

# Soliman & Perseda by Thomas Kyd

M/F BS, S&S, R&D

Soliman & Perseda

by Thomas kyd (c. 1592)

Soliman: Emperor of the Turks

Perseda: Beloved of Erastus

Soliman lays siege on Rhodes and allows Erastus, whom he grows to like, to remain as one of his knights. Perseda, in love with Erastus, becomes one of Soliman's prisoners. He falls in love with her, but recognizing that Perseda will never marry him while Erastus is alive. Soliman reunites them but plots to accuse Erastus of treason to dishonor his name. He then strangles Erastus and kills all the men that helped him do it to secure the secret. Here, Perseda has figured out what has transpired.

Suggested weapon: Broadsword

Outside Rhodes. The drum sounds of parley. Perseda comes upon the walls in Man's apparel.

Perseda: At whose entreaty is this parley sounded?

Soliman: At our entreaty; therefore yield the town.

Perseda: Why, what art thou that boldly bid us yield?

Soliman: Great Soliman, Lord of all the world.

Perseda: Thou art not Lord of all; Rhodes is not thine.

Soliman: It was, and shall be, maugre who says no

Perseda: I, that say no, will never see it thine.

Soliman: Why, what art thou that dares to resist my force?

Perseda: A Gentleman, and thy mortal enemy.

And one that dares thee to a single combat.

Soliman: First tell me, doth Perseda live or no?

Perseda: She lives to see wrack of Soliman.

Soliman: Then I will combat thee, what ere thou art.

Perseda: And in Erastus name I'll combat thee;

And here I promise thee on my Christian faith,

Then I will yield Perseda to thy hands,

If that thy strength shall over match my right,

To use as thy liking shall seem best.

But ere I come to enter single fight,

First let my tongue utter my heart's despight;

And thus my tale begins: thou wicked tyrant,

Thou murders, accursed homicide,

for whom hell gapes, and all the ungly fiends

Do wait for to receive thee in their jaws;

Ah, purjured and inhuman Soliman,

Hot could thy heat harbor a wicked thought

Against the spotless life of poor Erastus?

In slaughtering him thy virtues are defames:

Didst thou misdo him in to win Perseda?

Ah, foolish man, therein thou are deceived;

(Perseda Cont'd)

For, thought she live, yet will she near live thine;

Which to approve, I'll come to combat thee.

Soliman: Injurious, foul-mouthes knight, my wrathful arm

Shall chastise and rebuke these injuries.

(Then Perseda comes down to Soliman)

I'll not defend Erastus innocence,

But die maintaining of Perseda's beauty.

(Then they fight; Soliman kills Perseda.)

Perseda: I, now lay Perseda at thy feet,

But with thy hand first wounded to the death:

Now shall the world report that Soliman

Slew Erastus in hope to win Perseda,

And murdered her for loving her husband.

Soliman: What, my Perseda? Ah, what have I done?

Yet kiss me, gentle love, before thou die.

Perseda: A kiss I grant thee, though I hate thee deadly.

Soliman: I loved thee dearly, and accept thy kiss.

why dist thou love Erastus more than me?

Or why dist not give Soliman a kiss

Ere this unhappy time? Then hadst thou lived.

Ah, Perseda, how shall I mourn for thee?

(She Dies)

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*(They fight. Soliman wins.)*

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