The entire page is framed by a highly detailed, ornate border of golden-brown floral and leaf motifs on a dark blue background. The border features intricate scrollwork, leaves, and small flowers, creating a rich, textured frame around the central text.

# The Winter's Tale

By  
William Shakespeare



The  
Primary  
Shakespeare  
Company

WRITTEN BY LUKE HOLLOWELL-WILLIAMS  
& NEIL CARTER

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# Prologue

## A SAD TALE'S BEST FOR WINTER

WELCOME! PLEASE, PLEASE, COME IN AND CLOSE THE DOOR. YOU POOR THING, YOU MUST BE FROZEN! PEOPLE ARE SAYING IT'S THE WORST BLIZZARD THEY CAN REMEMBER. WELL, THERE'S ONE THING FOR SURE - WE'RE GOING TO BE SNOWED IN! SO, SHAKE OFF YOUR BOOTS AND SIT BY THE FIRE. WOULD YOU LIKE TO BORROW MY CLOAK? NO? PERHAPS, YOU'D PREFER TO TAKE A BLANKET? NOW, I'LL CLOSE THE SHUTTERS, AND LIGHT THE CANDLES. AND, SEEING AS WE'RE GOING TO BE STUCK HERE AWHILE, WE COULD PASS THE TIME WITH A STORY. YOU'D LIKE THAT? EXCELLENT! AH... BUT WHICH ONE? LET ME SEE..... OF COURSE - I'LL TELL YOU **THE WINTER'S TALE**. AND OH, WHAT A TALE! PREPARE YOURSELF FOR STATUES THAT COME TO LIFE, FOR BABIES LOST AND BABIES FOUND, KINGS AND SHIPWRECKS AND BEARS. BUT, BEFORE WE GET TO ANY OF THAT, WE NEED TO GO BACK TO **BEFORE** THE BEGINNING OF OUR STORY...

TO A CASTLE IN THE LAND OF **SICILIA**

WHERE TWO BABIES HAVE JUST BEEN BORN...



IN FACT THOSE BABIES WERE **PRINCES**. ONE WAS CALLED **POLIXENES** ( SAY IT LIKE POLICKS - EH - KNEES!) AND THE OTHER WAS NAMED **LEONTES**. (SAY IT LIKE LEE- ON - TEAS!) THEY GREW UP TOGETHER, LOVING EACH OTHER LIKE BROTHERS - THOUGH EACH WAS DESTINED TO RULE A DIFFERENT KINGDOM. LET'S GROW THEM UP AT BIT...

THAT'S BETTER! YOUNG POLIXENES' SMILE WAS LIKE THE SUN, LIGHTING UP EVERY ROOM HE ENTERED



WHILST LEONTES- ALWAYS AT HIS FRIEND SIDE- WAS MORE LIKE THE SHADOW THAT THE SUN CASTS.



THEY DID EVERYTHING TOGETHER: RUNNING WILDLY THROUGH THE CORRIDORS OF THE PALACE...



STEALING BISCUITS FROM THE KITCHEN...



PAINTING ON THE STATUES IN THE GARDEN!



AND POLIXENES WOULD LAUGH SO HARD THAT LEONTES COULD NOT HELP BUT JOIN IN - THE SHADOWS LIFTING AND HIS OWN FACE LIGHTING UP. THEY WERE EVERYTHING THAT BEST FRIENDS SHOULD BE.

AS THEY GREW OLDER, THEY HAD TO LEARN ALL THAT PRINCES MUST KNOW...



HOW TO HUNT...



HOW TO COMMAND AND RULE...



HOW TO FIGHT...



AND STILL POLIXENES MANAGED, SOMEHOW, TO BRING LAUGHTER AND LIGHTNESS TO ALL THEY DID TOGETHER



BUT AT LAST, THE TIME CAME FOR THEM BOTH TO BECOME KINGS



AND LEONTES HAD TO WAVE A SAD FAREWELL TO HIS DEAREST FRIEND.

MANY YEARS LATER, LONGING TO SEE POLIXENES AGAIN, LEONTES SENT AN INVITATION TO THE LAND OF BOHEMIA, ASKING POLIXENES TO COME AND VISIT HIM ...



HE VERY MUCH HOPED HIS FRIEND WOULD SAY YES...

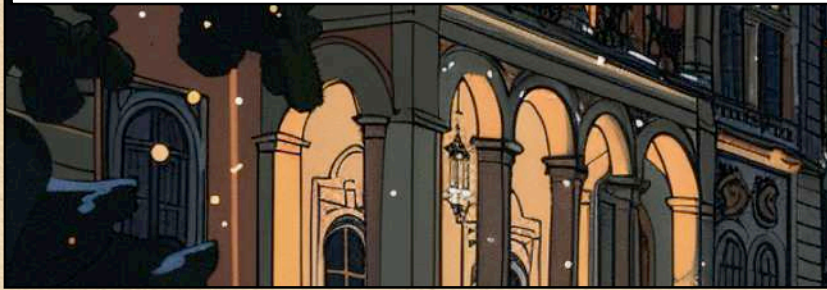
POLIXENES  
Land of Bohemia  
Bohemia





# Act I Too Hot, Too Hot!

OUTSIDE LEONTES' CASTLE, THE SNOW IS FALLING...



...AND ALL IS QUIET

INSIDE IT COULDN'T BE MORE DIFFERENT!



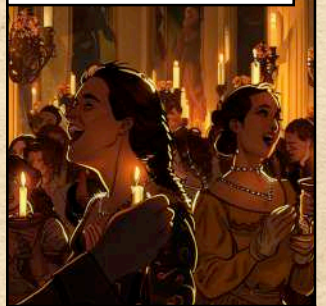
A PARTY IS IN FULL SWING...

MUSICIANS ARE PLAYING...



GUESTS ARE FEASTING ON THE FINEST FOODS...

PEOPLE ARE SINGING...



AND EVERYONE IS HAVING THE TIME OF THEIR LIVES!!!

THERE'S MUCH DANCING GOING ON, TOO - NOT ALL OF IT BRILLIANT....



BUT RIGHT IN THE CENTRE OF THE THRONG THERE ARE TWO KINGS WHO ARE GIVING IT ALL THEY'VE GOT.

SO, YES, NOT ONLY DID POLIXENES ACCEPT HIS GREAT FRIEND'S INVITATION, BUT HE'S ALSO ACTUALLY STAYED FOR NINE WHOLE MONTHS! **NINE MONTHS!** SOME OF US MIGHT FEEL THIS WAS A BIT ON THE LONG SIDE.... BUT NOT LEONTES! HE HAS LOVED EVERY MINUTE OF HAVING HIS FRIEND THERE AND IS THROWING THIS PARTY IN HIS HONOUR. POLIXENES DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO THANK HIS DEAR FRIEND FOR ALL THE HOSPITALITY

I MULTIPLY WITH ONE "WE THANK YOU" MANY THOUSANDS MORE THAT GO BEFORE IT

STAY YOUR THANKS A WHILE AND PAY THEM WHEN YOU PART!

POLIXENES KNOWS HE MUST GO HOME AND THAT HIS FRIEND WILL BE SAD



SIR, THAT'S TOMORROW!



POLIXENES! ONE SEV'N NIGHT LONGER



VERY SOOTH, TOMORROW

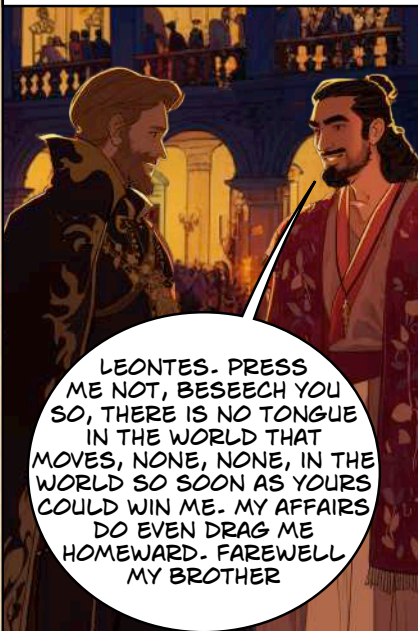
LEONTES WON'T GIVE UP, IF HE WON'T STAY A WEEK, HALF A WEEK!



WE'LL PART THE TIME BETWEEN'S THEN!



BUT THE KINGDOM OF BOHEMIA HAS BEEN WITHOUT A RULER FOR TOO LONG...



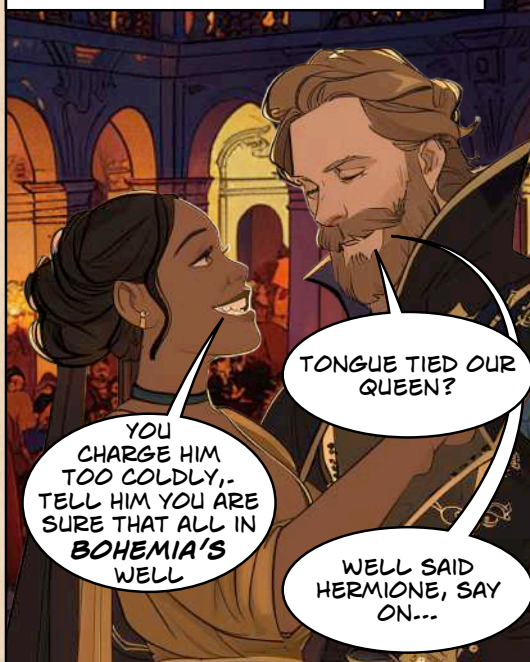
LEONTES. PRESS ME NOT, BESEECH YOU SO, THERE IS NO TONGUE IN THE WORLD THAT MOVES, NONE, NONE, IN THE WORLD SO SOON AS YOURS COULD WIN ME. MY AFFAIRS DO EVEN DRAG ME HOMEWARD. FAREWELL MY BROTHER

BUT LEONTES STILL HASN'T GIVEN UP, AFTER ALL HE HAS A SECRET WEAPON, A VERY PERSUASIVE PERSON, HIS WIFE HERMIONE! WHO IS SOON TO HAVE A BABY!



IF ONLY HE COULD GET HER TO SPEAK TO POLIXENES, SHE COULD DEFINITELY GET HIM TO STAY

AND AT THAT VERY MOMENT, SHE APPEARED AT HIS SIDE!



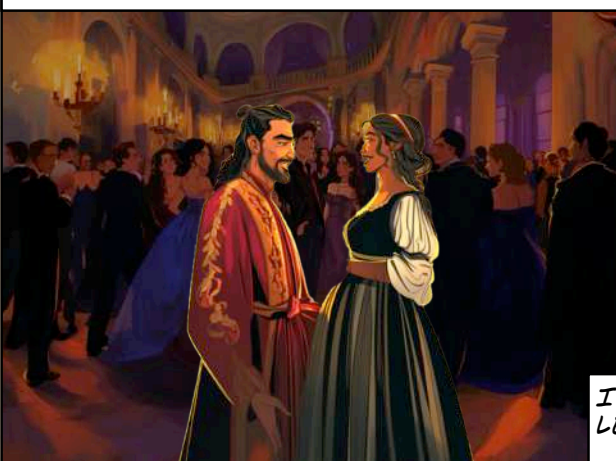
YOU CHARGE HIM TOO COLDLY,. TELL HIM YOU ARE SURE THAT ALL IN BOHEMIA'S WELL

TONGUE TIED OUR QUEEN?

WELL SAID HERMIONE, SAY ON...

HERMIONE NOW UNDERSTANDS THAT IT'S HER JOB TO TRY TO GET POLIXENES TO STAY A BIT LONGER. HERMIONE LOVES LEONTES. SHE'S VERY FOND OF POLIXENES TOO, BUT SHE ESPECIALLY LIKES HOW HAPPY HE MAKES HER KING. SO, SHE'S DETERMINED TO USE ALL HER SKILL WITH WORDS, AND ALL HER CHARM TO GET HIM TO STAY. SHE'LL START WITH HER SMILE, WHICH IS... DAZZLING.

THE MUSIC STARTS AGAIN, AND LEONTES IS CONTENT TO STAND TO ONE SIDE, WATCHING HIS BELOVED QUEEN AND HIS DEAREST FRIEND TALKING AS THEY JOIN THE DANCE.



LEONTES CALLS OVER HIS YOUNG SON, MAMILLIUS, WHOM HE LOVES DEARLY



IT'S CLOSE TO CHRISTMAS AND LEONTES HAS A PRESENT FOR HIM...

WHEN LEONTES LOOKS BACK AGAIN, HERMIONE AND POLIXENES ARE ALL SMILES, LEONTES CALLS ACROSS TO THEM...



IS HE WON YET?

HE'LL STAY MY LORD!

FOR A MOMENT LEONTES' FACE LIGHTS UP. HIS FRIEND WILL STAY!



THEN SUDDENLY, SOMETHING AWFUL HAPPENS. NO-ONE CAN SEE IT, BUT SOMETHING IN LEONTES' MIND BEGINS TO TURN...

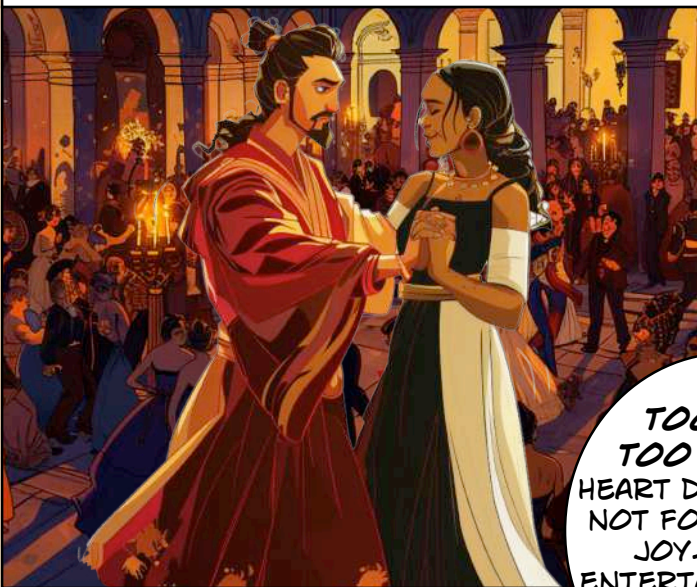
A SUSPICION. LIKE A DROP OF BLOOD IN A GLASS OF MILK...



IT STARTS TO SPREAD, STARTING TO SPOIL EVERYTHING...



IS IT POSSIBLE, HE THINKS, THAT POLIXENES LIKES HERMIONE MORE THAN HIM? AND WHAT IF HERMIONE LIKES POLIXENES MORE THAN LEONTES! HE TRIES TO SHAKE OFF THE JEALOUS THOUGHTS THAT WOULD SWARM INTO HIS MIND AND REMINDS HIMSELF THAT HE'S GOT WHAT HE WANTED.

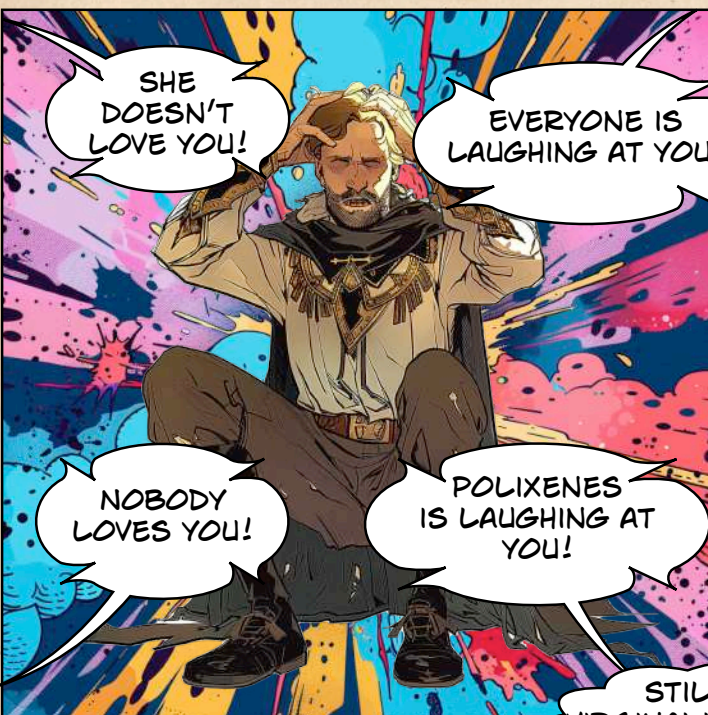


HE CAN'T STAND TO LOOK AND TURNS AWAY, BUT THE THOUGHTS COME THICK AND FAST, AS IF VOICES ARE WHISPERING

EVERYONE ELSE IN THE ROOM SEES TWO FRIENDS DANCING AND HOLDING HANDS - AS FRIENDS SOMETIMES DO - BUT THE POISONED MIND OF LEONTES SEES SOMETHING ELSE: HOLDING HANDS? THAT'S FOR HUSBANDS AND WIVES!



TOO HOT!  
TOO HOT! MY  
HEART DANCES, BUT  
NOT FOR JOY, NOT  
JOY. THAT IS  
ENTERTAINMENT MY  
HEART LIKES  
NOT!



SHE  
DOESN'T  
LOVE YOU!

