

Cymbeline

2.4

Enter Posthumus and Filario

POSTHUMUS

Fear it not, sir. I would I were so sure
To win the King as I am bold her honour
Will remain hers.

FILARIO What means do you make to him?

POSTHUMUS

Not any; but abide the change of time,
Quake in the present winter's state, and wish 5
That warmer days would come. In these seared hopes
I barely gratify your love; they failing,
I must die much your debtor.

FILARIO

Your very goodness and your company
O'erpays all I can do. By this, your king 10
Hath heard of great Augustus. Caius Lucius
Will do 's commission throughly. And I think
He'll grant the tribute, send th'arrearages,
Ere look upon our Romans, whose remembrance
Is yet fresh in their grief.

POSTHUMUS

I do believe, 15
Statist though I am none, nor like to be,
That this will prove a war, and you shall hear
The legions now in Gallia sooner landed
In our not-fearing Britain than have tidings
Of any penny tribute paid. Our countrymen 20
Are men more ordered than when Julius Caesar
Smiled at their lack of skill but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at. Their discipline,
Now wing-led with their courage, will make known
To their approvers they are people such 25
That mend upon the world.

Enter Giacomo

FILARIO See, Giacomo.

POSTHUMUS (to Giacomo)

The swiftest harts have posted you by land,

And winds of all the corners kissed your sails
To make your vessel nimble.

FILARIO *(to Giacomo)* Welcome, sir.

POSTHUMUS *(to Giacomo)*

I hope the briefness of your answer made 30
The speediness of your return.

GIACOMO Your lady is
One of the fair'st that I have looked upon±±

POSTHUMUS

And therewithal the best, or let her beauty
Look through a casement to allure false hearts,
And be false with them.

GIACOMO Here are letters for you. 35

POSTHUMUS

Their tenor good, I trust.

GIACOMO 'Tis very like.

Posthumus reads the letters

[FILARIO]

Was Caius Lucius in the Briton court
When you were there?

GIACOMO He was expected then,
But not approached.

POSTHUMUS All is well yet.

Sparkles this stone as it was wont, or is't not 40
Too dull for your good wearing?

GIACOMO If I had lost it
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.
I'll make a journey twice as far t'enjoy
A second night of such sweet shortness which
Was mine in Britain; for the ring is won. 45

POSTHUMUS

The stone's too hard to come by.

GIACOMO Not a whit,
Your lady being so easy.

POSTHUMUS Make not, sir,
Your loss your sport. I hope you know that we
Must not continue friends.

GIACOMO Good sir, we must,
If you keep covenant. Had I not brought 50
The knowledge of your mistress home I grant

We were to question farther, but I now
Profess myself the winner of her honour,
Together with your ring, and not the wronger
Of her or you, having proceeded but 55
By both your wills.

POSTHUMUS If you can make't apparent
That you have tasted her in bed, my hand
And ring is yours. If not, the foul opinion
You had of her pure honour gains or loses
Your sword or mine, or masterless leaves both 60
To who shall find them.

GIACOMO Sir, my circumstances,
Being so near the truth as I will make them,
Must first induce you to believe; whose strength
I will confirm with oath, which I doubt not
You'll give me leave to spare when you shall find 65
You need it not.

POSTHUMUS Proceed.

GIACOMO First, her bedchamber±±
Where I confess I slept not, but profess
Had that was well worth watching±±it was hanged
With tapestry of silk and silver; the story
Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman, 70
And Cydnus swelled above the banks, or for
The press of boats or pride: a piece of work
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive
In workmanship and value; which I wondered
Could be so rarely and exactly wrought, 75
Such the true life on't was.

POSTHUMUS This is true,
And this you might have heard of here, by me
Or by some other.

GIACOMO More particulars
Must justify my knowledge.

POSTHUMUS So they must,
Or do your honour injury.

GIACOMO The chimney 80
Is south the chamber, and the chimney-piece
Chaste Dian bathing. Never saw I figures
So likely to report themselves; the cutter

Was as another nature; dumb, outwent her,
Motion and breath left out.

POSTHUMUS This is a thing 85
Which you might from relation likewise reap,
Being, as it is, much spoke of.

GIACOMO The roof o'th' chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted. Her andirons±±
I had forgot them±±were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely 90
Depending on their brands.

POSTHUMUS This is her honour!
Let it be granted you have seen all this±±and praise
Be given to your remembrance±±the description
Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid.

GIACOMO Then, if you can 95
Be pale, I beg but leave to air this jewel. See!
He shows the bracelet
And now 'tis up again; it must be married
To that your diamond. I'll keep them.

POSTHUMUS Jove!
Once more let me behold it. Is it that
Which I left with her?

GIACOMO Sir, I thank her, that. 100
She stripped it from her arm. I see her yet.
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enriched it too. She gave it me,
And said she prized it once.

POSTHUMUS Maybe she plucked it off
To send it me.

GIACOMO She writes so to you, doth she? 105

POSTHUMUS
O, no, no, no±±'tis true! Here, take this too.
He gives Giacomo his ring
It is a basilisk unto mine eye,
Kills me to look on't. Let there be no honour
Where there is beauty, truth where semblance, love
Where there's another man. The vows of women 110
Of no more bondage be to where they are made
Than they are to their virtues, which is nothing!

O, above measure false!

FILARIO Have patience, sir,
And take your ring again; 'tis not yet won.
It may be probable she lost it, or 115
Who knows if one her woman, being corrupted,
Hath stol'n it from her?

POSTHUMUS Very true,
And so I hope he came by't. Back my ring.
He takes his ring again
Render to me some corporal sign about her
More evident than this; for this was stol'n. 120

GIACOMO
By Jupiter, I had it from her arm.

POSTHUMUS
Hark you, he swears, by Jupiter he swears.
'Tis true, nay, keep the ring, 'tis true. I am sure
She would not lose it. Her attendants are
All sworn and honourable. They induced to steal it? 125
And by a stranger? No, he hath enjoyed her.
The cognizance of her incontinency
Is this. She hath bought the name of whore thus
dearly.

He gives Giacomo his ring
There, take thy hire, and all the fiends of hell
Divide themselves between you!

FILARIO Sir, be patient. 130
This is not strong enough to be believed
Of one persuaded well of.

POSTHUMUS Never talk on't.
She hath been colted by him.

GIACOMO If you seek
For further satisfying, under her breast±±
Worthy the pressing±±lies a mole, right proud 135
Of that most delicate lodging. By my life,
I kissed it, and it gave me present hunger
To feed again, though full. You do remember
This stain upon her?

POSTHUMUS Ay, and it doth confirm
Another stain as big as hell can hold, 140
Were there no more but it.

GIACOMO Will you hear more?

POSTHUMUS

Spare your arithmetic, never count the turns.

Once, and a million!

GIACOMO I'll be sworn.

POSTHUMUS

No swearing.

If you will swear you have not done't, you lie,

And I will kill thee if thou dost deny 145

Thou'st made me cuckold.

GIACOMO I'll deny nothing.

POSTHUMUS

O that I had her here to tear her limb-meal!

I will go there and do't i'th' court, before

Her father. I'll do something.

Exit

FILARIO Quite besides

The government of patience! You have won. 150

Let's follow and pervert the present wrath

He hath against himself.

GIACOMO With all my heart.

Exeunt