***The Winter’s Tale by William Shakespeare***

***Edited by Dr. Kathy Phipps***

**Characters**

Archidamus, a Nobleman of Bohemia/ Shepherd (Ark – a - DAHM – us)

Camillo, a Nobleman of Sicilia (Ka – MIH-lo)

Leontes, King of Sicilia (Lee - AHN – tez)

Hermione, Queen of Sicilia (Her – MI – o – nee)

Mamillius, Prince of Sicilia (Ma – MIL – ee – us)

Polixines, King of Bohemia and life-long friend of Leontes (Pah – LICKS - uh – nez)

Antigonus, a Nobleman of Sicilia (An – TIG – o – nez)

Nobleman of Silica/ Shepherd

Paulina, noblewoman of Sicilia and wife of Antigonus (Pah – LEE – nuh)

Emelia, Noblewoman of Sicilia/ Mopsa (Shepherdess) (Ah – ME – lee – uh)

Lady/ Dorcas (Shepherdess) (DOR-cus)

Jailer/ Mariner/ Shepherd

Attendant to King Leontes/ Shepherd

Cleomenes, Nobleman of Sicilia/ Shepherd (Klee – OH – muh – nez)

Shepherd, foster-father of Perdita

Clown, foster brother of Perdita

Time/ Shepherdess

Perdita, unknown Princess of Sicilia (Per – DEE – ta)

Florizel, Prince of Bohemia (FLOOR – ih – zel)

Autolycus, a peddler, entertainer, and thief (Oh – TALL – ih – kuz)

**ACT I**

**SCENE I. Outside LEONTES' palace.**

*Enter CAMILLO and ARCHIDAMUS (they refer to Leontes and Polixines who are talking nearby with Hermione, and Attendants). The Nobles warm themselves by the fire, drinking a warm drink; Mamillius is having a snowball fight with some of the Attendants*

**ARCHIDAMUS**

If you shall chance, Camillo, to visit Bohemia, on/ the like occasion whereon my services are now on/ foot, you shall see, as I have said, great/ difference betwixt our Bohemia *(gestures to Polixines)* and your Sicilia *(gestures to Leontes)*.

**CAMILLO**

I think, this coming summer, the King of Sicilia/ means to pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him./ Sicilia cannot show himself over-kind to Bohemia./ They were trained together in their childhoods; and/ there rooted betwixt them then such an affection,/ which cannot choose but branch now./ The heavens continue their loves!

**ARCHIDAMUS**

I think there is not in the world either malice or/ matter to alter it. *(gesturing to Mamillius)* You have an unspeakable/ comfort of your young prince Mamillius: it is a /gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came/ into my note.

**CAMILLO**

I very well agree with you in the hopes of him: it/ is a gallant child; one that indeed physics the/ subject, makes old hearts fresh

**POLIXENES**

Nine changes of the watery star hath been/ The shepherd's note since we have left our throne/ Without a burthen: time as long again/ Would be find up, my brother, with our thanks;/ And yet we should, for perpetuity,/ Go hence in debt: and therefore, I multiply/ With one 'We thank you' many thousands moe/ That go before it.

**LEONTES**

Stay your thanks a while;/ And pay them when you part.

**POLIXENES**

Sir, that's to-morrow. *(all groan in disappointment)* besides, I have stay'd/ To tire your royalty.

**LEONTES**

We are tougher, brother,/ Than you can put us to't.

**POLIXENES**

*(shaking his head “No’)* No longer stay.

**LEONTES**

One seven-night longer.

**POLIXENES**

Press me not, beseech you, so./ My affairs Do even drag me homeward:/ *Farewell*, our brother.

**LEONTES**

Tongue-tied, our queen?/ speak you.

**HERMIONE *(****crossing towards them)*

I had thought, sir, to have held my peace until/ You have drawn oaths from him not to stay. You, sir,/ Charge him too coldly. Tell him, you are sure/ All in Bohemia's well; say this to him,/ He's beat from his best ward.

**LEONTES**

Well said, Hermione.

**HERMIONE**

To tell, he longs to see his son, were strong:/ But let him say so then, and let him go;  
Yet of your royal presence I'll adventure/ The borrow of a week./ You'll stay?

**POLIXENES**

No, madam.

**HERMIONE**

Nay, but you will?

**POLIXENES**

I may not, verily.

**HERMIONE**

Verily!/ You shall not go: a lady's 'Verily' 's/ As potent as a Lords. Will you go yet?  
Force me to keep you as a prisoner,/ Not like a guest; so you shall pay your fees

When you depart, and save your thanks. How say you?/ My prisoner? or my guest? by your dread 'Verily,'/ One of them you shall be.

**POLIXENES**

*(thinking for a moment, then agreeing)* Your guest, then, madam:/ To be your prisoner should import offending;/ Which is for me less easy to commit/ Than you to punish.

**HERMIONE**

Not your Jailer, then,/ But your kind hostess. Come, I'll question you/ Of my Lord's tricks and yours when you were boys:/ You were pretty Lordlings then?

**POLIXENES**

We were, fair queen,

**HERMIONE**

(Smiling, referring to her husband) Was not my Lord/ The verier wag o' the two?

**POLIXENES**

We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' the sun,/ And bleat the one at the other: what we changed/ Was innocence for innocence; we knew not/ The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd/ That any did.

**LEONTES**

Is he won yet?

**HERMIONE**

He'll stay my LORD. *(all applaud)*

**LEONTES**

*(Aside, angry)* At my request he would not./ *(masking his anger – to his wife)* Hermione, my dearest, thou never spokest/ To better purpose.

**HERMIONE**

Never?

**LEONTES**

Never, but once.

**HERMIONE**

My last good deed was to entreat his stay:/ What was my first?

**LEONTES**

Why, that was when/ thou utter/ 'I am yours for ever.'

**HERMIONE**

'Tis grace indeed./ Why, lo you now, I have spoke to the purpose twice:  
The one for ever earn'd a royal husband; *(she touches her husband’s face tenderly)*/ The other *(gesturing towards Polixines)* for some while a friend. *(she Xs to Polixines and puts her arm through his – they mime chatting in a friendly way, occasionally touching each other [no flirting is seen] as Leontes speaks)*

**LEONTES**

*[Aside]* Too **hot**, too hot!/ *(he imagines that they are flirting, but they are only friends)* To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods./ *(putting his hand to his heart as if he has chest pains)* **my heart dances**;/ But not for joy; **not** joy. This *entertainment*/ May a free face put on, derive a liberty/ From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom, / But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,/ As now they are, and making practised smiles,/ As in a looking-glass, *(Hermione sighs and holds her belly, having a cramp with the baby)* and then to sigh, as 'twere/ The mort o' the deer; O, that is entertainment/ My bosom likes not, nor my brows! *(crossing to his son)* Mamillius, /Art thou my boy?

**MAMILLIUS**

*(happily)* Ay, my good Lord.

**LEONTES**

What, hast/ smutch'd thy nose? *(he rubs a small smudge off his son’s nose)*  
They say it is a copy out of mine. - Come, captain,/ We must be neat; not neat, but cleanly, captain:/ How now, you wanton calf!/ Art thou my calf?

**MAMILLIUS**

*(confused)* Yes, if you will, my Lord.

**LEONTES**

They say we are/ Almost as like as eggs; *(speaking in a tone that hurts and confuses his son)* **women** say so,/ That will say anything but were they false as wind, as waters, false/ As dice To say this boy were like me. Come, sir page,/ Look on me with your welkin eye: *(his anger melts as he looks on his son – he speaks teasingly)* sweet villain! *(hugging the boy with true affection)* /Most dear'st! *(drawn back to his thoughts of jealousy)* Can thy dam?--may't be*?—**(looking back at his son)* Affection! thy intention stabs the centre:/ Thou dost make possible things not so held,/ Communicatest with dreams*;(crying out)* --how can this be?—(*he crosses away from his son)*

**POLIXENES**

What means Sicilia?

**HERMIONE**

He something seems unsettled.

**POLIXENES**

*(Xing to him)* How, my Lord!/ What cheer? how is't with you, best brother?

**HERMIONE**

*(Xing to them)* You look as if you held a brow of much distraction/ Are you moved, my Lord?

**LEONTES**

No, in good earnest./ How sometimes nature will betray its folly,/ Its tenderness, and make itself a pastime/ To harder bosoms! Looking on the lines/ Of my boy's face, methoughts I did recoil/ How like, methought, I then was to this kernel,/ This squash, this gentleman. *(to Polixines)* Mine honest friend,/ My brother,/ Are you so fond of your young prince as we/ Do seem to be of ours?

**POLIXENES**

If at home, sir,/ He's all my exercise, my mirth, my matter,/ Now my sworn friend and then mine enemy,/ My parasite, my soldier, statesman, all:/ He makes a July's day short as December,/ And with his varying childness cures in me/ Thoughts that would thick my blood.

**LEONTES**

*(gesturing to Mamillius)* So stands this squire/ Officed with me: *(puts his arm around Mamillius, guiding him away from the others)* we two will walk, my Lord,/ And leave you to your graver steps. Hermione,/ How thou lovest us, show in our brother's welcome;/ Let what is dear in Sicily be cheap:/ Next to thyself and my young rover, he's/ Apparent to my heart.

**HERMIONE**

If you would seek us,/ We are yours i' the garden: shall's attend you there?

**LEONTES**

To your own bents dispose you: you'll be found,/ Be you beneath the sky. *Exeunt Polixenes, Hermione, and Attendants – Mamillius stays with his father)*

*(Aside*) I am angling now,/ Though you perceive me not how I give line./ Go to, go to! *(watching Hermione and Polixines as they exit – she is near her delivery time and leans on Polixines)* How she holds up the neb, the bill to him!/ And arms her with the boldness of a wife/ To her allowing husband!/ Gone already!/ Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and/ ears a fork'd one! *(to Mamillius)*Go, play, boy, play: *(this confuses the son because the father said they’d walk together)* thy *mother plays*, and I/ Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue/ Will hiss me to my grave: contempt and clamour/ Will be my knell. *(raising his voice to Mamillius)* Go, play, boy, play/ There have been,/ Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now;/ And many a man there is, even at this present,/ Now while I speak this, holds his wife by the arm,/ That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence/ And his pond fish'd by his next neighbour, by/ Sir Smile, his neighbour: nay, there's comfort in't *(Mamillius understands that his father is insulting his mother)* */* Whiles other men have gates and those gates open'd,/ As mine, against their will. Should all despair/ That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind/ Would hang themselves. Think it,/ From east, west, north and south/ It will let in and out the enemy/ With bag and baggage: many thousand on's/ Have the disease, and feel't not. How now, boy!

**MAMILLIUS**

*(batting back tears)* I am like you, they say.

**LEONTES**

Why that's *some* comfort. *(Camillo enters and Xs to Leontes)* Go play, Mamillius; thou'rt an honest man. (*Exit Mamillius)* Camillo, this great sir will yet stay longer./ Didst note it?/ How came't, Camillo,/ That he did stay?

**CAMILLO**

At the good queen's entreaty.

**LEONTES**

At the queen's be't: 'good' should be pertinent/ But, so it is, it is not. Was this taken  
By any understanding pate but thine?

**CAMILLO**

*(confused by the King’s anger)* Bohemia stays here longer.

**LEONTES**

Ay, but why?

**CAMILLO**

To satisfy your highness and the entreaties/ Of our most gracious mistress.

**LEONTES**

Satisfy!/ The entreaties of your mistress! satisfy!/ Let that suffice. I have trusted thee, Camillo,/ but we have been/ Deceived in thy integrity, deceived/ In that which seems so.

**CAMILLO**

Be it forbid, my LORD!

**LEONTES**

To bide upon't, thou art not honest, or,/ If thou inclinest that way, thou art a *coward*,  
or else a fool/ That seest a game play'd home, the rich stake drawn,/And takest it all for jest.

**CAMILLO**

My gracious Lord,/ I may be negligent, foolish and fearful;/ In every one of these no man is free,/ In your affairs, my Lord,/ If ever I were wilful-negligent,/ It was my folly/ But, beseech your grace,/ Be plainer with me; let me know my trespass/ By its own visage: if I then deny it,/ 'Tis none of mine.

**LEONTES**

Ha' not you seen, Camillo,-- /My wife is slippery? *(Camillo recoils in shock)* If thou wilt confess,/ Or else be impudently negative,/ To have nor eyes nor ears nor thought, then say/ My wife's a hobby-horse, deserves a name/ As rank as any flax-wench that puts to/ Before her troth-plight: say't and justify't.

**CAMILLO**

I would not be a stander-by to hear/ My sovereign mistress clouded so, without  
My present vengeance taken: 'shrew my heart,/ You never spoke what did become you less/ Than this.

**LEONTES**

Is whispering nothing?/ Is leaning cheek to cheek? is meeting noses?/ Kissing with inside lip? stopping the career/ Of laughing with a sigh?--a note infallible/ Of breaking honesty--horsing foot on foot?/ Skulking in corners? wishing clocks more swift?/ Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes/ Blind with the pin and web but theirs, theirs only,/ That would unseen be wicked? is this nothing?/ Why, then the world and all that's in't is nothing;/ The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing; *(raising his voice)**/* **My wife is nothing**; nor nothing have these nothings,/ If this be nothing.

**CAMILLO**

Good my Lord, be cured/ Of this diseased opinion, and betimes;/ For 'tis most dangerous.

**LEONTES**

Say it be, 'tis true.

**CAMILLO**

No, no, my Lord.

**LEONTES**

It is; you lie, you lie:/ I say thou liest, Camillo, **and I hate thee**,/ if I/ Had servants true about me,/ they would do that/ Which should undo more doing: ay, and thou,  
His cupbearer - mightst bespice a cup,/ To give mine enemy a lasting wink;/ Which draught to me were cordial.

**CAMILLO**

*(recoils in horror at being asked to poison Polixines)* Sir, my Lord,/ I could do this/ but I cannot/ Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress.

**LEONTES**

Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,/ To appoint myself in this vexation, sully  
The purity and whiteness of my sheets,/ Give scandal to the blood o' the prince my son,/ Who I do think is mine and love as mine,/ Without ripe moving to't? Would I do this?/ Could man so blench?

**CAMILLO**

I must believe you, sir:/ I do; and will fetch off Bohemia for't;/ Provided that, when he's removed, your highness/ Will take again your queen as yours at first,/ Even for your son's sake; and thereby for sealing/ The injury of tongues in courts and kingdoms  
Known and allied to yours.

**LEONTES**

Thou dost advise **me**/ *(raises his hand to hit Camillo, then draws his hand back)* Even so as I mine own course have set down:/ *(lying)* I'll give no blemish to her honour, none.

**CAMILLO**

My Lord,/ Go then; and with a countenance as clear/ As friendship wears at feasts, keep with Bohemia/ And with your queen. I am his cupbearer:/ If from me he have wholesome beverage,/ Account me not your servant.

