Cymbeline

by William Shakespeare

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Dramatis Personæ

CYMBELINE, King of Britain CLOTEN, son to the Queen by a former husband POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, a gentleman, husband to Imogen BELARIUS, a banished lord, disguised under the name of Morgan GUIDERIUS and ARVIRAGUS, sons to Cymbeline, disguised under the names of POLYDORE and CADWAL, supposed sons to Belarius PHILARIO, Italian, friend to Posthumus IACHIMO, Italian, friend to Philario CAIUS LUCIUS, General of the Roman forces PISANIO, servant to Posthumus CORNELIUS, a physician A SOOTHSAYER A ROMAN CAPTAIN TWO BRITISH CAPTAINS A FRENCH GENTLEMAN,

friend to Philario TWO LORDS of Cymbeline’s court TWO GENTLEMEN of the same TWO GAOLERS

QUEEN, wife to Cymbeline IMOGEN, daughter to Cymbeline by a former queen HELEN, a lady attending on Imogen

APPARITIONS

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, a Dutch Gentleman, a Spanish Gentleman, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and Attendants

SCENE: Britain; Italy.

ACT I

SCENE I. Britain. The garden of Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter two Gentlemen.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. You do not meet a man but frowns; our bloods No more obey the heavens than our courtiers Still seem as does the King’s.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. But what’s the matter?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. His daughter, and the heir of’s kingdom, whom He purpos’d to his wife’s sole son—a widow That late he married—hath referr’d herself Unto a poor but worthy gentleman. She’s wedded; Her husband banish’d; she imprison’d. All Is outward sorrow, though I think the King Be touch’d at very heart.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. None but the King?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. He that hath lost her too. So is the Queen, That most desir’d the match. But not a courtier, Although they wear their faces to the bent Of the King’s looks, hath a heart that is not Glad at the thing they scowl at.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. And why so?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. He that hath miss’d the Princess is a thing Too bad for bad report; and he that hath her— I mean that married her, alack, good man! And therefore banish’d—is a creature such As, to seek through the regions of the earth For one his like, there would be something failing In him that should compare. I do not think So fair an outward and such stuff within Endows a man but he.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. You speak him far.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. I do extend him, sir, within himself; Crush him together rather than unfold His measure duly.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. What’s his name and birth?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. I cannot delve him to the root; his father Was call’d Sicilius, who did join his honour Against the Romans with Cassibelan, But had his titles by Tenantius, whom He serv’d with glory and admir’d success, So gain’d the sur-addition Leonatus; And had, besides this gentleman in question, Two other sons, who, in the wars o’ th’ time, Died with their swords in hand; for which their father, Then old and fond of issue, took such sorrow That he quit being; and his gentle lady, Big of this gentleman, our theme, deceas’d As he was born. The King he takes the babe To his protection, calls him Posthumus Leonatus, Breeds him and makes him of his bed-chamber, Puts to him all the learnings that his time Could make him the receiver of; which he took, As we do air, fast as ’twas minist’red, And in’s spring became a harvest, liv’d in court— Which rare it is to do—most prais’d, most lov’d, A sample to the youngest; to th’ more mature A glass that feated them; and to the graver A child that guided dotards. To his mistress, For whom he now is banish’d, her own price Proclaims how she esteem’d him and his virtue; By her election may be truly read What kind of man he is.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. I honour him Even out of your report. But pray you tell me, Is she sole child to th’ King?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. His only child. He had two sons—if this be worth your

hearing, Mark it—the eldest of them at three years old, I' th' swathing clothes the other, from their nursery Were stol'n; and to this hour no guess in knowledge Which way they went.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. How long is this ago?

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Some twenty years.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. That a king's children should be so convey'd, So slackly guarded, and the search so slow That could not trace them!

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Howsoe'er 'tis strange, Or that the negligence may well be laugh'd at, Yet is it true, sir.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. I do well believe you.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. We must forbear; here comes the gentleman, The Queen, and Princess.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. The same.

Enter Queen, Posthumus and Imogen.

QUEEN. No, be assur'd you shall not find me, daughter, After the slander of most stepmothers, Evil-ey'd unto you. You're my prisoner, but Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus, So soon as I can win th' offended King, I will be known your advocate. Marry, yet The fire of rage is in him, and 'twere good You lean'd unto his sentence with what patience Your wisdom may inform you.

POSTHUMUS. Please your Highness, I will from hence today.

QUEEN. You know the peril. I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying The pangs of barr'd affections, though the King Hath charg'd you should not speak together.

[Exit.]

IMOGEN. O dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband, I something fear my father's wrath, but nothing (Always reserv'd my holy duty) what His rage can do on me. You must be gone; And I shall here abide the hourly shot Of angry eyes, not comforted to live But that there is this jewel in the world That I may see again.

POSTHUMUS. My queen! my mistress! O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause To be suspected of more tenderness Than doth become a man. I will remain The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth; My residence in Rome at one Philario's, Who to my father was a friend, to me Known but by letter; thither write, my queen, And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send, Though ink be made of gall.

Enter Queen.

QUEEN. Be brief, I pray you. If the King come, I shall incur I know not How much of his displeasure. [Aside.] Yet I'll move him To walk this way. I never do him wrong But he does buy my injuries, to be friends; Pays dear for my offences.

[Exit.]

POSTHUMUS. Should we be taking leave As long a term as yet we have to live, The loathness to depart would grow. Adieu!

IMOGEN. Nay, stay a little. Were you but riding forth to air yourself, Such parting were too petty. Look here, love: This diamond was my mother's; take it, heart; But keep it till you woo another wife, When Imogen is dead.

POSTHUMUS. How, how? Another? You gentle gods, give me but this I have, And sear up my embracements from a next With bonds of death! Remain, remain thou here

[Puts on the ring.]

While sense can keep it on. And, sweetest, fairest, As I my poor self did exchange for you, To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles I still win of you. For my sake wear

this; It is a manacle of love; I’ll place it Upon this fairest prisoner.

[Puts a bracelet on her arm.]

IMOGEN. O the gods! When shall we see again?

Enter Cymbeline and Lords.

POSTHUMUS. Alack, the King!

CYMBELINE. Thou basest thing, avoid; hence from my sight If after this command thou fraught the court With thy unworthiness, thou diest. Away! Thou’rt poison to my blood.

POSTHUMUS. The gods protect you, And bless the good remainders of the court! I am gone.

[Exit.]

IMOGEN. There cannot be a pinch in death More sharp than this is.

CYMBELINE. O disloyal thing, That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap’st A year’s age on me!

IMOGEN. I beseech you, sir, Harm not yourself with your vexation. I am senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare Subdues all pangs, all fears.

CYMBELINE. Past grace? obedience?

IMOGEN. Past hope, and in despair; that way past grace.

CYMBELINE. That mightst have had the sole son of my queen!

IMOGEN. O blessed that I might not! I chose an eagle, And did avoid a puttock.

CYMBELINE. Thou took’st a beggar, wouldst have made my throne A seat for baseness.

IMOGEN. No; I rather added A lustre to it.

CYMBELINE. O thou vile one!

IMOGEN. Sir, It is your fault that I have lov’d Posthumus. You bred him as my

playfellow, and he is A man worth any woman; overbuys me Almost the sum he pays.

CYMBELINE. What, art thou mad?

IMOGEN. Almost, sir. Heaven restore me! Would I were A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus Our neighbour shepherd's son!

Enter Queen.

CYMBELINE. Thou foolish thing! [To the Queen.] They were again together. You have done Not after our command. Away with her, And pen her up.

QUEEN. Beseech your patience. Peace, Dear lady daughter, peace!—Sweet sovereign, Leave us to ourselves, and make yourself some comfort Out of your best advice.

CYMBELINE. Nay, let her languish A drop of blood a day and, being aged, Die of this folly.

[Exit with Lords.]

Enter Pisanio.

QUEEN. Fie! you must give way. Here is your servant. How now, sir! What news?

PISANIO. My lord your son drew on my master.

QUEEN. Ha! No harm, I trust, is done?

PISANIO. There might have been, But that my master rather play'd than fought, And had no help of anger; they were parted By gentlemen at hand.

QUEEN. I am very glad on't.

IMOGEN. Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part To draw upon an exile! O brave sir! I would they were in Afric both together; Myself by with a needle, that I might prick The goer-back. Why came you from your master?

PISANIO. On his command. He would not suffer me To bring him to the haven; left

these notes Of what commands I should be subject to, When't pleas'd you to employ me.

QUEEN. This hath been Your faithful servant. I dare lay mine honour He will remain so.

PISANIO. I humbly thank your Highness.

QUEEN. Pray walk awhile.

IMOGEN. About some half-hour hence, Pray you speak with me. You shall at least go see my lord aboard. For this time leave me.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Britain. A public place.

Enter Cloten and two Lords.

FIRST LORD. Sir, I would advise you to shift a shirt; the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice. Where air comes out, air comes in; there's none abroad so wholesome as that you vent.

CLOTEN. If my shirt were bloody, then to shift it. Have I hurt him?

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] No, faith; not so much as his patience.

FIRST LORD. Hurt him! His body's a passable carcass if he be not hurt. It is a throughfare for steel if it be not hurt.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] His steel was in debt; it went o' th' backside the town.

CLOTEN. The villain would not stand me.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] No; but he fled forward still, toward your face.

FIRST LORD. Stand you? You have land enough of your own; but he added to your having, gave you some ground.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] As many inches as you have oceans. Puppies!

CLOTEN. I would they had not come between us.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] So would I, till you had measur’d how long a fool you were upon the ground.

CLOTEN. And that she should love this fellow, and refuse me!

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damn’d.

FIRST LORD. Sir, as I told you always, her beauty and her brain go not together; she’s a good sign, but I have seen small reflection of her wit.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] She shines not upon fools, lest the reflection should hurt her.

CLOTEN. Come, I’ll to my chamber. Would there had been some hurt done!

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] I wish not so; unless it had been the fall of an ass, which is no great hurt.

CLOTEN. You’ll go with us?

FIRST LORD. I’ll attend your lordship.

CLOTEN. Nay, come, let’s go together.

SECOND LORD. Well, my lord.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE IV. Britain. Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter Imogen and Pisanio.

IMOGEN. I would thou grew’st unto the shores o’ th’ haven, And questioned’st every sail; if he should write, And I not have it, ’twere a paper lost, As offer’d mercy is. What was the last That he spake to thee?

PISANIO. It was: his queen, his queen!

IMOGEN. Then wav’d his handkerchief?

PISANIO. And kiss’d it, madam.

IMOGEN. Senseless linen, happier therein than I! And that was all?

PISANIO. No, madam; for so long As he could make me with his eye, or ear Distinguish him from others, he did keep The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief, Still waving, as the fits and stirs of's mind Could best express how slow his soul sail'd on, How swift his ship.

IMOGEN. Thou shouldst have made him As little as a crow, or less, ere left To after-eye him.

PISANIO. Madam, so I did.

IMOGEN. I would have broke mine eyestrings, crack'd them but To look upon him, till the diminution Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle; Nay, followed him till he had melted from The smallness of a gnat to air, and then Have turn'd mine eye and wept. But, good Pisanio, When shall we hear from him?

PISANIO. Be assur'd, madam, With his next vantage.

IMOGEN. I did not take my leave of him, but had Most pretty things to say. Ere I could tell him How I would think on him at certain hours Such thoughts and such; or I could make him swear The shes of Italy should not betray Mine interest and his honour; or have charg'd him, At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight, T' encounter me with orisons, for then I am in heaven for him; or ere I could Give him that parting kiss which I had set Betwixt two charming words, comes in my father, And like the tyrannous breathing of the north Shakes all our buds from growing.

Enter a Lady.

LADY. The Queen, madam, Desires your Highness' company.

IMOGEN. Those things I bid you do, get them dispatch'd. I will attend the Queen.

PISANIO. Madam, I shall.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V. Rome. Philario's house.

Enter Philario, Iachimo, a Frenchman, a Dutchman and a Spaniard.

IACHIMO. Believe it, sir, I have seen him in Britain. He was then of a crescent note, expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name of. But I could then have look'd on him without the help of admiration, though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side, and I to peruse him by items.

PHILARIO. You speak of him when he was less furnish'd than now he is with that which makes him both without and within.

FRENCHMAN. I have seen him in France; we had very many there could behold the sun with as firm eyes as he.

IACHIMO. This matter of marrying his king's daughter, wherein he must be weighed rather by her value than his own, words him, I doubt not, a great deal from the matter.

FRENCHMAN. And then his banishment.

IACHIMO. Ay, and the approbation of those that weep this lamentable divorce under her colours are wonderfully to extend him, be it but to fortify her judgement, which else an easy battery might lay flat, for taking a beggar, without less quality. But how comes it he is to sojourn with you? How creeps acquaintance?

PHILARIO. His father and I were soldiers together, to whom I have been often bound for no less than my life.

Enter Posthumus.

Here comes the Briton. Let him be so entertained amongst you as suits with gentlemen of your knowing to a stranger of his quality. I beseech you all be better known to this gentleman, whom I commend to you as a noble friend of mine. How worthy he is I will leave to appear hereafter, rather than story him in his own hearing.

FRENCHMAN. Sir, we have known together in Orleans.

POSTHUMUS. Since when I have been debtor to you for courtesies, which I will be ever to pay and yet pay still.

FRENCHMAN. Sir, you o'errate my poor kindness. I was glad I did atone my countryman and you; it had been pity you should have been put together with so mortal a purpose as then each bore, upon importance of so slight and trivial a nature.

POSTHUMUS. By your pardon, sir. I was then a young traveller; rather shunn'd to go even with what I heard than in my every action to be guided by others' experiences; but upon my mended judgement (if I offend not to say it is mended) my quarrel was not altogether slight.

FRENCHMAN. Faith, yes, to be put to the arbitrement of swords, and by such two that would by all likelihood have confounded one the other or have fall'n both.

IACHIMO. Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?

FRENCHMAN. Safely, I think. 'Twas a contention in public, which may, without contradiction, suffer the report. It was much like an argument that fell out last night, where each of us fell in praise of our country mistresses; this gentleman at that time vouching (and upon warrant of bloody affirmation) his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant, qualified, and less attemptable, than any the rarest of our ladies in France.

IACHIMO. That lady is not now living, or this gentleman's opinion, by this, worn out.

POSTHUMUS. She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

IACHIMO. You must not so far prefer her 'fore ours of Italy.

POSTHUMUS. Being so far provok'd as I was in France, I would abate her nothing, though I profess myself her adorer, not her friend.

IACHIMO. As fair and as good—a kind of hand-in-hand comparison—had been

something too fair and too good for any lady in Britain. If she went before others I have seen as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could not but believe she excelled many; but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.

POSTHUMUS. I prais'd her as I rated her. So do I my stone.

IACHIMO. What do you esteem it at?

POSTHUMUS. More than the world enjoys.

IACHIMO. Either your unparagon'd mistress is dead, or she's outpriz'd by a trifle.

POSTHUMUS. You are mistaken: the one may be sold or given, if there were wealth enough for the purchase or merit for the gift; the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

IACHIMO. Which the gods have given you?

POSTHUMUS. Which by their graces I will keep.

IACHIMO. You may wear her in title yours; but you know strange fowl light upon neighbouring ponds. Your ring may be stol'n too. So your brace of unprizable estimations, the one is but frail and the other casual; a cunning thief, or a that-way-accomplish'd courtier, would hazard the winning both of first and last.

POSTHUMUS. Your Italy contains none so accomplish'd a courtier to convince the honour of my mistress, if in the holding or loss of that you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding, I fear not my ring.

PHILARIO. Let us leave here, gentlemen.

POSTHUMUS. Sir, with all my heart. This worthy signior, I thank him, makes no stranger of me; we are familiar at first.

IACHIMO. With five times so much conversation I should get ground of your fair mistress; make her go back even to the yielding, had I admittance and opportunity to friend.

POSTHUMUS. No, no.

IACHIMO. I dare thereupon pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring, which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something. But I make my wager rather against your confidence than her reputation; and, to bar your offence herein too, I durst attempt it against any lady in the world.

POSTHUMUS. You are a great deal abus'd in too bold a persuasion, and I doubt not you sustain what y'are worthy of by your attempt.

IACHIMO. What's that?

POSTHUMUS. A repulse; though your attempt, as you call it, deserve more; a punishment too.

PHILARIO. Gentlemen, enough of this. It came in too suddenly; let it die as it was born, and I pray you be better acquainted.

IACHIMO. Would I had put my estate and my neighbour's on th' approbation of what I have spoke!

POSTHUMUS. What lady would you choose to assail?

IACHIMO. Yours, whom in constancy you think stands so safe. I will lay you ten thousand ducats to your ring that, commend me to the court where your lady is, with no more advantage than the opportunity of a second conference, and I will bring from thence that honour of hers which you imagine so reserv'd.

POSTHUMUS. I will wage against your gold, gold to it. My ring I hold dear as my finger; 'tis part of it.

IACHIMO. You are a friend, and therein the wiser. If you buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting. But I see you have some religion in you, that you fear.

