

**PERICLES***A line-by-line translation***Act 1, Chorus****Shakespeare***Enter GOWER*

**Gower**

To sing a song that old was sung,  
From ashes ancient Gower is come;  
Assuming man's infirmities,  
To glad your ear, and please your eyes.

5 It hath been sung at festivals,  
On ember-eves and holy-ales;  
And lords and ladies in their lives  
Have read it for restoratives:

The purchase is to make men glorious;

10 Et bonum quo antiquius, eo melius.  
If you, born in these latter times,  
When wit's more ripe, accept my rhymes.  
And that to hear an old man sing  
May to your wishes pleasure bring

15 I life would wish, and that I might  
Waste it for you, like taper-light.  
This Antioch, then, Antiochus the Great  
Built up, this city, for his chiefest seat:  
The fairest in all Syria,

20 I tell you what mine authors say:  
This king unto him took a fere,  
Who died and left a female heir,  
So buxom, blithe, and full of face,  
As heaven had lent her all his grace;

25 With whom the father liking took,  
And her to incest did provoke:  
Bad child; worse father! to entice his own  
To evil should be done by none:  
But custom what they did begin

30 Was with long use account no sin.  
The beauty of this sinful dame  
Made many princes thither frame,  
To seek her as a bed-fellow,  
In marriage-pleasures play-fellow:

35 Which to prevent he made a law,  
To keep her still, and men in awe,  
That whoso ask'd her for his wife,  
His riddle told not, lost his life:  
So for her many a wight did die,

40 As yon grim looks do testify.  
What now ensues, to the judgment of your eye  
I give, my cause who best can justify.

*Exit***Shakescleare Translation***GOWER enters in front of the palace of Antioch.***Gower**

I'm John Gower <sup>1</sup>, and I've come back to life (taking on the form of my weak body once again) to tell you an old story that never fails to please the ear and the eye. It's been told at parties, around the fire, over beers, and in storybooks for generations; men and women have read it to make themselves feel better. The point is to teach you how to be a better person. You know what they say: "the older and better the story, the better it makes you." And if you modern people (who are more clever than we used to be) will bear with my old-fashioned way of rhyming, you might enjoy what I, an old man, will bring to life on this stage by candlelight <sup>2</sup>. This is Antioch, a city built by the great King Antiochus to be the most beautiful in Syria, and his capital. According to my sources, the king got married, but his wife died young, leaving him a beautiful, obedient daughter, blessed by the gods. The king took a liking to her, and forced her to commit incest. Bad girl! Evil father! No one should do such a thing to their own child. Of course, by the time our story begins, they'd been up to it for so long that they forgot it was wrong. Princes came from miles around to seek the princess's hand in marriage, hoping to make her their lifelong bedfellow. To prevent losing his daughter, the king made a law: whoever wanted to marry the princess would have to answer a riddle, and a wrong answer meant sudden death. Many poor men lost their lives that way, in pursuit of her, as you can see by the serious looks on their faces. What comes next I'll let you see for yourself; you can be the judge of why.

<sup>1</sup> John Gower was a medieval poet whose masterpiece, *Confessio Amantis*, contains the story, "Apollonius of Tyre," upon which *Pericles* is based. The actor playing Gower speaks in iambic tetrameter, the meter preferred by most 14th-century poets, like Chaucer. This all gives the play a sense of antiquity.

<sup>2</sup> Here, Gower refers to the Blackfriars Playhouse, an indoor theater illuminated by candlelight, where *Pericles* was first performed.

*GOWER exits.***Act 1, Scene 1****Shakespeare***Enter ANTIOCHUS, Prince PERICLES, and followers***ANTIOCHUS**

Young prince of Tyre, you have at large received  
The danger of the task you undertake.

**Shakescleare Translation***ANTIOCHUS, PERICLES, and followers enter.***ANTIOCHUS**

So, Prince of Tyre: you understand how dangerous the task you're about to attempt is?

**PERICLES**

I have, Antiochus, and, with a soul  
Embolden'd with the glory of her praise,  
Think death no hazard in this enterprise.

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**ANTIOCHUS**

Bring in our daughter, clothed like a bride,  
For the embracements even of Jove himself;  
At whose conception, till Lucina reign'd,  
Nature this dowry gave, to glad her presence,  
The senate-house of planets all did sit,  
To knit in her their best perfections.

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For death remember'd should be like a mirror,  
Who tells us life's but breath, to trust it error.  
I'll make my will then, and, as sick men do  
Who know the world, see heaven, but, feeling woe,  
Gripe not at earthly joys as erst they did;  
50 So I bequeath a happy peace to you  
And all good men, as every prince should do;  
My riches to the earth from whence they came;  
*[To the Daughter of ANTIOCHUS]*  
55 But my unspotted fire of love to you.  
Thus ready for the way of life or death,  
I wait the sharpest blow, Antiochus.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Scorning advice, read the conclusion then:  
60 Which read and not expounded, 'tis decreed,  
As these before thee thou thyself shalt bleed.

**DAUGHTER**

Of all say'd yet, mayst thou prove prosperous!  
Of all say'd yet, I wish thee happiness!

**PERICLES**

Like a bold champion, I assume the lists,  
Nor ask advice of any other thought  
But faithfulness and courage.  
I am no viper, yet I feed  
On mother's flesh which did me breed.  
70 I sought a husband, in which labour  
I found that kindness in a father:  
He's father, son, and husband mild;  
I mother, wife, and yet his child.  
How they may be, and yet in two,  
75 As you will live, resolve it you.  
Sharp physic is the last: but, O you powers  
That give heaven countless eyes to view men's acts,  
Why cloud they not their sights perpetually,  
80 If this be true, which makes me pale to read it?  
Fair glass of light, I loved you, and could still,  
Were not this glorious casket stored with ill:  
But I must tell you, now my thoughts revolt  
For he's no man on whom perfections wait  
85 That, knowing sin within, will touch the gate.  
You are a fair viol, and your sense the strings;  
Who, finger'd to make man his lawful music,  
Would draw heaven down, and all the gods, to hearken:  
But being play'd upon before your time,  
90 Hell only danceth at so harsh a chime.  
Good sooth, I care not for you.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Prince Pericles, touch not, upon thy life.  
For that's an article within our law,  
As dangerous as the rest. Your time's expired:  
95 Either expound now, or receive your sentence.

to us the truth that life is short, and that it's a mistake to put our faith in it. I'll make my will, then, like sick men do when they've experienced the world and, near death, are both sad and resigned to give up the joys experienced on earth. I wish the best to you and to all good men (as every prince should do), and give away all my belongings.

*where an object (here, the skeletons)*  
*serves as a reminder of mortality.*

*[To ANTIOCHUS's DAUGHTER]* Except the pure fire of my love, which I give to you.

*[To ANTIOCHUS]* I'm ready. Whether I live or die, I can take it, Antiochus.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Since you won't listen to my advice, you'll have to face the consequences: if you read the riddle and can't answer it, you'll be killed like the others before you.

**DAUGHTER**

Of all the men who've tried, I hope you succeed! I hope this ends well for you!

**PERICLES**

Like a knight going into a tournament, the only advice or help I need is faithfulness and courage.

*[Reading the riddle from a scroll]*

I'm not a snake, but I eat  
My own mother's flesh.  
When I looked for a husband,  
I found him in a father.  
He's father, son, and husband;  
I'm mother, wife, and child.  
How is this possible?  
I leave it up to you.

*8 According to Christian doctrine, a man and woman who are married are "one flesh" (two parts of one person). The riddle discusses snakes, who proverbially eat their way out of their mother's wombs. In Antiochus's incestuous relationship, his daughter "feeds" (or sexually engages with) the other half of her mother's "flesh" (her father).*

*[Looking back up]* Oh, that last part is a bitter pill to swallow. Oh, you gods that see everything we do on earth, how can you look down on such a horrible thing (if what I'm reading is true)? *[He grabs ANTIOCHUS's DAUGHTER's hand]* Beautiful princess, I did love you, and would still love you, but now I know the dark secret behind that pretty face. I have to tell you: all my plans are unravelling, because a good man could hardly marry into such a depraved situation once he knows what's in store. You're gorgeous *9*

and your character makes you even more desirable; under normal circumstances, anyone would be lucky to marry you, and the gods would smile down on it. But you've been violated so young; it's a crime *10* worthy of hell. I'm not interested in you at all. *11*

*9 Pericles uses a conventional Renaissance metaphor, comparing Antiochus's daughter to an instrument, which objectifies women and eliminates their sexual agency. Her beautiful body is like the instrument's frame, and her "sense" (virginity) is the strings upon which men "play." With a suggestive pun on "fingered," Pericles explains that this instrument has been played prematurely (by her father's rape) and that Pericles is no longer interested in playing it (marrying and having sex with her).*

*10 Pericles contrasts the heavenly pleasures of sex in marriage with the hellish punishment for the sin of incest.*

*11 In Shakespeare's time, women on the marriage market were often seen as mere objects of exchange between men. It's telling that Pericles is quick to drop her, and that Antiochus's daughter doesn't even have a name.*

**ANTIOCHUS**

Don't touch her, Prince Pericles, if you value your life. That's the law, and it's as dangerous as the rest. Your time is up! Tell us the answer now, or prepare to die.

**PERICLES**

Great king,  
Few love to hear the sins they love to act;  
'Twould braid yourself too near for me to tell it.  
Who has a book of all that monarchs do,  
100 He's more secure to keep it shut than shown:  
For vice repeated is like the wandering wind.  
Blows dust in other's eyes, to spread itself;  
And yet the end of all is bought thus dear,  
The breath is gone, and the sore eyes see clear:  
105 To stop the air would hurt them. The blind mole casts  
Copp'd hills towards heaven, to tell the earth is  
throng'd  
By man's oppression; and the poor worm doth die for't.  
Kings are earth's gods; in vice their law's their will;  
110 And if Jove stray, who dares say Jove doth ill?  
It is enough you know; and it is fit,  
What being more known grows worse, to smother it.  
All love the womb that their first being bred,  
Then give my tongue like leave to love my head.

**ANTIOCHUS**

115 [Aside] Heaven, that I had thy head! he has found  
the meaning:  
But I will glaze with him. — Young prince of Tyre,  
Though by the tenor of our strict edict,  
Your exposition misinterpreting,  
120 We might proceed to cancel of your days;  
Yet hope, succeeding from so fair a tree  
As your fair self, doth tune us otherwise:  
Forty days longer we do respite you;  
If by which time our secret be undone,  
125 This mercy shows we'll joy in such a son:  
And until then your entertain shall be  
As doth befit our honour and your worth.

*Exeunt all but PERICLES*

**PERICLES**

How courtesy would seem to cover sin,  
When what is done is like an hypocrite,  
130 The which is good in nothing but in sight!  
If it be true that I interpret false,  
Then were it certain you were not so bad  
As with foul incest to abuse your soul;  
Where now you're both a father and a son,  
135 By your untimely clasplings with your child,  
Which pleasure fits an husband, not a father;  
And she an eater of her mother's flesh,  
By the defiling of her parent's bed;  
And both like serpents are, who though they feed  
140 On sweetest flowers, yet they poison breed.  
Antioch, farewell! for wisdom sees, those men  
Blush not in actions blacker than the night,  
Will shun no course to keep them from the light.  
One sin, I know, another doth provoke;  
145 Murder's as near to lust as flame to smoke:  
Poison and treason are the hands of sin,  
Ay, and the targets, to put off the shame:  
Then, lest my lie be cropp'd to keep you clear,  
By flight I'll shun the danger which I fear.

*Exit*

*Re-enter ANTIOCHUS*

**ANTIOCHUS**

150 He hath found the meaning, for which we mean  
To have his head.  
He must not live to trumpet forth my infamy,  
Nor tell the world Antiochus doth sin  
In such a loathed manner;  
155 And therefore instantly this prince must die:  
For by his fall my honour must keep high.  
Who attends us there?

**PERICLES**

Sir, no one likes to hear their sins repeated back to them—it would offend you to hear me say it. Anyone who found out about this before probably kept their mouth shut rather than telling. Evil spreads as quickly as dust on the wind. As the dust surrounds us and blinds us, we can no longer tell it's there; we start to think it's normal. The blind mole throws his hills of dirt toward heaven, to tell the gods the earth is filled with man's evil, and the worm dies because of it.<sup>12</sup> The world is full of evil men like you, but kings are supposed to be gods on earth! When kings are corrupt, they can twist the law to conform to their evil desires (and when a god makes a mistake, who would dare to tell him?). You know your actions are wrong, and the fact that you know and still keep on doing it makes it even worse. By the love everyone has for their own mother,<sup>13</sup> please don't kill me for what I've said!

.<sup>12</sup> Moles make small "hills" of dirt when they tunnel in the ground. In Pericles's metaphor, he worries for himself (the mole) and his people (the worms). If he reveals the meaning of the riddle, he will die and his people will be without a ruler.

.<sup>13</sup> Here, Pericles makes a veiled allusion to incest (based on the image of snakes eating their own mothers in the riddle).

**ANTIOCHUS**

[To himself] I wish I had a mind like yours! He's figured out the meaning, but I'll talk him out of it.

[To PERICLES] Prince of Tyre: though, according to our law, I could kill you for not giving me a correct answer, I'll give you some more time on account of your noble blood and your way with words. If, in forty days' time, you reveal the secret, I'll welcome you as my son-in-law with a celebratory feast worthy of myself as a king and you as a prince.

*Everyone except PERICLES leaves.*

**PERICLES**

You're trying to hide your evil with a show of hospitality, but it's hypocrisy; it only looks good from the outside! If I'd really gotten the answer wrong, then that would mean you weren't dirtying your soul by committing disgusting incest. But now, by sleeping with your daughter, you're both father and son, acting more like a husband than a father . . . and she's filling the role her mother should, taking her mother's place in your bed. They're both like snakes<sup>14</sup> who eat pretty flowers but produce deadly poison.

Goodbye, Antioch! I'm smart enough to know that a guy who's comfortable doing one evil thing won't hesitate to do another one if it'll keep him from being found out. One sin leads to another; murder is as close to lust as fire is to smoke. If I stick around, I'll be poisoned, or accused of treason, anything to keep me from exposing him. So, to save myself and not expose him, I'll leave here and escape the danger I'm afraid of.

.<sup>14</sup> The "serpent" imagery in this section again ties Antiochus's situation to the Garden of Eden in Genesis. Pericles says that although something good (beauty; sex) is being consumed, what comes out is evil (sin; incest).

*PERICLES exits.*

*ANTIOCHUS comes back in.*

**ANTIOCHUS**

[To himself] He's figured out the riddle, which means I'll have to kill him. He can't survive another day to ruin my reputation, or to tell the world the hateful sin I've committed. The prince must die instantly for my honor's sake.

[To an unknown person] Who's there?

*Enter THALIARD***THALIARD**

Doth your highness call?

**ANTIOCHUS**

Thaliard,  
 160 You are of our chamber, and our mind partakes  
 Her private actions to your secrecy;  
 And for your faithfulness we will advance you.  
 Thaliard, behold, here's poison, and here's gold;  
 We hate the prince of Tyre, and thou must kill him:  
 165 It fits thee not to ask the reason why,  
 Because we bid it. Say, is it done?

**THALIARD**

My lord,  
 'Tis done.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Enough.

170

*Enter a Messenger***ANTIOCHUS**

Let your breath cool yourself, telling your haste.

**MESSENGER**

My lord, prince Pericles is fled.

*Exit***ANTIOCHUS**

175 As thou  
 Wilt live, fly after: and like an arrow shot  
 From a well-experienced archer hits the mark  
 His eye doth level at, so thou ne'er return  
 Unless thou say 'Prince Pericles is dead.'

**THALIARD**

180 My lord,  
 If I can get him within my pistol's length,  
 I'll make him sure enough: so, farewell to your  
 highness.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Thaliard, adieu!

185

*Exit THALIARD***ANTIOCHUS**

Till Pericles be dead,  
 My heart can lend no succor to my head.

*Exit**THALIARD enters.***THALIARD**

Did you call, sir?

**ANTIOCHUS**

Thaliard, you're my trusted servant, and I need you to do  
 something for me under the utmost secrecy. You'll be  
 rewarded for your service.

*[He pulls out a bottle of poison and a bag of gold]* Look,  
 Thaliard, here's poison, and here's gold. I hate Pericles,  
 Prince of Tyre, and I want you to kill him. Don't ask me  
 why—it's because I said so. Understand?

**THALIARD**

Sir, I understand.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Good.

*A MESSENGER enters.***ANTIOCHUS**

Catch your breath, please. We can tell you've come in a  
 rush.

**MESSENGER**

Sir, Prince Pericles is gone.

*The MESSENGER exits.***ANTIOCHUS**

If you want to live, go after him! Be like an arrow shot by an  
 experienced archer—hit the target I've got my sights on,  
 and don't come back here until you can tell me that Pericles  
 is dead.

**THALIARD**

Sir, if I can get within gunshot, I'll take him out. Goodbye,  
 sir.

**ANTIOCHUS**

Goodbye, Thaliard!

*THALIARD exits.***ANTIOCHUS**

I won't rest until Pericles is dead.

*ANTIOCHUS exits.*

## Act 1, Scene 2

**Shakespeare***Enter PERICLES***Shakescleare Translation***PERICLES enters.*

**PERICLES**

[To Lords without] Let none disturb us.— Why should this change of thoughts,  
The sad companion, dull-eyed melancholy,  
Be my so used a guest as not an hour,  
5 In the day's glorious walk, or peaceful night,  
The tomb where grief should sleep, can breed me quiet?  
Here pleasures court mine eyes, and mine eyes shun them,  
And danger, which I fear'd, is at Antioch,  
10 Whose aim seems far too short to hit me here:  
Yet neither pleasure's art can joy my spirits,  
Nor yet the other's distance comfort me.  
Then it is thus: the passions of the mind,  
That have their first conception by mis-dread,  
15 Have after-nourishment and life by care;  
And what was first but fear what might be done,  
Grows elder now and cares it be not done.  
And so with me: the great Antiochus,  
'Gainst whom I am too little to contend,  
20 Since he's so great can make his will his act,  
Will think me speaking, though I swear to silence;  
Nor boots it me to say I honour him.  
If he suspect I may dishonour him:  
And what may make him blush in being known,  
25 He'll stop the course by which it might be known;  
With hostile forces he'll o'erspread the land,  
And with the ostent of war will look so huge,  
Amazement shall drive courage from the state;  
Our men be vanquish'd ere they do resist,  
30 And subjects punish'd that ne'er thought offence:  
Which care of them, not pity of myself,  
Who am no more but as the tops of trees,  
Which fence the roots they grow by and defend them,  
Makes both my body pine and soul to languish,  
35 And punish that before that he would punish.

*Enter HELICANUS, with other Lords*

**FIRST LORD**

Joy and all comfort in your sacred breast!

**SECOND LORD**

And keep your mind, till you return to us,  
Peaceful and comfortable!

**HELICANUS**

Peace, peace, and give experience tongue.  
They do abuse the king that flatter him:  
For flattery is the bellows blows up sin;  
The thing which is flatter'd, but a spark,  
To which that blast gives heat and stronger glowing;  
Whereas reproof, obedient and in order,  
45 Fits kings, as they are men, for they may err.  
When Signior Sooth here does proclaim a peace,  
He flatters you, makes war upon your life.  
Prince, pardon me, or strike me, if you please;  
I cannot be much lower than my knees.

**PERICLES**

50 All leave us else; but let your cares o'erlook  
What shipping and what lading's in our haven,  
And then return to us.  
*[Exeunt Lords]*  
55 Helicanus, thou  
Hast moved us: what seest thou in our looks?

**HELICANUS**

An angry brow, dread lord.

**PERICLES**

If there be such a dart in princes' frowns,  
60 How durst thy tongue move anger to our face?

**PERICLES**

[Speaking to Lords outside] Don't let anyone come in here.

[To himself] Why am I so changed? Why am I sad, downcast, and melancholy every hour of every day? Neither a beautiful day nor a quiet night (which should be where I put my worries to rest) can give me peace. Even when I'm surrounded by things I should enjoy, I can't get rid of this fear of danger waiting for me at Antioch—but there's no way the king could reach me here! And yet, nothing can cheer me up, not even the reality of distance. That's the way the mind works: once we start worrying about something, it only gets worse and worse, until we convince ourselves that the danger is real. Just like that, my fear of Antiochus, who is a much more powerful king than I am—and can put his desires into action—has been blown out of proportion. Even though I haven't said a word, he'll assume I've told his secret. And it won't help for me to say I'm loyal to him, if he's already decided I'm not. If he's determined to keep his secret under wraps, all he has to do is kill me. He'll infiltrate my country with his armies, wage war, and overthrow the government. He'll punish my subjects, too, even though they never did anything to hurt him. I'm more worried about them than I am about myself; I'm just the treetops that protect the roots by which the people grow, and help defend them. It's concern for them that makes my body sick

and my soul tired with wanting to punish Antiochus  
before he punishes us.

 Pericles puns on "pine," both a type of tree and a verb meaning "to long for."

*HELICANUS and other LORDS enter.*

**FIRST LORD**

God bless you, sir!

**SECOND LORD**

And good luck on your journey!

**HELICANUS**

Quiet, please. Let someone who knows what he's talking about speak up. These men are just flattering you, sir, and flattery only fans the fire of sin. When a king's fault is just a spark, flattery is the blast that gives it heat and makes it glow stronger. On the other hand, wise advice is the best tool a king can make use of, since even kings make mistakes sometimes. When Mr. Yes-man over here wishes you good luck, he's flattering you and, really, threatening your life.

*[He kneels] Forgive me, sir. Hit me if you want. I can't get much lower than here, on my knees.*

**PERICLES**

Everyone else leave. But take care to see what ships are coming in and out of the harbor and report back to me.

*[The LORDS leave]*

Helicanus, you've got my attention. How do I look?

**HELICANUS**

You look angry, sir.

**PERICLES**

You know that kings' moods can have serious consequences, right? How dare you make me angry?

**HELICANUS**

How dare the plants look up to heaven, from whence  
They have their nourishment?

**PERICLES**

Thou know'st I have power  
To take thy life from thee.

**HELICANUS**

65 [Kneeling]  
I have ground the axe myself;  
Do you but strike the blow.

**PERICLES**

Rise, prithee, rise.  
Sit down: thou art no flatterer:  
70 I thank thee for it; and heaven forbid  
That kings should let their ears hear their  
faults hid!  
Fit counsellor and servant for a prince,  
Who by thy wisdom makest a prince thy servant,  
75 What wouldest thou have me do?

**HELICANUS**

To bear with patience  
Such griefs as you yourself do lay upon yourself.

**PERICLES**

Thou speak'st like a physician, Helicanus,  
That minister'st a potion unto me  
80 That thou wouldest tremble to receive thyself.  
Attend me, then: I went to Antioch,  
Where as thou know'st, against the face of death,  
I sought the purchase of a glorious beauty.  
From whence an issue I might propagate,  
85 Are arms to princes, and bring joys to subjects.  
Her face was to mine eye beyond all wonder;  
The rest— hark in thine ear— as black as incest:  
Which by my knowledge found, the sinful father  
Seem'd not to strike, but smooth: but thou  
90 know'st this,  
'Tis time to fear when tyrants seem to kiss.  
Such fear so grew in me, I hither fled,  
Under the covering of a careful night,  
Who seem'd my good protector; and, being here,  
95 Bethought me what was past, what might succeed.  
I knew him tyrannous; and tyrants' fears  
Decrease not, but grow faster than the years:  
And should he doubt it, as no doubt he doth,  
That I should open to the listening air  
100 How many worthy princes' bloods were shed,  
To keep his bed of blackness unlaid ope,  
To lop that doubt, he'll fill this land with arms,  
And make pretence of wrong that I have done him:  
When all, for mine, if I may call offence,  
105 Must feel war's blow, who spares not innocence:  
Which love to all, of which thyself art one,  
Who now reprovest me for it,—

**HELICANUS**

Alas, sir!

**PERICLES**

110 Drew sleep out of mine eyes, blood from my cheeks,  
Musings into my mind, with thousand doubts  
How I might stop this tempest ere it came;  
And finding little comfort to relieve them,  
I thought it princely charity to grieve them.

**HELICANUS**

How dare plants grow up toward the sky, from which they  
receive rain and sun?

**PERICLES**

You know I have the power to kill you.

**HELICANUS**

[Kneeling and exposing his neck] I sharpened the axe  
myself. Just strike the blow.

**PERICLES**

Get up, please. Get up. Sit down. I'm glad you're not a  
flatterer. Kings shouldn't be surrounded by men who make  
excuses for their faults! You're a wise counsellor and  
servant fit for a prince; by your wisdom, you've made me  
your servant, ready to do your will. What should I do?

**HELICANUS**

Be patient, and don't be so hard on yourself.

**PERICLES**

You sound like a doctor, Helicanus, but what you're  
prescribing me is something you'd hardly do yourself. You  
see, I went to Antioch where, as you know, I faced death for  
the chance to win a famously beautiful woman. I had hoped  
we would get married and have children together, heirs for  
my throne that would strengthen my rule in this country  
and delight my subjects. I thought she was beautiful in  
person, but listen: they were committing incest. Once I  
figured it out, her sinful father didn't lash out; he suddenly  
became very smooth. As you well know, it's time to be  
afraid when tyrants kiss you. I ran away in the dark of  
night and, once I got here, thought I was safe. I know  
Antiochus is a tyrant, and that he's probably getting  
increasingly paranoid about what I know. And if he suspects  
that I've told the world how he killed all of those princes,  
and slept with his own daughter, then there's no doubt that  
he'll invade our country on the pretense of me having  
offended him. Then the country will be plunged into war for  
my so-called offense, and many innocent people will die,  
and everyone I love, yourself included, will blame me for  
it—

 Pericles cites the biblical traitor Judas's "kiss"—a sign used to betray Jesus. He claims an enemy's friendliness indicates imminent harm.

**HELICANUS**

Oh, sir!

**PERICLES**

I can't sleep. I'm pale and sick. I can't stop thinking about it,  
can't stop trying to come up with ways to stop this storm  
before it happens. And since there's no solution, I'm just  
letting myself be sad about it.

**HELICANUS**

Well, my lord, since you have given me leave to speak.  
 115 Freely will I speak. Antiochus you fear,  
 And justly too, I think, you fear the tyrant,  
 Who either by public war or private treason  
 Will take away your life.  
 Therefore, my lord, go travel for a while,  
 120 Till that his rage and anger be forgot,  
 Or till the Destinies do cut his thread of life.  
 Your rule direct to any; if to me,  
 Day serves not light more faithful than I'll be.

**PERICLES**

I do not doubt thy faith;  
 125 But should he wrong my liberties in my absence?

**HELICANUS**

We'll mingle our bloods together in the earth,  
 From whence we had our being and our birth.

**PERICLES**

Tyre, I now look from thee then, and to Tarsus  
 Intend my travel, where I'll hear from thee;  
 130 And by whose letters I'll dispose myself.  
 The care I had and have of subjects' good  
 On thee I lay whose wisdom's strength can bear it.  
 I'll take thy word for faith, not ask thine oath:  
 Who shuns not to break one will sure crack both:  
 135 But in our orbs we'll live so round and safe,  
 That time of both this truth shall ne'er convince,  
 Thou show'dst a subject's shine, I a true prince.

*Exeunt*

**HELICANUS**

Well, sir, since you've given me permission to speak, I will.  
 You're right to be afraid of Antiochus, since he'll either wage  
 a public war or kill you privately. So, I recommend that you  
 get away and don't come back until he either gets over his  
 anger or dies.<sup>3</sup> You can trust me to rule the country while  
 you're gone; I'll be as faithful as day is to the sun.