**LEONTES**

This is all:/ Do't and thou hast the one half of my heart;/ Do't not, thou split'st thine own.

**CAMILLO**

I'll do't, my Lord.

**LEONTES**

I will seem friendly, as thou hast advised me. (*Leontes exits, passing Polixines and ignoring him – Ploixines tries to follow Leontes, but Leontes rushes off)*

**CAMILLO**

O miserable lady! But, for me,/ What case stand I in? I must be the poisoner/ Of good Polixenes;/ To do this deed,/ *Promotion* follows. If I could find example/ Of thousands that had struck anointed kings/ And flourish'd after, *(pausing – realizing he must do the right thing)* I must/ Forsake the court: to do't, or no, is certain/ To me a break-neck. Happy star, reign now! (*Polixenes crosses towards Camillo)*

**POLIXENES**

This is strange: methinks/ My favour here begins to warp. Not speak?/ Good day, Camillo.

**CAMILLO**

Hail, most royal sir!

**POLIXENES**

The king hath on him such a countenance/ As he had lost some province and a region  
Loved as he loves himself: even now I met him/ With customary compliment; when he,/ Wafting his eyes to the contrary and falling/ A lip of much contempt, speeds from me and/ So leaves me to consider what is breeding/ That changeth thus his manners.

Camillo,--/ As you are certainly a gentleman, beseech you,/ If you know aught which does behove my knowledge/ Thereof to be inform'd, imprison't not/ In ignorant concealment.

**CAMILLO**

Sir, I will tell you;/ Since I am charged in honour and by him/ That I think honourable: therefore mark my counsel,/ Which must be even as swiftly follow'd as/ I mean to utter it, or both yourself and me/ Cry lost, and so good night!

**POLIXENES**

On, good Camillo.

**CAMILLO**

I am appointed by him to murder you.

**POLIXENES**

By whom, Camillo?

**CAMILLO**

By the king.

**POLIXENES**

For what?

**CAMILLO**

He thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears,/ As he had seen't / that you have touch'd his queen/ Forbiddenly.

**POLIXENES**

O, then my best blood turn/ To an infected jelly and my name/ Be yoked with his that did betray the Best!/ How should this grow?

**CAMILLO**

I know not: but I am sure 'tis safer to/ Avoid what's grown than question how 'tis born.  
If therefore you dare trust my honesty,/ away to-night!/ Your followers I will whisper to the business,/ And will by twos and threes at several posterns/ Clear them o' the city. For myself, I'll put/ My fortunes to your service, which are here/ By this discovery lost. Be not uncertain;/ For, by the honour of my parents, I  
Have utter'd truth.

**POLIXENES**

I do believe thee:/ I saw his heart in 's face. Give me thy hand:/ My ships are ready and/ My people did expect my hence departure/ Two days ago. This jealousy  
Is for a precious creature: as she's rare,/ Must it be great, and as his person's mighty,  
Must it be violent, and as he does conceive/ He is dishonour'd by a man which ever  
Profess'd to him, why, his revenges must/ In that be made more bitter. Fear o'ershades me:/ Good expedition be my friend, and comfort/ The gracious queen/ Come, Camillo;/ I will respect thee as a father if/ Thou bear'st my life off hence.

**CAMILLO**

*(pulling keys from his pocket)* It is in mine authority to command/ The keys of all the posterns: please your highness/ To take the urgent hour. Come, sir, away. *(They exit)*

**ACT II**

**SCENE I. A room in LEONTES' palace.**

*Enter Hermione, Mamillius, and Emelia, and Lady*

**HERMIONE**

*(Teasing – asking the Lady to play with her son – she is very pregnant and tired)* Take the boy to you: he so troubles me,/ 'Tis past enduring. *(she paces, walking off soreness in her abdomen)*

**EMELIA**

Come, my gracious LORD,/ Shall I be your playfellow?

**MAMILLIUS**

*(to Emelia)* No, I'll none of you.

**EMELIA**

Why, my sweet LORD?

**MAMILLIUS**

You'll kiss me hard and speak to me as if/ I were a baby still. *(to Lady)* I love you better.

**LADY**

And why so, my LORD?

**MAMILLIUS**

Not for because/ Your brows are blacker; yet black brows, they say,/ Become some women best

**LADY**

Who taught you this?

**MAMILLIUS**

I learnt it out of women's faces.

**EMELIA**

Hark ye;/ The queen your mother rounds apace: we shall/ Present our services to a fine newprince/ One of these days; and then you'ld wanton with us,/ If we would have you.

**HERMIONE**

What wisdom stirs amongst you? *(calling to Mamillius)* Come, sir, now/ I am for you again: pray you, sit by us,/ And tell 's a tale.

**MAMILLIUS**

Merry or sad shall't be?

**HERMIONE**

As merry as you will.

**MAMILLIUS**

A sad tale's best for winter: I have one/ Of sprites and goblins. *(Emelia and Lady make spooky sounds)*

**HERMIONE**

Let's have that, good sir*. (she pats the seat next to her)**/* Come on, sit down: come on, and do your best/ To fright me with your sprites; you're powerful at it.

**MAMILLIUS**

There was a man--

**HERMIONE**

Nay, come, sit down; then on.

**MAMILLIUS**

Dwelt by a churchyard: *(Ladies make spooky sounds – he is annoyed by their playfulness – to his mother:)* I will tell it softly;/ Yond crickets shall not hear it.

**HERMIONE**

Come on, then,/ And give't me in mine ear*. (Mamillius begins to whisper a story in his mother’s ear)*

*Enter Leontes, with Antigonus, Nobleman, Jailer, and Attendant*

**LEONTES**

Was he met there? his train? Camillo with him?

**NOBLEMAN**

Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never/ Saw I men scour so on their way: I eyed them/ Even to their ships.

**LEONTES**

How blest am I/ In my just censure, in my true opinion!/ Alack, for lesser knowledge! how accursed/ In being so blest*! (he begins a rant, in anger)* There may be in the cup/ A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,/ And yet partake no venom, for his / Is not infected: but if one present/ The abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known/ How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,/ With violent hefts. *(pauses – no one understands what he is saying)* I have drunk,/ and seen the spider. *(Everyone reacts in confusion to his raving)*Camillo was his help in this, his pander:/ **There is a plot against my life, my crown**;/ All's true that is mistrusted: that false villain/ Whom I employ'd was pre-employ'd by him:/ How came the posterns/ So easily open?

**NOBLEMAN**

By his great authority;

**LEONTES**

I know't too well./ Give me the boy *(he pull Maximillius away from his mother – speaking to Hermione)* I am glad you did not nurse him:/ Though he does bear some signs of me, yet you/ Have too much blood in him.

**HERMIONE**

What is this? sport?

**LEONTES**

*(to the Nobleman)* Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her;/ Away with him! *(Mamillius is taken off, screaming)* and let her sport herself/ With that she's big with; for 'tis Polixenes/ Has made thee swell thus. *(Nobles react in horror)*

**HERMIONE**

**But I'ld say he had not**,/ And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying,/ Howe'er you lean to the nayward.

**LEONTES**

You, my Lords,/ Look on her, mark her well; be but about/ To say 'she is a goodly lady,' and/ The justice of your hearts will thereto add/ 'Tis pity she's *not* honest, honourable:'/ When you have said 'she's goodly,' come between/ Ere you can say 'she's honest:' but be 't known,/ From him that has most cause to grieve it should be,  
**She's an adulteress***. (Nobles react in shock)*

**HERMIONE**

Should a villain say so,/ The most replenish'd villain in the world,/ He were as much more villain: **you, my Lord,****/ Do but mistake.**

**LEONTES**

You have mistook, my lady,/ Polixenes for Leontes: O thou thing!/ **I have said****/ She's an adulteress**; I have said with whom:/ More, she's a traitor and Camillo is/ A federary with her, and one that knows/ What she should shame to know herself/ But with her most vile principal, **that she's/** **A bed-swerver**, even as bad as those// That vulgars give bold'st titles, ay, and privy/ To this their late escape.

**HERMIONE**

**No,** by my life./ Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,/ When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that/ You thus have publish'd me! **Gentle** my Lord,  
You scarce can right me throughly then to say/ You did mistake.

**LEONTES**

No; / Away with her! to prison!/ *(no Noblemen come forward to lay hands on the Queen)* He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty/ But that he speaks. *(pause – then a Nobleman reluctantly comes forward Xing to the Queen)*

**HERMIONE**

There's some ill planet reigns:/ *(raising her hands to heaven*) I must be patient till the heavens look/ With an aspect more favourable. Good my Lords,/ I am not prone to weeping, as our sex/ Commonly are; / but I have That honourable grief lodged here which burns/ Worse than tears drown: beseech you all, my Lords,/ With thoughts so qualified as your charities/ Shall best instruct you, measure me; *(pause)* and so  
The king's will be perform'd! *(she begins to exit - the Ladies start to quietly cry - a Nobleman follows her)*

**LEONTES**

Shall I be heard?

**HERMIONE**

*(turning towards him)* Who is't that goes with me? Beseech your highness,/ My women may be with me; for you see *(holding her abdomen)*/ My plight requires it. *(to her ladies*) Do not weep, good fools;/ There is no cause: when you shall know your mistress/ Has deserved prison, *then* abound in tears/ Adieu, my Lord: *(she crosses to him and kneels before him)*/ I never wish'd to see you sorry; now/ I trust I shall. *(she has a hard time standing and the Ladies help her to rise)* My women, come; you have leave. *(Hermione exist with her noblewomen)*

**LEONTES**

*(to the Nobleman who should take her to prison)* Go, do our bidding; hence! *(A nobleman exits to take the Queen – who is already off-stage – to prison)*

**LORD**

Beseech your highness, call the queen again.

**ANTIGONUS**

Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice/ Prove violence; in the which three great ones suffer,/ Yourself, your queen, your son.

**LORD**

For her, my Lord,/ I dare my life lay down and will do't, sir,/ Please you to accept it, that **the queen is spotless/** **I' the eyes of heaven and to you**; I mean,/ In this which you accuse her.

**ANTIGONUS**

For every inch of woman in the world,/ Ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false, If she be.

**LEONTES**

Hold your peace.

**NOBLEMAN**

Good my Lord,--

**ANTIGONUS**

It is for you we speak, not for ourselves:/ You are abused and by some putter-on  
That will be damn'd for't; would I knew the villain,/ I would land-damn him.

**LEONTES**

Cease; no more./ You smell this business with a sense as cold/ As is a dead man's nose: but I do see't and feel't/ As you feel doing thus;

**ANTIGONUS**

If it be so,/ We need no grave to bury honesty:/ There's not a grain of it the face to sweeten/ Of the whole dungy earth.

**LEONTES**

What! lack Icredit?

**LORD**

I had rather you did lack than I, my Lord,/ Upon this ground; and more it would content me/ To have her honour true than your suspicion,/ Be blamed for't how you might.

**LEONTES**

Why, what need we/ Commune with you of this,/ **We need no more of your advice**: the matter,/ The loss, the gain, the ordering on't, is all/ Properly ours.

**ANTIGONUS**

And I wish, my liege,/ You had only in your silent judgment tried it,/ Without more overture.

**LEONTES**

How could that be?/ Either thou art most ignorant by age,/ Or thou wert born a fool. Camillo's flight,/ Added to their familiarity,/ Yet, for a greater confirmation,/ For in an act of this importance 'twere/ Most piteous to be wild, I have dispatch'd in post/ To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,/ Cleomenes and Dion,/ now from the oracle/ They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had,/ Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?

**NOBLEMAN**

*(greatly relieved)* Well done, my Lord.

**LEONTES**

Though I am satisfied and need no more/ Than what I know, yet shall the oracle  
Give rest to the minds of **others**, such as he/ Whose ignorant credulity will not  
Come up to the truth. Come, follow us;/ We are to speak in public; for this business  
Will raise us all.

**ANTIGONUS**

*[Aside]*To laughter, as I take it,/ If the good truth were known. (*Exit)*

**SCENE II. A prison.**

*Enter Paulina crosses to Nobleman*

**PAULINA**

The keeper of the prison, call to him;/ let him have knowledge who I am. *(Exit Gentleman)*Good lady,/ No court in Europe is too good for thee;/ What dost thou then in prison? *(Re-enter Nobleman, with the Jailer)* Now, good sir,/ You know me, do you not?

**JAILER**

For a worthy lady/ And one whom much I honour.

**PAULINA**

Pray you then,/ Conduct me to the queen.

**JAILER**

I may not, madam:/ To the contrary I have express commandment.

**PAULINA**

Here's ado,/ To lock up honesty and honour from/ The access of gentle visitors!/ Is't lawful, pray you,/ To see her women? any of them? Emilia?

**JAILER**

So please you, madam,/ I/ Shall bring Emilia forth.

**PAULINA**

I pray now, call her.

**JAILER**

And, madam,/ *(embarrassed)* I must be present at your conference.

**PAULINA**

Well, be't so, prithee. (*Exit Jailer)* Here's such ado to make no stain a stain/ As passes colouring. (*Re-enter Jailer, with Emilia)/* Dear gentlewoman,/ How fares our gracious lady?

**EMILIA**

As well as one so great and so forlorn/ May hold together: on her frights and griefs,  
Which never tender lady hath born greater,/ She is something before her time deliver'd.

**PAULINA**

A boy?

**EMILIA**

A daughter, and a goodly babe,/ Lusty and like to live: the queen receives/ Much comfort in't; says 'My poor prisoner,/ I am innocent as you.'

**PAULINA**

I dare be sworn/ These dangerous unsafe lunes i' the king,/ beshrew them!/ He must be told on't, and he shall: the office/ Becomes a woman best; I'll take't upon me:/ If I prove honey-mouth'd let my tongue blister/ And never to my red-look'd anger be/ The trumpet any more. Pray you, Emilia,/ Commend my best obedience to the queen:/ If she dares trust me with her little babe,/ I'll show't the king and undertake to be/ Her advocate to the loud'st. We do not know/ How he may soften at the sight o' the child:/ The silence often of pure innocence/ Persuades when speaking fails.

**EMILIA**

Most worthy madam,/ Your honour and your goodness is so evident/ That your free undertaking cannot miss/ A thriving issue: there is no lady living/ So meet for this great errand. Please your ladyship/ To visit the next room, I'll presently/ Acquaint the queen of your most noble offer;/ Who but to-day hammer'd of this design,/ But durst not tempt a minister of honour,/ Lest she should be denied.

**PAULINA**

Tell her, Emilia./ I'll use that tongue I have: if wit flow from't/ As boldness from my bosom, let 't not be doubted/ I shall do good.

**EMILIA**

Now be you blest for it!/ I'll to the queen: please you,/ come something nearer.

**JAILER**

Madam, if't please the queen to send the babe,/ I know not what I shall incur to pass it,  
Having no warrant.

