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Cymbeline

William Shakespeare

Imprint

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CYMBELINE

by William Shakespeare

Dramatis Personae

♫ 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

♫ 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

APPARITIONS

♫ Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, a Soothsayer, a

♫ Dutch Gentleman, a Spanish Gentleman, Musicians, Officers,

賤賤 Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and Attendants

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SCENE: Britain; Italy

ACT I. SCENE I. Britain. The garden of CYMBELINE'S palace

賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. You do not meet a man but frowns; our bloods

賤 賤 No more obey the heavens than our courtiers

賤 賤 Still seem as does the King's.

賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. But what's the matter?

賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. His daughter, and the heir of's kingdom, whom

賤 賤 He purpos'd to his wife's sole son- a widow

賤 賤 That late he married- hath referr'd herself

賤 賤 Unto a poor but worthy gentleman. She's wedded;

賤 賤 Her husband banish'd; she imprison'd. All

賤 賤 Is outward sorrow, though I think the King

賤 賤 Be touch'd at very heart.

賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. None but the King?

賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. He that hath lost her too. So is the Queen,

賤 賤 That most desir'd the match. But not a courtier,

賤 賤 Although they wear their faces to the bent

賤 賤 Of the King's looks, hath a heart that is not

賤 賤 Glad at the thing they scowl at.

賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. And why so?

賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. He that hath miss'd the Princess is a thing

賤 賤 Too bad for bad report; and he that hath her-

賤 賤 I mean that married her, alack, good man!

賤 賤 And therefore banish'd- is a creature such

賤 賤 As, to seek through the regions of the earth

賤 賤 For one his like, there would be something failing

賤 賤 In him that should compare. I do not think

賤 賤 So fair an outward and such stuff within

賤 賤 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,

賤賤 Mark it- the eldest of them at three years old,
賤賤 I th' swathing clothes the other, from their nursery
賤賤 Were stol'n; and to this hour no guess in knowledge
賤賤 Which way they went.
賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. How long is this ago?
賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. Some twenty years.
賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. That a king's children should be so
convey'd,
賤賤 So slackly guarded, and the search so slow
賤賤 That could not trace them!
賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. Howsoe'er 'tis strange,
賤賤 Or that the negligence may well be laugh'd at,
賤賤 Yet is it true, sir.
賤 SECOND GENTLEMAN. I do well believe you.
賤 FIRST GENTLEMAN. We must forbear; here comes the gent-
leman,
賤賤 The Queen, and Princess. Exeunt

Enter the QUEEN, POSTHUMUS, and IMOGEN

賤 QUEEN. No, be assur'd you shall not find me, daughter,
賤賤 After the slander of most stepmothers,
賤賤 Evil-ey'd unto you. You're my prisoner, but
賤賤 Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys
賤賤 That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus,
賤賤 So soon as I can win th' offended King,
賤賤 I will be known your advocate. Marry, yet
賤賤 The fire of rage is in him, and 'twere good
賤賤 You lean'd unto his sentence with what patience
賤賤 Your wisdom may inform you.
賤 POSTHUMUS. Please your Highness,
賤賤 I will from hence to-day.
賤 QUEEN. You know the peril.
賤賤 I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
賤賤 The pangs of barr'd affections, though the King
賤賤 Hath charg'd you should not speak together. Exit

賤 IMOGEN. O dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
賤 賤 Can tickle where she wounds! My dearest husband,
賤 賤 I something fear my father's wrath, but nothing-
賤 賤 Always reserv'd my holy duty- what
賤 賤 His rage can do on me. You must be gone;
賤 賤 And I shall here abide the hourly shot
賤 賤 Of angry eyes, not comforted to live
賤 賤 But that there is this jewel in the world
賤 賤 That I may see again.
賤 POSTHUMUS. My queen! my mistress!
賤 賤 O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
賤 賤 To be suspected of more tenderness
賤 賤 Than doth become a man. I will remain
賤 賤 The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth;
賤 賤 My residence in Rome at one Philario's,
賤 賤 Who to my father was a friend, to me
賤 賤 Known but by letter; thither write, my queen,
賤 賤 And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send,
賤 賤 Though ink be made of gall.

Re-enter QUEEN

賤 QUEEN. Be brief, I pray you.
賤 賤 If the King come, I shall incur I know not
賤 賤 How much of his displeasure. [Aside] Yet I'll move him
賤 賤 To walk this way. I never do him wrong
賤 賤 But he does buy my injuries, to be friends;
賤 賤 Pays dear for my offences. Exit
賤 POSTHUMUS. Should we be taking leave
賤 賤 As long a term as yet we have to live,
賤 賤 The loathness to depart would grow. Adieu!
賤 IMOGEN. Nay, stay a little.
賤 賤 Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
賤 賤 Such parting were too petty. Look here, love:
賤 賤 This diamond was my mother's; take it, heart;
賤 賤 But keep it till you woo another wife,
賤 賤 When Imogen is dead.

