

The Two Noble Kinsmen

1.3

Enter Pirithous, Hippolyta, and Emilia

PIRITHOUS

No further.

HIPPOLYTA

Sir, farewell. Repeat my wishes
To our great lord, of whose success I dare not
Make any timorous question; yet I wish him
Excess and overflow of power, an't might be,
To dure ill-dealing fortune. Speed to him; 5
Store never hurts good governors.

PIRITHOUS

Though I know
His ocean needs not my poor drops, yet they
Must yield their tribute there. *(To Emilia)* My precious
maid,
Those best affections that the heavens infuse
In their best-tempered pieces keep enthroned 10
In your dear heart.

EMILIA

Thanks, sir. Remember me
To our all-royal brother, for whose speed
The great Bellona I'll solicit; and
Since in our terrene state petitions are not
Without gifts understood, I'll offer to her 15
What I shall be advised she likes. Our hearts
Are in his army, in his tent.

HIPPOLYTA

In's bosom.
We have been soldiers, and we cannot weep
When our friends don their helms, or put to sea,
Or tell of babes broached on the lance, or women 20
That have sod their infants in±±and after eat them±±
The brine they wept at killing 'em: then if
You stay to see of us such spinsters, we
Should hold you here forever.

PIRITHOUS

Peace be to you
As I pursue this war, which shall be then 25
Beyond further requiring.

Exit Pirithous

EMILIA

How his longing

Follows his friend! Since his depart, his sports,
Though craving seriousness and skill, passed slightly
His careless execution, where nor gain
Made him regard or loss consider, but 30
Playing one business in his hand, another
Directing in his head, his mind nurse equal
To these so diff'ring twins. Have you observed him
Since our great lord departed?

HIPPOLYTA With much labour;
And I did love him for't. They two have cabined 35
In many as dangerous as poor a corner,
Peril and want contending; they have skiffed
Torrents whose roaring tyranny and power
I'th' least of these was dreadful, and they have
Fought out together where death's self was lodged; 40
Yet fate hath brought them off. Their knot of love,
Tied, weaved, entangled with so true, so long,
And with a finger of so deep a cunning,
May be outworn, never undone. I think
Theseus cannot be umpire to himself, 45
Cleaving his conscience into twain and doing
Each side like justice, which he loves best.

EMILIA
Doubtless
There is a best, and reason has no manners
To say it is not you. I was acquainted
Once with a time when I enjoyed a playfellow; 50
You were at wars when she the grave enriched,
Who made too proud the bed; took leave o'th'
moon±±
Which then looked pale at parting±±when our count
Was each eleven.

HIPPOLYTA 'Twas Flavina.

EMILIA Yes.
You talk of Pirithous' and Theseus' love: 55
Theirs has more ground, is more maturely seasoned,
More buckled with strong judgement, and their needs
The one of th'other may be said to water
Their intertangled roots of love; but I
And she I sigh and spoke of were things innocent, 60

Loved for we did, and like the elements,
 That know not what, nor why, yet do effect
 Rare issues by their operance, our souls
 Did so to one another. What she liked
 Was then of me approved; what not, condemned±± 65
 No more arraignment. The flower that I would pluck
 And put between my breasts±±O then but beginning
 To swell about the blossom±±she would long
 Till she had such another, and commit it
 To the like innocent cradle, where, phoenix-like, 70
 They died in perfume. On my head no toy
 But was her pattern. Her affections±±pretty,
 Though happily her careless wear±±I followed
 For my most serious decking. Had mine ear
 Stol'n some new air, or at adventure hummed one, 75
 From musical coinage, why, it was a note
 Whereon her spirits would sojourn±±rather dwell on±±
 And sing it in her slumbers. This rehearsal±±
 Which, seely innocence wots well, comes in
 Like old emportment's bastard±±has this end: 80
 That the true love 'tween maid and maid may be
 More than in sex dividual.

HIPPOLYTA You're out of breath,
 And this high-speeded pace is but to say
 That you shall never, like the maid Flavina,
 Love any that's called man. 85

EMILIA I am sure I shall not.

HIPPOLYTA Now alack, weak sister,
 I must no more believe thee in this point±±
 Though in't I know thou dost believe thyself±±
 Than I will trust a sickly appetite 90
 That loathes even as it longs. But sure, my sister,
 If I were ripe for your persuasion, you
 Have said enough to shake me from the arm
 Of the all-noble Theseus, for whose fortunes
 I will now in and kneel, with great assurance 95
 That we more than his Pirithous possess
 The high throne in his heart.

EMILIA I am not
 Against your faith, yet I continue mine.

Exeunt