

# Cymbeline

Act V, sc. 4 (line 123 – Verse/Prose)

## POSTHUMUS LEONATUS

Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire, and begot  
A father to me; and thou hast created  
A mother and two brothers: but, O scorn!  
Gone! they went hence so soon as they were born:  
And so I am awake. Poor wretches that depend  
On greatness' favour dream as I have done,  
Wake and find nothing. But, alas, I swerve:  
Many dream not to find, neither deserve,  
And yet are steep'd in favours: so am I,  
That have this golden chance and know not why.  
What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one!  
Be not, as is our fangled world, a garment  
Nobler than that it covers: let thy effects  
So follow, to be most unlike our courtiers,  
As good as promise.

*Reads*

'When as a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking find, and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock and

freshly grow; then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty.'

'Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen

Tongue and brain not; either both or nothing;

Or senseless speaking or a speaking such

As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,

The action of my life is like it, which

I'll keep, if but for sympathy.