

William Shakespeare

Cymbeline

Dramatis Personæ

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, **Arviragus**, sons to Cymbeline, supposed sons to Morgan

Philario, friend to Posthumus

Iachimo, friend to Philario

A French Gentleman, friend to Philario

Caius Lucius, general of the Roman forces

A Roman Captain

Two British Captains

Pisanio, servant to Posthumus

Cornelius, a physician

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

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, A

**Dutch Gentleman,
A Spanish Gentleman, A Soothsayer,
Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers,
and other Attendants, Apparitions.**

Scene: sometimes in Britain, sometimes in Rome.

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.

Second Gentleman

But what's the matter?

First Gentleman

His daughter, and the heir of's kingdom, whom
He purposed 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 desired the match; but not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the king's look's, 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 served with glory and admired success,
So gain'd the sur-addition Leonatus;
And had, besides this gentleman in question,
Two other sons, who in the wars o' the 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, deceased
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 minister'd,
And in's spring became a harvest, lived in court

-
Which rare it is to do-most praised, most loved,
A sample to the youngest, to the 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 the 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' the 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.

*Enter the QUEEN, POSTHUMUS
LEONATUS, and IMOGEN.*

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 Leonatus

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.

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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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

Imogen

O blest, 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 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 and Lords.

Queen

Fie! you must give way.

Enter PISANIO.

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?

Pisano

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 pleased you to employ me.

Queen

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

Pisano

I humbly thank your highness.

Queen

Pray, walk awhile.

Imogen

About some half-hour hence,
I pray you, speak with me: you shall at least
Go see my lord aboard: for this time leave me.

Exeunt.

SCENE II

The same. 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 thoroughfare for steel, if it be not hurt.

Second Lord [Aside]

His steel was in debt; it went o' the 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 measured 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 damned.

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 III

A room in Cymbeline's palace.

Enter IMOGEN and PISANIO.

Imogen

I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' the
 haven,
And question'dst every sail: if he should write
And 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 waved his handkerchief?

Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle,
Nay, follow'd 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 assured, 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 charged
him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
To 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 IV

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 looked 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 furnished
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 judgment,
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.
Here comes the Briton: let him be so entertained
amongst you as suits, with gentlemen of your
knowing, to a stranger of his quality.

Enter POSTHUMUS LEONATUS.

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 Leonatus

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'er-rate 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 Leonatus

By your pardon, sir, I was then a young
traveller;
rather shunned to go even with what I heard
than in
my every action to be guided by others'
experiences:
but upon my mended judgment-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 fallen 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 Leonatus

She holds her virtue still and I my mind.

Iachimo

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

Posthumus Leonatus

Being so far provoked 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 Leonatus

I praised her as I rated her: so do I my stone.

Iachimo

What do you esteem it at?

Posthumus Leonatus

More than the world enjoys.

Iachimo

Either your unparagoned mistress is dead, or
she's
outprized by a trifle.

Posthumus Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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 stolen too: so your brace of
unprizable

estimations; the one is but frail and the other
casual; a cunning thief, or a that way
accomplished
courtier, would hazard the winning both of first
and last.

Posthumus Leonatus

Your Italy contains none so accomplished 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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

You are a great deal abused in too bold a
persuasion; and I doubt not you sustain what
you're
worthy of by your attempt.

Iachimo

What's that?

Posthumus Leonatus

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 the
approbation of what I have spoke!

Posthumus Leonatus

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
reserved.

Posthumus Leonatus

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

Iachimo

You are afraid, 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 Leonatus

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 Leonatus

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 enjoyed 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 Leonatus

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 prevailed, I am no
further
your enemy; she is not worth our debate: if she
remain unsexed, you not making it appear
otherwise, for your ill opinion and the assault
you
have made to her chastity you shall answer me
with
your sword.

SCENE V

Britain. A room in 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?

First 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 small box

But I beseech your grace, without offence, -
My conscience bids me ask-wherefore you have
Commanded of me those 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 judgment 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 practise 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 lingering 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 takest 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 prethee, 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 shaken; 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 assured
To taste of too.

Re-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.

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 the 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 the 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' the eye, for apes and monkeys
'Twixt two such shes would chatter this way and
Contemn with mows the other; nor i' the
judgment,
For idiots in this case of favour would
Be wisely definite; nor i' the appetite;
Sluttery to such neat excellence opposed
Should make desire vomit emptiness,
Not so allured 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.

To PISANIO.

Beseech you, sir, desire
My man's abode where I did leave him: he
Is 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 disposed 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

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' the 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 doubling 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 the 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 unlustrous 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,
Inclined to this intelligence, pronounce
The beggary of his change; but 'tis your graces
That from pay 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 hired with that self-exhibition
Which your own coffers yield! with diseased
ventures
That play with all infirmities for gold
Which rottenness can lend nature! such boil'd
stuff
As well might poison poison! Be revenged;
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you

Recoil from your great stock.

Imogen

Revenged!

How should I be revenged? 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 revenged?

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
Solicit'st 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 assured 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 adventured
To try your taking a false report; which hath
Honour'd with confirmation your great
judgment
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 power i' the court
for yours.

Iachimo

My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
To entreat your grace but in a small request,

And yet of moment to, 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 to-morrow.

Imogen

O, no, no.

Iachimo

Yes, I beseech; or I shall short my word
By lengthening 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 to-morrow!

Iachimo

O, I must, madam:
Therefore I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do't to-night:
I have outstood my time; which is material
To the 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 two Lords.

Cloten

Was there ever man had such luck! when I
kissed the
jack, upon an up-cast 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.