<sup>3</sup> Helicanus refers to the "Destinies" or Fates—three figures in Greco-Roman mythology said to spin a thread to represent human life, and to "cut" the thread when a life was over.

**PERICLES**

I do trust you, but what if Antiochus attacks while I'm gone?

**HELICANUS**

We'll shed each other's blood into the earth from which we came.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In the biblical creation story, God makes Adam out of dirt or dust. Helicanus states a variation of "ashes to ashes, dust to dust," to show that they'll fight to the death, and he doesn't value his life at all.

**PERICLES**

Well, then, I'll leave Tyre and head to Tarsus. I'll wait for a letter from you there. Take care of my subjects while I'm gone; I leave it up to the strength of your wisdom. I'll take whatever you say as truth; I won't ask you to swear, since you either mean what you say or you don't. We'll each do our jobs, safe and surrounded in our own spheres. Time will tell how you'll be the best subject you can be, and how I'll be the best prince.

*They both exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 3

### Shakespeare

*Enter THALIARD*

**THALIARD**

So, this is Tyre, and this the court. Here must I kill King Pericles; and if I do it not, I am sure to be hanged at home: 'tis dangerous. Well, I perceive he was a wise fellow, and had good discretion, that, 5 being bid to ask what he would of the king, desired he might know none of his secrets: now do I see he had some reason for't; for if a king bid a man be a villain, he's bound by the indenture of his oath to be one! Hush! here come the lords of Tyre.

*Enter HELICANUS and ESCANES, with other Lords of Tyre*

**HELICANUS**

10 You shall not need, my fellow peers of Tyre,  
 Further to question me of your king's departure:  
 His seal'd commission, left in trust with me,  
 Doth speak sufficiently he's gone to travel.

**THALIARD**

*[Aside]* How! the king gone!

**HELICANUS**

15 If further yet you will be satisfied,  
 Why, as it were unlicensed of your loves,  
 He would depart, I'll give some light unto you.

### Shakescleare Translation

*THALIARD enters.*

**THALIARD**

So, this is Tyre, and this is the court. I'm supposed to kill King Pericles here and, if I don't do it, I'll be hanged back home. It's dangerous. Well, now I see that a man would be wise if, being told to ask for whatever he wanted from the king, said he didn't want to know any of the king's secrets. Now I see his reason for it: I mean, if a king tells you to be a villain, you're bound by your promise to him to be one. Quiet! Here come the lords of Tyre.

*HELICANUS, ESCANES, and other LORDS of Tyre enter.*

**HELICANUS**

Fellow lords of Tyre, there's no need to question me anymore about the king's departure. He left his sealed letter of approval with me; that's enough proof for my role while he's traveling.

**THALIARD**

*[To himself]* What? The king's gone?

**HELICANUS**

If you're still not satisfied—since he didn't go with your permission—I'll tell you why he left. When he was at Antioch—

Being at Antioch—

**THALIARD**

[Aside] What from Antioch?

**HELICANUS**

- 20 Royal Antiochus—on what cause I know not—  
Took some displeasure at him; at least he judged so:  
And doubting lest that he had err'd or sinn'd,  
To show his sorrow, he'd correct himself;  
So puts himself unto the shipman's toil,  
25 With whom each minute threatens life or death.

**THALIARD**

- [Aside] Well, I perceive  
I shall not be hang'd now, although I would;  
But since he's gone, the king's seas must please:  
He 'scaped the land, to perish at the sea.  
30 I'll present myself. Peace to the lords of Tyre!

**HELICANUS**

Lord Thaliard from Antiochus is welcome.

**THALIARD**

- From him I come  
With message unto princely Pericles;  
But since my landing I have understood  
35 Your lord has betook himself to unknown travels,  
My message must return from whence it came.

**HELICANUS**

- We have no reason to desire it,  
Commended to our master, not to us:  
Yet, ere you shall depart, this we desire,  
40 As friends to Antioch, we may feast in Tyre.

*Exeunt*

**THALIARD**

[To himself] What about Antioch?

**HELICANUS**

For reasons unknown to me, King Antiochus got angry at him (or at least Pericles thought so). Pericles, worried that he had offended the king, to show his remorse until he could rectify the situation, decided to sail away, despite it being dangerous on the seas.

**THALIARD**

[To himself] Well, I guess I won't be hanged now (though I almost was). He's gone, but the king should be happy anyway, since Pericles will probably die at sea. I'll come out of hiding.

[To HELICANUS and the LORDS] Greetings, lords of Tyre!

**HELICANUS**

Welcome, Lord Thaliard of Antioch.

**THALIARD**

I have a message from Antiochus for Prince Pericles but, since I got here I've heard that the prince is out on some unknown travels. I guess I'll have to take my message back to where it came from.

**HELICANUS**

We certainly wouldn't ask you to read it to us if it's addressed to Pericles. But please, before you leave, let's celebrate our friendship with a feast here in Tyre.

*They all exit.*

## Act 1, Scene 4

### Shakespeare

*Enter CLEON, the governor of Tarsus, with DIONYZA, and others*

**CLEON**

My Dionyza, shall we rest us here,  
And by relating tales of others' griefs,  
See if 'twill teach us to forget our own?

**DIONYZA**

That were to blow at fire in hope to quench it;  
5 For who digs hills because they do aspire  
Throws down one mountain to cast up a higher.  
O my distressed lord, even such our griefs are;  
Here they're but felt, and seen with mischief's eyes,  
But like to groves, being topp'd, they higher rise.

**CLEON**

- 10 O Dionyza,  
Who wanteth food, and will not say he wants it,  
Or can conceal his hunger till he famish?

### Shakescleare Translation

*CLEON (the governor of Tarsus), DIONYZA, and others enter.*

**CLEON**

Dionyza, should we sit down here and tell each other sad stories? Maybe that way we'll forget our own sad lives.

**DIONYZA**

That's like blowing on a fire to try to put it out. It's like digging up a hill to stop it growing tall; you'll build a higher mountain in the process. My dear, as bad as our suffering is, at least it's only felt. If someone up to no good were to take notice, they might make things even worse. 

 Dionyza's metaphors in the original text all suggest that talking about sadness makes it worse; finally, she suggests that the situation could become more dire if an enemy power took advantage of them in their weakness. In the last instance, she compares their current situation to a forest chopped down (by the violence of the invading army) and replaced by taller trees (that is, greater suffering by the form of foreign domination).

**CLEON**

Oh, Dionyza, how can someone who's starving not beg for food? Can he pretend he's not hungry until he dies? We should proclaim our grief loudly, cry out, weep, then shout

Our tongues and sorrows do sound deep  
Our woes into the air; our eyes do weep,  
Till tongues fetch breath that may proclaim them  
louder;  
That, if heaven slumber while their creatures want,  
They may awake their helps to comfort them.  
I'll then discourse our woes, felt several years,  
20 And wanting breath to speak help me with tears.

**DIONYZA**

I'll do my best, sir.

**CLEON**

This Tarsus, o'er which I have the government,  
A city on whom plenty held full hand,  
For riches strew'd herself even in the streets;  
25 Whose towers bore heads so high they kiss'd the clouds,  
And strangers ne'er beheld but wondered at;  
Whose men and dames so jettied and adorn'd,  
Like one another's glass to trim them by:  
Their tables were stored full, to glad the sight,  
30 And not so much to feed on as delight;  
All poverty was scorn'd, and pride so great,  
The name of help grew odious to repeat.

**DIONYZA**

O, 'tis too true.

**CLEON**

But see what heaven can do! By this our change,  
35 These mouths, who but of late, earth, sea, and air,  
Were all too little to content and please,  
Although they gave their creatures in abundance,  
As houses are defiled for want of use,  
They are now starved for want of exercise:  
40 Those palates who, not yet two summers younger,  
Must have inventions to delight the taste,  
Would now be glad of bread, and beg for it:  
Those mothers who, to nouse up their babes,  
Thought nought too curious, are ready now  
45 To eat those little darlings whom they loved.  
So sharp are hunger's teeth, that man and wife  
Draw lots who first shall die to lengthen life:  
Here stands a lord, and there a lady weeping;  
Here many sink, yet those which see them fall  
50 Have scarce strength left to give them burial.  
Is not this true?

**DIONYZA**

Our cheeks and hollow eyes do witness it.

**CLEON**

O, let those cities that of plenty's cup  
And her prosperities so largely taste,  
55 With their superfluous riots, hear these tears!  
The misery of Tarsus may be theirs.

*Enter a Lord*

**LORD**

Where's the lord governor?

**CLEON**

Here.  
Speak out thy sorrows which thou bring'st in haste,  
60 For comfort is too far for us to expect.

**LORD**

We have descried, upon our neighbouring shore,  
A portly sail of ships make hitherward.

even louder. Then maybe the gods will wake up from their sleep, take notice of how their creatures are suffering, and help us. I'll start by telling our sad story of the last few years, and you can help me by crying during the pauses.

**DIONYZA**

I'll do my best, sir.

**CLEON**

Tarsus, which I rule, was once wealthy. We had everything we wanted: the streets were strewn with riches, we built towers up to the skies, and every visitor who came here was amazed. Our men and women wore fine clothes and jewelry; they were like mirrors to each other's own riches. They had more than enough food on their tables. No one was poor. We were proud; we couldn't imagine needing help from anyone.

**DIONYZA**

Oh, it's too true.

**CLEON**

But look what heaven can do! At one time, the earth, sea, and air were hardly enough to content and please our mouths, though they gave us all the food we needed to survive. Just as houses become run-down from lack of use, our mouths are now starved for lack of exercise. Two years ago we looked for the best recipes to please our palates; now we'd be happy to get a crust a bread, and beg for it. Women who once happily nursed their babies would hardly think it strange that they would now want to eat them. Hunger is such a grim reality that husbands and wives take bets on which of them will die first. Look, there's a man, and there's a woman crying. Here so many are sick that, even when someone dies, no one has the strength to bury them. Isn't this true?

**DIONYZA**

You can tell by our sunken cheeks and hollow eyes.

**CLEON**

Oh, if only the cities that have enough, who enjoy the tastes of prosperity, with their superfluous riots, would hear these tears! One day, they could be as miserable as Tarsus.

*A LORD enters.*

**LORD**

Where's the governor?

**CLEON**

Here. Tell me the bad news that you hurried to bring us; I can't imagine it's good news you bring.

**LORD**

We can make out, on the opposite shore, a large group of ships sailing this way.

**CLEON**

I thought as much.  
 One sorrow never comes but brings an heir,  
 That may succeed as his inheritor;  
 And so in ours: some neighbouring nation,  
 Taking advantage of our misery,  
 Hath stuff'd these hollow vessels with their power,  
 To beat us down, the which are down already;  
 And make a conquest of unhappy me,  
 Whereas no glory's got to overcome.

**LORD**

That's the least fear; for, by the semblance  
 Of their white flags display'd, they bring us peace,  
 And come to us as favourers, not as foes.

**CLEON**

Thou speak'st like him's untutor'd to repeat:  
 Who makes the fairest show means most deceit.  
 But bring they what they will and what they can,  
 What need we fear?  
 The ground's the lowest, and we are half way there.  
 Go tell their general we attend him here,  
 To know for what he comes, and whence he comes,  
 And what he craves.

**LORD**

I go, my lord.

*Exit*

**CLEON**

Welcome is peace, if he on peace consist;  
 If wars, we are unable to resist.

*Enter PERICLES with Attendants*

**PERICLES**

Lord governor, for so we hear you are,  
 Let not our ships and number of our men  
 Be like a beacon fired to amaze your eyes.  
 We have heard your miseries as far as Tyre,  
 And seen the desolation of your streets:  
 Nor come we to add sorrow to your tears,  
 But to relieve them of their heavy load;  
 And these our ships, you happily may think  
 Are like the Trojan horse was stuff'd within  
 With bloody veins, expecting overthrow,  
 Are stored with corn to make your needy bread,  
 And give them life whom hunger starved half dead.

**ALL**

The gods of Greece protect you!  
 And we'll pray for you.

**PERICLES**

Arise, I pray you, rise:  
 We do not look for reverence, but to love,  
 And harbourage for ourself, our ships, and men.

**CLEON**

The which when any shall not gratify,  
 Or pay you with unthankfulness in thought,  
 Be it our wives, our children, or ourselves,  
 The curse of heaven and men succeed their evils!  
 Till when,—the which I hope shall ne'er be seen,—  
 Your grace is welcome to our town and us.

**PERICLES**

Which welcome we'll accept; feast here awhile,  
 Until our stars that frown lend us a smile.

*Exeunt*

**CLEON**

I figured. It never rains but it pours; one struggle gives way to another. It's that way with us. Some nearby country is going to take advantage of our weakness. They've sent all these ships to kick us while we're down, and conquer us in our misery, though it'll hardly be difficult for them to overcome us.

**LORD**

I don't think so. They're flying white flags to show they come in peace. They're coming as friends rather than as foes.

**CLEON**

You idiot, that doesn't mean anything! Those that seem to be the most kind are the most deceitful. But let them do what they will and what they can, why should we be afraid? Our lives couldn't be more miserable than they are now; we're halfway to the ground. Go, tell their general he can meet us here to announce why and from where he comes, and what he wants.

**LORD**

On my way, sir.

*The LORD exits.*

**CLEON**

Peace would be great, if that's what he's here for. If it's war he wants, there's nothing we can do about it.

*PERICLES enters with his servants.*

**PERICLES**

So we hear you're the governor? Don't be so surprised by all our ships and men. We've heard about your suffering all the way in Tyre, and we've seen the destruction in your streets. We came to help, not to make things worse. These ships might look like the Trojan horse [2] (which had Greek soldiers hidden inside, bloodthirsty and ready to attack), but they're filled with grain to make bread, to bring all your starving people back to life.

[2] The "Trojan horse" is from Homer's *Iliad*, an epic poem about the Trojan War. To infiltrate Troy, a group of Greek soldiers hides inside a giant wooden horse left as a gift. When the Trojans bring the horse inside the city, the Greeks attack.

**ALL**

[CLEON, DIONYZA, and the others kneel to PERICLES] May the gods of Greece protect you! And we'll pray for you.

**PERICLES**

Get up, please. I didn't come to be worshipped. All I ask is a place for myself, my ships, and my men to stay.

**CLEON**

If anyone fails to thank you, or think grateful thoughts toward you—whether it's our wives, children, or ourselves—may they be cursed by heaven and punished by men! Until the day someone denies you (which day we hope will never come) you're very welcome here in our town and with us.

**PERICLES**

We'll accept your welcome and feast here a while, until our fortunes turn again from bad to good.

*They all exit.*

## Act 2, Chorus

### Shakespeare

*Enter GOWER*

**GOWER**  
 Here have you seen a mighty king  
 His child, I wis, to incest bring;  
 A better prince and benign lord,  
 That will prove awful both in deed and word.  
 5 Be quiet then as men should be,  
 Till he hath pass'd necessity.  
 I'll show you those in troubles reign,  
 Losing a mite, a mountain gain.  
 The good in conversation,  
 10 To whom I give my benison,  
 Is still at Tarsus, where each man  
 Thinks all is writ he spoken can;  
 And, to remember what he does,  
 Build his statue to make him glorious:  
 15 But tidings to the contrary  
 Are brought your eyes; what need speak I?

**DUMB SHOW** Enter at one door PERICLES talking with CLEON; all the train with them. Enter at another door a Gentleman, with a letter to PERICLES; PERICLES shows the letter to CLEON; gives the Messenger a reward, and knights him. Exit PERICLES at one door, and CLEON at another

### Shakescleare Translation

*GOWER enters.*

**GOWER**

Here you've seen a king commit incest with his daughter. Pericles will turn out to be a much more powerful prince and a better ruler, strong in both word and deed. But now he has to keep his mouth shut, until enough time has passed. I'll show you how much trouble he had to deal with; once he got over the molehill, he ran into a mountain. That good man whom I bless, Pericles, is still at Tarsus, where everyone is singing his praises and the city is erecting a statue of him to remember him by—everything seems happy. But what you're about to see contradicts that, so what can I say?

In a dumb show , PERICLES comes in on one side of the stage talking with CLEON, their servants and lords following them. At the opposite side, a MESSENGER enters with a letter, which he gives to PERICLES. PERICLES shows the letter to CLEON, gives the MESSENGER a reward, and touches both his shoulders with his sword. PERICLES leaves in one direction, CLEON in the other.

 "Dumb shows"—usually silent sequences of action—were a common dramatic tool in Shakespeare's day. They were incorporated into the play to abridge parts of the plot, or used allegorically to explain a moral. Presenters (like Gower) would narrate the dumb show. Loosely based on medieval forms of dramatic entertainment, the dumb show adds to the sense of history that Gower began to build in his first speech.

**GOWER**

Back at home, Helicanus has hardly been a lazy worker bee  : he's done everything the prince asked him to, and has sent news of everything happening in Tyre. He told Pericles how Thaliard came to murder him, and advised him not to stay in Tarsus much longer. Pericles sailed away on the sea, where men can never rest easy, and was quickly caught up in a storm. The winds blew, loud thunder was heard, and the ship that should have kept him safe was wrecked. Having lost everything, Pericles was tossed by waves from coast to coast. He had nothing and no one to keep him company, since no one else escaped alive. Finally, fortune got tired of ruining his life, and threw him on shore to make him happy. Here he comes. What happens next—actually, I'll shut up now.

 Gower indicates Helicanus isn't greedy or lazy. He hasn't tried to usurp the queen bee's place (Pericles's kingship), but has worked as hard as a "drone" making honey.

**GOWER**

Good Helicanus, that stay'd at home,  
 Not to eat honey like a drone  
 From others' labours; for though he strive  
 20 To killen bad, keep good alive;  
 And to fulfil his prince' desire,  
 Sends word of all that hap in Tyre:  
 How Thaliard came full bent with sin  
 And had intent to murder him;  
 25 And that in Tarsus was not best  
 Longer for him to make his rest.  
 He, doing so, put forth to seas,  
 Where when men been, there's seldom ease;  
 For now the wind begins to blow;  
 30 Thunder above and deeps below  
 Make such unquiet, that the ship  
 Should house him safe is wreck'd and split;  
 And he, good prince, having all lost,  
 By waves from coast to coast is tost:  
 35 All perishen of man, of pelf,  
 Ne aught escapan but himself;  
 Till fortune, tired with doing bad,  
 Threw him ashore, to give him glad:  
 And here he comes. What shall be next,  
 40 Pardon old Gower,—this longs the text.

*Exit*

*GOWER exits.*

## Act 2, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter PERICLES, wet*

### Shakescleare Translation

*PERICLES enters, wet.*

**PERICLES**

Yet cease your ire, you angry stars of heaven!  
Wind, rain, and thunder, remember, earthly man  
Is but a substance that must yield to you;  
And I, as fits my nature, do obey you:  
5   Alas, the sea hath cast me on the rocks,  
Wash'd me from shore to shore, and left me breath  
Nothing to think on but ensuing death:  
Let it suffice the greatness of your powers  
To have bereft a prince of all his fortunes;  
10 And having thrown him from your watery grave,  
Here to have death in peace is all he'll crave.

*Enter three FISHERMEN*

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

What, ho, Pilch!

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Ha, come and bring away the nets!

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

What, Patch-breech, I say!

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

15 What say you, master?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Look how thou stirrest now! come away, or I'll  
fetch thee with a wanion.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

Faith, master, I am thinking of the poor men that  
were cast away before us even now.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

20 Alas, poor souls, it grieved my heart to hear what  
pitiful cries they made to us to help them, when,  
well-a-day, we could scarce help ourselves.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

Nay, master, said not I as much when I saw the  
porpus how he bounced and tumbled? they say  
25 they're half fish, half flesh: a plague on them,  
they ne'er come but I look to be washed. Master, I  
marvel how the fishes live in the sea.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Why, as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the  
little ones: I can compare our rich misers to  
30 nothing so fitly as to a whale; a' plays and  
tumbles, driving the poor fry before him, and at  
last devours them all at a mouthful: such whales  
have I heard on o' the land, who never leave gaping  
35 till they've swallowed the whole parish, church,  
steeple, bells, and all.

**PERICLES**

[Aside] A pretty moral.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

But, master, if I had been the sexton, I would have  
been that day in the belfry.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Why, man?

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

40 Because he should have swallowed me too: and when I  
had been in his belly, I would have kept such a

**PERICLES**

Please, heaven, stop your wrath! Wind, rain and thunder:  
remember that earthly men can only yield to you and  
recognize that I, as an earthly man, do obey you. The sea  
has tossed me onto the rocks, washed me from shore to  
shore, and left me sure of nothing but that my end is near.  
Please, let it be enough for your great powers that I, a  
prince, have lost everything. Since you've thrown me out of  
your watery grave, all I ask is to die here in peace.

*Three FISHERMEN enter.*

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Come on, buddy!

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Hey, come bring the nets in!

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

What'd you say, dummy?

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

What did you say, master?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Oh, look how fast you're moving now! Come on, then, or I'll  
come after you with a vengeance.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

Master, I'm thinking of the poor men that were shipwrecked  
before us even now.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Poor souls. It was heart-wrenching to hear them crying out  
for help when, truth be told, we could barely help  
ourselves.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

I told you this was coming when I saw the dolphin jumping  
in the waves. They say dolphins are part fish, part human . . .  
. curse them, every time I see one I end up in a storm.  
Master, how do fish live in the sea?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

The same way men do on land: the big ones eat the little  
ones. Whales are like rich men , they play and tumble,  
pushing all the little fish in front of them, then eat them up  
all in one gulp. I've heard of whales like that on land, who  
won't stop until they've swallowed the whole parish,  
church, steeple, bells, and everything else.

 1 The next few speeches provide an  
extended comparison of the newly-  
emerging Jacobean middle class of  
landowners to whales.

**PERICLES**

[To himself] That's a nice moral.

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

But master, if I worked  in a church, I'd want to be there  
for that.

 2 In the original text, a "sexton" is a  
church employee who, among other  
things, rings church bells. A "belfry"  
is a part of the steeple that houses the  
bells.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Why, man?

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

Because, when he swallowed me, I would have made a  
bunch of noise in his belly. I would have jangled all the bells

jangling of the bells, that he should never have left, till he cast bells, steeple, church, and parish up again. But if the good King Simonides were of my mind,—

45

**PERICLES**

*[Aside]* Simonides!

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

We would purge the land of these drones, that rob the bee of her honey.

**PERICLES**

*[Aside]* How from the finny subject of the sea These fishers tell the infirmities of men; And from their watery empire recollect All that may men approve or men detect! Peace be at your labour, honest fishermen.

50

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Honest! good fellow, what's that? If it be a day fits you, search out of the calendar, and nobody look after it.

55

**PERICLES**

May see the sea hath cast upon your coast.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

What a drunken knave was the sea to cast thee in our way!

**PERICLES**

60 A man whom both the waters and the wind, In that vast tennis-court, have made the ball For them to play upon, entreats you pity him: He asks of you, that never used to beg.

60

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

No, friend, cannot you beg? Here's them in our country Greece gets more with begging than we can do with working.

65

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Canst thou catch any fishes, then?

**PERICLES**

I never practised it.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Nay, then thou wilt starve, sure; for here's nothing to be got now-a-days, unless thou canst fish for't.

70

**PERICLES**

What I have been I have forgot to know; But what I am, want teaches me to think on: A man throng'd up with cold: my veins are chill, And have no more of life than may suffice 75 To give my tongue that heat to ask your help; Which if you shall refuse, when I am dead, For that I am a man, pray see me buried.

75

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Die quoth-a? Now gods forbid! I have a gown here; come, put it on; keep thee warm. Now, afore me, a 80 handsome fellow! Come, thou shalt go home, and we'll have flesh for holidays, fish for fasting-days, and moreo'er puddings and flap-jacks, and thou shalt be welcome.

80

so much that he wouldn't have left until he vomited up all the bells, steeple, church, and parish again. If King Simonides agreed with me—

**PERICLES**

*[To himself]* Simonides!

**THIRD FISHERMAN**

—then we could get rid of all the men  that are robbing the king of his wealth.

 *The fisherman uses the metaphor of an unnatural bee hive, in which male worker bees steal from the queen bee instead of gathering honey for her.*

**PERICLES**

*[To himself]* It's amazing how these fishermen have gone from talking about fish in the sea to explaining the men's weaknesses, and how, from their watery corner of the world, they've come to understand everything that men could think of or discover.

*[To the FISHERMEN]* Hello there, honest fishermen.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Honest? What's that mean? If you pointed to any old day on the calendar, we wouldn't know what it meant.

**PERICLES**

As you can see, I've been shipwrecked here.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

The sea must have been drunk if it dropped you here.

**PERICLES**

I'm a man whom the waves and the wind have hit around like a tennis ball all day in gigantic tennis court of the sea. Please, have pity on me. I'm asking you, and I don't usually beg.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

You don't beg? There's a lot of people in our country, Greece, that get more from begging than we do from working.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Do you know how to catch fish?

**PERICLES**

I've never tried it.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Well, you'll starve then. There's nothing to be had these days unless you fish for it.

**PERICLES**

I can't think about what I was before; I can only think about what I am now, which is cold. I'm freezing down to my veins and barely have enough life left in me to warm my tongue up to ask you for help. Please help me, or at least, when I'm dead, make sure I get a proper burial.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Did you say "die"? May the gods forbid! I have a coat here, come on, put it on, get warm. Now come with me, a handsome man! You can come home with me. We'll have meat on holidays , fish on fasting days, and plenty of desserts and pancakes, and you're welcome to it all.

 *The fisherman describes typical Christian dietary rules. Fish substituted for meat during fasting periods like Lent. Meat was allowed*

*during feasting periods like the Christmas season.*

**PERICLES**

I thank you, sir.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

85 Hark you, my friend; you said you could not beg.

**PERICLES**

I did but crave.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

But crave! Then I'll turn craver too, and so I shall 'scape whipping.

**PERICLES**

Why, are all your beggars whipped, then?

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

90 O, not all, my friend, not all; for if all your beggars were whipped, I would wish no better office than to be beadle. But, master, I'll go draw up the net.

*Exit with Third Fisherman*

**PERICLES**

[Aside] How well this honest mirth becomes their labour!

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Hark you, sir, do you know where ye are?

**PERICLES**

Not well.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Why, I'll tell you: this is called Pentapolis, and our king the good Simonides.

**PERICLES**

100 The good King Simonides, do you call him.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Ay, sir; and he deserves so to be called for his peaceable reign and good government.

**PERICLES**

He is a happy king, since he gains from his subjects the name of good by his government. How far is his court distant from this shore?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Marry, sir, half a day's journey: and I'll tell you, he hath a fair daughter, and to-morrow is her birth-day; and there are princes and knights come from all parts of the world to just and tourney for her love.

**PERICLES**

110 Were my fortunes equal to my desires, I could wish to make one there.

**PERICLES**

Thank you, sir.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Hey, man, you said you wouldn't beg!

**PERICLES**

I only asked.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Only asked! Maybe I'll become a beggar too, and talk my way out of a whipping.

**PERICLES**

Why? Are all beggars whipped in this country, then?

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Oh, not all of them, my friend, not all. If all beggars were whipped, I would want no better job than to be a beadle.  
But master, I'll go pull the nets in.

5 "Beadles" were minor church officials in charge of punishing petty offenders. If all beggars were punishable by whipping, the fishermen would like to be a beadle--he'd have plenty of work and be paid well.

*The Second and Third FISHERMEN exit.*

**PERICLES**

[To himself] Joking makes their work fun!

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Listen, sir, do you know where you are?

**PERICLES**

Not really.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Well, I'll tell you. This is Pentapolis, and our king is the good Simonides.

**PERICLES**

The good King Simonides, huh?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Yes, sir, and he deserves it. He rules with peace and good government.

**PERICLES**

He's fortunate to have his subjects speak so highly of his government. How far is the court from where we are now?

