

Cymbeline

Cast

<i>Cymbeline</i>	<i>Jack Shepherd</i>
<i>Imogen</i>	<i>Sophie Thompson</i>
<i>Posthumus</i>	<i>Ben Porter</i>
<i>Belarius</i>	<i>Stephen Moore</i>
<i>Iachimo</i>	<i>Ron Cook</i>
<i>Cloten</i>	<i>Stephen Mangan</i>
<i>Queen</i>	<i>Suzanne Bertish</i>
<i>Arviragus</i>	<i>Ian Hughes</i>
<i>Guiderius</i>	<i>Will Keen</i>
<i>Pisanio</i>	<i>James Greene</i>
<i>Philario</i>	<i>Charlie Woods</i>
<i>Soothsayer</i>	<i>Max Bonamy</i>
<i>Senator</i>	<i>Rupert Mason</i>
<i>Lady</i>	<i>Annabel Capper</i>
<i>Messenger</i>	<i>James Reynard</i>
<i>Jailer</i>	<i>Julius Barnett</i>

Play description

ACT I

Scene 1. Imogen, daughter of King Cymbeline of Britain, has angered her father by marrying Posthumus. Cymbeline himself reared the orphaned Posthumus, his own two sons having been abducted in infancy. The wicked Queen (whose son Cloten was Cymbeline's preferred match for Imogen) pretends kindness to the young couple. Before Posthumus leaves for exile in Rome, Imogen gives him a ring, receiving in return a bracelet.

Scene 2. Cloten's attendants ridicule him.

Scene 3. Pisanio, Posthumus's servant, tells Imogen of his master's departure.

Scene 4. Posthumus meets Iachimo in Rome. When Posthumus extols Imogen's virtue, Iachimo wagers him ten thousand ducats to his diamond ring that he can persuade her to commit adultery. Posthumus accepts the wager.

Scene 5. The doctor Cornelius is suspicious when the Queen gathers poisonous plants. He reveals privately that what she believes to be fatal poison is in fact a sleeping draught. The Queen tries unsuccessfully to turn Pisanio against Posthumus and gives him the poison, claiming that it is a life-saving remedy.

Scene 6. Iachimo comes to see Imogen, bringing a letter of introduction from Posthumus. Realizing that he can only win the wager by resorting to subterfuge, he claims that Posthumus has been unfaithful, suggesting that she avenge herself by becoming his lover. When she reacts with revulsion, he assures her that he was merely testing her devotion. She then agrees to his request to leave a trunk of valuables in her chamber overnight, for safekeeping.

ACT II

Scene 1. Cloten wants to meet Iachimo.

Scene 2. While Imogen sleeps, Iachimo creeps from the trunk. He carefully notes details of her chamber and person and then eases Posthumus's bracelet from her arm.

Scene 3. When Cloten tries to woo Imogen she dismisses him impatiently. She asks Pisanio to find her missing bracelet.

Scene 4. Iachimo uses his observations of Imogen, and her bracelet, to convince Posthumus that he has slept with her.

Scene 5. Posthumus vows revenge.

ACT III

Scene 1. Cymbeline refuses to pay a tribute to Caesar, and Rome declares war on Britain.

Scene 2. Posthumus writes to Pisanio ordering him to kill Imogen. Pisanio refuses to believe her unfaithful. In order to help Pisanio in his task, Posthumus tells Imogen to meet him at Milford Haven.

Scene 3. Belarius, unjustly banished by Cymbeline, abducted his sons Guiderius and Arviragus, and lives with them in a remote Welsh cave. The young men, unaware of their provenance, are frustrated by their isolated life.

Scene 4. As Imogen and Pisanio approach Milford he shows her Posthumus's letter. She begs him "Do his bidding, strike!" Pisanio convinces her that he should report her death to Posthumus; she, meanwhile, must dress as a man and seek the protection of Lucius, a noble Roman. Before they part, Pisanio gives Imogen the Queen's potion, as a remedy for sickness.

