my prisoner, but
Your jailer shall deliver you the keys
That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus, 75
So soon as I can win th'offended King
I will be known your advocate. Marry, yet
The fire of rage is in him, and 'twere good
You leaned unto his sentence with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you.

POSTHUMUS Please your highness, 80
I will from hence today.

QUEEN You know the peril.

I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barred affections, though the King
Hath charged you should not speak together.

Exit

INNOGEN

O dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant 85
Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
I something fear my father's wrath, but nothing±±
Always reserved my holy duty±±what
His rage can do on me. You must be gone,
And I shall here abide the hourly shot 90
Of angry eyes, not comforted to live

But that there is this jewel in the world
That I may see again.

POSTHUMUS My queen, my mistress!
O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness 95
Than doth become a man. I will remain
The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth;
My residence in Rome at one Filario's,
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter; thither write, my queen, 100
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send
Though ink be made of gall.

Enter Queen

QUEEN Be brief, I pray you.
If the King come, I shall incur I know not
How much of his displeasure. (*Aside*) Yet I'll move him
To walk this way. I never do him wrong 105
But he does buy my injuries, to be friends,
Pays dear for my offences.

Exit

POSTHUMUS Should we be taking leave
As long a term as yet we have to live,
The loathness to depart would grow. Adieu.

INNOGEN Nay, stay a little. 110
Were you but riding forth to air yourself
Such parting were too petty. Look here, love:
This diamond was my mother's. Take it, heart;
She gives him a ring
But keep it till you woo another wife
When Innogen is dead.

POSTHUMUS How, how? Another? 115
You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
And cere up my embracements from a next
With bonds of death! Remain, remain thou here

He puts on the ring

While sense can keep it on; and, sweetest, fairest,
As I my poor self did exchange for you 120
To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles
I still win of you. For my sake wear this.

He gives her a bracelet

It is a manacle of love. I'll place it
Upon this fairest prisoner.

INNOGEN O the gods!
When shall we see again?

Enter Cymbeline and lords

POSTHUMUS Alack, the King! 125

CYMBELINE
Thou basest thing, avoid hence, from my sight!
If after this command thou fraught the court
With thy unworthiness, thou diest. Away.
Thou'rt poison to my blood.

POSTHUMUS The gods protect you,
And bless the good remainders of the court! 130
I am gone.
Exit

INNOGEN There cannot be a pinch in death
More sharp than this is.

CYMBELINE O disloyal thing,
That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap'st
A year's age on me.

INNOGEN I beseech you, sir,
Harm not yourself with your vexation. 135
I am senseless of your wrath. A touch more rare
Subdues all pangs, all fears.

CYMBELINE Past grace, obedience±±

INNOGEN
Past hope and in despair: that way past grace.

CYMBELINE
That mightst have had the sole son of my queen!

INNOGEN
O blesseÁd that I might not! I chose an eagle 140
And did avoid a puttock.

CYMBELINE
Thou took'st a beggar, wouldst have made my throne
A seat for baseness.

INNOGEN No, I rather added
A lustre to it.

CYMBELINE O thou vile one!

INNOGEN Sir,
It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus. 145

You bred him as my playfellow, and he is
A man worth any woman, over-buys me
Almost the sum he pays.

CYMBELINE What, art thou mad?

INNOGEN

Almost, sir. Heaven restore me! Would I were
A neatherd's daughter, and my Leonatus 150
Our neighbour shepherd's son.

Enter Queen

CYMBELINE Thou foolish thing.
(*To Queen*) They were again together; you have done
Not after our command. (*To lords*) Away with her,
And pen her up.

QUEEN Beseech your patience, peace,
Dear lady daughter, peace. Sweet sovereign, 155
Leave us to ourselves, and make yourself some
comfort
Out of your best advice.

CYMBELINE Nay, let her languish
A drop of blood a day, and, being aged,
Die of this folly.

Exit with lords

QUEEN Fie, you must give way.

Enter Pisanio

Here is your servant. How now, sir? What news? 160

PISANIO
My lord your son drew on my master.

QUEEN Ha!
No harm, I trust, is done?

PISANIO There might have been,
But that my master rather played than fought,
And had no help of anger. They were parted
By gentlemen at hand.

QUEEN I am very glad on't. 165

INNOGEN

Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part
To draw upon an exile±±O brave sir!
I would they were in Afric both together,
Myself by with a needle, that I might prick
The goer-back. (*To Pisanio*) Why came you from your

master?

170

PISANIO

On his command. He would not suffer me
To bring him to the haven, left these notes
Of what commands I should be subject to
When't pleased you to employ me.

QUEEN

This hath been

Your faithful servant. I dare lay mine honour
He will remain so.

175

PISANIO I humbly thank your highness.

QUEEN Pray walk a while.

[Exit]

INNOGEN

About some half hour hence, pray you speak with
me.

You shall at least go see my lord aboard.

180

For this time leave me.

Exeunt severally