

УИЛЬЯМ ШЕКСПИР

THE WINTER'S
TALE

Уильям Шекспир

The Winter's Tale

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William Shakespeare

The Winter's Tale

Dramatis Personae

LEONTES, King of Sicilia
MAMILLIUS, his son, the young Prince of Sicilia
CAMILLO, lord of Sicilia
ANTIGONUS, " " "
CLEOMENES, " " "
DION, " " "
POLIXENES, King of Bohemia
FLORIZEL, his son, Prince of Bohemia
ARCHIDAMUS, a lord of Bohemia
OLD SHEPHERD, reputed father of Perdita
CLOWN, his son
AUTOLYCUS, a rogue
A MARINER
A GAOLER
TIME, as Chorus
HERMIONE, Queen to Leontes
PERDITA, daughter to Leontes and Hermione
PAULINA, wife to Antigonus
EMILIA, a lady attending on the Queen
MOPSA, shepherdess
DORCAS, "
Other Lords, Gentlemen, Ladies, Officers, Servants, Shepherds,
Shepherdesses

SCENE: Sicilia and Bohemia

ACT I. SCENE I. Sicilia. The palace of LEONTES

Enter CAMILLO and ARCHIDAMUS

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 and your Sicilia.

CAMILLO. I think this coming summer the King of Sicilia means to

pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him.

ARCHIDAMUS. Wherein our entertainment shall shame us we will be

justified in our loves; for indeed-

CAMILLO. Beseech you-

ARCHIDAMUS. Verily, I speak it in the freedom of my knowledge: we

cannot with such magnificence, in so rare- I know not what to say. We will give you sleepy drinks, that your senses, unintelligent of our insufficiency, may, though they cannot praise us, as little accuse us.

CAMILLO. You pay a great deal too dear for what's given freely.

ARCHIDAMUS. Believe me, I speak as my understanding instructs me

and as mine honesty puts it to utterance.

CAMILLO. Sicilia cannot show himself overkind to Bohemia. They were

train'd together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt

them then such an affection which cannot choose but branch now.

Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters, though not personal, have been royally attorneyed with interchange of gifts,

letters, loving embassies; that they have seem'd to be together,

though absent; shook hands, as over a vast; and embrac'd as it

were from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their

loves!

ARCHIDAMUS. I think there is not in the world either malice or

matter to alter it. 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; they that went on crutches ere he was born desire

yet their life to see him a man.

ARCHIDAMUS. Would they else be content to die?

CAMILLO. Yes; if there were no other excuse why they should desire

to live.

ARCHIDAMUS. If the King had no son, they would desire to live on

crutches till he had one.

Exeunt

SCENE II. Sicilia. The palace of LEONTES

Enter LEONTES, POLIXENES, HERMIONE, MAMILLIUS, CAMILLO, and ATTENDANTS

POLIXENES. Nine changes of the wat'ry star hath been
The shepherd's note since we have left our throne
Without a burden. Time as long again
Would be fill'd up, my brother, with our thanks;
And yet we should for perpetuity
Go hence in debt. And therefore, like a cipher,
Yet standing in rich place, 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.
I am question'd by my fears of what may chance
Or breed upon our absence, that may blow
No sneaping winds at home, to make us say
'This is put forth too truly.' Besides, I have stay'd
To tire your royalty.

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

POLIXENES. No longer stay.

LEONTES. One sev'night longer.

POLIXENES. Very sooth, to-morrow.

LEONTES. We'll part the time between's then; and in that
I'll no gainsaying.

POLIXENES. Press me not, beseech you, so.

There is no tongue that moves, none, none i' th' world,
So soon as yours could win me. So it should now,
Were there necessity in your request, although
'Twere needful I denied it. My affairs
Do even drag me homeward; which to hinder
Were in your love a whip to me; my stay
To you a charge and trouble. To save both,
Farewell, our brother.

LEONTES. Tongue-tied, our Queen? Speak you.

HERMIONE. I had thought, sir, to have held my peace until
You had drawn oaths from him not to stay. You, sir,
Charge him too coldly. Tell him you are sure
All in Bohemia's well- this satisfaction
The by-gone day proclaim'd. 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;
But let him swear so, and he shall not stay;
We'll thwack him hence with distaffs.

[To POLIXENES] Yet of your royal presence I'll
adventure the borrow of a week. When at Bohemia
You take my lord, I'll give him my commission
To let him there a month behind the gest
Prefix'd for's parting. – Yet, good deed, Leontes,
I love thee not a jar o' th' clock behind
What lady she her lord. – You'll stay?