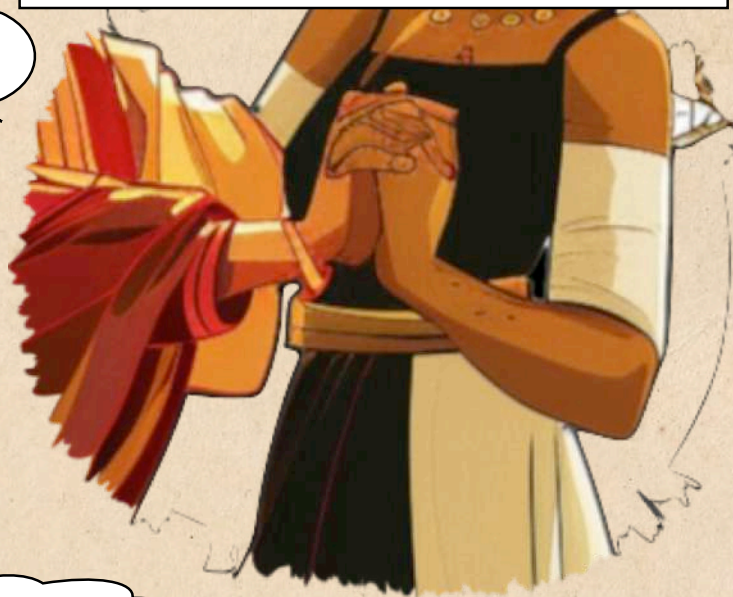
EVERYONE IS  
LAUGHING AT YOU!

NOBODY  
LOVES YOU!

POLIXENES  
IS LAUGHING AT  
YOU!

STILL  
VIRGINALLING UPON  
HIS PALM?

LEONTES MAKES HIMSELF LOOK AGAIN. HE SEES THEIR HANDS, HELD, AS THEY DANCE...



A VIRGINAL WAS  
LIKE A VERY EARLY  
KIND OF PIANO, SO,  
HERE, LEONTES IS SAYING  
THAT HERMIONE'S  
FINGERS ARE PLAYING  
ON POLIXENES HAND  
LIKE A KEYBOARD.





AND NOW HIS MIND  
SLIPS INTO ...

# MADNESS

IT'S AS IF HE'S  
SLIPPED INTO A  
PARALLEL UNIVERSE...

WHERE POLIXENES AND  
HERMIONE ARE  
MARRIED!

HANG ON, HE THINKS,  
THAT WOULD MEAN  
MAMILLIUS WAS THEIR  
SON, NOT HIS! HE HAS  
TO CHECK...

BUT MAMILLIUS DOESN'T  
UNDERSTAND...

YES! IF  
YOU WILL MY  
LORD

HE THINKS IT'S A GAME WHERE HE HAS TO  
PRETEND TO BE AN ANIMAL!

LEONTES STARES AND STARES AS HIS  
SON GALLOPS AROUND HIM, WONDERING  
IF HE IS HIS SON

ARE YOU MY  
CALF?

AND THERE'S SOMETHING SO  
INTENSE ABOUT HIS STARE...

POLIXENES WONDERS WHAT'S  
GOING ON...

IN THIS SHORT SPACE OF TIME,  
LEONTES HAS BECOME  
COMPLETELY CONVINCED THAT  
HERMIONE AND POLIXENES ARE  
IN LOVE AND SO ARE NOW HIS  
**ENEMIES**- ENEMIES MUST BE  
DEFEATED. BUT THEY MUST  
ALSO NOT SUSPECT ANYTHING.  
SO, LEONTES SMILES AS IF TO  
PROVE **NOTHING IS WRONG**.

THAT EVERYONE STOPS TALKING  
AND LOOKS AT LEONTES

HOW NOW MY  
LORD! WHAT  
CHEER?

ARE YOU  
MOVED MY  
LORD?

LEONTES TELLS THEM TO DO  
WHAT THEY LIKE

SO LEONTES SMILES TO PROVE  
NOTHING IS WRONG...

HAPPY THAT HE'S OK,  
HERMIONE SAYS...

NO, IN GOOD  
EARNEST

IF YOU  
WOULD SEEK US, WE ARE  
YOURS IN THE GARDEN.  
SHALL I ATTEND YOU  
THERE?

TO YOUR OWN  
BENTS DISPOSE  
YOU



BUT AS THEY LEAVE...



YOU'LL BE FOUND, BE YOU  
BENEATH THE SKY

AND STILL, NO-ONE ELSE HAS ANY IDEA  
WHAT IS GOING THROUGH LEONTES' HEAD.  
HOW COULD THEY?

AS THEY WALK AWAY,  
HERMIONE SIMPLY TURNS TO  
LISTEN TO POLIXENES - WHICH  
IS ALL ANYONE ELSE SEES -



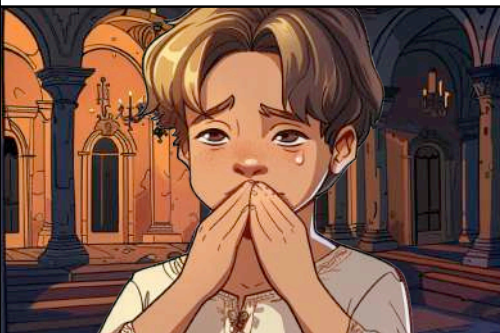
BUT TO LEONTES, SHE'S  
TURNED HER MOUTH TO HIM  
WAITING TO BE KISSED! HE'S  
FURIOUS.

HE TURNS ON MAMILLIUS,  
HIS VOICE ROARING...



GO PLAY,  
BOY, PLAY: THY  
MOTHER PLAYS AND I  
PLAY TOO. GO PLAY  
BOY, PLAY!

MAMILLIUS STARTS TO CRY...



THE SIGHT OF MAMILLIUS IN TEARS  
MOMENTARILY BRINGS LEONTES TO HIS  
SENSES. HE'S ALWAYS LOVED HIS SON.



I AM  
LIKE YOU THEY  
SAY

WHY, THAT'S  
SOME COMFORT,  
GO PLAY  
MAMILLIUS, THOU  
ART AN HONEST  
MAN

LOOKING AT HIS SON, HE REMEMBERS  
HIS OWN CHILDHOOD, WHEN HE AND  
POLIXENES WERE SUCH GOOD FRIENDS



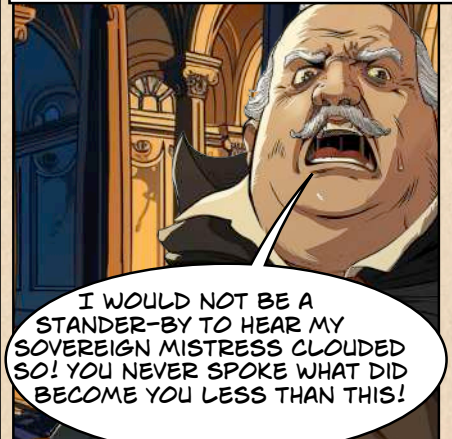
WHAT!  
CAMILLO  
THERE!

CAMILLO IS LEONTES' RIGHT HAND MAN;  
LONG-SERVING, HONEST AND NOBLE.  
HE IS LOYAL TO BOTH THE KING AND HIS  
QUEEN.



DOES THOU  
NOT THINK MY  
WIFE IS  
SLIPPERY?

CAMILLO WASTES NO TIME IN  
TELLING HIM OFF...



I WOULD NOT BE A  
STANDER-BY TO HEAR MY  
SOVEREIGN MISTRESS CLOUDED  
SO! YOU NEVER SPOKE WHAT DID  
BECOME YOU LESS THAN THIS!

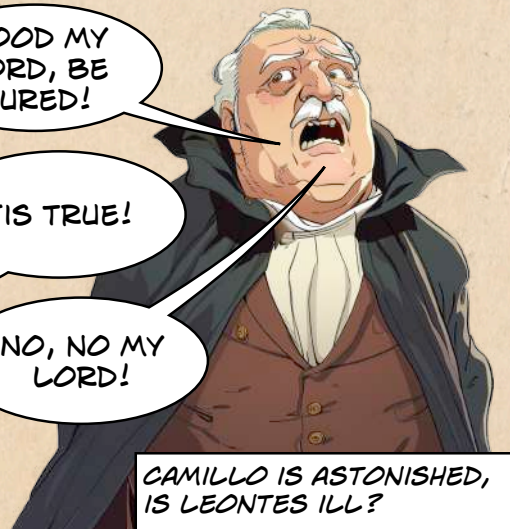


IS  
WHISPERING  
NOTHING? IS  
LEANING CHEEK  
TO CHEEK? IS  
MEETING NOSES?  
WHY, THEN THE  
WORLD AND ALL  
THAT'S IN IT IS  
NOTHING!

GOOD MY  
LORD, BE  
CURED!

TIS TRUE!

NO, NO MY  
LORD!



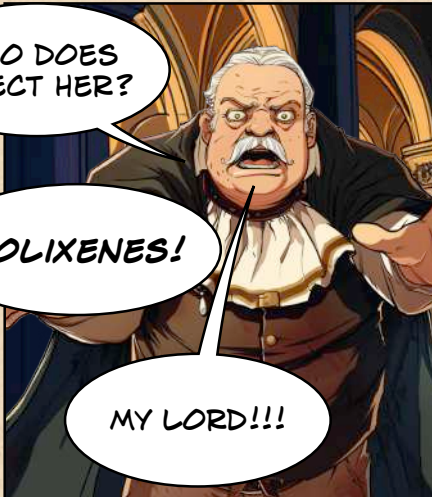
CAMILLO IS ASTONISHED,  
IS LEONTES ILL?





IT IS. YOU LIE, YOU LIE! I SAY THOU LIEST CAMILLO AND I HATE THEE!

CAMILLO'S HEAD IS SPINNING. CAN LEONTES BE RIGHT? IF SO, WITH WHOM HAS HERMIONE BETRAYED HIM?



WHO DOES INFECT HER?

POLIXENES!

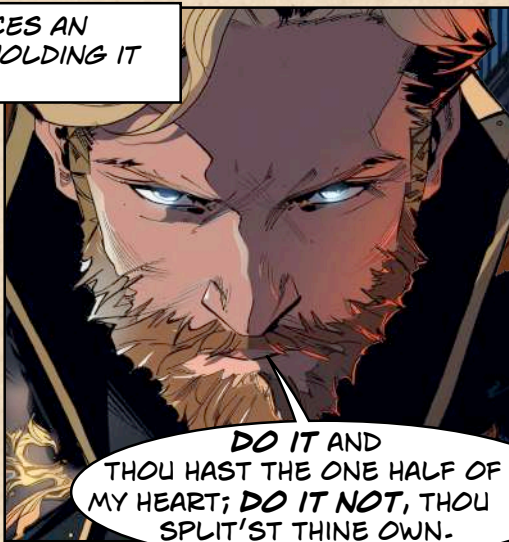
MY LORD!!!

NOW HE KNOWS FOR SURE THAT LEONTES IS DELUDED. THE ONLY PERSON TO LOVE LEONTES AS MUCH AS HERMIONE IS POLIXENES. NEITHER WOULD EVER DO ANYTHING TO HURT HIM. WHAT LEONTES HAS SAID SO FAR HAS WORRIED CAMILLO DEEPLY, BUT WHAT LEONTES DOES NEXT, TERRIFIES HIM...

FROM HIS POCKET, LEONTES PRODUCES AN EVIL-LOOKING BOTTLE OF POISON HOLDING IT OUT TO CAMILLO.



BESPICE A CUP TO GIVE MINE ENEMY A LASTING WINK



DO IT AND THOU HAST THE ONE HALF OF MY HEART; DO IT NOT, THOU SPLIT'ST THINE OWN.

WHAT A HORRIBLE CHOICE TO HAVE TO MAKE! EITHER TO KILL POLIXENES OR TO BE KILLED HIMSELF... CAMILLO DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, BUT HE KNOWS THAT, IF HE REFUSES NOW, LEONTES WILL HAVE HIM EXECUTED ON THE SPOT

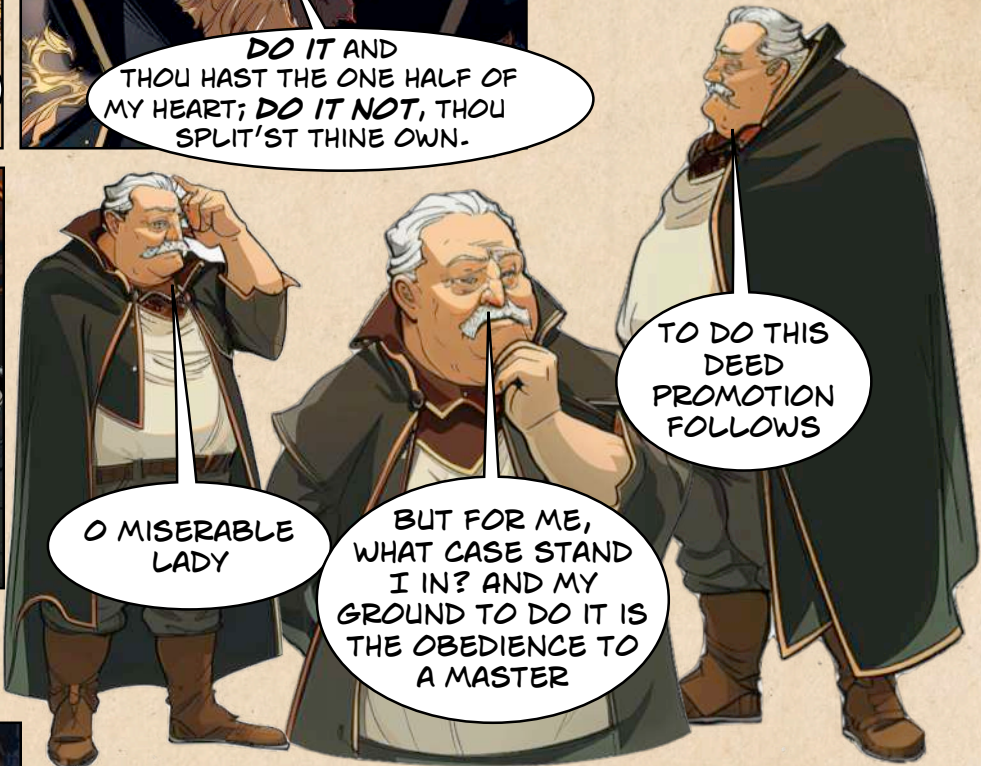


I'LL DO IT, MY LORD

WAIT A MINUTE, CAN GOOD CAMILLO BE THINKING OF CARRYING THIS OUT???



IF I COULD FIND EXAMPLE OF THOUSANDS THAT HAD STRUCK ANOINTED KINGS AND FLOURISHED AFTER, I'D NOT DO IT.



O MISERABLE LADY

BUT FOR ME, WHAT CASE STAND I IN? AND MY GROUND TO DO IT IS THE OBEDIENCE TO A MASTER

TO DO THIS DEED PROMOTION FOLLOWS

OF COURSE NOT! HE'S **GOOD** CAMILLO, THE **BEST**! EVEN IF KILLING POLIXENES MADE HIM A **BILLIONAIRE**, HE'D STILL REFUSE. BUT HOW IS HE TO **ESCAPE LEONTES' FURY** WHEN THE KING FINDS OUT HE'S BEEN DISOBEYED? THERE'S ONLY ONE THING TO DO... HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO SAVE **POLIXENES** AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT. QUICK, HERE COMES POLIXENES NOW...





GOOD DAY  
CAMILLO

HAIL MOST  
ROYAL SIR

CAMILLO KNOWS THAT THERE  
IS VERY LITTLE TIME AND THAT,  
IF THEY ARE TO SAVE THEIR  
LIVES, HE MUST BE BLUNT



I AM  
APPOINTED  
BY THE KING TO  
MURDER  
YOU!!!

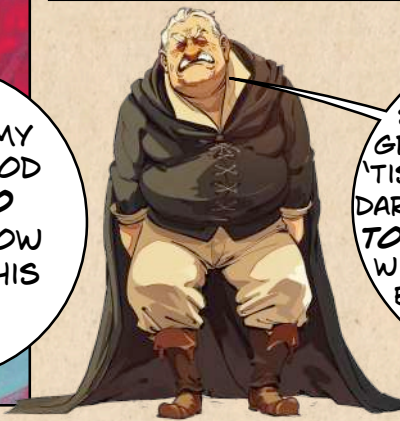


FOR  
WHAT???



OH THEN MY  
BEST BLOOD  
TURN TO  
JELLY! HOW  
SHOULD THIS  
GROW?

BUT NOW IS NOT THE TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS, NOW IS  
THE TIME TO RUN...



I KNOW NOT;  
BUT AM SURE 'TIS  
SAFER TO **AVOID** WHAT'S  
GROWN THAN QUESTION HOW  
'TIS BORN. IF THEREFORE YOU  
DARE TRUST MY HONESTY, **AWAY**  
**TONIGHT!** YOUR FOLLOWERS I  
WILL WHISPER TO THE  
BUSINESS AND CLEAR THEM  
OF THE CITY, **COME**  
**SIR, AWAY!**

AND SO THEY RAN, THROUGH THE CITY, TO THE BOATS WAITING FOR POLIXENES AND HIS FOLLOWERS. WOW, WE'VE COME TO THE END OF ACT 1 - I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. MAYBE WE NEED TO CHECK WHERE EVERYONE IS AND WHAT THEY ARE DOING...



HERMIONE IS IN HER  
BED CHAMBER, TIRED  
AFTER THE PARTY...



LEONTES IS BLINDED  
BY RAGE, WAITING FOR  
NEWS OF  
POLIXENES' DEATH...



CAMILLO AND POLIXENES ARE RUNNING  
THROUGH THE CITY, TRYING TO SAIL AWAY  
BEFORE LEONTES FINDS OUT THEY ARE GONE.  
WILL THEY MAKE IT? WILL HERMIONE LEARN  
WHAT'S GOING ON? WILL LEONTES CATCH AND  
KILL POLIXENES? YOU'LL HAVE TO READ ON TO  
FIND OUT!!!

