

Cymbeline 1.1

Enter the QUEEN, POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, and IMOGEN

QUEEN No, be assured you shall not find me, daughter,
After the slander of most stepmothers,
Evil-eyed 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 the 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 to-day.

QUEEN You know the peril.
I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barr'd affections, though the king
Hath charged 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 reserved 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.

Re-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! [*Putting on the ring*] Remain, remain thou here
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. [*Putting a bracelet upon 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 blest, that I might not!

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 loved 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!

CYMBELINE Thou foolish thing! *Re-enter 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! *Exeunt CYMBELINE*

QUEEN Fie! you must give way.