POLIXENES. No, madam.

HERMIONE. Nay, but you will?

POLIXENES. I may not, verily.

HERMIONE. Verily!

You put me off with limber vows; but I,
Though you would seek t' unsphere the stars with oaths,
Should yet say 'Sir, no going.' Verily,
You shall not go; a lady's 'verily' is
As potent as a lord's. Will 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. 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 gaoler then,
But your kind. hostess. Come, I'll question you
Of my lord's tricks and yours when you were boys.
You were pretty lordings then!

POLIXENES. We were, fair Queen,
Two lads that thought there was no more behind
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
And to be boy eternal.

HERMIONE. Was not my lord
The verier wag o' th' two?

POLIXENES. We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i' th' sun
And bleat the one at th' other. What we chang'd
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd
That any did. Had we pursu'd that life,
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd
With stronger blood, we should have answer'd heaven
Boldly 'Not guilty,' the imposition clear'd
Hereditary ours.

HERMIONE. By this we gather
You have tripp'd since.

POLIXENES. O my most sacred lady,
Temptations have since then been born to 's, for
In those unfledg'd days was my wife a girl;
Your precious self had then not cross'd the eyes
Of my young playfellow.

HERMIONE. Grace to boot!
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say
Your queen and I are devils. Yet, go on;
Th' offences we have made you do we'll answer,
If you first sinn'd with us, and that with us
You did continue fault, and that you slipp'd not
With any but with us.

LEONTES. Is he won yet?

HERMIONE. He'll stay, my lord.

LEONTES. At my request he would not.

Hermione, my dearest, thou never spok'st
To better purpose.

HERMIONE. Never?

LEONTES. Never but once.

HERMIONE. What! Have I twice said well? When was't before?
I prithee tell me; cram's with praise, and make's
As fat as tame things. One good deed dying tongueless
Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.
Our praises are our wages; you may ride's
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere
With spur we heat an acre. But to th' goal:
My last good deed was to entreat his stay;
What was my first? It has an elder sister,

Or I mistake you. O, would her name were Grace!
But once before I spoke to th' purpose- When?
Nay, let me have't; I long.

LEONTES. Why, that was when
Three crabbed months had sour'd themselves to death,
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand
And clap thyself my love; then didst thou utter
'I am yours for ever.'

HERMIONE. 'Tis Grace indeed.
Why, lo you now, I have spoke to th' purpose twice:
The one for ever earn'd a royal husband;
Th' other for some while a friend.

[Giving her hand to POLIXENES]

LEONTES. [Aside] Too hot, too hot!
To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.
I have tremor cordis on me; 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,
And well become the agent. 'T may, I grant;
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
As now they are, and making practis'd smiles
As in a looking-glass; and then to sigh, as 'twere
The mort o' th' deer. O, that is entertainment
My bosom likes not, nor my brows! Mamillius,
Art thou my boy?

MAMILLIUS. Ay, my good lord.

LEONTES. I' fecks!
Why, that's my bawcock. What! hast smutch'd thy nose?
They say it is a copy out of mine. Come, Captain,
We must be neat- not neat, but cleanly, Captain.
And yet the steer, the heifer, and the calf,
Are all call'd neat. – Still virginalling
Upon his palm? – How now, you wanton calf,
Art thou my calf?

MAMILLIUS. Yes, if you will, my lord.

LEONTES. Thou want'st a rough pash and the shoots that I have,
To be full like me; yet they say we are
Almost as like as eggs. Women say so,
That will say anything. But were they false
As o'er-dy'd blacks, as wind, as waters- false
As dice are to be wish'd by one that fixes
No bourn 'twixt his and mine; yet were it true
To say this boy were like me. Come, sir page,
Look on me with your welkin eye. Sweet villain!
Most dear'st! my collop! Can thy dam? – may't be?
Affection! thy intention stabs the centre.
Thou dost make possible things not so held,
Communicat'st with dreams- how can this be? -

With what's unreal thou coactive art,
And fellow'st nothing. Then 'tis very credent
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost-
And that beyond commission; and I find it,
And that to the infection of my brains
And hard'ning of my brows.

POLIXENES. What means Sicilia?

HERMIONE. He something seems unsettled.

POLIXENES. How, my lord!

What cheer? How is't with you, best brother?

HERMIONE. You look

As if you held a brow of much distraction.