POSTHUMUS. This is but a custom in your tongue; you bear a graver purpose, I hope.

IACHIMO. I am the master of my speeches, and would undergo what’s spoken, I swear.

POSTHUMUS. Will you? I shall but lend my diamond till your return. Let there be covenants drawn between’s. My mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking. I dare you to this match: here’s my ring.

PHILARIO. I will have it no lay.

IACHIMO. By the gods, it is one. If I bring you no sufficient testimony that I have enjoy’d the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are yours; so is your diamond too. If I come off, and leave her in such honour as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours: provided I have your commendation for my more free entertainment.

POSTHUMUS. I embrace these conditions; let us have articles betwixt us. Only, thus far you shall answer: if you make your voyage upon her, and give me directly to understand you have prevail’d, I am no further your enemy; she is not worth our debate; if she remain unseduc’d, you not making it appear otherwise, for your ill opinion and th’ assault you have made to her chastity you shall answer me with your sword.

IACHIMO. Your hand, a covenant! We will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and straight away for Britain, lest the bargain should catch cold and starve. I will fetch my gold and have our two wagers recorded.

POSTHUMUS. Agreed.

[Exeunt Posthumus and Iachimo.]

FRENCHMAN. Will this hold, think you?

PHILARIO. Signior Iachimo will not from it. Pray let us follow ’em.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VI. Britain. Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter Queen, Ladies and Cornelius.

QUEEN. Whiles yet the dew’s on ground, gather those flowers; Make haste; who has the note of them?

LADY. I, madam.

QUEEN. Dispatch.

[Exeunt Ladies.]

Now, Master Doctor, have you brought those drugs?

CORNELIUS. Pleaseth your Highness, ay. Here they are, madam.

[Presenting a box.]

But I beseech your Grace, without offence, (My conscience bids me ask) wherefore you have Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds Which are the movers of a languishing death, But, though slow, deadly?

QUEEN. I wonder, Doctor, Thou ask’st me such a question. Have I not been Thy pupil long? Hast thou not learn’d me how To make perfumes? distil? preserve? yea, so That our great king himself doth woo me oft For my confections? Having thus far proceeded (Unless thou think’st me devilish) is’t not meet That I did amplify my judgement in Other conclusions? I will try the forces Of these thy compounds on such creatures as We count not worth the hanging (but none human) To try the vigour of them, and apply Allayments to their act, and by them gather Their several virtues and effects.

CORNELIUS. Your Highness Shall from this practice but make hard your heart; Besides, the seeing these effects will be Both noisome and infectious.

QUEEN. O, content thee.

Enter Pisanio.

[Aside.] Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him Will I first work. He’s for his

master, An enemy to my son. How now, Pisanio! Doctor, your service for this time is ended; Take your own way.

CORNELIUS. [Aside.] I do suspect you, madam; But you shall do no harm.

QUEEN. [To Pisanio.] Hark thee, a word.

CORNELIUS. [Aside.] I do not like her. She doth think she has Strange ling'ring poisons. I do know her spirit, And will not trust one of her malice with A drug of such damn'd nature. Those she has Will stupefy and dull the sense awhile, Which first perchance she'll prove on cats and dogs, Then afterward up higher; but there is No danger in what show of death it makes, More than the locking up the spirits a time, To be more fresh, reviving. She is fool'd With a most false effect; and I the truer So to be false with her.

QUEEN. No further service, Doctor, Until I send for thee.

CORNELIUS. I humbly take my leave.

[Exit.]

QUEEN. Weeps she still, say'st thou? Dost thou think in time She will not quench, and let instructions enter Where folly now possesses? Do thou work. When thou shalt bring me word she loves my son, I'll tell thee on the instant thou art then As great as is thy master; greater, for His fortunes all lie speechless, and his name Is at last gasp. Return he cannot, nor Continue where he is. To shift his being Is to exchange one misery with another, And every day that comes comes to decay A day's work in him. What shalt thou expect To be depender on a thing that leans, Who cannot be new built, nor has no friends So much as but to prop him?

[The Queen drops the box. Pisanio takes it up.]

Thou tak'st up Thou know'st not what; but take it for thy labour. It is a thing I made, which hath the King Five times redeem'd from death. I do not know What is more cordial. Nay, I prithee take it; It is an earnest of a further good That I mean to thee.

Tell thy mistress how The case stands with her; do't as from thyself. Think what a chance thou changest on; but think Thou hast thy mistress still; to boot, my son, Who shall take notice of thee. I'll move the King To any shape of thy preferment, such As thou'lt desire; and then myself, I chiefly, That set thee on to this desert, am bound To load thy merit richly. Call my women. Think on my words.

[Exit Pisanio.]

A sly and constant knave, Not to be shak'd; the agent for his master, And the remembrancer of her to hold The hand-fast to her lord. I have given him that Which, if he take, shall quite unpeople her Of liegers for her sweet; and which she after, Except she bend her humour, shall be assur'd To taste of too.

Enter Pisanio and Ladies.

So, so. Well done, well done. The violets, cowslips, and the primroses, Bear to my closet. Fare thee well, Pisanio; Think on my words.

[Exeunt Queen and Ladies.]

PISANIO. And shall do. But when to my good lord I prove untrue I'll choke myself: there's all I'll do for you.

[Exit.]

SCENE VII. Britain. The palace.

Enter Imogen alone.

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

Enter Pisanio and Iachimo.

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

IACHIMO. Change you, madam? The worthy Leonatus is in safety, And greets your Highness dearly.

[Presents a letter.]

IMOGEN. Thanks, good sir. You’re kindly welcome.

IACHIMO. [Aside.] All of her that is out of door most rich! If she be furnish’d 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; Rather, directly fly.

IMOGEN. [Reads.] He is one of the noblest note, to whose kindnesses I am most infinitely tied. Reflect upon him accordingly, as you value your trust. LEONATUS.

So far I read aloud; But even the very middle of my heart Is warm’d by th’ rest and takes it thankfully. You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I Have words to bid you; and shall find it so In all that I can do.

IACHIMO. 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 The fiery orbs above and the twinn’d stones Upon the number’d beach, and can we not Partition make with spectacles so precious ’Twixt fair and foul?

IMOGEN. What makes your admiration?

IACHIMO. It cannot be i’ th’ eye, for apes and monkeys, ’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 oppos’d, Should make desire vomit emptiness, Not so allur’d to feed.

IMOGEN. What is the matter, trow?

IACHIMO. The cloyed will— That satiate yet unsatisfied desire, that tub Both fill’d

and running—ravening first the lamb, Longs after for the garbage.

IMOGEN. What, dear sir, Thus raps you? Are you well?

IACHIMO. Thanks, madam; well. Beseech you, sir, Desire my man's abode where I did leave him. He's strange and peevish.

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

[Exit.]

IMOGEN. Continues well my lord? His health beseech you?

IACHIMO. Well, madam.

IMOGEN. Is he dispos'd to mirth? I hope he is.

IACHIMO. Exceeding pleasant; none a stranger there So merry and so gamesome. He is call'd The Briton reveller.

IMOGEN. When he was here He did incline to sadness, and oft-times Not knowing why.

IACHIMO. I never saw him sad. There is a Frenchman his companion, one 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 By history, report, or his own proof, What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose But must be, will's free hours languish for Assured bondage?"

IMOGEN. Will my lord say so?

IACHIMO. Ay, madam, with his eyes in flood with laughter. It is a recreation to be by And hear him mock the Frenchman. But heavens know Some men are much to blame.

IMOGEN. Not he, I hope.

IACHIMO. Not he; but yet heaven's bounty towards him might Be us'd more thankfully. In himself, 'tis much; In you, which I account his, beyond all talents.

Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound To pity too.

IMOGEN. What do you pity, sir?

IACHIMO. Two creatures heartily.

IMOGEN. Am I one, sir? You look on me: what wreck discern you in me Deserves your pity?

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

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

IACHIMO. 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.

IMOGEN. You do seem to know Something of me, or what concerns me; pray you, 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.

IACHIMO. Had I this cheek 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, Fixing it only here; should I, damn'd then, Slaver with lips as common as the stairs That mount the Capitol; join gripes with hands Made hard with hourly falsehood (falsehood as With labour): then by-peeping in an eye Base and illustrious as the smoky light That's fed with stinking tallow: it were fit That all the plagues of hell should at one time Encounter such revolt.

IMOGEN. My lord, I fear, Has forgot Britain.

IACHIMO. And himself. Not I Inclin'd to this intelligence pronounce The beggary of his change; but 'tis your graces That from my mutest conscience to my tongue

Charms this report out.

IMOGEN. Let me hear no more.

IACHIMO. O dearest soul, your cause doth strike my heart With pity that doth make me sick! A lady So fair, and fasten’d to an empery, Would make the great’st king double, to be partner’d With tomboys hir’d with that self exhibition Which your own coffers yield! with diseas’d ventures That play with all infirmities for gold Which rottenness can lend nature! Such boil’d stuff As well might poison poison! Be reveng’d; Or she that bore you was no queen, and you Recoil from your great stock.

IMOGEN. Reveng’d? How should I be reveng’d? If this be true, (As I have such a heart that both mine ears Must not in haste abuse) if it be true, How should I be reveng’d?

IACHIMO. Should he make me Live like Diana’s priest betwixt cold sheets, Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps, 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.

IMOGEN. What ho, Pisanio!

IACHIMO. Let me my service tender on your lips.

IMOGEN. 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. Thou wrong’st a gentleman who is as far From thy report as thou from honour; and Solicits here a lady that disdains Thee and the devil alike. What ho, Pisanio! The King my father shall be made acquainted 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!

IACHIMO. O happy Leonatus! I may say The credit that thy lady hath of thee Deserves thy trust, and thy most perfect goodness Her assur’d credit. Blessed live

you long, A lady to the worthiest sir that ever Country call'd 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 That which he is new o'er; and he is one The truest manner'd, such a holy witch That he enchants societies into him, Half all men's hearts are his.

IMOGEN. You make amends.

IACHIMO. He sits 'mongst men like a descended god: He hath a kind of honour sets him off More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry, Most mighty Princess, that I have adventur'd To try your taking of a false report, which hath Honour'd with confirmation your great judgement 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.

IMOGEN. All's well, sir; take my pow'r i' th' court for yours.

IACHIMO. 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.

IMOGEN. Pray what is't?

IACHIMO. Some dozen Romans of us, and your lord (The 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 Of rich and exquisite form, their values great; And I am something curious, being strange, To have them in safe stowage. May it please you To take them in protection?

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

IACHIMO. 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.

IMOGEN. O, no, no.

IACHIMO. Yes, I beseech; or I shall short my word By length'ning my return. From Gallia I cross'd the seas on purpose and on promise To see your Grace.

IMOGEN. I thank you for your pains. But not away tomorrow!

IACHIMO. O, I must, madam. 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.

IMOGEN. I will write. Send your trunk to me; it shall safe be kept And truly yielded you. You're very welcome.

[Exeunt.]

ACT II

SCENE I. Britain. Before Cymbeline's palace.

Enter Cloten and the two Lords.

CLOTEN. Was there ever man had such luck! When I kiss'd the jack, upon an upcast to be hit away! I had a hundred pound on't; and then a whoreson jackanapes must take me up for swearing, as if I borrowed mine oaths of him, and might not spend them at my pleasure.

FIRST LORD. What got he by that? You have broke his pate with your bowl.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] If his wit had been like him that broke it, it would have run all out.

CLOTEN. When a gentleman is dispos'd to swear, it is not for any standers-by to curtail his oaths. Ha?

SECOND LORD. No, my lord; [Aside.] nor crop the ears of them.

CLOTEN. Whoreson dog! I gave him satisfaction. Would he had been one of my

rank!

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] To have smell’d like a fool.

CLOTEN. I am not vex’d more at anything in th’ earth. A pox on’t! I had rather not be so noble as I am; they dare not fight with me, because of the Queen my mother. Every jackslave hath his bellyful of fighting, and I must go up and down like a cock that nobody can match.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] You are cock and capon too; and you crow, cock, with your comb on.

CLOTEN. Sayest thou?

SECOND LORD. It is not fit your lordship should undertake every companion that you give offence to.

CLOTEN. No, I know that; but it is fit I should commit offence to my inferiors.

SECOND LORD. Ay, it is fit for your lordship only.

CLOTEN. Why, so I say.

FIRST LORD. Did you hear of a stranger that’s come to court tonight?

CLOTEN. A stranger, and I not known on’t?

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] He’s a strange fellow himself, and knows it not.

FIRST LORD. There’s an Italian come, and, ’tis thought, one of Leonatus’ friends.

CLOTEN. Leonatus? A banish’d rascal; and he’s another, whatsoever he be. Who told you of this stranger?

FIRST LORD. One of your lordship’s pages.

CLOTEN. Is it fit I went to look upon him? Is there no derogation in’t?

SECOND LORD. You cannot derogate, my lord.

CLOTEN. Not easily, I think.

SECOND LORD. [Aside.] You are a fool granted; therefore your issues, being

foolish, do not derogate.

CLOTEN. Come, I'll go see this Italian. What I have lost today at bowls I'll win tonight of him. Come, go.

SECOND LORD. I'll attend your lordship.

[Exeunt Cloten and First Lord.]

That such a crafty devil as is his mother Should yield the world this ass! A woman that Bears all down with her brain; and this her son Cannot take two from twenty, for his heart, And leave eighteen. Alas, poor princess, Thou divine Imogen, what thou endur'st, Betwixt a father by thy step-dame govern'd, A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer More hateful than the foul expulsion is Of thy dear husband, than that horrid act Of the divorce he'd make! The heavens hold firm The walls of thy dear honour, keep unshak'd That temple, thy fair mind, that thou mayst stand T' enjoy thy banish'd lord and this great land!

[Exit.]

SCENE II. Britain. Imogen's bedchamber in Cymbeline's palace; a trunk in one corner.

Enter Imogen in her bed, and a Lady attending.

IMOGEN. Who's there? My woman Helen?

LADY. Please you, madam.

IMOGEN. What hour is it?

LADY. Almost midnight, madam.

IMOGEN. I have read three hours then. Mine eyes are weak; Fold down the leaf where I have left. To bed. Take not away the taper, leave it burning; And if thou canst awake by four o' th' clock, I prithee call me. Sleep hath seiz'd me wholly.

[Exit Lady.]

To your protection I commend me, gods. From fairies and the tempters of the night Guard me, beseech ye!

[Sleeps. Iachimo comes from the trunk.]

IACHIMO. The crickets sing, and man’s o’er-labour’d sense Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus Did softly press the rushes ere he waken’d The chastity he wounded. Cytherea, How bravely thou becom’st thy bed! fresh lily, And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch! But kiss; one kiss! Rubies unparagon’d, How dearly they do’t! ’Tis her breathing that Perfumes the chamber thus. The flame o’ th’ taper Bows toward her and would under-peep her lids To see th’ enclosed lights, now canopied Under these windows white and azure, lac’d With blue of heaven’s own tinct. But my design To note the chamber. I will write all down: Such and such pictures; there the window; such Th’ adornment of her bed; the arras, figures, Why, such and such; and the contents o’ th’ story. Ah, but some natural notes about her body Above ten thousand meaner movables Would testify, t’ enrich mine inventory. O sleep, thou ape of death, lie dull upon her! And be her sense but as a monument, Thus in a chapel lying! Come off, come off;

[Taking off her bracelet.]

As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard! ’Tis mine; and this will witness outwardly, As strongly as the conscience does within, To th’ madding of her lord. On her left breast A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops I’ th’ bottom of a cowslip. Here’s a voucher Stronger than ever law could make; this secret Will force him think I have pick’d the lock and ta’en The treasure of her honour. No more. To what end? Why should I write this down that’s riveted, Screw’d to my memory? She hath been reading late The tale of Tereus; here the leaf’s turn’d down Where Philomel gave up. I have enough. To th’ trunk again, and shut the spring of it. Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning May bare the raven’s eye! I lodge in fear; Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here.

[Clock strikes.]

One, two, three. Time, time!

[Exit into the trunk.]

SCENE III. Cymbeline’s palace. An ante-chamber adjoining Imogen’s apartments.

Enter Cloten and Lords.

FIRST LORD. Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turn’d up ace.

CLOTEN. It would make any man cold to lose.

FIRST LORD. But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship. You are most hot and furious when you win.

CLOTEN. Winning will put any man into courage. If I could get this foolish Imogen, I should have gold enough. It’s almost morning, is’t not?

FIRST LORD. Day, my lord.

CLOTEN. I would this music would come. I am advised to give her music a mornings; they say it will penetrate.

Enter Musicians.

Come on, tune. If you can penetrate her with your fingering, so. We’ll try with tongue too. If none will do, let her remain; but I’ll never give o’er. First, a very excellent good-conceited thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it, and then let her consider.

SONG

Hark, hark! the lark at heaven’s gate sings, And Phœbus ’gins arise, His steeds to water at those springs On chalic’d flow’rs that lies; And winking Mary-buds begin To ope their golden eyes. With everything that pretty is, My lady sweet, arise; Arise,

arise!

