

# Cymbeline

## 3.1

*[Flourish.] Enter in state Cymbeline, the Queen,  
Cloten, and lords at one door, and at another,  
Caius Lucius and attendants*

**CYMBELINE**

Now say, what would Augustus Caesar with us?

**LUCIUS**

When Julius Caesar±±whose remembrance yet  
Lives in men's eyes, and will to ears and tongues  
Be theme and hearing ever±±was in this Britain  
And conquered it, Cassibelan, thine uncle, 5  
Famous in Caesar's praises no whit less  
Than in his feats deserving it, for him  
And his succession granted Rome a tribute,  
Yearly three thousand pounds, which by thee lately  
Is left untendered.

**QUEEN**

And, to kill the marvel, 10

Shall be so ever.

**CLOTEN**

There will be many Caesars

Ere such another Julius. Britain's a world  
By itself, and we will nothing pay  
For wearing our own noses.

**QUEEN**

That opportunity

Which then they had to take from 's, to resume 15  
We have again. Remember, sir, my liege,  
The kings your ancestors, together with  
The natural bravery of your isle, which stands  
As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in  
With banks unscalable and roaring waters, 20  
With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats,  
But suck them up to th' topmast. A kind of conquest  
Caesar made here, but made not here his brag  
Of 'came and saw and overcame'. With shame±±  
The first that ever touched him±±he was carried 25  
From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping,  
Poor ignorant baubles, on our terrible seas  
Like eggshells moved upon their surges, cracked

As easily 'gainst our rocks; for joy whereof  
The famed Cassibelan, who was once at point±± 30  
O giglot fortune!±±to master Caesar's sword,  
Made Lud's town with rejoicing fires bright,  
And Britons strut with courage.

**CLOTEN** Come, there's no more tribute to be paid. Our  
kingdom is stronger than it was at that time, and, as 35  
I said, there is no more such Caesars. Other of them  
may have crooked noses, but to owe such straight  
arms, none.

**CYMBELINE** Son, let your mother end.

**CLOTEN** We have yet many among us can grip as hard 40  
as Cassibelan. I do not say I am one, but I have a  
hand. Why tribute? Why should we pay tribute? If  
Caesar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put  
the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for  
light; else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now. 45

**CYMBELINE** (*to Lucius*) You must know,  
Till the injurious Romans did extort  
This tribute from us we were free. Caesar's ambition,  
Which swelled so much that it did almost stretch  
The sides o'th' world, against all colour here 50  
Did put the yoke upon 's, which to shake off  
Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon  
Ourselves to be. We do say then to Caesar,  
Our ancestor was that Mulmutius which  
Ordained our laws, whose use the sword of Caesar 55  
Hath too much mangled, whose repair and franchise  
Shall by the power we hold be our good deed,  
Though Rome be therefore angry. Mulmutius made  
our laws,  
Who was the first of Britain which did put  
His brows within a golden crown and called 60  
Himself a king.

**LUCIUS** I am sorry, Cymbeline,  
That I am to pronounce Augustus Caesar±±  
Caesar, that hath more kings his servants than  
Thyself domestic officers±±thine enemy.  
Receive it from me, then: war and confusion 65  
In Caesar's name pronounce I 'gainst thee. Look

For fury not to be resisted. Thus defied,  
I thank thee for myself.

**CYMBELINE**                      Thou art welcome, Caius.

Thy Caesar knighted me; my youth I spent  
Much under him; of him I gathered honour,  
Which he to seek of me again perforce  
Behoves me keep at utterance. I am perfect  
That the Pannonians and Dalmatians for  
Their liberties are now in arms, a precedent  
Which not to read would show the Britons cold;  
So Caesar shall not find them.

**LUCIUS** Let proof speak.

**CLOTEN** His majesty bids you welcome. Make pastime with us a day or two or longer. If you seek us afterwards in other terms, you shall find us in our salt-water girdle. If you beat us out of it, it is yours; if you fall in the 80 adventure, our crows shall fare the better for you; and there's an end.

**LUCIUS**      So, sir.

# CYMBELINE

I know your master's pleasure, and he mine.  
All the remain is `Welcome'. 85  
*[Flourish.] Exeunt*