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Well, sir, it's half a day's journey. And, by the way, he has a beautiful daughter and tomorrow is her birthday. Princes and knights from all over the world have come to fight in a tournament for her love.

**PERICLES**

If my luck matched my desires, I'd try my hand at that.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

O, sir, things must be as they may; and what a man cannot get, he may lawfully deal for—his wife's soul.

*Re-enter Second and Third Fishermen, drawing up a net*

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

115 Help, master, help! here's a fish hangs in the net, like a poor man's right in the law; 'twill hardly come out. Ha! bots on't, 'tis come at last, and 'tis turned to a rusty armour.

**PERICLES**

An armour, friends! I pray you, let me see it.  
120 Thanks, fortune, yet, that, after all my crosses, Thou givest me somewhat to repair myself; And though it was mine own, part of my heritage, Which my dead father did bequeath to me. With this strict charge, even as he left his life,  
125 'Keep it, my Pericles; it hath been a shield Twixt me and death;— and pointed to this brace;— 'For that it saved me, keep it; in like necessity— The which the gods protect thee from!— may defend thee.'

130 It kept where I kept, I so dearly loved it; Till the rough seas, that spare not any man, Took it in rage, though calm'd have given't again: I thank thee for't: my shipwreck now's no ill, Since I have here my father's gift in's will.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

135 What mean you, sir?

**PERICLES**

To beg of you, kind friends, this coat of worth, For it was sometime target to a king; I know it by this mark. He loved me dearly, And for his sake I wish the having of it;  
140 And that you'd guide me to your sovereign's court, Where with it I may appear a gentleman; And if that ever my low fortune's better, I'll pay your bounties; till then rest your debtor.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Why, wilt thou tourney for the lady?

**PERICLES**

145 I'll show the virtue I have borne in arms.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Why, do 'e take it, and the gods give thee good on't!

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Ay, but hark you, my friend; 'twas we that made up this garment through the rough seams of the waters: there are certain condolements, certain vails. I  
150 hope, sir, if you thrive, you'll remember from whence you had it.

**PERICLES**

Believe 't, I will.  
By your furtherance I am clothed in steel;  
And, spite of all the rapture of the sea,  
155 This jewel holds his building on my arm:  
Unto thy value I will mount myself  
Upon a courser, whose delightful steps  
Shall make the gazer joy to see him tread.  
Only, my friend, I yet am unprovided  
160 Of a pair of bases.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Oh, Sir, things are what they are. What a man can't get, he can trade for (like his wife's soul).

*The Second and Third FISHERMEN come back in, pulling a net behind them.*

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

Help, master, help! There's a heavy fish stuck in the net! He's as stuck as a poor man in a prison! We can't get it out. Hey! Here we go! We got it out at last, and it turned into a suit of rusty armor.

**PERICLES**

Armor? Let me see that. After all the bad luck 6 I've had, finally, something to help me fix myself, though it is my own, and part of my heritage: this is my armor, given to me by my dead father. Just before he died he told me, "Keep it, Pericles. It's kept me safe all my life," and he pointed to this brace, "It saved me. Keep it. When you need it, though I hope the gods will protect you from such a situation, it will defend you." I've always had it with me and have always loved it. I'd never been separated from it until the storm, which doesn't spare anyone, took it in its rage. Now that it's calmed, it's given it back again. I thank you for it. I didn't lose much after all in the shipwreck, since I have my father's gift now.

6 In the original text, Pericles calls his misfortunes "crosses"—alluding to the cross that Jesus had to carry through Jerusalem up to the hill where he was killed. "Crosses" is shorthand for unfair physical and spiritual trials suffered patiently.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

What do you mean, sir?

**PERICLES**

Friends, can I beg for you to give me this armor? I recognize the marks; it belongs to a king who loved me, and I want to have it for his sake. Can I also ask you to lead me to the king's court? With this armor, I'll dress up like like a gentleman and, if I win and improve my bad luck, I'll pay you back for kindness. Until then, I owe you.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

What, you're going to enter the tournament for the lady?

**PERICLES**

I'll show how skilled I am in battle.

**FIRST FISHERMAN**

Well, take it, then, and may the gods bless you!

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

But listen, sir: we're the ones that pulled this armor out of the rough sea, so there are certain conditions, certain respects to paid. I hope, sir, if you're successful, that you'll remember where you got it from.

**PERICLES**

Believe me, I will. With your help, I have a suit of armor. In spite of what the sea did to me, I still have this valuable ring, which I'll sell to buy a horse so beautiful everyone will love to see me riding him. And yet, my friends, I still need some jousting equipment.

**SECOND FISHERMAN**

We'll sure provide: thou shalt have my best gown to make thee a pair; and I'll bring thee to the court myself.

**PERICLES**

Then honour be but a goal to my will,  
This day I'll rise, or else add ill to ill.

165

*Exeunt***SECOND FISHERMAN**

We can help you with that. We'll make sure you get a pair, and I'll bring you to court myself.

**PERICLES**

All I want is honor. It can only get better from here.

*They all exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 2

**Shakespeare**

*Enter SIMONIDES, THAISA, Lords, and Attendants*

**SIMONIDES**

Are the knights ready to begin the triumph?

**FIRST LORD**

They are, my liege;  
And stay your coming to present themselves.

**SIMONIDES**

Return them, we are ready; and our daughter,  
5 In honour of whose birth these triumphs are,  
Sits here, like beauty's child, whom nature gat  
For men to see, and seeing wonder at.

*Exit a Lord***THAISA**

It pleaseth you, my royal father, to express  
My commendations great, whose merit's less.

**SIMONIDES**

10 It's fit it should be so; for princes are  
A model which heaven makes like to itself:  
As jewels lose their glory if neglected,  
So princes their renous if not respected.  
'Tis now your honour, daughter, to explain  
15 The labour of each knight in his device.

**THAISA**

Which, to preserve mine honour, I'll perform.

*Enter a Knight; he passes over, and his Squire presents his shield to the Princess*

**SIMONIDES**

Who is the first that doth prefer himself?

**THAISA**

20 A knight of Sparta, my renowned father;  
And the device he bears upon his shield  
Is a black Ethiope reaching at the sun  
The word, 'Lux tua vita mihi.'

**SIMONIDES**

He loves you well that holds his life of you.

*The Second Knight passes over***Shakescleare Translation**

*SIMONIDES, THAISA, LORDS, and servants enter.*

**SIMONIDES**

Are the knights ready to begin the contest?

**FIRST LORD**

They are, sir, and are waiting to present themselves to you.

**SIMONIDES**

Bring them in; I'm ready. Since this whole thing is in honor of her birthday, my beautiful daughter, whom Nature made for men to see<sup>1</sup>, will sit here, where everyone can marvel at her.

*FIRST LORD exits.***THAISA**<sup>2</sup>

Father, you like bragging about me even when I don't deserve it.

<sup>1</sup> Simonides's description of Thaisa is similar to Antiochus's description of his daughter.

<sup>2</sup> Thaisa's name is pronounced "Ty-EE-suh," according to Shakespeare's metrical pattern--the stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry.

**SIMONIDES**

I have to—princes are as vain as the gods. Just like jewels lose their shine if they're not polished, princes lose their reputations if they're not respected. Now, daughter, it's your job to explain what each knight's emblem<sup>3</sup> means.

<sup>3</sup> In the Renaissance, most aristocratic men had a personal emblem accompanied by a Latin motto—a "device." A device on clothes, tapestries, rings, and shields would identify its owner.

**THAISA**

I'll do my best.

*FIRST KNIGHT marches in front of them as his squire presents the knight's shield (which has an emblem painted on it) to THAISA.*

**SIMONIDES**

Who's this first knight?

**THAISA**

A knight from Sparta, sir. The design on his shield shows an African man reaching toward the sun, with the motto "Your light is my life."

**SIMONIDES**

Sounds like he loves you a lot, if you're his whole life.

*The SECOND KNIGHT marches by.*

**SIMONIDES**

25 Who is the second that presents himself?

**THAISA**

A prince of Macedon, my royal father;  
And the device he bears upon his shield  
Is an arm'd knight that's conquer'd by a lady;  
30 The motto thus, in Spanish, 'Piu por dulzura que por fuerza.'

*The Third Knight passes over*

**SIMONIDES**

And what's the third?

**THAISA**

The third of Antioch;  
And his device, a wreath of chivalry;  
35 The word, 'Me pompaev provexit apex.'

*The Fourth Knight passes over*

**SIMONIDES**

What is the fourth?

**THAISA**

A burning torch that's turned upside down;  
The word, 'Quod me alit, me extinguit.'

**SIMONIDES**

40 Which shows that beauty hath his power and will,  
Which can as well inflame as it can kill.

*The Fifth Knight passes over*

**THAISA**

The fifth, an hand environed with clouds,  
Holding out gold that's by the touchstone tried;  
45 The motto thus, 'Sic spectanda fides.'

*The Sixth Knight, PERICLES, passes over*

**SIMONIDES**

And what's  
The sixth and last, the which the knight himself  
With such a graceful courtesy deliver'd?

**THAISA**

50 He seems to be a stranger; but his present is  
A wither'd branch, that's only green at top;  
The motto, 'In hac spe vivo!'

**SIMONIDES**

A pretty moral;  
From the dejected state wherein he is,  
55 He hopes by you his fortunes yet may flourish.

**FIRST LORD**

He had need mean better than his outward show  
Can any way speak in his just command;  
For by his rusty outside he appears  
To have practised more the whipstock than the lance.

**SECOND LORD**

60 He well may be a stranger, for he comes  
To an honour'd triumph strangely furnished.

**THIRD LORD**

And on set purpose let his armour rust  
Until this day, to scour it in the dust.

**SIMONIDES**

Who's the second knight?

**THAISA**

A prince of Macedon, sir. His design shows a knight being conquered by a lady. The motto, in Spanish, is "Better by sweetness than by force."

*The THIRD KNIGHT marches by.*

**SIMONIDES**

And the third?

**THAISA**

The third is from Antioch. His shield shows a green wreath, with the motto, "I'll fight my way to the top."

*The fourth knight marches by.*

**SIMONIDES**

And the fourth?

**THAISA**

A burning torch turned upside down, with the motto, "That which lights me snuffs me out."

**SIMONIDES**

Which symbolizes that his love of beauty could as easily lead him to do great things as evil ones.

*The fifth knight marches by.*

**THAISA**

The fifth knight's shield shows a hand emerging from clouds, holding pure gold. His motto is, "Faith should be valued this way."

*The sixth knight, PERICLES, marches by.*

**SIMONIDES**

And what about the sixth and the last? It's very polite to go last, you know.

**THAISA**

I think he's a stranger. His shield design is a dead tree branch with only a little green at the top. The motto is, "This hope keeps me alive."

**SIMONIDES**

That's a nice moral. It means that he's currently down and out but hopes that, by marrying you, he'll be on his way to a better fortune.

**FIRST LORD**

He'll have to do better than this to prove himself. His rusty armor looks less like a knight's and more like it came from a junk shop.

**SECOND LORD**

He must be a stranger, since he showed up with such a strange outfit.

**THIRD LORD**

And let his armor rust until today on purpose, before he wears it in the tournament.

**SIMONIDES**

Opinion's but a fool, that makes us scan  
 65 The outward habit by the inward man.  
 But stay, the knights are coming: we will withdraw  
 Into the gallery.

*Exeunt***SIMONIDES**

It's foolish to judge a book by its cover. Wait, the knights are coming—let's go into the stadium.

*They all exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 3

**Shakespeare**

*Great shouts within and all cry, "The mean knight!" Enter SIMONIDES, THAISA, Lords, Attendants, and Knights, from tilting*

**SIMONIDES**

Knights,  
 To say you're welcome were superfluous.  
 To place upon the volume of your deeds,  
 As in a title-page, your worth in arms,  
 5 Were more than you expect, or more than's fit.  
 Since every worth in show commends itself.  
 Prepare for mirth, for mirth becomes a feast:  
 You are princes and my guests.

**THAISA**

But you, my knight and guest;  
 10 To whom this wreath of victory I give,  
 And crown you king of this day's happiness.

**PERICLES**

'Tis more by fortune, lady, than by merit.

**SIMONIDES**

Call it by what you will, the day is yours;  
 And here, I hope, is none that envies it.  
 15 In framing an artist, art hath thus decreed,  
 To make some good, but others to exceed;  
 And you are her labour'd scholar. Come, queen o'  
 the feast,—  
 For, daughter, so you are,— here take your place:  
 20 Marshal the rest, as they deserve their grace.

**KNIGHTS**

We are honour'd much by good Simonides.

**SIMONIDES**

Your presence glads our days: honour we love;  
 For who hates honour hates the gods above.

**MARSHAL**

Sir, yonder is your place.

**PERICLES**

25 Some other is more fit.

**FIRST KNIGHT**

Contend not, sir; for we are gentlemen  
 That neither in our hearts nor outward eyes  
 Envy the great nor do the low despise.

**PERICLES**

You are right courteous knights.

**SIMONIDES**

30 Sit, sir, sit.

**Shakescleare Translation**

*From offstage, everyone cheers for PERICLES. SIMONIDES, THAISA, LORDS, attendants, and KNIGHTS come in from the stadium, where the tournament has just happened.*

**SIMONIDES**

Knights, I hardly need to say how welcome you are. To write an endorsement of the book of your good deeds, like on a title page, would be more than is needed, since you've already showed your worth by doing the deeds themselves. So, get ready to laugh, since feasts are best enjoyed with laughter. All of you princes are my guests.

**THAISA**

*[To PERICLES]* Except for you; you're my guest. Here's a victory crown so everyone know's you're the king of the feast.

**PERICLES**

It was more by good luck, ma'am, than by skill.

**SIMONIDES**

Call it whatever you want; the day is yours. And I hope no one here is jealous of you. Some artists are good, but according to the standards of art, some are excellent; you're clearly the best that art has to offer.

*[To THAISA]* Come, daughter, queen of the feast (since that's what you are), take your place. Direct everyone to do what they're supposed to.

*[He seats THAISA at the high table]*

**KNIGHTS**

You've honored us with this feast, Simonides.

**SIMONIDES**

I'm glad you're all here. I love honor; anyone who hates honor hates the gods above.

**MARSHAL**

*[Gesturing toward the high table]* Sir, there's your place.

**PERICLES**

Some other place would be better.

**FIRST KNIGHT**

Don't argue, sir. We gentlemen don't get jealous of others with our eyes or our hearts. We neither envy the powerful nor hate the weak.

**PERICLES**

You're all very kind, polite knights.

**SIMONIDES**

Sit, sir, sit.

**PERICLES**

By Jove, I wonder, that is king of thoughts,  
These cates resist me, she but thought upon.

**THAISA**

By Juno, that is queen of marriage,  
All viands that I eat do seem unsavoury.  
35 Wishing him my meat. Sure, he's a gallant gentleman.

**SIMONIDES**

He's but a country gentleman;  
Has done no more than other knights have done;  
Has broken a staff or so; so let it pass.

**THAISA**

To me he seems like diamond to glass.

**PERICLES**

40 Yon king's to me like to my father's picture,  
Which tells me in that glory once he was;  
Had princes sit, like stars, about his throne,  
And he the sun, for them to reverence;  
None that beheld him, but, like lesser lights,  
45 Did vail their crowns to his supremacy:  
Where now his son's like a glow-worm in the night,  
The which hath fire in darkness, none in light:  
Whereby I see that Time's the king of men,  
He's both their parent, and he is their grave,  
50 And gives them what he will, not what they crave.

**SIMONIDES**

What, are you merry, knights?

**KNIGHTS**

Who can be other in this royal presence?

**SIMONIDES**

Here, with a cup that's stored unto the brim,—  
As you do love, fill to your mistress' lips,—  
55 We drink this health to you.

**KNIGHTS**

We thank your grace.

**SIMONIDES**

Yet pause awhile:  
Yon knight doth sit too melancholy,  
As if the entertainment in our court  
60 Had not a show might countervail his worth.  
Note it not you, Thaisa?

**THAISA**

What is it  
To me, my father?

**SIMONIDES**

O, attend, my daughter:  
65 Princes in this should live like gods above,  
Who freely give to every one that comes  
To honour them:  
And princes not doing so are like to gnats,  
Which make a sound, but kill'd are wonder'd at.  
70 Therefore to make his entrance more sweet,  
Here, say we drink this standing-bowl of wine to him.

**THAISA**

Alas, my father, it befits not me  
Unto a stranger knight to be so bold:  
He may my proffer take for an offence,

**PERICLES**

[To himself] By Jove , king of thoughts: I can hardly eat this delicious food; I can't stop thinking about a certain girl.

 Again, Jove was the king of the Greco-Roman gods.

**THAISA**

[To herself] By Juno , queen of marriage: everything I eat tastes bland; I only want to taste him.

 Juno was Jove's wife, and goddess of marriage.

[To SIMONIDES] He's definitely an rich gentleman.

**SIMONIDES**

He's just a country gentleman. He's done no more than any other knight would do, he's broken a lance or two, so let it go.

**THAISA**

To me he's one in a million .

 In the original text, Thaisa compares Pericles to a "diamond" and the other knights to "glass" to indicate Pericles's higher value.

**PERICLES**

That king is like a picture of my own father; looking at him reminds me of how glorious he once was. He used to have princes sit around his throne like stars, looking up to him like the sun  . No one who saw him could hold a candle to his greatness; those smaller lights were outshone by his supremacy. I, his, son, am just a little firefly. You can see me at night, but I'm invisible in the day. From this, I can say that Time rules men. He raises men up and he puts them in their graves, and doesn't always give them what they want.

 In Pericles's extended metaphor, light symbolizes power and individual greatness. Pericles's father and Simonides are represented as bright. By contrast, Antiochus and Cleon are associated with darkness to emphasize their bad morals.

**SIMONIDES**

What are you all laughing at?

**KNIGHTS**

How could we do anything else in your royal presence?

**SIMONIDES**

Here, fill your cup up to the brim. Here's a toast to your love for Thaisa and to all your health.

**KNIGHTS**

We thank you, sir.

**SIMONIDES**

[Pointing to PERICLES] But wait: that knight looks sad, like our party isn't good enough for him. Haven't you noticed, Thaisa?

**THAISA**

What is it to me, father?

**SIMONIDES**

Listen, daughter: princes, like the gods, should be generous to anyone who comes before them. Stingy princes are like gnats; they buzz around and everyone's glad when they're killed. So, to make Pericles's stay more enjoyable, what do you say we drink a toast of this wine to him to help cheer him up?

**THAISA**

Father, I can't be that forward with a strange knight. He might be offended by the offer, since some men take women's gifts as disrespect.

Since men take women's gifts for impudence.

**SIMONIDES**

How!  
Do as I bid you, or you'll move me else.

**THAISA**

[*Aside*] Now, by the gods, he could not please me better.

**SIMONIDES**

80 And furthermore tell him, we desire to know of him,  
Of whence he is, his name and parentage.

**THAISA**

The king my father, sir, has drunk to you.

**PERICLES**

I thank him.

**THAISA**

Wishing it so much blood unto your life.

**PERICLES**

85 I thank both him and you, and pledge him freely.

**THAISA**

And further he desires to know of you,  
Of whence you are, your name and parentage.

**PERICLES**

A gentleman of Tyre; my name, Pericles;  
My education been in arts and arms;  
90 Who, looking for adventures in the world,  
Was by the rough seas reft of ships and men,  
And after shipwreck driven upon this shore.

**THAISA**

He thanks your grace; names himself Pericles,  
A gentleman of Tyre,  
95 Who only by misfortune of the seas  
Bereft of ships and men, cast on this shore.

**SIMONIDES**

Now, by the gods, I pity his misfortune,  
And will awake him from his melancholy.  
Come, gentlemen, we sit too long on trifles,  
100 And waste the time, which looks for other revels.  
Even in your armours, as you are address'd,  
Will very well become a soldier's dance.  
I will not have excuse, with saying this  
Loud music is too harsh for ladies' heads,  
105 Since they love men in arms as well as beds.

*The Knights dance*

**SIMONIDES**

So, this was well ask'd, 'twas so well perform'd.  
Come, sir;  
Here is a lady that wants breathing too:  
And I have heard, you knights of Tyre  
110 Are excellent in making ladies trip;  
And that their measures are as excellent.

**PERICLES**

In those that practise them they are, my lord.

**SIMONIDES**

O, that's as much as you would be denied  
Of your fair courtesy.

**SIMONIDES**

What? Do what I say, or else.

**THAISA**

[*To herself*] Now, by the gods, there's nothing that would make me happier.

**SIMONIDES**

And also tell him we want to know where he came from and who his parents are.

**THAISA**

[*To PERICLES*] Sir, the king, my father, just drank a toast to you.

**PERICLES**

Tell him I said thanks.

**THAISA**

He wished you good health.

**PERICLES**

Thanks to him and to you. I'm honored.

**THAISA**

And he also wants to know where you came from, what your name is, and who your parents are.

**PERICLES**

I'm from Tyre. My name is Pericles. I've been schooled in arts and in arms. I was looking for adventure in the world when I was shipwrecked by storms, lost my men, and landed on your shore.

**THAISA**

[*Returning to SIMONIDES*] He said thank you, and that his name is Pericles, that he's from Tyre, and was only shipwrecked here by chance.

**SIMONIDES**

Now, by the gods, I feel sorry for him and will cheer him up. Come on, gentlemen, we're spending too much time on little things. Let's not waste time any longer; let's find another pastime. Even in your armor, as you're dressed, you'll look great dancing a soldier's dance. No excuses; no one says the music is too loud for the ladies. We all know that ladies love to dance with soldiers as much as they like to get in bed with them!

*The KNIGHTS dance.*

**SIMONIDES**

Well, I'm glad I asked; that was a good dance.

[*To PERICLES*] Here, sir, this lady needs a partner, too. I've heard you knights of Tyre are excellent dancers, and that you have a way of dancing with women, and that your rhythm is excellent.

**PERICLES**

Those that dance might, sir.

**SIMONIDES**

Well, you might miss your chance if you keep talking.

*The Knights and Ladies dance***SIMONIDES**

Unclasp, unclasp:  
Thanks, gentlemen, to all; all have done well.  
[To PERICLES]  
120 But you the best. Pages and lights, to conduct  
These knights unto their several lodgings!  
Yours, sir,  
We have given order to be next our own.

*The KNIGHTS and ladies dance.***SIMONIDES**

All right, break it up. Thanks, gentleman, and everyone. You  
all did well.

[To PERICLES] But you were the best.

[To ALL] Servants, bring lamps and take these knights to  
their rooms![To PERICLES] We've asked for you to have the best room,  
right next to mine.**PERICLES**

125 I am at your grace's pleasure.

**SIMONIDES**

Princes, it is too late to talk of love;  
And that's the mark I know you level at:  
Therefore each one betake him to his rest;  
To-morrow all for speeding do their best.

**PERICLES**

Thank you, sir.

**SIMONIDES**

It's too late now to talk about love (though I know that's  
what you're all aiming for). Everyone go to bed; we'll get to  
it tomorrow.

*Exeunt**They all exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 4

**Shakespeare***Enter HELICANUS and ESCANES***HELICANUS**

No, Escanes, know this of me,  
Antiochus from incest lived not free:  
For which, the most high gods not minding longer  
To withhold the vengeance that they had in store,  
5 Due to this heinous capital offence,  
Even in the height and pride of all his glory,  
When he was seated in a chariot  
Of an inestimable value, and his daughter with him,  
A fire from heaven came and shrivell'd up  
10 Their bodies, even to loathing; for they so stunk,  
That all those eyes adored them ere their fall  
Scorn now their hand should give them burial.

**ESCANES**

'Twas very strange.

**HELICANUS**

And yet but justice; for though  
15 This king were great, his greatness was no guard  
To bar heaven's shaft, but sin had his reward.

**ESCANES**

'Tis very true.

*Enter two or three Lords***FIRST LORD**

See, not a man in private conference  
20 Or council has respect with him but he.

**SECOND LORD**

It shall no longer grieve without reproof.

**THIRD LORD**

And cursed be he that will not second it.

**Shakescleare Translation***HELICANUS and ESCANES enter.***HELICANUS**

Listen, Escanes: Antiochus was committing incest, and the  
most high gods couldn't contain their vengeance any longer  
against this most horrible of crimes. He was at the height of  
his glory, riding in his expensive chariot with his daughter  
when lightening struck from heaven, shriveling up their  
bodies to a disgusting, stinking mess. It was so horrible that  
no one who formerly adored them would stoop low enough  
to bury them.

**ESCANES**

It was very strange.

**HELICANUS**

It was just, though. Even though he was a great king, his  
greatness couldn't shield him from heaven's wrath. His sin  
got its reward.

**ESCANES**

It's very true.

*Two or three LORDS enter.***FIRST LORD**

See, no one has private access to Pericles except for  
Helicanus.

**SECOND LORD**

We can't let this go on any longer without challenging it.

**THIRD LORD**

Anyone who's not with us is against us.

**FIRST LORD**

Follow me, then. Lord Helicane, a word.

**HELICANUS**

With me? and welcome: happy day, my lords.

**FIRST LORD**

25 Know that our griefs are risen to the top,  
And now at length they overflow their banks.

**HELICANUS**

Your griefs! for what? wrong not your prince you love.

**FIRST LORD**

Wrong not yourself, then, noble Helicane;  
But if the prince do live, let us salute him,  
30 Or know what ground's made happy by his breath.  
If in the world he live, we'll seek him out;  
If in his grave he rest, we'll find him there;  
And be resolved he lives to govern us,  
Or dead, give's cause to mourn his funeral,  
35 And leave us to our free election.

**SECOND LORD**

Whose death indeed's the strongest in our censure:  
And knowing this kingdom is without a head,—  
Like goodly buildings left without a roof  
Soon fall to ruin,— your noble self,  
40 That best know how to rule and how to reign,  
We thus submit unto,— our sovereign.

**ALL**

Live, noble Helicane!

**HELICANUS**

For honour's cause, forbear your suffrages:  
If that you love Prince Pericles, forbear.  
45 Take I your wish, I leap into the seas,  
Where's hourly trouble for a minute's ease.  
A twelvemonth longer, let me entreat you to  
Forbear the absence of your king:  
If in which time expired, he not return,  
50 I shall with aged patience bear your yoke.  
But if I cannot win you to this love,  
Go search like nobles, like noble subjects,  
And in your search spend your adventurous worth;  
Whom if you find, and win unto return,  
55 You shall like diamonds sit about his crown.

**FIRST LORD**

To wisdom he's a fool that will not yield;  
And since Lord Helicane enjoineth us,  
We with our travels will endeavour us.

**HELICANUS**

Then you love us, we you, and we'll clasp hands:  
60 When peers thus knit, a kingdom ever stands.

*Exeunt*

**FIRST LORD**

Follow me, then.

[To HELICANUS] Helicanus, can we have a word?

**HELICANUS**

With me? Of course. Hello, gentlemen.

**FIRST LORD**

You have to understand that our grievances have piled up  
to the point of overflowing.

**HELICANUS**

Your grievances! Why? Don't say anything against the prince  
you love.

**FIRST LORD**

Then don't say anything against yourself, Helicanus; if the  
prince is alive, let us see him. Otherwise just tell us where  
he's buried. If he's alive somewhere in the world, we'll find  
him; if he's in his grave, we'll find him there. Give us the  
right to know if he's still our rightful ruler or, if he's dead, let  
us mourn him with a funeral and then have an open  
election.

**SECOND LORD**

If he is dead, and we don't have a ruler, then we would  
hardly want the kingdom to continue this way, like a  
building without a roof, a country without a king is quickly  
ruined. With all your experience, we would look to you, and  
would appoint you to be our next king.

**ALL**

Long live Helicanus!