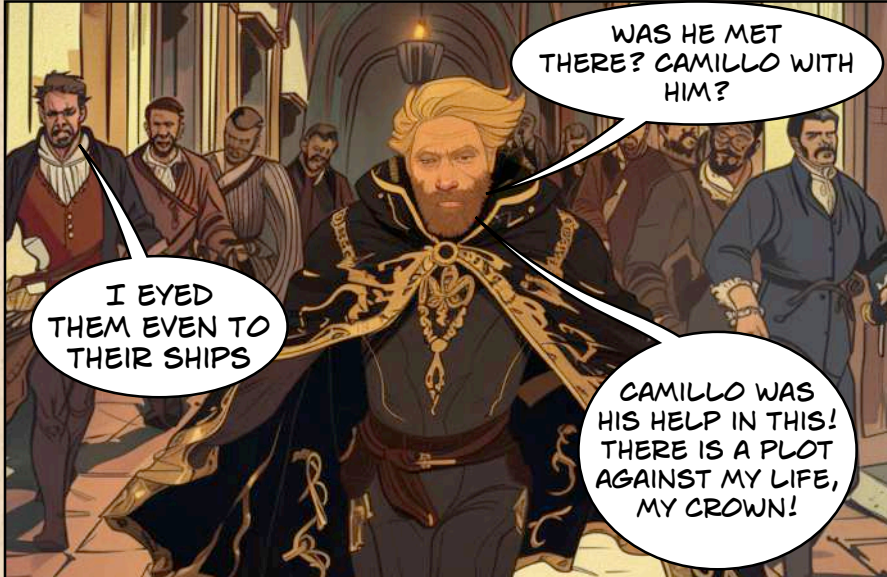


# Act II

## YOU DO BUT MISTAKE

HAD LEONTES BECOME A WEREWOLF HE COULD NOT BE MORE CHANGED! FROM LOVING TO SAVAGE, FROM WISE TO FOOLISH, FROM HAPPY TO A CREATURE POSSESSED BY A MAD FURY.

IT'S BEEN A LONG EVENING AND HERMIONE NEEDS A REST, SHE'S WITH PAULINA A LADY OF THE COURT AND HER GREATEST FRIEND AND MAMILLIUS. IT'S NEARLY BED TIME...



I EYED THEM EVEN TO THEIR SHIPS

WAS HE MET THERE? CAMILLO WITH HIM?

CAMILLO WAS HIS HELP IN THIS! THERE IS A PLOT AGAINST MY LIFE, MY CROWN!



SIT BY US AND TELL US A TALE

A SAD TALE'S BEST FOR WINTER

LET'S HAVE THAT! DO YOUR BEST TO FRIGHT ME WITH YOUR SPRITES...

BUT AT THAT MOMENT THE DOOR FLIES OPEN...

HERMIONE HAS NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING ON. CAN IT BE SOME SORT OF JOKE?



GIVE ME THE BOY!!!

WHAT IS THIS? SPORT?

BEAR THE BOY HENCE!

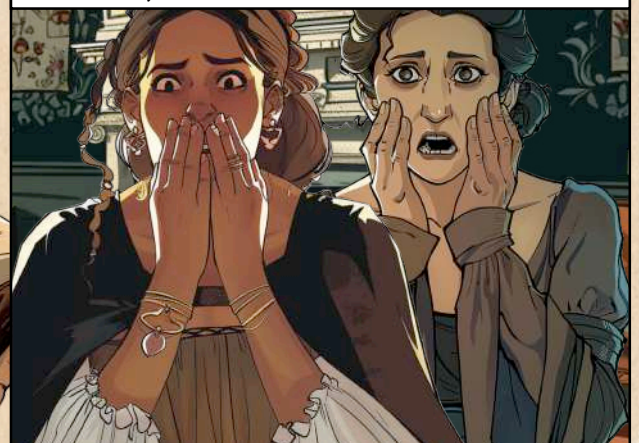
AT FIRST NO-ONE MOVES...

THE GUARDS ARE AS PUZZLED AS HERMIONE AT THIS COMMAND; WHY SHOULD THEY TAKE THE BOY AWAY FROM HIS MOTHER - THEIR DEAR QUEEN? BUT LEONTES ROUNDS ON THEM AND SCREAMS HIS ORDER SO FIERCELY THAT THEY FEAR FOR THEIR OWN LIVES



AWAY WITH HIM!

AS ONE OF THE GUARDS LEADS HIM GENTLY AWAY, HERMIONE AND PAULINA LOOK ON, SPEECHLESS WITH SHOCK.







YOU, MY LORDS, LOOK ON HER, MARK HER WELL: SHE HAS **BETRAYED** ME!

HERMIONE LOVES LEONTES DEEPLY AND HAS DONE SO FOR A LONG TIME. SHE THINKS THIS MUST JUST BE A MISUNDERSTANDING.



YOU MY LORD, DO BUT MISTAKE!



YOU HAVE MISTOOK, MY LADY, **POLIXENES** FOR **LEONTES**!

NO, BY MY LIFE!

AND SO, NO-ONE SPEAKS. EVERYONE **WOULD** SPEAK FOR HERMIONE, THEIR MISTRESS, BUT FOR FEAR OF LEONTES. THEY KNOW HER TO BE KIND AND FAIR AND NOT A SINGLE PERSON IN THAT ROOM CAN BELIEVE SHE HAS DONE ANYTHING TO DESERVE PRISON. EVEN A FURIOUS LEONTES CANNOT MAKE THEM MOVE.

LEONTES WANTS HIS GUARDS TO TAKE HERMIONE TO THE DUNGEON!



GO, DO OUR BIDDING, HENCE!

IT'S NOT UNTIL HERMIONE HERSELF NODS HER AGREEMENT TO THEM -

KNOWING THAT THE GUARDS MUST OBEY OR FACE PUNISHMENT THEMSELVES...



...THAT THEY CARRY OUT LEONTES' ORDERS.

THE LORDS LEFT ARE BEWILDERED. LEONTES' ACTIONS SEEM LIKE THOSE OF A MADMAN AND DESTINED TO HAVE TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES.



BESEECH YOUR HIGHNESS, CALL THE QUEEN AGAIN

BE CERTAIN WHAT YOU DO SIR

I DARE LAY DOWN MY LIFE THAT THE QUEEN IS SPOTLESS

BUT LEONTES WON'T LISTEN TO SENSE, HE'S ON A DIFFERENT PLANET TO EVERYONE ELSE...



HOLD YOUR PEACES! EITHER THOU ART MOST IGNORANT BY AGE, OR THOU WERT BORN A FOOL

SO CONFIDENT IS LEONTES THAT HE IS RIGHT AND EVERYONE ELSE - AND I MEAN EVERYONE - IS WRONG, THAT HE HAS DONE SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY...

YET FOR A GREATER CONFIRMATION I HAVE DISPATCHED IN POST TO THE ORACLE AT SACRED **DELPHOS**, TO **APOLLO'S TEMPLE**



LEONTES HAS SENT SERVANTS TO THE DELPHIC (SAY DEL-FIC) ORACLE TO ASK WHETHER HERMIONE IS GUILTY OR INNOCENT. THE ORACLE LIVED AT **DELPHI** IN **GREECE** AND THROUGH HER, PEOPLE COULD TALK TO THE GOD **APOLLO**, ASKING HIM QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE. BECAUSE THE ANSWERS THE ORACLE GAVE CAME FROM A GOD, THEY WERE THE ULTIMATE TRUTH. LEONTES IS CONVINCED THE ORACLE WILL BE ON HIS SIDE, AND THEN EVERYONE WILL HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT HE IS RIGHT!



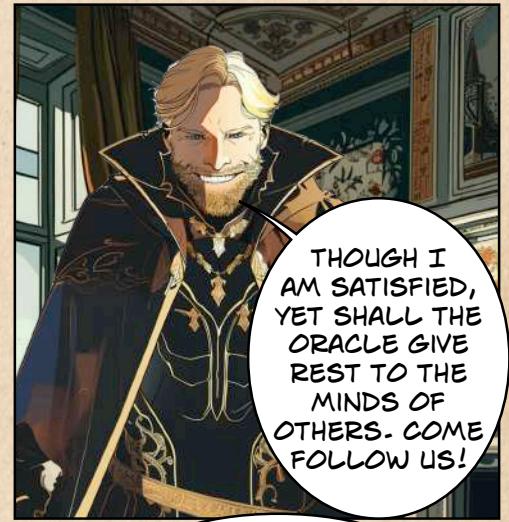


HAVE I DONE WELL?

THIS IS THE WORST THING EVER DONE IN SICILIA, BUT THE LORDS CAN'T SAY THAT...



WELL DONE MY LORD



THOUGH I AM SATISFIED, YET SHALL THE ORACLE GIVE REST TO THE MINDS OF OTHERS. COME FOLLOW US!

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HERMIONE? LEONTES' BEHAVIOUR SEEMS TO HAVE TERRIFIED THE WHOLE COURT INTO SILENCE. IF NO-ONE WILL SPEAK UP FOR HER - IS SHE DOOMED? WELL, NOT IF PAULINA HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT...



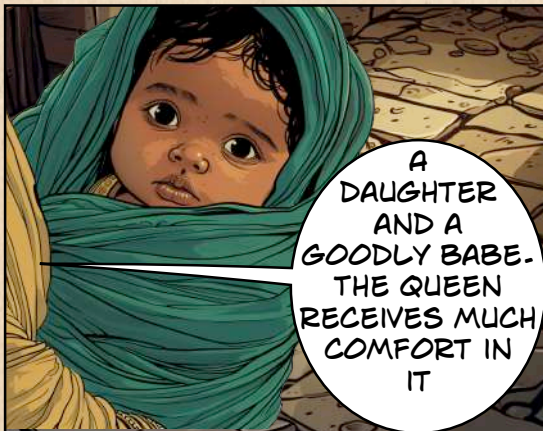
PAULINA IS DOWN IN THE DUNGEONS, NEAR WHERE HERMIONE IS BEING HELD...



HOW FARES OUR GRACIOUS LADY?

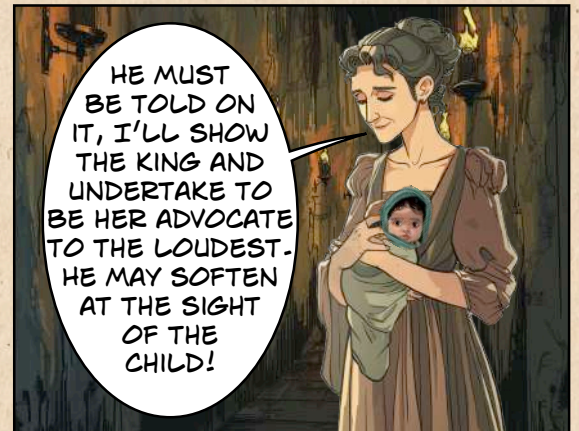
SHE IS SOMETHING BEFORE HER TIME DELIVERED

A BOY?



A DAUGHTER AND A GOODLY BABE. THE QUEEN RECEIVES MUCH COMFORT IN IT

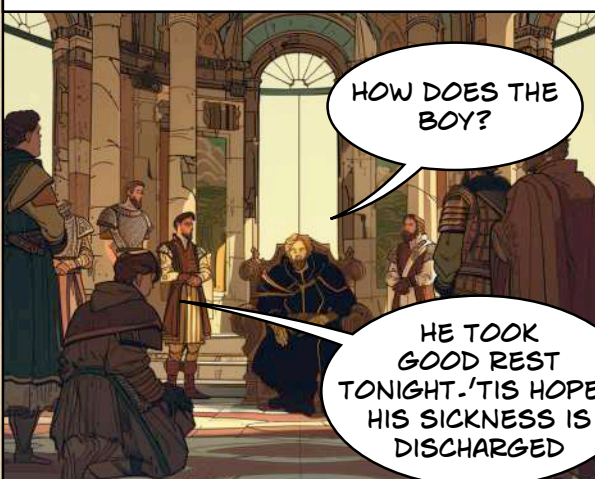
SO HERMIONE HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO HER BABY DAUGHTER WHILE IN THE DUNGEON!!! THANK GOODNESS THE BABY IS OK. MAYBE PAULINA CAN TURN THIS SITUATION TO HERMIONE'S ADVANTAGE AND GET HER SET FREE!



HE MUST BE TOLD ON IT, I'LL SHOW THE KING AND UNDERTAKE TO BE HER ADVOCATE TO THE LOUDEST. HE MAY SOFTEN AT THE SIGHT OF THE CHILD!

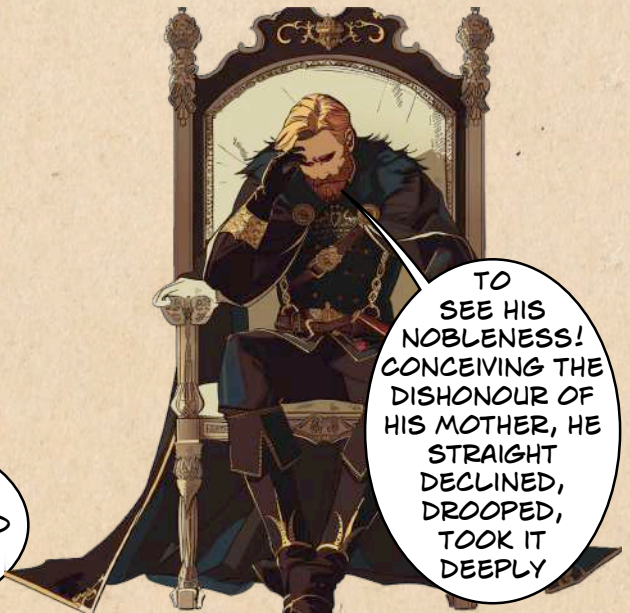
ALL IS NOT YET LOST! PAULINA IS BRAVE AND WISE - A WARRIOR IN SPIRIT, SHE'S LIKE THE FIERCEST HEAD TEACHER YOU'VE EVER MET, AND WITH HER ON YOUR SIDE, YOU SHOULD NEVER GIVE UP.

SINCE HE WAS SNATCHED FROM HIS MOTHER, AND SHE WAS THROWN INTO PRISON, POOR MAMILLIUS HAS BEEN ILL, FEVERISH.



HOW DOES THE BOY?

HE TOOK GOOD REST TONIGHT. 'TIS HOPED HIS SICKNESS IS DISCHARGED



TO SEE HIS NOBLENES! CONCEIVING THE DISHONOUR OF HIS MOTHER, HE STRAIGHT DECLINED, DROOPED, TOOK IT DEEPLY



LEONTES  
CHOOSES TO  
THINK THAT  
MAMILLIUS'S  
ILLNESS IS A  
REACTION TO  
HIS MOTHER'S  
BEHAVIOUR AND  
THAT THIS  
SHOWS WHAT A  
NOBLE BOY HE  
IS! JUST AT  
THIS MOMENT,  
THOUGH, THERE  
IS A POUNDING  
AT THE DOOR,  
AND IT IS  
FLUNG WIDE.  
THERE STANDS  
**PAULINA** WITH  
THE BABY.



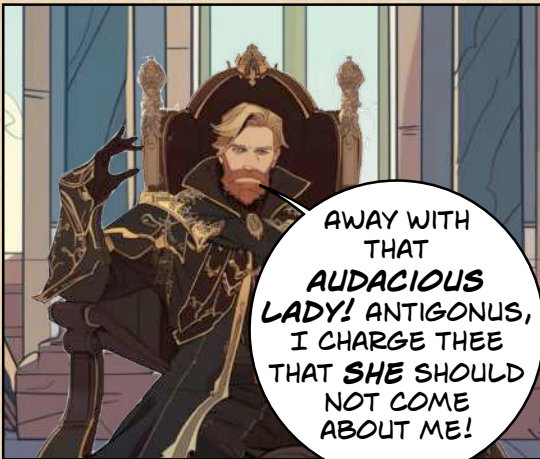
A MAN RUSHES TO THE DOOR TO STOP  
PAULINA FROM ENTERING. IT IS  
**ANTIGONUS**, LEONTES' TRUSTED  
ADVISOR - AND **PAULINA'S HUSBAND!!!**



LET ME PASS!

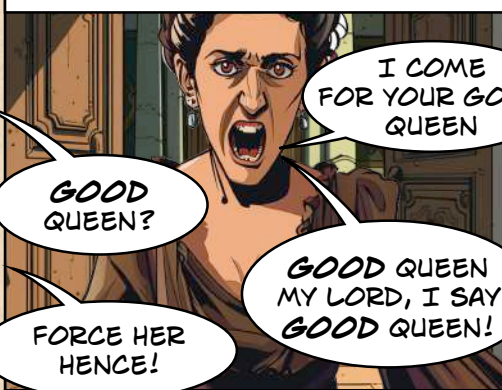
YOU MUST NOT  
ENTER!

HE'S TRYING TO STOP HER COMING IN  
TO PROTECT HER FROM LEONTES...



AWAY WITH  
THAT  
**AUDACIOUS  
LADY!** ANTIGONUS,  
I CHARGE THEE  
THAT **SHE** SHOULD  
NOT COME  
ABOUT ME!

BUT PAULINA WILL NOT BE  
STOPPED...



I COME  
FOR YOUR GOOD  
QUEEN

**GOOD  
QUEEN?**

**GOOD QUEEN  
MY LORD, I SAY  
GOOD QUEEN!**

FORCE HER  
HENCE!