賤 POSTHUMUS. How, how? Another?

賤 賤 You gentle gods, give me but this I have,

賤 賤 And sear up my embracements from a next

賤 賤 With bonds of death! Remain, remain thou here

賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 賤 [Puts on the ring]

賤 賤 While sense can keep it on. And, sweetest, fairest,

賤 賤 As I my poor self did exchange for you,

賤 賤 To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles

賤 賤 I still win of you. For my sake wear this;

賤 賤 It is a manacle of love; I'll place it

賤 賤 Upon this fairest prisoner. [Puts a bracelet on her arm]

賤 IMOGEN. O the gods!

賤 賤 When shall we see again?

Enter CYMBELINE and LORDS

賤 POSTHUMUS. Alack, the King!

賤 CYMBELINE. Thou basest thing, avoid; hence from my sight

賤 賤 If after this command thou fraught the court

賤 賤 With thy unworthiness, thou diest. Away!

賤 賤 Thou'rt poison to my blood.

賤 POSTHUMUS. The gods protect you,

賤 賤 And bless the good remainders of the court!

賤 賤 I am gone. Exit

賤 IMOGEN. There cannot be a pinch in death

賤 賤 More sharp than this is.

賤 CYMBELINE. O disloyal thing,

賤 賤 That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap'st

賤 賤 A year's age on me!

賤 IMOGEN. I beseech you, sir,

賤 賤 Harm not yourself with your vexation.

賤 賤 I am senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare

賤 賤 Subdues all pangs, all fears.

賤 CYMBELINE. Past grace? obedience?

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

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

賤 IMOGEN. O blessed that I might not! I chose an eagle,

賤 賤 And did avoid a puttock.

賤 CYMBELINE. Thou took'st a beggar, wouldst have made my throne

賤 賤 A seat for baseness.

賤 IMOGEN. No; I rather added

賤 賤 A lustre to it.

賤 CYMBELINE. O thou vile one!

賤 IMOGEN. Sir,

賤 賤 It is your fault that I have lov'd Posthumus.

賤 賤 You bred him as my playfellow, and he is

賤 賤 A man worth any woman; overbuys me

賤 賤 Almost the sum he pays.

賤 CYMBELINE. What, art thou mad?

賤 IMOGEN. Almost, sir. Heaven restore me! Would I were

賤 賤 A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus

賤 賤 Our neighbour shepherd's son!

Re-enter QUEEN

賤 CYMBELINE. Thou foolish thing!

賤 賤 [To the QUEEN] They were again together. You have done

賤 賤 Not after our command. Away with her,

賤 賤 And pen her up.

賤 QUEEN. Beseech your patience.- Peace,

賤 賤 Dear lady daughter, peace!- Sweet sovereign,

賤 賤 Leave us to ourselves, and make yourself some comfort

賤 賤 Out of your best advice.

賤 CYMBELINE. Nay, let her languish

賤 賤 A drop of blood a day and, being aged,

賤 賤 Die of this folly. Exit, with LORDS

Enter PISANIO

賤 QUEEN. Fie! you must give way.

賤 賤 Here is your servant. How now, sir! What news?

賤 PISANIO. My lord your son drew on my master.

賤 QUEEN. Ha!

賤 賤 No harm, I trust, is done?

賤 PISANIO. There might have been,

賤 賤 But that my master rather play'd than fought,

賤 賤 And had no help of anger; they were parted

賤 賤 By gentlemen at hand.

賤 QUEEN. I am very glad on't.

賤 IMOGEN. Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part

賤 賤 To draw upon an exile! O brave sir!

賤 賤 I would they were in Afric both together;

賤 賤 Myself by with a needle, that I might prick

賤 賤 The goer-back. Why came you from your master?

賤 PISANIO. On his command. He would not suffer me

賤 賤 To bring him to the haven; left these notes

賤 賤 Of what commands I should be subject to,

賤 賤 When't pleas'd you to employ me.

賤 QUEEN. This hath been

賤 賤 Your faithful servant. I dare lay mine honour

賤 賤 He will remain so.

賤 PISANIO. I humbly thank your Highness.

賤 QUEEN. Pray walk awhile.

賤 IMOGEN. About some half-hour hence,

賤 賤 Pray you speak with me. You shall at least

賤 賤 Go see my lord aboard. For this time leave me. Exeunt