**HELICANUS**

Please, for honor's sake, no more. If you love Prince  
Pericles, you'll stop. I'll do as you wish: I'll set sail to find  
him, as dangerous as it is out there on the seas. Let me ask  
you to stand the absence of the king for another year. If I  
can't find the Prince within that time, I'll patiently accept  
your appointment. If you can't wait, go and look for him;  
show how loyal you are by your diligent searching. Then, if  
you find him and bring him back, he will reward you  
generously.

**FIRST LORD**

We'd be foolish not to give in to your wisdom. Since you  
told us so, we'll go about our travels like you said.

**HELICANUS**

We're all friends here; let's shake hands. Our kingdom is  
strong because we're all united.

*They all exit.*

## Act 2, Scene 5

### Shakespeare

Enter SIMONIDES, reading a letter, at one door: the Knights meet him

### Shakescleare Translation

SIMONIDES comes in on one side of the stage reading a  
letter; the KNIGHTS come up to him.

**FIRST KNIGHT**

Good Morrow to the good Simonides.

**SIMONIDES**

Knights, from my daughter this I let you know,  
That for this twelvemonth she'll not undertake  
A married life.

5 Her reason to herself is only known,  
Which yet from her by no means can I get.

**SECOND KNIGHT**

May we not get access to her, my lord?

**SIMONIDES**

'Faith, by no means; she has so strictly tied  
Her to her chamber, that 'tis impossible.  
10 One twelve moons more she'll wear Diana's livery;  
This by the eye of Cynthia hath she vow'd  
And on her virgin honour will not break it.

**THIRD KNIGHT**

Loath to bid farewell, we take our leaves.

*Exeunt Knights*

**SIMONIDES**

15 So,  
They are well dispatch'd; now to my daughter's letter:  
She tells me here, she'd wed the stranger knight,  
Or never more to view nor day nor light.  
'Tis well, mistress; your choice agrees with mine;  
20 I like that well: nay, how absolute she's in't,  
Not minding whether I dislike or no!  
Well, I do command her choice;  
And will no longer have it be delay'd.  
Soft! here he comes: I must dissemble it.

*Enter PERICLES*

**PERICLES**

25 All fortune to the good Simonides!

**SIMONIDES**

To you as much, sir! I am beholding to you  
For your sweet music this last night: I do  
Protest my ears were never better fed  
With such delightful pleasing harmony.

**PERICLES**

30 It is your grace's pleasure to command;  
Not my desert.

**SIMONIDES**

Sir, you are music's master.

**PERICLES**

The worst of all her scholars, my good lord.

**SIMONIDES**

Let me ask you one thing:  
35 What do you think of my daughter, sir?

**PERICLES**

A most virtuous princess.

**SIMONIDES**

And she is fair too, is she not?

**PERICLES**

As a fair day in summer, wondrous fair.

**FIRST KNIGHT**

Good morning, Simonides.

**SIMONIDES**

Gentlemen, I have to tell you that my daughter has decided  
not to marry for another year. Only she knows why; she  
won't tell me.

**SECOND KNIGHT**

Can't we see her, sir?

**SIMONIDES**

Absolutely not; she's locked in her room and it's impossible  
to get her out. She's sworn to remain a virgin 1 for another  
year, and swears on her honor she won't go back on her  
promise.

1 "Diana," in the original text, was the Roman goddess of the hunt, associated with the moon and with virginity. Vowing oneself to Diana was equivalent to promising not to have sex.

**THIRD KNIGHT**

We're sad to leave, but we'll go now.

*The KNIGHTS exit.*

**SIMONIDES**

Well, they're gone. Now about my daughter's letter . . . [He looks at a letter] She says here that she wants to marry the stranger knight, or she'll never see the light of day again. That's fine, missy; your choice is the same as mine. I really like that. It's funny how set she is in it; she doesn't care whether or not I dislike it! Well, I'm happy with her choice, but I'll pretend I'm not. 2 Shh! Here he comes! I'll have to pretend it.

2 Early modern comedies often involved lovers who wanted to marry without their parents' consent. Simonides plays the part of the obstructing father, even though he supports the couple.

*PERICLES enters.*

**PERICLES**

All blessings to you, good Simonides!

**SIMONIDES**

The same to you, sir! I owe you for that lovely singing last night. I swear I've never heard such a great voice.

**PERICLES**

Thanks for the compliment, but I hardly deserve it.

**SIMONIDES**

You're a master of music.

**PERICLES**

I'm the worst of all music's students, sir.

**SIMONIDES**

Let me ask you a question: what do you think of my daughter, sir?

**PERICLES**

She's a virtuous princess.

**SIMONIDES**

And she's pretty, too, right?

**PERICLES**

As beautiful as a summer day; extremely beautiful.

**SIMONIDES**

Sir, my daughter thinks very well of you;  
 Ay, so well, that you must be her master,  
 And she will be your scholar: therefore look to it.

**PERICLES**

I am unworthy for her schoolmaster.

**SIMONIDES**

She thinks not so; peruse this writing else.

**PERICLES**

*[Aside]* What's here?  
 A letter, that she loves the knight of Tyre!  
 'Tis the king's subtlety to have my life.  
 O, seek not to entrap me, gracious lord,  
 A stranger and distressed gentleman,  
 That never aim'd so high to love your daughter,  
 But bent all offices to honour her.

**SIMONIDES**

Thou hast bewitch'd my daughter, and thou art  
 A villain.

**PERICLES**

By the gods, I have not:  
 Never did thought of mine levy offence;  
 Nor never did my actions yet commence  
 A deed might gain her love or your displeasure.

**SIMONIDES**

Traitor, thou liest.

**PERICLES**

Traitor!

**SIMONIDES**

Ay, traitor.

**PERICLES**

Even in his throat—unless it be the king—  
 That calls me traitor, I return the lie.

**SIMONIDES**

*[Aside]* Now, by the gods, I do applaud his courage.

**PERICLES**

My actions are as noble as my thoughts,  
 That never relish'd of a base descent.  
 I came unto your court for honour's cause,  
 And not to be a rebel to her state;  
 And he that otherwise accounts of me,  
 This sword shall prove he's honour's enemy.

**SIMONIDES**

No?

Here comes my daughter, she can witness it.

*Enter THAISA*

**PERICLES**

Then, as you are as virtuous as fair,  
 Resolve your angry father, if my tongue  
 Did ere solicit, or my hand subscribe  
 To any syllable that made love to you.

**SIMONIDES**

Sir, my daughter likes you. She likes you so much that she wants you to be her master <sup>3</sup>, and she'll be your student. What do you think?

<sup>3</sup> In speaking of a "master" and a "scholar" in the original text, Simonides is playing off of the earlier conversation about music. He now positions Pericles as a teacher of music and Thaisa as a student (in which music is a metaphor, perhaps, for love).

**PERICLES**

I'm not worthy to be her teacher.

**SIMONIDES**

She doesn't think so; look at this letter.

**PERICLES**

*[To himself, reading the letter]* What does this say? She says in this letter that she loves me! Maybe this is the king's plot to kill me?

*[To SIMONIDES]* Oh, please don't try to trap me, sir. I'm just an unlucky stranger and a gentleman in distress. I never wanted to marry your daughter; I just wanted to do my best to honor her.

**SIMONIDES**

You've tricked my daughter into loving you, you crook.

**PERICLES**

I swear I haven't. I never did anything to hurt you. I never wanted to win her over and never wanted to offend you.

**SIMONIDES**

Traitor, you lie!

**PERICLES**

Traitor?

**SIMONIDES**

Yes, traitor.

**PERICLES**

Anyone who calls me a traitor (unless he's a king, of course) is a liar.

**SIMONIDES**

*[To himself]* Now, by the gods, I have to applaud his bravery.

**PERICLES**

I've only tried to do the right thing; I haven't thought or done a single wrong thing. I came here to compete in the tournament for honor's sake, not to commit treason. Anyone who says otherwise will have to fight me for honor.

**SIMONIDES**

Really? Here comes my daughter; she can prove it.

*THAISA enters.*

**PERICLES**

Please, since you're as honest as you are beautiful, tell the truth: tell your angry father that I never said or wrote anything proclaiming my feelings to you.

**THAISA**

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

**SIMONIDES**

Yea, mistress, are you so peremptory?

*[Aside]*  
80 I am glad on't with all my heart.—  
I'll tame you; I'll bring you in subjection.  
Will you, not having my consent,  
85 Bestow your love and your affections  
Upon a stranger? who, for aught I know,  
May be, nor can I think the contrary,  
As great in blood as I myself.—  
Therefore hear you, mistress; either frame  
90 Your will to mine,— and you, sir, hear you,  
Either be ruled by me, or I will make you—  
Man and wife:  
Nay, come, your hands and lips must seal it too:  
And being join'd, I'll thus your hopes destroy;  
95 And for a further grief,—God give you joy!—  
What, are you both pleased?

**THAISA**

Yes, if you love me, sir.

**PERICLES**

Even as my life, or blood that fosters it.

**SIMONIDES**

What, are you both agreed?

**BOTH**

100 Yes, if it please your majesty.

**SIMONIDES**

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

*Exeunt*

*Enter GOWER*

**GOWER**

Now sleep y-slaked hath the rout;  
105 No din but snores the house about,  
Made louder by the o'er-fed breast  
Of this most pompous marriage-feast.  
The cat, with eyne of burning coal,  
Now crouches fore the mouse's hole;  
110 And crickets sing at the oven's mouth,  
E'er the blither for their drouth.  
Hymen hath brought the bride to bed.  
Where, by the loss of maidenhead,  
A babe is moulded. Be attent,  
115 And time that is so briefly spent  
With your fine fancies quaintly eche:  
What's dumb in show I'll plain with speech.

**DUMB SHOW.** Enter, PERICLES and SIMONIDES at one door, with Attendants; a Messenger meets them, kneels, and gives PERICLES a letter: PERICLES shows it SIMONIDES; the Lords kneel to him. Then enter THAISA with child, with LYCHORIDA a nurse. The KING shows her the letter; she rejoices: she and PERICLES take leave of her father, and depart with LYCHORIDA and their Attendants. Then exeunt SIMONIDES and the rest

**THAISA**

Well, if you did, I wouldn't be offended; I'd be glad.

**SIMONIDES**

Hey, missy, aren't you getting a little hasty?

*[To himself]* I'm happy about this, with all my heart.

*[To PERICLES and THAISA]* You'll have to listen to me; I'll make you do what I want. Would you really agree to marry a stranger without my permission? He could be anybody, we don't even know if he's a prince. So, listen, missy: You'll either obey me (and you, too, sir, listen to me) or I'll make you . . . man and wife! Come on, then, hold each other's hands, kiss, and seal the deal! And, now that you're together, I'll disappoint you again, with the further condition . . . God bless you! Are you happy?

**THAISA**

Of course, if you love me, sir!

**PERICLES**

I swear on my life, with all my heart!

**SIMONIDES**

You both feel the same way?

**BOTH**

Yes, if you approve.

**SIMONIDES**

I approve so wholeheartedly that I'd like to have the wedding immediately and get you off to bed!

*They all exit.*

*GOWER enters.*

**GOWER**

Now it's night and everyone is asleep; the only sound in the house is snoring, all the louder after being overfed at this marriage feast. Cats' eyes shine like burning coals as they hunt for mice, crickets chirp in the empty kitchen, and everything goes on as usual. Meanwhile, Pericles and Thaisa go to their marriage bed <sup>A</sup>, where, by the loss of virginity, a baby is conceived. Pay attention: we'll bridge a lot of action into a short amount of time with the help of your imagination. It'll be silent, but I'll explain it afterward.

<sup>A</sup> "Hymen," in the original text, was the Roman goddess of marriage and virgins, associated with Juno. Classical poets often invoked Hymen for a blessing on wedding nights.

In a dumb show, PERICLES and SIMONIDES come in on one side of the stage followed by other lords and servants. A MESSENGER comes in to meet them, kneels, and gives PERICLES a letter. PERICLES shows the letter to SIMONIDES; he reads it aloud and the lords all kneel to PERICLES. Then THAISA comes in, pregnant, accompanied by LYCHORIDA, a nurse. The KING shows the letter to THAISA, and she rejoices. THAISA and PERICLES says goodbye to SIMONIDES and leave with LYCHORIDA and their servants. Then SIMONIDES and the others leave.

## Act 3, Chorus

### Shakespeare

**GOWER**

By many a dern and painful perch  
Of Pericles the careful search,  
By the four opposing coigns  
Which the world together joins,  
5 Is made with all due diligence  
That horse and sail and high expense  
Can stead the quest. At last from Tyre,  
Fame answering the most strange inquire,  
To the court of King Simonides  
10 Are letters brought, the tenor these:  
Antiochus and his daughter dead;  
The men of Tyrus on the head  
Of Helicanus would set on  
The crown of Tyre, but he will none:  
15 The mutiny he there hastes t' oppress;  
Says to 'em, if King Pericles  
Come not home in twice six moons,  
He, obedient to their dooms,  
Will take the crown. The sum of this,  
20 Brought hither to Pentapolis,  
Y-ravished the regions round,  
And every one with claps can sound,  
'Our heir-apparent is a king!  
Who dream'd, who thought of such a thing?'  
25 Brief, he must hence depart to Tyre:  
His queen with child makes her desire—  
Which who shall cross?— along to go:  
Omit we all their dole and woe:  
Lychorida, her nurse, she takes,  
30 And so to sea. Their vessel shakes  
On Neptune's billow; half the flood  
Hath their keel cut: but fortune's mood  
Varies again; the grisly north  
Disgorges such a tempest forth,  
35 That, as a duck for life that dives,  
So up and down the poor ship drives:  
The lady shrieks, and well-a-near  
Does fall in travail with her fear:  
And what ensues in this fell storm  
40 Shall for itself itself perform.  
I nill relate, action may  
Conveniently the rest convey;  
Which might not what by me is told.  
In your imagination hold  
45 This stage the ship, upon whose deck  
The sea-tost Pericles appears to speak.

Exit

### Shakescleare Translation

**GOWER**

The search for Pericles was long and difficult, and covered all four corners of the world. It was made with all the careful and determined effort that horses, boats, and money could make possible. At last, news came all the way from Tyre to answer the strange inquiries, and reached the court of King Simonides. Here is what the letters said: that Antiochus and his daughter are dead, and that the people of Tyre want to crown Helicanus king, but he refused. Helicanus is trying to contain a mutiny, but if Pericles doesn't return within a year, he'll give in to their wishes and take the crown. Hearing this, everyone in Pentapolis rejoiced and clapped their hands, saying, "our princess's husband is a king! who would have thought?" So he has to return to Tyre, and his pregnant queen demands to go with him (and who could say no to that?). We'll skip over their argument. She takes her nurse, Lychorida, with her to sea. Their ship shakes on the waves and they cross half the sea. 1

But then fortune's mood 2 changes, and a powerful storm comes from the north. It tosses the ship in the waves like a duck diving for its life. The poor queen goes into labor early, partly out of fear. The rest of what happened during the storm, you'll have to see for yourself; I can't explain it as well as action can show it. Now imagine the stage is a ship, and that Pericles speaks from the deck.

1 The original text refers to this halfway point with imagery of a *keel*—the large beam under the ship's hull, placed in the middle and running from front to back.

2 "Fortune," or luck, is often personified as a Lady who has the power to make or break humans' destinies as she likes.

## Act 3, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter PERICLES, on shipboard*

**PERICLES**

Thou god of this great vast, rebuke these surges,  
Which wash both heaven and hell; and thou, that hast  
Upon the winds command, bind them in brass,  
Having call'd them from the deep! O, still  
5 Thy deafening, dreadful thunders; gently quench  
Thy nimble, sulphurous flashes! O, how, Lychorida,  
How does my queen? Thou stormest venomously,  
Wilt thou spit all thyself? The seaman's whistle

### Shakescleare Translation

*PERICLES enters, onboard his ship.*

**PERICLES**

God of the sea 1, please stop this horrible storm, which washes over both heaven and hell. You can control the wind; settle them down, since you're the one who called them up. Stop the deafening, terrifying thunder and halt the quick, bright lightning! Oh, Lychorida, how is the queen doing? This storm is absolutely crazy! From what the sailors are saying, we're due to die any minute now.

1 In the original text, Pericles prays to "Neptune," the Roman god of the sea. His prayer, though, resonates with the story of Jesus calming the storm in the New Testament—familiar to early modern audiences.

Is as a whisper in the ears of death,  
 10 Unheard. Lychorida!— Lucina, O  
 Divinest patroness, and midwife gentle  
 To those that cry by night, convey thy deity  
 Aboard our dancing boat; make swift the pangs  
 Of my queen's travails!

*Enter LYCHORIDA, with an Infant*

**PERICLES**

15 Now, Lychorida!

**LYCHORIDA**

Here is a thing too young for such a place,  
 Who, if it had conceit, would die, as I  
 Am like to do: take in your arms this piece  
 20 Of your dead queen.

**PERICLES**

How, how, Lychorida!

**LYCHORIDA**

Patience, good sir; do not assist the storm.  
 Here's all that is left living of your queen,  
 A little daughter: for the sake of it,  
 25 Be manly, and take comfort.

**PERICLES**

O you gods!  
 Why do you make us love your goodly gifts,  
 And snatch them straight away? We here below  
 Recall not what we give, and therein may  
 30 Use honour with you.

**LYCHORIDA**

Patience, good sir,  
 Even for this charge.

**PERICLES**

Now, mild may be thy life!  
 For a more blustrous birth had never babe:  
 35 Quiet and gentle thy conditions! for  
 Thou art the rudest welcome to this world  
 That ever was prince's child. Happy what follows!  
 Thou hast as chiding a nativity  
 As fire, air, water, earth, and heaven can make,  
 40 To herald thee from the womb: even at the first  
 Thy loss is more than can thy portage quit,  
 With all thou canst find here. Now, the good gods  
 Throw their best eyes upon't!

*Enter two Sailors*

**FIRST SAILOR**

What courage, sir? God save you!

**PERICLES**

45 Courage enough: I do not fear the flaw;  
 It hath done to me the worst. Yet, for the love  
 Of this poor infant, this fresh-new sea-farer,  
 I would it would be quiet.

**FIRST SAILOR**

Slack the bolins there! Thou wilt not, wilt thou?  
 50 Blow, and split thyself.

**SECOND SAILOR**

But sea-room, an the brine and cloudy billow kiss  
 the moon, I care not.

Lychorida—oh, Lucina, goddess of midwives and childbirth,  
 come aboard our boat and make my wife's labor go quickly!

*LYCHORIDA enters, holding a baby.*

**PERICLES**

Now, Lychorida!

**LYCHORIDA**

Here's a baby far too young to be on board this ship. If she  
 were smart, she'd die, just like I'm about to do. Here's all  
 that's left of your dead queen.

**PERICLES**

What, what, Lychorida!

**LYCHORIDA**

Don't cry, sir, we've got enough wailing with the storm  
 going on. Here's all that's left alive of your queen: a little  
 daughter. For her sake, be a man and be strong.

**PERICLES**

Oh, you gods! Why do you give us good things that we love  
 and then take them away? Those of us on earth hardly  
 know what to do.

**LYCHORIDA**

Calm down, sir—as bad as this is.

**PERICLES**

*[To the baby]* May you have an easy life! No baby has ever  
 had such a chaotic birth, but you seem to be quiet and  
 gentle! This is the worst welcome to the world that any  
 princess has ever had. It can only go up from here! This is  
 the roughest start for a newborn that fire, water, earth, and  
 heaven could put together as you came out of the  
 womb—you've lost everything before you had anything at  
 all. May the gods take note of this and bless your future!

*Two SAILORS enter.*

**FIRST SAILOR**

Have courage, sir! God bless you!

**PERICLES**

I have enough courage; I've never been afraid in my life (to  
 my own injury). But for this baby's sake, this brand-new  
 sailor, I wish the storm would quiet down.

**FIRST SAILOR**

Let the sails go slack there! Do it, why don't you! Hurry up!

**SECOND SAILOR**

The waves are coming in over the sides of the ship, and the  
 clouds have covered the moon so it's completely dark! I  
 can't do anything!

**FIRST SAILOR**

Sir, your queen must overboard: the sea works high,  
the wind is loud, and will not lie till the ship be  
cleared of the dead.

55

**PERICLES**

That's your superstition.

**FIRST SAILOR**

Pardon us, sir; with us at sea it hath been still observed: and we are strong in custom. Therefore briefly yield her; for she must overboard straight.

**PERICLES**

60 As you think meet. Most wretched queen!

**LYCHORIDA**

Here she lies, sir.

**PERICLES**

A terrible childbed hast thou had, my dear;  
No light, no fire: the unfriendly elements  
Forgot thee utterly: nor have I time  
65 To give thee hallow'd to thy grave, but straight  
Must cast thee, scarcely coffin'd, in the ooze;  
Where, for a monument upon thy bones,  
And e'er-remaining lamps, the belching whale  
And humming water must o'erwhelm thy corpse,  
70 Lying with simple shells. O Lychorida,  
Bid Nestor bring me spices, ink and paper,  
My casket and my jewels; and bid Nicander  
Bring me the satin coffer: lay the babe  
Upon the pillow: hie thee, whiles I say  
75 A priestly farewell to her: suddenly, woman.

*Exit LYCHORIDA*

**SECOND SAILOR**

Sir, we have a chest beneath the hatches, caulked and bitumed ready.

**PERICLES**

I thank thee. Mariner, say what coast is this?

**SECOND SAILOR**

We are near Tarsus.

**PERICLES**

80 Thither, gentle mariner.  
Alter thy course for Tyre. When canst thou reach it?

**SECOND SAILOR**

By break of day, if the wind cease.

**PERICLES**

O, make for Tarsus!  
There will I visit Cleon, for the babe  
85 Cannot hold out to Tyrus: there I'll leave it  
At careful nursing. Go thy ways, good mariner:  
I'll bring the body presently.

*Exeunt*

**FIRST SAILOR**

Sir, we have to throw the queen overboard. The waves are high, the wind is loud, and this storm won't stop until the ship is cleared of the dead.

**PERICLES**

That's your superstition.

**FIRST SAILOR**

Sorry, sir, it's the way things are done at sea, and we're true to tradition. Give her up quickly, because we have to throw her overboard now.

**PERICLES**

If you think it's best. Poor queen!

**LYCHORIDA**

Here she is, sir.

**PERICLES**

You've had a terrible experience giving birth, my dear. No light, no warmth, and a storm. And I don't even have time to bury you; I have to throw you into the sea without a coffin, straight into the depths. Instead of a tombstone and lighted lamps, you'll have whales, flowing water, and simple shells.

*[To LYCHORIDA] Lychorida, have Nestor bring in some spices, ink, and paper, a casket, and my jewels. And ask Nicander to bring me that fancy box. Lay the baby on that pillow, there, and go, while I say goodbye to my wife. Hurry!*

*LYCHORIDA exits.*

**SECOND SAILOR**

Sir, we have a chest ready, waterproofed and sealed.

**PERICLES**

Thank you. Sailor, where are we?

**SECOND SAILOR**

We're near Tarsus.

**PERICLES**

Let's go there, and then change course for Tyre. How soon can we get there?

**SECOND SAILOR**

By morning, if the wind stops.

**PERICLES**

Let's go to Tarsus! I'll visit Cleon, since the baby can't make it to Tyre. I'll leave her there for them to take care of. Go about your business, sailors. I'll bring you the body now.

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 2

### Shakespeare

Enter CERIMON, with a Servant, and some Persons who have been shipwrecked

### Shakescleare Translation

CERIMON enters with a servant and some people who have been shipwrecked.

**CERIMON**

Philemon, ho!

*Enter PHILEMON*

**PHILEMON**

Doth my lord call?

**CERIMON**

Get fire and meat for these poor men:  
5 'T has been a turbulent and stormy night.

**SERVANT**

I have been in many; but such a night as this,  
Till now, I ne'er endured.

**CERIMON**

Your master will be dead ere you return;  
There's nothing can be minister'd to nature  
10 That can recover him.  
[TO PHILEMON]  
Give this to the 'pothecary,  
15 And tell me how it works.

*Exeunt all but CERIMON*

*Enter two Gentlemen*

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Good morrow.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Good morrow to your lordship.

**CERIMON**

Gentlemen,  
Why do you stir so early?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

20 Sir,  
Our lodgings, standing bleak upon the sea,  
Shook as the earth did quake;  
The very principals did seem to rend,  
And all-to topple: pure surprise and fear  
25 Made me to quit the house.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

That is the cause we trouble you so early;  
'Tis not our husbandry.

**CERIMON**

O, you say well.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

But I much marvel that your lordship, having  
30 Rich tire about you, should at these early hours  
Shake off the golden slumber of repose.  
'Tis most strange,  
Nature should be so conversant with pain,  
Being thereto not compell'd.

**CERIMON**

35 I hold it ever,  
Virtue and cunning were endowments greater  
Than nobleness and riches: careless heirs  
May the two latter darken and expend;  
But immortality attends the former.  
40 Making a man a god. 'Tis known, I ever  
Have studied physic, through which secret art,  
By turning o'er authorities, I have,  
Together with my practise, made familiar  
To me and to my aid the blest infusions  
45 That dwell in vegetives, in metals, stones;

**CERIMON**

Hey, Philemon!

*PHILEMON enters.*

**PHILEMON**

Did you call me, sir?

**CERIMON**

Start a fire and get some food for these poor men. It's been  
a rough and stormy night.

**SERVANT**

I've been in many storms, but, until now, I've never seen a  
night as bad as this.

**CERIMON**

Your master will be dead before you get back; there's no  
way on earth  to help him now.

[To PHILEMON] Give this to the doctor, and tell me how it  
works.

 Cerimon emphasizes that his means of healing are natural; that is, he is not a magician. Because witch hunts were common in Shakespeare's day, distinctions between medicine and magic, religion and the occult were important to make.

*Everyone but CERIMON exits.*

*Two GENTLEMEN enter.*

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Good morning.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Good morning, sir.

**CERIMON**

Gentleman, what are you doing up so early?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Sir, our house, which overlooks the sea, shook in the  
earthquake. It seemed like the foundation itself was  
breaking and that the whole building would split in two! It  
scared us enough that we left quickly.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

That's why we're bothering you so early—it's not our fault.

**CERIMON**

Fair enough.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

But I'm surprised that someone as rich and well-provided  
as you is awake at this hour. It's odd that you'd want to  
sacrifice sleep when you don't have to.

**CERIMON**

I truly believe that virtue and wisdom are more important  
to have than status and wealth. Careless children can ruin  
and waste the latter, but the former last forever, making  
humans like gods. As everyone knows, I've studied  
medicine for a long time, the secrets of which I've  
discovered through reading old experts and through my  
own experience. I'm now familiar with the powerful potions  
to be found in plants, metals, and stones. And I can talk  
about the good and bad that Nature is capable of , all of  
which I enjoy this a lot more than I would trying to earn

 Cerimon understands the best and worst of Nature—its storms which might turn a prince into a beggar (like Pericles) and its miracles which might

And I can speak of the disturbances  
That nature works, and of her cures; which doth give me  
A more content in course of true delight  
Than to be thirsty after tottering honour,  
50 Or tie my treasure up in silken bags,  
To please the fool and death.

money or win other people's approval; that's totally worthless.

*bring a dead woman back to life (like Thaisa).*

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

Your honour has through Ephesus pour'd forth  
Your charity, and hundreds call themselves  
Your creatures, who by you have been restored:  
55 And not your knowledge, your personal pain, but even  
Your purse, still open, hath built Lord Cerimon  
Such strong renown as time shall ne'er decay.

*Enter two or three Servants with a chest*

### FIRST SERVANT

So; lift there.

### CERIMON

What is that?