**PAULINA**

You need not fear it, sir:/ This child was prisoner to the womb and is/ By law and process of great nature thence/ Freed and enfranchised, not a party to/ The anger of the king nor guilty of,/ If any be, the trespass of the queen.

**JAILER**

I do believe it.

**PAULINA**

Do not you fear: upon mine honour,/ I will stand betwixt you and danger. *(She exits)*

**SCENE III. A room in LEONTES' palace.**

*Leontes is seated - Antigonus, Lord and Attendant Stand*

**LEONTES**

Nor night nor day no rest: it is but weakness/ To bear the matter thus; mere weakness. If/ The cause were not in being,--part o' the cause,/ She the adulteress; for the harlot king/ Is quite beyond mine arm, out of the blank/ And level of my brain, plot-proof; but she/ I can hook to me: say that she were gone,/ Given to the fire, a moiety of my rest/ Might come to me again. Who's there?

**ATTENDANT**

My Lord?

**LEONTES**

How does the boy?

**ATTENDANT**

He took good rest to-night;/ 'Tis hoped his sickness is discharged.

**LEONTES**

To see his nobleness!/ Conceiving the dishonour of his mother,/ He straight declined, droop'd, took it deeply,/ Fasten'd and fix'd the shame on't in himsel*f*,/ Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,/ And downright languish'd. Leave me solely: go,/ See how he fares. (*Exit Attendant)* Fie, fie! no thought of him:/ The thought of my revenges that way/ Recoil upon me: in himself too mighty,/ And in his parties, his alliance; let him be/ Until a time may serve: for present vengeance,/ Take it on her. Camillo and Polixenes/ Laugh at me, make their pastime at my sorrow:/ *(crying out at their supposed betrayal)* They should not laugh if I could reach them, nor/ Shall she within my power.

*Enter PAULINA, with a child*

**LORD**

You must not enter.

**PAULINA**

Nay, rather, good my Lords, be second to me:/ Fear you his tyrannous passion more, alas,/ Than the queen's life? a gracious innocent soul,/ More free than he is jealous.

**ANTIGONUS**

That's enough./ Madam, he hath not slept tonight; commanded/ None should come at him.

**PAULINA**

Not so hot, good sir:/ I come to bring him sleep. 'Tis such as you,/ That creep like shadows by him and do sigh/ At each his needless heavings, such as you/ Nourish the cause of his awaking: I/ Do come with words as medicinal as true,/ Honest as either, to purge him of that humour/ That presses him from sleep.

**LEONTES**

What noise there, ho?

**PAULINA**

No noise, my Lord; but needful conference/ About some gossips for your highness.

**LEONTES**

How!/ Away with that audacious lady! Antigonus,/ I charged thee that she should not come about me:/ I knew she would.

**ANTIGONUS**

I told her so, my Lord,/ On your displeasure's peril and on mine,/ *(directed towards his wife)* She should not visit you.

**LEONTES**

What, canst not rule her?

**PAULINA**

From all dishonesty he can: in this,/ Unless he take the course that you have done,  
Commit me for committing honour, trust it,/ He shall not rule me.

**ANTIGONUS**

La you now, you hear:/ *(fondly to his wife)* When she will take the rein I let her run;/ But she'll not stumble.

**PAULINA**

Good my liege, I come;/ And, I beseech you, hear me, who profess/ Myself your loyal servant, your physician,/ Your most obedient counsellor, *(calling out the Noblemen who won’t stand up to the King)* yet that dare/ Less appear so in comforting your evils,/ Than such as most seem yours: I say, I come/ From your good queen.

**LEONTES**

Good queen!

**PAULINA**

Good queen, my Lord,/ Good queen; I say *good* queen;/ And would by combat make her good, so were I/ A man, the worst about you.

**LEONTES**

Force her hence. *(Attendant crosses to Paulina)*

**PAULINA**

Let him that makes but trifles of his eyes/ First hand me: *(Attendant backs away a few steps)* on mine own accord I'll off;/ But first I'll do my errand. The good queen,/ For she is good, hath brought you forth a daughter;/ Here 'tis; commends it to your blessing.

*Laying down the child (the crying from the basket – for a moment Leontes’ heart softens)*

**LEONTES**

Out!/ A mankind witch! Hence with her, out o' door:/ A most intelligencing bawd!

**PAULINA**

*(emphasizing each word)* Not so:/ I am as ignorant in that as you/ In so entitling me, and no less honest/ Than you are mad; which is enough, I'll warrant,/ As this world goes, to pass for honest.

**LEONTES**

**Traitors**!/ Will you not push her out? Give her the bastard. *(all recoil at the word)*  
*(to Antigonus)* Thou dotard! thou art woman-tired, unroosted/ By thy dame Partlet here. Take up the bastard;/ Take't up, I say; give't to thy crone.

**PAULINA**

For ever/ Unvenerable be thy hands, if thou/ Takest up the princess by that forced baseness/ Which he has put upon't!

**LEONTES**

*(laughting at Antigonus)* He dreads his wife.

**PAULINA**

So I would you did; then 'twere past all doubt/ You'ld call your children yours.

**LEONTES**

A nest of traitors!

**ANTIGONUS**

I am none, by this good light.

**PAULINA**

Nor I, nor any/ *(pointing at Leontes)* But one that's here, and that's himself, for he  
The sacred honour of himself, his queen's,/ His hopeful son's, his babe's, betrays to slander,/ Whose sting is sharper than the sword's.

**LEONTES**

A callat/ Of boundless tongue, who late hath beat her husband/ And now baits me! *(pointing to the baby in the basket)* This brat is none of mine;/ It is the issue of Polixenes:/ Hence with it, and together with the dam/ Commit them to the fire!

**PAULINA**

*(crying out in horror, blocking the way to the baby, then picking her up)* It *is yours*;/ *(looking at the baby in the basket)* Behold, my Lords,/ Although the print be little, the whole matter/ And copy of the father, eye, nose, lip,/ The trick of's frown, *(referring to Leontes)* his forehead, nay, the valley,/ pretty dimples of his chin and cheek,/ His smiles,/ The very mould and frame of hand, nail, finger:/ And thou, good goddess Nature, which hast made it/ So like to him that got it.

**LEONTES**

A gross hag/ *(to Antigonus)* And, lozel, thou art worthy to be hang'd,/ That wilt not stay her tongue.

**ANTIGONUS**

Hang all the husbands/ That cannot do that feat, you'll leave yourself/ Hardly one subject.

**LEONTES**

Once more, take her hence.

**PAULINA**

A most unworthy and unnatural Lord/ Can do no more.

**LEONTES**

I'll ha' thee burnt.

**PAULINA**

**I care not**:/ *(referring to Leontes)* It is an heretic that makes the fire,/ Not she which burns in't. I'll not call you tyrant;/ But this most cruel usage of your queen,  
Not able to produce more accusation/ Than your own weak-hinged fancy, something **savours/** Of tyranny and will **ignoble make you**,/ Yea, scandalous to the world.

**LEONTES**

*(to Lord)* On your allegiance,/ **Out of the chamber with her**! **Were** I a tyrant,/ Where were her life? she durst not call me so,/ If she did know me one. **Away with her!**

**PAULINA**

*(Lord begins to take her arm and she pulls back)* I pray you, *(emphasizing each word)* **do not push me**; I'll be gone./ *(crossing to Leontes with the baby basket)* Look to your babe, my Lord; *(emphasize both words)* **'tis yours**:/ Jove send her/ A better guiding spirit! *(to the Noblemen)* You, that are thus so tender o'er his follies,/ Will never do him good, not one of you./ So, so: farewell; we are gone. (*She exit leaving the baby behind)*

**LEONTES**

*(to Antigonus)* Thou, traitor, hast set on thy wife to this./ *(glancing at the basket)* My child? away with't! *(neither the Lord nor Antigonus move)* Even thou, *(to Antigonus)* that hast/ A heart so tender o'er it, **take it hence**/ And **see it instantly consumed with fire**; *(Antigonus and the Lord react in horro**r - to Antigonus)* Even thou and/ Take it up straight:/ Within this hour bring me word 'tis done,/ And by good testimony, or I'll seize thy life,/ With what thou else call'st thine. If thou refuse/ And wilt encounter with my wrath, say so;/ *(Leontes picks up the baby and threatens to kill it)* The bastard brains with these my proper hands/ Shall I dash out. *(Leontes raises the baby above his head to kill it but Antigones rushes to the king and takes the baby from him – the King speaks to Antigonus)* Go, take it to the fire;/ For thou set'st on thy wife.

**ANTIGONUS**

*(cradling the baby gently)* I did not, sir:/ This Lord, my noble fellow,/ Can clear me in't.

**LORD**

I can: my royal liege,/ He is not guilty of her coming hither.

**LEONTES**

**You're liars all**.

**LORD**

Beseech your highness, give us better credit:/ We have always truly served you, and beseech you/ So to esteem of us, and *(he kneels)* on my knees **I beg**,/ As recompense of my dear service/ Past and to come, **that you do change this purpose**,/ Which being so horrible, so bloody, must/ Lead on to some foul issue: we both kneel. *(Antigonus kneels with the baby in his arms)*

**LEONTES**

I am a feather for each wind that blows:/ Shall I live on to see *(referring to the child in the basket)* this bastard kneel/ And call me father? better burn it now*/* Than curse it then. *(both men shudder at the thought)* But be it; let it live. *(they both sigh in relief)*You, sir, come you hither;/ *(Antigonus stands and crosses to Leontes with the baby)* You that have been so tenderly officious/ With Lady Margery, your midwife there,/ To save this bastard's life,--**for 'tis a bastard**,/ --what will you adventure/ To save this *brat's* life?

**ANTIGONUS**

**Any thing, my Lord**,/ That my ability may undergo/ And nobleness impose: at least thus much:/ I'll pawn the little blood which I have left/ To save the innocent: ***any thing* possible.**

**LEONTES**

It shall be possible. *(draws his sword)* Swear by this sword/ Thou wilt perform my bidding.

**ANTIGONUS**

*(he touches the sword)* I will, my Lord.

**LEONTES**

Mark and perform it, see'st thou! for the fail/ Of any point in't shall not only be  
Death to thyself but to thy lewd-tongued wife,/ Whom for this time we pardon. We enjoin thee,/ As thou art liege-man to us, that thou carry/ This female bastard hence and that thou bear it/ To some remote and desert place quite out/ Of our dominions, and that there thou leave it,/ Without more mercy, to its own protection/ And favour of the climate. As by strange fortune/ It came to us, I do in justice charge thee,/ On thy soul's peril and thy body's torture,/ That thou commend it strangely to some place/ Where chance may nurse or end it. Take it up.

**ANTIGONUS**

I swear to do this, though a present death/ Had been more merciful. Come on, poor babe:/ Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens/ To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, they say/ Casting their savageness aside have done/ Like offices of pity. *(to Leontes)* Sir, be prosperous/ In more than this deed does require! And blessing/ Against this cruelty fight on thy side,/ Poor thing, condemn'd to loss! *(He exits with the child)*

**LEONTES**

No, I'll not rear/ Another's issue.

*Enter the Attendant*

**ATTENDANT**

Please your highness, posts/ From those you sent to the oracle are come/ An hour since: Cleomenes and Dion,/ Being well arrived from Delphos, are both landed,/ Hasting to the court.

**LORD**

So please you, sir, their speed/ Hath been beyond account.

**LEONTES**

Twenty-three days/ They have been absent: 'tis good speed; foretells/ The great Apollo suddenly will have/ The truth of this appear. *(to the Lord)* Prepare you, Lord;/ Summon a session, that we may arraign/ Our most disloyal lady, for, as she hath  
Been publicly accused, so shall she have/ A just and open trial. While she lives  
My heart will be a burthen to me. Leave me,/ And think upon my bidding. *(He exits)*

**ACT III**

**SCENE I. A court of Justice.**

*Enter LEONTES and LORD*

**LEONTES**

This sessions, to our great grief we pronounce,/ Even pushes 'gainst our heart: the party tried/ The daughter of a king, our wife, and one/ Of us too much beloved. Let us be clear'd/ Of being tyrannous, since we so openly/ Proceed in justice, which shall have due course,//Even to the guilt or the purgation./ Produce the prisoner.

**LORD**

It is his highness' pleasure that the queen/ Appear in person here in court. Silence!

*(Enter Hermione guarded by the Jailer – she is dirty and disheveled, in a prisoner’s clothing; Paulina and Ladies attending)*

**LEONTES**

Read the indictment.

**LORD**

*[Reads]* Hermione, queen to the worthy/ Leontes, king of Sicilia, thou art here accused and/ arraigned of high treason, in committing adultery/ with Polixenes, king of Bohemia, and conspiring/ with Camillo to take away the life of our sovereign  
Lord the king, thy royal husband: thou, Hermione, contrary to the faith and allegiance/ of a true subject, didst counsel and aid them, for/ their better safety, to fly away by night.

**HERMIONE**

Since what I am to say must be but that/ Which contradicts my accusation and/ The testimony on my part no other/ But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me/ To say **'not guilty:**' *(pausing to gather herself)* mine integrity/ Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,/ Be so received. But thus: if powers divine/ Behold our human actions, as they do,/ I doubt not then but innocence shall make/ False accusation blush and tyranny Tremble at patience. *(pausing, Paulina puts her own cloak around the Queens’ shoulders)* You, my LORD, best know,/ Who least will seem to do so**, my past life/** **Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,**/ As I am now unhappy; which is more/ Than history can pattern, though devised/ And play'd to take spectators. For behold me/ A fellow of the royal bed, which owe/ A moiety of the throne a great king's daughter,/ The mother to a hopeful prince, here **standing**/ *(pauses)* To prate and talk for life and honour 'fore/ Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it/ As I weigh grief, which I would spare: for honour,/ 'Tis a derivative from me to mine,/ And only **that** I stand for. I appeal/ To your own conscience, sir*,* before Polixenes/ Came to your court, how I was in your grace,/ How merited to be so; since he came,/ With what encounter so uncurrent I/ Have strain'd to appear thus: if one jot beyond/ The bound of honour, or in act or will/ That way inclining, harden'd be the hearts/ Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin/ Cry fie upon my grave!

**LEONTES**

You will not own it.

**HERMIONE**

For Polixenes,/ With whom I am accused, I do confess/ I loved him as in *honour* he required, With such a kind of love as might become/ A *lady* like me, with a love even such,/ So and no other, as yourself commanded:/ Which not to have done I think had been in me/ Both disobedience and ingratitude/ To you and toward your friend, whose love had spoke,/ Even since it could speak, from an infant, freely/ That it was yours*.(pausing to gather herself)* Now, for conspiracy,/ I know not how it tastes*;* though it be dish'd/ For me to try how: all I know of it/ Is *that Camillo was an honest man*;/ And why he left your court, the gods themselves,/ Wotting no more than I, are ignorant.

**LEONTES**

You knew of his departure, as you know/ What you have underta'en to do in's absence.