Are you mov'd, 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

Twenty-three years; and saw myself unbreech'd,

In my green velvet coat; my dagger muzzl'd,

Lest it should bite its master and so prove,

As ornaments oft do, too dangerous.

How like, methought, I then was to this kernel,

This squash, this gentleman. Mine honest friend,

Will you take eggs for money?

MAMILLIUS. No, my lord, I'll fight.

LEONTES. You will? Why, happy man be's dole! 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 thicken my blood.

LEONTES. So stands this squire

Offic'd with me. We two will walk, my lord,

And leave you to your graver steps. Hermione,

How thou lov'st 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' th' garden. Shall's attend you there?

LEONTES. To your own bents dispose you; you'll be found,

Be you beneath the sky. [Aside] I am angling now,

Though you perceive me not how I give line.

Go to, go to!

How she holds up the neb, the bill to him!
And arms her with the boldness of a wife
To her allowing husband!

Exeunt POLIXENES, HERMIONE, and ATTENDANTS

Gone already!
Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a fork'd one!
Go, play, boy, play; thy mother plays, and I
Play too; but so disgrac'd a part, whose issue
Will hiss me to my grave. Contempt and clamour
Will be my knell. Go, play, boy, play. There have been,
Or I am much deceiv'd, cuckolds ere now;
And many a man there is, even at this present,
Now while I speak this, holds his wife by th' arm
That little thinks she has been sluic'd in's absence,
And his pond fish'd by his next neighbour, by
Sir Smile, his neighbour. Nay, there's comfort in't,
Whiles other men have gates and those gates open'd,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That hath revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there's none;
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis pow'rfull, think it,
From east, west, north, and south. Be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly. Know't,
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. I am like you, they say.
LEONTES. Why, that's some comfort.
What! Camillo there?
CAMILLO. Ay, my good lord.
LEONTES. Go play, Mamillius; thou'rt an honest man.
Exit MAMILLIUS
Camillo, this great sir will yet stay longer.
CAMILLO. You had much ado to make his anchor hold;
When you cast out, it still came home.
LEONTES. Didst note it?
CAMILLO. He would not stay at your petitions; made
His business more material.
LEONTES. Didst perceive it?
[Aside] They're here with me already; whisp'ring, rounding,
'Sicilia is a so-forth.' 'Tis far gone
When I shall gust it last. – 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?
For thy conceit is soaking, will draw in
More than the common blocks. Not noted, is't,
But of the finer natures, by some severals
Of head-piece extraordinary? Lower messes
Perchance are to this business purblind? Say.
CAMILLO. Business, my lord? I think most understand
Bohemia stays here longer.
LEONTES. Ha?
CAMILLO. Stays here longer.
LEONTES. Ay, but why?
CAMILLO. To satisfy your Highness, and the entreaties
Of our most gracious mistress.
LEONTES. Satisfy
Th' entreaties of your mistress! Satisfy!
Let that suffice. I have trusted thee, Camillo,
With all the nearest things to my heart, as well
My chamber-councils, wherein, priest-like, thou
Hast cleans'd my bosom- I from thee departed
Thy penitent reform'd; but we have been
Deceiv'd in thy integrity, deceiv'd
In that which seems so.
CAMILLO. Be it forbid, my lord!
LEONTES. To bide upon't: thou art not honest; or,
If thou inclin'st that way, thou art a coward,
Which hoxes honesty behind, restraining
From course requir'd; or else thou must be counted
A servant grafted in my serious trust,
And therein negligent; or else a fool
That seest a game play'd home, the rich stake drawn,
And tak'st it all for jest.
CAMILLO. My gracious lord,
I may be negligent, foolish, and fearful:
In every one of these no man is free
But that his negligence, his folly, fear,
Among the infinite doings of the world,
Sometime puts forth. In your affairs, my lord,
If ever I were wilfull-negligent,
It was my folly; if industriously
I play'd the fool, it was my negligence,
Not weighing well the end; if ever fearful
To do a thing where I the issue doubted,
Whereof the execution did cry out
Against the non-performance, 'twas a fear
Which oft infects the wisest. These, my lord,
Are such allow'd infirmities that honesty
Is never free of. 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-
But that's past doubt; you have, or your eye-glass
Is thicker than a cuckold's horn- or heard-
For to a vision so apparent rumour
Cannot be mute- or thought- for cogitation
Resides not in that man that does not think-
My wife is slippery? 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; which to reiterate were sin
As deep as that, though true.