BUT FIRST  
I'LL DO MY  
**ERRAND**

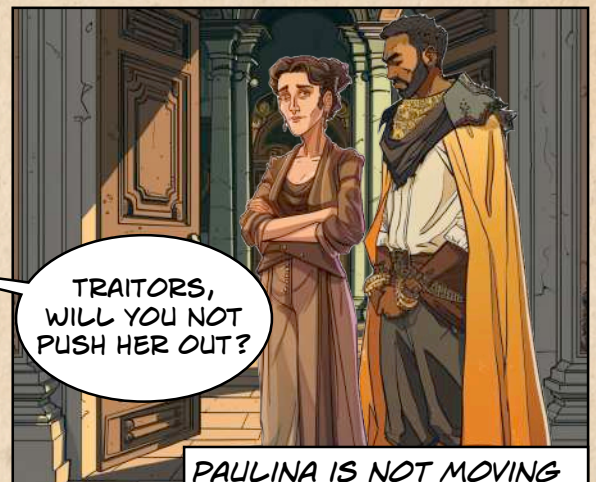


SHE PLACES THE BASKET AT  
LEONTES' FEET...



LEONTES IS FILLED WITH  
RAGE...

**OUT!!!**



TRAITORS,  
WILL YOU NOT  
PUSH HER OUT?

PAULINA IS NOT MOVING



TAKE UP  
THE BRAT!  
TAKE'T UP I  
SAY!

NO-ONE ELSE IS HELPING  
LEONTES EITHER...



A NEST OF  
**TRAITORS!!!**

NO-ONE HAS  
EVER DARED TO  
SPEAK OUT  
AGAINST THE  
KING BEFORE,  
BUT AS THEY  
LOOK AROUND AT  
EACH OTHER,  
THEY CAN'T  
BELIEVE HOW HE  
IS BEHAVING AND  
THEY START TO  
GET BRAVER...



ANTIGONUS SPEAKS FIRST...



I AM NONE BY THIS GOOD LIGHT!

THEN THE OTHER NOBLES...



NOR I

NOR I

THEN PAULINA...



NOR I, NOR ANY BUT ONE THAT'S HERE, AND THAT'S HIMSELF!



THIS BRAT IS NONE OF MINE: HENCE WITH IT, AND TOGETHER WITH THE DAM, COMMIT THEM TO THE FIRE!

EVERY SINGLE PERSON IN THAT ROOM, EXCEPT LEONTES, FEELS THEIR BLOOD TURN TO ICE. CAN THE KING TRULY BE ASKING THEM TO HAVE HERMIONE AND THE BABY BURNT? IT'S TOO HORRIBLE TO THINK ABOUT.

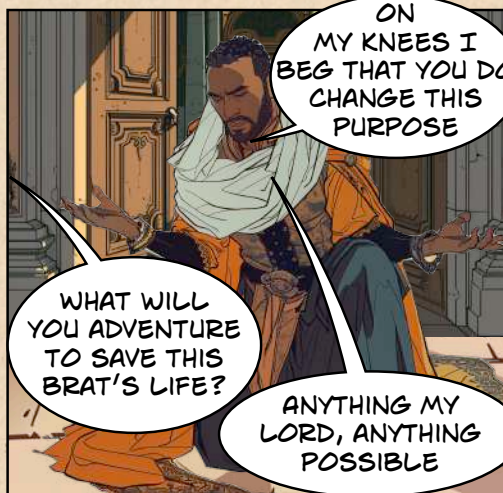
FINALLY ANTIGONUS LEADS HIS WIFE AWAY...



IT IS YOURS!

I'LL HAVE THEE BURNED

I. CARE. NOT!

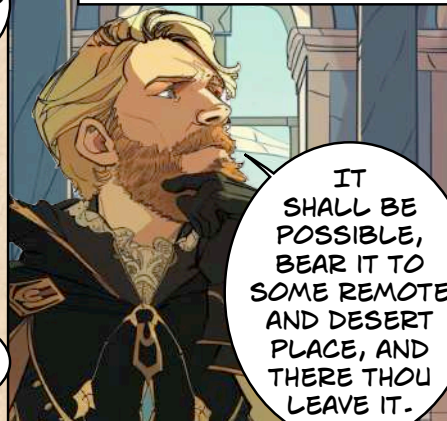


ON MY KNEES I BEG THAT YOU DO CHANGE THIS PURPOSE

WHAT WILL YOU ADVENTURE TO SAVE THIS BRAT'S LIFE?

ANYTHING MY LORD, ANYTHING POSSIBLE

LEONTES THINKS FOR A MOMENT...



IT SHALL BE POSSIBLE, BEAR IT TO SOME REMOTE AND DESERT PLACE, AND THERE THOU LEAVE IT.

LEAVE THE BABY IN A DESERTED PLACE!!!



I SWEAR TO DO THIS, THOUGH A PRESENT DEATH HAD BEEN MORE MERCIFUL.

SUDDENLY A SERVANT ARRIVES...



PLEASE YOUR HIGHNESS, POSTS FROM THOSE YOU SENT TO THE ORACLE ARE COME AN HOUR SINCE.

AT LAST THINKS LEONTES, NOW EVERYONE WILL KNOW HE WAS RIGHT...



THE GREAT APOLLO SUDDENLY WILL HAVE THE TRUTH OF THIS APPEAR. PREPARE THE LORDS. SUMMON A SESSION, THAT WE MAY ARRAIGN OUR MOST DISLOYAL LADY. SHE SHALL HAVE A JUST AND OPEN TRIAL.

WE'RE AT THE END OF ACT 2 AND THINGS SEEM TERRIBLE! HOW DID WE GET FROM TWO BFFS DANCING AT A PARTY, TO THIS??? ONE FRIEND RUNNING FOR HIS LIFE, THE OTHER SEEMS TO HAVE GONE MAD WITH JEALOUSY, PUTTING HIS WIFE IN PRISON, SENDING HIS BABY DAUGHTER TO BE ABANDONED IN SOME OTHER LAND... AND HIS SON'S NOT TOO WELL EITHER. AND DID YOU KNOW THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A COMEDY??? I'M TELLING YOU, THERE'D BETTER BE SOME LAUGHS IN ACT 3...



# Act III

## APOLLO BE MY JUDGE

CLEOMENES AND DION - LORDS OF THE COURT OF LEONTES - HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM THEIR LONG JOURNEY ACROSS THE SEA TO GREECE



THEIR FRIENDS CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR WHAT VISITING THE ORACLE WAS LIKE - THEY'RE ALL A LITTLE BIT JEALOUS THAT THEY DIDN'T GET TO GO ON THIS IMPORTANT TRIP!

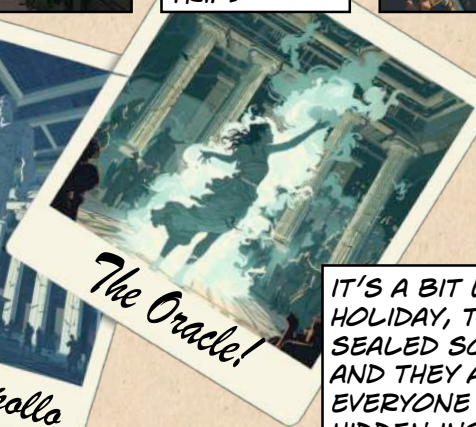
CLEOMENES TELLS THEM HOW BEAUTIFUL EVERYTHING WAS!



The temple



Statue of Apollo



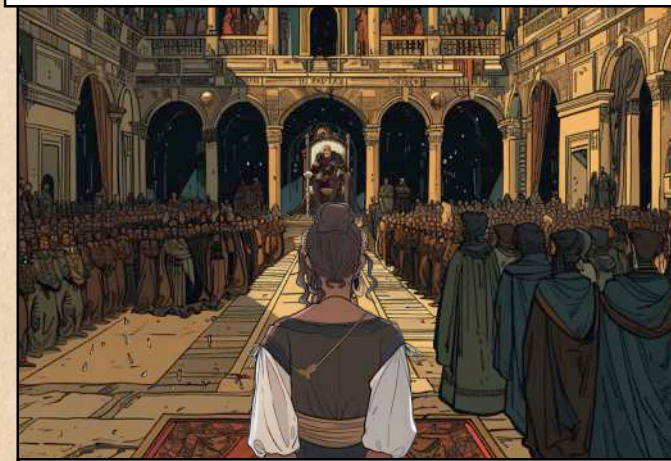
The Oracle!



DION WAS SUPER-IMPRESSED BY THE HUGE STATUE OF APOLLO. BUT WHAT REALLY BLEW THEM BOTH AWAY WAS THE ORACLE HERSELF - HOW LOUD SHE WAS!

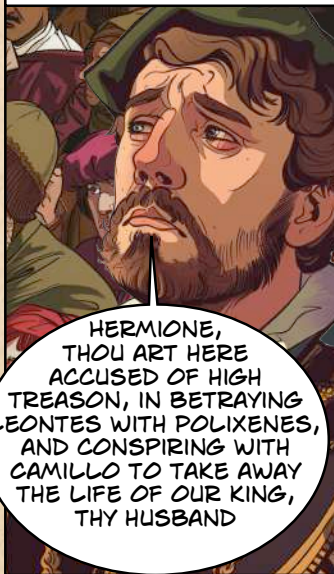
IT'S A BIT LIKE THEY'VE COME BACK FROM A HOLIDAY, TILL EVERYONE NOTICES THE SEALED SCROLL THAT DION IS CARRYING, AND THEY ALL FALL SILENT. SUDDENLY EVERYONE REMEMBERS WHAT MESSAGE IS HIDDEN INSIDE, AND HOW SERIOUS THIS MOMENT IS. WHAT IS THE TRUTH THAT THE ORACLE WILL REVEAL? WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO HERMIONE?

THE ROOM IS FULL FOR THE TRIAL OF HERMIONE. EVERY MEMBER OF THE COURT IS THERE, YET, HERMIONE STANDS ALONE TO FACE HER ACCUSER.

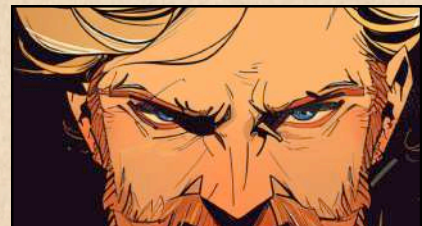


ALL BUT LEONTES BELIEVE HER TO BE INNOCENT, ALTHOUGH NO-ONE DARES SPEAK FOR HER.

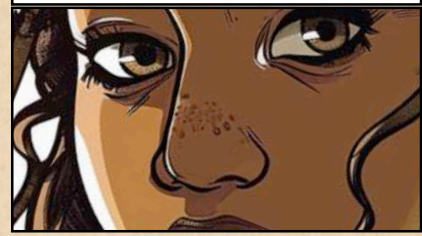
AN OFFICER READS THE CHARGES AGAINST HERMIONE...



HERMIONE, THOU ART HERE ACCUSED OF HIGH TREASON, IN BETRAYING LEONTES WITH POLIXENES, AND CONSPIRING WITH CAMILLO TO TAKE AWAY THE LIFE OF OUR KING, THY HUSBAND

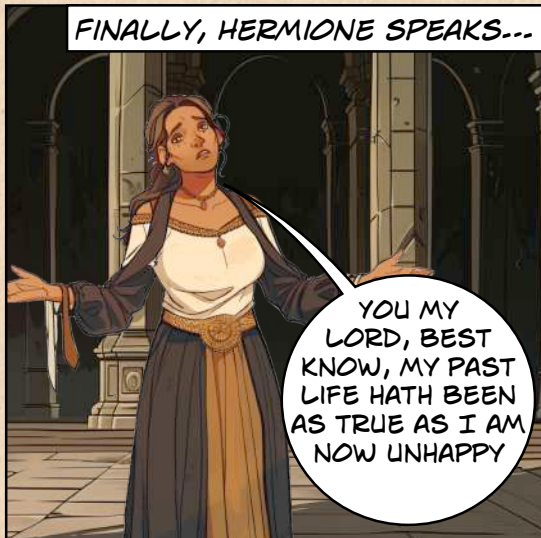


LEONTES STARES AT HIS WIFE - ONCE THE LOVE OF HIS LIFE - WITH HATRED. BUT THERE IS NO HATRED IN THE LOOK THAT HERMIONE RETURNS TO HIM - ONLY SORROW.





FINALLY, HERMIONE SPEAKS...



YOU MY LORD, BEST KNOW, MY PAST LIFE HATH BEEN AS TRUE AS I AM NOW UNHAPPY

FOR POLIXENES, WITH WHOM I AM ACCUSED, I DO CONFESS I LOVED HIM AS IN HONOUR HE REQUIRED: WITH SUCH KIND AS YOU YOURSELF COMMANDED



LEONTES SHOULD KNOW HOW FAITHFUL HERMIONE HAD ALWAYS BEEN UP UNTIL THE POINT AT WHICH HE ACCUSED HER. SHE LOVED POLIXENES ONLY IN THE WAY THAT A QUEEN **SHOULD** LOVE A VISITING KING AND FRIEND TO HER HUSBAND. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WRONG FOR HER **NOT** TO LOVE HIM LIKE THIS. AND ANYWAY, IT WAS LEONTES WHO **TOLD HER** TO GET POLIXENES TO STAY!

NOW FOR CONSPIRACY, I KNOW NOT HOW IT TASTES. CAMILLO WAS AN HONEST MAN AND WHY HE LEFT YOUR COURT THE GODS THEMSELVES ARE IGNORANT



YOU KNEW OF HIS DEPARTURE!



SIR, YOU SPEAK A LANGUAGE THAT I UNDERSTAND NOT.



AT THAT MOMENT, THERE IS A NOISE AND EVERYONE TURNS TOWARDS THE GREAT DOORS...



THERE STAND CLEOMENES AND DION, HOLDING THE SCROLL...

THE SCROLL CONTAINING THE WORDS OF THE ORACLE...



THE CROWD HOLDS ITS BREATH...

THE SCROLL IS HANDED TO THE OFFICER. **THIS IS IT!** THESE ARE THE WORDS THE ORACLE SPOKE. EVERYONE STRAINS TO HEAR, IT'S AS IF THEY WERE ALL TRANSPORTED TO THAT TEMPLE IN DELPHI...

...HERMIONE IS CHASTE!



...POLIXENES BLAMELESS



...CAMILLO A TRUE SUBJECT!



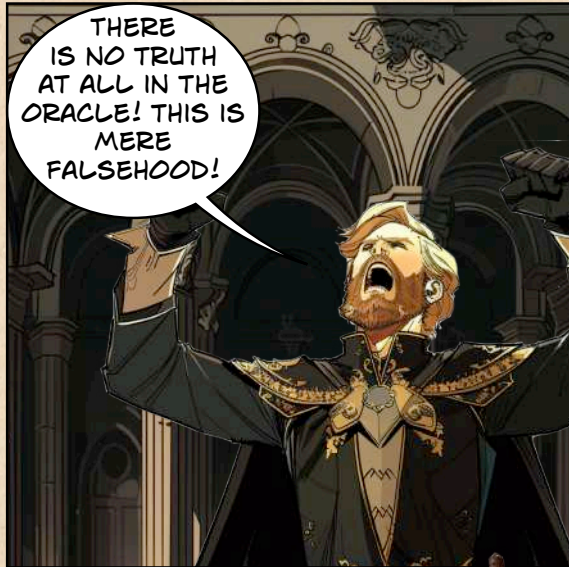
...LEONTES A JEALOUS TYRANT!



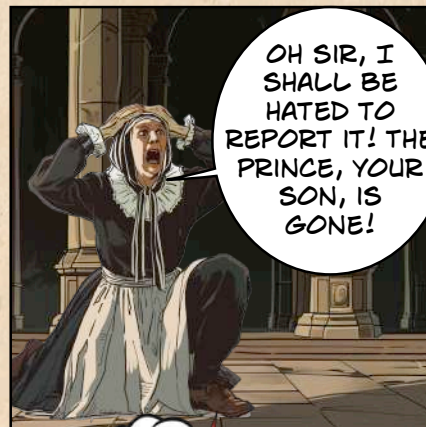




WOW! LET'S THINK ABOUT THE ORACLE'S WORDS FOR A MINUTE- HERMIONE HAS DONE **NOTHING** WRONG, **NOR** HAS POLIXENES, **NOR** HAS CAMILLO - BUT LEONTES HAS - HE'S A JEALOUS TYRANT - AND - HE SHALL LIVE WITHOUT AN HEIR? WHAT COULD THAT MEAN? ANYWAY, THE ORACLE HAS SPOKEN, THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT NOW...



WAIT, WHAT? EVERYONE FREEZES. THIS IS THE GREATEST BLASPHEMY. LEONTES HAS JUST CALLED THE ORACLE, THE VOICE OF THE GOD APOLLO, A LIAR. THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE- ONCE APOLLO SPEAKS, THAT'S IT, YOU LISTEN. YOU **DON'T** QUESTION THE WORD OF A GOD. EVERYONE LOOKS AT EACH OTHER, WONDERING WHAT TO DO NEXT, WHEN SUDDENLY....



LIKE A TREE FELLED BY AN AXE, LEONTES FALLS TO HIS KNEES. IT SEEMS THAT APOLLO IS ALREADY PUNISHING HIM FOR QUESTIONING THE WORD OF A GOD AND NOW **POOR MAMILLIUS** IS GONE! BUT THERE IS STILL MORE TO COME FOR LEONTES...



