

Pericles, Prince of Tyre

Sc.9

Enter King Simonides at one door reading of a letter, the Knights enter [at another door] and meet him

FIRST KNIGHT

Good morrow to the good Simonides.

KING SIMONIDES

Knights, from my daughter this I let you know:
That for this twelvemonth she'll not undertake
A married life. Her reason to herself
Is only known, which from her none can get.

5

SECOND KNIGHT

May we not have access to her, my lord?

KING SIMONIDES

Faith, by no means. It is impossible,
She hath so strictly tied her to her chamber.
One twelve moons more she'll wear Diana's liv'ry.
This by the eye of Cynthia hath she vowed,
And on her virgin honour will not break it.

10

THIRD KNIGHT

Loath to bid farewell, we take our leaves.

Exeunt Knights

KING SIMONIDES

So, they are well dispatched. Now to my daughter's
letter.

She tells me here she'll wed the stranger knight,
Or never more to view nor day nor light.

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I like that well. Nay, how absolute she's in't,
Not minding whether I dislike or no!
Mistress, 'tis well, I do commend your choice,
And will no longer have it be delayed.

Enter Pericles

Soft, here he comes. I must dissemble that
In show, I have determined on in heart.

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PERICLES

All fortune to the good Simonides.

KING SIMONIDES

To you as much, sir. I am beholden to you

For your sweet music this last night. My ears,
I do protest, were never better fed 25
With such delightful pleasing harmony.

PERICLES

It is your grace's pleasure to commend,
Not my desert.

KING SIMONIDES Sir, you are music's master.

PERICLES

The worst of all her scholars, my good lord.

KING SIMONIDES

Let me ask you one thing. What think you of my
daughter? 30

PERICLES

A most virtuous princess.

KING SIMONIDES And fair, too, is she not?

PERICLES

As a fair day in summer; wondrous fair.

KING SIMONIDES

My daughter, sir, thinks very well of you;
So well indeed that you must be her master
And she will be your scholar; therefore look to it. 35

PERICLES

I am unworthy for her schoolmaster.

KING SIMONIDES

She thinks not so. Peruse this writing else.
He gives the letter to Pericles, who reads

PERICLES *(aside)*

What's here?—a letter that she loves the knight of
Tyre?

'Tis the King's subtlety to have my life.

[He prostrates himself at the King's feet]

O, seek not to entrap me, gracious lord, 40

A stranger and distressee—A gentleman

That never aimed so high to love your daughter,

But bent all offices to honour her.

Never did thought of mine levy offence,

Nor never did my actions yet commence 45

A deed might gain her love or your displeasure.

KING SIMONIDES

Thou liest like a traitor.

PERICLES

Traitor?

KING SIMONIDES Ay, traitor,
That thus disguised art stol'n into my court
With witchcraft of thy actions to bewitch
The yielding spirit of my tender child. 50

PERICLES *[rising]*
Who calls me traitor, unless it be the King,
Ev'n in his bosom I will write the lie.

KING SIMONIDES *(aside)*
Now, by the gods, I do applaud his courage.

PERICLES
My actions are as noble as my blood,
That never relished of a base descent. 55
I came unto your court in search of honour,
And not to be a rebel to your state;
And he that otherwise accounts of me,
This sword shall prove he's honour's enemy.

KING SIMONIDES
I shall prove otherwise, since both your practice 60
And her consent therein is evident
There, by my daughter's hand, as she can witness.

Enter Thaisa

PERICLES *(to Thaisa)*
Then as you are as virtuous as fair,
By what you hope of heaven or desire
By your best wishes here i'th' world fulfilled, 65
Resolve your angry father if my tongue
Did e'er solicit, or my hand subscribe
To any syllable made love to you.

THAISA Why, sir, say if you had,
Who takes offence at that would make me glad? 70

KING SIMONIDES
How, minion, are you so peremptory?
(Aside) I am glad on't. ~~±±~~ Is this a fit match for you?
A straggling Theseus, born we know not where,
One that hath neither blood nor merit
For thee to hope for, or himself to challenge 75
Of thy perfections e'en the least allowance.

THAISA *(kneeling)*
Suppose his birth were base, when that his life
Shows that he is not so, yet he hath virtue,

The very ground of all nobility,
Enough to make him noble. I entreat you 80
To remember that I am in love,
The power of which love cannot be confined
By th' power of your will. Most royal father,
What with my pen I have in secret written
With my tongue now I openly confirm, 85
Which is I have no life but in his love,
Nor any being but in joying of his worth.

KING SIMONIDES

Equals to equals, good to good is joined.
This not being so, the bavin of your mind
In rashness kindled must again be quenched, 90
Or purchase our displeasure.±±And for you, sir,
First learn to know I banish you my court,
And yet I scorn our rage should stoop so low.
For your ambition, sir, I'll have your life.

THAISA *(to Pericles)*

For every drop of blood he sheds of yours 95
He'll draw another from his only child.

KING SIMONIDES

I'll tame you, yea, I'll bring you in subjection.
Will you not having my consent
Bestow your love and your affections
Upon a stranger?±± *(aside)* who for aught I know 100
May be, nor can I think the contrary,
As great in blood as I myself.

[He catches Thaisa rashly by the hand]

Therefore hear you, mistress: either frame your will to
mine±±

[He catches Pericles rashly by the hand]

And you, sir, hear you: either be ruled by me±±
Or I shall make you

[He claps their hands together]

man and wife.

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Nay, come, your hands and lips must seal it too,

Pericles and Thaisa kiss

And being joined, I'll thus your hopes destroy,

[He parts them]

And for your further grief, God give you joy.

What, are you pleased?

THAISA Yes, *(to Pericles)* if you love me, sir.

PERICLES

Ev'n as my life my blood that fosters it. 110

KING SIMONIDES

What, are you both agreed?

PERICLES AND THAISA Yes, if't please your majesty.

KING SIMONIDES

It pleaseth me so well that I will see you wed,
Then with what haste you can, get you to bed.

Exeunt