LEONTES. Is whispering nothing?
Is leaning cheek to cheek? Is meeting noses?
Kissing with inside lip? Stopping the career
Of laughter 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;
My is nothing; nor nothing have these nothings,
If this be nothing.

CAMILLO. Good my lord, be cur'd
Of this diseas'd 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;
Pronounce thee a gross lout, a mindless slave,
Or else a hovering temporizer that
Canst with thine eyes at once see good and evil,
Inclining to them both. Were my wife's liver
Infected as her life, she would not live
The running of one glass.

CAMILLO. Who does her?

LEONTES. Why, he that wears her like her medal, hanging
About his neck, Bohemia; who- if I
Had servants true about me that bare eyes

To see alike mine honour as their profits,
Their own particular thrifts, they would do that
Which should undo more doing. Ay, and thou,
His cupbearer- whom I from meaner form
Have bench'd and rear'd to worship; who mayst see,
Plainly as heaven sees earth and earth sees heaven,
How I am gall'd- mightst bespice a cup
To give mine enemy a lasting wink;
Which draught to me were cordial.

CAMILLO. Sir, my lord,
I could do this; and that with no rash potion,
But with a ling'ring dram that should not work
Maliciously like poison. But I cannot
Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress,
So sovereignly being honourable.
I have lov'd thee-

LEONTES. Make that thy question, and go rot!
Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,
To appoint myself in this vexation; sully
The purity and whiteness of my sheets-
Which to preserve is sleep, which being spotted
Is goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps;
Give scandal to the blood o' th' 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 remov'd, 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
Even so as I mine own course have set down.
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 advis'd me. Exit

CAMILLO. O miserable lady! But, for me,
What case stand I in? I must be the poisoner

Of good Polixenes; and my ground to do't
Is the obedience to a master; one
Who, in rebellion with himself, will have
All that are his so too. To do this deed,
Promotion follows. If I could find example
Of thousands that had struck anointed kings
And flourish'd after, I'd not do't; but since
Nor brass, nor stone, nor parchment, bears not one,
Let villainy itself forswear't. I must
Forsake the court. To do't, or no, is certain
To me a break-neck. Happy star reign now!
Here comes Bohemia.

Enter POLIXENES

POLIXENES. This is strange. Methinks
My favour here begins to warp. Not speak?
Good day, Camillo.
CAMILLO. Hail, most royal sir!
POLIXENES. What is the news i' th' court?
CAMILLO. None rare, my lord.
POLIXENES. The King hath on him such a countenance
As he had lost some province, and a region
Lov'd as he loves himself; even now I met him
With customary compliment, when he,
Wafting his eyes to th' contrary and falling
A lip of much contempt, speeds from me;
So leaves me to consider what is breeding
That changes thus his manners.
CAMILLO. I dare not know, my lord.
POLIXENES. How, dare not! Do not. Do you know, and dare not
Be intelligent to me? 'Tis thereabouts;
For, to yourself, what you do know, you must,
And cannot say you dare not. Good Camillo,
Your chang'd complexions are to me a mirror
Which shows me mine chang'd too; for I must be
A party in this alteration, finding
Myself thus alter'd with't.
CAMILLO. There is a sickness
Which puts some of us in distemper; but
I cannot name the disease; and it is caught
Of you that yet are well.
POLIXENES. How! caught of me?
Make me not sighted like the basilisk;
I have look'd on thousands who have sped the better
By my regard, but kill'd none so. Camillo-
As you are certainly a gentleman; thereto
Clerk-like experienc'd, which no less adorns
Our gentry than our parents' noble names,

In whose success we are gentle- I beseech you,
If you know aught which does behove my knowledge
Thereof to be inform'd, imprison't not
In ignorant concealment.

CAMILLO. I may not answer.

POLIXENES. A sickness caught of me, and yet I well?
I must be answer'd. Dost thou hear, Camillo?
I conjure thee, by all the parts of man
Which honour does acknowledge, whereof the least
Is not this suit of mine, that thou declare
What incidency thou dost guess of harm
Is creeping toward me; how far off, how near;
Which way to be prevented, if to be;
If not, how best to bear it.

CAMILLO. Sir, I will tell you;
Since I am charg'd in honour, and by him
That I think honourable. Therefore mark my counsel,
Which must be ev'n as swiftly followed as
I mean to utter it, or both yourself and me
Cry lost, and so goodnight.

POLIXENES. On, good Camillo.