### FIRST SERVANT

60 Sir, even now  
Did the sea toss upon our shore this chest:  
'Tis of some wreck.

### CERIMON

Set 't down, let's look upon't.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

'Tis like a coffin, sir.

### CERIMON

65 Whate'er it be,  
'Tis wondrous heavy. Wrench it open straight:  
If the sea's stomach be o'recharged with gold,  
'Tis a good constraint of fortune it belches upon us.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

'Tis so, my lord.

### CERIMON

70 How close 'tis caulk'd and bitumed!  
Did the sea cast it up?

### FIRST SERVANT

I never saw so huge a bellow, sir,  
As toss'd it upon shore.

### CERIMON

Wrench it open;  
75 Soft! it smells most sweetly in my sense.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

A delicate odour.

### CERIMON

As ever hit my nostril. So, up with it.  
O you most potent gods! what's here? a corse!

### FIRST GENTLEMAN

Most strange!

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

Sir, you've been generous here in Ephesus. Thousands of people have been cured by you and are loyal to you. Not only your knowledge and your personal effort, but also your charity, Lord Cerimon, have built a reputation that will last forever.

*Two or three SERVANTS come in carrying a chest.*

### FIRST SERVANT

Put it up there.

### CERIMON

What is that?

### FIRST SERVANT

Sir, this chest washed up on the shore from a shipwreck.

### CERIMON

Set it down; let's look at it.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

It looks like a coffin, sir.

### CERIMON

Whatever it is, it's very heavy. Open it up quick! If there's too much gold laying on the ocean floor , it's good luck that the sea has thrown it up to us.

 In the original text, Cerimon compares the ocean floor to a stomach and the tide to a burp.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

Of course, sir.

### CERIMON

It's really sealed up tight! Did it come out of the sea?

### FIRST SERVANT

The biggest wave I've ever seen washed it up on the shore.

### CERIMON

Open it! [They succeed in loosening the lid of the chest]  
Shh! I smell something sweet.

### SECOND GENTLEMAN

A delicate odor.

### CERIMON

The most delicate I've ever smelled. Lift up the lid! Oh, you powerful gods! What's in here?

*[He looks in] A body!*

### FIRST GENTLEMAN

How strange!

**CERIMON**

80 Shrouded in cloth of state; balm'd and entreasured  
With full bags of spices! A passport too!  
Apollo, perfect me in the characters!  
*[Reading from a scroll]*  
85 'Here I give to understand,  
If e'er this coffin drive a-land,  
I, King Pericles, have lost  
This queen, worth all our mundane cost.  
90 Who finds her, give her burying;  
She was the daughter of a king:  
Besides this treasure for a fee,  
The gods requite his charity!  
If thou livest, Pericles, thou hast a heart  
95 That even cracks for woe! This chanced tonight.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Most likely, sir.

**CERIMON**

Nay, certainly to-night;  
For look how fresh she looks! They were too rough  
That threw her in the sea. Make a fire within:  
100 Fetch hither all my boxes in my closet.

*Exit a Servant*

**CERIMON**

Death may usurp on nature many hours,  
And yet the fire of life kindle again  
The o'erpress'd spirits. I heard of an Egyptian  
That had nine hours lien dead,  
105 Who was by good appliance recovered.

*Re-enter a Servant, with boxes, napkins, and fire*

**CERIMON**

Well said, well said; the fire and cloths.  
The rough and woeful music that we have,  
Cause it to sound, beseech you.  
The viol once more: how thou stirr'st, thou block!  
110 The music there!—I pray you, give her air.  
Gentlemen.  
This queen will live: nature awakes; a warmth  
Breathes out of her: she hath not been entranced  
Above five hours: see how she gins to blow  
115 Into life's flower again!

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

The heavens,  
Through you, increase our wonder and set up  
Your fame forever.

**CERIMON**

She is alive; behold,  
120 Her eyelids, cases to those heavenly jewels  
Which Pericles hath lost,  
Begin to part their fringes of bright gold;  
The diamonds of a most praised water  
Do appear, to make the world twice rich. Live,  
125 And make us weep to hear your fate, fair creature,  
Rare as you seem to be.

*She moves*

**THAISA**

O dear Diana,  
Where am I? Where's my lord? What world is this?

**CERIMON**

Wearing royal clothes, scented with perfumes and spices!  
With a passport, too! Apollo <sup>4</sup>, help me read what this  
says.

<sup>4</sup> Apollo was the Greco-Roman god of music, poetry, and scribes.

*[He picks up a scroll and reads from it]* "To whoever's  
reading this, if this coffin ever comes to land: I, King  
Pericles, have lost my beloved wife. If you've found her,  
please give her a proper burial. She was the daughter of the  
king. Take this gold as payment for your service. May the  
gods bless you!"

*[To the absent Pericles]* Pericles, if you're alive, I feel sorry  
for you. She must have died tonight.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Most likely, sir.

**CERIMON**

No, definitely tonight, look how fresh she looks! They  
shouldn't have thrown her in the sea. Build a fire inside,  
and bring all the boxes from my closet.

*The SERVANT exits.*

**CERIMON**

It may look like someone is dead for hours, but then they  
revive and come back to life. I heard of an Egyptian who  
was dead for nine hours and then, with some help,  
recovered.

*The SERVANT comes back in with boxes, clothes, and fire.*

**CERIMON**

*[To the servants]* Perfect, perfect. Give me the fire and the  
clothes. Play some sad music, please! Play that violin, you  
lazy man! Music, please, give her some music.

*[The servants begin to play while Cerimon uses various  
medicines and potions on THAISA]*

*[To the GENTLEMEN]* Gentlemen. The queen will live. Look,  
she's waking up! She's warm! She's been asleep for about  
five hours, but look how she comes back to life <sup>5</sup>!

<sup>5</sup> The cold, pale look of death  
contrasts with the "flower," or flushed  
looks, of life.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

The gods, through you, amaze us. You've secured your fame  
forever.

**CERIMON**

She's alive! Look, her eyelids, which cover the beautiful  
eyes <sup>6</sup>, which Pericles has lost, are just beginning to  
separate their eyelashes. Now her sparkling eyes are  
appearing—and what a treasure they are.

<sup>6</sup> Using the common Renaissance  
metaphor of eyes as "jewels," Cerimon  
likens Thaisa's material wealth to her  
beauty (and virtue).

*[To THAISA]* Live, and bring tears to our eyes with your sad  
story, beautiful lady. We can tell how special you are.

*THAISA moves.*

**THAISA**

Oh, Diana <sup>7</sup>, where am I? Where's my husband? What is  
this place?

<sup>7</sup> We recall that Diana was the  
Roman goddess of virginity and  
hunting. Thaisa later becomes a  
priestess in Diana's temple, devoting  
herself to chastity—the opposite  
extreme from Antiochus's incestuous  
relationship with his daughter.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Is not this strange?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

130 Most rare.

**CERIMON**

Hush, my gentle neighbours!  
Lend me your hands; to the next chamber bear her.  
Get linen: now this matter must be look'd to,  
For her relapse is mortal. Come, come;  
135 And AEsculapius guide us!

*Exeunt, carrying her away*

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

Isn't this strange?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Very odd.

**CERIMON**

Quiet, gentlemen! Please, pick her up and take her into the next room. Get some sheets; we need to hurry, since a relapse could kill her. Come, come, and Aesculapius<sup>8</sup> help us!

<sup>8</sup> Aesculapius was the Greco-Roman god of medicine.

*They all exit, carrying THAISA away.*

## Act 3, Scene 3

### Shakespeare

Enter PERICLES, CLEON, DIONYZA, and LYCHORIDA with MARINA in her arms

**PERICLES**

Most honour'd Cleon, I must needs be gone;  
My twelve months are expired, and Tyrus stands  
In a litigious peace. You, and your lady,  
Take from my heart all thankfulness! The gods  
5 Make up the rest upon you!

**CLEON**

Your shafts of fortune, though they hurt you mortally,  
Yet glance full wanderingly on us.

**DIONYZA**

O your sweet queen!  
That the strict fates had pleased you had brought her  
10 hither,  
To have bless'd mine eyes with her!

**PERICLES**

We cannot but obey  
The powers above us. Could I rage and roar  
As doth the sea she lies in, yet the end  
15 Must be as 'tis. My gentle babe Marina, whom,  
For she was born at sea, I have named so, here  
I charge your charity withal, leaving her  
The infant of your care; beseeching you  
To give her princely training, that she may be  
20 Manner'd as she is born.

**CLEON**

Fear not, my lord, but think  
Your grace, that fed my country with your corn,  
For which the people's prayers still fall upon you,  
Must in your child be thought on. If neglection  
25 Should therein make me vile, the common body,  
By you relieved, would force me to my duty:  
But if to that my nature need a spur,  
The gods revenge it upon me and mine,  
To the end of generation!

**PERICLES**

30 I believe you;  
Your honour and your goodness teach me to't,  
Without your vows. Till she be married, madam,  
By bright Diana, whom we honour, all  
Unscissor'd shall this hair of mine remain,

### Shakescleare Translation

PERICLES, CLEON, DIONYZA, and LYCHORIDA (with baby MARINA in her arms) enter.

**PERICLES**

Dear Cleon, I have to go. My year is up and the state of peace in Tyre is fragile. Thanks for everything you and your wife have done for me. May the gods bless you.

**CLEON**

Though the bad luck<sup>1</sup> you've experienced has hurt you the most, we feel your pain, too.

<sup>1</sup> In the original text, Cleon compares Pericles's bad luck to the "shafts" of arrows, which strike him "mortally" (to the death) and "glance" (or injure) too.

**DIONYZA**

Your poor queen! If only<sup>2</sup> you could have brought her here, so that I could have met her.

<sup>2</sup> "Strict fates," in the original text, is another reference to the Fates, the three sisters said to control the lives and deaths of humankind.

**PERICLES**

We have to obey the gods above. I can rage as loud as the sea and it won't bring Thaisa back. I named our daughter Marina because she was born at sea. Please, I'm asking a favor: I'm leaving the baby in your care. Make sure she has an education fit for a princess, so she grows up to be as cultivated as her pedigree.

**CLEON**

Don't worry, sir. You provided corn for my country when we were starving. My people still pray for you, and we'll take care of your child, too. If I neglected my duty, the common people (whom you saved) would force me to do my duty. But if I need any punishment, may the gods take revenge on me and my descendants of the next generation!

**PERICLES**

I believe. Your actions speak louder than your words; you don't have to swear. I won't cut my hair again until she gets married, though it might look strange. Goodbye.

*[To DIONYZA] Ma'am, please take good care of my child.*

Though I show ill in't. So I take my leave.  
Good madam, make me blessed in your care  
In bringing up my child.

**DIONYZA**

I have one myself,  
Who shall not be more dear to my respect  
Than yours, my lord.

40

**PERICLES**

Madam, my thanks and prayers.

**CLEON**

We'll bring your grace e'en to the edge o' the shore,  
Then give you up to the mask'd Neptune and  
The gentlest winds of heaven.

**PERICLES**

45

I will embrace  
Your offer. Come, dearest madam. O, no tears,  
Lychorida, no tears:  
Look to your little mistress, on whose grace  
You may depend hereafter. Come, my lord.

*Exeunt***DIONYZA**

I have a daughter, too. I'll love yours like my own.

**PERICLES**

You have my thanks and prayers, ma'am.

**CLEON**

We'll walk you up to the shore, then we'll give you up to  
Neptune  and pray for the gentlest winds from the skies.

 Neptune was the Roman god of the sea.

**PERICLES**

I'll accept that offer.

[To MARINA] Come here, sweetheart. [He holds the baby]  
Don't cry, Lychorida. Take care of your little mistress; she'll  
be in charge of you when I'm gone.

[To CLEON] Let's go, sir.

*They all exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 4

**Shakespeare**

*Enter CERIMON and THAISA*

**CERIMON**

Madam, this letter, and some certain jewels,  
Lay with you in your coffer: which are now  
At your command. Know you the character?

**THAISA**

It is my lord's.  
5 That I was shipp'd at sea, I well remember,  
Even on my eaning time; but whether there  
Deliver'd, by the holy gods,  
I cannot rightly say. But since King Pericles,  
My wedded lord, I ne'er shall see again,  
10 A vestal livery will I take me to,  
And never more have joy.

**CERIMON**

Madam, if this you purpose as ye speak,  
Diana's temple is not distant far,  
Where you may abide till your date expire.  
15 Moreover, if you please, a niece of mine  
Shall there attend you.

**THAISA**

My recompense is thanks, that's all;  
Yet my good will is great, though the gift small.

*Exeunt***Shakescleare Translation**

*CERIMON and THAISA enter.*

**CERIMON**

Ma'am, this letter and some jewelry were in your coffin with  
you. Here they are; they're yours. Do you recognize the  
handwriting?

**THAISA**

It's my husband's. I remember being set in the sea right  
after I gave birth, but don't know how I washed up here.  
Since I'll never see my husband, King Pericles, again, I'll  
become a nun and will never be happy again.

**CERIMON**

If you mean it, ma'am, Diana's temple is nearby. You can  
stay there for the rest of your life. Furthermore, my niece  
can take you there if you like.

**THAISA**

Thank you. I wish I had more to repay your kindness.

*They all exit.*

## Act 4, Chorus

**Shakespeare****Shakescleare Translation**

*Enter GOWER***GOWER**

Imagine Pericles arrived at Tyre,  
Welcomed and settled to his own desire.  
His woeful queen we leave at Ephesus,  
Unto Diana there a votress.

5 Now to Marina bend your mind,  
Whom our fast-growing scene must find  
At Tarsus, and by Cleon train'd  
In music, letters; who hath gain'd  
Of education all the grace,

10 Which makes her both the heart and place  
Of general wonder. But, alack,  
That monster envy, oft the wrack  
Of earned praise, Marina's life  
Seeks to take off by treason's knife.

15 And in this kind hath our Cleon  
One daughter, and a wench full grown,  
Even ripe for marriage-rite; this maid  
Hight Philoten: and it is said  
For certain in our story, she

20 Would ever with Marina be:  
Be't when she weaved the sleided silk  
With fingers long, small, white as milk;  
Or when she would with sharp needle wound  
The cambric, which she made more sound

25 By hurting it; or when to the lute  
She sung, and made the night-bird mute,  
That still records with moan; or when  
She would with rich and constant pen  
Vail to her mistress Dian; still

30 This Philoten contends in skill  
With absolute Marina: so  
With the dove of Paphos might the crow  
Vie feathers white. Marina gets  
All praises, which are paid as debts,

35 And not as given. This so darks  
In Philoten all graceful marks,  
That Cleon's wife, with envy rare,  
A present murderer does prepare  
For good Marina, that her daughter

40 Might stand peerless by this slaughter.  
The sooner her vile thoughts to stead,  
Lychorida, our nurse, is dead:  
And cursed Dionyza hath  
The pregnant instrument of wrath

45 Prest for this blow. The unborn event  
I do commend to your content:  
Only I carry winged time  
Post on the lame feet of my rhyme;  
Which never could I so convey,

50 Unless your thoughts went on my way.  
Dionyza does appear,  
With Leonine, a murderer.

*Exit**GOWER enters.***GOWER**

Imagine Pericles gets back to Tyre, where he's welcomed back and settles down quickly. We'll leave his poor queen here at Ephesus, where she becomes a priestess of Diana. Now back to Marina, whom our quickly-moving scene will find in Tarsus. Cleon educates her in music and literature until she's the most accomplished girl around, and is admired by everyone. Unfortunately, as often happens to those who deserve praise, a jealous person threatens to take Marina's life. Cleon has a grown daughter, Philoten, who's the right age for getting married. According to our story, she and Marina were always together. Whenever Marina wove silk with long, thin, white fingers, or drew her sharp needle through the fabric, making it stronger with each stitch, or sang like a bird while playing the lute (which people still talk about), or when she would write prayerful letters to her goddess, Diana, Philoten couldn't compete with the supreme Marina. A crow could just as well compete with a dove for whiteness. Marina got all the praises; everyone felt less like they were giving compliments, and more like they owed them to her! This hurt Philoten's reputation so much that Cleon's wife, Dionyza, hires a murderer to get Marina out of the way so that Philoten could shine. As soon as she thinks up this vile plan, Lychorida, the nurse, dies. Wicked Dionyza has the murderer all prepped now for his job. I leave what's about to happen up to you. Time with its winged feet flies away while I make my rhyming speeches (which are stuck firmly on the ground). I could never make you understand unless your own imagination helps. That's where I bring you now: to Dionyza meeting with a murderer named Leonine.

*GOWER exits.***Act 4, Scene 1****Shakespeare***Enter DIONYZA and LEONINE***DIONYZA**

Thy oath remember; thou hast sworn to do't:  
'Tis but a blow, which never shall be known.  
Thou canst not do a thing in the world so soon,  
To yield thee so much profit. Let not conscience,  
5 Which is but cold, inflaming love i' thy bosom,  
Inflame too nicely; nor let pity, which

**Shakescleare Translation***DIONYZA and LEONINE enter.***DIONYZA**

Remember your promise: you've sworn to do it. It's just a little thing which no one will ever find out about. And you can count on being rewarded. Don't let your icy conscience thaw out with the heat of love. And don't let pity, which even women have nothing to do with, get the best of you—do just what I've told you to do.

Even women have cast off, melt thee, but be  
A soldier to thy purpose.

**LEONINE**

I will do't; but yet she is a goodly creature.

**DIONYZA**

10 The fitter, then, the gods should have her. Here  
she comes weeping for her only mistress' death.  
Thou art resolved?

**LEONINE**

I am resolved.

*Enter MARINA, with a basket of flowers*

**MARINA**

15 No, I will rob Tellus of her weed,  
To strew thy green with flowers: the yellows, blues,  
The purple violets, and marigolds,  
Shall as a carpet hang upon thy grave,  
While summer-days do last. Ay me! poor maid,  
20 Born in a tempest, when my mother died,  
This world to me is like a lasting storm,  
Whirring me from my friends.

**DIONYZA**

How now, Marina! why do you keep alone?  
How chance my daughter is not with you? Do not  
25 Consume your blood with sorrowing: you have  
A nurse of me. Lord, how your favour's changed  
With this unprofitable woe!  
Come, give me your flowers, ere the sea mar it.  
Walk with Leonine; the air is quick there,  
30 And it pierces and sharpens the stomach. Come,  
Leonine, take her by the arm, walk with her.

**MARINA**

No, I pray you;  
I'll not bereave you of your servant.

**DIONYZA**

Come, come;  
35 I love the king your father, and yourself,  
With more than foreign heart. We every day  
Expect him here: when he shall come and find  
Our paragon to all reports thus blasted,  
He will repent the breadth of his great voyage;  
40 Blame both my lord and me, that we have taken  
No care to your best courses. Go, I pray you,  
Walk, and be cheerful once again; reserve  
That excellent complexion, which did steal  
The eyes of young and old. Care not for me  
45 I can go home alone.

**MARINA**

Well, I will go;  
But yet I have no desire to it.

**DIONYZA**

Come, come, I know 'tis good for you.  
Walk half an hour, Leonine, at the least:  
50 Remember what I have said.

**LEONINE**

I warrant you, madam.

**DIONYZA**

I'll leave you, my sweet lady, for a while:  
Pray, walk softly, do not heat your blood:  
What! I must have a care of you.

**LEONINE**

I'll do it, but she is an innocent girl.

**DIONYZA**

It's better, then, that the gods should have her. Here she  
comes, crying over Lychorida's death. Are you ready?

**LEONINE**

I'm ready.

*MARINA comes in carrying a basket of flowers.*

**MARINA**

I'll take every flower Mother Earth  has to offer, to  
decorate your grave with yellows, blues, purple violets,  
marigolds—all these will cover you as long as summer lasts.  
Poor me! When I was born (in a storm), my mother died; my  
whole life has been a continuous storm blowing me away  
from my friends.

 "Tellus," in the original text, was a  
classical name for Mother Earth.  
Tellus's "weeds," or clothes, are  
flowers.

**DIONYZA**

Hello, Marina! Why are you alone? Why isn't my daughter  
with you? Don't make yourself sick with being so upset; I'll  
be your nurse now. Look how your situation has changed  
with this unfortunate loss! Come on, give me your flowers  
before the sea air wilts them. Walk with Leonine down by  
the shore. The air will do you some good; the wind is  
refreshing and makes your stomach strong. Come on,  
Leonine; take her by the arm, walk with her.

**MARINA**

No, please. I won't take your servant from you.

**DIONYZA**

Come, come! I love you and your father as if I were his own  
subject rather than a foreigner. We expect him to visit any  
day now, and when he does, what will he say when he finds  
our little princess in poor health? He'll wish he hadn't come  
so far, and he'll blame my husband and me for not taking  
care of you like we promised to do. Go, please. Walk, be  
happy, bring back those rosy cheeks we all love so much!  
Don't worry about me; I can go home alone.

**MARINA**

Well, I'll go even though I don't want to.

**DIONYZA**

Come, come! I know it's best for you. Walk half an hour,  
Leonine, at least. Remember what I said.

**LEONINE**

Of course, ma'am.

**DIONYZA**

I'll leave you for a while, dear. Mind you, walk slowly and  
don't get too worked up! What? I have to take care of you!

**MARINA**

55 My thanks, sweet madam.

*Exit DIONYZA*

**MARINA**

Is this wind westerly that blows?

**LEONINE**

South-west.

**MARINA**

60 When I was born, the wind was north.

**LEONINE**

Was't so?

**MARINA**

My father, as nurse said, did never fear,  
But cried 'Good seaman!' to the sailors, galling  
His kingly hands, haling ropes;  
65 And, clasping to the mast, endured a sea  
That almost burst the deck.

**LEONINE**

When was this?

**MARINA**

When I was born:  
Never was waves nor wind more violent;  
70 And from the ladder-tackle washes off  
A canvas-climber. 'Ha!' says one, 'wilt out?'  
And with a dropping industry they skip  
From stem to stern: the boatswain whistles, and  
The master calls, and trebles their confusion.

**LEONINE**

75 Come, say your prayers.

**MARINA**

What mean you?

**LEONINE**

If you require a little space for prayer,  
I grant it: pray; but be not tedious,  
For the gods are quick of ear, and I am sworn  
80 To do my work with haste.

**MARINA**

Why will you kill me?

**LEONINE**

To satisfy my lady.

**MARINA**

Why would she have me kill'd?  
Now, as I can remember, by my troth,  
85 I never did her hurt in all my life:  
I never spake bad word, nor did ill turn  
To any living creature: believe me, la,  
I never kill'd a mouse, nor hurt a fly:  
I trod upon a worm against my will,  
90 But I wept for it. How have I offended,  
Wherein my death might yield her any profit,  
Or my life imply her any danger?

**LEONINE**

My commission  
Is not to reason of the deed, but do it.

**MARINA**

Thanks, ma'am.

*DIONYZA exits.*

**MARINA**

Is that a west wind blowing?

**LEONINE**

South-west.

**MARINA**

When I was born, the wind was from the north.

**LEONINE**

Was it?

**MARINA**

According to my nurse, my father wasn't afraid. He just called out to the sailors, "Good seamen!" and helped them, pulling the ropes with his own hands, and holding onto the mast to ride out the waves that almost broke the ship.

**LEONINE**

When was this?

**MARINA**

When I was born. The waves and wind were incredibly violent, washing a sailor straight out of the crow's nest. Another sailor said, "Ha! Will this ever end?" and they kept running around from the front to the back of the boat, the boatswain  whistling, the master calling, and everything in complete chaos.

 A "boatswain" is the officer in charge of a ship's equipment and crew.

**LEONINE**

Say your prayers, now.

**MARINA**

What do you mean?

**LEONINE**

If you need a little room to pray, I'll allow it, but don't take too long. The gods might listen, you know, and I swore I'd do my job quickly.

**MARINA**

Why would you want to kill me?

**LEONINE**

To satisfy Dionyza.

**MARINA**

Why would she want me killed? As far as I can remember, I've never done anything to hurt her in my life. I've never said a mean word or done a bad thing to a single living creature. Believe me, I never killed a mouse or even hurt a fly! Once I stepped on a worm on accident, and I cried. How have I offended her enough that she would want to kill me? How would she gain from my death? How is she threatened by my life?

**LEONINE**

My job isn't to debate the reason. It's just to do it.

**MARINA**

95 You will not do't for all the world, I hope.  
 You are well favour'd, and your looks foreshow  
 You have a gentle heart. I saw you lately,  
 When you caught hurt in parting two that fought:  
 Good sooth, it show'd well in you: do so now:  
 100 Your lady seeks my life; come you between,  
 And save poor me, the weaker.

**LEONINE**

I am sworn,  
 And will dispatch.  
 105 [He seizes her]

*Enter Pirates***FIRST PIRATE**

Hold, villain!

*LEONINE runs away***SECOND PIRATE**

A prize! a prize!

**THIRD PIRATE**

Half-part, mates, half-part.

110 Come, let's have her aboard suddenly.

*Exeunt Pirates with MARINA**Re-enter LEONINE***LEONINE**

These roguing thieves serve the great pirate Valdes;  
 And they have seized Marina. Let her go:  
 There's no hope she will return. I'll swear  
 115 she's dead,  
 And thrown into the sea. But I'll see further:  
 Perhaps they will but please themselves upon her,  
 Not carry her aboard. If she remain,  
 Whom they have ravish'd must by me be slain.

*Exit**PIRATES enter.***FIRST PIRATE**

Stop right there, you scoundrel!

*LEONINE runs away.***SECOND PIRATE**

Some booty! Some booty!

**THIRD PIRATE**

Let's split it equally, mates, equally. Come on, get her  
 onboard.

*The PIRATES leave, carrying MARINA.**LEONINE comes back in.***LEONINE**

Those terrible thieves who've taken Marina serve the great  
 pirate, Valdes. Let her go—there's not a chance of her  
 coming back. I'll swear she's dead and that I threw her into  
 the sea . . . actually, I'll follow along and see what happens.  
 They might just have their way with her and not take her  
 onboard. If she survives the assault, I'll have to kill her.

*LEONINE exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 2

**Shakespeare***Enter Pandar, Bawd, and BOULT***Shakescleare Translation***The PANDAR  , BAWD, and BOULT enter.***PANDAR**

Boult!

**BOULT**

Sir?

**PANDAR**

Search the market narrowly; Mytilene is full of  
 gallants. We lost too much money this mart by being  
 5 too wenchless.

**PANDAR**

Boult!

**BOULT**

Sir?

**PANDAR**

Search the market carefully. Mytilene is full of young men.  
 We lost too much money this season because we didn't  
 have enough girls.

 "Pandar" is a generic name for a go-between (particularly for sexual affairs). A "bawd" is a woman who owns a brothel.

**BAWD**

We were never so much out of creatures. We have but poor three, and they can do no more than they can do; and they with continual action are even as good as rotten.

**PANDAR**

10 Therefore let's have fresh ones, whate'er we pay for them. If there be not a conscience to be used in every trade, we shall never prosper.

**BAWD**

Thou sayest true: 'tis not our bringing up of poor bastards,—as, I think, I have brought up some eleven—

**BOULT**

15 Ay, to eleven; and brought them down again. But shall I search the market?

**BAWD**

What else, man? The stuff we have, a strong wind will blow it to pieces, they are so pitifully sodden.

**PANDAR**

20 Thou sayest true; they're too unwholesome, o' conscience. The poor Transylvanian is dead, that lay with the little baggage.

**BOULT**

Ay, she quickly pooped him; she made him roast-meat for worms. But I'll go search the market.

*Exit*

**PANDAR**

25 Three or four thousand chequins were as pretty a proportion to live quietly, and so give over.

**BAWD**

Why to give over, I pray you? is it a shame to get when we are old?

