

KING, PERICLES, & MOE

KING

Good Morning Pericles. Did you sleep well?

PERICLES

Like a baby. Your rooms are most comfortable.

KING

Nothing's too good for our guests. Tell me, are you a well-educated man?

PERICLES

I was trained in the verbal and mathematical arts along with studies in survival and warfare during my younger days.

KING

Wonderful. I was wondering if you would stay on and tutor my daughter.

PERICLES

I don't understand. Why would you make such a request of me? I'm not any sort of school master.

KING

Oh, but you are. In fact, you've already had a great influence on my daughter's writing. *(Hands him CAMILLA'S note)* Perhaps you care to read some for yourself?

PERICLES

(Looks at the letter – slightly stunned) It says she wishes to marry me.

KING

(Suddenly angry he snatches the letter out of his hand) It tells me much more than that. It tells me you seduced her behind my back!

PERICLES

I did no such thing. How dare you accuse me of so disgraceful an act.

KING

Don't try to deny it. I have a witness.

PERICLES

(Draws his sword) Show me the lying scoundrel and I'll wring the truth from his miserable hide.

KING

My trusted Regent Moe here claims he saw the entire affair.

MOE

(Startled) I did?

KING

Afraid so.

MOE

Oh dear.

PERICLES

With your Highnesses permission, I would like to teach this *dog* a thing or two about honor.

MOE hides behind the KING

KING

(Calm) That won't be necessary. You may put your sword away, brave knight. There is no need to defend your honor any further. Now that I think on it, my Regent was suffering from a fair amount of alcoholic intake last evening. The reported offense was most likely a figment of his spirit-soaked imagination. I withdraw the accusation. I pray you'll forgive my rash words.

PERICLES

(Sheathes his sword) There is no need for forgiveness, your Highness. You acted as any good father would. However, I would recommend you cure your Regent of his taste for drink with twenty or so good lashes.

KING

Not such a bad idea. I shall take your suggestion under advisement. Moe!

MOE

(From behind the KING) Yes, your Highness?

KING

Go fetch the Princess.

MOE

(Pointing Stage Right from behind the KING) I believe I see her coming down the hall as we speak.

KING

That's a time saver.

CERI & PHIL

CERI

What is this, Phil?

PHIL

It was found on the beach. Washed up from the storm.

CERI

Hmm... I see. Go ahead and open it

PHIL

Are you sure? It looks like a coffin.

CERI

Whatever it is, it's heavy. Open it. It could be treasure that good fortune gifts us.

PHIL

Perhaps....

CERI

You said the storm left this on the shore? All sealed up.

PHIL

Yes. They said the storm left it after a huge wave crash on the shore.

CERI

Open it. (*PHIL cracks the chest*) Too good smelling to be a body.

PHIL

Like perfume.

CERI

Quite. Open it the rest of the way Phil. (*Phil opens the chest completely*) oh god... it's a body. Completely arranged for a funeral at sea...even a note. (*reads*) "If this coffins come to shore, know that this is the body of the noble queen. Wife of King Pericles. Daughter of a king. For the sake of decent humanity and the money encased with her, see she is given the burial fitting her status." Poor Pericles, if he still lives through that storm. Sorrowful night for him.

PHIL

Why tonight?

CERI

Her body is fresh. She passed in his mind last night. He buried her at sea. Phil, make a fire in my chambers. Take all my supplies down and ready the room. (*Phil exits*) Death takes time gentlemen. Her life might yet be able to start again. I heard once of an Egyptian who was dead 9 hours who was brought back to full spirit. Phil will have all the supplies ready. I'll need music still. Rough woeful music that will bring her soul back to life. Violin at once. I promise you gentlemen, this queen will live again. Nature shall breathe within her lungs once more. She's not been gone 5 hours. Can you see the life in her cheeks yet?

GENTLEMAN 1

It's a miracle. Reinforces your reputation as a healer and leader.

CERI

She's alive still. Look at her eyes. They twitch and flicker with life yet. Within them lies the treasure that Pericles has lost. She'll bring the wonder of life yet again.

ATHOS, ARMIS, & PORTHOS

ATHOS and ARAMIS are pantomiming throwing fishing nets into the sea located off Stage Left. PORTHOS enters Stage Right as if he is carrying a heavy net over his shoulder

PORTHOS

Hello boys! How goes the fishing this morning?

ARAMIS turns to talk to PORTHOS – ATHOS keeps fishing

ATHOS

Lousy.

ARAMIS

I fear last night's storm has scared away all the fish.

PORTHOS

It was a fierce one. Kept me up most of the night.

ARAMIS

Athos says he saw a ship go down just as he arrived a little before dawn.

PORTHOS

And you didn't raise the alarm?

ATHOS

The ship was smashed in two by a rogue wave. No one could survive a strike such as that. Besides, I was busy untangling my nets.

PORTHOS

You're a real humanitarian.

ATHOS

Hey. I have a houseful of mouths to feed. I've no time to save folks foolish enough to sail around in a storm.

ATHOS suddenly gets a pull on his net

ATHOS

Whoa! Something big just snagged my net. *(Struggles to pull it in)* Feels like a whale.

PORTHOS

There are no whales in these waters.

ATHOS

Tell that to the one in my net.

ARAMIS

Would you like some help?

ATHOS

No, I would not. I've been fishing since I was knee high to a mackerel. I am more than capable of pulling in my own nets. *(Nearly gets tugged off stage)* What are you two just standing around for?! Give me a hand with this!

They all pantomime giving a mighty tug and PERICLES comes rolling onto the stage in a ball

PORTHOS

Smallest whale I've ever seen.

ATHOS

Shut up and help me get whatever that is out of my net.

ARAMIS

Since you asked so politely.