CAMILLO. I am appointed 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 or been an instrument
To vice you to't, that you have touch'd his queen
Forbiddenly.

POLIXENES. O, then my best blood turn
To an infected jelly, and my name
Be yok'd with his that did betray the Best!
Turn then my freshest reputation to
A savour that may strike the dullest nostril
Where I arrive, and my approach be shunn'd,
Nay, hated too, worse than the great'st infection
That e'er was heard or read!

CAMILLO. Swear his thought over
By each particular star in heaven and
By all their influences, you may as well
Forbid the sea for to obey the moon
As or by oath remove or counsel shake
The fabric of his folly, whose foundation
Is pil'd upon his faith and will continue
The standing of his body.

POLIXENES. 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,

That lies enclosed in this trunk which you
Shall bear along impawn'd, away to-night.
Your followers I will whisper to the business;
And will, by twos and threes, at several posterns,
Clear them o' th' 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 utt'red truth; which if you seek to prove,
I dare not stand by; nor shall you be safer
Than one condemn'd by the King's own mouth, thereon
His execution sworn.

POLIXENES. I do believe thee:

I saw his heart in's face. Give me thy hand;
Be pilot to me, and thy places shall
Still neighbour mine. 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, part of this theme, but nothing
Of his ill-ta'en suspicion! Come, Camillo;
I will respect thee as a father, if
Thou bear'st my life off hence. Let us avoid.

CAMILLO. It is in mine authority to command
The keys of all the posterns. Please your Highness
To take the urgent hour. Come, sir, away. Exeunt

ACT II. SCENE I. Sicilia. The palace of LEONTES

Enter HERMIONE, MAMILLIUS, and LADIES

HERMIONE. Take the boy to you; he so troubles me,
'Tis past enduring.

FIRST LADY. Come, my gracious lord,
Shall I be your playfellow?

MAMILLIUS. No, I'll none of you.

FIRST LADY. Why, my sweet lord?

MAMILLIUS. You'll kiss me hard, and speak to me as if
I were a baby still. I love you better.

SECOND LADY. And why so, my lord?

MAMILLIUS. Not for because
Your brows are blacker; yet black brows, they say,
Become some women best; so that there be not
Too much hair there, but in a semicircle
Or a half-moon made with a pen.

SECOND LADY. Who taught't this?

MAMILLIUS. I learn'd it out of women's faces. Pray now,
What colour are your eyebrows?

FIRST LADY. Blue, my lord.

MAMILLIUS. Nay, that's a mock. I have seen a lady's nose
That has been blue, but not her eyebrows.

FIRST LADY. Hark ye:
The Queen your mother rounds apace. We shall
Present our services to a fine new prince
One of these days; and then you'd wanton with us,
If we would have you.

SECOND LADY. She is spread of late
Into a goodly bulk. Good time encounter her!

HERMIONE. What wisdom stirs amongst you? 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.

HERMIONE. Let's have that, good sir.
Come on, sit down; come on, and do your best
To fright me with your sprites; you're pow'rfull at it.

MAMILLIUS. There was a man-

HERMIONE. Nay, come, sit down; then on.

MAMILLIUS. Dwelt by a churchyard- I will tell it softly;
Yond crickets shall not hear it.

HERMIONE. Come on then,
And give't me in mine ear.

Enter LEONTES, ANTIGONUS, LORDS, and OTHERS

LEONTES. he met there? his train? Camillo with him?

FIRST LORD. Behind the tuft of pines I met them; never
Saw I men scour so on their way. I ey'd them
Even to their ships.

LEONTES. How blest am I

In my just censure, in my true opinion!
Alack, for lesser knowledge! How accurs'd
In being so blest! There may be in the cup
A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
Th' abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.
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;
He has discover'd my design, and I
Remain a pinch'd thing; yea, a very trick
For them to play at will. How came the posterns
So easily open?

FIRST LORD. By his great authority;
Which often hath no less prevail'd than so
On your command.

LEONTES. I know't too well.

Give me the boy. 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. Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her;
Away with him; and let her sport herself

[MAMILLIUS is led out]

With that she's big with- for 'tis Polixenes
Has made thee swell thus.

HERMIONE. But I'd say he had not,
And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying,
Howe'er you lean to th' 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 ad
'Tis pity she's not honest- honourable.'
Praise her but for this her without-door form,
Which on my faith deserves high speech, and straight
The shrug, the hum or ha, these petty brands
That calumny doth use- O, I am out! -

That mercy does, for calumny will sear
Virtue itself- these shrugs, these hum's and ha's,
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 adultress.