CLOTEN. So, get you gone. If this penetrate, I will consider your music the better; if it do not, it is a vice in her ears which horsehairs and calves' guts, nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot, can never amend.

[Exeunt Musicians.]

Enter Cymbeline and Queen.

SECOND LORD. Here comes the King.

CLOTEN. I am glad I was up so late, for that's the reason I was up so early. He cannot choose but take this service I have done fatherly.—Good morrow to your Majesty and to my gracious mother.

CYMBELINE. Attend you here the door of our stern daughter? Will she not forth?

CLOTEN. I have assail'd her with musics, but she vouchsafes no notice.

CYMBELINE. The exile of her minion is too new; She hath not yet forgot him; some more time Must wear the print of his remembrance on't, And then she's yours.

QUEEN. You are most bound to th' King, Who lets go by no vantages that may Prefer you to his daughter. Frame yourself To orderly solicits, and be friended With aptness of the season; make denials Increase your services; so seem as if You were inspir'd to do those duties which You tender to her; that you in all obey her, Save when command to your dismission tends, And therein you are senseless.

CLOTEN. Senseless? Not so.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER. So like you, sir, ambassadors from Rome; The one is Caius Lucius.

CYMBELINE. A worthy fellow, Albeit he comes on angry purpose now; But that's no fault of his. We must receive him According to the honour of his sender; And towards himself, his goodness forespent on us, We must extend our notice. Our dear son, When you have given good morning to your mistress, Attend the Queen and us;

we shall have need T’ employ you towards this Roman. Come, our queen.

[Exeunt all but Cloten.]

CLOTEN. If she be up, I’ll speak with her; if not, Let her lie still and dream. By your leave, ho!

[Knocks.]

I know her women are about her; what If I do line one of their hands? ’Tis gold Which buys admittance (oft it doth) yea, and makes Diana’s rangers false themselves, yield up Their deer to th’ stand o’ th’ stealer; and ’tis gold Which makes the true man kill’d and saves the thief; Nay, sometime hangs both thief and true man. What Can it not do and undo? I will make One of her women lawyer to me, for I yet not understand the case myself. By your leave.

[Knocks.]

Enter a Lady.

LADY. Who’s there that knocks?

CLOTEN. A gentleman.

LADY. No more?

CLOTEN. Yes, and a gentlewoman’s son.

LADY. That’s more Than some whose tailors are as dear as yours Can justly boast of. What’s your lordship’s pleasure?

CLOTEN. Your lady’s person; is she ready?

LADY. Ay, To keep her chamber.

CLOTEN. There is gold for you; sell me your good report.

LADY. How? My good name? or to report of you What I shall think is good? The Princess!

Enter Imogen.

CLOTEN. Good morrow, fairest sister. Your sweet hand.

[Exit Lady.]

IMOGEN. Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains For purchasing but trouble. The thanks I give Is telling you that I am poor of thanks, And scarce can spare them.

CLOTEN. Still I swear I love you.

IMOGEN. If you but said so, ’twere as deep with me. If you swear still, your recompense is still That I regard it not.

CLOTEN. This is no answer.

IMOGEN. But that you shall not say I yield, being silent, I would not speak. I pray you spare me. Faith, I shall unfold equal discourtesy To your best kindness; one of your great knowing Should learn, being taught, forbearance.

CLOTEN. To leave you in your madness ’twere my sin; I will not.

IMOGEN. Fools are not mad folks.

CLOTEN. Do you call me fool?

IMOGEN. As I am mad, I do; If you’ll be patient, I’ll no more be mad; That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir, You put me to forget a lady’s manners By being so verbal; and learn now, for all, That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce, By th’ very truth of it, I care not for you, And am so near the lack of charity To accuse myself I hate you; which I had rather You felt than make’t my boast.

CLOTEN. You sin against Obedience, which you owe your father. For The contract you pretend with that base wretch, One bred of alms and foster’d with cold dishes, With scraps o’ th’ court, it is no contract, none. And though it be allowed in meaner parties (Yet who than he more mean?) to knit their souls (On whom there is no more dependency But brats and beggary) in self-figur’d knot, Yet you are curb’d from that enlargement by The consequence o’ th’ crown, and must not foil The precious note

of it with a base slave, A hilding for a livery, a squire's cloth, A pantler; not so eminent!

IMOGEN. Profane fellow! Wert thou the son of Jupiter, and no more But what thou art besides, thou wert too base To be his groom. Thou wert dignified enough, Even to the point of envy, if 'twere made Comparative for your virtues to be styl'd The under-hangman of his kingdom, and hated For being preferr'd so well.

CLOTEN. The south fog rot him!

IMOGEN. He never can meet more mischance than come To be but nam'd of thee. His mean'st garment That ever hath but clipp'd his body, is dearer In my respect, than all the hairs above thee, Were they all made such men. How now, Pisanio!

Enter Pisanio.

CLOTEN. 'His garment'! Now the devil—

IMOGEN. To Dorothy my woman hie thee presently.

CLOTEN. 'His garment'!

IMOGEN. I am sprited with a fool; Frighted, and ang'red worse. Go bid my woman Search for a jewel that too casually Hath left mine arm. It was thy master's; shrew me, If I would lose it for a revenue Of any king's in Europe! I do think I saw't this morning; confident I am Last night 'twas on mine arm; I kiss'd it. I hope it be not gone to tell my lord That I kiss aught but he.

PISANIO. 'Twill not be lost.

IMOGEN. I hope so. Go and search.

[Exit Pisanio.]

CLOTEN. You have abus'd me. 'His meanest garment'!

IMOGEN. Ay, I said so, sir. If you will make 't an action, call witness to 't.

CLOTEN. I will inform your father.

IMOGEN. Your mother too. She’s my good lady and will conceive, I hope, But the worst of me. So I leave you, sir, To th’ worst of discontent.

[Exit.]

CLOTEN. I’ll be reveng’d. ‘His mean’st garment’! Well.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV. Rome. Philario’s house.

Enter Posthumus and Philario.

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

PHILARIO. 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 That warmer days would come. In these fear’d hopes I barely gratify your love; they failing, I must die much your debtor.

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

POSTHUMUS. I do believe 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 Are men more order’d than when Julius Cæsar Smil’d at their lack of skill, but found their courage Worthy his frowning at. Their discipline, Now mingled with their courages, will make known To their approvers they are people such That mend upon the world.

Enter Iachimo.

PHILARIO. See! Iachimo!

POSTHUMUS. The swiftest harts have posted you by land, And winds of all the corners kiss'd your sails, To make your vessel nimble.

PHILARIO. Welcome, sir.

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

IACHIMO. Your lady Is one of the fairest that I have look'd upon.

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

IACHIMO. Here are letters for you.

POSTHUMUS. Their tenour good, I trust.

IACHIMO. 'Tis very like.

PHILARIO. Was Caius Lucius in the Britain court When you were there?

IACHIMO. He was expected then, But not approach'd.

POSTHUMUS. All is well yet. Sparkles this stone as it was wont, or is't not Too dull for your good wearing?

IACHIMO. If I have 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.

POSTHUMUS. The stone's too hard to come by.

IACHIMO. 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.

IACHIMO. Good sir, we must, If you keep covenant. Had I not brought 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 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 To who shall find them.

IACHIMO. 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 You need it not.

POSTHUMUS. Proceed.

IACHIMO. First, her bedchamber, (Where I confess I slept not, but profess Had that was well worth watching) it was hang’d With tapestry of silk and silver; the story, Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman And Cydnus swell’d 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 wonder’d Could be so rarely and exactly wrought, Since the true life on’t was—

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

IACHIMO. More particulars Must justify my knowledge.

POSTHUMUS. So they must, Or do your honour injury.

IACHIMO. The chimney Is south the chamber, and the chimneypiece 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 Which you might from relation likewise reap, Being, as it is, much spoke of.

IACHIMO. 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 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.

IACHIMO. Then, if you can, [Shows the bracelet] Be pale. I beg but leave to air this jewel. See! 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?

IACHIMO. Sir (I thank her) that. She stripp’d it from her arm; I see her yet; Her pretty action did outsell her gift, And yet enrich’d it too. She gave it me, and said She priz’d it once.

POSTHUMUS. May be she pluck’d it off To send it me.

IACHIMO. She writes so to you, doth she?

POSTHUMUS. O, no, no, no! ’tis true. Here, take this too;

[Gives the 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 Of no more bondage be to where they are made Than they are to their virtues, which is nothing. O, above measure false!

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

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

IACHIMO. 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 induc’d to steal it! And by a stranger! No, he hath enjoy’d her. The cognizance of her incontinency Is this: she hath bought the name of whore thus dearly. There, take thy hire; and all the fiends of hell Divide themselves between you!

PHILARIO. Sir, be patient; This is not strong enough to be believ’d Of one persuaded well of.

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

IACHIMO. If you seek For further satisfying, under her breast (Worthy the pressing) lies a mole, right proud Of that most delicate lodging. By my life, I kiss’d 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, Were there no more but it.

IACHIMO. Will you hear more?

POSTHUMUS. Spare your arithmetic; never count the turns. Once, and a million!

IACHIMO. 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 Thou’st made me cuckold.

IACHIMO. 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.]

PHILARIO. Quite besides The government of patience! You have won. Let’s follow him and pervert the present wrath He hath against himself.

IACHIMO. With all my heart.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE V. Rome. Another room in Philario’s house.

Enter Posthumus.

POSTHUMUS. Is there no way for men to be, but women Must be half-workers? We are all bastards, And that most venerable man which I Did call my father was I know not where When I was stamp’d. Some coiner with his tools Made me a counterfeit; yet my mother seem’d The Dian of that time. So doth my wife The nonpareil of this. O, vengeance, vengeance! Me of my lawful pleasure she restrain’d, And pray’d me oft forbearance; did it with A pudency so rosy, the sweet view on’t Might well have warm’d old Saturn; that I thought her As chaste as unsunn’d snow. O, all the devils! This yellow Iachimo in an hour, was’t not? Or less; at first? Perchance he spoke not, but, Like a full-acorn’d boar, a German one, Cried “O!” and mounted; found no opposition But what he look’d for should oppose and she Should from encounter guard. Could I find out The woman’s part in me! For there’s no motion That tends to vice in man but I affirm It is the woman’s part. Be it lying, note it, The woman’s; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers; Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers; Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain, Nice longing, slanders, mutability, All faults that man may name, nay, that hell knows, Why, hers, in part or all; but rather all; For even to vice They are not constant, but are changing still One vice but of a minute old for one Not half so old as that. I’ll write against them, Detest them, curse them. Yet ’tis greater skill In a true hate to pray they have their will: The very devils cannot plague them better.

[Exit.]

ACT III

SCENE I. Britain. A hall in Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter in state Cymbeline, Queen, Cloten and Lords at one door, and at another Caius Lucius and Attendants.

CYMBELINE. Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?

LUCIUS. When Julius Cæsar, (whose remembrance yet Lives in men's eyes, and will to ears and tongues Be theme and hearing ever) was in this Britain, And conquer'd it, Cassibelan, thine uncle, Famous in Cæsar'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 untender'd.

QUEEN. And, to kill the marvel, Shall be so ever.

CLOTEN. There be many Cæsars ere such another Julius. Britain is 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 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, ribb'd and pal'd in With rocks unscaleable and roaring waters, With sands that will not bear your enemies' boats But suck them up to th' top-mast. A kind of conquest Cæsar made here, but made not here his brag Of 'Came, and saw, and overcame.' With shame (The first that ever touch'd him) he was carried From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping (Poor ignorant baubles!) on our terrible seas, Like egg-shells mov'd upon their surges, crack'd As easily 'gainst our rocks; for joy whereof The fam'd Cassibelan, who was once at point (O, giglot fortune!) to master Cæsar'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 I said, there is no moe such Cæsars. Other of them may have crook'd noses; but to owe such straight arms, none.

CYMBELINE. Son, let your mother end.

CLOTEN. We have yet many among us can gripe as hard as Cassibelan. I do not say

I am one; but I have a hand. Why tribute? Why should we pay tribute? If Cæsar 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.

CYMBELINE. You must know, Till the injurious Romans did extort This tribute from us, we were free. Cæsar's ambition, Which swell'd so much that it did almost stretch The sides o' th' world, against all colour here Did put the yoke upon's; which to shake off Becomes a warlike people, whom we reckon Ourselves to be.

CLOTEN. We do.

CYMBELINE. Say then to Cæsar, Our ancestor was that Mulmutius which Ordain'd our laws, whose use the sword of Cæsar 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 call'd Himself a king.

LUCIUS. I am sorry, Cymbeline, That I am to pronounce Augustus Cæsar (Cæsar, that hath moe kings his servants than Thyself domestic officers) thine enemy. Receive it from me, then: war and confusion In Cæsar'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 Cæsar knighted me; my youth I spent Much under him; of him I gather'd 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 Cæsar 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 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.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. Britain. Another room in Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter Pisanio reading of a letter.

PISANIO. How? of adultery? Wherefore write you not What monsters her accuse? Leonatus! O master, what a strange infection Is fall’n into thy ear! What false Italian (As poisonous-tongu’d as handed) hath prevail’d On thy too ready hearing? Disloyal? No. She’s punish’d for her truth, and undergoes, More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults As would take in some virtue. O my master, Thy mind to her is now as low as were Thy fortunes. How? that I should murder her? Upon the love, and truth, and vows, which I Have made to thy command? I, her? Her blood? If it be so to do good service, never Let me be counted serviceable. How look I That I should seem to lack humanity So much as this fact comes to?

[Reads.]

‘Do’t. The letter That I have sent her, by her own command Shall give thee opportunity.’ O damn’d paper, Black as the ink that’s on thee! Senseless bauble, Art thou a fedary for this act, and look’st So virgin-like without? Lo, here she comes.

Enter Imogen.

I am ignorant in what I am commanded.

IMOGEN. How now, Pisanio?

PISANIO. Madam, here is a letter from my lord.

IMOGEN. Who? thy lord? That is my lord, Leonatus? O, learn’d indeed were that astronomer That knew the stars as I his characters; He’d lay the future open. You

good gods, Let what is here contain’d relish of love, Of my lord’s health, of his content; yet not That we two are asunder; let that grieve him! Some griefs are med’cinable; that is one of them, For it doth physic love: of his content, All but in that. Good wax, thy leave. Blest be You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers And men in dangerous bonds pray not alike; Though forfeiters you cast in prison, yet You clasp young Cupid’s tables. Good news, gods!

[Reads.]

Justice and your father’s wrath, should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me as you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford Haven. What your own love will out of this advise you, follow. So he wishes you all happiness that remains loyal to his vow, and your increasing in love. LEONATUS POSTHUMUS.

O for a horse with wings! Hear’st thou, Pisanio? He is at Milford Haven. Read, and tell me How far ’tis thither. If one of mean affairs May plod it in a week, why may not I Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio, Who long’st like me to see thy lord, who long’st (O, let me ’bate!) but not like me, yet long’st, But in a fainter kind. O, not like me, For mine’s beyond beyond: say, and speak thick, (Love’s counsellor should fill the bores of hearing To th’ smothering of the sense) how far it is To this same blessed Milford. And by th’ way Tell me how Wales was made so happy as T’ inherit such a haven. But first of all, How we may steal from hence; and for the gap That we shall make in time from our hence-going And our return, to excuse. But first, how get hence. Why should excuse be born or ere begot? We’ll talk of that hereafter. Prithee speak, How many score of miles may we well rid ’Twixt hour and hour?

PISANIO. One score ’twixt sun and sun, Madam, ’s enough for you, and too much too.

IMOGEN. Why, one that rode to’s execution, man, Could never go so slow. I have

heard of riding wagers Where horses have been nimbler than the sands That run i’ th’ clock’s behalf. But this is fool’ry. Go bid my woman feign a sickness; say She’ll home to her father; and provide me presently A riding suit, no costlier than would fit A franklin’s huswife.

PISANIO. Madam, you’re best consider.

IMOGEN. I see before me, man. Nor here, nor here, Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them That I cannot look through. Away, I prithee; Do as I bid thee. There’s no more to say. Accessible is none but Milford way.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Wales. A mountainous country with a cave.

Enter from the cave Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus.

BELARIUS. A goodly day not to keep house with such Whose roof’s as low as ours! Stoop, boys; this gate Instructs you how t’ adore the heavens, and bows you To a morning’s holy office. The gates of monarchs Are arch’d so high that giants may jet through And keep their impious turbans on without Good morrow to the sun. Hail, thou fair heaven! We house i’ th’ rock, yet use thee not so hardly As prouder livers do.

GUIDERIUS. Hail, heaven!

ARVIRAGUS. Hail, heaven!

