

Cymbeline

1.6

Enter Innogen

INNOGEN

A father cruel and a stepdame false,
A foolish suitor to a wedded lady
That hath her husband banished. O, that husband,
My supreme crown of grief, and those repeated
Vexations of it! Had I been thief-stol'n, 5
As my two brothers, happy; but most miserable
Is the desire that's glorious. Blest be those,
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,
Which seasons comfort.

Enter Pisanio and Giacomo

Who may this be? Fie!

PISANIO

Madam, a noble gentleman of Rome
Comes from my lord with letters. 10

GIACOMO

Change you, madam?

The worthy Leonatus is in safety,
And greets your highness dearly.

He gives her the letters

INNOGEN

Thanks, good sir.

You're kindly welcome.

She reads the letters

GIACOMO *(aside)*

All of her that is out of door most rich! 15
If she be furnished with a mind so rare
She is alone, th'Arabian bird, and I
Have lost the wager. Boldness be my friend;
Arm me audacity from head to foot,
Or, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight; 20
Rather, directly fly.

INNOGEN *(reads aloud)* 'He is one of the noblest note, to
whose kindnesses I am most infinitely tied. Reflect upon
him accordingly, as you value
Your truest 25
Leonatus.'

(*To Giacomo*) So far I read aloud,
But even the very middle of my heart
Is warmed by th' rest, and takes it thankfully.
You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I 30
Have words to bid you, and shall find it so
In all that I can do.

GIACOMO Thanks, fairest lady.
What, are men mad? Hath nature given them eyes
To see this vaulted arch and the rich crop
Of sea and land, which can distinguish 'twixt 35
The fiery orbs above and the twinned stones
Upon th'unnumbered beach, and can we not
Partition make with spectacles so precious
'Twixt fair and foul?

INNOGEN What makes your admiration?

GIACOMO
It cannot be i'th' eye±±for apes and monkeys, 40
'Twixt two such shes, would chatter this way and
Contemn with mows the other; nor i'th' judgement,
For idiots in this case of favour would
Be wisely definite; nor i'th' appetite±±
Sluttery, to such neat excellence opposed, 45
Should make desire vomit emptiness,
Not so allured to feed.

INNOGEN What is the matter, trow?

GIACOMO The cloveÁd will,
That satiate yet unsatisfied desire, that tub 50
Both filled and running, ravening first the lamb,
Longs after for the garbage.

INNOGEN What, dear sir,
Thus raps you? Are you well?

GIACOMO
Thanks, madam, well. (*To Pisanio*) Beseech you, sir,
Desire my man's abode where I did leave him. 55
He's strange and peevish.

PISANIO I was going, sir,
To give him welcome.

Exit

INNOGEN Continues well my lord?
His health, beseech you?

GIACOMO Well, madam.
INNOGEN
 Is he disposed to mirth? I hope he is.
GIACOMO
 Exceeding pleasant, none a stranger there 60
 So merry and so gamesome. He is called
 The Briton Reveller.
INNOGEN When he was here
 He did incline to sadness, and oft-times
 Not knowing why.
GIACOMO I never saw him sad.
 There is a Frenchman his companion, one 65
 An eminent monsieur that, it seems, much loves
 A Gallian girl at home. He furnaces
 The thick sighs from him, whiles the jolly Briton±±
 Your lord, I mean±±laughs from 's free lungs, cries `O,
 Can my sides hold, to think that man, who knows 70
 By history, report or his own proof
 What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose
 But must be, will 's free hours languish
 For assureÁd bondage?'
INNOGEN Will my lord say so?
GIACOMO
 Ay, madam, with his eyes in flood with laughter. 75
 It is a recreation to be by
 And hear him mock the Frenchman. But heavens
 know
 Some men are much to blame.
INNOGEN Not he, I hope.
GIACOMO
 Not he; but yet heaven's bounty towards him might
 Be used more thankfully. In himself 'tis much; 80
 In you, which I count his, beyond all talents.
 Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound
 To pity too.
INNOGEN What do you pity, sir?
GIACOMO
 Two creatures heartily.
INNOGEN Am I one, sir?
 You look on me; what wreck discern you in me 85

Deserves your pity?

GIACOMO Lamentable! What,
To hide me from the radiant sun, and solace
I'th' dungeon by a snuff?

INNOGEN I pray you, sir,
Deliver with more openness your answers
To my demands. Why do you pity me? 90

GIACOMO That others do±±
I was about to say enjoy your±±but
It is an office of the gods to venge it,
Not mine to speak on't.

INNOGEN You do seem to know
Something of me, or what concerns me. Pray you, 95
Since doubting things go ill often hurts more
Than to be sure they do±±for certainties
Either are past remedies, or, timely knowing,
The remedy then born±±discover to me
What both you spur and stop.

