

# *Cymbeline*

Act V, sc. 4 (line 3)

## **POSTHUMUS LEONATUS**

Most welcome, bondage! for thou art away,  
Think, to liberty: yet am I better  
Than one that's sick o' the gout; since he had rather  
Groan so in perpetuity than be cured  
By the sure physician, death, who is the key  
To unbar these locks. My conscience, thou art fetter'd  
More than my shanks and wrists: you good gods, give me  
The penitent instrument to pick that bolt,  
Then, free for ever! Is't enough I am sorry?  
So children temporal fathers do appease;  
Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent?  
I cannot do it better than in gyves,  
Desired more than constrain'd: to satisfy,  
If of my freedom 'tis the main part, take  
No stricter render of me than my all.  
I know you are more clement than vile men,  
Who of their broken debtors take a third,  
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again  
On their abatement: that's not my desire:  
For Imogen's dear life take mine; and though  
'Tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life; you coin'd it:

'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp;  
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake:  
You rather mine, being yours: and so, great powers,  
If you will take this audit, take this life,  
And cancel these cold bonds. O Imogen!  
I'll speak to thee in silence.