BELARIUS. Now for our mountain sport. Up to yond hill, Your legs are young; I’ll tread these flats. Consider, When you above perceive me like a crow, That it is place which lessens and sets off; And you may then revolve what tales I have told you Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war. This service is not service so being done, But being so allow’d. To apprehend thus Draws us a profit from all things we see, And often to our comfort shall we find The sharded beetle in a safer hold Than is the full-wing’d eagle. O, this life Is nobler than attending for a check, Richer than doing

nothing for a robe, Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk: Such gain the cap of him that makes him fine, Yet keeps his book uncross'd. No life to ours!

GUIDERIUS. Out of your proof you speak. We, poor unfledg'd, Have never wing'd from view o' th' nest, nor know not What air's from home. Haply this life is best, If quiet life be best; sweeter to you That have a sharper known; well corresponding With your stiff age. But unto us it is A cell of ignorance, travelling abed, A prison for a debtor that not dares To stride a limit.

ARVIRAGUS. What should we speak of When we are old as you? When we shall hear The rain and wind beat dark December, how, In this our pinching cave, shall we discourse. The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing; We are beastly: subtle as the fox for prey, Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat. Our valour is to chase what flies; our cage We make a choir, as doth the prison'd bird, And sing our bondage freely.

BELARIUS. How you speak! Did you but know the city's usuries, And felt them knowingly; the art o' th' court, As hard to leave as keep, whose top to climb Is certain falling, or so slipp'ry that The fear's as bad as falling; the toil o' th' war, A pain that only seems to seek out danger I' th' name of fame and honour, which dies i' th' search, And hath as oft a sland'rous epitaph As record of fair act; nay, many times, Doth ill deserve by doing well; what's worse, Must curtsy at the censure. O, boys, this story The world may read in me; my body's mark'd With Roman swords, and my report was once First with the best of note. Cymbeline lov'd me; And when a soldier was the theme, my name Was not far off. Then was I as a tree Whose boughs did bend with fruit. But in one night A storm, or robbery, call it what you will, Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves, And left me bare to weather.

GUIDERIUS. Uncertain favour!

BELARIUS. My fault being nothing, as I have told you oft, But that two villains,

whose false oaths prevail'd Before my perfect honour, swore to Cymbeline I was confederate with the Romans. So Follow'd my banishment, and this twenty years This rock and these demesnes have been my world, Where I have liv'd at honest freedom, paid More pious debts to heaven than in all The fore-end of my time. But up to th' mountains! This is not hunters' language. He that strikes The venison first shall be the lord o' th' feast; To him the other two shall minister; And we will fear no poison, which attends In place of greater state. I'll meet you in the valleys.

[Exeunt Guiderius and Arviragus.]

How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature! These boys know little they are sons to th' King, Nor Cymbeline dreams that they are alive. They think they are mine; and though train'd up thus meanly I' th' cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them In simple and low things to prince it much Beyond the trick of others. This Polydore, The heir of Cymbeline and Britain, who The King his father call'd Guiderius—Jove! When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell The warlike feats I have done, his spirits fly out Into my story; say 'Thus mine enemy fell, And thus I set my foot on's neck'; even then The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats, Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture That acts my words. The younger brother, Cadwal, Once Arviragus, in as like a figure Strikes life into my speech, and shows much more His own conceiving. Hark, the game is rous'd! O Cymbeline, heaven and my conscience knows Thou didst unjustly banish me! Whereon, At three and two years old, I stole these babes, Thinking to bar thee of succession as Thou refts me of my lands. Euriphile, Thou wast their nurse; they took thee for their mother, And every day do honour to her grave. Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan call'd, They take for natural father. The game is up.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV. Wales, near Milford Haven.

Enter Pisanio and Imogen.

IMOGEN. Thou told’st me, when we came from horse, the place Was near at hand. Ne’er long’d my mother so To see me first as I have now. Pisanio! Man! Where is Posthumus? What is in thy mind That makes thee stare thus? Wherefore breaks that sigh From th’ inward of thee? One but painted thus Would be interpreted a thing perplex’d Beyond self-explication. Put thyself Into a haviour of less fear, ere wildness Vanquish my staider senses. What’s the matter? Why tender’st thou that paper to me with A look untender? If’t be summer news, Smile to’t before; if winterly, thou need’st But keep that count’nance still. My husband’s hand? That drug-damn’d Italy hath out-craftied him, And he’s at some hard point. Speak, man; thy tongue May take off some extremity, which to read Would be even mortal to me.

PISANIO. Please you read, And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing The most disdain’d of fortune.

IMOGEN. [Reads.] Thy mistress, Pisanio, hath play’d the strumpet in my bed, the testimonies whereof lie bleeding in me. I speak not out of weak surmises, but from proof as strong as my grief and as certain as I expect my revenge. That part thou, Pisanio, must act for me, if thy faith be not tainted with the breach of hers. Let thine own hands take away her life; I shall give thee opportunity at Milford Haven; she hath my letter for the purpose; where, if thou fear to strike, and to make me certain it is done, thou art the pandar to her dishonour, and equally to me disloyal.

PISANIO. What shall I need to draw my sword? The paper Hath cut her throat already. No, ’tis slander, Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue Outvenoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath Rides on the posting winds and doth belie All corners of the world. Kings, queens, and states, Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the grave, This viperous slander enters. What cheer, madam?

IMOGEN. False to his bed? What is it to be false? To lie in watch there, and to think on him? To weep twixt clock and clock? If sleep charge nature, To break it with a

fearful dream of him, And cry myself awake? That's false to's bed, Is it?

PISANIO. Alas, good lady!

IMOGEN. I false! Thy conscience witness! Iachimo, Thou didst accuse him of incontinency; Thou then look'dst like a villain; now, methinks, Thy favour's good enough. Some jay of Italy, Whose mother was her painting, hath betray'd him. Poor I am stale, a garment out of fashion, And for I am richer than to hang by th' walls I must be ripp'd. To pieces with me! O, Men's vows are women's traitors! All good seeming, By thy revolt, O husband, shall be thought Put on for villainy; not born where't grows, But worn a bait for ladies.

PISANIO. Good madam, hear me.

IMOGEN. True honest men being heard, like false Æneas, Were, in his time, thought false; and Sinon's weeping Did scandal many a holy tear, took pity From most true wretchedness. So thou, Posthumus, Wilt lay the leaven on all proper men: Goodly and gallant shall be false and perjur'd From thy great fail. Come, fellow, be thou honest; Do thou thy master's bidding; when thou seest him, A little witness my obedience. Look! I draw the sword myself; take it, and hit The innocent mansion of my love, my heart. Fear not; 'tis empty of all things but grief; Thy master is not there, who was indeed The riches of it. Do his bidding; strike. Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause, But now thou seem'st a coward.

PISANIO. Hence, vile instrument! Thou shalt not damn my hand.

IMOGEN. Why, I must die; And if I do not by thy hand, thou art No servant of thy master's. Against self-slaughter There is a prohibition so divine That cravens my weak hand. Come, here's my heart: Something's afore't. Soft, soft! we'll no defence, Obedient as the scabbard. What is here? The scriptures of the loyal Leonatus All turn'd to heresy? Away, away, Corrupters of my faith, you shall no more Be stomachers to my heart. Thus may poor fools Believe false teachers; though those that are betray'd Do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor Stands in

worse case of woe. And thou, Posthumus, That didst set up my disobedience ’gainst the King My father, and make me put into contempt the suits Of princely fellows, shalt hereafter find It is no act of common passage but A strain of rareness; and I grieve myself To think, when thou shalt be disedg’d by her That now thou tirest on, how thy memory Will then be pang’d by me. Prithee dispatch. The lamb entreats the butcher. Where’s thy knife? Thou art too slow to do thy master’s bidding, When I desire it too.

PISANIO. O gracious lady, Since I receiv’d command to do this busines I have not slept one wink.

IMOGEN. Do’t, and to bed then.

PISANIO. I’ll wake mine eyeballs first.

IMOGEN. Wherefore then Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abus’d So many miles with a pretence? This place? Mine action and thine own? our horses’ labour? The time inviting thee? The perturb’d court, For my being absent? whereunto I never Purpose return. Why hast thou gone so far To be unbent when thou hast ta’en thy stand, Th’ elected deer before thee?

PISANIO. But to win time To lose so bad employment, in the which I have consider’d of a course. Good lady, Hear me with patience.

IMOGEN. Talk thy tongue weary, speak. I have heard I am a strumpet, and mine ear, Therein false struck, can take no greater wound, Nor tent to bottom that. But speak.

PISANIO. Then, madam, I thought you would not back again.

IMOGEN. Most like, Bringing me here to kill me.

PISANIO. Not so, neither; But if I were as wise as honest, then My purpose would prove well. It cannot be But that my master is abus’d. Some villain, Ay, and singular in his art, hath done you both This cursed injury.

IMOGEN. Some Roman courtezan!

PISANIO. No, on my life! I'll give but notice you are dead, and send him Some bloody sign of it, for 'tis commanded I should do so. You shall be miss'd at court, And that will well confirm it.

IMOGEN. Why, good fellow, What shall I do the while? Where bide? How live? Or in my life what comfort, when I am Dead to my husband?

PISANIO. If you'll back to th' court—

IMOGEN. No court, no father, nor no more ado With that harsh, noble, simple nothing, That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me As fearful as a siege.

PISANIO. If not at court, Then not in Britain must you bide.

IMOGEN. Where then? Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day, night, Are they not but in Britain? I' th' world's volume Our Britain seems as of it, but not in't; In a great pool a swan's nest. Prithee think There's livers out of Britain.

PISANIO. I am most glad You think of other place. Th' ambassador, Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford Haven Tomorrow. Now, if you could wear a mind Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise That which t' appear itself must not yet be But by self-danger, you should tread a course Pretty and full of view; yea, happily, near The residence of Posthumus; so nigh, at least, That though his actions were not visible, yet Report should render him hourly to your ear As truly as he moves.

IMOGEN. O! for such means, Though peril to my modesty, not death on't, I would adventure.

PISANIO. Well then, here's the point: You must forget to be a woman; change Command into obedience; fear and niceness (The handmaids of all women, or, more truly, Woman it pretty self) into a waggish courage; Ready in gibes, quick-answer'd, saucy, and As quarrelous as the weasel. Nay, you must Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek, Exposing it (but, O, the harder heart! Alack, no remedy) to the greedy

touch Of common-kissing Titan, and forget Your laboursome and dainty trims wherein You made great Juno angry.

IMOGEN. Nay, be brief; I see into thy end, and am almost A man already.

PISANIO. First, make yourself but like one. Fore-thinking this, I have already fit (’Tis in my cloak-bag) doublet, hat, hose, all That answer to them. Would you, in their serving, And with what imitation you can borrow From youth of such a season, ’fore noble Lucius Present yourself, desire his service, tell him Wherein you’re happy; which will make him know If that his head have ear in music; doubtless With joy he will embrace you; for he’s honourable, And, doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad: You have me, rich; and I will never fail Beginning nor supplyment.

IMOGEN. Thou art all the comfort The gods will diet me with. Prithee away! There’s more to be consider’d; but we’ll even All that good time will give us. This attempt I am soldier to, and will abide it with A prince’s courage. Away, I prithee.

PISANIO. Well, madam, we must take a short farewell, Lest, being miss’d, I be suspected of Your carriage from the court. My noble mistress, Here is a box; I had it from the Queen. What’s in’t is precious. If you are sick at sea Or stomach-qualm’d at land, a dram of this Will drive away distemper. To some shade, And fit you to your manhood. May the gods Direct you to the best!

IMOGEN. Amen. I thank thee.

[Exeunt severally.]

SCENE V. Britain. Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter Cymbeline, Queen, Cloten, Lucius and Lords.

CYMBELINE. Thus far, and so farewell.

LUCIUS. Thanks, royal sir. My emperor hath wrote; I must from hence, And am right sorry that I must report ye My master’s enemy.

CYMBELINE. Our subjects, sir, Will not endure his yoke; and for ourself To show

less sovereignty than they, must needs Appear unkinglike.

LUCIUS. So, sir. I desire of you A conduct overland to Milford Haven. Madam, all joy befall your Grace, and you!

CYMBELINE. My lords, you are appointed for that office; The due of honour in no point omit. So farewell, noble Lucius.

LUCIUS. Your hand, my lord.

CLOTEN. Receive it friendly; but from this time forth I wear it as your enemy.

LUCIUS. Sir, the event Is yet to name the winner. Fare you well.

CYMBELINE. Leave not the worthy Lucius, good my lords, Till he have cross'd the Severn. Happiness!

[Exeunt Lucius and Lords.]

QUEEN. He goes hence frowning; but it honours us That we have given him cause.

CLOTEN. 'Tis all the better; Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it.

CYMBELINE. Lucius hath wrote already to the Emperor How it goes here. It fits us therefore ripely Our chariots and our horsemen be in readiness. The pow'rs that he already hath in Gallia Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves His war for Britain.

QUEEN. 'Tis not sleepy business, But must be look'd to speedily and strongly.

CYMBELINE. Our expectation that it would be thus Hath made us forward. But, my gentle queen, Where is our daughter? She hath not appear'd Before the Roman, nor to us hath tender'd The duty of the day. She looks us like A thing more made of malice than of duty; We have noted it. Call her before us, for We have been too slight in sufferance.

[Exit an Attendant.]

QUEEN. Royal sir, Since the exile of Posthumus, most retir'd Hath her life been; the cure whereof, my lord, 'Tis time must do. Beseech your Majesty, Forbear sharp

speeches to her; she’s a lady So tender of rebukes that words are strokes, And strokes death to her.

Enter Attendant.

CYMBELINE. Where is she, sir? How Can her contempt be answer’d?

ATTENDANT. Please you, sir, Her chambers are all lock’d, and there’s no answer That will be given to th’ loud of noise we make.

QUEEN. My lord, when last I went to visit her, She pray’d me to excuse her keeping close; Whereto constrain’d by her infirmity She should that duty leave unpaid to you Which daily she was bound to proffer. This She wish’d me to make known; but our great court Made me to blame in memory.

CYMBELINE. Her doors lock’d? Not seen of late? Grant, heavens, that which I fear Prove false!

[Exit.]

QUEEN. Son, I say, follow the King.

CLOTEN. That man of hers, Pisanio, her old servant, I have not seen these two days.

QUEEN. Go, look after.

[Exit Cloten.]

Pisanio, thou that stand’st so for Posthumus! He hath a drug of mine. I pray his absence Proceed by swallowing that; for he believes It is a thing most precious. But for her, Where is she gone? Haply despair hath seiz’d her; Or, wing’d with fervour of her love, she’s flown To her desir’d Posthumus. Gone she is To death or to dishonour, and my end Can make good use of either. She being down, I have the placing of the British crown.

Enter Cloten.

How now, my son?

CLOTEN. ’Tis certain she is fled. Go in and cheer the King. He rages; none Dare come about him.

QUEEN. All the better. May This night forestall him of the coming day!

[Exit.]

CLOTEN. I love and hate her; for she’s fair and royal, And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite Than lady, ladies, woman. From every one The best she hath, and she, of all compounded, Outsells them all. I love her therefore; but Disdaining me and throwing favours on The low Posthumus slanders so her judgement That what’s else rare is chok’d; and in that point I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed, To be reveng’d upon her. For when fools Shall—

Enter Pisanio.

Who is here? What, are you packing, sirrah? Come hither. Ah, you precious pandar! Villain, Where is thy lady? In a word, or else Thou art straightway with the fiends.

PISANIO. O good my lord!

CLOTEN. Where is thy lady? or, by Jupiter— I will not ask again. Close villain, I’ll have this secret from thy heart, or rip Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthumus? From whose so many weights of baseness cannot A dram of worth be drawn.

PISANIO. Alas, my lord, How can she be with him? When was she miss’d? He is in Rome.

CLOTEN. Where is she, sir? Come nearer. No farther halting! Satisfy me home What is become of her.

PISANIO. O my all-worthy lord!

CLOTEN. All-worthy villain! Discover where thy mistress is at once, At the next word. No more of ‘worthy lord’! Speak, or thy silence on the instant is Thy condemnation and thy death.

PISANIO. Then, sir, This paper is the history of my knowledge Touching her flight.

[Presenting a letter.]

CLOTEN. Let’s see’t. I will pursue her Even to Augustus’ throne.

PISANIO. [Aside.] Or this or perish. She’s far enough; and what he learns by this May prove his travel, not her danger.

CLOTEN. Humh!

PISANIO. [Aside.] I’ll write to my lord she’s dead. O Imogen, Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again!

CLOTEN. Sirrah, is this letter true?

PISANIO. Sir, as I think.

CLOTEN. It is Posthumus’ hand; I know’t. Sirrah, if thou wouldst not be a villain, but do me true service, undergo those employments wherein I should have cause to use thee with a serious industry—that is, what villainy soe’er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and truly—I would think thee an honest man; thou shouldst neither want my means for thy relief nor my voice for thy preferment.

PISANIO. Well, my good lord.

CLOTEN. Wilt thou serve me? For since patiently and constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that beggar Posthumus, thou canst not, in the course of gratitude, but be a diligent follower of mine. Wilt thou serve me?

PISANIO. Sir, I will.