**HERMIONE**

Sir,/ You speak a language that I understand not:/ My life stands in the level of your dreams,/ Which I'll lay down.

**LEONTES**

Your actions are my dreams;/ You had a bastard by Polixenes,/ And I but dream'd it. As you were past all shame,--/ Those of your fact are so--so past all truth:/ Which to deny concerns more than avails; for as/ Thy brat hath been cast out, *(Hermione;s knees buckle)* like to itself,/ No father owning it,--which is, indeed,/ More criminal in thee than it,--so **thou/** **Shalt feel our justice**, in whose easiest passage/ Look for no less than **death**.

**HERMIONE**

*(gathering her strength to speak)* Sir, spare your threats:/ The bug which you would fright me with I seek./ To me can life be no commodity:/ The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,/ I do give lost; for I do feel it gone,/ But know not how it went. My second joy/ And first-fruits of my body, from his presence/ I am barr'd, like one infectious. My third comfort/ Starr'd most unluckily, is from my breast,/ The innocent milk in its most innocent mouth,/ Haled out to murder: myself on every post  
Proclaimed a strumpet: with immodest hatred/ **The child-bed privilege denied**, which 'longs/ To women of all fashion; lastly*,* hurried/ Here to this place*, i' the open air, before**/ I have got strength of limit*. Now, my liege,/ Tell me what blessings I have here alive,/ That I should fear to die? Therefore proceed./ But yet hear this: mistake me not; no life,/ I prize it not a straw, but for mine honour,/ Which I would free, *(pauses)* if I shall be condemn'd/ Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else/ But what your jealousies awake, I tell you/ 'Tis rigor and not law. (*addressing the nobles there*) Your honours all,/ **I do refer me to the oracle:/** **Apollo be my judge!**

**LORD**

This your request/ Is altogether just: therefore bring forth,/ And in Apollos name, his oracle. (*Exit the Attendant)*

**HERMIONE**

The Emperor of Russia was my father:/ O that he were alive, and here beholding  
His daughter's trial! that he did but see/ The flatness of my misery, yet with eyes  
Of pity, not revenge!

*Re-enter Attendant, with Cleomenes and Dion – after ushering them in the Attendant exits [to check on the Prince]*

**LORD**

(*extending a sword*) You here shall swear upon this sword of justice,/ That you, Cleomenes and Dion, have/ Been both at Delphos, and from thence have brought/ The seal'd-up oracle, by the hand deliver'd/ Of great Apollo's priest; and that, since then,/ You have not dared to break the holy seal/ Nor read the secrets in't.

**CLEOMENES** and **DION**

*(they touch the sword*) All this we swear.

**LEONTES**

Break up the seals and read.

**LORD**

*[Reads]* **Hermione is chaste;****/ Polixenes blameless; Camillo a true subject; Leontes/** **a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe truly begotten;****/ and the king shall live without an heir, if that/** **which is lost be not found.**Now blessed be the great Apollo!

**HERMIONE**

Praised!

**LEONTES**

Hast thou read truth?

**LORD**

Ay, my Lord; even so/ As it is here set down.

**LEONTES**

**There is no truth at all i' the oracle** *(all react in shock)* / The sessions shall proceed: this is mere falsehood. *(Leontes takes the declaration from the Oracle and studies it in disbelief while the Attendant speaks of his dead son - he doesn’t look up)*

*(Enter Attendant carrying Mamillius, who is dead – the nobles all gasp at the listless prince but the King doesn’t notice)*

**ATTENDANT**

My Lord the king, the king!

**LEONTES**

*(still looking at the declaration from the Oracle)* What is the business?

**ATTENDANT**

O sir, I shall be hated to report it!/ The prince your son, with mere conceit and fear  
Of the queen's speed, **is gone**.

**LEONTES**

*(still looking at the document)* How! gone!

**ATTENDANT**

*(laying Mamillius’ body on the ground)* Is **dead**.

**LEONTES**

*(he throws down the document and Xs to the dead body of his son)* Apollo's angry; and the heavens themselves/ Do strike at my injustice. (*Hermione faints and falls to the ground*) How now there!

**PAULINA**

This news is mortal to the queen: look down/ And see what death is doing.

**LEONTES**

*(to a Lord)* Take her hence:/ Her heart is but o'ercharged; **she will recover**:  
I have too much believed mine own suspicion:/ *(the Lord carries Hermione off-stage Attendant carries Mamillius’ body off-stage - ladies [except for Paulina] follow Hermionie - Leontes crosses to Paulina and speaks to her)* Beseech you, tenderly apply to her/ Some remedies for life. *(Paulina exits* *– Leontes falls to his knees)* Apollo, pardon/ My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!/ I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,/ New woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,/ Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy;/ For, being transported by my jealousies/ To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose/ Camillo for the minister to poison/ My friend Polixenes: which had been done,/ But that the good mind of Camillo tardied/ My swift command, though I with death and with/ Reward did threaten and encourage him,/ Not doing 't and being done: he, most humane/ And fill'd with honour, to my kingly guest/ Unclasp'd my practise, quit his fortunes here,/ Which you knew great, and to the hazard/ Of all encertainties himself commended,/ No richer than his honour: how he glisters/ Thorough my rust! and how **his pity****/ Does my deeds make the blacker**!

*Re-enter PAULINA*

**PAULINA**

Woe the while!/ O, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,/ Break too.

**LEONTES**

What fit is this*,* goodlady?

**PAULINA**

What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?/ What wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling?/ In leads or oils? what old or newer torture/ Must I receive, whose every word deserves/ To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny/ Together working with thy jealousies/ O, think what they have done/ And then run mad indeed, stark mad!  
That thou betray'dst Polixenes,'twas nothing;/ That did but show thee, of a fool, inconstant/ And damnable ingrateful: nor was't much,/ Thou wouldst have poison'd good Camillo's honour,/ To have him kill a king: poor trespasses,/ More monstrous standing by: whereof I reckon/ The casting forth to crows thy baby-daughter/ To be or none or little; though a devil/ Would have shed water out of fire ere done't: (*pauses)* Nor is't directly laid to thee, the death/ Of the young prince, whose honourable thoughts,/ Thoughts high for one so tender, cleft the heart/ That could conceive a gross and foolish sire/ Blemish'd his gracious dam: this is not, no,/Laid to thy answer: but the last,--O Lord,/ When I have said, cry 'woe!**' the queen, the queen,/** **The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead,**/ and vengeance for't/ Not dropp'd down yet.

**LEONTES**

The higher powers forbid!

**PAULINA**

**I say she's dead**; I'll swear't. If word nor oath/ Prevail not, go and see: if you can bring/ Tincture or lustre in her lip, her eye,/ Heat outwardly or breath within, I'll serve you/ As I would do the gods. But, O thou tyrant!/ Do not repent these things, for they are heavier/ Than all thy woes can stir; therefore betake thee/ To nothing but despair. A thousand knees/ Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,/ Upon a barren mountain and still winter/ In storm perpetual, could not move the gods/ To look that way thou wert.

**LEONTES**

Go on, go on/ Thou canst not speak too much; I have deserved/ All tongues to talk their bitterest.

**PAULINA**

I am sorry for't:/ All faults I make, when I shall come to know them,/ I do repent. Alas! I have show'd too much/ The rashness of a woman: he is touch'd/ To the noble heart. What's gone and what's past help/ Should be past grief: do not receive affliction  
At my petition; I beseech you, rather/ Let me be punish'd, that have minded you  
Of what you should forget. *(fighting back tears)* Now, good my liege/ Sir, royal sir, forgive a foolish woman:/ The love I bore your queen--lo, fool again!--/ I'll speak of her no more, nor of your children;/ *(he reacts with great sorrow)* I'll not remember you of my own Lord,/ Who is lost too: take your patience to you,/ And I'll say nothing.

**LEONTES**

Thou didst speak but well/ When most the truth; which I receive much better/ Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee, bring me/ to the dead bodies of my queen and son:/ one grave shall be for both: upon them shall/ the causes of their death appear, unto  
our shame perpetual. once a day I’ll visit/ the chapel where they lie, and tears shed there/ shall be my recreation: so long as nature/ will bear up with this exercise, so long  
I daily vow to use it. come and lead me/ unto these sorrows. *(They exit)*

**SCENE III. Bohemia. A desert country near the sea.**

*Enter ANTIGONUS with a Child, and a Mariner carrying a fardel*

**ANTIGONUS**

Thou art perfect then, our ship hath touch'd upon/ The deserts of Bohemia?

**MARINER**

Ay, my LORD: and fear/ We have landed in ill time: the skies look grimly/ And threaten present blusters. In my conscience,/ The heavens with that we have in hand are angry/ And frown upon 's.

**ANTIGONUS**

Their sacred wills be done! Go, get aboard;/ Look to thy bark: I'll not be long before  
I call upon thee. *(the Mariner sets down the fardel)*

**MARINER**

Make your best haste, and go not/ Too far i' the land: 'tis like to be loud weather;  
Besides, this place is famous for the creatures*/ (bear growl heard from off-stage)* Of prey that keep upon't.

**ANTIGONUS**

Go thou away:/ I'll follow instantly.

**MARINER**

I am glad at heart/ To be so rid o' the business. (*Exits)*

**ANTIGONUS**

Come, poor babe:/ I have heard, but not believed,/ the spirits o' the dead/ May walk again: if such thing be, thy mother/ Appear'd to me last night,/ I never saw a vessel of like sorrow,/ So fill'd and so becoming: in pure white robes,/ Like very sanctity, she did approach/ And gasping to begin some speech, her eyes/ became two spouts: the fury spent, anon/ Did this break-from her: 'Good Antigonus,/ Since fate, against thy better disposition,/ Hath made thy person for the thrower-out/ Of my poor babe, according to thine oath,/ Places remote enough are in Bohemia,/ There weep and leave it crying; and, for the babe/ Is counted lost for ever, Perdita,/ I prithee, call't. For this ungentle business/ Put on thee by my Lord, thou ne'er shalt see/ Thy wife Paulina more.' And so, with shrieks/ She melted into air. Affrighted much, I did in time collect myself and thought/ This was so and no slumber. Dreams are toys:/ Yet for this once, yea, superstitiously,/ I will be squared by this. I do believe/ Hermione hath suffer'd death, and that/ Apollo would, this being indeed the issue/ Of King Polixenes, it should here be laid,/ Either for life or death, upon the earth/ Of its right father. Blossom, speed thee well!/ There lie, and there thy character: (*placing a bag of gold in the basket*) there these;/ Which may, if fortune please, both breed thee, pretty,/ And still rest thine. *(the Bear enters, staying out of Antigonus’ sight)* The storm begins; poor wretch,/ *(cues for thunder and lightning)* That for thy mother's fault art thus exposed/ To loss and what may follow! Weep I cannot,/ But my heart bleeds; and most accursed am I/ To be by oath enjoin'd to this. Farewell! *(he backs away from the baby)*/ The day frowns more and more: thou'rt like to have/ A lullaby too rough: I never saw/ The heavens so dim by day. *(the Bear roars and crosses towards the baby)* A savage clamour!/ *(wonders if he should run for the ship?)*Well may I get aboard! This is the chase:/ *(he crosses to the Bear to distract it from the* *baby)* I am gone for ever. (*Exit, pursued by a bear)*

*Enter a Shepherd*

**SHEPHERD**

I would there were no age between sixteen and/ three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the/ rest; for there is nothing in the between but/ wronging the ancientry,  
stealing, fighting--Hark you now! Would any but/ these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty/ hunt this weather? *(cue for thunder and lightning)* They have scared away two of my/ best sheep, which I fear the wolf will sooner find/ than the master: *(seeing the baby)* Good luck, an't be thy/ will what have we here! Mercy on 's, a barne a very/ pretty barne! A boy or a child, I wonder? A/ pretty one; a very pretty one: sure, some 'scape:/ though I am not bookish, yet I can read/ waiting-gentlewoman in the 'scape. This has been/ some stair-work, some trunk-work, some/ behind-door-work: they were warmer that got this/ than the poor thing is here. I'll take it up for/ pity: yet I'll tarry till my son come; he hallooed/ but even now. Whoa, ho, hoa! (*Enter Clown)*

**CLOWN**

Hilloa, loa!

**SHEPHERD**

What, art so near? / What ailest thou, man?

**CLOWN**

I have seen two such sights, by sea and by land!

**SHEPHERD**

Why, boy, how is it?

**CLOWN**

I would you did but see how it chafes, how it rages,/ to see how the bear tore out his  
shoulder-bone; how he cried to me for help and said/ his name was Antigonus, a Lord. and how the poor gentleman roared/ and the bear mocked him, both roaring louder than/ the sea or weather.

**SHEPHERD**

Name of mercy, when was this, boy?

**CLOWN**

Now, now: I have not winked since I saw these/ sights: the bear half dined on the gentleman: he's at it/ now.

**SHEPHERD**

Would I had been by, to have helped the old man!/ Heavy matters! heavy matters! but look thee here,/ boy. Now bless thyself: thou mettest with things/ dying, I with things newborn. *(picking up the baby from the basket)* Here's a sight for/ thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth for a squire's/ child! *(getting the bag of gold from the basket)* look thee here; take up, take up, boy;/ open't. So, let's see: it was told me I should be/ rich by the fairies. This is some changeling:/ open't. What's within, boy?

**CLOWN**

*(holding up a gold coin)* You're a made old man: if the sins of your youth/ are forgiven you, you're well to live. Gold! all gold!

**SHEPHERD**

This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so: up/ with't, keep it close: home, home, the next way./ We are lucky, boy; and to be so still requires/ nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go: come, good/ boy, the next way home.

**CLOWN**

*(hands the bag of gold to his father)* Go you the next way with your findings. I'll go see/ if the bear be gone from the gentleman and how much/ he hath eaten: they are never curst but when they/ are hungry: if there be any of him left, I'll bury it. *(realizing that his father can’t carry the baby and the fardel, he takes the fardel)*

**SHEPHERD**

That's a good deed. If thou mayest discern by that/ which is left of him what he is, fetch me to the/ sight of him.

**CLOWN**

Marry, will I; and you shall help to put him i' the ground.