**PANDAR**

30 O, our credit comes not in like the commodity, nor the commodity wages not with the danger: therefore, if in our youths we could pick up some pretty estate, 'twere not amiss to keep our door hatched. Besides, the sore terms we stand upon with the gods will be strong with us for giving over.

**BAWD**

35 Come, other sorts offend as well as we.

**PANDAR**

As well as we! ay, and better too; we offend worse. Neither is our profession any trade; it's no calling. But here comes Boult.

*Re-enter BOULT, with the Pirates and MARINA*

**BOULT**

[To MARINA] Come your ways. My masters, you say 40 she's a virgin?

**BAWD**

We've never had such a shortage of creatures. We only have three, and they can only do what they can do. And they've worked so much they're as good as rotten. [2]

[2] In the original text, the Bawd mentions the "poor three"—the three remaining prostitutes at her brothel, who suffer from venereal disease. This scene is full of crass imagery and innuendo.

**PANDAR**

So, let's get some fresh ones, no matter what we have to pay for them. If we don't put any heart into this business we'll never succeed.

**BAWD**

You're right. Of course, we've brought up some bastards [3] ... I've brought up at least eleven, I think—

[3] A "bastard" is a child born out of wedlock.

**BOULT**

Yeah, it was eleven, and we brought them down [4] again! But should I search the market?

[4] Here, Boult jokes that, although the trio of prostitutes have raised the fatherless children, they also corrupted them once they grew up—a reference to begging, theft, or prostitution in the next generation.

**BAWD**

What else can we do? The girls we have are so pitiful, a strong wind would blow them all to pieces.

**PANDAR**

You're right; they're a mess, truth be told. The poor Transylvanian girl is dead—the one that slept with that guy with the tiny junk.

**BOULT**

Yeah, and she gave him whatever she had; he's food for worms [5] now! But I'll go search the market.

[5] In the original text, "roast-meat for worms" means "dead."

*BOULT exits.*

**PANDAR**

Three or four thousand gold coins is all we need to retire quietly and give up the business.

**BAWD**

Why would we give it up? Is there anything wrong with working while we're old?

**PANDAR**

Our credit's not as good as our property, and our property hasn't held up well. When we were young we could pick up lots of young girls, and it was easy to keep a roof over our heads. Besides, the fact that we're in the gods' bad books is reason enough to retire.

**BAWD**

Oh, come on. Loads of people do as much evil as we do.

**PANDAR**

As much as we do? But our evil is worse. And our profession isn't really a "trade" or a "calling." But here comes Boult.

*BOULT comes back in with the PIRATES and MARINA.*

**BOULT**

[To MARINA] Hurry up, now.

[To the PIRATES] So, guys, you say she's a virgin?

**FIRST PIRATE**

O, sir, we doubt it not.

**BOULT**

Master, I have gone through for this piece, you see:  
if you like her, so; if not, I have lost my earnest.

**BAWD**

Boult, has she any qualities?

**BOULT**

45 She has a good face, speaks well, and has excellent  
good clothes: there's no further necessity of  
qualities can make her be refused.

**BAWD**

What's her price, Boult?

**BOULT**

I cannot be bated one doit of a thousand pieces.

**PANDAR**

50 Well, follow me, my masters, you shall have your  
money presently. Wife, take her in; instruct her  
what she has to do, that she may not be raw in her  
entertainment.

*Exeunt Pandar and Pirates*

**BAWD**

55 Boult, take you the marks of her, the colour of her  
hair, complexion, height, age, with warrant of her  
virginity; and cry 'He that will give most shall  
have her first.' Such a maidenhead were no cheap  
thing, if men were as they have been. Get this done  
as I command you.

**BOULT**

60 Performance shall follow.

*Exit*

**MARINA**

Alack that Leonine was so slack, so slow!  
He should have struck, not spoke; or that these  
pirates,  
65 Not enough barbarous, had not o'erboard thrown me  
For to seek my mother!

**BAWD**

Why lament you, pretty one?

**MARINA**

That I am pretty.

**BAWD**

Come, the gods have done their part in you.

**MARINA**

70 I accuse them not.

**BAWD**

You are light into my hands, where you are like to  
live.

**MARINA**

The more my fault  
To scape his hands where I was like to die.

**BAWD**

75 Ay, and you shall live in pleasure.

**FIRST PIRATE**

Oh, sir, we have no doubt.

**BOULT**

Master, I've paid through the nose for this one. If you like  
her, good. If not, I've lost my bet.

**BAWD**

Boult, what are her assets?

**BOULT**

She has a good face, speaks well, and has really nice  
clothes. There's nothing about her that would make you  
dislike her.

**BAWD**

What's her price, Boult?

**BOULT**

I can't get her for a cent less than a thousand gold coins.

**PANDAR**

Well, follow me, guys. You'll get your money shortly.

*[To BAWD] Wife, take her in. Teach her what she has to do so  
she's not caught unawares her first time.*

*The PANDAR and the PIRATES exit.*

**BAWD**

Boult, write a full report of her: the color of her hair,  
complexion, height, age, with a guarantee of her virginity,  
and cry, "Whoever pays the most can have her first." If I  
know men, a virginity like this won't go cheap. Do exactly as  
I say.

**BOULT**

I'll take care of it.

*BOULT exits.*

**MARINA**

If only Leonine hadn't been so slow! He should have killed  
me instead of talking so much. Or if only the pirates (as if  
they weren't barbarous enough) had thrown me overboard,  
to go after my mother!

**BAWD**

Why are you crying, pretty girl?

**MARINA**

Because I'm pretty.

**BAWD**

Come on, the gods have blessed you.

**MARINA**

I'm not accusing them.

**BAWD**

You've come into my hands now, where you're likely to live.

**MARINA**

Which makes it even worse that I escaped Leonine's hands,  
where I might have died.

**BAWD**

Oh, but you'll live in pleasure.

**MARINA**

No.

**BAWD**

Yes, indeed shall you, and taste gentlemen of all fashions: you shall fare well; you shall have the difference of all complexions. What! do you stop your ears?

80

**MARINA**

Are you a woman?

**BAWD**

What would you have me be, an I be not a woman?

**MARINA**

An honest woman, or not a woman.

**BAWD**

Marry, whip thee, gosling: I think I shall have something to do with you. Come, you're a young foolish sapling, and must be bowed as I would have you.

85

**MARINA**

The gods defend me!

**BAWD**

If it please the gods to defend you by men, then men must comfort you, men must feed you, men must stir you up. Boult's returned.

90

*Re-enter BOULT*

**BAWD**

Now, sir, hast thou cried her through the market?

**BOULT**

I have cried her almost to the number of her hairs; I have drawn her picture with my voice.

95

**BAWD**

And I prithee tell me, how dost thou find the inclination of the people, especially of the younger sort?

**BOULT**

100 'Faith, they listened to me as they would have hearkened to their father's testament. There was a Spaniard's mouth so watered, that he went to bed to her very description.

**BAWD**

We shall have him here to-morrow with his best ruff on.

**BOULT**

105 To-night, to-night. But, mistress, do you know the French knight that cowers i' the hams?

**BAWD**

Who, Monsieur Veroles?

110

**BOULT**

Ay, he: he offered to cut a caper at the proclamation; but he made a groan at it, and swore he would see her to-morrow.

**MARINA**

No.

**BAWD**

Yes, you will, and you'll taste all different kinds of gentlemen. You'll do well! You'll have all sorts. What? Why are you covering your ears?

**MARINA**

Are you a woman?

**BAWD**

What would you rather me be, if not a woman?

**MARINA**

A good woman, or not a woman at all.

**BAWD**

Shut your mouth, girl. I think I'll have to do something about you. You're young and naive and you'll have to be broken as I would have you.

6 In the original text, the Bawd compares Marina to a "sapling" or young tree which needs to be "bowed" or bent to her will.

**MARINA**

May the gods protect me!

**BAWD**

If it pleases the gods to protect you through men, then men will comfort you, feed you, sleep with you. Boult's back.

7 Bawd's short speech here is a pun, referring to the men who will come to Marina as customers when she is a prostitute.

*BOULT comes back in.*

**BAWD**

Have you spread the word about her all over the market?

**BOULT**

I've described her down to every last hair. I've drawn a picture of her with my voice.

**BAWD**

And please, tell me: how do people seem to be reacting, especially the younger ones?

**BOULT**

Well, they listened to me as closely as they would to their own father's will being read. There was a Spanish guy whose mouth watered so much, he went to masturbate off just the description of her.

**BAWD**

I'm sure he'll be here tomorrow in his best clothes.

**BOULT**

Tonight, tonight. But, mistress, do you know the French guy who works as a butcher?

**BAWD**

Who, Mr. Syphilis ?

8 "Veroles" was the early modern English word for syphilis—a venereal disease nicknamed the "French pox" ("vèrole" means "pox" in French).

**BOULT**

Yeah, him. He wanted to do it as soon as he heard the proclamation, but then groaned and swore he would see her tomorrow.

9 Boult uses the word "caper" as in action. He possibly puns on its similarity to "capon" (chicken), as this character seems to be a butcher.

**BAWD**

Well, well; as for him, he brought his disease hither: here he does but repair it. I know he will come in our shadow, to scatter his crowns in the sun.

**BOULT**

115 Well, if we had of every nation a traveller, we should lodge them with this sign.

**BAWD**

[To MARINA] Pray you, come hither awhile. You have fortunes coming upon you. Mark me: you must seem to do that fearfully which you commit willingly, despise profit where you have most gain. To weep that you live as ye do makes pity in your lovers: seldom but that pity begets you a good opinion, and that opinion a mere profit.

**MARINA**

I understand you not.

**BOULT**

125 O, take her home, mistress, take her home: these blushes of hers must be quenched with some present practise.

**BAWD**

Thou sayest true, i' faith, so they must; for your bride goes to that with shame which is her way to go with warrant.

**BOULT**

'Faith, some do, and some do not. But, mistress, if I have bargained for the joint,—

**BAWD**

Thou mayst cut a morsel off the spit.

**BOULT**

I may so.

**BAWD**

135 Who should deny it? Come, young one, I like the manner of your garments well.

**BOULT**

Ay, by my faith, they shall not be changed yet.

**BAWD**

Boult, spend thou that in the town: report what a sojourner we have; you'll lose nothing by custom. 140 When nature flamed this piece, she meant thee a good turn; therefore say what a paragon she is, and thou hast the harvest out of thine own report.

**BOULT**

I warrant you, mistress, thunder shall not so awake the beds of eels as my giving out her beauty stir up the lewdly-inclined. I'll bring home some to-night.

**BAWD**

Come your ways; follow me.

**MARINA**

If fires be hot, knives sharp, or waters deep,

**BAWD**

Well, well, as for him—he brought his disease here, and he just keeps it up. I know he'll come here soon and that he'll spend plenty of money.

**BOULT**

Well, if we had customers from every country in the world, we'd welcome them in, since they either have syphilis or will do soon.

**BAWD**

[To MARINA] Come here for a minute. Good things are coming your way. Mark my words: you need to pretend you're afraid of having sex even though you're perfectly willing, and you need to seem like you don't want the money, even though you'll make a fortune. If you cry about having to work as a prostitute, your customers will take pity on you; pity equals good reviews, and good reviews equals a huge profit.

**MARINA**

I don't understand you.

**BOULT**

Oh, take her home, mistress, take her home. We'll get rid of all this shyness with a little practice.

**BAWD**

You're right, darn it, we will. Even brides are afraid of the wedding night, though they have no reason to be.

**BOULT**

Well, some do, some don't. But, mistress, since it's me that bought her—

**BAWD**

—you can have a little taste  .

 10 Marina is again compared to a piece of meat, this time to one roasted on a "spit," a metal rod that is pushed through meat so that it can be turned and roasted over a fire.

**BOULT**

I may?

**BAWD**

Who's stopping you?

[To MARINA] Cheer up, missy. I like your clothes.

**BOULT**

Ah, don't change them yet.

**BAWD**

[She gives BOULT a coin] Boult, spread the news in town about our new guest, and don't leave out a single detail. When Mother Nature put together this girl, she meant to do you a favor. If you tell everyone how beautiful she is, you'll get money and you'll get to sleep with her, too.

**BOULT**

I promise I'll excite those dirty-minded men as much as I can. I'll bring some home tonight.

**BAWD**

Come on, then, follow me.

**MARINA**

I swear I'll stay a virgin! Diana, help me!

Untied I still my virgin knot will keep.  
Diana, aid my purpose!

**BAWD**

150 What have we to do with Diana? Pray you, will you go with us?

*Exeunt*

**BAWD**

What do we have to do with Diana ? Now will you come with us?

 **11** We recall that Diana is the Roman goddess of virginity, and the patron goddess of the temple where Thaisa now lives.

*They all exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 3

**Shakespeare**

*Enter CLEON and DIONYZA*

**DIONYZA**

Why, are you foolish? Can it be undone?

**CLEON**

O Dionyza, such a piece of slaughter  
The sun and moon ne'er look'd upon!

**DIONYZA**

I think  
5 You'll turn a child again.

**CLEON**

Were I chief lord of all this spacious world,  
I'd give it to undo the deed. O lady,  
Much less in blood than virtue, yet a princess  
To equal any single crown o' the earth  
10 I' the justice of compare! O villain Leonine!  
Whom thou hast poison'd too:  
If thou hadst drunk to him, 't had been a kindness  
Becoming well thy fact: what canst thou say  
When noble Pericles shall demand his child?

**DIONYZA**

15 That she is dead. Nurses are not the fates,  
To foster it, nor ever to preserve.  
She died at night; I'll say so. Who can cross it?  
Unless you play the pious innocent,  
And for an honest attribute cry out  
20 'She died by foul play.'

**CLEON**

O, go to. Well, well,  
Of all the faults beneath the heavens, the gods  
Do like this worst.

**DIONYZA**

Be one of those that think  
25 The petty wrens of Tarsus will fly hence,  
And open this to Pericles. I do shame  
To think of what a noble strain you are,  
And of how coward a spirit.

**CLEON**

To such proceeding  
30 Who ever but his approbation added,  
Though not his prime consent, he did not flow  
From honourable sources.

**DIONYZA**

Be it so, then:  
Yet none does know, but you, how she came dead,  
35 Nor none can know, Leonine being gone.  
She did disdain my child, and stood between

**Shakesclare Translation**

*CLEON and DIONYZA enter.*

**DIONYZA**

You idiot, why would you ask if I can "undo it?"

**CLEON**

Dionyza, there's never been such a horrible murder committed on the earth.

**DIONYZA**

I think you're about to turn back into a baby!

**CLEON**

Were I the king of the whole world, I would do anything to undo this. Poor Marina! She was not only a princess by blood, she was a virtuous person, the equal of any single princess on the earth by comparison! Curse you, Leonine. And you've poisoned him, too, haven't you? If you'd poisoned yourself, it would have been the punishment you deserved. What are you going to say to Pericles when he comes looking for his child?

**DIONYZA**

That she's dead. The Fates aren't nurses; they don't protect our lives forever or even for a while. She died at night; I'll say so. Who would dare to contradict me? Unless you try to play Mr. Innocent and, in a display of honesty, blurt out, "She was murdered!"

**CLEON**

Oh, quit it. Well, well, of all the evil things that go on on earth, the gods will be the least happy about this.

**DIONYZA**

You're one of those who thinks a little birdie is going to fly to Tarsus and tell Pericles what happened! I'm ashamed to think of what a coward you are, and a king, too.

**CLEON**

Anyone who would have said "yes" to this, even if he didn't do it himself, is a bad person.

**DIONYZA**

So be it. But no one besides you knows how she died—and no one else will know, since Leonine is dead. She made my daughter look bad, and stood between her and a good marriage. No one would look at her when Marina was

Her and her fortunes: none would look on her,  
But cast their gazes on Marina's face;  
Whilst ours was blurted at and held a malkin  
40 Not worth the time of day. It pierced me through;  
And though you call my course unnatural,  
You not your child well loving, yet I find  
It greets me as an enterprise of kindness  
Perform'd to your sole daughter.

**CLEON**

45 Heavens forgive it!

**DIONYZA**

And as for Pericles,  
What should he say? We wept after her hearse,  
And yet we mourn: her monument  
Is almost finish'd, and her epitaphs  
50 In glittering golden characters express  
A general praise to her, and care in us  
At whose expense 'tis done.

**CLEON**

Thou art like the harpy,  
Which, to betray, dost, with thine angel's face,  
Seize with thine eagle's talons.  
55

**DIONYZA**

You are like one that superstitiously  
Doth swear to the gods that winter kills the flies:  
But yet I know you'll do as I advise.

*Exeunt*

nearby; they looked at her face, while our daughter's was criticized and treated as though she wasn't worth the time of day. It hurt me to see that and, though you may criticize me, it strikes me as what a loving parent ought to do for your only daughter.

**CLEON**

May the gods forgive you!

**DIONYZA**

And as for Pericles, what can he say? We cried at her funeral, and we mourn now. The monument to her is almost finished. The epitaph on it proclaims how great she was in gold letters. We've done all the right things, and have spared no expense.

**CLEON**

You harpy!  You use your beautiful face to get away with evil.

 "Harpies" were mythological monsters: half woman, half bird, hungry, and mean.

**DIONYZA**

You're like a person who superstitiously swears by the gods, but I know you'll do as I say.

*They both exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 4

### Shakespeare

Enter GOWER, before the monument of MARINA at Tarsus

**GOWER**

Thus time we waste, and longest leagues make short;  
Sail seas in cockles, have an wish but for't;  
Making, to take your imagination,  
From bourn to bourn, region to region.  
5 By you being pardon'd, we commit no crime  
To use one language in each several clime  
Where our scenes seem to live. I do beseech you  
To learn of me, who stand i' the gaps to teach you,  
The stages of our story. Pericles  
10 Is now again thwarting the wayward seas,  
Attended on by many a lord and knight.  
To see his daughter, all his life's delight.  
Old Escanes, whom Helicanus late  
Advanced in time to great and high estate,  
15 Is left to govern. Bear you it in mind,  
Old Helicanus goes along behind.  
Well-sailing ships and bounteous winds have brought  
This king to Tarsus,— think his pilot thought;  
So with his steerage shall your thoughts grow on,—  
20 To fetch his daughter home, who first is gone.  
Like motes and shadows see them move awhile;  
Your ears unto your eyes I'll reconcile.

DUMB SHOW: Enter PERICLES, at one door, with all his train; CLEON and DIONYZA, at the other. CLEON shows PERICLES the tomb; whereat PERICLES makes lamentation, puts on sackcloth, and in a mighty passion departs. Then exeunt CLEON and DIONYZA

### Shakescleare Translation

GOWER comes in, standing in front of MARINA's monument in Tarsus.

**GOWER**

Again, we'll sail over miles of miles of ocean as if it were nothing, hopping from country to country and region to region, by the power of your imagination. Forgive us for using the same language in all these different places where our scenes are set for the sake of simplicity. Now let me fill you in on what happens next, in the gaps between the parts of our story: Pericles takes to the unruly sea once again, along with many courtiers. He's coming to see his daughter, the light of his life. Old Escanes, Helicanus's friend whom he left in charge, is governing while he's gone. Keep that in mind, since Helicanus is going along with Pericles. With a sturdy ship and a good wind at his back, Pericles arrives in Tarsus. Just imagine his ship and all its cargo, arriving here to take Marina home, who's gone. Watch them move like ghosts and shadows for a while, and then I'll explain in words what you've just seen.

In a dumb show, PERICLES comes in on one side of the stage with his servants. CLEON and DIONYZA come in on the other side. CLEON shows PERICLES MARINA's tomb, where PERICLES cries, puts on mourning clothes, and leaves, upset. Then CLEON and DIONYZA leave.

**GOWER**

See how belief may suffer by foul show!  
This borrow'd passion stands for true old woe;  
And Pericles, in sorrow all devour'd,  
With sighs shot through, and biggest tears  
o'ershower'd,  
Leaves Tarsus and again embarks.  
He swears  
Never to wash his face, nor cut his hairs:  
He puts on sackcloth, and to sea. He bears  
A tempest, which his mortal vessel tears,  
And yet he rides it out. Now please you wit.  
The epitaph is for Marina writ By wicked Dionyza.

[Reads the inscription on MARINA's monument]  
'The fairest, sweet'st, and best lies here,  
Who wither'd in her spring of year.  
She was of Tyrus the king's daughter,  
On whom foul death hath made this slaughter;  
Marina was she call'd; and at her birth,  
Thetis, being proud, swallow'd some part o' the earth:  
Therefore the earth, fearing to be o'erflow'd,  
Hath Thetis' birth-child on the heavens bestow'd:  
Wherefore she does, and swears she'll never stint,  
Make raging battery upon shores of flint.  
No visor does become black villany  
So well as soft and tender flattery.  
Let Pericles believe his daughter's dead,  
And bear his courses to be ordered  
By Lady Fortune; while our scene must play  
His daughter's woe and heavy well-a-dayln her unholy  
service.  
Patience, then,  
And think you now are all in Mytilene.

*Exit***GOWER**

Poor Pericles believed that fake performance! He's really grieving, though, as if she were gone. Pericles leaves Tarsus wrecked by grief, overcome with sighs and shedding constant tears. He swears never to wash his face or cut his hair or wear anything but black , and sets out to sea. Another storm comes and damages the boat, but he rides it out. Now listen to the epitaph the wicked Dionyza wrote for Marina:

*[He reads the inscription on MARINA's monument]*

 "Sackcloth" was a rough material, associated in the Bible and in classical literature with mourning or self-punishment.

The sweetest, most beautiful girl lies here. She died too young, in the spring of her life. She was the daughter of the king of Tyre; death has taken her away from us. Her name was Marina. At her birth, Thetis was jealous of her and swallowed a piece of the earth; the earth, afraid of being flooded, gave this watery girl back to heaven . That's why the sea continues to storm, barraging our shores with waves.

No shady presentation could be more fitting for evil deeds than such soft, tender flattery. Let Pericles believe his daughter's dead; he's in Fortune's hands for now. Our next scene will have to do with his daughter's misfortune and trials in an ungodly occupation. Patience, then, and imagine you're all in Mytilene.

 In Greek mythology, the sea-nymph "Thetis" was the mother of the hero Achilles. Playing on Marina's name (which means "of the sea"), the epitaph suggests that Marina was also the daughter of the sea-nymph and that she died because, if she reached maturity, the earth would have been flooded by her watery powers.

*GOWER exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 5

**Shakespeare***Enter, from the brothel, two Gentlemen***FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Did you ever hear the like?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

No, nor never shall do in such a place as this, she being once gone.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

But to have divinity preached there! did you ever dream of such a thing?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

No, no. Come, I am for no more bawdy-houses: shall's go hear the vestals sing?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

I'll do any thing now that is virtuous; but I am out of the road of rutting for ever.

10

*Exeunt***Shakescleare Translation***Two GENTLEMEN enter from the brothel.***FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Have you ever heard anything like it?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

No. I'll never set foot in a place like this again, if she's not there.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Isn't it strange to hear such godly preaching there? Did you ever dream of such a thing?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

No, no. Listen; I'm not interested in brothels anymore. Should we go hear the nuns sing?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

I'll do anything now, as long as its virtuous. I'm done with prostitutes forever.

*They exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 6

**Shakespeare****Shakescleare Translation**

*Enter Pandar, Bawd, and BOULT*

**PANDAR**

Well, I had rather than twice the worth of her she had ne'er come here.

**BAWD**

Fie, fie upon her! she's able to freeze the god Priapus, and undo a whole generation. We must either get her ravished, or be rid of her. When she should do for clients her fitment, and do me the kindness of our profession, she has me her quirks, her reasons, her master reasons, her prayers, her knees; that she would make a puritan of the devil, if he should cheapen a kiss of her.

**BOULT**

'Faith, I must ravish her, or she'll disfurnish us of all our cavaliers, and make our swearers priests.

**PANDAR**

Now, the pox upon her green-sickness for me!

**BAWD**

'Faith, there's no way to be rid on't but by the way to the pox. Here comes the Lord Lysimachus disguised.

**BOULT**

We should have both lord and lown, if the peevish baggage would but give way to customers.

*Enter LYSIMACHUS*

**LYSIMACHUS**

How now! How a dozen of virginities?

**BAWD**

Now, the gods to-bless your honour!

**BOULT**

I am glad to see your honour in good health.

**LYSIMACHUS**

You may so; 'tis the better for you that your resorters stand upon sound legs. How now! wholesome iniquity have you that a man may deal withal, and defy the surgeon?

**BAWD**

We have here one, sir, if she would—but there never came her like in Mytilene.

**LYSIMACHUS**

If she'd do the deed of darkness, thou wouldst say.

**BAWD**

30 Your honour knows what 'tis to say well enough.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Well, call forth, call forth.

*The PANDAR, the BAWD, and BOULT enter.*

**PANDAR**

I don't care what she's worth; I wish she had never come here.

**BAWD**

Shame, shame on her! She could convince even the most hot-blooded man <sup>1</sup> not to have sex. We either need to have someone sleep with her or get rid of her. When she's supposed to be fulfilling her customers' desires (and giving me the profit), instead she's up to all her shenanigans: her excuses, her better excuses, her prayers, begging on her knees. She could turn the devil himself into a born-again Christian <sup>2</sup> if he so much as tried to kiss her.

<sup>1</sup> "Priapus" was a minor classical deity associated with the harvest, fertility, and penises.

<sup>2</sup> "Puritans," in the original text, were radical reformers who dissented from the mainline Church of England. In general, they were more socially and theologically conservative, adhering to the Bible as literal truth, living modestly, and worshipping simply.

**BOULT**

Well, I'll have to rape her, or she'll ruin all our customers, converting the evil-doers to good.

**PANDAR**

Damn <sup>3</sup> her inexperience!

<sup>3</sup> Pandar's casual curse in the original text, "the pox upon her," refers a general name for diseases in Shakespeare's day. Here, the pox specifically applied to the sexually-transmitted disease, syphilis.

**BAWD**

Well, there's no way for her to get experience except by getting experience. <sup>4</sup> Here comes Lord Lysimachus in a disguise.

<sup>4</sup> The Bawd jokes that the only way to cure Marina's "green-sickness" (inexperience) is by "the way to the pox" (having sex, since syphilis is a sexually-transmitted disease).

**BOULT**

We could win him and his money over if the girl would just give in to customers.

*LYSIMACHUS enters.*

**LYSIMACHUS**

Hello! How much for a dozen virginities?

**BAWD**

God bless you, sir.

**BOULT**

I'm glad to see you're healthy, sir.

**LYSIMACHUS**

I'm sure you are—it's better for your business when your clients keep from getting sick! What new stock do you have here that might allow a man to enjoy his whores and keep the sexually-transmitted diseases at bay?

**BAWD**

We have one here, sir, if she would . . . but we've never had anyone like her in Mytilene.

**LYSIMACHUS**

If she would do the dirty, you mean.

**BAWD**

You're exactly right, sir.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Well, bring her in, then!

**BOULT**

For flesh and blood, sir, white and red, you shall see a rose; and she were a rose indeed, if she had but—

**LYSIMACHUS**

What, prithee?

**BOULT**

35 O, sir, I can be modest.

**LYSIMACHUS**

That dignifies the renown of a bawd, no less than it gives a good report to a number to be chaste.

*Exit BOULT*

**BAWD**

Here comes that which grows to the stalk; never 40 plucked yet, I can assure you.

*Re-enter BOULT with MARINA*

**BAWD**

Is she not a fair creature?

**LYSIMACHUS**

'Faith, she would serve after a long voyage at sea. 45 Well, there's for you: leave us.

**BAWD**

I beseech your honour, give me leave: a word, and I'll have done presently.

**LYSIMACHUS**

I beseech you, do.

**BAWD**

[To MARINA] First, I would have you note, this is 50 an honourable man.

**MARINA**

I desire to find him so, that I may worthily note him.