CLOTEN. Give me thy hand; here’s my purse. Hast any of thy late master’s garments in thy possession?

PISANIO. I have, my lord, at my lodging, the same suit he wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

CLOTEN. The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit hither. Let it be thy first service; go.

PISANIO. I shall, my lord.

[Exit.]

CLOTEN. Meet thee at Milford Haven! I forgot to ask him one thing; I'll remember't anon. Even there, thou villain Posthumus, will I kill thee. I would these garments were come. She said upon a time—the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart—that she held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect than my noble and natural person, together with the adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my back will I ravish her; first kill him, and in her eyes. There shall she see my valour, which will then be a torment to her contempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my lust hath dined—which, as I say, to vex her I will execute in the clothes that she so prais'd—to the court I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despis'd me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge.

Enter Pisanio with the clothes.

Be those the garments?

PISANIO. Ay, my noble lord.

CLOTEN. How long is't since she went to Milford Haven?

PISANIO. She can scarce be there yet.

CLOTEN. Bring this apparel to my chamber; that is the second thing that I have commanded thee. The third is that thou wilt be a voluntary mute to my design. Be but duteous and true, preferment shall tender itself to thee. My revenge is now at Milford, would I had wings to follow it! Come, and be true.

[Exit.]

PISANIO. Thou bid'st me to my loss; for true to thee Were to prove false, which I will never be, To him that is most true. To Milford go, And find not her whom thou pursuest. Flow, flow, You heavenly blessings, on her! This fool's speed Be cross'd with slowness! Labour be his meed!

[Exit.]

SCENE VI. Wales. Before the cave of Belarius.

Enter Imogen alone, in boy's clothes.

IMOGEN. I see a man's life is a tedious one. I have tir'd myself, and for two nights together Have made the ground my bed. I should be sick But that my resolution helps me. Milford, When from the mountain-top Pisanio show'd thee, Thou wast within a ken. O Jove! I think Foundations fly the wretched; such, I mean, Where they should be reliev'd. Two beggars told me I could not miss my way. Will poor folks lie, That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder, When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness Is sorer than to lie for need; and falsehood Is worse in kings than beggars. My dear lord! Thou art one o' th' false ones. Now I think on thee My hunger's gone; but even before, I was At point to sink for food. But what is this? Here is a path to't; 'tis some savage hold. I were best not call; I dare not call. Yet famine, Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant. Plenty and peace breeds cowards; hardness ever Of hardiness is mother. Ho! who's here? If anything that's civil, speak; if savage, Take or lend. Ho! No answer? Then I'll enter. Best draw my sword; and if mine enemy But fear the sword, like me, he'll scarcely look on't. Such a foe, good heavens!

[Exit into the cave.]

SCENE VII. The same.

Enter Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus.

BELARIUS. You, Polydore, have prov'd best woodman and Are master of the feast. Cadwal and I Will play the cook and servant; 'tis our match. The sweat of industry would dry and die But for the end it works to. Come, our stomachs Will make what's homely savoury; weariness Can snore upon the flint, when resty sloth Finds the down pillow hard. Now, peace be here, Poor house, that keep'st thyself!

GUIDERIUS. I am thoroughly weary.

ARVIRAGUS. I am weak with toil, yet strong in appetite.

GUIDERIUS. There is cold meat i’ th’ cave; we’ll browse on that Whilst what we have kill’d be cook’d.

BELARIUS. [Looking into the cave.] Stay, come not in. But that it eats our victuals, I should think Here were a fairy.

GUIDERIUS. What’s the matter, sir?

BELARIUS. By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not, An earthly paragon! Behold divineness No elder than a boy!

Enter Imogen.

IMOGEN. Good masters, harm me not. Before I enter’d here I call’d, and thought To have begg’d or bought what I have took. Good troth, I have stol’n nought; nor would not though I had found Gold strew’d i’ th’ floor. Here’s money for my meat. I would have left it on the board, so soon As I had made my meal, and parted With pray’rs for the provider.

GUIDERIUS. Money, youth?

ARVIRAGUS. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt, As ’tis no better reckon’d but of those Who worship dirty gods.

IMOGEN. I see you’re angry. Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should Have died had I not made it.

BELARIUS. Whither bound?

IMOGEN. To Milford Haven.

BELARIUS. What’s your name?

IMOGEN. Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who Is bound for Italy; he embark’d at Milford; To whom being going, almost spent with hunger, I am fall’n in this offence.

BELARIUS. Prithee, fair youth, Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds By this rude place we live in. Well encounter'd! 'Tis almost night; you shall have better cheer Ere you depart, and thanks to stay and eat it. Boys, bid him welcome.

GUIDERIUS. Were you a woman, youth, I should woo hard but be your groom. In honesty I bid for you as I'd buy.

ARVIRAGUS. I'll make't my comfort He is a man. I'll love him as my brother; And such a welcome as I'd give to him After long absence, such is yours. Most welcome! Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.

IMOGEN. 'Mongst friends, If brothers. [Aside.] Would it had been so that they Had been my father's sons! Then had my prize Been less, and so more equal ballasting To thee, Posthumus.

BELARIUS. He wrings at some distress.

GUIDERIUS. Would I could free't!

ARVIRAGUS. Or I, whate'er it be, What pain it cost, what danger! Gods!

BELARIUS. [Whispering.] Hark, boys.

IMOGEN. [Aside.] Great men, That had a court no bigger than this cave, That did attend themselves, and had the virtue Which their own conscience seal'd them, laying by That nothing-gift of differing multitudes, Could not out-peer these twain. Pardon me, gods! I'd change my sex to be companion with them, Since Leonatus false.

BELARIUS. It shall be so. Boys, we'll go dress our hunt. Fair youth, come in. Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we have supp'd, We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story, So far as thou wilt speak it.

GUIDERIUS. Pray draw near.

ARVIRAGUS. The night to th' owl and morn to th' lark less welcome.

IMOGEN. Thanks, sir.

ARVIRAGUS. I pray draw near.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VIII. Rome. A public place.

Enter two Roman Senators and Tribunes.

FIRST SENATOR. This is the tenour of the Emperor’s writ: That since the common men are now in action ’Gainst the Pannonians and Dalmatians, And that the legions now in Gallia are Full weak to undertake our wars against The fall’n-off Britons, that we do incite The gentry to this business. He creates Lucius proconsul; and to you, the tribunes, For this immediate levy, he commands His absolute commission. Long live Cæsar!

TRIBUNE. Is Lucius general of the forces?

SECOND SENATOR. Ay.

TRIBUNE. Remaining now in Gallia?

FIRST SENATOR. With those legions Which I have spoke of, whereunto your levy Must be supplyant. The words of your commission Will tie you to the numbers and the time Of their dispatch.

TRIBUNE. We will discharge our duty.

[Exeunt.]

ACT IV

SCENE I. Wales. Near the cave of Belarius.

Enter Cloten alone.

CLOTEN. I am near to th’ place where they should meet, if Pisanio have mapp’d it truly. How fit his garments serve me! Why should his mistress, who was made by

him that made the tailor, not be fit too? The rather, saving reverence of the word, for ’tis said a woman’s fitness comes by fits. Therein I must play the workman. I dare speak it to myself, for it is not vain-glory for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber; I mean, the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less young, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in birth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single oppositions. Yet this imperceiverant thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is! Posthumus, thy head, which now is growing upon thy shoulders, shall within this hour be off; thy mistress enforced; thy garments cut to pieces before her face; and all this done, spurn her home to her father, who may, haply, be a little angry for my so rough usage; but my mother, having power of his testiness, shall turn all into my commendations. My horse is tied up safe. Out, sword, and to a sore purpose! Fortune, put them into my hand. This is the very description of their meeting-place; and the fellow dares not deceive me.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. Wales. Before the cave of Belarius.

Enter from the cave, Belarius, Guiderius, Arviragus and Imogen.

BELARIUS. [To Imogen.] You are not well. Remain here in the cave; We’ll come to you after hunting.

ARVIRAGUS. [To Imogen.] Brother, stay here. Are we not brothers?

IMOGEN. So man and man should be; But clay and clay differs in dignity, Whose dust is both alike. I am very sick.

GUIDERIUS. Go you to hunting; I’ll abide with him.

IMOGEN. So sick I am not, yet I am not well; But not so citizen a wanton as To seem to die ere sick. So please you, leave me; Stick to your journal course. The breach of custom Is breach of all. I am ill, but your being by me Cannot amend me;

society is no comfort To one not sociable. I am not very sick, Since I can reason of it. Pray you trust me here. I'll rob none but myself; and let me die, Stealing so poorly.

GUIDERIUS. I love thee; I have spoke it. How much the quantity, the weight as much As I do love my father.

BELARIUS. What? how? how?

ARVIRAGUS. If it be sin to say so, sir, I yoke me In my good brother's fault. I know not why I love this youth, and I have heard you say Love's reason's without reason. The bier at door, And a demand who is't shall die, I'd say 'My father, not this youth.'

BELARIUS. [Aside.] O noble strain! O worthiness of nature! breed of greatness! Cowards father cowards and base things sire base. Nature hath meal and bran, contempt and grace. I'm not their father; yet who this should be Doth miracle itself, lov'd before me.— 'Tis the ninth hour o' th' morn.

ARVIRAGUS. Brother, farewell.

IMOGEN. I wish ye sport.

ARVIRAGUS. Your health. [To Belarius.] So please you, sir.

IMOGEN. [Aside.] These are kind creatures. Gods, what lies I have heard! Our courtiers say all's savage but at court. Experience, O, thou disprov'st report! Th' imperious seas breed monsters; for the dish, Poor tributary rivers as sweet fish. I am sick still; heart-sick. Pisanio, I'll now taste of thy drug.

[Swallows some.]

GUIDERIUS. I could not stir him. He said he was gentle, but unfortunate; Dishonestly afflicted, but yet honest.

ARVIRAGUS. Thus did he answer me; yet said hereafter I might know more.

BELARIUS. To th' field, to th' field! We'll leave you for this time. Go in and rest.

ARVIRAGUS. We’ll not be long away.

BELARIUS. Pray be not sick, For you must be our huswife.

IMOGEN. Well, or ill, I am bound to you.

BELARIUS. And shalt be ever.

[Exit Imogen into the cave.]

This youth, howe’er distress’d, appears he hath had Good ancestors.

ARVIRAGUS. How angel-like he sings!

GUIDERIUS. But his neat cookery! He cut our roots in characters, And sauc’d our broths as Juno had been sick, And he her dieter.

ARVIRAGUS. Nobly he yokes A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh Was that it was for not being such a smile; The smile mocking the sigh that it would fly From so divine a temple to commix With winds that sailors rail at.

GUIDERIUS. I do note That grief and patience, rooted in him both, Mingle their spurs together.

ARVIRAGUS. Grow patience! And let the stinking elder, grief, untwine His perishing root with the increasing vine!

BELARIUS. It is great morning. Come, away! Who’s there?

Enter Cloten.

CLOTEN. I cannot find those runagates; that villain Hath mock’d me. I am faint.

BELARIUS. Those runagates? Means he not us? I partly know him; ’tis Cloten, the son o’ th’ Queen. I fear some ambush. I saw him not these many years, and yet I know ’tis he. We are held as outlaws. Hence!

GUIDERIUS. He is but one; you and my brother search What companies are near. Pray you away; Let me alone with him.

[Exeunt Belarius and Arviragus.]

CLOTEN. Soft! What are you That fly me thus? Some villain mountaineers? I have heard of such. What slave art thou?

GUIDERIUS. A thing More slavish did I ne’er than answering A slave without a knock.

CLOTEN. Thou art a robber, A law-breaker, a villain. Yield thee, thief.

GUIDERIUS. To who? To thee? What art thou? Have not I An arm as big as thine, a heart as big? Thy words, I grant, are bigger, for I wear not My dagger in my mouth. Say what thou art; Why I should yield to thee.

CLOTEN. Thou villain base, Know’st me not by my clothes?

GUIDERIUS. No, nor thy tailor, rascal, Who is thy grandfather; he made those clothes, Which, as it seems, make thee.

CLOTEN. Thou precious varlet, My tailor made them not.

GUIDERIUS. Hence, then, and thank The man that gave them thee. Thou art some fool; I am loath to beat thee.

CLOTEN. Thou injurious thief, Hear but my name, and tremble.

GUIDERIUS. What’s thy name?

CLOTEN. Cloten, thou villain.

GUIDERIUS. Cloten, thou double villain, be thy name, I cannot tremble at it. Were it Toad, or Adder, Spider, ’Twould move me sooner.

CLOTEN. To thy further fear, Nay, to thy mere confusion, thou shalt know I am son to th’ Queen.

GUIDERIUS. I’m sorry for’t; not seeming So worthy as thy birth.

CLOTEN. Art not afeard?

GUIDERIUS. Those that I reverence, those I fear—the wise; At fools I laugh, not fear them.

CLOTEN. Die the death. When I have slain thee with my proper hand, I'll follow those that even now fled hence, And on the gates of Lud's Town set your heads. Yield, rustic mountaineer.

[Exeunt, fighting.]

Enter Belarius and Arviragus.

BELARIUS. No company's abroad?

ARVIRAGUS. None in the world; you did mistake him, sure.

BELARIUS. I cannot tell; long is it since I saw him, But time hath nothing blurr'd those lines of favour Which then he wore; the snatches in his voice, And burst of speaking, were as his. I am absolute 'Twas very Cloten.

ARVIRAGUS. In this place we left them. I wish my brother make good time with him, You say he is so fell.

BELARIUS. Being scarce made up, I mean to man, he had not apprehension Or roaring terrors; for defect of judgement Is oft the cease of fear.

Enter Guiderius with Cloten's head.

But, see, thy brother.

GUIDERIUS. This Cloten was a fool, an empty purse; There was no money in't. Not Hercules Could have knock'd out his brains, for he had none; Yet I not doing this, the fool had borne My head as I do his.

BELARIUS. What hast thou done?

GUIDERIUS. I am perfect what: cut off one Cloten's head, Son to the Queen, after his own report; Who call'd me traitor, mountaineer, and swore With his own single hand he'd take us in, Displace our heads where, thank the gods, they grow, And set them on Lud's Town.

BELARIUS. We are all undone.

GUIDERIUS. Why, worthy father, what have we to lose But that he swore to take,

our lives? The law Protects not us; then why should we be tender To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us, Play judge and executioner all himself, For we do fear the law? What company Discover you abroad?

BELARIUS. No single soul Can we set eye on, but in all safe reason He must have some attendants. Though his humour Was nothing but mutation, ay, and that From one bad thing to worse, not frenzy, not Absolute madness could so far have rav'd, To bring him here alone. Although perhaps It may be heard at court that such as we Cave here, hunt here, are outlaws, and in time May make some stronger head, the which he hearing, As it is like him, might break out and swear He'd fetch us in; yet is't not probable To come alone, either he so undertaking Or they so suffering. Then on good ground we fear, If we do fear this body hath a tail More perilous than the head.

ARVIRAGUS. Let ordinance Come as the gods foresay it. Howsoe'er, My brother hath done well.

BELARIUS. I had no mind To hunt this day; the boy Fidele's sickness Did make my way long forth.

GUIDERIUS. With his own sword, Which he did wave against my throat, I have ta'en His head from him. I'll throw't into the creek Behind our rock, and let it to the sea And tell the fishes he's the Queen's son, Cloten. That's all I reck.

[Exit.]

BELARIUS. I fear 'twill be reveng'd. Would, Polydore, thou hadst not done't! though valour Becomes thee well enough.

ARVIRAGUS. Would I had done't, So the revenge alone pursu'd me! Polydore, I love thee brotherly, but envy much Thou hast robb'd me of this deed. I would revenges, That possible strength might meet, would seek us through, And put us to our answer.

BELARIUS. Well, 'tis done. We'll hunt no more today, nor seek for danger Where

there’s no profit. I prithee to our rock. You and Fidele play the cooks; I’ll stay Till hasty Polydore return, and bring him To dinner presently.

ARVIRAGUS. Poor sick Fidele! I’ll willingly to him; to gain his colour I’d let a parish of such Cloten’s blood, And praise myself for charity.

[Exit.]

BELARIUS. O thou goddess, Thou divine Nature, thou thyself thou blazon’st In these two princely boys! They are as gentle As zephyrs blowing below the violet, Not wagging his sweet head; and yet as rough, Their royal blood enchaf’d, as the rud’st wind That by the top doth take the mountain pine And make him stoop to th’ vale. ’Tis wonder That an invisible instinct should frame them To royalty unlearn’d, honour untaught, Civility not seen from other, valour That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop As if it had been sow’d. Yet still it’s strange What Cloten’s being here to us portends, Or what his death will bring us.

Enter Guiderius.

GUIDERIUS. Where’s my brother? I have sent Cloten’s clotpoll down the stream, In embassy to his mother; his body’s hostage For his return.

[Solemn music.]

BELARIUS. My ingenious instrument! Hark, Polydore, it sounds. But what occasion Hath Cadwal now to give it motion? Hark!

GUIDERIUS. Is he at home?