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!
Which I'll not call a creature of thy place,
Lest barbarism, making me the precedent,
Should a like language use to all degrees
And mannerly distinguishment leave out
Betwixt the prince and beggar. I have said
She's an adultress; 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 thoroughly then to say
You did mistake.

LEONTES. No; if I mistake
In those foundations which I build upon,
The centre is not big enough to bear
A school-boy's top. Away with her to prison.
He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty
But that he speaks.

HERMIONE. There's some ill planet reigns.
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- the want of which vain dew
Perchance shall dry your pities- but I have
That honourable grief lodg'd 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; and so
The King's will be perform'd!

LEONTES. [To the GUARD] Shall I be heard?

HERMIONE. Who is't that goes with me? Beseech your highness
My women may be with me, for you see
My plight requires it. Do not weep, good fools;
There is no cause; when you shall know your mistress
Has deserv'd prison, then abound in tears
As I come out: this action I now go on
Is for my better grace. Adieu, my lord.
I never wish'd to see you sorry; now
I trust I shall. My women, come; you have leave.

LEONTES. Go, do our bidding; hence!

Exeunt HERMIONE, guarded, and LADIES

FIRST 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.

FIRST LORD. For her, my lord,
I dare my life lay down- and will do't, sir,
Please you t' accept it- that the Queen is spotless
I' th' eyes of heaven and to you- I mean
In this which you accuse her.

ANTIGONUS. If it prove
She's otherwise, I'll keep my stables where
I lodge my wife; I'll go in couples with her;
Than when I feel and see her no farther trust her;
For every inch of woman in the world,
Ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false,
If she be.

LEONTES. Hold your peaces.

FIRST LORD. Good my lord-

ANTIGONUS. It is for you we speak, not for ourselves.
You are abus'd, and by some putter-on
That will be damn'd for't. Would I knew the villain!
I would land-damn him. Be she honour-flaw'd-
I have three daughters: the eldest is eleven;
The second and the third, nine and some five;
If this prove true, they'll pay for 't. By mine honour,
I'll geld 'em all; fourteen they shall not see
To bring false generations. They are co-heirs;
And I had rather glib myself than they
Should not produce fair issue.

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; and see withal
The instruments that feel.

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 I credit?

FIRST 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 blam'd for't how you might.

LEONTES. Why, what need we
Commune with you of this, but rather follow
Our forceful instigation? Our prerogative
Calls not your counsels; but our natural goodness
Imparts this; which, if you- or stupified
Or seeming so in skill- cannot or will not
Relish a truth like us, inform yourselves
We need no more of your advice. The matter,
The loss, the gain, the ord'ring 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-
Which was as gross as ever touch'd conjecture,
That lack'd sight only, nought for approbation
But only seeing, all other circumstances
Made up to th' deed- doth push on this proceeding.
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, whom you know
Of stuff'd sufficiency. Now, from the oracle
They will bring all, whose spiritual counsel had,
Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?

FIRST LORD. Well done, my lord.

LEONTES. Though I am satisfied, and need no more
Than what I know, yet shall the oracle
Give rest to th' minds of others such as he
Whose ignorant credulity will not
Come up to th' truth. So have we thought it good
From our free person she should be confin'd,
Lest that the treachery of the two fled hence
Be left her to perform. 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.

Exeunt

SCENE II. Sicilia. A prison

Enter PAULINA, a GENTLEMAN, and ATTENDANTS

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 GENTLEMAN with the GAOLER

Now, good sir,
You know me, do you not?
GAOLER. For a worthy lady,
And one who much I honour.
PAULINA. Pray you, then,
Conduct me to the Queen.
GAOLER. I may not, madam;
To the contrary I have express commandment.
PAULINA. Here's ado, to lock up honesty and honour from
Th' access of gentle visitors! Is't lawful, pray you,
To see her women- any of them? Emilia?
GAOLER. So please you, madam,
To put apart these your attendants,
Shall bring Emilia forth.
PAULINA. I pray now, call her.
Withdraw yourselves. Exeunt ATTENDANTS
GAOLER. And, madam,
I must be present at your conference.
PAULINA. Well, be't so, prithee. Exit GAOLER
Here's such ado to make no stain a stain
As passes colouring.

Re-enter GAOLER, 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 borne greater,
She is, something before her time, deliver'd.
PAULINA. A boy?
EMILIA. A daughter, and a goodly babe,

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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