**SHEPHERD**

'Tis a lucky day, boy, and we'll do good deeds on't. *(they exit in different directions)*

***Intermission***

**ACT IV**

SCENE I:

*Enter Time (the Chorus)*

**TIME**

I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror/ Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error,/ Now take upon me, in the name of Time,/ To use my wings. Impute it not a crime/ To me or my swift passage, that I slide/ O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried/. Let me pass/ The same I am, ere ancient'st order was/ Or what is now received: I witness to/ The times that brought them in; so shall I do/ To the freshest things now reigning and make stale/ The glistering of this present, as my tale/ Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing, *(a deeply aged Leontes enters - short mime of Leontes kneeling in prayer)* I turn my glass and give my scene such growing/ As you had slept between: Leontes leaving,/ The effects of his fond jealousies so grieving/ That he shuts up himself, *(Leontes leaves*) imagine me,/ Gentle spectators, that I now may be/ *(Enter Florizel and Perdita – short mime of them flirting)* In fair Bohemia, and remember well,/ I mentioned a son o' the king's, which Florizel/ I now name to you; and with speed so pace/ To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace/ A shepherd's daughter,/ And what to her adheres, which follows after,/ Is the argument of Time. *(Florizel and Perdita exit, laughing)* Of this allow,/ If ever you have spent time worse ere now;/ If never, yet that Time himself doth say: He/ She wishes earnestly you never may.(*Exit)*

**SCENE II. Bohemia. The palace of POLIXENES.**

**POLIXENES**

*(Enter Polixenes and Camillo*) I pray thee, good Camillo, be no more importunate:/ 'tis a sickness denying thee any thing; a death to/ grant this.

**CAMILLO**

It is fifteen years since I saw my country: though/ I have for the most part been aired abroad, I/ desire to lay my bones there. Besides, the penitent/ king, my master, hath sent for me; to whose feeling/ sorrows I might be some allay, or I o'erween to  
think so, which is another spur to my departure.

**POLIXENES**

As thou lovest me, Camillo, wipe not out the rest of/ thy services by leaving me now: the need I have of/ thee thine own goodness hath made; better not to/ have had thee than thus to want thee: Of that fatal/ country, Sicilia, prithee speak no more; whose very/ naming punishes me with the remembrance of that/ penitent, as thou callest him, and reconciled king,/ my brother; whose loss of his most precious queen/ and children are even now to be afresh lamented./ Say to me, when sawest thou the Prince Florizel, my/ son?

**CAMILLO**

Sir, it is three days since I saw the prince. What/ his happier affairs may be, are to me unknown: but I/ have missingly noted, he is of late much retired/ from court and is less frequent to his princely/ exercises than formerly he hath appeared.

**POLIXENES**

I have considered so much, Camillo, and with some/ care; so far that I have eyes under my service which/ look upon his removedness; from whom I have this/ intelligence, that he is seldom from the house of a/ most homely shepherd.

**CAMILLO**

I have heard, sir, of such a man, who hath a/ daughter of most rare note: the report of her is/ extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage.

**POLIXENES**

That's likewise part of my intelligence; but, I/ fear, the angle that plucks our son thither. *(the King begins to change into the clothes of a country farmer)* Thou/ shalt accompany us to the place; where we will, not/ appearing what we are, have some question with the/ shepherd; from whose simplicity I think it not uneasy to get the cause of my son's resort thither./ *(holding out country clothes to Camillo)* Prithee, be my present partner in this business, and/ lay aside the thoughts of Sicilia.

**CAMILLO**

I willingly obey your command.

**POLIXENES**

My best Camillo! *(happily referring to the country clothes)* We must disguise ourselves. *(They exit)*

**SCENE III. A road near the Shepherd's cottage.**

*Enter AUTOLYCUS, (pushing his cart which he leaves UL) singing* [*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAjU45nXdyw*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mAjU45nXdyw)

**AUTOLYCUS**

When daffodils begin to peer,  
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,  
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;  
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.  
The white sheet bleaching on the hedge,  
With heigh! the sweet birds, O, how they sing!  
Doth set my pugging tooth on edge;  
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.  
The lark, that tirra-lyra cries,  
With heigh! with heigh! the thrush and the jay,  
Are summer songs for me and my bride,  
While we lie tumbling in the hay.

*(speaking – Xing DC - aside)* I have served Prince Florizel and in my time/ wore three-pile; but now I am out of service:

*(singing)* But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?  
The pale moon shines by night:  
And when I wander here and there,  
I then do *mostly* go right.  
If tinkers may have leave to live,  
And bear the sow-skin budget,  
Then my account I well may, give,  
And in the stocks avouch it.

Jog on, jog the footpath way

And merrily in the style, eh?

A merry heart goes all the day

Your sad tires in a mile, eh?

*(Aside – Xing DC)* My father named me Autolycus; who/ being, as I am, littered under Mercury, my revenue is/ the silly cheat./ Beating and hanging are terrors to/ me: *(pausing)* for the life to come, I sleep out the thought/ of it*. (He sees the Clown entering from UR Xing towards CS)* A prize! a prize!

**CLOWN**

*(counting his money)* Let me see: every 'leven wether tods; every tod/ yields pound and odd shilling; fifteen hundred/ shorn. what comes the wool to?

**AUTOLYCUS**

*[Aside]* If the springe hold, the cock's mine.

**CLOWN**

Let me see; what am/ I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? *(looking at the list from his sister*) Three pound/ of sugar, five pound of currants, rice,--what will/ this sister of mine do with rice? But my father/ hath made her mistress of the feast, and she lays it on. /I must have saffron to colour the warden/ pies; mace; dates?--none, that's out of my note;/ nutmegs, seven; a race or two of ginger, but that I/ may beg; four pound of prunes, and as many of/ raisins o' the sun.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(Pretending he is hurt, he falls to the ground DR)* O that ever I was born! (*Grovelling on the ground in “pain”)*

**CLOWN**

I' the name of me--

**AUTOLYCUS**

O, help me, help me! pluck but off these rags; and/ then, death, death!

**CLOWN**

Alack, poor soul! thou hast need of more rags to lay/ on thee, rather than have these off.

**AUTOLYCUS**

O sir, the loathsomeness of them offends me more/ than the stripes I have received, which are mighty/ ones and millions.

**CLOWN**

Alas, poor man! a million of beating may come to a/ great matter.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I am robbed, sir, and beaten; my money and apparel/ ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon/ me.

**CLOWN**

Lend me thy hand,/ I'll help thee: come, lend me thy hand.

**AUTOLYCUS**

O, good sir, tenderly, O*! (He painfully “allows” himself to be picked up by the Clown)*

**CLOWN**

Alas, poor soul! *(helping Autolycus to stand)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(cringing and favoring his shoulder)* O, good sir, softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my/ shoulder-blade is out.

**CLOWN**

How now! canst stand? *(Autolycus tries to stand, then falls against the Clown and picks his pocket of the money bag)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

Softly, dear sir; good sir, softly. *(holding the Clown’s bag of money behind the Clown’s back)* You ha' done me/ a charitable office.

**CLOWN**

Dost lack any money? I have a little money for thee. *(he begins to reach for his money bag, but Autolychus pretends he is in pain and leans against his arm)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

**No,** good sweet sir; no, I beseech you, sir: I have/ a kinsman not past three quarters of a mile hence,/ unto whom I was going; I shall there have money, or/ any thing I want: offer me no money, I pray you;/ that kills my heart.

**CLOWN**

What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

**AUTOLYCUS**

I knew him once a servant of the/ prince: I cannot tell, good sir, for which of his  
virtues it was, but he was certainly whipped out of the court.

**CLOWN**

His vices, you would say; there's no virtue whipped/ out of the court: they cherish it to make it stay/ there; and yet it will no more but abide.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Vices, I would say, sir. I know this man well: some call him Autolycus.

**CLOWN**

*(having heard of the trickster but never having seen him)* Out upon him! prig, for my life, prig: he haunts/ wakes, fairs and bear-baitings.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Very true, sir; he, sir, he; that's the rogue that/ put me into this apparel.

**CLOWN**

Not a more cowardly rogue in all Bohemia: if you had/ but looked big and spit at him, he'ld have run.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I must confess to you, sir, I am no fighter: I am/ false of heart that way; and that he knew, I warrant/ him.

**CLOWN**

How do you now?

**AUTOLYCUS**

Sweet sir, much better than I was; I can stand and/ walk: I will even take my leave of you, and pace/ softly towards my kinsman's.

**CLOWN**

Shall I bring thee on the way?

**AUTOLYCUS**

No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

**CLOWN**

*(Shaking his hand)* Then fare thee well: I must go buy spices for our/ sheep-shearing.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Prosper you, sweet sir! *(Exit Clown DR – Autolychus hold up the Clown’s bag of coins)* Your purse is not hot enough to purchase your spice./ I'll be with you at your sheep-shearing too: if I/ make not this cheat bring out another and the/ shearers prove sheep, let me be unrolled and my name/ put in the book of virtue! *(he Xs UL to his cart and pushes it DR and off-stage, singing)*

*(Sings**)*

Jog on, jog on, the foot-path way,  
And merrily in the style, eh  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile, eh? (*Exits)*

**SCENE IV. The Shepherd's cottage.**

*Enter Florizel and Perdita*

**FLORIZEL**

These your unusual weeds to each part of you/ Do give a life: no shepherdess, but Flora/ Peering in April's front. This your sheep-shearing/ Is as a meeting of the petty gods,/ And you the queen on't.

**PERDITA**

Sir, my gracious Lord,/ To chide at your extremes it not becomes me:/ O, pardon, that I name them! Your high self,/ The gracious mark o' the land, you have obscured  
With a swain's wearing, and me, poor lowly maid,/ Most goddess-like prank'd up: I should blush/ To see you so attired, sworn, I think,/ To show myself a glass.

**FLORIZEL**

I bless the time/ When my good falcon made her flight across/ Thy father's ground.

**PERDITA**

Now Jove afford you cause!/ To me the difference forges dread; your greatness  
Hath not been used to fear. Even now I tremble/ To think your father, by some accident,/ Should pass this way as you did: O, the Fates!/ How would he look, to see his work so noble/ Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how/ Should I, in these my borrow'd flaunts, behold/ The sternness of his presence?

**FLORIZEL**

Apprehend/ Nothing but jollity. The gods themselves,/ Humbling their deities to love, have taken/ The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter/ Became a bull, and bellow'd; the green Neptune/ A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,/ Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,/ As I seem now. Their transformations/ Were never for a piece of beauty rarer,/ Nor in a way so chaste, since my desires/ Run not before mine honour, nor my lusts/ Burn hotter than my faith.

**PERDITA**

O, but, sir,/ Your resolution cannot hold, when 'tis/ Opposed, as it must be, by the power of the king:/ One of these two must be necessities,/ Which then will speak, that you must/ change this purpose,/ Or I my life.

**FLORIZEL**

Thou dearest Perdita,/ With these forced thoughts, I prithee, darken not/ The mirth o' the feast. I'll be thine, my fair,/ Or not my father's. For I cannot be/ Mine own, nor any thing to any, if/ I be not thine. To this I am most constant,/ Though destiny say no. Be merry, gentle;/ Strangle such thoughts as these with any thing/ That you behold the while. Your guests are coming:/ Lift up your countenance, as it were the day/ Of celebration of that *nuptial* which/ We two have *sworn* shall come.

**PERDITA**

O lady Fortune,/ Stand you auspicious! *(Shepherds and Shepherdesses begin to enter)*

**FLORIZEL**

See, your guests approach:/ Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,/ And let's be red with mirth.

*(Enter Shepherd, Clown, Mopsa, Dorcas, with Polixines and Camillo disguised as country people)*

**SHEPHERD**

*(Calling Perdita to him)* Come, quench your blushes and present yourself/ That which you are, mistress o' the feast: come on,/ And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,  
As your good flock shall prosper.

**PERDITA**

*[spotting a new-comer in the crowd - to Polixines]* Sir, welcome:/ It is my father's will I should take on me/ The hostess-ship o' the day. *(To Camillo)* You're welcome, sir./ *(to Dorcas who has a basket of flowers)* Give me those flowers there, Dorcas. Reverend sirs,/ For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep/ Seeming and savour all the winter long:/ Grace and remembrance be to you both,/ And welcome to our shearing!

**POLIXENES**

Shepherdess,/ A fair one are you--well you fit our ages/ With flowers of winter.

**PERDITA**

Sir, the year growing ancient,/ Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth  
Of trembling winter, the fairest/ flowers o' the season/ Are our carnations and streak'd gillyvors,/ *(to Camillo)* Here's flowers for you;/ Hot lavender, mints, savoury, marjoram;/ The marigold, that goes to bed wi' the sun/ And with him rises weeping: these are flowers/ Of middle summer, and I think they are given/ To men of middle age. *(they chuckle)* You're very welcome. *(to Florizel)*Now, my fair'st friend,/ I would I had some flowers o' the spring that might/ Become your time of day; *(giving flowers to Mopsa and Dorcas)* and yours, and yours,/ That wear upon your virgin branches/ daffodils,/ That come before the swallow dares, and take/ The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,/ But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes *(she gives flowers to all present)*bold oxlips and/ The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,/ The flower-de-luce being one! O, these I lack,/ To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,/ To strew him o'er and o'er!

**FLORIZEL**

What, like a corpse?

**PERDITA**

*(flirting with him)* No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;/ Not like a corpse; or if, not to be buried, But quick and in mine arms. *(she puts her arms around him)* Come, take your flowers. *(He kisses her)*

**FLORIZEL**

When you speak, sweet./ I'ld have you do it ever: when you sing,/ I'ld have you buy and sell so, so give alms,/ Pray so; and, for the ordering your affairs,/ To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you/ A wave o' the sea, that you might ever do  
Nothing but that; move still, still so,/ And own no other function: each your doing,  
So singular in each particular,/ Crowns what you are doing in the present deed,  
That all your acts are queens.

**PERDITA**

Your praises are too large: but that your youth,/ And the true blood which peepeth fairly through't,/ Do plainly give you out an **unstain'd** shepherd,/ With wisdom I might fear, / You woo'd me the false way. *(Dance music begins to play)*

[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHDkoDof8UI*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHDkoDof8UI) *– Shepherds seek out dance partners)*

**FLORIZEL**

I think you have/ As little skill to fear as I have purpose/ To put you to't. But come; our dance, I pray:/ (*extends his hand and she takes his hand to dance)* Your hand, my Perdita: so turtles pair,/ That never mean to part.

**PERDITA**

I'll swear for 'em. *(A Country Dance begins)*

**POLIXENES**

*(Ploixines and Camillo talk over the music)*This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever/ Ran on the green-sward: nothing she does or seems/ But smacks of something greater than herself,/ Too noble for *this* place.

*(Florizel whispers something in Perdita’s ear and she laughs)*

**CAMILLO**

He tells her something/ That makes her blood look out: good sooth, she is/ The queen of curds and cream.

**CLOWN**

*(the Clown gestures to Mopsa, asking her to dance)* Come on, strike up!

**MOPSA**

Now, in good time!

**CLOWN**

Not a word, a word; we stand upon our manners./ Come, strike up!

*(All dance except the Shepherd, Polixines, and Camillo)*

**POLIXENES**

Pray, good shepherd, what fair swain is this/ Which dances with your daughter?

**SHEPHERD**

They call him Doricles; and boasts himself/ To have a worthy feeding: but I have it  
Upon his own report and I believe it;/ He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter:/ I think so too; for never gazed the moon/ Upon the water as he'll stand and read/ As 'twere my daughter's eyes: and, to be plain./ I think there is not half a kiss to choose/ Who loves another best.