HERMIONE FAINTS!

HOW NOW THERE!  
TAKE HER HENCE!

APOLLO,  
PARDON MY  
GREAT  
PROFANENESS  
'AGAINST THINE  
ORACLE

HER  
HEART IS BUT  
O'ERCHARGED,  
SHE WILL  
RECOVER.

LEONTES SLUMPS BACK ON HIS THRONE...

BUT THE WORST IS YET TO COME...

THE  
QUEEN, THE QUEEN,  
THE SWEET'ST DEAR'ST  
CREATURE'S DEAD!

FAR AWAY FROM HERE, ANTIGONUS IS ABOUT TO CARRY OUT THE TERRIBLE TASK THAT LEONTES HAS SET HIM. HIS BOAT HAS LANDED ON THE SEA-COAST OF BOHEMIA AND A STORM LOOMS ON THE HORIZON...

ANTIGONUS IS ALSO IN A HURRY TO GET AWAY, BESIDES THE STORM, THIS COASTLINE IS A WILD DESOLATE PLACE PLAGUED BY WOLVES AND BEARS...

MAKE YOUR  
BEST HASTE!

I AM GLAD  
AT HEART TO BE  
SO RID OF THE  
BUSINESS

COME,  
POOR BABE.  
THERE LIE. AND  
FOR THOU MAY BE  
LOST FOREVER,  
THY NAME SHALL  
HENCEFORTH  
PERDITA BE.



PERDITA MEANS 'SHE WHO HAS BEEN LOST' IN LATIN. I THINK WE CAN ALL AGREE THAT, AT THIS POINT IN THE PLAY, IN THIS LONELY PART OF THE WORLD, THIS POOR BABY IS WELL AND TRULY LOST!

ANTIGONUS PLACES SOME GOLD AND SOME OF HERMIONE'S JEWELS IN THE BASKET...



THE STORM BEGINS!

ANTIGONUS IS ABOUT TO RETURN TO HIS SHIP, WHEN SUDDENLY...

A HUGE BEAR EMERGES FROM AMONGST THE TREES!



THIS IS THE CHASE! I AM GONE FOREVER!

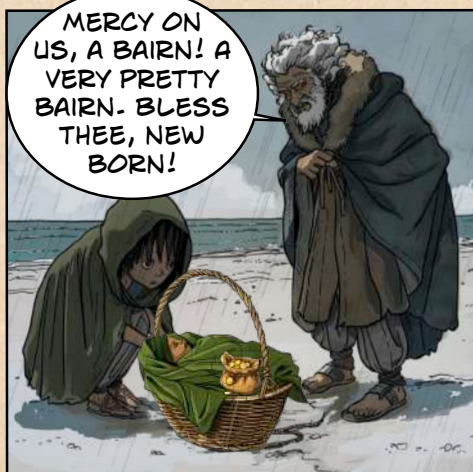
POOR PERDITA! HOW CAN SHE POSSIBLY SURVIVE - A NEW-BORN BABY ABANDONED IN A STORM IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE, SURROUNDED BY FEARSOME CARNIVOROUS BEASTS? HOW CAN SHAKESPEARE DO THIS TO US?! I CAN ONLY SEE THIS STORY ENDING ONE WAY - IN TRAGEDY AND DESPAIR! I MUST BE RIGHT - AFTER ALL, EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR HAS BEEN DISASTROUS; THERE'S NO HOPE. OH, HANG ON, WHAT'S THIS? OR RATHER, WHO'S THIS...?

SUDDENLY TWO FIGURES APPROACH...



IT'S AN OLD SHEPHERD AND HIS YOUNG SON, BATTLING THROUGH THE RAIN AND WIND, TRYING TO GET HOME BEFORE NIGHTFALL...

MERCY ON US, A BAIRN! A VERY PRETTY BAIRN. BLESS THEE, NEW BORN!



GOLD! ALL GOLD! YOU'RE A MADE OLD MAN! HOME, HOME!


TIS A LUCKY DAY BOY!



WELL, I MUST ADMIT, I WAS WRONG. AND SO, AS ACT 3 DRAWS TO A CLOSE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, SOMETHING SEEMS TO HAVE GONE RIGHT. BABY PERDITA HAS BEEN FOUND AND A SHEPHERD HAS GOT HIMSELF SOME GOLD! STILL NO JOKES, THOUGH....



# TIME FLIES!




NOW, I KNOW THAT, WHEN YOU STARTED READING THIS, NOBODY WARNED YOU THAT THERE'D BE TIME TRAVEL INVOLVED. HOWEVER, IF YOU WANT TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, YOU ARE JUST GOING TO HAVE TO TRUST ME AND STEP INTO THIS TOP-OF-THE-RANGE ELIZABETHAN TIME MACHINE. THE REASON WE HAVE TO GET INTO THIS NOT VERY SAFE LOOKING MACHINE IS THAT WE NEED TO JOURNEY **SIXTEEN YEARS** INTO THIS STORY'S FUTURE! THAT'S RIGHT- WE ARE ABOUT TO SKIP A WHOLE **SIXTEEN YEARS!** GET IN, SHUT THE DOOR AND LET'S HAVE A LOOK THROUGH THE WINDSCREEN AS WE START THE ENGINE, HOLD TIGHT!!!

**LEONTES**



HERE'S LEONTES SHUTTING HIMSELF AWAY IN HIS CASTLE OUT OF SHAME AND GRIEF - PAULINA IS HIS CHIEF COMPANION NOW.

**PERDITA**



AND LOOK WHAT'S HAPPENED TO **BABY PERDITA**. THE KIND SHEPHERD HAS BROUGHT HER UP LIKE HIS OWN DAUGHTER, AND NOW SHE'S GROWN INTO A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN.

LAST OF ALL, A NEW ADDITION TO OUR STORY. POLIXENES HAS HAD A SON, HIS NAME IS **FLORIZEL**. YOU MAY NOTICE THAT HE'S QUITE HANDSOME AND CHARMING LOOKING. OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS STORY (**PERDITA**) HAVE NOTICED THIS TOO!

**FLORIZEL**



NOW, WHILE WE'RE TRAVELLING THROUGH TIME AND SPACE THERE SEEMS TO BE A WEIRD KIND OF SONG FILLING THE AIR. I'M NOT SURE EXACTLY WHERE IT'S COMING FROM, BUT SOMETHING TELLS ME THE VOICE IS ACTUALLY **TIME ITSELF**. I CAN'T REALLY EXPLAIN IT, BUT LET'S HAVE A LISTEN...



TAKE UPON  
ME IN THE NAME OF **TIME** TO USE MY WINGS,  
SPEED MY SWIFT PASSAGE AS I SLIDE O'ER SIXTEEN YEARS.  
GENTLE SPECTATORS, THAT I NOW MAY BE, IN **FAIR BOHEMIA**....

AND JUST AS THE SONG SAYS THE WORDS "**FAIR BOHEMIA**" - HERE WE ARE, ARRIVED SIXTEEN LONG YEARS LATER (LONG FOR THEM, NOT FOR US!) IN BOHEMIA ITSELF. NOW BOHEMIA IS A VERY DIFFERENT PLACE FROM SICILIA WHERE LEONTES LIVES...



SICILIA IS ALL TALL BUILDINGS AND PALACES AND WALLED GARDENS, WHILE BOHEMIA IS FULL OF ROLLING HILLS AND VILLAGES. AND SHEEP. THOUSANDS OF SHEEP. SHEEP ARE PRETTY IMPORTANT IN BOHEMIA...



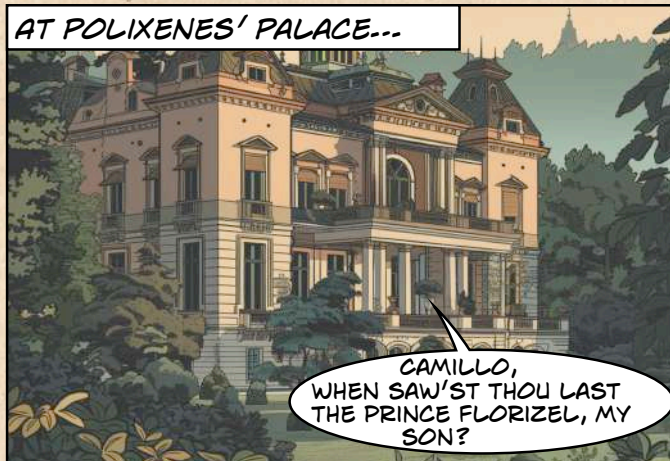
OK, WE'VE REACHED OUR DESTINATION AND IT'S TIME TO STOP THE MACHINE AND GET OUT. WE NOW FIND OURSELVES IN POLIXENES' ROYAL COURT. REMEMBER **CAMILLO**? AFTER HELPING POLIXENES ESCAPE, HE DIDN'T DARE GO HOME AGAIN, SO HE'S STAYED RIGHT HERE AND BECOME POLIXENES' RIGHT HAND MAN - JUST LIKE HE WAS WITH LEONTES. JUST AS WELL BECAUSE POLIXENES HAS QUITE A PROBLEM ON HIS MIND. NOW, ON WITH THE STORY; HERE COMES ACT FOUR...



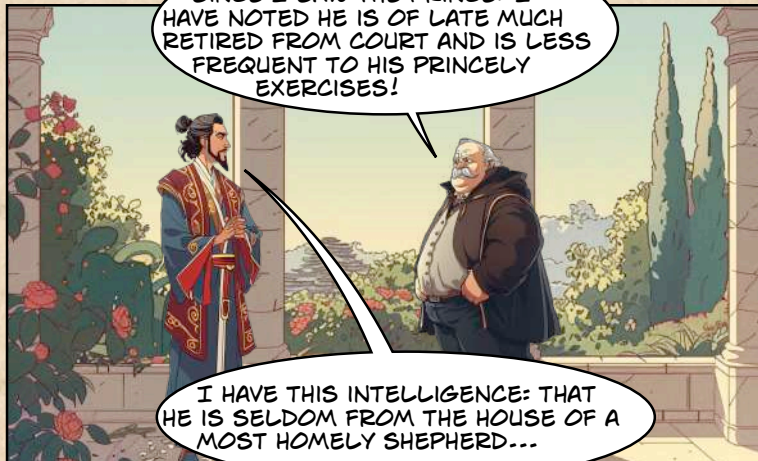
# ACT IV

## IN FAIR BOHEMIA

AT POLIXENES' PALACE...

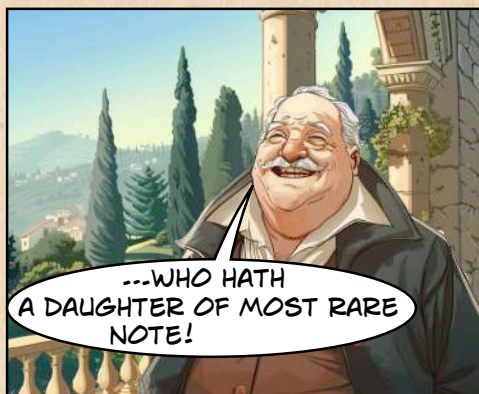


CAMILLO,  
WHEN SAW'ST THOU LAST  
THE PRINCE FLORIZEL, MY  
SON?



SIR, IT IS THREE DAYS  
SINCE I SAW THE PRINCE. I  
HAVE NOTED HE IS OF LATE MUCH  
RETIRED FROM COURT AND IS LESS  
FREQUENT TO HIS PRINCELY  
EXERCISES!

I HAVE THIS INTELLIGENCE: THAT  
HE IS SELDOM FROM THE HOUSE OF A  
MOST HOMELY SHEPHERD...



...WHO HATH  
A DAUGHTER OF MOST RARE  
NOTE!



THAT'S LIKEWISE PART OF  
MY INTELLIGENCE! BUT, I  
FEAR THE ANGLE THAT PLUCKS  
OUR SON THITHER!

SO POLIXENES' SON  
**FLORIZEL** HAS BEEN  
IGNORING HIS DUTIES TO GO  
AND HANG OUT AT AN OLD  
SHEPHERD'S HOUSE! THE  
REASON? IT'S THE GIRL WHO  
LIVES THERE. CAN YOU GUESS  
WHO THE GIRL IS? THAT'S  
RIGHT! **PERDITA!** SO THESE  
TWO MEN ARE GOING TO GO  
TO THAT SHEPHERD'S HOME -  
IN DISGUISE!!!



BE  
MY PRESENT  
PARTNER IN THIS  
BUSINESS, WE MUST  
DISGUISE  
OURSELVES...

FIVE MINUTES LATER...



PERFECT DISGUISES

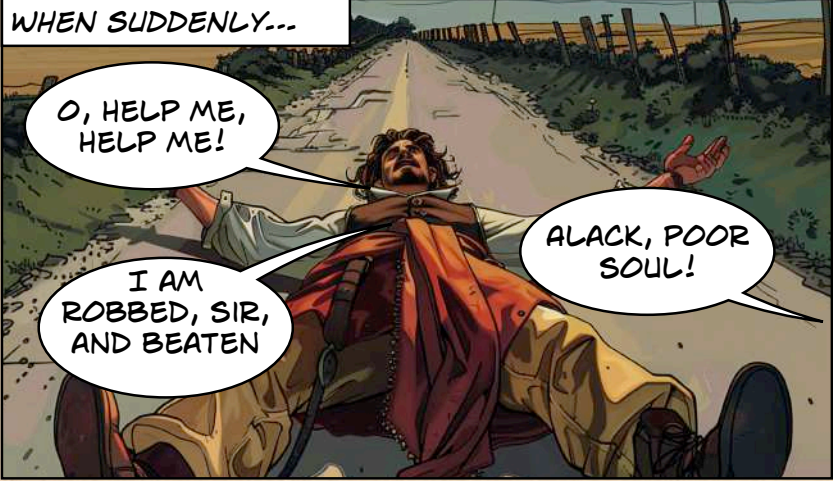
MEANWHILE, IN THE  
BOHEMIAN COUNTRYSIDE,  
WE FIND THE SON OF THAT  
'HOMELY SHEPHERD' (AND  
**PERDITA'S BROTHER**)  
ON HIS WAY TO MARKET  
AND HOLDING THE ONLY  
SHOPPING LIST EVER TO BE  
FOUND IN SHAKESPEARE...



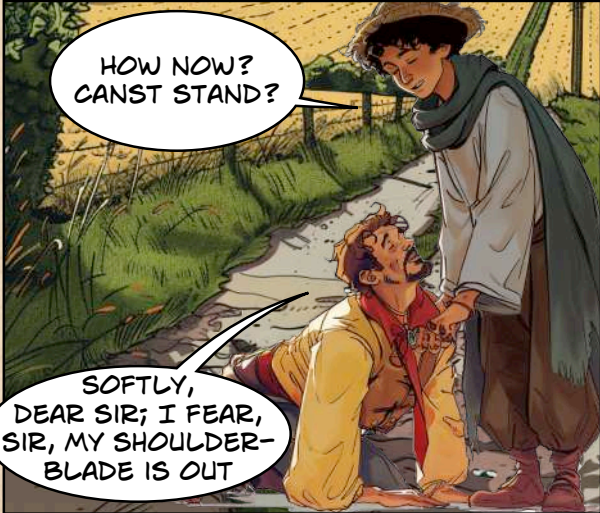
LET ME  
SEE: WHAT AM I TO  
BUY FOR OUR SHEEP-  
SHEARING FEAST? THREE  
POUND OF SUGAR, FIVE POUND  
OF CURRANTS, RICE -  
NUTMEGS... GINGER...  
PRUNES.



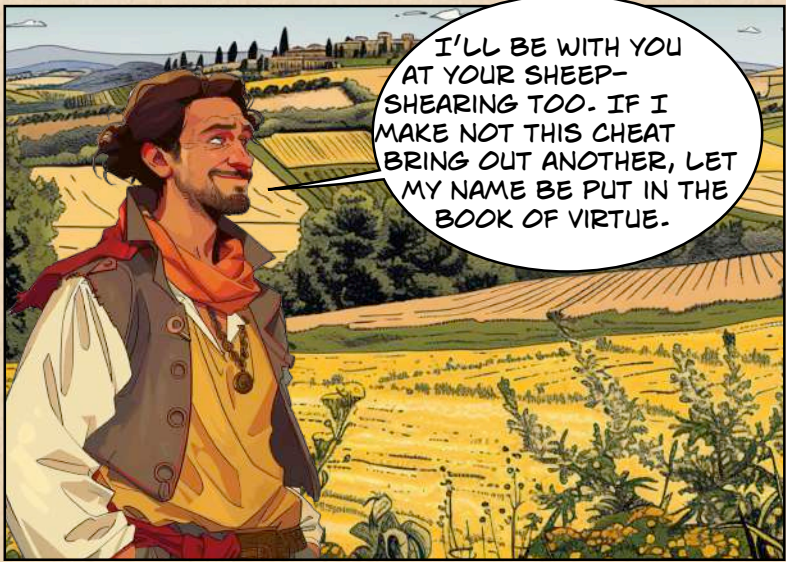
WHEN SUDDENLY...



NO! OH, YOUNG SHEPHERD, DON'T! YOU SEE, THIS IS NOT SOME POOR VICTIM, THIS IS BOHEMIA'S TRICKIEST TRICKSTER, CON-MAN EXTRAORDINAIRE - AUTOLYCUS. AND, WHILST AUTOLYCUS IS SHARP AS A RAZOR, OUR POOR SHEPHERD IS AS SHARP AS A SOCK-FULL OF SOUP. LOVELY, KIND, GENTLE, BUT HE DOESN'T REALISE HE'S ABOUT TO BE ROBBED...