BELARIUS. He went hence even now.

GUIDERIUS. What does he mean? Since death of my dear’st mother It did not speak before. All solemn things Should answer solemn accidents. The matter? Triumphs for nothing and lamenting toys Is jollity for apes and grief for boys. Is Cadwal mad?

Enter Arviragus with Imogen as dead, bearing her in his arms.

BELARIUS. Look, here he comes, And brings the dire occasion in his arms Of what we blame him for!

ARVIRAGUS. The bird is dead That we have made so much on. I had rather Have skipp'd from sixteen years of age to sixty, To have turn'd my leaping time into a crutch, Than have seen this.

GUIDERIUS. O sweetest, fairest lily! My brother wears thee not the one half so well As when thou grew'st thyself.

BELARIUS. O melancholy! Who ever yet could sound thy bottom? find The ooze to show what coast thy sluggish crare Might'st easiliest harbour in? Thou blessed thing! Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but I, Thou diedst, a most rare boy, of melancholy. How found you him?

ARVIRAGUS. Stark, as you see; Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber, Not as death's dart, being laugh'd at; his right cheek Reposing on a cushion.

GUIDERIUS. Where?

ARVIRAGUS. O' th' floor; His arms thus leagu'd. I thought he slept, and put My clouted brogues from off my feet, whose rudeness Answer'd my steps too loud.

GUIDERIUS. Why, he but sleeps. If he be gone he'll make his grave a bed; With female fairies will his tomb be haunted, And worms will not come to thee.

ARVIRAGUS. With fairest flowers, Whilst summer lasts and I live here, Fidele, I'll sweeten thy sad grave. Thou shalt not lack The flower that's like thy face, pale primrose; nor The azur'd hare-bell, like thy veins; no, nor The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slander, Out-sweet'ned not thy breath. The ruddock would, With charitable bill (O bill, sore shaming Those rich-left heirs that let their fathers lie Without a monument!) bring thee all this; Yea, and furr'd moss besides, when flow'rs are none, To winter-ground thy corse—

GUIDERIUS. Prithee have done, And do not play in wench-like words with that

Which is so serious. Let us bury him, And not protract with admiration what Is now due debt. To th’ grave.

ARVIRAGUS. Say, where shall’s lay him?

GUIDERIUS. By good Euriphile, our mother.

ARVIRAGUS. Be’t so; And let us, Polydore, though now our voices Have got the mannish crack, sing him to th’ ground, As once to our mother; use like note and words, Save that Euriphile must be Fidele.

GUIDERIUS. Cadwal, I cannot sing. I’ll weep, and word it with thee; For notes of sorrow out of tune are worse Than priests and fanes that lie.

ARVIRAGUS. We’ll speak it, then.

BELARIUS. Great griefs, I see, med’cine the less, for Cloten Is quite forgot. He was a queen’s son, boys; And though he came our enemy, remember He was paid for that. Though mean and mighty rotting Together have one dust, yet reverence, That angel of the world, doth make distinction Of place ’tween high and low. Our foe was princely; And though you took his life, as being our foe, Yet bury him as a prince.

GUIDERIUS. Pray you fetch him hither. Thersites’ body is as good as Ajax’, When neither are alive.

ARVIRAGUS. If you’ll go fetch him, We’ll say our song the whilst. Brother, begin.

[Exit Belarius.]

GUIDERIUS. Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to th’ East; My father hath a reason for’t.

ARVIRAGUS. ’Tis true.

GUIDERIUS. Come on, then, and remove him.

ARVIRAGUS. So. Begin.

SONG

GUIDERIUS. Fear no more the heat o’ th’ sun, Nor the furious winter’s rages; Thou thy worldly task hast done, Home art gone, and ta’en thy wages. Golden lads and girls all must, As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

ARVIRAGUS. Fear no more the frown o’ th’ great; Thou art past the tyrant’s stroke. Care no more to clothe and eat; To thee the reed is as the oak. The sceptre, learning, physic, must All follow this and come to dust.

GUIDERIUS. Fear no more the lightning flash.

ARVIRAGUS. Nor th’ all-dreaded thunder-stone.

GUIDERIUS. Fear not slander, censure rash;

ARVIRAGUS. Thou hast finish’d joy and moan.

BOTH. All lovers young, all lovers must Consign to thee and come to dust.

GUIDERIUS. No exorciser harm thee!

ARVIRAGUS. Nor no witchcraft charm thee!

GUIDERIUS. Ghost unlaid forbear thee!

ARVIRAGUS. Nothing ill come near thee!

BOTH. Quiet consummation have, And renowned be thy grave!

Enter Belarius with the body of Cloten.

GUIDERIUS. We have done our obsequies. Come, lay him down.

BELARIUS. Here’s a few flowers; but ’bout midnight, more. The herbs that have on them cold dew o’ th’ night Are strewings fit’st for graves. Upon their faces. You were as flow’rs, now wither’d. Even so These herblets shall which we upon you strew. Come on, away. Apart upon our knees. The ground that gave them first has them again. Their pleasures here are past, so is their pain.

[Exeunt all but Imogen.]

IMOGEN. [Awaking.] Yes, sir, to Milford Haven. Which is the way? I thank you.

By yond bush? Pray, how far thither? ’Ods pittikins! can it be six mile yet? I have gone all night. Faith, I’ll lie down and sleep. But, soft! no bedfellow. O gods and goddesses!

[Seeing the body.]

These flow’rs are like the pleasures of the world; This bloody man, the care on’t. I hope I dream; For so I thought I was a cave-keeper, And cook to honest creatures. But ’tis not so; ’Twas but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing, Which the brain makes of fumes. Our very eyes Are sometimes, like our judgements, blind. Good faith, I tremble still with fear; but if there be Yet left in heaven as small a drop of pity As a wren’s eye, fear’d gods, a part of it! The dream’s here still. Even when I wake it is Without me, as within me; not imagin’d, felt. A headless man? The garments of Posthumus? I know the shape of’s leg; this is his hand, His foot Mercurial, his Martial thigh, The brawns of Hercules; but his Jovial face— Murder in heaven! How! ’Tis gone. Pisanio, All curses madded Hecuba gave the Greeks, And mine to boot, be darted on thee! Thou, Conspir’d with that irregulous devil, Cloten, Hath here cut off my lord. To write and read Be henceforth treacherous! Damn’d Pisanio Hath with his forged letters (damn’d Pisanio) From this most bravest vessel of the world Struck the main-top. O Posthumus! alas, Where is thy head? Where’s that? Ay me! where’s that? Pisanio might have kill’d thee at the heart, And left this head on. How should this be? Pisanio? ’Tis he and Cloten; malice and lucre in them Have laid this woe here. O, ’tis pregnant, pregnant! The drug he gave me, which he said was precious And cordial to me, have I not found it Murd’rous to th’ senses? That confirms it home. This is Pisanio’s deed, and Cloten. O! Give colour to my pale cheek with thy blood, That we the horrider may seem to those Which chance to find us. O, my lord, my lord!

[Falls fainting on the body.]

Enter Lucius, Captains and a Soothsayer.

CAPTAIN. To them the legions garrison'd in Gallia, After your will, have cross'd the sea, attending You here at Milford Haven; with your ships, They are in readiness.

LUCIUS. But what from Rome?

CAPTAIN. The Senate hath stirr'd up the confiners And gentlemen of Italy, most willing spirits, That promise noble service; and they come Under the conduct of bold Iachimo, Sienna's brother.

LUCIUS. When expect you them?

CAPTAIN. With the next benefit o' th' wind.

LUCIUS. This forwardness Makes our hopes fair. Command our present numbers Be muster'd; bid the captains look to't. Now, sir, What have you dream'd of late of this war's purpose?

SOOTHSAYER. Last night the very gods show'd me a vision (I fast and pray'd for their intelligence) thus: I saw Jove's bird, the Roman eagle, wing'd From the spongy south to this part of the west, There vanish'd in the sunbeams; which portends, Unless my sins abuse my divination, Success to th' Roman host.

LUCIUS. Dream often so, And never false. Soft, ho! what trunk is here Without his top? The ruin speaks that sometime It was a worthy building. How? a page? Or dead or sleeping on him? But dead, rather; For nature doth abhor to make his bed With the defunct, or sleep upon the dead. Let's see the boy's face.

CAPTAIN. He's alive, my lord.

LUCIUS. He'll then instruct us of this body. Young one, Inform us of thy fortunes; for it seems They crave to be demanded. Who is this Thou mak'st thy bloody pillow? Or who was he That, otherwise than noble nature did, Hath alter'd that good picture? What's thy interest In this sad wreck? How came't? Who is't? What art thou?

IMOGEN. I am nothing; or if not, Nothing to be were better. This was my master, A very valiant Briton and a good, That here by mountaineers lies slain. Alas! There is no more such masters. I may wander From east to occident; cry out for service; Try many, all good; serve truly; never Find such another master.

LUCIUS. ’Lack, good youth! Thou mov’st no less with thy complaining than Thy master in bleeding. Say his name, good friend.

IMOGEN. Richard du Champ. [Aside.] If I do lie, and do No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope They’ll pardon it.—Say you, sir?

LUCIUS. Thy name?

IMOGEN. Fidele, sir.

LUCIUS. Thou dost approve thyself the very same; Thy name well fits thy faith, thy faith thy name. Wilt take thy chance with me? I will not say Thou shalt be so well master’d; but, be sure, No less belov’d. The Roman Emperor’s letters, Sent by a consul to me, should not sooner Than thine own worth prefer thee. Go with me.

IMOGEN. I’ll follow, sir. But first, an’t please the gods, I’ll hide my master from the flies, as deep As these poor pickaxes can dig; and when With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha’ strew’d his grave, And on it said a century of prayers, Such as I can, twice o’er, I’ll weep and sigh; And leaving so his service, follow you, So please you entertain me.

LUCIUS. Ay, good youth; And rather father thee than master thee. My friends, The boy hath taught us manly duties; let us Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can, And make him with our pikes and partisans A grave. Come, arm him. Boy, he is preferr’d By thee to us; and he shall be interr’d As soldiers can. Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes. Some falls are means the happier to arise.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Britain. Cymbeline’s palace.

Enter Cymbeline, Lords, Pisanio and Attendants.

CYMBELINE. Again! and bring me word how ’tis with her.

[Exit an Attendant.]

A fever with the absence of her son; A madness, of which her life’s in danger. Heavens, How deeply you at once do touch me! Imogen, The great part of my comfort, gone; my queen Upon a desperate bed, and in a time When fearful wars point at me; her son gone, So needful for this present. It strikes me past The hope of comfort. But for thee, fellow, Who needs must know of her departure and Dost seem so ignorant, we’ll enforce it from thee By a sharp torture.

PISANIO. Sir, my life is yours; I humbly set it at your will; but for my mistress, I nothing know where she remains, why gone, Nor when she purposes return. Beseech your Highness, Hold me your loyal servant.

LORD. Good my liege, The day that she was missing he was here. I dare be bound he’s true and shall perform All parts of his subjection loyally. For Cloten, There wants no diligence in seeking him, And will no doubt be found.

CYMBELINE. The time is troublesome. [To Pisanio.] We’ll slip you for a season; but our jealousy Does yet depend.

LORD. So please your Majesty, The Roman legions, all from Gallia drawn, Are landed on your coast, with a supply Of Roman gentlemen by the Senate sent.

CYMBELINE. Now for the counsel of my son and queen! I am amaz’d with matter.

LORD. Good my liege, Your preparation can affront no less Than what you hear of. Come more, for more you’re ready. The want is but to put those pow’rs in motion That long to move.

CYMBELINE. I thank you. Let’s withdraw, And meet the time as it seeks us. We fear not What can from Italy annoy us; but We grieve at chances here. Away!

[Exeunt all but Pisanio.]

PISANIO. I heard no letter from my master since I wrote him Imogen was slain. ’Tis strange. Nor hear I from my mistress, who did promise To yield me often tidings. Neither know I What is betid to Cloten, but remain Perplex’d in all. The heavens still must work. Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true. These present wars shall find I love my country, Even to the note o’ th’ King, or I’ll fall in them. All other doubts, by time let them be clear’d: Fortune brings in some boats that are not steer’d.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV. Wales. Before the cave of Belarius.

Enter Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus.

GUIDERIUS. The noise is round about us.

BELARIUS. Let us from it.

ARVIRAGUS. What pleasure, sir, find we in life, to lock it From action and adventure?

GUIDERIUS. Nay, what hope Have we in hiding us? This way the Romans Must or for Britons slay us, or receive us For barbarous and unnatural revolts During their use, and slay us after.

BELARIUS. Sons, We’ll higher to the mountains; there secure us. To the King’s party there’s no going. Newness Of Cloten’s death (we being not known, not muster’d Among the bands) may drive us to a render Where we have liv’d, and so extort from’s that Which we have done, whose answer would be death, Drawn on with torture.

GUIDERIUS. This is, sir, a doubt In such a time nothing becoming you Nor satisfying us.

ARVIRAGUS. It is not likely That when they hear the Roman horses neigh, Behold their quarter’d fires, have both their eyes And ears so cloy’d importantly as now,

That they will waste their time upon our note, To know from whence we are.

BELARIUS. O, I am known Of many in the army. Many years, Though Cloten then but young, you see, not wore him From my remembrance. And, besides, the King Hath not deserv'd my service nor your loves, Who find in my exile the want of breeding, The certainty of this hard life; aye hopeless To have the courtesy your cradle promis'd, But to be still hot summer's tanlings and The shrinking slaves of winter.

GUIDERIUS. Than be so, Better to cease to be. Pray, sir, to th' army. I and my brother are not known; yourself So out of thought, and thereto so o'ergrown, Cannot be questioned.

ARVIRAGUS. By this sun that shines, I'll thither. What thing is't that I never Did see man die! scarce ever look'd on blood But that of coward hares, hot goats, and venison! Never bestrid a horse, save one that had A rider like myself, who ne'er wore rowel Nor iron on his heel! I am asham'd To look upon the holy sun, to have The benefit of his blest beams, remaining So long a poor unknown.

GUIDERIUS. By heavens, I'll go! If you will bless me, sir, and give me leave, I'll take the better care; but if you will not, The hazard therefore due fall on me by The hands of Romans!

ARVIRAGUS. So say I. Amen.

BELARIUS. No reason I, since of your lives you set So slight a valuation, should reserve My crack'd one to more care. Have with you, boys! If in your country wars you chance to die, That is my bed too, lads, and there I'll lie. Lead, lead. [Aside.] The time seems long; their blood thinks scorn Till it fly out and show them princes born.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V

SCENE I. Britain. The Roman camp.

Enter Posthumus alone, with a bloody handkerchief.

POSTHUMUS. Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee; for I wish'd Thou shouldst be colour'd thus. You married ones, If each of you should take this course, how many Must murder wives much better than themselves For wrying but a little! O Pisanio! Every good servant does not all commands; No bond but to do just ones. Gods! if you Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never Had liv'd to put on this; so had you saved The noble Imogen to repent, and struck Me, wretch more worth your vengeance. But alack, You snatch some hence for little faults; that's love, To have them fall no more. You some permit To second ills with ills, each elder worse, And make them dread it, to the doers' thrift. But Imogen is your own. Do your best wills, And make me blest to obey. I am brought hither Among th' Italian gentry, and to fight Against my lady's kingdom. 'Tis enough That, Britain, I have kill'd thy mistress; peace! I'll give no wound to thee. Therefore, good heavens, Hear patiently my purpose. I'll disrobe me Of these Italian weeds, and suit myself As does a Britain peasant. So I'll fight Against the part I come with; so I'll die For thee, O Imogen, even for whom my life Is every breath a death. And thus unknown, Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril Myself I'll dedicate. Let me make men know More valour in me than my habits show. Gods, put the strength o' th' Leonati in me! To shame the guise o' th' world, I will begin The fashion less without and more within.

[Exit.]

SCENE II. Britain. A field of battle between the British and Roman camps.

Enter Lucius, Iachimo and the Roman army at one door, and the British army at another, Leonatus Posthumus following like a poor soldier. They march over and go out. Alarums. Then enter again, in skirmish, Iachimo and Posthumus. He vanquisheth and disarmeth Iachimo and then leaves him.

IACHIMO. The heaviness and guilt within my bosom Takes off my manhood. I have belied a lady, The Princess of this country, and the air on't Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carl, A very drudge of nature's, have subdu'd me In my profession? Knighthoods and honours borne As I wear mine are titles but of scorn. If that thy gentry, Britain, go before This lout as he exceeds our lords, the odds Is that we scarce are men, and you are gods.

[Exit.]

The battle continues; the Britons fly; Cymbeline is taken. Then enter to his rescue Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus.

BELARIUS. Stand, stand! We have th' advantage of the ground; The lane is guarded; nothing routs us but The villainy of our fears.

GUIDERIUS and ARVIRAGUS. Stand, stand, and fight!

Enter Posthumus and seconds the Britons; they rescue Cymbeline and exeunt. Then re-enter Lucius and Iachimo with Imogen.