**POLIXENES**

She dances featly.

**SHEPHERD**

So she does any thing; though I report it,/ That should be silent: if young Doricles  
Do light upon her, she shall bring him that/ Which he not dreams of.

*(Enter Servant – pulling the Clown away from the dancing)*

**SERVANT**

O master, if you did but hear the pedlar at the/ door - he sings/ several tunes faster than you'll tell money.

**CLOWN**

He could never come better; he shall come in. I/ love a ballad

**SERVANT**

He hath ribbons of an the colours i' the rainbow;/ inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns: why, he/ sings 'em over as they were gods or goddesses; you/ would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants/ to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on't.

**CLOWN**

Prithee bring him in; and let him approach singing. *(the dance is ending)*Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in 's tunes. *(Exit Servant)*

*(Enter AUTOLYCUS, singing – pushing his cart - showing off the things he has to sell*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9bLSCUcS68](mailto:https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9bLSCUcS68)

**AUTOLYCUS**

Lawn *(fabric)* as white as driven snow;  
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;  
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;  
Masks for faces and for noses;  
Bugle bracelet, necklace amber,  
Perfume for a lady's chamber;  
Golden quoifs and stomachers,  
For my lads to give their dears:  
Pins and poking-sticks of steel,  
What maids lack from head to heel:  
Come buy of me, come; come buy, come buy;  
Buy lads, or else your lasses cry: Come buy*.*

*(Autolycus hums under the dialogue – showing off his wares to a delighted crowd – as he sells he also picks people’s pockets)*

**CLOWN**

If I were not in love with Mopsa, thou shouldst take/ no money of me; but being enthralled as I am, it/ will also be the bondage of certain ribbons and gloves.

**MOPSA**

I was promised them against the feast; but they come/ not too late now.

**DORCAS**

He hath promised you more than that, or there be liars.

**MOPSA**

*(to Dorcas – they both like the Clown)* He hath paid you all he promised you; may be, he has/ paid you more, which will shame you to give him again.

**CLOWN**

Is there no manners left among maids? / to whistle off these/ secrets, but you must be tittle-tattling before all/ our guests? 'tis well they are whispering: clamour/ your tongues, and not a word more.

**MOPSA**

I have done. Come, you promised me a tawdry-lace/ and a pair of sweet gloves.

**CLOWN**

Have I not told thee how I was cozened by the way/and lost all my money?

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(speaking – laughing to himself - looking secretly at the bag of money in his pocket)* And indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad;/ *(hiding the bag and speaking somberly to the crowd)* therefore it behoves men to be wary.

**CLOWN**

Fear not thou, man, thou shalt lose nothing here.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of charge*. (Secretly showing other bags of coins he has stolen)*

**CLOWN**

*(sees pieces of paper with music written on them)* What hast here? ballads?

**MOPSA**

Pray now, buy some: I love a ballad in print o'/ life, for then we are sure they are true.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Here's a ballad of a fish, that appeared upon  
the coast on Wednesday the four-score of April,  
forty thousand fathom above water, *(All react in wonder)* and sung this  
ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was  
thought she was a woman and was turned into a cold  
fish for she would not exchange flesh with one that  
loved her: the ballad is very pitiful and as true.

**DORCAS**

*(to the Clown, pushing Mopsa away and taking his arm)* Is it true too, think you?

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(puts one hand over his heart and raises the other, as if taking an oath)* Five justices' hands at it, and witnesses more than/ my pack will hold.

**CLOWN**

Lay it by too: another.

**AUTOLYCUS**

This is a merry ballad, but a very pretty one.

**MOPSA**

*(shoves Dorcas aside and takes the Clown’s arm)* Let's have some merry ones.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*(holding up a song sheet)* Why, this is a passing merry one and goes to/ the tune of *(looks at Mopsa and Dorcas fighting over the Clown)* 'Two maids wooing a man:' *(all chuckle except Mopsa and Dorcas)* there's/ scarce a maid westward but she sings it; 'tis in/ request, I can tell you.

**MOPSA**

*(making peace with Dorcas)* We can both sing it: if thou'lt bear a part, thou/ shalt hear; *(looking at the music – looks at Autolycus)* 'tis in three parts.

**DORCAS**

We had the tune on't a month ago.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I can bear my part; you must know 'tis my/ occupation; have at it with you. *(Dorcas and Mopsa move close to him, both vying for his favor).* Yet, *(pushing the girls aside and holding up a new piece of music)* here’s a merry ballad for all to sing.

*(As he sings he moves around the crowd and continues to pick pockets)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o4FYxyk_l1o>

**AUTOLYCUS** *(singing)*

Now that spring hath filled our veins with a kind and active fire

And made green liveries for the plains and every grove a choir

Sing we this song with mirth and merry glee *(helps himself to a cup of ale)*

and Bacchus crown the bowl *(raising his cup in a toast)*

Here’s to me, and thou to me, and every thirsty soul

“Sheer sheep that have them,” cry we still *(puts down the empty glass and pours himself some sherry)* And see that none escape!

To take off the sherry that makes us so merry and plump as a lusty grape.

*(He repeats the song and it becomes a round – the second time, Perdita and Florizel join Autolycus; the Clown, Dorcas, Mopsa, and the Shepherd joins the next group, and all others join the third group of the round. At the end of the song all applaud.*

*(Autolycus realizes he has stolen and sold all he can and he begins to pack his wares away)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

Farewell, my dearest friends! *(All groan and are sorry to see him go)*

*He exits, singing (same tune as “Lawn as white as driven snow”* *– as he exits, everyone (except Florizel and Perdita) gets food from their baskets and have a picnic)*

Will you buy any tape,  
Or lace for your cape,  
My dainty duck, my dear-a?  
Any silk, any thread,  
Any toys for your head,  
Of the new'st and finest, finest wear-a?  
Come to the pedlar;  
Money's a medler.  
That doth utter all men's ware-a. *(He exits)*

**POLIXENES**

(*To Florizel)* How now, fair shepherd!/ Your heart is full of something that does take/ Your mind from feasting. Sooth, when I was young/ I would have ransack'd  
The pedlar's silken treasury and have pour'd it/ To her acceptance; you have let him go/ And nothing marted with him. If your lass/ Interpretation should abuse and call this/ Your lack of love or bounty, you were straited/ For a reply, at least if you make a care/ Of happy holding her.

**FLORIZEL**

Old sir, I know/ She prizes not such trifles as these are:/ The gifts she looks from me are pack'd and lock'd/ Up in my heart; which I have given already,/ But not deliver'd. O, hear me breathe my life/ Before this ancient sir, who, it should seem,/ Hath sometime loved! *(he takes Perdita’s hand and kisses it)* I take thy hand, this hand,/ As soft as dove's down

**POLIXENES**

I have put you out:/ But to your protestation; let me hear/ What you profess.

**FLORIZEL**

That, were I crown'd the most imperial monarch,/ Thereof most worthy, were I the fairest youth/ That ever made eye swerve, had force and knowledge/ More than was ever man's, *I would not prize them**/ Without her love*; *(kissing her hand)* for her employ them all;/ Commend them and condemn them to her service/ Or to their own perdition.

**POLIXENES**

Fairly offer'd.

**CAMILLO**

This shows a sound affection.

**SHEPHERD**

But, my daughter,/ Say you the like to him?

**PERDITA**

I cannot speak/ So well, nothing so well; no, nor mean better:/ By the pattern of mine own thoughts I cut out/ The purity of his.

**SHEPHERD**

Take hands, a bargain!/ And, friends unknown, you shall bear witness to 't:  
I give my daughter to him, and will make/ Her portion equal his.

**FLORIZEL**

I shall have more than you can dream of yet;/ Enough then for your wonder. But, come on,/ Contract us 'fore these witnesses.

**SHEPHERD**

Come, your hand;/ And, daughter, yours.

**POLIXENES**

Soft, swain, awhile, beseech you;/ Have you a father?

**FLORIZEL**

I have: but what of him?

**POLIXENES**

Knows he of this?

**FLORIZEL**

He neither does nor shall.

**POLIXENES**

Methinks a father/ Is at the nuptial of his son a guest/ That best becomes the table. Pray you once more,/ Is not your father grown incapable/ Of reasonable affairs/ can he speak? hear?/ Lies he not bed-rid?

**FLORIZEL**

No, good sir;/ He has his health and ampler strength indeed/ Than most have of his age.

**POLIXENES**

By my white beard,/ You offer him, if this be so, a wrong/ Something unfilial: reason my son/ Should choose himself a wife, but as good reason/ The father, all whose joy is nothing else/But fair posterity, should hold some counsel/ In such a business.

**FLORIZEL**

I yield all this;/ But for some other reasons, my grave sir,/ Which 'tis not fit you know, I not acquaint/ My father of this business.

**POLIXENES**

Let him know't.

**FLORIZEL**

He shall not.

**POLIXENES**

Prithee, let him.

**FLORIZEL**

No, he must not.

**SHEPHERD**

Let him, my son: he shall not need to grieve/ At knowing of thy choice.

**FLORIZEL**

Come, come, he must not./ Mark our contract.

**POLIXENES**

Mark your divorce, young sir, *(pulling off his disguise – speaking to Florizel)*/ Whom son I dare not call; thou art too base/ To be acknowledged: *(to the Shepherd)* Thou old traitor,/ *(to Perdita)* And thou, fresh piece/ Of excellent witchcraft, who of force must know/ *(gesturing to his son)* The royal fool thou copest with,--

**SHEPHERD**

O, my heart!

**POLIXENES**

*(to Perdita)* I'll have thy beauty scratch'd with briers, and made/ More homely than thy state. *(to his son)* For thee, fond boy,/ If I may ever know thou dost but sigh/ That thou no more shalt see *(gesturing to Perdita)* this knack, as never/ I mean thou shalt, we'll bar thee from succession;/ Not hold thee of our blood, no, not our kin,/ mark thou my words:/ Follow us to the court. *(to the Shepherd)* Thou churl, for this time,/ Though full of our displeasure, yet we free thee/ From the dead blow of it. *(to Perdita)* And you, enchantment.--/ Worthy enough a herdsman:/ Unworthy thee,--if ever henceforth thou/ These rural latches to his entrance open,/ Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,/ I will devise a death as cruel for thee/ As thou art tender to't. *(Exit DL with Camillo following – Florizel runs after his father to speak with him, but stops short of exiting)*

**PERDITA**

*(aside Xing DR)* Even here undone!/ I was not much afeard; for once or twice/ I was about to speak and tell him plainly,/ The selfsame sun that shines upon his court/ Hides not his visage from our cottage but/ Looks on alike. *(to Florizel)* Will't please you, sir, be gone?/ I told you what would come of this: beseech you,/ Of your own state take care: this dream of mine,--/ Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch farther,/ But milk my ewes and weep.

**SHEPHERD**

I cannot speak, nor think/ Nor dare to know that which I know. (speaking to Florizel) O sir!/ You have undone *(referring to himself)* a man of fourscore three,/ That thought to fill his grave in quiet, yea,/ To die upon the bed my father died,/ To lie close by his honest bones: but now/ Some hangman must put on my shroud and lay me/ Where no priest shovels in dust. *(speaking to his daughter)* O cursed wretch,/ That knew'st this was the prince,/ and wouldst adventure/ To mingle faith with him! Undone! undone!  
If I might die within this hour, I have lived/ To die when I desire. *(He exits UR)*

**FLORIZEL**

*(Xing DR to Perdita)* Why look you so upon me?/ I am but sorry, not afeard; delay'd,  
But nothing alter'd: what I was, I am

**CAMILLO**

*(Entering from DL and Xing to Florizel DR)* Gracious my Lord,/ You know your father's temper: at this time/ He will allow no speech, which I do guess/ You do not purpose to him; and as hardly/ Will he endure your sight as yet, I fear:/ Then, till the fury of his highness settle,/ Come not before him.

**FLORIZEL**

I not purpose it.

**PERDITA**

How often have I told you 'twould be thus!/ How often said, my dignity would last/ But till 'twere known!

**FLORIZEL**

It cannot fail but by/ The violation of my faith; / From my succession wipe me, father; I/ Am heir to my affection.

**CAMILLO**

Be advised./ This is desperate, sir.

**FLORIZEL**

Camillo, Not for Bohemia, will I break my oath/ To this my fair beloved: therefore, I pray you,/ As you have ever been my father's honour'd friend,/ When he shall miss me,--as, in faith, I mean not/ To see him any more,--cast your good counsels/ Upon his passion; / This you may know And so deliver, *(putting his arm around her)* I am put to sea/ With her whom here I cannot hold on shore.

**CAMILLO**

O my Lord!/ I would your spirit were easier for advice,/ He's irremoveable,  
Resolved for flight. Now were I happy, if/ His going I could frame to serve my turn,  
Save him from danger, do him love and honour,/ Purchase the sight again of dear Sicilia/ And that unhappy king, my master, whom/ I so much thirst to see*.* *(to Florizel)* Well, my Lord,/ If you may please to think I love the king/ And through him what is nearest to him, which is/ Your gracious self, embrace but my direction:  
If your more ponderous and settled project/ May suffer alteration, on mine honour,  
I'll point you where you shall have such receiving/ As shall become your highness; where you may/ Enjoy your mistress, marry her,/ And, with my best endeavours in your absence,/ Your discontenting father strive to qualify/ And bring him up to liking.

**FLORIZEL**

How, Camillo,/ May this, almost a miracle, be done?

**CAMILLO**

Have you thought on/ A place whereto you'll go?

**FLORIZEL**

Not any yet.

**CAMILLO**

Then list to me:/ undergo this flight, make for Sicilia,/ And there present yourself and your fair princess,/ For so I see she must be, 'fore Leontes:/ She shall be habited as it becomes/ The partner of your bed. Methinks I see/ Leontes opening his free arms and weeping/ His welcomes forth; asks thee the son forgiveness,/ As 'twere i' the father's person.

**FLORIZEL**

Worthy Camillo,/ What colour for my visitation shall I/ Hold up before him?

**CAMILLO**

Sent by the king your father/ To greet him and to give him comforts. Sir,  
The manner of your bearing towards him, with/ What you as from your father shall deliver,/ Things known betwixt us three, I'll write you down:/ The which shall point you forth at every sitting/ What you must say; that he shall not perceive/ But that you have your father's bosom there/ And speak his very heart.

**FLORIZEL**

I am bound to you. Camillo,/ Preserver of my father, now of me,/ The medicine of our house, how shall we do?/ We are not furnish'd like Bohemia's son,/ Nor shall appear in Sicilia.