BUT AS HE IS HELPED UP, HIS HAND DIPS INTO THE SHEPHERD BOY'S BASKET...





NOW, WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORDS 'SHEEP-SHEARING FESTIVAL', DOES YOUR HEART SKIP A BEAT WITH EXCITEMENT? I THOUGHT NOT. HOWEVER, ON THIS OCCASION, YOU ARE WRONG! PERHAPS THIS IS THE PICTURE YOU HAVE IN YOUR HEAD....

THIS?



WHEN IT'S ACTUALLY MORE LIKE THIS...



THE FESTIVITIES WILL START SOON, BUT IN THE MEANTIME, THE MISTRESS OF THE FEAST AND HER PARTNER ARE GETTING READY, REHEARSING ONE OF THE SLOWER DANCES.

DOES SHE LOOK FAMILIAR? DOES HE? YES, IT'S PERDITA AND PRINCE FLORIZEL!



SO, THIS IS WHERE HE'S BEEN!



A FEW MONTHS AGO, HE GOT LOST WHILST HUNTING AND, STRAYING INTO THE FIELDS OWNED BY THE OLD SHEPHERD, SAW, AND FELL IN LOVE WITH, PERDITA. SINCE THEN, HE'S KEPT COMING BACK, DAY AFTER DAY, DISGUIISING HIMSELF AS A SHEPHERD CALLED DORICLES. HE'S TOLD PERDITA WHO HE REALLY IS, BUT EVERYONE ELSE THINKS HE'S A POOR SHEPHERD



I BLESS THE TIME WHEN MY GOOD FALCON MADE HER FLIGHT ACROSS THY FATHER'S GROUND.

PERDITA IS TERRIFIED THAT KING POLIXENES WILL FIND OUT



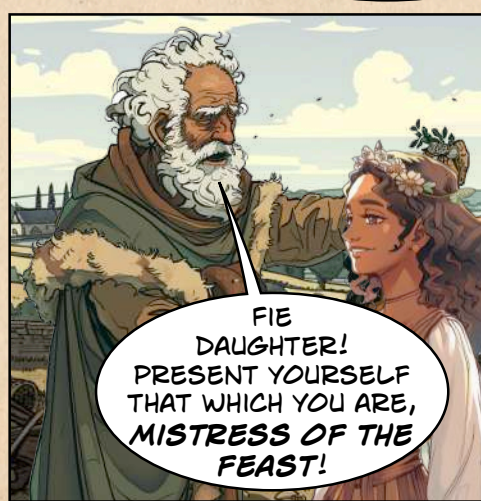
EVEN NOW I TREMBLE TO THINK YOUR FATHER BY SOME ACCIDENT SHOULD PASS THIS WAY.



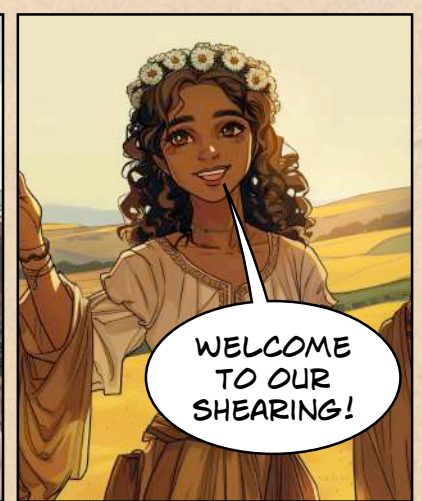
I'LL BE THINE, MY FAIR, NOT MY FATHER'S



YOUR GUESTS ARE COMING!



FIE DAUGHTER! PRESENT YOURSELF THAT WHICH YOU ARE, MISTRESS OF THE FEAST!



WELCOME TO OUR SHEARING!

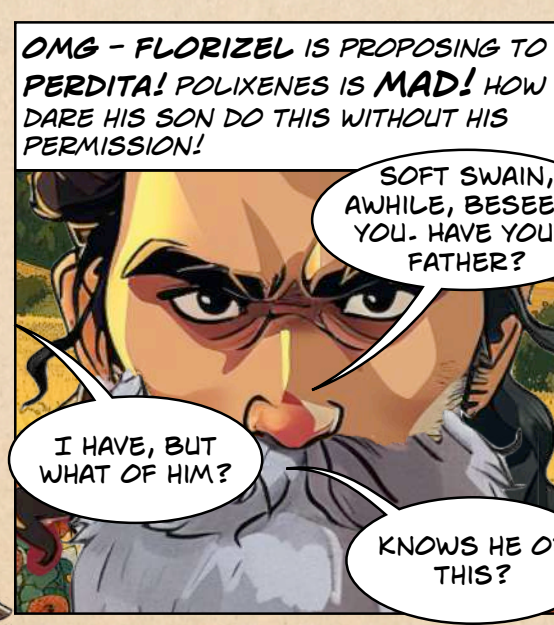




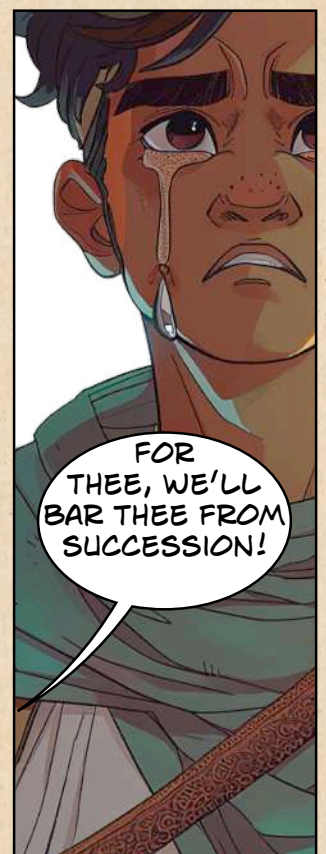
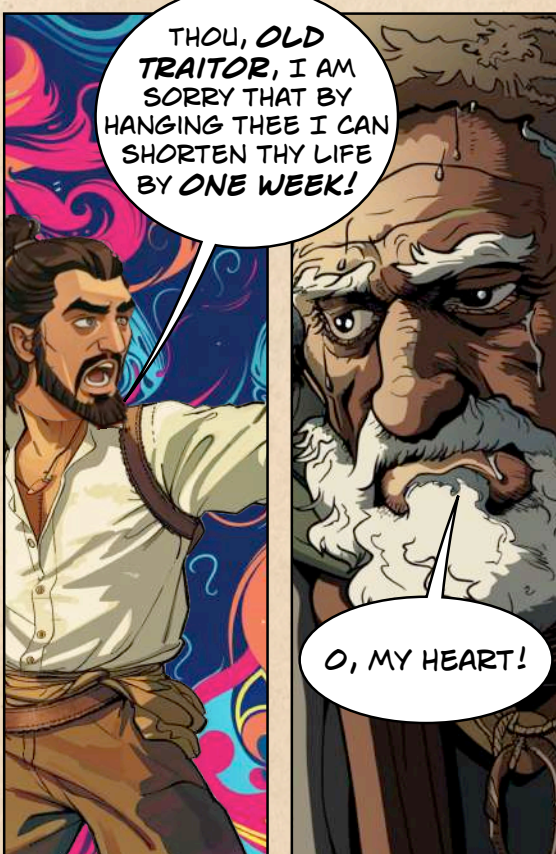
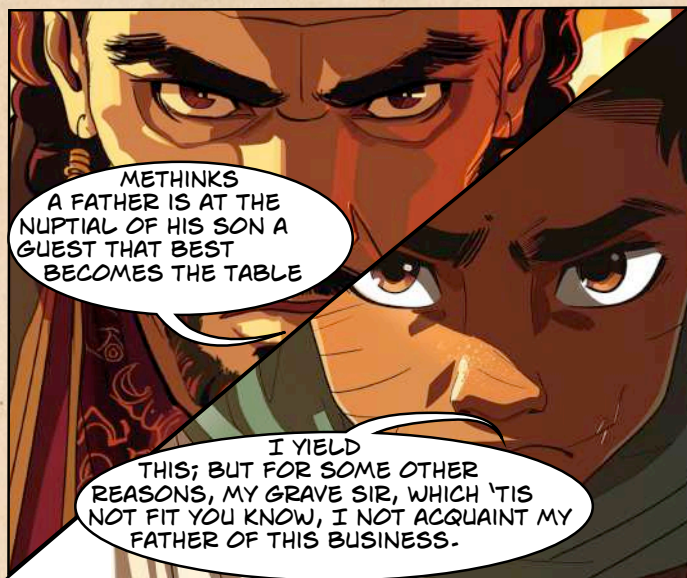
WELL DONE!  
YES,  
POLIXENES  
AND  
CAMILLO,  
ARE HERE  
TO CHECK  
UP ON  
FLORIZEL  
AND THEY  
WASTE NO  
TIME IN  
BEGINNING  
TO SPY...



POLIXENES IS NOT  
HAPPY AT ALL.  
FLORIZEL SHOULD  
BE MEETING  
PRINCESSES AND  
BEING CHARMED BY  
THEIR DANCING  
-CERTAINLY NOT  
DANCING WITH A  
COMMON  
SHEPHERD'S  
DAUGHTER, HE'LL  
HAVE TO PUT A  
STOP TO THIS...









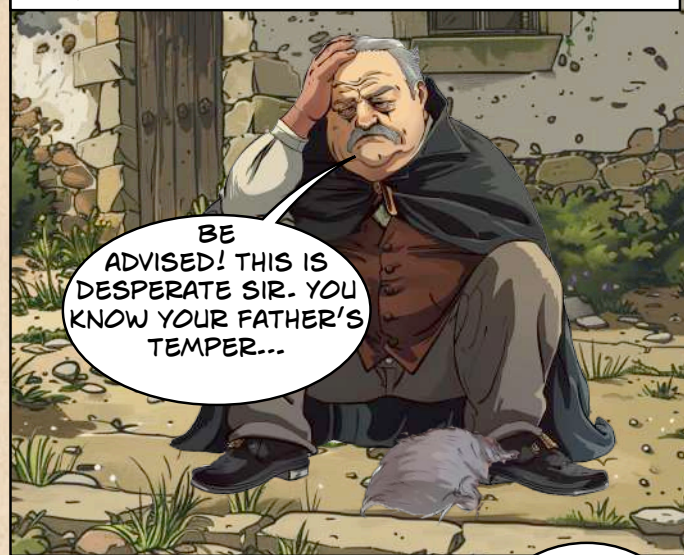
NOW PERDITA'S BROTHER  
TURNS ON HER...



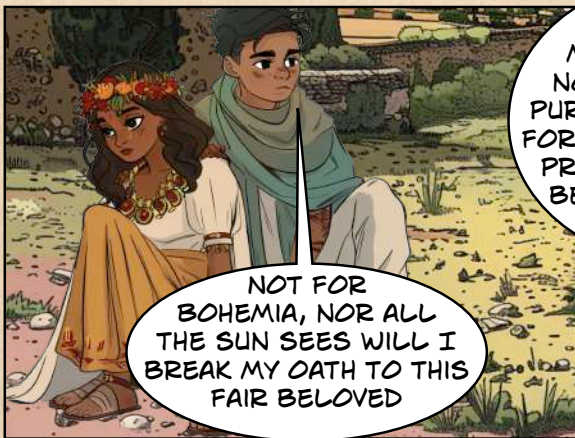
O CURSED  
WRETCH THAT  
KNEW THIS WAS  
THE PRINCE!

THIS IS AWFUL! AND  
JUST WHEN IT  
LOOKED LIKE THE  
STORY WAS TAKING A  
TURN FOR THE  
BETTER! THE OLD  
SHEPHERD TO BE  
KILLED, PERDITA'S  
BEAUTY RUINED AND  
FLORIZEL NEVER TO  
BE KING? AND ALL  
FOR LOVE?  
POLIXENES IS MAKING  
A TERRIBLE MISTAKE!  
HANG ON... DIDN'T  
ANOTHER KING MAKE  
A TERRIBLE MISTAKE  
ABOUT 16 YEARS  
AGO? IS THERE A  
PATTERN HERE?

POOR CAMILLO DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...



BE  
ADVISED! THIS IS  
DESPERATE SIR. YOU  
KNOW YOUR FATHER'S  
TEMPER...

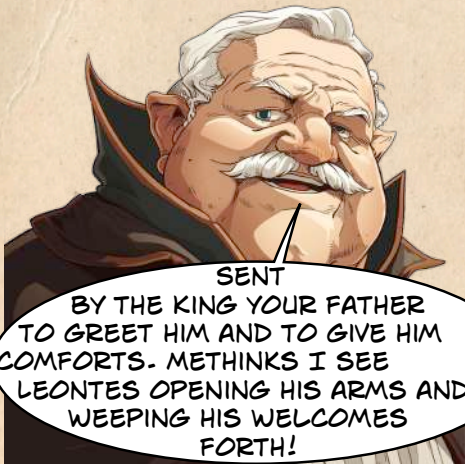


NOT FOR  
BOHEMIA, NOR ALL  
THE SUN SEES WILL I  
BREAK MY OATH TO THIS  
FAIR BELOVED

THEN LIST TO  
ME, IF YOU WILL  
NOT CHANGE YOUR  
PURPOSE, THEN MAKE  
FOR SICILIA AND THERE  
PRESENT YOURSELF  
BEFORE LEONTES!



WHAT  
COLOUR  
FOR MY  
VISITATION  
SHALL I HOLD  
UP BEFORE  
HIM?



SENT  
BY THE KING YOUR FATHER  
TO GREET HIM AND TO GIVE HIM  
COMFORTS. METHINKS I SEE  
LEONTES OPENING HIS ARMS AND  
WEEPING HIS WELCOMES  
FORTH!

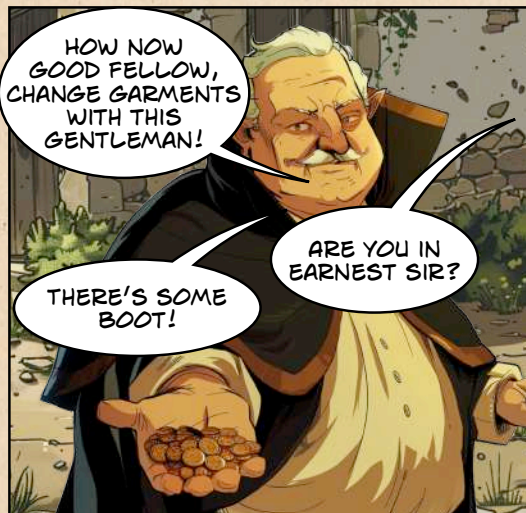
WHAT! SURELY THIS IS  
CRAZY TALK! LEONTES AND  
POLIXENES HAVEN'T  
SPOKEN TO EACH OTHER  
FOR 16 YEARS AND - LET'S  
FACE IT - THE LAST TIME,  
LEONTES TRIED TO HAVE  
POLIXENES KILLED! SO  
WHY ON EARTH SHOULD HE  
WELCOME POLIXENES'  
SON? ALSO, HOW IS  
FLORIZEL TO ESCAPE  
BOHEMIA WITHOUT HIS  
FATHER NOTICING? IF  
ONLY THERE WAS SOME  
WAY TO DISGUISE HIM...

UH OH...



GUESS WHO'S BACK...

AUTOLYCUS HAS  
DONE VERY WELL  
AT THE FESTIVAL.  
HE GOT BUSY  
SELLING ALL  
SORTS OF STUFF:  
RIBBONS, LACE,  
GLOVES, SONGS.  
AND THE GUESTS  
COULDN'T GET  
ENOUGH OF IT! SO,  
NOW, HE'S ABOUT  
TO GO HOME, BUT  
MAYBE THERE'S  
ONE MORE  
OPPORTUNITY TO  
MAKE SOME CASH...

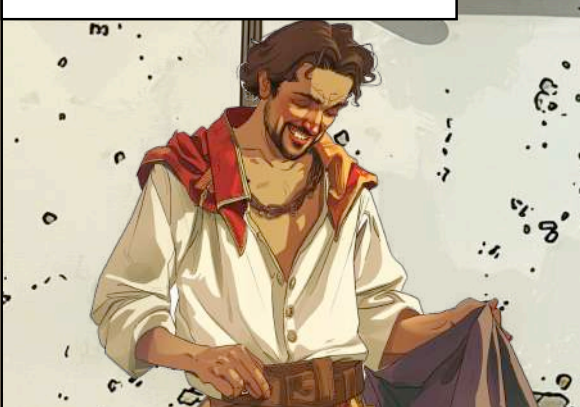


HOW NOW  
GOOD FELLOW,  
CHANGE GARMENTS  
WITH THIS  
GENTLEMAN!

THERE'S SOME  
BOOT!

ARE YOU IN  
EARNEST SIR?

DEFINITELY A WEIRD REQUEST...



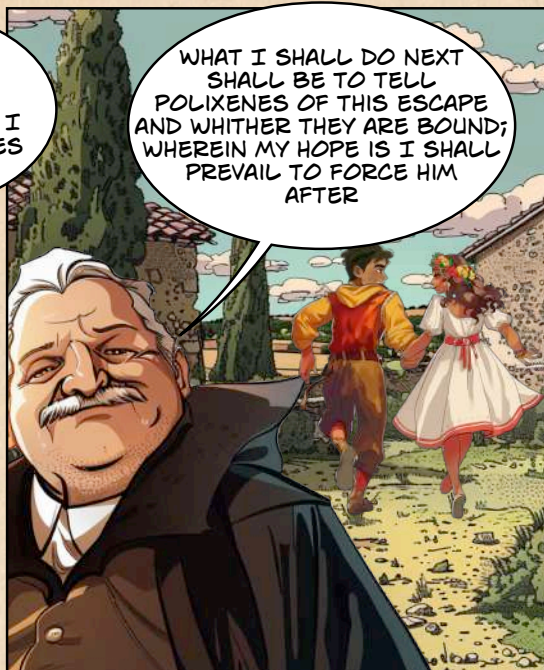
BUT IF THERE'S MONEY IN IT, WHAT'S NOT  
TO LIKE!