LUCIUS. Away, boy, from the troops, and save thyself; For friends kill friends, and the disorder's such As war were hoodwink'd.

IACHIMO. 'Tis their fresh supplies.

LUCIUS. It is a day turn'd strangely. Or betimes Let's reinforce or fly.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Another part of the field.

Enter Posthumus and a Briton Lord.

LORD. Cam'st thou from where they made the stand?

POSTHUMUS. I did: Though you, it seems, come from the fliers.

LORD. I did.

POSTHUMUS. No blame be to you, sir, for all was lost, But that the heavens

fought. The King himself Of his wings destitute, the army broken, And but the backs of Britons seen, all flying, Through a strait lane; the enemy, full-hearted, Lolling the tongue with slaught'ring, having work More plentiful than tools to do't, struck down Some mortally, some slightly touch'd, some falling Merely through fear, that the strait pass was damm'd With dead men hurt behind, and cowards living To die with length'ned shame.

LORD. Where was this lane?

POSTHUMUS. Close by the battle, ditch'd, and wall'd with turf, Which gave advantage to an ancient soldier, An honest one, I warrant, who deserv'd So long a breeding as his white beard came to, In doing this for's country. Athwart the lane He, with two striplings (lads more like to run The country base than to commit such slaughter; With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer Than those for preservation cas'd or shame) Made good the passage, cried to those that fled 'Our Britain's harts die flying, not our men. To darkness fleet souls that fly backwards! Stand; Or we are Romans and will give you that, Like beasts, which you shun beastly, and may save But to look back in frown. Stand, stand!' These three, Three thousand confident, in act as many— For three performers are the file when all The rest do nothing—with this word 'Stand, stand!' Accommodated by the place, more charming With their own nobleness, which could have turn'd A distaff to a lance, gilded pale looks, Part shame, part spirit renew'd; that some turn'd coward But by example (O, a sin in war Damn'd in the first beginners) 'gan to look The way that they did and to grin like lions Upon the pikes o' th' hunters. Then began A stop i' th' chaser, a retire; anon A rout, confusion thick. Forthwith they fly, Chickens, the way which they stoop'd eagles; slaves, The strides they victors made; and now our cowards, Like fragments in hard voyages, became The life o' th' need. Having found the back-door open Of the unguarded hearts, heavens, how they wound! Some slain before, some dying, some their friends O'erborne i' th' former wave. Ten chas'd by one Are now each one the slaughterman of twenty. Those that would die or ere resist are grown The

mortal bugs o’ th’ field.

LORD. This was strange chance: A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys.

POSTHUMUS. Nay, do not wonder at it; you are made Rather to wonder at the things you hear Than to work any. Will you rhyme upon’t, And vent it for a mock’ry? Here is one:

‘Two boys, an old man (twice a boy), a lane, Preserv’d the Britons, was the Romans’ bane.’

LORD. Nay, be not angry, sir.

POSTHUMUS. ’Lack, to what end? Who dares not stand his foe I’ll be his friend; For if he’ll do as he is made to do, I know he’ll quickly fly my friendship too. You have put me into rhyme.

LORD. Farewell; you’re angry.

[Exit.]

POSTHUMUS. Still going? This is a lord! O noble misery, To be i’ th’ field and ask ‘What news?’ of me! Today how many would have given their honours To have sav’d their carcasses! took heel to do’t, And yet died too! I, in mine own woe charm’d, Could not find death where I did hear him groan, Nor feel him where he struck. Being an ugly monster, ’Tis strange he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds, Sweet words; or hath moe ministers than we That draw his knives i’ th’ war. Well, I will find him; For being now a favourer to the Briton, No more a Briton, I have resum’d again The part I came in. Fight I will no more, But yield me to the veriest hind that shall Once touch my shoulder. Great the slaughter is Here made by th’ Roman; great the answer be Britons must take. For me, my ransom’s death; On either side I come to spend my breath, Which neither here I’ll keep nor bear again, But end it by some means for Imogen.

Enter two British Captains and soldiers.

FIRST CAPTAIN. Great Jupiter be prais’d! Lucius is taken. ’Tis thought the old man and his sons were angels.

SECOND CAPTAIN. There was a fourth man, in a silly habit, That gave th’ affront with them.

FIRST CAPTAIN. So ’tis reported; But none of ’em can be found. Stand! who’s there?

POSTHUMUS. A Roman, Who had not now been drooping here if seconds Had answer’d him.

SECOND CAPTAIN. Lay hands on him; a dog! A leg of Rome shall not return to tell What crows have peck’d them here. He brags his service, As if he were of note. Bring him to th’ King.

Enter Cymbeline, Belarius, Guiderius, Arviragus, Pisanio and Roman captives. The Captains present Posthumus to Cymbeline, who delivers him over to a gaoler.

[Exeunt omnes.]

SCENE IV. Britain. A prison.

Enter Posthumus and two Gaolers.

FIRST GAOLER. You shall not now be stol’n, you have locks upon you; So graze as you find pasture.

SECOND GAOLER. Ay, or a stomach.

[Exeunt Gaolers.]

POSTHUMUS. Most welcome, bondage! for thou art a way, I think, to liberty. Yet am I better Than one that’s sick o’ th’ gout, since he had rather Groan so in perpetuity than be cur’d By th’ sure physician death, who is the key T’ unbar these locks. My conscience, thou art fetter’d More than my shanks and wrists; you good gods, give me The penitent instrument to pick that bolt, Then, free for ever! Is’t

enough I am sorry? So children temporal fathers do appease; Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent, I cannot do it better than in gyves, Desir'd more than constrain'd. To satisfy, If of my freedom 'tis the main part, take No stricter render of me than my all. I know you are more clement than vile men, Who of their broken debtors take a third, A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again On their abatement; that's not my desire. For Imogen's dear life take mine; and though 'Tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life; you coin'd it. 'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp; Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake; You rather mine, being yours. And so, great pow'rs, If you will take this audit, take this life, And cancel these cold bonds. O Imogen! I'll speak to thee in silence.

[Sleeps.]

Solemn music. Enter, as in an apparition, Sicilius Leonatus, father to Posthumus, an old man attired like a warrior; leading in his hand an ancient matron, his wife and Mother to Posthumus, with music before them. Then, after other music, follows the two young Leonati, brothers to Posthumus, with wounds, as they died in the wars. They circle Posthumus round as he lies sleeping.

SICILIUS. No more, thou thunder-master, show Thy spite on mortal flies. With Mars fall out, with Juno chide, That thy adulteries Rates and revenges. Hath my poor boy done aught but well, Whose face I never saw? I died whilst in the womb he stay'd Attending nature's law; Whose father then, as men report Thou orphans' father art, Thou shouldst have been, and shielded him From this earth-vexing smart.

MOTHER. Lucina lent not me her aid, But took me in my throes, That from me was Posthumus ripp'd, Came crying 'mongst his foes, A thing of pity.

SICILIUS. Great Nature like his ancestry Moulded the stuff so fair That he deserv'd the praise o' th' world As great Sicilius' heir.

FIRST BROTHER. When once he was mature for man, In Britain where was he That could stand up his parallel, Or fruitful object be In eye of Imogen, that best

Could deem his dignity?

MOTHER. With marriage wherefore was he mock’d, To be exil’d and thrown From Leonati seat and cast From her his dearest one, Sweet Imogen?

SICILIUS. Why did you suffer Iachimo, Slight thing of Italy, To taint his nobler heart and brain With needless jealousy, And to become the geck and scorn O’ th’ other’s villainy?

SECOND BROTHER. For this from stiller seats we came, Our parents and us twain, That, striking in our country’s cause, Fell bravely and were slain, Our fealty and Tenantius’ right With honour to maintain.

FIRST BROTHER. Like hardiment Posthumus hath To Cymbeline perform’d. Then, Jupiter, thou king of gods, Why hast thou thus adjourn’d The graces for his merits due, Being all to dolours turn’d?

SICILIUS. Thy crystal window ope; look out; No longer exercise Upon a valiant race thy harsh And potent injuries.

MOTHER. Since, Jupiter, our son is good, Take off his miseries.

SICILIUS. Peep through thy marble mansion. Help! Or we poor ghosts will cry To th’ shining synod of the rest Against thy deity.

BROTHERS. Help, Jupiter! or we appeal, And from thy justice fly.

Jupiter descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle. He throws a thunderbolt. The Ghosts fall on their knees.

JUPITER. No more, you petty spirits of region low, Offend our hearing; hush! How dare you ghosts Accuse the Thunderer whose bolt, you know, Sky-planted, batters all rebelling coasts? Poor shadows of Elysium, hence and rest Upon your never-withering banks of flow’rs. Be not with mortal accidents oppress: No care of yours it is; you know ’tis ours. Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift, The more delay’d, delighted. Be content; Your low-laid son our godhead will uplift; His

comforts thrive, his trials well are spent. Our Jovial star reign'd at his birth, and in Our temple was he married. Rise and fade! He shall be lord of Lady Imogen, And happier much by his affliction made. This tablet lay upon his breast, wherein Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine; And so, away; no farther with your din Express impatience, lest you stir up mine. Mount, eagle, to my palace crystalline.

[Ascends.]

SICILIUS. He came in thunder; his celestial breath Was sulphurous to smell; the holy eagle Stoop'd as to foot us. His ascension is More sweet than our blest fields. His royal bird Prunes the immortal wing, and cloys his beak, As when his god is pleas'd.

ALL. Thanks, Jupiter!

SICILIUS. The marble pavement closes, he is enter'd His radiant roof. Away! and, to be blest, Let us with care perform his great behest.

[Ghosts vanish.]

POSTHUMUS. [Waking.] Sleep, thou has been a grandsire and begot A father to me; and thou hast created A mother and two brothers. But, O scorn, Gone! They went hence so soon as they were born. And so I am awake. Poor wretches, that depend On greatness' favour, dream as I have done; Wake and find nothing. But, alas, I swerve; Many dream not to find, neither deserve, And yet are steep'd in favours; so am I, That have this golden chance, and know not why. What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one! Be not, as is our fangled world, a garment Nobler than that it covers. Let thy effects So follow to be most unlike our courtiers, As good as promise.

[Reads.] When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embrac'd by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopp'd branches which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be

fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty.

’Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen Tongue, and brain not; either both or nothing, Or senseless speaking, or a speaking such As sense cannot untie. Be what it is, The action of my life is like it, which I’ll keep, if but for sympathy.

Enter Gaoler.

GAOLER. Come, sir, are you ready for death?

POSTHUMUS. Over-roasted rather; ready long ago.

GAOLER. Hanging is the word, sir; if you be ready for that, you are well cook’d.

POSTHUMUS. So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot.

GAOLER. A heavy reckoning for you, sir. But the comfort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear no more tavern bills, which are often the sadness of parting, as the procuring of mirth. You come in faint for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink; sorry that you have paid too much, and sorry that you are paid too much; purse and brain both empty; the brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light, being drawn of heaviness. O, of this contradiction you shall now be quit. O, the charity of a penny cord! It sums up thousands in a trice. You have no true debitor and creditor but it; of what’s past, is, and to come, the discharge. Your neck, sir, is pen, book, and counters; so the acquittance follows.

POSTHUMUS. I am merrier to die than thou art to live.

GAOLER. Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the toothache. But a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change places with his officer; for look you, sir, you know not which way you shall go.

POSTHUMUS. Yes indeed do I, fellow.

GAOLER. Your death has eyes in’s head, then; I have not seen him so pictur’d. You must either be directed by some that take upon them to know, or to take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know, or jump the after-inquiry on your

own peril. And how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you'll never return to tell one.

POSTHUMUS. I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going, but such as wink and will not use them.

GAOLER. What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness! I am sure hanging's the way of winking.

Enter a Messenger.

MESSENGER. Knock off his manacles; bring your prisoner to the King.

POSTHUMUS. Thou bring'st good news: I am call'd to be made free.

GAOLER. I'll be hang'd then.

POSTHUMUS. Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler; no bolts for the dead.

[Exeunt Posthumus and Messenger.]

GAOLER. Unless a man would marry a gallows and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone. Yet, on my conscience, there are verier knaves desire to live, for all he be a Roman; and there be some of them too that die against their wills; so should I, if I were one. I would we were all of one mind, and one mind good. O, there were desolation of gaolers and gallowses! I speak against my present profit, but my wish hath a preferment in't.

[Exit.]

SCENE V. Britain. Cymbeline's tent.

Enter Cymbeline, Belarius, Guiderius, Arviragus, Pisanio, Lords, Officers and Attendants.

CYMBELINE. Stand by my side, you whom the gods have made Preservers of my throne. Woe is my heart That the poor soldier that so richly fought, Whose rags sham'd gilded arms, whose naked breast Stepp'd before targes of proof, cannot be

found. He shall be happy that can find him, if Our grace can make him so.

BELARIUS. I never saw Such noble fury in so poor a thing; Such precious deeds in one that promis'd nought But beggary and poor looks.

CYMBELINE. No tidings of him?

PISANIO. He hath been search'd among the dead and living, But no trace of him.

CYMBELINE. To my grief, I am The heir of his reward, [To Belarius, Guiderius, and Arviragus] which I will add To you, the liver, heart, and brain of Britain, By whom I grant she lives. 'Tis now the time To ask of whence you are. Report it.

BELARIUS. Sir, In Cambria are we born, and gentlemen; Further to boast were neither true nor modest, Unless I add we are honest.

CYMBELINE. Bow your knees. Arise my knights o' th' battle; I create you Companions to our person, and will fit you With dignities becoming your estates.

Enter Cornelius and Ladies.

There's business in these faces. Why so sadly Greet you our victory? You look like Romans, And not o' th' court of Britain.

CORNELIUS. Hail, great King! To sour your happiness I must report The Queen is dead.

CYMBELINE. Who worse than a physician Would this report become? But I consider By med'cine life may be prolong'd, yet death Will seize the doctor too. How ended she?

CORNELIUS. With horror, madly dying, like her life; Which, being cruel to the world, concluded Most cruel to herself. What she confess'd I will report, so please you; these her women Can trip me if I err, who with wet cheeks Were present when she finish'd.

CYMBELINE. Prithee say.

CORNELIUS. First, she confess'd she never lov'd you; only Affected greatness got

by you, not you; Married your royalty, was wife to your place; Abhorr’d your person.

CYMBELINE. She alone knew this; And but she spoke it dying, I would not Believe her lips in opening it. Proceed.

CORNELIUS. Your daughter, whom she bore in hand to love With such integrity, she did confess Was as a scorpion to her sight; whose life, But that her flight prevented it, she had Ta’en off by poison.

CYMBELINE. O most delicate fiend! Who is’t can read a woman? Is there more?

CORNELIUS. More, sir, and worse. She did confess she had For you a mortal mineral, which, being took, Should by the minute feed on life, and ling’ring, By inches waste you. In which time she purpos’d, By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to O’ercome you with her show; and in time, When she had fitted you with her craft, to work Her son into th’ adoption of the crown; But failing of her end by his strange absence, Grew shameless-desperate, open’d, in despite Of heaven and men, her purposes, repented The evils she hatch’d were not effected; so, Despairing, died.

CYMBELINE. Heard you all this, her women?

LADIES. We did, so please your Highness.

CYMBELINE. Mine eyes Were not in fault, for she was beautiful; Mine ears, that heard her flattery; nor my heart That thought her like her seeming. It had been vicious To have mistrusted her; yet, O my daughter! That it was folly in me thou mayst say, And prove it in thy feeling. Heaven mend all!

Enter Lucius, Iachimo, the Soothsayer and other Roman prisoners, guarded; Posthumus behind, and Imogen.

Thou com’st not, Caius, now for tribute; that The Britons have raz’d out, though with the loss Of many a bold one, whose kinsmen have made suit That their good

souls may be appeas’d with slaughter Of you their captives, which ourself have granted; So think of your estate.

LUCIUS. Consider, sir, the chance of war. The day Was yours by accident; had it gone with us, We should not, when the blood was cool, have threaten’d Our prisoners with the sword. But since the gods Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives May be call’d ransom, let it come. Sufficeth A Roman with a Roman’s heart can suffer. Augustus lives to think on’t; and so much For my peculiar care. This one thing only I will entreat: my boy, a Briton born, Let him be ransom’d. Never master had A page so kind, so duteous, diligent, So tender over his occasions, true, So feat, so nurse-like; let his virtue join With my request, which I’ll make bold your Highness Cannot deny; he hath done no Briton harm Though he have serv’d a Roman. Save him, sir, And spare no blood beside.

CYMBELINE. I have surely seen him; His favour is familiar to me. Boy, Thou hast look’d thyself into my grace, And art mine own. I know not why, wherefore To say “Live, boy.” Ne’er thank thy master. Live; And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt, Fitting my bounty and thy state, I’ll give it; Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner, The noblest ta’en.

IMOGEN. I humbly thank your Highness.

LUCIUS. I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad, And yet I know thou wilt.

IMOGEN. No, no! Alack, There’s other work in hand. I see a thing Bitter to me as death; your life, good master, Must shuffle for itself.