**CAMILLO**

My Lord,/ Fear none of this: I think you know my fortunes/ Do all lie there: it shall be so my care/ To have you royally appointed as if/ The scene you play were mine. For instance, sir,/ That you may know you shall not want, one word. (*They talk aside)*

*Re-enter AUTOLYCUS*

**AUTOLYCUS**

Ha, ha! what a fool Honesty is! and Trust, his/ sworn brother, a very simple gentleman! I have sold/ all my trumpery. I picked and cut most of their/ festival purses; and had not the old man come in/ with a whoo-bub against his daughter and the king's// son and scared my choughs from the chaff, I had not/ left a purse alive in the whole army. (*Camillo, Florizel, and Perdita come forward)*

**CAMILLO**

Nay, but my letters, by this means being there/ So soon as you arrive, shall clear that doubt.

**FLORIZEL**

And those that you'll procure from King Leontes--

**CAMILLO**

Shall satisfy your father.

**PERDITA**

Happy be you!/ All that you speak shows fair.

**CAMILLO**

Who have we here? *(Seeing Autolycus)* We'll make an instrument of this, omit/ Nothing may give us aid.

**AUTOLYCUS**

If they have overheard me now, why, hanging.

**CAMILLO**

How now, good fellow! why shakest thou so? Fear/ not, man; here's no harm intended to thee.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I am a poor fellow, sir.

**CAMILLO**

Why, be so still; here's nobody will steal that from/ thee: yet for the outside of thy poverty we must/ make an exchange; therefore discase thee instantly,/ --thou must think there's a necessity in't,--and/ change garments with this gentleman: though the  
pennyworth on his side be the worst, yet hold thee,/ there's some boot.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I am a poor fellow, sir. (*Aside*) I know ye well enough.

**CAMILLO**

Nay, prithee, dispatch

**AUTOLYCUS**

Are you in earnest, sir? (*Aside)* I smell the trick on't.

**FLORIZEL**

Dispatch, I prithee.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Indeed, I have had earnest: but I cannot with/ conscience take it.

**CAMILLO**

Unbuckle, unbuckle. (*Florizel and Autolycus exchange garments)*/ Fortunate mistress,--let my prophecy/ Come home to ye!--you must retire yourself/ Into some covert: take your sweetheart's hat/ And pluck it o'er your brows, muffle your face,/ Dismantle you, and, as you can, disliken/ The truth of your own seeming; that you may----to shipboard

**PERDITA**

I see the play so lies/ That I must bear a part.

**CAMILLO**

Have you done there?

**FLORIZEL**

Should I now meet my father,/ He would not call me son.

**CAMILLO**

Nay, you shall have no hat. (*Giving it to Perdita)**/* Come, lady, come. Farewell, my friend.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Adieu, sir.

**CAMILLO**

*[Aside]* What I do next, shall be to tell the king/ Of this escape and whither they are bound;/ Wherein my hope is I shall so prevail/ To force him after: in whose company  
I shall review Sicilia, for whose sight/ I have a longing.

**FLORIZEL**

Fortune speed us!/ Thus we set on, Camillo, to the sea-side.

**CAMILLO**

The swifter speed the better. (*Exit Florizel, Perdita, and Camillo)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

I understand the business, I hear it: to have an/ open ear, a quick eye, and a nimble hand, is/ necessary for a cut-purse; a good nose is requisite/ also, to smell out work for the other senses. I see/ this is the time that the unjust man doth thrive./ Sure the gods do/ this year connive at us, and we may do any thing/ extempore. The prince himself is about a piece of/ iniquity, stealing away from his father: if I thought it were a piece of/ honesty to acquaint the king withal, I would not/ do't: I hold it the more knavery to conceal it;/ and therein am I constant to my profession.

*(Re-enter Clown and Shepherd with a fardel containing the things in Perdita’s basket when she was a baby)*

**CLOWN**

See, see; what a man you are now!/ There is no other way but to tell the king  
she's a changeling and none of your flesh and blood.

**SHEPHERD**

Nay, but hear me.

**CLOWN**

Nay, but hear me.

**SHEPHERD**

Go to, then.

**CLOWN**

She being none of your flesh and blood, your flesh/ and blood has not offended the king; and so your/ flesh and blood is not to be punished by him. Show/ those things you found about her, those secret/ things, all but what she has with her: this being  
done, let the law go whistle: I warrant you.

**SHEPHERD**

I will tell the king all, every word, yea, and his/ son's pranks too; who, I may say, is no honest man,/ neither to his father nor to me, to go about to make/ me the king's brother-in-law.

**CLOWN**

Indeed, brother-in-law was the farthest off you/ could have been to him and then your blood had been/ the dearer by I know how much an ounce.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*[Aside]* Very wisely, puppies!

**SHEPHERD**

Well, let us to the king.

**CLOWN**

Pray heartily he be at palace.

**AUTOLYCUS**

*[Aside]* Though I am not naturally honest, I am so/ sometimes by chance: *(Takes off his false beard)* How now, rustics! whither are you bound?

**SHEPHERD**

To the palace, an it like your worship.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Your affairs there, the place of your dwelling, your/ names, your ages, of what having, breeding, and any/ thing that is fitting to be known, discover.

**CLOWN**

We are but plain fellows, sir.

**AUTOLYCUS**

A lie, let me have no/ lying: it becomes none but tradesmen, and they/   
often give us soldiers the lie.

**SHEPHERD**

Are you a courtier, sir?

**AUTOLYCUS**

I am a courtier*. (showing off his clothing)* Seest/ thou not the air of the court in these enfoldings?/ *(walking in a noble manner)* hath not my gait in it the measure of the court?/ receives not thy nose court-odor from me? / I am courtier: whereupon I command thee to/ open thy affair.

**SHEPHERD**

My business, sir, is to the king.

**AUTOLYCUS**

What advocate hast thou to him?

**SHEPHERD**

I know not.

**CLOWN**

Advocate's the court-word for a pheasant: say you/ have none.

**SHEPHERD**

None, sir; I have no pheasant, cock nor hen.

**AUTOLYCUS**

How blessed are we that are not simple men!/ Yet nature might have made me as these are,/ Therefore I will not disdain.

**CLOWN**

This cannot be but a great courtier.

**SHEPHERD**

His garments are rich, but he wears/ them not handsomely.

**AUTOLYCUS**

What's i' the fardel?

**SHEPHERD**

Sir, there lies such secrets in this fardel,/ which none must know but the king; and which he/ shall know within this hour, if I may come to the/ speech of him.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Age, thou hast lost thy labour.

**SHEPHERD**

Why, sir?

**AUTOLYCUS**

The king is not at the palace; he is gone aboard a/ new ship to purge melancholy and air himself: for,/ if thou beest capable of things serious, thou must/ know the king is full of grief.

**SHEPHERD**

So 'tis said, sir; about his son, that should have/ married a shepherd's daughter.

**AUTOLYCUS**

If that shepherd be not in hand-fast, let him fly:/ the curses he shall have, the tortures he shall/ feel, will break the back of man, the heart of monster.

**CLOWN**

Think you so, sir?

**AUTOLYCUS**

Not he alone shall suffer what wit can make heavy/ and vengeance bitter; but those that are germane to/ him, though removed fifty times, shall all come/ under the hangman: which though it be great pity,/ yet it is necessary. An old sheep-whistling rogue a/ ram-tender, to offer to have his daughter come into/ grace! Some say he shall be stoned; but that death/ is too soft for him.

**CLOWN**

Has the old man e'er a son, sir, do you hear. an't/ like you, sir?

**AUTOLYCUS**

He has a son, who shall be flayed alive; then/ 'nointed over with honey, set on the head of a/ wasp's nest; Tell me, for you seem to be honest plain/ men, what you have to the king: being something/ gently considered, I'll bring you where he is  
aboard.

**CLOWN**

He seems to be of great authority: Remember 'stoned,' and 'flayed alive.'

**SHEPHERD**

An't please you, sir, to undertake the business for/ us, here is that gold I have.

**AUTOLYCUS**

Well, give me the moiety. Are you a party in this business?

**CLOWN**

We must to the king and show/ our strange sights: *(whispering to his father)* he must know 'tis none of your/ daughter nor my sister; we are gone else. *(to Autolycus)* Sir, I  
will give you as much as this old man does when the/ business is performed.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I will trust you. I will but look upon the/ hedge and follow you.

**CLOWN**

We are blest in this man, as I may say, even blest.

**SHEPHERD**

Let's before as he bids us: he was provided to do us good. (*Exit Shepherd and Clown)*

**AUTOLYCUS**

If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would/ not suffer me: she drops booties in my mouth. I am/ courted now with a double occasion, gold and a means/ to do the prince my master good; which who knows how/ that may turn back to my advancement? I will bring/ these two moles, these blind ones, aboard him: To him will I present/ them: there may be matter in it. (*Exit)*

**ACT V**

**SCENE I. A room in LEONTES' palace.**

*Enter Leontes, Cleomenes, Dion, Paulina, and Servants*

**CLEOMENES**

Sir, you have done enough, and have perform'd/ A saint-like sorrow: no fault could you make,/ Which you have not redeem'd; indeed, paid down/ More penitence than done trespass: at the last,/ Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil;/ With them forgive yourself.

**LEONTES**

Whilst I remember/ Her and her virtues, I cannot forget/ My blemishes in them, and so still think of/ The wrong I did myself; which was so much,/ That heirless it hath made my kingdom and/ Destroy'd the sweet'st companion that e'er man/ Bred his hopes out of.

**PAULINA**

True, too true, my Lord:/ If, one by one, you wedded all the world,  
Or from the all that are took something good,/ To make a perfect woman, she you kill'd/ Would be unparallel'd.

**LEONTES**

I think so. Kill'd!/ She I kill'd! I did so: but thou strikest me/ Sorely, to say I did; it is as bitter/ Upon thy tongue as in my thought: now, good now,/ Say so but seldom.

**CLEOMENES**

Good lady:/ You might have spoken a thousand things that would  
Have done the time more benefit and graced/ Your kindness better.

**PAULINA**

You are one of those/ Would have him wed again.

**DION**

If you would not so,/ You pity not the state, nor the remembrance/ Of his most sovereign name; consider little/ What dangers, by his highness' fail of issue,  
May drop upon his kingdom and devour/ Incertain lookers on. What were more holy  
Than to rejoice the former queen is well?/ What holier than, for royalty's repair,  
For present comfort and for future good,/To bless the bed of majesty again  
With a sweet fellow to't?

**PAULINA**

There is none worthy,/ Respecting her that's gone. Besides, the gods/ Will have fulfill'd their secret purposes;/ For has not the divine Apollo said,/ Is't not the tenor of his oracle,/ That King Leontes shall not have an heir/ Till his lost child be found? which that it shall,/ Is all as monstrous to our human reason/ As my Antigonus to break his grave/ And come again to me; who, on my life,/ Did perish with the infant. 'Tis your counsel/ My Lord should to the heavens be contrary,/ Oppose against their wills. *(To Leontes)* Care not for issue;/ The crown will find an heir.

**LEONTES**

Good Paulina,/ Who hast the memory of Hermione,/ I know, in honour, O, that ever I  
Had squared me to thy counsel! then, even now,/ I might have look'd upon my queen's full eyes,/ Have taken treasure from her lips--

**PAULINA**

And left them/ More rich for what they yielded.

**LEONTES**

Thou speak'st truth./ No more such wives; therefore, no wife.

**PAULINA**

Will you swear/ Never to marry but by my free leave?

**LEONTES**

Never, Paulina; so be blest my spirit!

**PAULINA**

*(to the Nobles)* Then, good my Lords, bear witness to his oath./ Unless another,  
As like Hermione as is her picture,/ Affront his eye.

**CLEOMENES**

Good madam,--

**PAULINA**

I have done./ Yet, if my Lord will marry,--if you will, sir,/ No remedy, but you will,--give me the office/ To choose you a queen: she shall not be so young/ As was your former; but she shall be such/ As, walk'd your first queen's ghost,/ it should take joy  
To see her in your arms.

**LEONTES**

My true Paulina,/ We shall not marry till thou bid'st us.

**PAULINA**

That/ Shall be when your first queen's again in breath;/ Never till then.

*Enter an Attendant*

**ATTENDANT**

One that gives out himself Prince Florizel,/ Son of Polixenes, with his princess, she  
The fairest I have yet beheld, desires access/ To your high presence.

**LEONTES**

What with him? he comes not/ Like to his father's greatness: his approach,  
So out of circumstance and sudden, tells us/ 'Tis not a visitation framed, but forced  
By need and accident. What train?

**ATTENDANT**

But few,/ And those but mean.

**LEONTES**

His princess, say you, with him?

**ATTENDANT**

Ay, the most peerless piece of earth, I think,/ That e'er the sun shone bright on. She is  
The rarest of all women.

**LEONTES**

Go, Cleomenes;/ Yourself, assisted with your honour'd friends,/ Bring them to our embracement. Still, 'tis strange (*Exit Cleomenes and others)* He thus should steal upon us.

**PAULINA**

Had our prince,/ Jewel of children, seen this hour, he had pair'd/ Well with this Lord: there was not full a month/ Between their births.

**LEONTES**

Prithee, no more; cease; thou know'st/ He dies to me again when talk'd of: sure,  
When I shall see this gentleman, thy speeches/ Will bring me to consider that which may/ Unfurnish me of reason. They are come.

*Re-enter Cleomenes and others, with Florizel and Perdita*

*(to Florizel)* Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince;/ For she did print your royal father off,/ Conceiving you: were I but twenty-one,/ Your father's image is so hit in you,/ His very air, that I should call you brother,/ As I did him, Most dearly welcome!/ And your fair princess,--goddess!--O, alas!/ I lost a couple, that 'twixt heaven and earth/ Might thus have stood begetting wonder as/ You, gracious couple, do: and then I lost--/ All mine own folly--the society,/ Amity too, of your brave father, whom,/ Though bearing misery, I desire my life/ Once more to look on him.

**FLORIZEL**

By his command/ Have I here touch'd Sicilia and from him/ Give you all greetings that a king, at friend,/ Can send his brother.

**LEONTES**

O my brother,/ Good gentleman! the wrongs I have done thee stir  
Afresh within me, / *(to Florizel)* Welcome hither,/ As is the spring to the earth.

You have a holy father,/ A graceful gentleman; against whose person,  
So sacred as it is, I have done sin:/ For which the heavens, taking angry note,  
Have left me issueless; and your father's blest,/ As he from heaven merits it, with you  
Worthy his goodness. What might I have been,/ Might I a son and daughter now have look'd on,/ Such goodly things as you!

*Enter a Lord*

**LORD**

Most noble sir,/ That which I shall report will bear no credit,/ Were not the proof so nigh. Please you, great sir,/ Bohemia greets you from himself by me;/ Desires you to attach his son, who has--/ His dignity and duty both cast off--/ Fled from his father, from his hopes, and with/ A shepherd's daughter.

**LEONTES**

Where's Bohemia? speak.

**LORD**

Here in your city; I now came from him:  
I speak amazedly; and it becomes/ My marvel and my message. To your court  
Whiles he was hastening, in the chase, it seems,/ Of this fair couple, meets he on the way/ The father of this seeming lady and/ Her brother, having both their country quitted/ With this young prince.