SHOULD I NOW MEET MY FATHER, HE WOULD NOT CALL ME SON. FORTUNE SPEED US! I HAVE A VESSEL RIDES FAST BY. TO THE SEASIDE!

AND SO FLORIZEL AND PERDITA ARE OFF TO SICILIA!



WHAT I SHALL DO NEXT SHALL BE TO TELL POLIXENES OF THIS ESCAPE AND WHITHER THEY ARE BOUND; WHEREIN MY HOPE IS I SHALL PREVAIL TO FORCE HIM AFTER

I DON'T KNOW WHAT CAMILLO ATE (OR DRANK) AT THE SHEEP-SHEARING FEAST, BUT IT SEEMS TO HAVE MADE HIM STRANGELY OPTIMISTIC. HE'S HOPING THAT, ONCE POLIXENES HAS BEEN TRICKED INTO RETURNING TO THE COURT OF LEONTES, SOMETHING FANTASTIC WILL HAPPEN - PROBABLY INVOLVING HUGS ALL ROUND. HOWEVER, I'VE BEEN PAYING ATTENTION TO THIS STORY AND NOTICED THAT EVERYTHING ALWAYS SEEMS TO GO WRONG, I THINK IT'S MORE LIKELY THAT LEONTES HAS BEEN TRAINING A GROUP OF SAVAGE BOHEMIAN BEARS THAT WILL EAT EVERYONE AS SOON AS THEY ARRIVE.

SOMEBODY HAS BEEN HIDING AND LISTENING!



NOW AUTOLYCUS KNOWS THE PLAN, MAYBE HE CAN MAKE EVEN MORE MONEY SOMEHOW...

HERE COMES THE OLD SHEPHERD AND HIS SON...



THERE IS NO OTHER WAY BUT TO TELL THE KING SHE'S A CHANGELING AND NONE OF YOUR FLESH AND BLOOD

IT'S A GOOD IDEA, IF THEY TELL POLIXENES THAT PERDITA ISN'T REALLY ONE OF THEIR FAMILY, THEN MAYBE THEY WON'T BE PUNISHED?



AND THEY KEPT THE EVIDENCE...



SHOW THOSE THINGS YOU FOUND ABOUT HER, THOSE SECRET THINGS

WELL LET US TO THE KING

PRAY HEARTILY HE BE AT PALACE

AUTOLYCUS SEES HIS CHANCE...



THE KING IS NOT AT THE PALACE, HE IS GONE ABOARD A NEW SHIP. I'LL BRING YOU WHERE HE IS ABOARD, TENDER YOUR PERSONS TO HIS PRESENCE, WHISPER HIM IN YOUR BEHALFS



HE SEEMS TO BE OF GREAT AUTHORITY. GIVE HIM GOLD!

AN PLEASE SIR, TO UNDERTAKE THIS BUSINESS FOR US, HERE IS THE GOLD THAT I HAVE

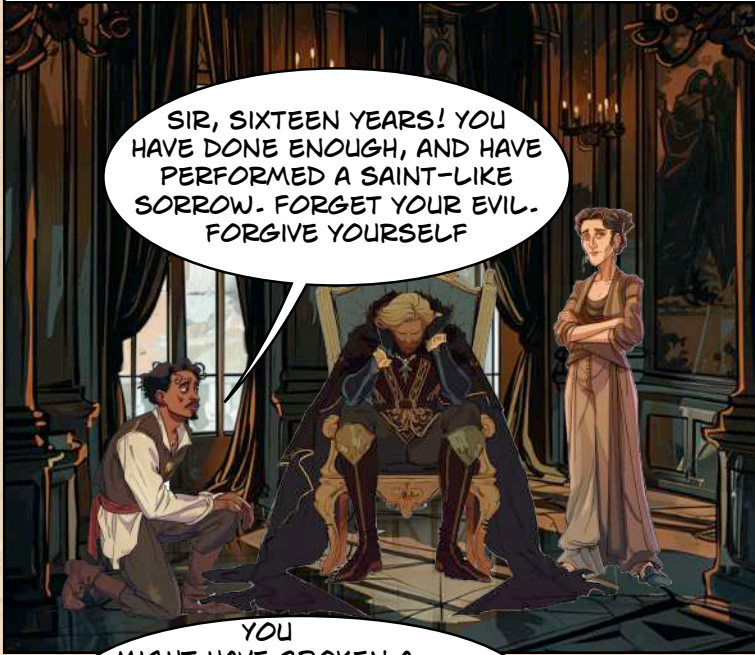
AUTOLYCUS HAS DONE IT AGAIN! AND SO AS WE SAIL INTO ACT FIVE, WHAT CAN POSSIBLY HAPPEN NEXT? WILL LEONTES FORGIVE EVERYONE, WILL THEY FORGIVE HIM? WILL THE SHEPHERDS BE PUNISHED? WILL FLORIZEL AND PERDITA BE ALLOWED TO MARRY? SO MANY QUESTIONS...



# Act V

## DEAR LIFE REDEEMS YOU

SIXTEEN YEARS HAVE SEEMED A VERY LONG TIME IN THE COURT OF SICILIA. LET'S PAY LEONTES A VISIT...



SIR, SIXTEEN YEARS! YOU HAVE DONE ENOUGH, AND HAVE PERFORMED A SAINT-LIKE SORROW. FORGET YOUR EVIL. FORGIVE YOURSELF

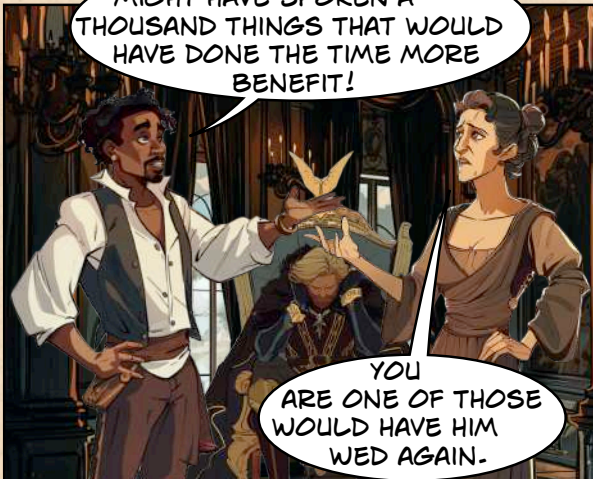
YOU MIGHT HAVE SPOKEN A THOUSAND THINGS THAT WOULD HAVE DONE THE TIME MORE BENEFIT!

YOU ARE ONE OF THOSE WOULD HAVE HIM WED AGAIN.

WHILST I REMEMBER HER AND HER VIRTUES, I CANNOT FORGET

TOO TRUE, MY LORD. SHE YOU KILLED IS STILL UNPARALLELED

LEONTES HAS SPENT ALL THIS TIME REPENTING OF THE TERRIBLE THINGS THAT HE HAS DONE AND PAULINA WON'T LET HIM FORGET IT...



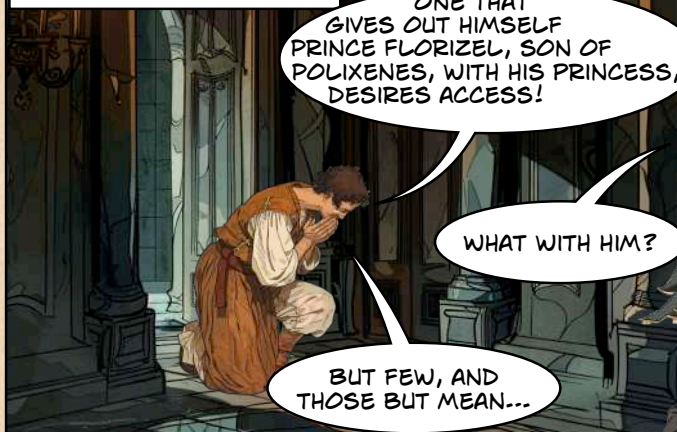
IF YOU WOULD NOT SO, YOU PITY NOT THE STATE!

AND THERE YOU HAVE WHAT IS WORRYING SO MANY IN LEONTES' COURT. IF HE DOESN'T MARRY AGAIN, IF THERE ARE NO MORE CHILDREN, THERE WILL BE NO HEIR TO THE THRONE - WHICH MIGHT WELL LEAD TO WAR!



THERE IS NONE WORTHY, RESPECTING HER THAT'S...

A SERVANT RUNS IN...



ONE THAT GIVES OUT HIMSELF PRINCE FLORIZEL, SON OF POLIXENES, WITH HIS PRINCESS, DESIRES ACCESS!

WHAT WITH HIM?

BUT FEW, AND THOSE BUT MEAN...



BRING THEM TO OUR EMBRACEMENT!





MOST DEARLY WELCOME, AND YOUR FAIR PRINCES



YOUR FATHER'S IMAGE IS SO HIT IN YOU, THAT I SHOULD CALL YOU BROTHER!

LEONTES IS ASTONISHED AT THE RESEMBLANCE BETWEEN FLORIZEL AND HIS FATHER WHEN HE WAS YOUNG. IN AN INSTANT HE IS FULL OF OVERWHELMING EMOTION: SORROW, REGRET AND LOVE ALL MINGLED WITH HOPE...



BY HIS COMMAND I GIVE YOU ALL GREETINGS THAT A KING CAN HIS BROTHER



O MY BROTHER, GOOD GENTLEMEN, THE WRONGS I HAVE DONE THEE...

FLORIZEL IS TELLING A BIT OF A LIE, HE'S NOT HERE TO SEND GREETINGS FROM POLIXENES IS HE? QUITE THE OPPOSITE, HE'S ON THE RUN FROM HIM! HE'S HOPING THIS LITTLE LIE WON'T GET FOUND OUT...

A LORD ARRIVES...



PLEASE YOU GREAT SIR, POLIXENES GREET'S YOU FROM HIMSELF BY ME. DESIRES YOU CATCH HIS SON, WHO HAS FLED FROM HIS FATHER WITH A SHEPHERD'S DAUGHTER!

OOPS! WELL FLORIZEL'S STORY DIDN'T HOLD UP FOR LONG...

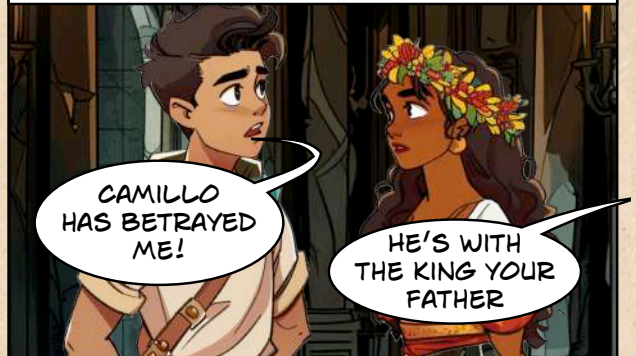


WHERE'S POLIXENES?



HERE IN YOUR CITY. IN THE CHASE OF THIS FAIR COUPLE MEETS HE THE FATHER OF THIS SEEMING LADY AND HER BROTHER

SO POLIXENES HAS CAUGHT UP WITH THE OLD SHEPHERD...



CAMILLO HAS BETRAYED ME!

HE'S WITH THE KING YOUR FATHER



WHO, CAMILLO?

CAMILLO, SIR. I SPAKE WITH HIM, WHO NOW HAS THESE POOR MEN IN QUESTION.

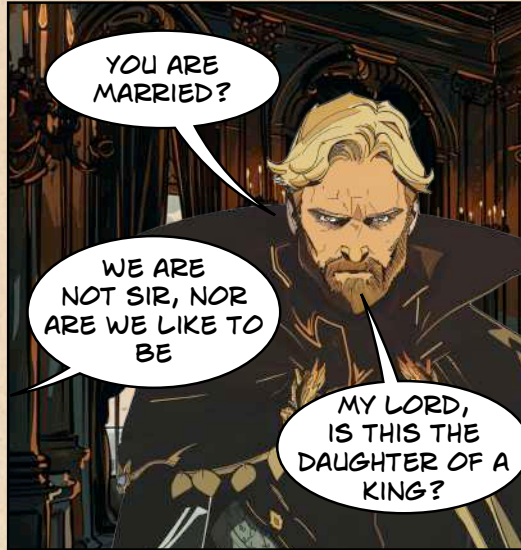


NEVER SAW I WRETCHES SO QUAKE! POLIXENES THREATENS THEM WITH DIVERS DEATHS IN DEATH!





O MY POOR FATHER! THE HEAVENS WILL NOT HAVE OUR CONTRACT CELEBRATED!



YOU ARE MARRIED?

WE ARE NOT SIR, NOR ARE WE LIKE TO BE

MY LORD, IS THIS THE DAUGHTER OF A KING?



SHE IS WHEN ONCE SHE IS MY WIFE. BESEECH YOU SIR, STEP FORTH MINE ADVOCATE

STEP FORTH MINE ADVOCATE? NOW, HE'S ASKING **LEONTES** TO SPEAK TO **POLIXENES** ON HIS BEHALF! WE'VE ALREADY ESTABLISHED: PRINCES SHOULD MARRY PRINCESSES AND THEY SHOULD MARRY TO MAKE THEIR KINGDOMS **MORE POWERFUL**, NOT FOR LOVE. **LEONTES** IS A KING, HE UNDERSTANDS THIS. BUT HE IS ALSO A MAN, AND ONE WHO HAS SPENT THE LAST **16 YEARS** THINKING ABOUT HOW MUCH HE LOVED HIS OWN WIFE AND HOW HE DID HER **WRONG...**

EVERYONE HOLDS THEIR BREATH, UNTIL...



I WILL TO YOUR FATHER, THEREFORE FOLLOW ME AND MARK WHAT WAY I MAKE.



FLORIZEL AND PERDITA BOTH HOPE FOR THEIR HAPPILY EVER AFTER...

AND SO...A GREAT CROWD HAS GATHERED OUTSIDE **LEONTES'** PALACE, WONDERING WHAT IS GOING ON...



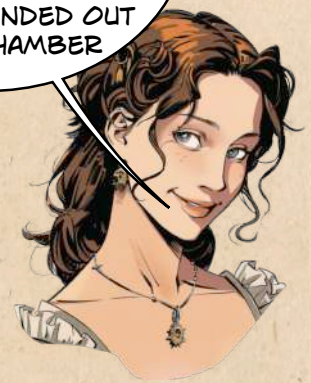
**AUTOLYCUS** HAS FOLLOWED THE SHEPHERDS HERE BUT HAS HAD TO WAIT OUTSIDE. HE IS DESPERATE TO FIND OUT THE NEWS...



BESEECH YOU, WERE YOU PRESENT AT THIS RELATION?

I WAS BY AT THE OPENING OF THE **FARDEL** THAT WAS LEFT WITH **PERDITA**, HEARD THE OLD SHEPHERD DELIVER THE MANNER HOW HE FOUND IT, WHEREUPON WE WERE ALL COMMANDED OUT OF THE CHAMBER

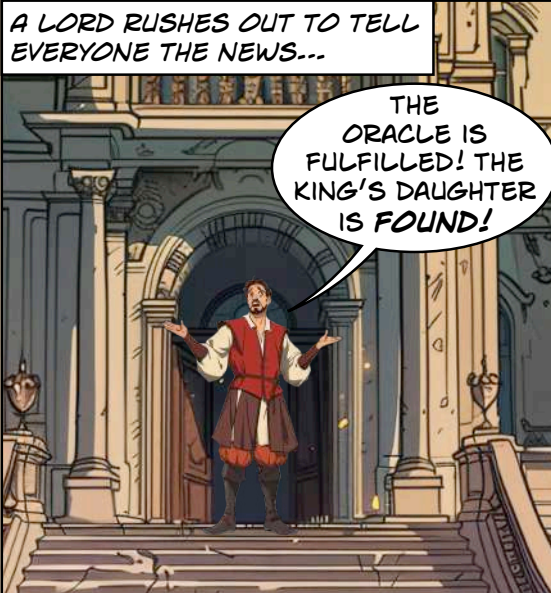
A **FARDEL** IS A BUNDLE - THE ONE THAT **PERDITA** WAS LEFT WITH ON THE SHORE, WITH THE GOLD AND JEWELS IN





SO, THE SHEPHERD SHOWED LEONTES ALL THE STUFF IN THE FARDEL THAT WAS LEFT WITH PERDITA - WHICH, OF COURSE, LEONTES RECOGNISED BECAUSE IT HAD BELONGED TO HERMIONE BEFORE!

A LORD RUSHES OUT TO TELL EVERYONE THE NEWS...



THE ORACLE IS FULFILLED! THE KING'S DAUGHTER IS FOUND!

AS NEWS SPREADS ROUND THE CROWD, YOU CAN FEEL THE EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR. SICILIA IS SAVED! AN HEIR TO THE THRONE! THE KING REUNITED WITH PERDITA, HIS LONG-LOST CHILD! IT'S LIKE A FAIRYTALE! AND OF COURSE, NOW THAT PERDITA IS PROVED A PRINCESS, SHE AND FLORIZEL CAN MARRY!