**BAWD**

Next, he's the governor of this country, and a man whom I am bound to.

**MARINA**

If he govern the country, you are bound to him 55 indeed; but how honourable he is in that, I know not.

**BAWD**

Pray you, without any more virginal fencing, will you use him kindly? He will line your apron with gold.

**MARINA**

What he will do graciously, I will thankfully receive.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Ha' you done?

**BAWD**

60 My lord, she's not paced yet: you must take some pains to work her to your manage. Come, we will

**BOULT**

Sir 5, it might be better if someone else popped the cherry before you—

5 In these lines, Boult, who was been promised multiple times the right to have sex with Marina, is trying to deter Lysimachus from doing so before he can.

**LYSIMACHUS**

What did you say?

**BOULT**

Oh, sir, I can be quiet.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Silence 6 is as useful to a bawd as a reputation is to a virgin.

6 Lysimachus's speech here is an oxymoron: owners of whorehouses should be loud self-promoters to get business, and virgins should have no reputation at all, if they are truly chaste.

*BOULT leaves.*

**BAWD**

Here comes a fresh flower. Never been picked, I can assure you.

*BOULT comes back in with MARINA.*

**BAWD**

Isn't she pretty?

**LYSIMACHUS**

She's just what you want after a long voyage at sea.

[He gives the BAWD a coin] Well, there you go. Leave us.

**BAWD**

Please, sir, let me speak with her first and then I'll leave you.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Please, do.

**BAWD**

[To MARINA] First, please note that he is an honorable man.

**MARINA**

I hope he proves himself so; then I can respect him.

**BAWD**

Second: he's the governor of this country, and I'm bound to serve him.

**MARINA**

If he governs the country, you are definitely bound to serve him. It's unclear how honorable he is in the act of governing, though.

**BAWD**

Please stop arguing with me. Will you do him well? He'll give you a lot of money.

**MARINA**

Whatever he gives courteously, I accept gratefully.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Are you done?

**BAWD**

Sir, she hasn't been broken in yet 7; you'll need to work hard to make her obey.

7 In saying that Marina has not been "paced yet," the Bawd compares

leave his honour and her together. Go thy ways.

*Exeunt Bawd, Pandar, and BOULT*

**LYSIMACHUS**

Now, pretty one, how long have you been at this trade?

**MARINA**

65 What trade, sir?

**LYSIMACHUS**

Why, I cannot name't but I shall offend.

**MARINA**

I cannot be offended with my trade. Please you to name it.

**LYSIMACHUS**

How long have you been of this profession?

**MARINA**

70 E'er since I can remember.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Did you go to 't so young? Were you a gamester at five or at seven?

**MARINA**

Earlier too, sir, if now I be one.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Why, the house you dwell in proclaims you to be a creature of sale.

**MARINA**

Do you know this house to be a place of such resort, and will come into 't? I hear say you are of honourable parts, and are the governor of this place.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Why, hath your principal made known unto you who I am?

**MARINA**

80 Who is my principal?

**LYSIMACHUS**

Why, your herb-woman; she that sets seeds and roots of shame and iniquity. O, you have heard something of my power, and so stand aloof for more serious wooing. But I protest to thee, pretty one, my authority shall not see thee, or else look friendly upon thee. Come, bring me to some private place: come, come.

**MARINA**

If you were born to honour, show it now; If put upon you, make the judgment good  
90 That thought you worthy of it.

[*To BOULT and PANDAR*] Come on, we'll leave the two of them together. Go on, now.

*Marina to a horse who must be trained.*

*The BAWD, the PANDAR, and BOULT leave.*

**LYSIMACHUS**

So, pretty girl, how long have you been working in this business?

**MARINA**

What business , sir?

. 8 To maintain her innocence, Marina refuses to accept the "trade" (in the original text) of being a prostitute that Lysimachus assumes she is a part of.

**LYSIMACHUS**

I can't say the name, or I'll offend you.

**MARINA**

I can't be offended by the name of my business. Please say it.

**LYSIMACHUS**

How long have you been in this profession?

**MARINA**

Ever since I can remember. 9

. 9 Marina, who of course believes her "profession" to be that of a princess, is answering honestly, but Lysimachus takes her answers to refer to the profession of prostitution.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Did you start that young? Were you a prostitute at the age of five or seven?

**MARINA**

Earlier that that, sir, if that's what I am now.

**LYSIMACHUS**

The place where you live proclaims you to be a prostitute.

**MARINA**

If you know this place is a brothel, why did you come in ? I've heard that you're honorable, and that you're the governor of this place.

. 10 Here, Marina asks Lysimachus to assess his abilities as a ruler along the same lines that Pericles, Antiochus, Simonides, and Cleon have been assessed: according to their individual virtue, represented by their sexual conduct.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Did your boss tell you who I am?

**MARINA**

Who is my boss?

**LYSIMACHUS**

The Bawd , the one that teaches you and facilitates your shame and wickedness. All right, you've heard I'm powerful and rich so you're playing hard to get. I'll have you know, pretty girl, that once I see you, I'll pay you very well. Come on, bring me to a private room. Come, come.

. 11 An "herb-woman" is simply a woman who sells herbs; Lysimachus is using the plant metaphor as a euphemism to describe the Bawd, who runs the brothel and in doing so "sets seeds and roots" that lead to her employees' shame.

**MARINA**

If you were born to power, sir, prove how honorable you are now. If you rose to power later, prove that those who thought you were honorable then made a good choice.

**LYSIMACHUS**

How's this? how's this? Some more; be sage.

**MARINA**

For me,  
That am a maid, though most ungentle fortune  
Have placed me in this sty, where, since I came,  
95 Diseases have been sold dearer than physic,  
O, that the gods  
Would set me free from this unhallow'd place,  
Though they did change me to the meanest bird  
That flies i' the purer air!

**LYSIMACHUS**

100 I did not think  
Thou couldst have spoke so well; ne'er dream'd thou  
couldst.  
Had I brought hither a corrupted mind,  
Thy speech had alter'd it. Hold, here's gold for thee:  
105 Persever in that clear way thou goest,  
And the gods strengthen thee!

**MARINA**

The good gods preserve you!

**LYSIMACHUS**

For me, be you thoughten  
That I came with no ill intent; for to me  
110 The very doors and windows savour vilely.  
Fare thee well. Thou art a piece of virtue, and  
I doubt not but thy training hath been noble.  
Hold, here's more gold for thee.  
A curse upon him, die he like a thief,  
115 That robs thee of thy goodness! If thou dost  
Hear from me, it shall be for thy good.

*Re-enter BOULT*

**BOULT**

I beseech your honour, one piece for me.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Avaunt, thou damned door-keeper!  
Your house, but for this virgin that doth prop it,  
120 Would sink and overwhelm you. Away!

*Exit*

**BOULT**

How's this? We must take another course with you.  
If your peevish chastity, which is not worth a  
breakfast in the cheapest country under the cope,  
125 shall undo a whole household, let me be gelded like  
a spaniel. Come your ways.

**MARINA**

Whither would you have me?

**BOULT**

I must have your maidenhead taken off, or the common  
hangman shall execute it. Come your ways. We'll  
130 have no more gentlemen driven away. Come your ways, I  
say.

*Re-enter Bawd*

**BAWD**

How now! what's the matter?

**BOULT**

Worse and worse, mistress; she has here spoken holy  
words to the Lord Lysimachus.

**LYSIMACHUS**

What? What? Say more, be clear.

**MARINA**

I'm a virgin, although bad luck has landed me in this dump  
where, since I came people have paid more to get diseases  
than they would for medicine. Oh, may the gods set me free  
from this hellish place, even if it means changing me into a  
bird that flies through the pure air!

**LYSIMACHUS**

I couldn't have imagined you could speak so well; I couldn't  
have dreamed it. If I had had a dirty mind, your speech  
would have changed it. Here, take this coin. Keep going on  
this virtuous path, and may the gods bless you!

**MARINA**

May the gods protect you!

**LYSIMACHUS**

As for me: rest assured I had no bad intentions. Actually,  
this whole place is disgusting. Goodbye. You are virtuous,  
and I have no doubt that you've had an aristocratic  
education. Here, here's more gold for you. Curse anyone  
who tries to force himself on you, may he die like a thief! If  
you ever hear from me again, it'll be for your benefit.

*BOULT comes back in.*

**BOULT**

Please, sir, a coin for me?

**LYSIMACHUS**

Get out, you damned doorman! Without this virgin keeping  
it up, this whole house would collapse and bury you! Away!

*LYSIMACHUS leaves.*

**BOULT**

What now? We'll have to try a different tactic with you. Your  
worthless virginity—which isn't worth a cheap breakfast  
eaten in the night—isn't about to ruin this place; I'd rather  
be neutered like a dog than see that happen. Come with  
me.

**MARINA**

Where are you taking me?

**BOULT**

I have to deflower you; otherwise you'll have to be killed.  
Come with me. We can't have any more gentleman driven  
away. Come with me, I said!

*The BAWD comes back in.*

**BAWD**

Hey, what's going on here?

**BOULT**

Worse and worse, ma'am. She's preached some sermon to  
Lord Lysimachus.

**BAWD**

135 O abominable!

**BOULT**

She makes our profession as it were to stink afore  
the face of the gods.

**BAWD**

Marry, hang her up for ever!

**BOULT**

The nobleman would have dealt with her like a  
140 nobleman, and she sent him away as cold as a  
snowball; saying his prayers too.

**BAWD**

Boult, take her away; use her at thy pleasure:  
crack the glass of her virginity, and make the rest  
malleable.

**BOULT**

145 An if she were a thornier piece of ground than she  
is, she shall be ploughed.

**MARINA**

Hark, hark, you gods!

**BAWD**

She conjures: away with her! Would she had never  
come within my doors! Marry, hang you! She's born  
150 to undo us. Will you not go the way of women-kind?  
Marry, come up, my dish of chastity with rosemary and  
bays!

*Exit*

**BOULT**

Come, mistress; come your ways with me.

**MARINA**

Whither wilt thou have me?

**BOULT**

155 To take from you the jewel you hold so dear.

**MARINA**

Prithee, tell me one thing first.

**BOULT**

Come now, your one thing.

**MARINA**

What canst thou wish thine enemy to be?

**BOULT**

Why, I could wish him to be my master, or rather, my  
160 mistress.

**MARINA**

Neither of these are so bad as thou art,  
Since they do better thee in their command.  
Thou hold'st a place, for which the painest' fiend  
Of hell would not in reputation change:  
165 Thou art the damned doorkeeper to every  
Coistrel that comes inquiring for his Tib;  
To the choleric fisting of every rogue  
Thy ear is liable; thy food is such  
As hath been belch'd on by infected lungs.

**BAWD**

It's unthinkable!

**BOULT**

She's ruining the name of our profession.

**BAWD**

For goodness' sake, have her hanged!

**BOULT**

The nobleman would have done with her what a nobleman  
does, but she sent him away as cold as a snowball, and  
saying his prayers, too.

**BAWD**

Boult, take her away. Do whatever you like with her. Smash  
her virginity into pieces so we can mold the rest into  
whatever shape we want.

**BOULT**

Even if she were uglier than she is, she'd have to be  
screwed.

**MARINA**

Gods, listen, help me!

**BAWD**

She's praying; take her away! I wish she had never set foot  
in this house. Damn her! She's going to ruin us. Don't you  
want to do what women do? Come up, my little virgin pie [12]  
with rosemary and bay leaves!

[12] The Bawd describes Marina as a "dish" to eat, implying that her virginity is something to be consumed; rosemary and bay leaves are herbs used for flavoring.

*The BAWD exits.*

**BOULT**

Come on, missy, come with me.

**MARINA**

What are you going to do to me?

**BOULT**

Take away your most prized possession.

**MARINA**

Please, tell me one thing first.

**BOULT**

All right, what's your one thing?

**MARINA**

Who's the worst person you know?

**BOULT**

Probably the Pandar. Or the Bawd.

**MARINA**

Neither of them is as bad as you; their jobs are better than  
yours. The worst demon in hell wouldn't trade places with  
you. You're the damned doorman who lets in every  
vagabond that comes looking for his slut; every diseased  
person owes his misery to you. The very food you eat has  
been burped on by infected lungs.

**BOULT**

170 What would you have me do? go to the wars, would you? where a man may serve seven years for the loss of a leg, and have not money enough in the end to buy him a wooden one?

**MARINA**

Do any thing but this thou doest. Empty  
175 Old receptacles, or common shores, of filth;  
Serve by indenture to the common hangman:  
Any of these ways are yet better than this;  
For what thou professest, a baboon, could he speak,  
Would own a name too dear. O, that the gods  
180 Would safely deliver me from this place!  
Here, here's gold for thee.  
If that thy master would gain by thee,  
Proclaim that I can sing, weave, sew, and dance,  
With other virtues, which I'll keep from boast:  
185 And I will undertake all these to teach.  
I doubt not but this populous city will  
Yield many scholars.

**BOULT**

But can you teach all this you speak of?

**MARINA**

Prove that I cannot, take me home again,  
190 And prostitute me to the basest groom  
That doth frequent your house.

**BOULT**

Well, I will see what I can do for thee: if I can  
place thee, I will.

**MARINA**

But amongst honest women.

**BOULT**

195 'Faith, my acquaintance lies little amongst them.  
But since my master and mistress have bought you,  
there's no going but by their consent: therefore I  
will make them acquainted with your purpose, and I  
doubt not but I shall find them tractable enough.  
200 Come, I'll do for thee what I can; come your ways.

*Exeunt*

**BOULT**

What do you want me to do? Fight in the war, huh? Where a man might serve seven years before he loses a leg, and then not have enough money to buy a wooden one?

**MARINA**

Do anything but this. Empty trash cans, or clean up the beaches. Work as an apprentice in the prison. Anything is better than this. What you do? If a baboon could speak, he would say your job is beneath him. I wish the gods would take me out of here safely! Here, take this gold coin. If your master is intent to make a profit from me, let him know I can sing, weave, sew, and dance, and more which I won't brag about. I'll hire myself out to teach all these. I have no doubt that I'll find plenty of students in the city.

**BOULT**

Can you teach all those things?

**MARINA**

If it turns out that I can't, you can take me home and  
prostitute me to the lowest peasant that's a regular at your  
house.

**BOULT**

Well, I'll see what I can do for you. If I can help you, I will.

**MARINA**

I want to work among honest women.

**BOULT**

I don't know many of them, I'll tell you. But since my master and mistress have bought you, there's no way of going unless they consent. So I'll explain your plan to them; I'm sure they'll be willing. Come on, I'll do what I can for you. Come with me.

*They both exit.*

## Act 5, Chorus

### Shakespeare

*Enter GOWER*

**GOWER**

Marina thus the brothel 'scapes, and chances  
Into an honest house, our story says.  
She sings like one immortal, and she dances  
As goddess-like to her admired lays;  
5 Deep clerks she dumbes; and with her needle composes  
Nature's own shape, of bud, bird, branch, or berry,  
That even her art sisters the natural roses;  
Her inkle, silk, twin with the rubied cherry:  
That pupils lacks she none of noble race,  
10 Who pour their bounty on her; and her gain  
She gives the cursed bawd. Here we her place;  
And to her father turn our thoughts again,  
Where we left him, on the sea. We there him lost;  
Whence, driven before the winds, he is arrived  
15 Here where his daughter dwells; and on this coast  
Suppose him now at anchor. The city strived

### Shakescleare Translation

*GOWER enters.*

**GOWER**

So Marina escapes the brothel and, according to our story, finds some decent work. She sings beautifully, dances to her songs like a goddess, amazes scholars with her wisdom, and can sew anything (a bud, a bird, a branch, or a berry) perfectly realistically. Her embroidered roses are twins to those that grow in the earth; the cherries she sews with silk and inkle  look just like the real thing. She teaches children of the local nobility and, when their parents pay her, she's forced to give her earnings to the Bawd, that awful woman. We'll leave Marina here and go back to her father at sea. We lost him there, but now the winds have driven him here, where his daughter is; he just docked. From the middle of a festival celebrating Neptune, Lysimachus sees the ship approach with fancy black sails, and rows out in his own boat to check it out. Think back to

 "Inkle" is a kind of linen thread or yarn.

God Neptune's annual feast to keep: from whence  
Lysimachus our Tyrian ship espies,  
His banners sable, trimm'd with rich expense;  
20 And to him in his barge with fervor hies.  
In your supposing once more put your sight  
Of heavy Pericles; think this his bark:  
Where what is done in action, more, if might,  
Shall be discover'd; please you, sit and hark.

*Exit*

poor Pericles and imagine this is his ship. You'll like what happens next; sit and listen.

*GOWER exits.*

## Act 5, Scene 1

### Shakespeare

*Enter two Sailors, one belonging to the Tyrian vessel, the other to the barge; to them HELICANUS*

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

[*To the Sailor of Mytilene*] Where is lord Helicanus?  
he can resolve you.  
O, here he is.  
Sir, there's a barge put off from Mytilene,  
5 And in it Lysimachus the governor,  
Who craves to come aboard. What is your will?

#### HELICANUS

That he have his. Call up some gentlemen.

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

Ho, gentlemen! my lord calls.

*Enter two or three Gentlemen*

#### FIRST GENTLEMAN

10 Doth your lordship call?

#### HELICANUS

Gentlemen, there's some of worth would come aboard;  
I pray ye, greet them fairly.

*The Gentlemen and the two Sailors descend, and go on board the barge*

*Enter, from thence, LYSIMACHUS and Lords; with the Gentlemen and the two Sailors*

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

Sir,  
15 This is the man that can, in aught you would,  
Resolve you.

#### LYSIMACHUS

Hail, reverend sir! the gods preserve you!

#### HELICANUS

And you, sir, to outlive the age I am,  
And die as I would do.

#### LYSIMACHUS

20 You wish me well.  
Being on shore, honouring of Neptune's triumphs,  
Seeing this goodly vessel ride before us,  
I made to it, to know of whence you are.

#### HELICANUS

First, what is your place?

### Shakescleare Translation

*HELICANUS comes in, along with one TYRIAN SAILOR and one sailor of Mytilene.*

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

[*To the Mytilene Sailor*] Where is Lord Helicanus? He can answer your questions. Oh, here he is.

[*To HELICANUS*] Sir, there's a boat that just came from Mytilene and Lysimachus, the governor, is in it, asking to come onboard. What should we do?

#### HELICANUS

Bring him aboard. And bring some gentlemen with you.

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

Hey, gentlemen! Helicanus is calling.

*Two or three GENTLEMEN enter.*

#### FIRST GENTLEMAN

Did you call, sir?

#### HELICANUS

Gentlemen, there's some powerful people who want to come aboard. Please greet them warmly.

*The GENTLEMEN and the two SAILORS go down to go onboard PERICLES's boat.*

*LYSIMACHUS, his Lords, the GENTLEMEN and two SAILORS come in from the boat.*

#### TYRIAN SAILOR

Sir, this is the man who can answer whatever questions you may have.

#### LYSIMACHUS

Greetings, sir! May the gods bless you!

#### HELICANUS

And you, sir. May you live longer than me and die an old man.

#### LYSIMACHUS

Thanks. I was on the shore, admiring Neptune's domain, when I saw your impressive ship sail toward us. I came out in my ship to find out where you've come from.

 "Neptune" was the ancient Roman god of the sea.

#### HELICANUS

First, who are you?

**LYSIMACHUS**

25 I am the governor of this place you lie before.

**HELICANUS**

Sir,  
Our vessel is of Tyre, in it the king;  
A man who for this three months hath not spoken  
To any one, nor taken sustenance  
30 But to prorogue his grief.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Upon what ground is his distemperature?

**HELICANUS**

'Twould be too tedious to repeat;  
But the main grief springs from the loss  
Of a beloved daughter and a wife.

**LYSIMACHUS**

35 May we not see him?

**HELICANUS**

You may;  
But bootless is your sight: he will not speak To any.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Yet let me obtain my wish.

**HELICANUS**

Behold him.

40

*PERICLES discovered*

**HELICANUS**

This was a goodly person,  
Till the disaster that, one mortal night,  
Drove him to this.

**LYSIMACHUS**

45 Sir king, all hail! the gods preserve you!  
Hail, royal sir!

**HELICANUS**

It is in vain; he will not speak to you.

**FIRST LORD**

Sir,  
We have a maid in Mytilene, I durst wager,  
50 Would win some words of him.

**LYSIMACHUS**

'Tis well bethought.  
She questionless with her sweet harmony  
And other chosen attractions, would allure,  
And make a battery through his deafen'd parts,  
55 Which now are midway stopp'd:  
She is all happy as the fairest of all,  
And, with her fellow maids is now upon  
The leafy shelter that abuts against  
The island's side.

*Whispers a Lord, who goes off in the barge of LYSIMACHUS*

**HELICANUS**

60 Sure, all's effectless; yet nothing we'll omit  
That bears recovery's name. But, since your kindness  
We have stretch'd thus far, let us beseech you  
That for our gold we may provision have,  
Wherein we are not destitute for want,  
65 But weary for the staleness.

**LYSIMACHUS**

I am the governor of the country you are now in.

**HELICANUS**

Sir, our ship has come from Tyre, and the king is onboard.  
For the past three months he hasn't spoken to anyone and  
he's refused to eat anything more than what he needs to  
prolong his grieving.

**LYSIMACHUS**

How did he get this way?

**HELICANUS**

The story is too long to repeat, but the short version is that  
he lost his beloved daughter and his wife.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Can we see him?

**HELICANUS**

You may, but it won't help. He won't speak to anyone.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Let me see him anyway.

**HELICANUS**

Here he is.

*He draws back a curtain, revealing PERICLES.*

**HELICANUS**

He was a good man until the disaster that destroyed him in  
a single night.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Greetings, king! May the gods protect you. Greetings, sir!

**HELICANUS**

It's no use; he won't speak to you.

**FIRST LORD**

Sir, there's a girl in Mytilene who could probably make him  
speak.

**LYSIMACHUS**

That's a good idea. Most likely, her beautiful voice and  
many other attractive qualities will allure him and get  
through to his deaf ears, though they're stopped up now.  
She's the most beautiful girl there is. She's with her  
students now in the building surrounded by trees on the  
other side of the island.

*LYSIMACHUS whispers directions to a Lord, who leaves and enters LYSIMACHUS's boat.*

**HELICANUS**

It's probably useless, but we won't overlook anything that  
might help. And since we've taken advantage of your  
kindness so far, can I ask you if we could exchange our gold  
for food? We have some, but it's gone stale.

**LYSIMACHUS**

O, sir, a courtesy  
Which if we should deny, the most just gods  
For every graff would send a caterpillar,  
And so afflict our province. Yet once more  
70 Let me entreat to know at large the cause  
Of your king's sorrow.

**HELICANUS**

Sit, sir, I will recount it to you:  
But, see, I am prevented.

*Re-enter, from the barge, Lord, with MARINA*

**LYSIMACHUS**

75 O, here is  
The lady that I sent for. Welcome, fair one!  
Is't not a goodly presence?

**HELICANUS**

She's a gallant lady.

**LYSIMACHUS**

She's such a one, that, were I well assured  
80 Came of a gentle kind and noble stock,  
I'd wish no better choice, and think me rarely wed.  
Fair one, all goodness that consists in bounty  
Expect even here, where is a kingly patient:  
If that thy prosperous and artificial feat  
85 Can draw him but to answer thee in aught,  
Thy sacred physic shall receive such pay  
As thy desires can wish.

**MARINA**

Sir, I will use  
My utmost skill in his recovery, provided  
90 That none but I and my companion maid  
Be suffer'd to come near him.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Come, let us leave her;  
And the gods make her prosperous!

*MARINA sings*

**LYSIMACHUS**

95 Mark'd he your music?

**MARINA**

No, nor look'd on us.

**LYSIMACHUS**

See, she will speak to him.

**MARINA**

Hail, sir! my lord, lend ear.

**PERICLES**

Hum, ha!

**MARINA**

100 I am a maid,  
My lord, that ne'er before invited eyes,  
But have been gazed on like a comet: she speaks,  
My lord, that, may be, hath endured a grief  
Might equal yours, if both were justly weigh'd.  
105 Though wayward fortune did malign my state,  
My derivation was from ancestors  
Who stood equivalent with mighty kings:  
But time hath rooted out my parentage,  
And to the world and awkward casualties  
110 Bound me in servitude.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Oh, sir, if I were to deny you that service, the most just gods  
would send a plague of caterpillars, one for every grain we  
didn't give, to afflict our country. But let me ask again: can I  
hear the story of how your king came to be so sad?

**HELICANUS**

Sit, sir, and I'll tell you. But, as you can see, I'll be  
interrupted...

*The Lord comes back in with MARINA.*

**LYSIMACHUS**

Oh, here's the lady that I sent for. Hello, beautiful! Isn't she  
pretty?

**HELICANUS**

She's a noble lady.

**LYSIMACHUS**

She's so beautiful that, if I could only be assured she came  
from an aristocratic family and noble blood, I couldn't find  
a better choice, and would marry her. Beautiful girl, you can  
expect to be rewarded generously for helping the sick king  
here. If your artistic talents are successful in getting him to  
respond to you in anything, we'll pay you anything you  
want for the healing.

**MARINA**

Sir, I'll use all the skills I have to help him, as long as no one  
but me and my maid are allowed to come near him.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Come, let's leave her. May the gods help her!

*MARINA sings. PERICLES does not look up. She returns to LYSIMACHUS.*

**LYSIMACHUS**

Did he listen to your music?

**MARINA**

No, and he didn't look at us.

**LYSIMACHUS**

See, she's going to speak to him.

**MARINA**

Hello, sir! Sir, will you listen to me?

**PERICLES**

Hmm, ha! [PERICLES hits MARINA]

**MARINA**

I'm a virgin, sir, and though I've never asked for anyone's  
attention, I've had a lot of people stare at me (as though I  
were a shooting star)! I'm speaking to you, sir, because I  
think I may have experienced grief that, if we compared,  
might equal yours. Though I've been unlucky to end up  
where I am now, I'm descended from ancestors who were  
the equivalent of powerful kings. I've been robbed of my  
inheritance from my parents, and over the course of time  
have been forced to serve the world and its uncomfortable  
institutions.

[Aside]  
I will desist;  
115 But there is something glows upon my cheek,  
And whispers in mine ear, 'Go not till he speak.'

**PERICLES**

My fortunes—parentage—good parentage—  
To equal mine!—was it not thus? what say you?

**MARINA**

I said, my lord, if you did know my parentage,  
120 You would not do me violence.

**PERICLES**

I do think so. Pray you, turn your eyes upon me.  
You are like something that—What country-woman?  
Here of these shores?

**MARINA**

No, nor of any shores:  
125 Yet I was mortally brought forth, and am  
No other than I appear.

**PERICLES**

I am great with woe, and shall deliver weeping.  
My dearest wife was like this maid, and such a one  
130 My daughter might have been: my queen's square brows;  
Her stature to an inch; as wand-like straight;  
As silver-voiced; her eyes as jewel-like  
And cased as richly; in pace another Juno;  
Who starves the ears she feeds, and makes them hungry,  
The more she gives them speech. Where do you live?

**MARINA**

135 Where I am but a stranger: from the deck  
You may discern the place.

**PERICLES**

Where were you bred?  
And how achieved you these endowments, which  
You make more rich to owe?

**MARINA**

140 If I should tell my history, it would seem  
Like lies disdain'd in the reporting.

**PERICLES**

Prithee, speak:  
Falseness cannot come from thee; for thou look'st  
Modest as Justice, and thou seem'st a palace  
145 For the crown'd Truth to dwell in: I will  
believe thee,  
And make my senses credit thy relation  
To points that seem impossible; for thou look'st  
Like one I loved indeed. What were thy friends?  
150 Didst thou not say, when I did push thee back—  
Which was when I perceived thee—that thou camest  
From good descending?