Scene 5. Imogen is missing from the court. The Queen privately hopes that she is either dead or exiled and that "She being down, I have the placing of the British crown." Believing Imogen well on her way to Rome, Pisanio tells Cloten that she has gone to Milford and gives him a suit of Posthumus' clothes. Cloten plots his revenge, intending to kill Posthumus and ravish Imogen.

Scene 6. When Imogen arrives exhausted at Belarius's cave, she is welcomed with food and shelter. She calls herself Fidele.

Scene 7. Romans discuss the war with Britain.

ACT IV

Scene 1. Cloten draws near to Milford, gloating about the horrible punishments he will deal out.

Scene 2. Pleading sickness, Imogen remains in the cave whilst her hosts go hunting. She takes Pisanio's drug. Belarius sees Cloten and fears that they have been discovered. Guiderius beheads Cloten. The brothers find Imogen/Fidele apparently dead, and lay her tenderly in a grave. When Imogen awakes, she sees Cloten's decapitated body in Posthumus's clothes and assumes her husband has been killed. Lucius comes upon Imogen/Fidele and takes her under his protection.

Scene 3. Cymbeline wonders where Imogen and Cloten have gone, and questions Pisanio. Pisanio denies knowledge, and swears loyalty to the king.

Scene 4. Belarius wants to flee the area, but his adopted sons are eager to fight the Romans.

ACT V

Scene 1. Posthumus, having returned to Britain with the Romans, is devastated to learn from Pisanio of Imogen's death. He dresses as a peasant and resolves to fight for his country.

Scene 2. Iachimo reveals his guilt at having wronged Imogen.

Scene 3. Posthumus describes how three men (Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus) heroically saved the flagging Briton army. Posthumus, again disguised as a Roman, is arrested.

Scene 4. Posthumus willingly embraces imprisonment. He awakes from a vision to find a written prophecy that both his and Britain's miseries will end.

Scene 5. Cymbeline knights Belarius, Arviragus and Guiderius, but regrets the disappearance of an outstandingly valiant unknown soldier (Posthumus). The Queen has died, confessing her misdeeds. The prisoners Fidele/Imogen, Posthumus, Lucius and Iachimo, are brought to Cymbeline. Lucius begs clemency for Fidele/Imogen and Cymbeline agrees. Fidele/Imogen demands that Iachimo explain where he found the diamond ring he wears; this he does. Heart-broken, Posthumus steps forward, thrusting Imogen away when she tries to intervene. Pisanio comes to her aid and she accuses him of poisoning her. Cornelius, however, interposes in his defense. Thus, Belarius, Guiderius and Arviragus, who are amazed at Fidele's apparent return from the dead, understand all. Guiderius admits to the slaying of Cloten and is arrested by Cymbeline. Belarius then reveals both his own and his adoptive sons' true identities. Posthumus forgives Iachimo freely. Amidst the general rejoicing, Cymbeline announces that he will pay tribute to Caesar, thus restoring peace between Britain and Rome.

Track list

Disc 1

Track 1	Act I	Scene i
Track 2	Act I	Scene ii
Track 3	Act I	Scene iii
Track 4	Act I	Scene iv
Track 5	Act I	Scene v
Track 6	Act I	Scene vi
Track 7	Act II	Scene i
Track 8	Act II	Scene ii
Track 9	Act II	Scene iii
Track 10	Act II	Scene iv

Disk 2

Track 1	Act II	Scene v
Track 2	Act III	Scene i
Track 3	Act III	Scene ii
Track 4	Act III	Scene iii
Track 5	Act III	Scene iv
Track 6	Act III	Scene v
Track 7	Act III	Scene vi
Track 8	Act III	Scene vii
Track 9	Act IV	Scene i
Track 10	Act IV	Scene ii

Disk 3

Track 1	Act IV	Scene iii
Track 2	Act IV	Scene iv
Track 3	Act V	Scene i
Track 4	Act V	Scene ii
Track 5	Act V	Scene iii
Track 6	Act V	Scene iv
Track 7	Act V	Scene v