**FLORIZEL**

Camillo has betray'd me;/ Whose honour and whose honesty till now/ Endured all weathers.

**LORD**

Lay't so to his charge:/ He's with the king your father.

**LEONTES**

Who? Camillo?

**LORD**

Camillo, sir; I spake with him; who now/ Has these poor men in question. Never saw I  
Wretches so quake: they kneel, they kiss the earth;/ Forswear themselves as often as they speak:/ Bohemia stops his ears, and threatens them/ With divers deaths in death.

**PERDITA**

## O my poor father!/ The heaven sets spies upon us, will not have/ Our contract celebrated.

**LEONTES**

You are married?

**FLORIZEL**

We are not, sir, nor are we like to be;/ The stars, I see, will kiss the valleys first:  
The odds for high and low's alike.

**LEONTES**

My Lord,/ Is this the daughter of a king?

**FLORIZEL**

She is,/ When once she is my wife.

**LEONTES**

That 'once' I see by your good father's speed/ Will come on very slowly. I am sorry,  
Most sorry, you have broken from his liking/ Where you were tied in duty, and as sorry/ Your choice is not so rich in worth as beauty,/ That you might well enjoy her.

**FLORIZEL**

Dear, look up:/ Though Fortune, visible an enemy,/ Should chase us with my father, power no jot/ Hath she to change our loves. Beseech you, sir,/ Step forth mine advocate; at your request/ My father will grant precious things as trifles.

**LEONTES**

Would he do so, I'ld beg your precious mistress,/ Which he counts but a trifle.

**PAULINA**

Sir, my liege,/ Your eye hath too much youth in't: not a month  
'Fore your queen died, she was more worth such gazes/ Than what you look on now.

**LEONTES**

I thought of her,/ Even in these looks I made. (*To Florizel)* But your petition  
Is yet unanswer'd. I will to your father:/ Your honour not o'erthrown by your desires,  
I am friend to them and you: upon which errand/ I now go toward him; therefore follow me/ And mark what way I make: come, good my Lord. (*Exit)*

**SCENE II. Before LEONTES' palace.**

*Enter AUTOLYCUS and a Gentleman*

**AUTOLYCUS**

Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation? *(As they speak, the scene is mimed SL)*

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

I was by at the opening of the fardel, *(mime of Shepherd talking with Leontes)* heard the old/ shepherd deliver the manner how he found it:/ whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all/ commanded out of the chamber; only this methought I/ heard the shepherd say, he found the child.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I would most gladly know the issue of it.

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

I make a broken delivery of the business; *(Camillo enters and embraces Leontes)* but the/ changes I perceived in the king and Camillo were/ very notes of admiration: they seemed almost, with/ staring on one another, to tear the cases of their/ eyes; there was speech in their dumbness, language/ in their very gesture; but the wisest/ beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not/ say if the importance were joy or sorrow; but in the/ extremity of the one, it must needs be. (*Enter Emelia)* Here comes one that haply knows more./ The news, Emelia?

**EMEILA**

Nothing but bonfires: the oracle is fulfilled; the/ king's daughter is found: such a deal of wonder is/ broken out within this hour that ballad-makers/ cannot be able to express it. (*Enter a NOBLEMAN)* How goes it now, sir? Has the king/ found his heir? *(Leontes opens the Shepherd’s fardel)*

**NOBLEMAN**

Most true: *(He puts Hermione’s cape around Perdita)* the mantle/ of Queen Hermione's, her jewel about the neck of it, *(He puts royal jewels around Perdita’s neck)* / the letters of Antigonus *(he hands letters to Paulina)* found with it which they/ know to be his character, the majesty of the/ creature in resemblance of the mother, proclaim her with all/ certainty to be the king's daughter. Did you see/ the meeting of the two kings?

**EMELIA**

No.

**NOBLEMAN**

*(Polinixes enters and Xs to Leontes, they embrace)* Then have you lost a sight, which was to be seen,/ cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one/ joy crown another, so and in such manner that it/ seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their/ joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes,/ holding up of hands, with countenances of such/ distraction that they were to be known by garment,/ not by favour. Our king, being ready to leap out of/ himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that/ joy were now become a loss, cries 'O, thy mother,/ thy mother!' then asks Bohemia forgiveness; then/ embraces his son-in-law; now he thanks the old  
shepherd. I never heard of such/ another encounter, which lames report to follow it  
and undoes description to do it.

**EMELIA**

What, pray you, became of Antigonus, that carried/ hence the child?

**NOBLEMAN**

He was torn to pieces with a bear: this/ avouches the shepherd's son; who has not only his/ innocence, which seems much, to justify him, *(Leontes receives a handkerchief and ring from the Clown and hands them to Paulina)* but a/ handkerchief and rings of his that Paulina knows./ But O, the noble/ combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was fought in/ Paulina! She had one eye declined for the loss of/ her husband, another elevated that the oracle was/ fulfilled: *(Paulina hugs Perdita)* she lifted the princess from the earth,/ and so locks her in embracing, as if she would pin/ her to her heart that she might no more be in danger/ of losing.

**EMELIA**

The dignity of this act was worth the audience of/ kings and princes; for by such was it acted./ Are they returned to the court?

**NOBLEMAN**

No: the princess hearing of her mother's statue,/ which is in the keeping of Paulina,--a piece many/ years in doing and now newly performed by a rare/ Italian master, he so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that/ they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of/ answer: thither with all greediness of affection/ are they gone, and there they intend to sup.

**EMELIA**

Shall we thither and with our company piece/ the rejoicing?

**NOBLEMAN**

Let's along. (They exit)

**AUTOLYCUS**

Now, had I not the dash of my former life in me,/ would preferment drop on my head. I brought the old/ man and his son aboard the prince: told him I heard/ them talk of a fardel and I know not what: But 'tis all one to me; for had I/ been the finder out of this secret, it would not/ have relished among my other discredits. (*Enter Shepherd and Clown in noble clothing – the shepherd has an expensive walking stick)* Here come those I have done good to against my will,/ and already appearing in the blossoms of their fortune.

**SHEPHERD**

Come, boy; I am past moe children, but thy sons and/ daughters will be all gentlemen born.

**CLOWN**

*(to Autolycus)* See you these clothes? say you see them not and/ think me still no gentleman born: you were best say/ these robes are not gentlemen born: give me the  
lie, do, and try whether I am not now a gentleman born.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I know you are now, sir, a gentleman born.

**CLOWN**

Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

**SHEPHERD**

And so have I, boy.

**CLOWN**

So you have: but I was a gentleman born before my/ father; for the king's son took me by the hand, and/ called me brother; and then the two kings called my/ father brother; and then the prince my brother and/ the princess my sister called my father father; and  
so we wept, and there was the first gentleman-like/ tears that ever we shed.

**SHEPHERD**

We may live, son, to shed many more.

**AUTOLYCUS**

I humbly beseech you, sir, to pardon me all the/ faults I have committed to your worship and to give/ me your good report to the prince my master.

**SHEPHERD**

Prithee, son, do; for we must be *gentle*, *(laughing at his own joke)* now we are/ gentlemen.

**CLOWN**

Thou wilt amend thy life?

**AUTOLYCUS**

Ay, an it like your good worship.

**CLOWN**

Give me thy hand: *(shakes Autolycus’ hand)* I will swear to the prince thou/ art as honest a true fellow as any is in Bohemia.

**SHEPHERD**

You may say it, but not swear it./ How if it be false, son?

**CLOWN**

If it be ne'er so false, a true gentleman may swear/ it in the behalf of his friend: and I'll swear to the prince that thou wilt not be drunk; but I know that thou wilt be/ drunk: but I'll swear it

**AUTOLYCUS**

I will prove so, sir, to my power. *(A royal fanfare plays)*

**CLOWN**

Hark! the kings/ and the princes, our kindred, are going to see the  
queen's picture. Come, follow us: we'll be thy/ good masters. *(They exit)*

**SCENE III. A Chapel in PAULINA'S house.**

*Enter Leontes, Polixenes, Florizel, Perdita, Camillo, Paulina, Lords, and Attendants*

**LEONTES**

O grave and good Paulina, the great comfort/ That I have had of thee!

**PAULINA**

What, sovereign sir,/ I did not well I meant well. All my services/ You have paid home: but that you have vouchsafed,/ With your crown'd brother and these your contracted/ Heirs of your kingdoms, my poor house to visit,/ It is a surplus of your grace, which never/ My life may last to answer.

**LEONTES**

O Paulina,/ We honour you with trouble: but we came/ To see the statue of our queen: your gallery/ Have we pass'd through, not without much content/ In many singularities; but we saw not/ That which my daughter came to look upon,/ The statue of her mother.

**PAULINA**

As she lived peerless,/ So her dead likeness, I do well believe,/ Excels whatever yet you look'd upon/ Or hand of man hath done; therefore I keep it/ Lonely, apart. *(gesturing to the curtain)* But here it is: prepare/ To see the life as lively mock'd as ever/ Still sleep mock'd death: behold, and say 'tis well. **(***Paulina draws a curtain, and discovers Hermione standing like a statue, dimly lit by many candles)*I like your silence, it the more shows off/ Your wonder: but yet speak; first, you, my liege,/ Comes it not something near?

**LEONTES**

Her natural posture!/ Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed/ Thou art Hermione; thou art she for she was as tender/ As infancy and grace. / O, thus she stood,/ Even with such life of majesty, warm life,/ As now it coldly stands, when first I woo'd her!/ I am ashamed: does not the stone rebuke me/ For being more stone than it? O royal piece,/ There's magic in thy majesty, which has/ My evils conjured to remembrance and/ From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,/ Standing like stone with thee.

**PERDITA**

And give me leave,/ And do not say 'tis superstition, that  
I kneel and then implore her blessing. Lady,/ Dear queen, that ended when I but began,/ Give me that hand of yours to kiss*. (she begins to kiss the statue’s hand)*

**PAULINA**

*(stopping Perdita’s kiss)* O, patience!/ The statue is but newly fix'd, the colour's Not dry.

**CAMILLO**

*(to Leontes)* My Lord, your sorrow was too sore laid on,/ Which sixteen winters cannot blow away.

**POLIXENES**

*(to Leontes)* Dear my brother,/ Let him that was the cause of this have power/ To take off so much grief from you as he/ Will piece up in himself.

**PAULINA**

Indeed, my Lord,/ If I had thought the sight of my poor image/ Would thus have wrought you,--for the stone is mine--/ I'ld not have show'd it. *(she begins to close the curtains)*

**LEONTES**

Do not draw the curtain.

**PAULINA**

No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy/ May think anon it moves.

**LEONTES**

Let be, let be./ Would I were dead, but that, methinks, already--/ What was he that did make it? *(to Polixines)* See, my Lord,/ Would you not deem it breathed? and that those veins/ Did verily bear blood?

**POLIXENES**

Masterly done:/ The very life seems warm upon her lip.

**LEONTES**

The fixture of her eye has motion in't,/ As we are mock'd with art.

**PAULINA**

I'll draw the curtain:/ My Lord’s almost so far transported that/ He'll think anon it lives./ I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirr'd you: but/ I could afflict you farther.

**LEONTES**

Do, Paulina;/ For this affliction has a taste as sweet/ As any cordial comfort. Still, methinks,/ There is an air comes from her: what fine chisel/ Could ever yet cut breath? Let no man mock me,/ *(he moves to kiss the statue)* For I will kiss her.

**PAULINA**

*(she moves between Leontes and Hermione)* Good my Lord, forbear:/ The ruddiness upon her lip is wet;/ You'll mar it if you kiss it, stain your own/ With oily painting. Shall I draw the curtain?

**LEONTES**

No, not these twenty years.

**PERDITA**

So long could I/ Stand by, a looker on.

**PAULINA**

Resolve you/ For more amazement. If you can behold it,/ I'll make the statue *move* indeed, descend/ And take you by the hand; but then you'll think--/ Which I protest against--I am assisted/ By wicked powers.

**LEONTES**

What you can make her do,/ I am content to look on: what to speak,/ I am content to hear; for 'tis as easy/ To make her speak as move.

**PAULINA**

It is required/ You do awake your faith. Then all stand still;/ Music, awake her; strike!

(*Music begins* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm1PKAybRnw> *)*

'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;/ Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come,/ I'll fill your grave up: stir, nay, come away,/ Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him/ Dear life redeems you. You perceive she stirs: (*Hermione begins to move then comes down from the pedestal)* Start not; her actions shall be holy as/ You hear my spell is lawful: do not shun her/ for then/ You kill her double. *(to Leontes)* Nay, present your hand:/ When she was young you woo'd her; now in age  
Is she become the suitor? *(he extends his hand and touches Hermione)*

**LEONTES**

O, she's warm!/ If this be magic, let it be an art/ Lawful as eating.

**POLIXENES**

She embraces him.

**CAMILLO**

She hangs about his neck:/ If she pertain to life let her speak too.

**POLIXENES**

Ay, and make't manifest where she has lived,/ Or how stolen from the dead.

**PAULINA**

That she is living,/ Were it but told you, should be hooted at/ Like an old tale: but it appears she lives,/ Though yet she speak not. Mark a little while./ Please you to interpose, *(to Perdita)* fair madam: kneel/ And pray your mother's blessing. *(Perdita kneels)* Turn, good lady;/ Our Perdita is found.

**HERMIONE**

You gods, look down/ And from your sacred vials pour your graces/ Upon my daughter's head! Tell me, mine own./ Where hast thou been preserved? where lived? how found/ Thy father's court? for thou shalt hear that I,/ Knowing by Paulina that the oracle/ Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved/ Myself to see the issue.

**PAULINA**

There's time enough for that;/ Go together,/ You precious winners all; your exultation  
Partake to every one. I, an old turtle,/Will wing me to some wither'd bough and there  
My mate, that's never to be found again,/ Lament till I am lost.

**LEONTES**

O, peace, Paulina!/ / Thou shouldst a husband take by my consent,  
As I by thine a wife: *(gesturing to Camillo)* this is a match,/ And made between's by vows. Thou hast found mine;/ But how, is to be question'd; for I saw her,/ As I thought, dead, and have in vain said many/ A prayer upon her grave. I'll not seek far--  
For him, I partly know his mind--to find thee/ An honourable husband. Come, Camillo,/ And take her by the hand, whose worth and honesty/ Is richly noted and here justified/ By us, a pair of kings. Let's from this place./ What! look upon my brother: both your pardons,/ That e'er I put between your holy looks/ My ill suspicion. *(gesturing to Florizel)* This is your son-in-law,/ And son unto the king, who, heavens directing,/ Is troth-plight to your daughter. Good Paulina,/ Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely/ Each one demand an answer to his part/ Perform'd in this wide gap of time since first/ We were dissever'd: hastily lead away. *(All Exit)*