**MARINA**

So indeed I did.

**PERICLES**

Report thy parentage. I think thou said'st  
155 Thou hadst been toss'd from wrong to injury,  
And that thou thought'st thy griefs might equal mine,  
If both were open'd.

**MARINA**

Some such thing  
I said, and said no more but what my thoughts

[To herself] I should stop. But there's something that warms  
my cheek, a little voice inside me telling me, "Keep going  
until he says something."

**PERICLES**

My luck . . . parents . . . good parents . . . like me! Was it  
really? What did you say?

**MARINA**

I said, sir, that if you knew who my parents were, you  
wouldn't hurt me.

**PERICLES**

I believe you. Please, look at me. You remind me of  
someone . . . where are you from? From this country?

**MARINA**

No, I wasn't born in any country. And yet I was born, and am  
exactly what I seem.

**PERICLES**

I'm so upset; 2 I'm about to start crying. My wife looked  
just like this girl, and my daughter might have looked like  
her if she had survived: she has my wife's thick eyebrows,  
her exact height, her straight posture, her beautiful voice,  
her sparkling eyes framed in rich eyelashes 3, with a walk  
as graceful as Juno's 4, and a voice that makes people  
hungry to hear her speak. Where do you live?

2 Pericles uses the language of pregnancy. He is "great with woe" (pregnant with sadness) and will "deliver" (give birth to) weeping.

3 This description of Marina echoes Cerimon's description of Thaisa's eyes, eyelids, and eyelashes in Act 2.

4 In ancient Roman mythology, Juno was Jove's wife, and queen of the gods.

**MARINA**

I'm just a stranger here: you can see where I live from the  
deck of this boat.

**PERICLES**

Where were you born? And how did you achieve all these  
accomplishments?

**MARINA**

If I told you my story, you would think I was lying.

**PERICLES**

Please, speak. You can't tell a lie; you look like the  
embodiment of Justice, like the queen of Truth. I will  
believe you, even if you say things that seem impossible,  
because you look like someone I used to love. Who was  
your family? Didn't you say, when I pushed you back, when  
I first looked at you, that you came from a good family?

**MARINA**

Yes, I did.

**PERICLES**

Tell me who your parents were. I think you said you'd been  
wronged and hurt in the past, and that you thought you had  
suffered as much as I had (if the stories were both told).

**MARINA**

I said something like that, but I only said what I thought  
might be true.

Did warrant me was likely.

### PERICLES

Tell thy story;  
If thine consider'd prove the thousandth part  
Of my endurance, thou art a man, and I  
Have suffer'd like a girl: yet thou dost look  
Like Patience gazing on kings' graves, and smiling  
Extremity out of act. What were thy friends?  
How lost thou them? Thy name, my most kind virgin?  
Recount, I do beseech thee: come, sit by me.

### MARINA

My name is Marina.

### PERICLES

O, I am mock'd,  
And thou by some incensed god sent hither  
To make the world to laugh at me.

### MARINA

Patience, good sir,  
Or here I'll cease.

### PERICLES

Nay, I'll be patient.  
Thou little know'st how thou dost startle me,  
To call thyself Marina.

### MARINA

The name  
Was given me by one that had some power,  
My father, and a king.

### PERICLES

How! a king's daughter?  
And call'd Marina?

### MARINA

You said you would believe me;  
But, not to be a troubler of your peace,  
I will end here.

### PERICLES

But are you flesh and blood?  
Have you a working pulse? and are no fairy?  
Motion! Well; speak on. Where were you born?  
And wherefore call'd Marina?

### MARINA

Call'd Marina  
For I was born at sea.

### PERICLES

At sea! what mother?

### MARINA

My mother was the daughter of a king;  
Who died the minute I was born,  
As my good nurse Lychorida hath oft  
Deliver'd weeping.

### PERICLES

O, stop there a little!  
*[Aside]*

This is the rarest dream that e'er dull sleep  
Did mock sad fools withal: this cannot be:  
My daughter's buried. Well: where were you bred?  
I'll hear you more, to the bottom of your story,  
And never interrupt you.

### MARINA

You scorn: believe me, 'twere best I did give o'er.

### PERICLES

Tell your story; if you've experienced one thousandth of what I have, you're a man and I've suffered like a girl. You look patient in the face of death 5; you're smiling as if nothing had happened! Who was your family? How did you lose them? What is your name, friendly virgin? Please, tell me, I'm begging you. Come sit by me.

5 In the original text, "kings' graves" (that is, death) has significance in this scene about Pericles's spiritual death and rebirth through Marina.

### MARINA

My name is Marina.

### PERICLES

This is a joke. Some angry god has sent you here to make the world laugh at me.

### MARINA

Sir, please listen, or I'll stop here.

### PERICLES

I'll listen. You have no idea how much you've startled me by calling yourself "Marina."

### MARINA

The name was given to me by a powerful person: my father, who was a king.

### PERICLES

What? You're a king's daughter named Marina?

### MARINA

You said you would believe me. I won't bother you anymore; I'll stop there.

### PERICLES

Are you flesh and blood? Is your heart beating? You're not a ghost? You're alive! Well, keep talking. Where were you born? And why were you called Marina?

### MARINA

I was called Marina because I was born at sea.

### PERICLES

At sea! Who was your mother?

### MARINA

My mother was the daughter of a king, and she died as soon as I was born. My nurse, Lychorida, told me the story many times, crying.

### PERICLES

Oh, wait a minute!

*[To himself]* This is the strangest dream that a poor idiot ever had. This can't be true; my daughter is dead.

*[To MARINA]* Well, where were you born? I'll listen to you again, to the whole story, and won't interrupt you anymore.

### MARINA

You're making fun of me. Believe me; it's best if I stop.

**PERICLES**

I will believe you by the syllable  
Of what you shall deliver. Yet, give me leave:  
How came you in these parts? where were you bred?

**MARINA**

210 The king my father did in Tarsus leave me;  
Till cruel Cleon, with his wicked wife,  
Did seek to murder me: and having woo'd  
A villain to attempt it, who having drawn to do it,  
A crew of pirates came and rescued me;  
215 Brought me to Mytilene. But, good sir,  
Whither will you have me? Why do you weep?  
It may be,  
You think me an impostor: no, good faith;  
I am the daughter to King Pericles,  
220 If good King Pericles be.

**PERICLES**

Ho, Helicanus!

**HELICANUS**

Calls my lord?

**PERICLES**

Thou art a grave and noble counsellor,  
Most wise in general: tell me, if thou canst,  
225 What this maid is, or what is like to be,  
That thus hath made me weep?

**HELICANUS**

I know not; but  
Here is the regent, sir, of Mytilene  
Speaks nobly of her.

**LYSIMACHUS**

230 She would never tell  
Her parentage; being demanded that,  
She would sit still and weep.

**PERICLES**

O Helicanus, strike me, honour'd sir;  
Give me a gash, put me to present pain;  
235 Lest this great sea of joys rushing upon me  
O'erbear the shores of my mortality,  
And drown me with their sweetness . O, come hither,  
Thou that beget'st him that did thee beget;  
Thou that wast born at sea, buried at Tarsus,  
240 And found at sea again! O Helicanus,  
Down on thy knees, thank the holy gods as loud  
As thunder threatens us: this is Marina.  
What was thy mother's name? tell me but that,  
For truth can never be confirm'd enough,  
245 Though doubts did ever sleep.

**MARINA**

First, sir, I pray,  
What is your title?

**PERICLES**

I am Pericles of Tyre: but tell me now  
My drown'd queen's name, as in the rest you said  
250 Thou hast been godlike perfect,  
The heir of kingdoms and another like  
To Pericles thy father.

**MARINA**

Is it no more to be your daughter than  
To say my mother's name was Thaisa?  
255 Thaisa was my mother, who did end  
The minute I began.

**PERICLES**

I'll believe every word you say. But let me ask: how did you get here? Where were you born?

**MARINA**

My father, the king, left me in Tarsus until the king, Cleon, and his evil wife tried to murder me. They had even hired a criminal to do it, but right as he was about to, a group of pirates came and rescued me and brought me to Mytilene.

*[PERICLES begins to cry]* Sir, did I say something wrong?  
Why are you crying? Maybe you think I'm a fake, but I'm not:  
I'm good King Pericles's daughter, if good King Pericles is still alive.

**PERICLES**

Hey, Helicanus!

**HELICANUS**

Did you call, sir?

**PERICLES**

You're a serious, noble advisor, and wise about many different things: tell me, if you can, what this girl is, or is supposed to be, that she's made me cry so much?

**HELICANUS**

I don't know, but here's the governor of Mytilene, sir, and he speaks highly of her.

**LYSIMACHUS**

She would never tell me who her parents were. Whenever I asked, she would sit still and weep.

**PERICLES**

Oh, Helicanus, pinch me! Hit me, make me feel some pain, or this great sea <sup>6</sup> of happiness will overwhelm me and kill me!

*[To MARINA]* Oh come here; I gave birth to you, but finding you makes me feel like I'm reborn <sup>7</sup>. You were born at sea, buried in Tarsus, and found at sea again!

*[To HELICANUS]* Oh, Helicanus, kneel and thank the gods in a voice louder than the storm: this is Marina.

*[To MARINA]* What was your mother's name? Tell me that. The truth can never be confirmed enough, even if I have no doubts.

**MARINA**

First, sir, please: who are you?

**PERICLES**

I am Pericles of Tyre, but tell me my drowned wife's name. Everything you've said has been completely perfect. If you get this right, you're the heir to two kingdoms and to me, your father, Pericles.

**MARINA**

Will it prove I'm your daughter if I say my mother's name was Thaisa? Thaisa was my mother, and she died as soon as I was born.

<sup>6</sup> The "great sea," a symbol of misfortune, destruction, and alienation thus far, is (through Marina) now associated with joy.

<sup>7</sup> The language of pregnancy in this scene reprises the scene of Marina's birth—here, Pericles plays Marina, and Marina plays Thaisa. Pericles imagines he was lost at sea (in his depression and despair) and was saved (in his metaphor, born) by Marina.

**PERICLES**

Now, blessing on thee! rise; thou art my child.  
Give me fresh garments. Mine own, Helicanus;  
She is not dead at Tarsus, as she should have been,  
260 By savage Cleon: she shall tell thee all;  
When thou shalt kneel, and justify in knowledge  
She is thy very princess. Who is this?

**HELICANUS**

Sir, 'tis the governor of Mytilene,  
Who, hearing of your melancholy state,  
265 Did come to see you.

**PERICLES**

I embrace you.  
Give me my robes. I am wild in my beholding.  
O heavens bless my girl! But, hark, what music?  
Tell Helicanus, my Marina, tell him  
270 O'er, point by point, for yet he seems to doubt,  
How sure you are my daughter. But, what music?

**HELICANUS**

My lord, I hear none.

**PERICLES**

None!  
The music of the spheres! List, my Marina.

**LYSIMACHUS**

275 It is not good to cross him; give him way.

**PERICLES**

Rarest sounds! Do ye not hear?

**LYSIMACHUS**

My lord, I hear.

*Music*

**PERICLES**

Most heavenly music!  
280 It nips me unto listening, and thick slumber  
Hangs upon mine eyes: let me rest.

*Sleeps*

**LYSIMACHUS**

A pillow for his head:  
So, leave him all. Well, my companion friends,  
285 If this but answer to my just belief,  
I'll well remember you.

*Exeunt all but PERICLES*

*DIANA appears to PERICLES as in a vision*

**DIANA**

My temple stands in Ephesus: hie thee thither,  
And do upon mine altar sacrifice.  
There, when my maiden priests are met together,  
290 Before the people all,  
Reveal how thou at sea didst lose thy wife:  
To mourn thy crosses, with thy daughter's, call  
And give them repetition to the life.  
Or perform my bidding, or thou livest in woe;  
295 Do it, and happy; by my silver bow!  
Awake, and tell thy dream.

**PERICLES**

Now bless you! Get up; you are my child. Bring me fresh clothes. She's my daughter, Helicanus. She's wasn't killed by Cleon back in Tarsus like she should have been. She can tell you everything, but first kneel and acknowledge her as your princess. Who is this?

**HELICANUS**

Sir, it's the governor of Mytilene. He heard how melancholy you were and came to see you.

**PERICLES**

I'll give you a hug. Give me my clothes. I'm overwhelmed with what I've seen. May the heavens bless my girl! But listen: what's that music? Tell Helicanus, my Marina, tell him the whole thing, point by point, because he still seems unsure—tell him that you're my daughter. But what's that music?

**HELICANUS**

Sir, I can't hear anything.

**PERICLES**

Nothing? It's the *music of the spheres*!<sup>8</sup> Listen, my Marina.

<sup>8</sup> The "music of the spheres" is a philosophical and astronomical concept going back to Aristotle—a state of harmony in the natural world which humans can access. Pericles's ability to hear the music of the spheres is a shorthand for his heightened philosophical and spiritual state after recovering Marina.

**LYSIMACHUS**

It's not good to contradict him; let him go on.

**PERICLES**

Strange sounds! Can't you hear?

**LYSIMACHUS**

Sir, I hear.

*Music begins to play.*

**PERICLES**

The most heavenly music! I can't stop listening; and it's making me sleepy. Let me rest.

*PERICLES falls asleep.*

**LYSIMACHUS**

Get a pillow for his head. Let's all leave him.

Well, friends, if all this is true, I'll never forget you.

*Everyone except PERICLES exits.*

*DIANA appears to PERICLES, as if in a dream.*

**DIANA**

My temple is in Ephesus. Go there and make a sacrifice at my altar. In front of the virgin nuns and people there, reveal the story of how you lost your wife at sea. Weep for your grief, and your daughter's. Bring the stories to life by repeating them. Do what I say, or you'll live a cursed life. If you do it, you'll be happy, I'll make sure of it! Now wake up and tell about your dream.

*Disappears**DIANA disappears.***PERICLES**

Celestial Dian, goddess argentine,  
I will obey thee. Helicanus!

*Re-enter HELICANUS, LYSIMACHUS, and MARINA*

**HELICANUS**

300 Sir?

**PERICLES**

My purpose was for Tarsus, there to strike  
The inhospitable Cleon; but I am  
For other service first: toward Ephesus  
Turn our blown sails; eftsoons I'll tell thee why.

305 *[To LYSIMACHUS]*

Shall we refresh us, sir, upon your shore,  
And give you gold for such provision

310 As our intents will need?

**LYSIMACHUS**

Sir,  
With all my heart; and, when you come ashore,  
I have another suit.

**PERICLES**

You shall prevail,  
315 Were it to woo my daughter; for it seems  
You have been noble towards her.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Sir, lend me your arm.

**PERICLES**

Come, my Marina.

*Exeunt**They all leave.***PERICLES**

Heavenly Diana, silver goddess, I will obey you. Helicanus!

*HELICANUS, LYSIMACHUS, and MARINA come back in.*

**HELICANUS**

Sir?

**PERICLES**

I had planned to go to Tarsus and wage war on Cleon, but I  
have to do something else first. Turn the sails toward  
Ephesus. I'll tell you why soon.

*[To LYSIMACHUS]* Can we rest and get provisions, sir, in  
Mytilene? We can pay you in gold for everything that we  
need.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Sir, with all my heart. And when you come on shore, I have  
another request.

**PERICLES**

The answer is "yes" if you're asking to marry my daughter.  
It seems you've been kind to her.

**LYSIMACHUS**

Sir, give me your arm.

**PERICLES**

Come, my Marina.

## Act 5, Scene 2

**Shakespeare**

*Enter GOWER, before the temple of DIANA at Ephesus*

**Shakescleare Translation**

*GOWER comes in, standing in front of the temple of DIANA  
in Ephesus.*

**GOWER**

Now our sands are almost run;  
More a little, and then dumb.  
This, my last boon, give me,  
For such kindness must relieve me,  
5 That you aptly will suppose  
What pageantry, what feats, what shows,  
What minstrelsy, and pretty din,  
The regent made in Mytilene  
To greet the king. So he thrived,  
10 That he is promised to be wived  
To fair Marina; but in no wise  
Till he had done his sacrifice,  
As Dian bade: whereto being bound,  
The interim, pray you, all confound.  
15 In feather'd briefness sails are fill'd,  
And wishes fall out as they're will'd.  
At Ephesus, the temple see,  
Our king and all his company.  
That he can hither come so soon,  
20 Is by your fancy's thankful doom.

*Exit***GOWER**

Now our time is almost up; there's only a little bit left before  
we shut up. Here's the last favor I'll ask of you: that you'll  
envision all the parades, performances, shows, songs, and  
fanfare that the governor put on in Mytilene to greet the  
king. He succeeded in getting engaged to Marina, but they  
won't be married until Pericles performs the sacrifice that  
Diana ordered. They're headed there now; picture them  
going in the meantime. The sails fill with wind, the ship  
goes quickly, and everyone's wishes are fulfilled. Now see  
the temple in Ephesus where the king and his group are.  
They got there so quickly only by the power of your  
imagination.

*GOWER exits.*

## Act 5, Scene 3

### Shakespeare

*Enter PERICLES, with his train; LYSIMACHUS, HELICANUS, MARINA, and a Lady*

**PERICLES**

Hail, Diana! to perform thy just command,  
I here confess myself the king of Tyre;  
Who, frighted from my country, did wed  
At Pentapolis the fair Thaisa.

5 At sea in childbed died she, but brought forth  
A maid-child call'd Marina; who, O goddess,  
Wears yet thy silver livery. She at Tarsus  
Was nursed with Cleon; who at fourteen years  
He sought to murder: but her better stars  
10 Brought her to Mytilene; 'gainst whose shore  
Riding, her fortunes brought the maid aboard us,  
Where, by her own most clear remembrance, she  
Made known herself my daughter.

**THAISA**

Voice and favour!  
15 You are, you are—O royal Pericles!

*Faints*

**PERICLES**

What means the nun? she dies! help, gentlemen!

**CERIMON**

Noble sir,  
If you have told Diana's altar true,  
This is your wife.

**PERICLES**

20 Reverend appearer, no;  
I threw her overboard with these very arms.

**CERIMON**

Upon this coast, I warrant you.

**PERICLES**

'Tis most certain.

**CERIMON**

Look to the lady; O, she's but o'erjoy'd.  
25 Early in blustering morn this lady was  
Thrown upon this shore. I oped the coffin,  
Found there rich jewels; recover'd her, and placed her  
Here in Diana's temple.

**PERICLES**

May we see them?

**CERIMON**

30 Great sir, they shall be brought you to my house,  
Whither I invite you. Look, Thaisa is recovered.

**THAISA**

O, let me look!  
If he be none of mine, my sanctity  
Will to my sense bend no licentious ear,  
35 But curb it, spite of seeing. O, my lord,  
Are you not Pericles? Like him you spake,  
Like him you are: did you not name a tempest,  
A birth, and death?

### Shakescleare Translation

*PERICLES, LYSIMACHUS, HELICANUS, MARINA, and a lady enter with others. THAISA, CERIMON, and others stand by the altar.*

**PERICLES**

Praise Diana! I'm doing what you asked: I'll tell the whole story here. I'm the king of Tyre. I left my country because I was afraid for my life, and married Thaisa in Pentapolis. She died giving birth to our daughter, Marina, at sea. Marina is still a virgin like you, Diana! Cleon took care of her in Tarsus, but when she was fourteen years old he tried to murder her. Luckily, she came to Mytilene, where, when I arrived, by good fortune she was brought aboard my ship and, by recounting her story, she made it clear she was my daughter.

**THAISA**

I recognize that voice! You're, you're—oh, Pericles!

*THAISA faints.*

**PERICLES**

What did that nun say? Is she dead? Help her, gentlemen!

**CERIMON**

Sir, if you've told the truth just now at Diana's altar, this is your wife.

**PERICLES**

Sir, it can't be. I threw her overboard with my own hands.

**CERIMON**

Near this coast, I bet.

**PERICLES**

Exactly.

**CERIMON**

*[To the nuns]* Take care of the lady, she's just overexcited.

*[To PERICLES]* Early one morning, this woman washed up on shore. I opened the coffin, found some expensive jewels inside, revived her, and made her a nun here in Diana's temple.

**PERICLES**

Can we see the jewels?

**CERIMON**

Of course, come to my house and I'll bring them to you.  
Look, Thaisa woke up.

**THAISA**

Let me look! If he's not my husband, my religious spirit won't let me get excited just by hearing; I'm inclined not to believe, having not seen.

*[She comes face to face with PERICLES]* Oh, sir, are you Pericles? You spoke just like him, and you look just like him . . . did you mention a storm, a birth, and a death?

**PERICLES**

The voice of dead Thaisa!

**THAISA**

40 That Thaisa am I, supposed dead  
And drown'd.

**PERICLES**

Immortal Dian!

**THAISA**

Now I know you better.  
When we with tears parted Pentapolis,  
45 The king my father gave you such a ring.

*Shows a ring*

**PERICLES**

This, this: no more, you gods! your present kindness  
Makes my past miseries sports: you shall do well,  
That on the touching of her lips I may  
50 Melt and no more be seen. O, come, be buried  
A second time within these arms.

**MARINA**

My heart  
Leaps to be gone into my mother's bosom.

*Kneels to THAISA*

**PERICLES**

55 Look, who kneels here! Flesh of thy flesh, Thaisa;  
Thy burden at the sea, and call'd Marina  
For she was yielded there.

**THAISA**

Blest, and mine own!

**HELICANUS**

Hail, madam, and my queen!

**THAISA**

60 I know you not.

**PERICLES**

You have heard me say, when I did fly from Tyre,  
I left behind an ancient substitute:  
Can you remember what I call'd the man?  
I have named him oft.

**THAISA**

65 'Twas Helicanus then.

**PERICLES**

Still confirmation:  
Embrace him, dear Thaisa; this is he.  
Now do I long to hear how you were found;  
How possibly preserved; and who to thank,  
70 Besides the gods, for this great miracle.

**THAISA**

Lord Cerimon, my lord; this man,  
Through whom the gods have shown their power; that can  
From first to last resolve you.

**PERICLES**

The voice of Thaisa, who's dead!

**THAISA**

I am Thaisa, who you thought was dead and drowned.

**PERICLES**

Immortal Diana!

**THAISA**

Now I recognize you. When we left Pentapolis, my father,  
the king, gave you this ring.

*THAISA shows him a ring.*

**PERICLES**

This, this—no more, gods! All this goodness makes the past  
pain seem like nothing. You'll do well if, when I kiss her, I  
melt and am never seen again! Oh, come and let me hold  
you  . [PERICLES and THAISA embrace]

 The language of birth and death  
pervade this scene as in the previous  
one. Thaisa was "buried" in the sea  
and is "buried" again in Pericles's  
arms. Though he finds her  
miraculously come back to life, his  
invitation to hug uses the metaphor of  
a grave.

**MARINA**

My heart jumps at the thought of being able to hug my own  
mother.

*MARINA kneels to THAISA.*

**PERICLES**

Look who kneels here! This is your daughter , Thaisa,  
called "Marina" for the sea because that's where she was  
born.

 In the original text, Pericles  
adapts Adam's declaration to identify  
Eve ("flesh of my flesh") in the Book of  
Genesis. Pericles and his family's  
rebirth is figured as a sort of new  
Creation story.

**THAISA**

Bless you, daughter!

**HELICANUS**

I salute you, my queen!

**THAISA**

I don't know you.

**PERICLES**

Do you remember me saying that, when I left Tyre, I left an  
old friend behind? Do you remember his name? I've  
mentioned it many times.

**THAISA**

It was Helicanus back then.

**PERICLES**

More confirmation! Give him a hug, Thaisa, this is  
Helicanus. Now I want to know how you were found, how  
you survived, and who I should thank (besides the gods) for  
this miracle.

**THAISA**

Thank Lord Cerimon, dear, this man through whom the  
gods have shown their power. He can tell you everything  
from beginning to end.

**PERICLES**

Reverend sir,  
 75 The gods can have no mortal officer  
 More like a god than you. Will you deliver  
 How this dead queen re-lives?

**CERIMON**

I will, my lord.  
 Beseech you, first go with me to my house,  
 80 Where shall be shown you all was found with her;  
 How she came placed here in the temple;  
 No needful thing omitted.

**PERICLES**

Pure Dian, bless thee for thy vision!  
 Will offer night-oblations to thee, Thaisa,  
 85 This prince, the fair-betrothed of your daughter,  
 Shall marry her at Pentapolis. And now,  
 This ornament  
 Makes me look dismal will I clip to form;  
 And what this fourteen years no razor touch'd,  
 90 To grace thy marriage-day, I'll beautify.

**THAISA**

Lord Cerimon hath letters of good credit, sir,  
 My father's dead.

**PERICLES**

Heavens make a star of him! Yet there, my queen,  
 We'll celebrate their nuptials, and ourselves  
 95 Will in that kingdom spend our following days:  
 Our son and daughter shall in Tyrus reign.  
 Lord Cerimon, we do our longing stay  
 To hear the rest untold: sir, lead's the way.

*Exeunt*

**PERICLES**

Sir, you're the nearest thing to a god that a man can be. Can  
 you explain how my queen came back to life?

**CERIMON**

I can, sir. But first, let's go into my house, where I can show  
 you everything we found with her. We'll explain how she  
 came here to the temple, and we won't leave anything out.

**PERICLES**

Diana, bless your perfect plan! I will make a sacrifice to you  
 tonight. Thaisa, this is Lysimachus, who's engaged to your  
 daughter and is about to marry her in Pentapolis. And now,  
 I'll shave off this long beard that I've grown for the last  
 fourteen years. I'll look young again for your wedding day,  
 Marina.

**THAISA**

Lord Cerimon has received trustworthy letters saying my  
 father's dead.

**PERICLES**

May the gods bless his soul. We'll go to Pentapolis to  
 celebrate their wedding, and we'll stay there to rule that  
 kingdom for the rest of our lives. Marina and Lysimachus  
 will rule in Tyre.

*[To CERIMON] Lord Cerimon, we'll stay here until we hear  
 the rest of the story! Sir, lead the way.*

*They all exit.*

## Act 5, Epilogue

**Shakespeare**

*Enter GOWER*

**Shakescleare Translation**

*GOWER enters.*

**GOWER**

In Antiochus and his daughter you have heard  
 Of monstrous lust the due and just reward:  
 In Pericles, his queen and daughter, seen,  
 Although assail'd with fortune fierce and keen,  
 5 Virtue preserved from fell destruction's blast,  
 Led on by heaven, and crown'd with joy at last:  
 In Helicanus may you well descry  
 A figure of truth, of faith, of loyalty:  
 In reverend Cerimon there well appears  
 10 The worth that learned charity aye wears:  
 For wicked Cleon and his wife, when fame  
 Had spread their cursed deed, and honour'd name  
 Of Pericles, to rage the city turn,  
 That him and his they in his palace burn;  
 15 The gods for murder seemed so content  
 To punish them; although not done, but meant.  
 So, on your patience evermore attending,  
 New joy wait on you! Here our play has ending.

*Exit*

**GOWER**

You heard about the just deserts that Antiochus and his  
 daughter got for their monstrous actions. And you've seen  
 how Pericles, his queen, and his daughter—despite the bad  
 fortune life threw at them—kept their virtue safe from  
 misfortune's attacks, trusted the gods, and are happy at  
 last. You can see that Helicanus is an example of truth, faith,  
 and loyalty; Cerimon displays how wisdom and generosity  
 can do good in the world. Once the word got out about  
 what Cleon and his wife had done, the city of Tarsus (which  
 loved Pericles) reacted in a rage, burning them to death in  
 their own palace. The gods punished them that way for  
 their attempted murder—though they didn't do it, they  
 meant it. So, thanks again for your patience, and may you  
 be blessed! This is the end of our play.

*GOWER exits.*

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