LUCIUS. The boy disdains me, He leaves me, scorns me. Briefly die their joys That place them on the truth of girls and boys. Why stands he so perplex’d?

CYMBELINE. What wouldst thou, boy? I love thee more and more; think more and more What’s best to ask. Know’st him thou look’st on? Speak, Wilt have him live? Is he thy kin? thy friend?

IMOGEN. He is a Roman, no more kin to me Than I to your Highness; who, being

born your vassal, Am something nearer.

CYMBELINE. Wherefore ey'st him so?

IMOGEN. I'll tell you, sir, in private, if you please To give me hearing.

CYMBELINE. Ay, with all my heart, And lend my best attention. What's thy name?

IMOGEN. Fidele, sir.

CYMBELINE. Thou'rt my good youth, my page; I'll be thy master. Walk with me; speak freely.

[Cymbeline and Imogen converse apart.]

BELARIUS. Is not this boy reviv'd from death?

ARVIRAGUS. One sand another Not more resembles that sweet rosy lad Who died and was Fidele. What think you?

GUIDERIUS. The same dead thing alive.

BELARIUS. Peace, peace! see further. He eyes us not; forbear. Creatures may be alike; were't he, I am sure He would have spoke to us.

GUIDERIUS. But we see him dead.

BELARIUS. Be silent; let's see further.

PISANIO. [Aside.] It is my mistress. Since she is living, let the time run on To good or bad.

[Cymbeline and Imogen advance.]

CYMBELINE. Come, stand thou by our side; Make thy demand aloud. [To Iachimo.] Sir, step you forth; Give answer to this boy, and do it freely, Or, by our greatness and the grace of it, Which is our honour, bitter torture shall Winnow the truth from falsehood. On, speak to him.

IMOGEN. My boon is that this gentleman may render Of whom he had this ring.

POSTHUMUS. [Aside.] What's that to him?

CYMBELINE. That diamond upon your finger, say How came it yours?

IACHIMO. Thou'lt torture me to leave unspoken that Which to be spoke would torture thee.

CYMBELINE. How? me?

IACHIMO. I am glad to be constrain'd to utter that Which torments me to conceal. By villainy I got this ring; 'twas Leonatus' jewel, Whom thou didst banish; and—which more may grieve thee, As it doth me—a nobler sir ne'er liv'd 'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou hear more, my lord?

CYMBELINE. All that belongs to this.

IACHIMO. That paragon, thy daughter, For whom my heart drops blood and my false spirits Quail to remember—Give me leave, I faint.

CYMBELINE. My daughter? What of her? Renew thy strength; I had rather thou shouldst live while nature will Than die ere I hear more. Strive, man, and speak.

IACHIMO. Upon a time, unhappy was the clock That struck the hour: was in Rome, accurs'd The mansion where: 'twas at a feast, O, would Our viands had been poison'd (or at least Those which I heav'd to head) the good Posthumus (What should I say? he was too good to be Where ill men were, and was the best of all Amongst the rar'st of good ones) sitting sadly Hearing us praise our loves of Italy For beauty that made barren the swell'd boast Of him that best could speak; for feature, laming The shrine of Venus or straight-pight Minerva, Postures beyond brief nature; for condition, A shop of all the qualities that man Loves woman for; besides that hook of wiving, Fairness which strikes the eye.

CYMBELINE. I stand on fire. Come to the matter.

IACHIMO. All too soon I shall, Unless thou wouldst grieve quickly. This Posthumus, Most like a noble lord in love and one That had a royal lover, took his hint; And (not dispraising whom we prais'd, therein He was as calm as virtue) he

began His mistress' picture; which by his tongue being made, And then a mind put in't, either our brags Were crack'd of kitchen trulls, or his description Prov'd us unspeaking sots.

CYMBELINE. Nay, nay, to th' purpose.

IACHIMO. Your daughter's chastity (there it begins) He spake of her as Dian had hot dreams And she alone were cold; whereat I, wretch, Made scruple of his praise, and wager'd with him Pieces of gold 'gainst this which then he wore Upon his honour'd finger, to attain In suit the place of's bed, and win this ring By hers and mine adultery. He, true knight, No lesser of her honour confident Than I did truly find her, stakes this ring; And would so, had it been a carbuncle Of Phoebus' wheel; and might so safely, had it Been all the worth of's car. Away to Britain Post I in this design. Well may you, sir, Remember me at court, where I was taught Of your chaste daughter the wide difference 'Twixt amorous and villainous. Being thus quench'd Of hope, not longing, mine Italian brain Gan in your duller Britain operate Most vilely; for my vantage, excellent; And, to be brief, my practice so prevail'd That I return'd with simular proof enough To make the noble Leonatus mad, By wounding his belief in her renown With tokens thus and thus; averring notes Of chamber-hanging, pictures, this her bracelet (O cunning, how I got it!) nay, some marks Of secret on her person, that he could not But think her bond of chastity quite crack'd, I having ta'en the forfeit. Whereupon Methinks I see him now—

POSTHUMUS. [Coming forward.] Ay, so thou dost, Italian fiend! Ay me, most credulous fool, Egregious murderer, thief, anything That's due to all the villains past, in being, To come! O, give me cord, or knife, or poison, Some upright justicer! Thou, King, send out For torturers ingenious. It is I That all th' abhorred things o' th' earth amend By being worse than they. I am Posthumus, That kill'd thy daughter; villain-like, I lie; That caus'd a lesser villain than myself, A sacrilegious thief, to do't. The temple Of virtue was she; yea, and she herself. Spit, and throw stones, cast

mire upon me, set The dogs o’ th’ street to bay me. Every villain Be call’d Posthumus Leonatus, and Be villainy less than ’twas! O Imogen! My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen, Imogen, Imogen!

IMOGEN. Peace, my lord. Hear, hear!

POSTHUMUS. Shall’s have a play of this? Thou scornful page, There lies thy part.

[Strikes her. She falls.]

PISANIO. O gentlemen, help! Mine and your mistress! O, my lord Posthumus! You ne’er kill’d Imogen till now. Help, help! Mine honour’d lady!

CYMBELINE. Does the world go round?

POSTHUMUS. How comes these staggers on me?

PISANIO. Wake, my mistress!

CYMBELINE. If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me To death with mortal joy.

PISANIO. How fares my mistress?

IMOGEN. O, get thee from my sight; Thou gav’st me poison. Dangerous fellow, hence! Breathe not where princes are.

CYMBELINE. The tune of Imogen!

PISANIO. Lady, The gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if That box I gave you was not thought by me A precious thing! I had it from the Queen.

CYMBELINE. New matter still?

IMOGEN. It poison’d me.

CORNELIUS. O gods! I left out one thing which the Queen confess’d, Which must approve thee honest. ‘If Pisanio Have’ said she ‘given his mistress that confection Which I gave him for cordial, she is serv’d As I would serve a rat.’

CYMBELINE. What’s this, Cornelius?

CORNELIUS. The Queen, sir, very oft importun’d me To temper poisons for her;

still pretending The satisfaction of her knowledge only In killing creatures vile, as cats and dogs, Of no esteem. I, dreading that her purpose Was of more danger, did compound for her A certain stuff, which, being ta'en would cease The present pow'r of life, but in short time All offices of nature should again Do their due functions. Have you ta'en of it?

IMOGEN. Most like I did, for I was dead.

BELARIUS. My boys, There was our error.

GUIDERIUS. This is sure Fidele.

IMOGEN. Why did you throw your wedded lady from you? Think that you are upon a rock, and now Throw me again.

[Embracing him.]

POSTHUMUS. Hang there like fruit, my soul, Till the tree die!

CYMBELINE. How now, my flesh? my child? What, mak'st thou me a dullard in this act? Wilt thou not speak to me?

IMOGEN. [Kneeling.] Your blessing, sir.

BELARIUS. [To Guiderius and Arviragus.] Though you did love this youth, I blame ye not; You had a motive for't.

CYMBELINE. My tears that fall Prove holy water on thee! Imogen, Thy mother's dead.

IMOGEN. I am sorry for't, my lord.

CYMBELINE. O, she was naught, and long of her it was That we meet here so strangely; but her son Is gone, we know not how nor where.

PISANIO. My lord, Now fear is from me, I'll speak troth. Lord Cloten, Upon my lady's missing, came to me With his sword drawn, foam'd at the mouth, and swore, If I discover'd not which way she was gone, It was my instant death. By accident I had a feigned letter of my master's Then in my pocket, which directed him To seek

her on the mountains near to Milford; Where, in a frenzy, in my master's garments, Which he enforc'd from me, away he posts With unchaste purpose, and with oath to violate My lady's honour. What became of him I further know not.

GUIDERIUS. Let me end the story: I slew him there.

CYMBELINE. Marry, the gods forfend! I would not thy good deeds should from my lips Pluck a hard sentence. Prithee, valiant youth, Deny't again.

GUIDERIUS. I have spoke it, and I did it.

CYMBELINE. He was a prince.

GUIDERIUS. A most incivil one. The wrongs he did me Were nothing prince-like; for he did provoke me With language that would make me spurn the sea, If it could so roar to me. I cut off's head, And am right glad he is not standing here To tell this tale of mine.

CYMBELINE. I am sorry for thee. By thine own tongue thou art condemn'd, and must Endure our law. Thou'rt dead.

IMOGEN. That headless man I thought had been my lord.

CYMBELINE. Bind the offender, And take him from our presence.

BELARIUS. Stay, sir King. This man is better than the man he slew, As well descended as thyself, and hath More of thee merited than a band of Clotens Had ever scar for. [To the guard.] Let his arms alone; They were not born for bondage.

CYMBELINE. Why, old soldier, Wilt thou undo the worth thou art unpaid for By tasting of our wrath? How of descent As good as we?

ARVIRAGUS. In that he spake too far.

CYMBELINE. And thou shalt die for't.

BELARIUS. We will die all three; But I will prove that two on's are as good As I have given out him. My sons, I must For mine own part unfold a dangerous speech, Though haply well for you.

ARVIRAGUS. Your danger’s ours.

GUIDERIUS. And our good his.

BELARIUS. Have at it then by leave! Thou hadst, great King, a subject who Was call’d Belarius.

CYMBELINE. What of him? He is A banish’d traitor.

BELARIUS. He it is that hath Assum’d this age; indeed a banish’d man; I know not how a traitor.

CYMBELINE. Take him hence, The whole world shall not save him.

BELARIUS. Not too hot. First pay me for the nursing of thy sons, And let it be confiscate all, so soon As I have receiv’d it.

CYMBELINE. Nursing of my sons?

BELARIUS. I am too blunt and saucy: here’s my knee. Ere I arise I will prefer my sons; Then spare not the old father. Mighty sir, These two young gentlemen that call me father, And think they are my sons, are none of mine; They are the issue of your loins, my liege, And blood of your begetting.

CYMBELINE. How? my issue?

BELARIUS. So sure as you your father’s. I, old Morgan, Am that Belarius whom you sometime banish’d. Your pleasure was my mere offence, my punishment Itself, and all my treason; that I suffer’d Was all the harm I did. These gentle princes (For such and so they are) these twenty years Have I train’d up; those arts they have as I Could put into them. My breeding was, sir, as Your Highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile, Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children Upon my banishment; I mov’d her to’t, Having receiv’d the punishment before For that which I did then. Beaten for loyalty Excited me to treason. Their dear loss, The more of you ’twas felt, the more it shap’d Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir, Here are your sons again, and I must lose Two of the sweet’st companions in the world. The

benediction of these covering heavens Fall on their heads like dew! for they are worthy To inlay heaven with stars.

CYMBELINE. Thou weep'st and speak'st. The service that you three have done is more Unlike than this thou tell'st. I lost my children. If these be they, I know not how to wish A pair of worthier sons.

BELARIUS. Be pleas'd awhile. This gentleman, whom I call Polydore, Most worthy prince, as yours, is true Guiderius; This gentleman, my Cadwal, Arviragus, Your younger princely son; he, sir, was lapp'd In a most curious mantle, wrought by th' hand Of his queen mother, which for more probation I can with ease produce.

CYMBELINE. Guiderius had Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star; It was a mark of wonder.

BELARIUS. This is he, Who hath upon him still that natural stamp. It was wise nature's end in the donation, To be his evidence now.

CYMBELINE. O, what am I? A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother Rejoic'd deliverance more. Blest pray you be, That, after this strange starting from your orbs, You may reign in them now! O Imogen, Thou hast lost by this a kingdom.

IMOGEN. No, my lord; I have got two worlds by't. O my gentle brothers, Have we thus met? O, never say hereafter But I am truest speaker! You call'd me brother, When I was but your sister: I you brothers, When we were so indeed.

CYMBELINE. Did you e'er meet?

ARVIRAGUS. Ay, my good lord.

GUIDERIUS. And at first meeting lov'd, Continu'd so until we thought he died.

CORNELIUS. By the Queen's dram she swallow'd.

CYMBELINE. O rare instinct! When shall I hear all through? This fierce abridgement Hath to it circumstantial branches, which Distinction should be rich in. Where? how liv'd you? And when came you to serve our Roman captive? How

parted with your brothers? how first met them? Why fled you from the court? and whither? These, And your three motives to the battle, with I know not how much more, should be demanded, And all the other by-dependances, From chance to chance; but nor the time nor place Will serve our long interrogatories. See, Posthumus anchors upon Imogen; And she, like harmless lightning, throws her eye On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting Each object with a joy; the counterchange Is severally in all. Let's quit this ground, And smoke the temple with our sacrifices. [To Belarius.] Thou art my brother; so we'll hold thee ever.

IMOGEN. You are my father too, and did relieve me To see this gracious season.

CYMBELINE. All o'erjoy'd Save these in bonds. Let them be joyful too, For they shall taste our comfort.

IMOGEN. My good master, I will yet do you service.

LUCIUS. Happy be you!

CYMBELINE. The forlorn soldier, that so nobly fought, He would have well becom'd this place and grac'd The thankings of a king.

POSTHUMUS. I am, sir, The soldier that did company these three In poor beseeming; 'twas a fitment for The purpose I then follow'd. That I was he, Speak, Iachimo. I had you down, and might Have made you finish.

IACHIMO. [Kneeling.] I am down again; But now my heavy conscience sinks my knee, As then your force did. Take that life, beseech you, Which I so often owe; but your ring first, And here the bracelet of the truest princess That ever swore her faith.

POSTHUMUS. Kneel not to me. The pow'r that I have on you is to spare you; The malice towards you to forgive you. Live, And deal with others better.

CYMBELINE. Nobly doom'd! We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law; Pardon's the word to all.

ARVIRAGUS. You holp us, sir, As you did mean indeed to be our brother; Joy'd

are we that you are.

POSTHUMUS. Your servant, Princes. Good my lord of Rome, Call forth your soothsayer. As I slept, methought Great Jupiter, upon his eagle back'd, Appear'd to me, with other spritely shows Of mine own kindred. When I wak'd, I found This label on my bosom; whose containing Is so from sense in hardness that I can Make no collection of it. Let him show His skill in the construction.

LUCIUS. Philarmonus!

SOOTHSAYER. Here, my good lord.

LUCIUS. Read, and declare the meaning.

SOOTHSAYER. [Reads.] When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embrac'd by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopp'd branches which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty. Thou, Leonatus, art the lion's whelp; The fit and apt construction of thy name, Being Leo-natus, doth import so much. [To Cymbeline] The piece of tender air, thy virtuous daughter, Which we call mollis aer, and mollis aer We term it mulier; which mulier I divine Is this most constant wife, who even now Answering the letter of the oracle, Unknown to you, unsought, were clipp'd about With this most tender air.

CYMBELINE. This hath some seeming.

SOOTHSAYER. The lofty cedar, royal Cymbeline, Personates thee; and thy lopp'd branches point Thy two sons forth, who, by Belarius stol'n, For many years thought dead, are now reviv'd, To the majestic cedar join'd, whose issue Promises Britain peace and plenty.

CYMBELINE. Well, My peace we will begin. And, Caius Lucius, Although the victor, we submit to Cæsar And to the Roman empire, promising To pay our wonted tribute, from the which We were dissuaded by our wicked queen, Whom heavens in

justice, both on her and hers, Have laid most heavy hand.

SOOTHSAYER. The fingers of the pow’rs above do tune The harmony of this peace. The vision Which I made known to Lucius ere the stroke Of yet this scarce-cold battle, at this instant Is full accomplish’d; for the Roman eagle, From south to west on wing soaring aloft, Lessen’d herself and in the beams o’ th’ sun So vanish’d; which foreshow’d our princely eagle, Th’ imperial Cæsar, should again unite His favour with the radiant Cymbeline, Which shines here in the west.

CYMBELINE. Laud we the gods; And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils From our bless’d altars. Publish we this peace To all our subjects. Set we forward; let A Roman and a British ensign wave Friendly together. So through Lud’s Town march; And in the temple of great Jupiter Our peace we’ll ratify; seal it with feasts. Set on there! Never was a war did cease, Ere bloody hands were wash’d, with such a peace.

[Exeunt.]

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