DID YOU SEE THE MEETING OF THE TWO KINGS? THEN YOU HAVE LOST A SIGHT WHICH WAS TO BE SEEN...



OUR KING, BEING READY TO LEAP OUT OF HIMSELF FOR JOY OF HIS FOUND DAUGHTER CRIES...



O THY MOTHER, THY MOTHER!

THEN ASKS POLIXENES FORGIVENESS



THEN EMBRACES FLORIZEL

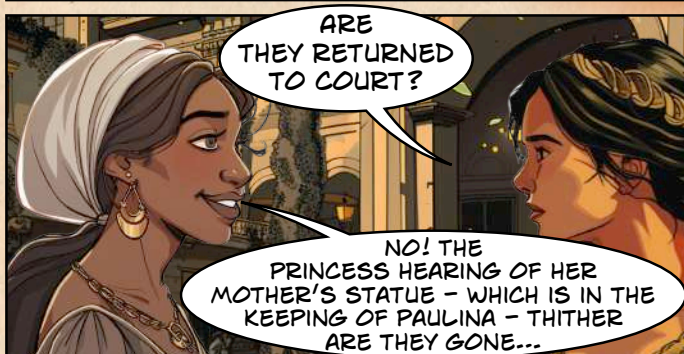


NOW HE THANKS THE OLD SHEPHERD



OK, OK. BEFORE ANYBODY POINTS THIS OUT, YES, CAMILLO WAS RIGHT AT THE END OF ACT 4, AND I WAS WRONG. IT WOULD SEEM THAT THERE HAVE BEEN HUGS ALL ROUND... AND THE SHEPHERDS ARE SAFE!

ARE THEY RETURNED TO COURT?



NO! THE PRINCESS HEARING OF HER MOTHER'S STATUE - WHICH IS IN THE KEEPING OF PAULINA - THITHER ARE THEY GONE...

WAIT A MINUTE, WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT A STATUE OF HERMIONE? WHY AM I ONLY HEARING ABOUT THIS NOW?



A PIECE MANY YEARS IN THE DOING AND NOW NEWLY PERFORMED BY THAT ITALIAN MASTER, JULIO ROMANO

OH, RIGHT. SO IT'S A STATUE THAT THIS JULIO ROMANO HAS BEEN WORKING ON FOR A LONG TIME, I JUST HAVEN'T HEARD ABOUT IT. AND PAULINA'S BEEN LOOKING AFTER IT?

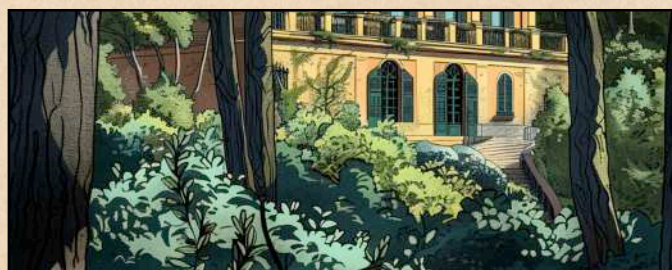


SHE HATH

FOR HOW LONG?

EVER SINCE THE DEATH OF HERMIONE

OK! THANKS VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP, WE'D BETTER GO AND HAVE A LOOK FOR OURSELVES. THIS IS THE PLACE THAT PAULINA HAS KEPT SECRET FOR ALL THESE YEARS...

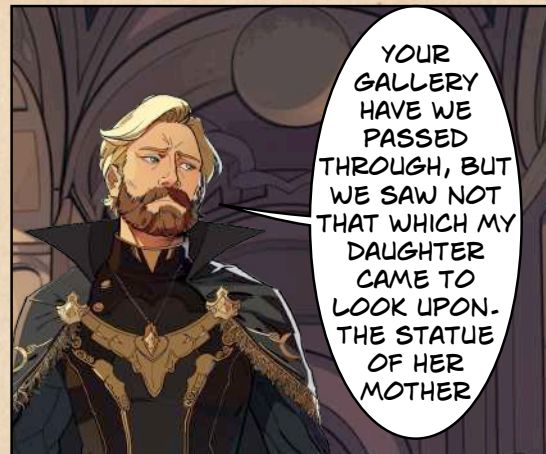




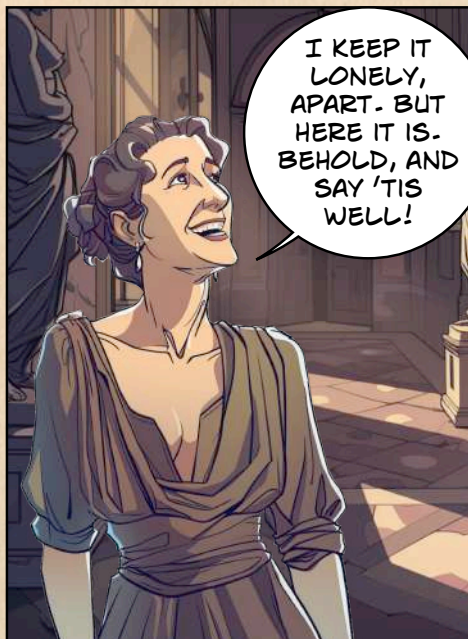
SO, HERE WE ARE INSIDE, AND THE GANG'S ALL HERE: LEONTES, POLIXENES, CAMILLO, FLORIZEL AND PERDITA. THEY ARE ALL **SO** HAPPY TO BE BACK TOGETHER. THERE ARE MANY STATUES TO LOOK AT, BUT THEY REALLY ONLY CARE ABOUT ONE IN PARTICULAR...



O GRAVE AND GOOD PAULINA



YOUR GALLERY HAVE WE PASSED THROUGH, BUT WE SAW NOT THAT WHICH MY DAUGHTER CAME TO LOOK UPON. THE STATUE OF HER MOTHER



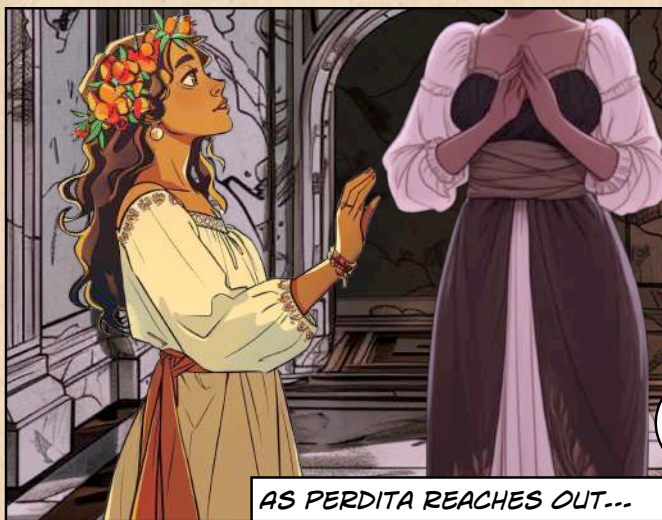
I KEEP IT LONELY, APART. BUT HERE IT IS. BEHOLD, AND SAY 'TIS WELL!



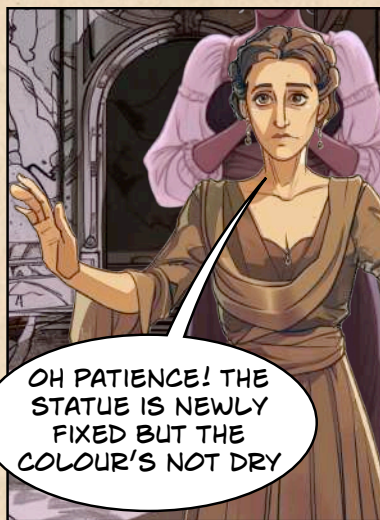
THERE IS A GASP FROM EVERYONE PRESENT...

THE STATUE LOOKS JUST LIKE THE QUEEN. MAYBE IT'S THE WAY THAT IT'S HIT BY THE LIGHT, BUT IT LOOKS SO LIFELIKE. AND IT BRINGS ALL THOSE MEMORIES FROM SIXTEEN YEARS AGO BACK FOR LEONTES.

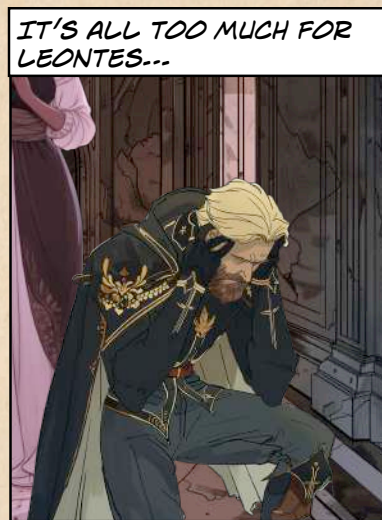
O, THUS SHE STOOD WHEN FIRST I WOODED HER! I AM ASHAMED...



AS PERDITA REACHES OUT...



OH PATIENCE! THE STATUE IS NEWLY FIXED BUT THE COLOUR'S NOT DRY



IT'S ALL TOO MUCH FOR LEONTES...



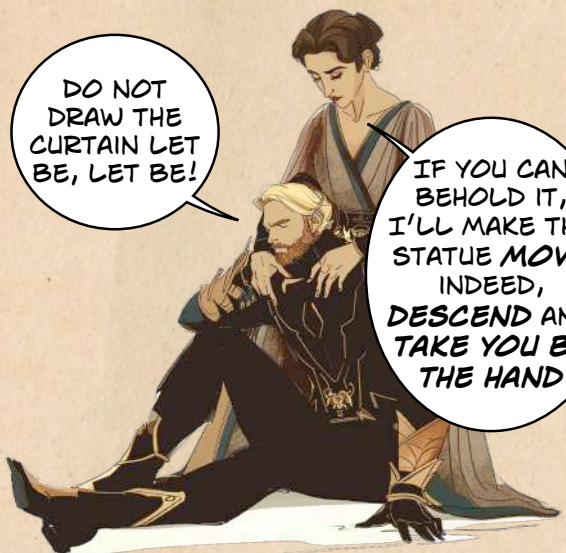
DEAR BROTHER

MY LORD



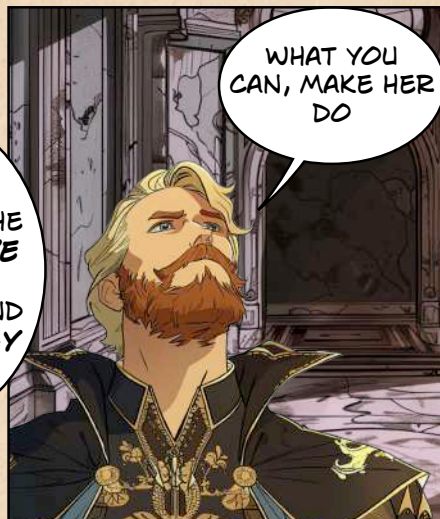
NO-ONE SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO CALM LEONTES DOWN, SO PAULINA, SEEING HOW UPSET HE IS, DECIDES TO COVER UP THE STATUE...





DO NOT  
DRAW THE  
CURTAIN LET  
BE, LET BE!

IF YOU CAN  
BEHOLD IT,  
I'LL MAKE THE  
STATUE MOVE  
INDEED,  
DESCEND AND  
TAKE YOU BY  
THE HAND



WHAT YOU  
CAN, MAKE HER  
DO



IT IS  
REQUIRED YOU  
DO AWAKE YOUR  
FAITH. THEN ALL  
STAND STILL



'TIS  
TIME; DESCEND;  
BE STONE NO  
MORE!



AND THEN THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY,  
WONDERFUL THING HAPPENS...

**START NOT,**  
HER ACTIONS SHALL  
BE AS HOLY AS YOU  
HEAR MY SPELL IS  
LAWFUL



O, SHE'S  
WARM! IF THIS BE  
MAGIC, LET IT BE AN  
ART AS LAWFUL AS  
EATING!

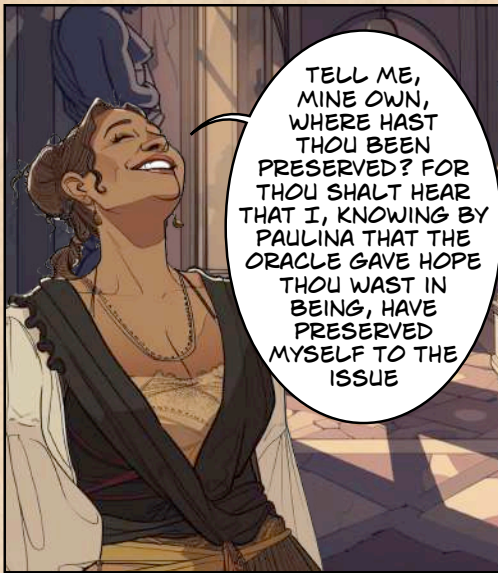


TURN, GOOD  
LADY; OUR  
PERDITA IS  
FOUND



YOU GODS  
LOOK DOWN, AND  
FROM YOUR  
SACRED VIALS POUR  
YOUR GRACES ON  
MY DAUGHTER'S  
HEAD





TELL ME, MINE OWN, WHERE HAST THOU BEEN PRESERVED? FOR THOU SHALT HEAR THAT I, KNOWING BY PAULINA THAT THE ORACLE GAVE HOPE THOU WAST IN BEING, HAVE PRESERVED MYSELF TO THE ISSUE

WAIT, I'M A BIT CONFUSED HERE.... I THINK THE STATUE HAS JUST SAID THAT SHE HAS STAYED ALIVE BECAUSE PAULINA TOLD HER THAT THE ORACLE SAID THAT HER BABY - PERDITA - HAD SURVIVED. BUT STATUES CAN'T HAVE BABIES, CAN THEY? AND IF THEY DID, WOULDN'T THEY BE STATUE BABIES? Hmm. COULD THIS POSSIBLY BE THE **REAL HERMIONE!** WHAT? YOU'VE ALREADY WORKED THAT OUT? GREAT. RIGHT, SO PAULINA HAS PRETENDED THAT SHE'S BEEN HAVING A STATUE OF HERMIONE MADE, TO KEEP THE **REAL HERMIONE** SAFE ALL THIS TIME, AND TO MAKE SURE THAT LEONTES IS PROPERLY SORRY. I GET IT NOW...



GO TOGETHER, YOU PRECIOUS WINNERS ALL; I WILL WING ME TO SOME WITHER'D BOUGH AND THERE MY MATE, THAT'S NEVER TO BE FOUND AGAIN, LAMENT TILL I AM LOST

OF COURSE, POOR ANTIGONUS NEVER MADE IT HOME...



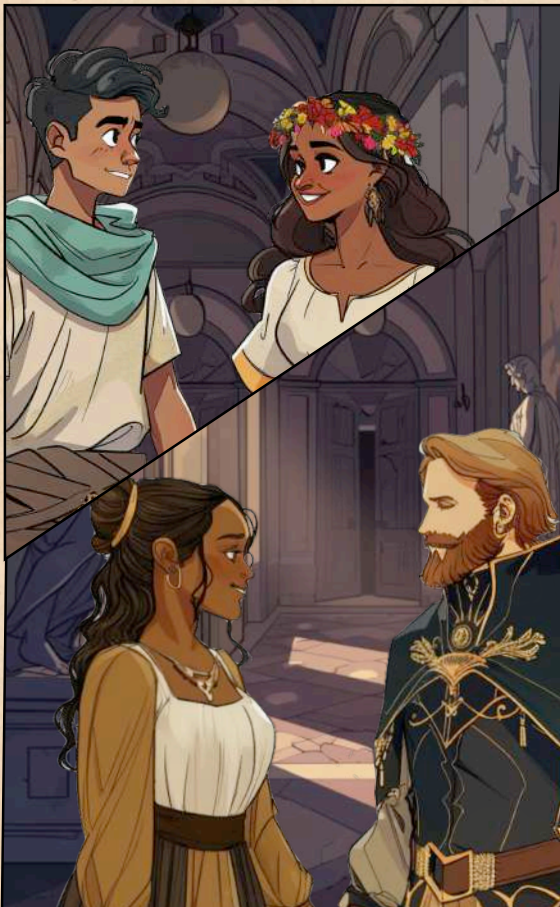
O, PEACE, PAULINA! THOU SHOULDST A HUSBAND TAKE BY MY CONSENT, AS I BY THINE A WIFE.



COME, CAMILLO!



AND TAKE HER BY THE HAND!



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

SO, THAT'S IT, EVERYONE'S OFF, PROBABLY TO HAVE LUNCH, AND CERTAINLY TO TELL EACH OTHER EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED IN THE LAST SIXTEEN YEARS. WE DON'T GET TO HEAR THAT, THOUGH, AS THIS IS WHERE THE STORY ENDS FOR US - MUCH MORE HAPPILY THAN I HAD THOUGHT IT WOULD HALF WAY THROUGH! WHAT A WINTER'S TALE IT WAS! SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED AND SO MUCH TIME HAS PASSED. THINGS WORKED OUT FOR EVERYONE IN THE END - APART FROM POOR ANTIGONUS. MAYBE ONE OF THE MORALS OF THE STORY IS DON'T GO TO A BEACH WHERE THERE ARE BEARS? OR MAYBE, THE MAIN THING TO LEARN IS THAT JEALOUSY CAN RUIN EVERYTHING, BUT LOVE WILL ALWAYS WIN IN THE END! OH LOOK, THE BLIZZARD OUTSIDE SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED AND IT'S TIME TO LEAVE THE LAND OF SICILIA. SAFE JOURNEY, PERHAPS WE'LL MEET AGAIN SOMEDAY?

**THE END!**