GIACOMO Had I this cheek 100
To bathe my lips upon; this hand whose touch,
Whose every touch, would force the feeler's soul
To th'oath of loyalty; this object which
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Firing it only here: should I, damned then, 105
Slaver with lips as common as the stairs
That mount the Capitol; join grips with hands
Made hard with hourly falsehood±±falsehood as
With labour; then by-peeping in an eye
Base and illustrious as the smoky light 110
That's fed with stinking tallow±±it were fit
That all the plagues of hell should at one time
Encounter such revolt.

INNOGEN My lord, I fear,
Has forgot Britain.

GIACOMO And himself. Not I
Inclined to this intelligence pronounce 115
The beggary of his change, but 'tis your graces
That from my mutest conscience to my tongue
Charms this report out.

INNOGEN Let me hear no more.

GIACOMO

O dearest soul, your cause doth strike my heart
With pity that doth make me sick. A lady 120
So fair, and fastened to an empery
Would make the great'st king double, to be partnered
With tomboys hired with that self exhibition
Which your own coffers yield; with diseased ventures
That play with all infirmities for gold 125
Which rottenness can lend to nature; such boiled stuff
As well might poison poison! Be revenged,
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you
Recoil from your great stock.

INNOGEN

Revenged?

How should I be revenged? If this be true±± 130
As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse±±if it be true,
How should I be revenged?

GIACOMO

Should he make me

Live like Diana's priest betwixt cold sheets
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps, 135
In your despite, upon your purse±±revenge it.
I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure,
More noble than that runagate to your bed,
And will continue fast to your affection,
Still close as sure.

INNOGEN

What ho, Pisanio!

140

GIACOMO

Let me my service tender on your lips.

INNOGEN

Away, I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honourable
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st, as base as strange. 145
Thou wrong'st a gentleman who is as far
From thy report as thou from honour, and
Solicit'st here a lady that disdains
Thee and the devil alike. What ho, Pisanio!
The King my father shall be made acquainted 150
Of thy assault. If he shall think it fit
A saucy stranger in his court to mart

As in a Romish stew, and to expound
His beastly mind to us, he hath a court
He little cares for, and a daughter who
He not respects at all. What ho, Pisanio! 155

GIACOMO

O happy Leonatus! I may say
The credit that thy lady hath of thee
Deserves thy trust, and thy most perfect goodness
Her assured credit. BlesseÁd live you long, 160
A lady to the worthiest sir that ever
Country called his; and you his mistress, only
For the most worthiest fit. Give me your pardon.
I have spoke this to know if your affiance
Were deeply rooted, and shall make your lord 165
That which he is new o'er; and he is one
The truest mannered, such a holy witch
That he enchants societies into him;
Half all men's hearts are his.

INNOGEN

You make amends.

GIACOMO

He sits 'mongst men like a descended god. 170
He hath a kind of honour sets him off
More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
Most mighty princess, that I have adventured
To try your taking of a false report, which hath
Honoured with confirmation your great judgement 175
In the election of a sir so rare
Which you know cannot err. The love I bear him
Made me to fan you thus, but the gods made you,
Unlike all others, chaffless. Pray, your pardon.

INNOGEN

All's well, sir. Take my power i'th' court for yours. 180

GIACOMO

My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
T'entreat your grace but in a small request,
And yet of moment too, for it concerns
Your lord; myself and other noble friends
Are partners in the business.

INNOGEN

Pray what is't? 185

GIACOMO

Some dozen Romans of us, and your lord±±
Best feather of our wing±±have mingled sums
To buy a present for the Emperor,
Which I, the factor for the rest, have done
In France. 'Tis plate of rare device, and jewels 190
Of rich and exquisite form; their value's great,
And I am something curious, being strange,
To have them in safe stowage. May it please you
To take them in protection?

INNOGEN Willingly,
And pawn mine honour for their safety; since 195
My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
In my bedchamber.

GIACOMO They are in a trunk
Attended by my men. I will make bold
To send them to you, only for this night.
I must aboard tomorrow.

INNOGEN O, no, no! 200

GIACOMO
Yes, I beseech, or I shall short my word
By length'ning my return. From Gallia
I crossed the seas on purpose and on promise
To see your grace.

INNOGEN I thank you for your pains;
But not away tomorrow!

GIACOMO O, I must, madam. 205
Therefore I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do't tonight.
I have outstood my time, which is material
To th' tender of our present.

INNOGEN I will write.
Send your trunk to me, it shall safe be kept, 210
And truly yielded you. You're very welcome.
Exeunt severally