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***“O, she’s warm!”:***  
**The taking of hands ... and bears ... and time’s ...**  
**in *The Winter’s Tale*.**

**A thesis**  
**submitted in fulfilment**  
**of the requirements for the Degree**  
**of Master of Arts**  
**at the**  
**University of Waikato**  
**by**  
**Malcolm Alexander Forbes**

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## Abstract

Shakespeare wrote words and plays. Words might well be considered to be the ‘life blood’ of a play. But plays are more than words. Plays have characters, movement, costumes and props. Words inhabit and animate, give rhyme and reason to an actor being on a stage, performing for an audience. But between the words, the play still exists. This thesis is an exploration of those ‘moments’ that are played out in silence and are watched rather than heard.

To tell the story of *The Winter’s Tale*, Shakespeare was faced with some specific problems. There are essentially two tales to be told in the space of one play. The first requires for an all consuming jealousy to be played out. He solved this with a simple and understandable wordless action. Then to conclude this first tragic section, the story demanded that a helpless baby be abandoned - lost. Here he used an old trick in a new and surprising way, to be played quickly and, with his unerring sense of staging, for a laugh. The second tale then had to begin, and the baby had to become a woman. For this he used a convention - unconventionally. Finally, at the end of the play, he decided to change the story. To conclude his tale, the tale he was telling, with an image of redemption, reconciliation and hope. Of all the moments, this is the one that is the quietest, slowest and most beautifully painted.

This thesis is an exploration of those moments. A discussion about how Shakespeare, who has probably added more words into the lexicon than any other person, was also essentially a visual artist. That he ‘drew and painted and sculpted’ - creating stage pictures.

## **Acknowledgements**

This Masters Thesis is for my father - Mac.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. William Farrimond, for his patience, support, and long-suffering understanding as this document slowly, oh so slowly, took shape.

I would also like to express my heart-felt thanks to my beloved Marga, who gave me inspiration and reality and laughter.

And, finally, to my mother - ta very much.

# Table of Contents

<b>Abstract</b> .....	ii
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	iii
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	iv

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

1.1 “Suit the action to the word, the word to the action”.....	1
----------------------------------------------------------------	---

## **Chapter Two: Surveys**

2.1 The shape of the words.....	6
2.2 The source of the words.....	11
2.3 The stage-history of the words.....	19

## **Chapter Three: Signals**

3.1 Seeing the signal.....	24
3.2 Understanding the signal.....	31
3.3 Interpreting the signal.....	37

## **Chapter Four: Surprises**

4.1 Preparing the surprise.....	47
4.2 Setting the surprise.....	55
4.3 The surprise.....	59
4.4 Recovering from the surprise.....	67

## **Chapter Five: Stories**

5.1 Setting up the story.....	73
5.2 The shape of the story.....	79
5.3 The art of the story .....	83
5.4 Speaking the story.....	86

## **Chapter Six: Signals Part II**

6.1 Echoing the signal.....	92
6.2 Reading the signal again.....	95

## **Chapter Seven: Stones**

7.1 Finding the stone.....	102
7.2 Cutting the stone.....	108
7.3 Shaping and polishing the stone.....	112
7.4 Waiting to see the stone.....	115
7.5 Opening the door to the inner stone.....	119
7.6 Looking at the stone.....	122
7.7 Experiencing the stone.....	126

## **Chapter 8: Signals Part III**

8.1 Repeating the signal.....	131
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## **Chapter 9: Conclusion**

9.1 “I heard thee speak me a speech once”.....	134
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<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>139</b>
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# Chapter One: Introduction

## 1.1: “*Suit the action to the word, the word to the action*”<sup>1</sup>

If we are to believe, Hamlet is actually, in essence, speaking on behalf of Shakespeare, when he advises the players before their performance at Elsinore, then we may take this as an overt statement of his theatrical intent and practise. That ‘inside’ a text, there will be embedded hints, clues or even direct ‘instructions’ as to how a scene is to be played. *The Winter’s Tale* is, I believe, a prime example of this. The text of the play, as printed in the *First Folio*, does not contain a surfeit of authorial stage-direction as to how the action should proceed. Consequently, to ‘understand’ what, and more importantly how, ‘things’ unfold, we need to read the words not only for their ‘surface-linguistic’ meaning, but also for the ‘underlying-semiotic’ instructions that are therein contained. And *The Winter’s Tale* is a play where ‘things’ do indeed happen.

In the staging of a production of *The Winter’s Tale*, there are three quite definite and overtly visual ‘theatrical moments’ that need to be considered from the outset. And then, in addition, there is one further ‘moment’ that requires some significant amount of thought. These moments lie at the very heart of the play. They are all concerned with questions of important plot development. So important to the story, that Shakespeare decided to stage them visually, so that the ‘auditors’<sup>2</sup> see what is unfolding, rather than hearing the telling of the tale.

Famously there is an exit of a bear, the entrance of Time itself, and the performance of a cold statue that moves into a warm woman. This is just as

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<sup>1</sup> *Hamlet* 3 ii 17-8

<sup>2</sup> In *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595) 3 i 73-4 Puck describes himself as an ‘auditor’ - “*What a play toward? I’ll be an auditor An actor, too, perhaps.*” This descriptor of ‘an audience’, will be used throughout the thesis.

Jacques observed in *As You Like It* (1599-1600), wherein he proclaims that “*they* [the players] *have their exits and entrances, and one man in his time plays many parts.*”<sup>3</sup> But in addition, to these three wonderfully visual ‘moments’, there is also one more ‘action’ that is, I would suggest, indicated by the words that surround it, of most significant import to the performance of the play. It is a quite simple action, and maybe it is for that reason that it seems to be rather ‘overlooked’ and not generally considered to have any great or singular importance. It is the act of ‘the taking of hands’. It is to these ‘three and one’ theatrical ‘pictures’, which this thesis will address itself.

Sequentially, the ‘moments’ under consideration are: the ‘signal’ - ‘the taking of hands’ or the jealousy of Leontes; the ‘surprise’ - the entrance of ‘the bear’; the ‘story’ - the personification of Time, and the ‘stone’ - the image of a statue.

The primary material for the thesis is the Wells and Taylor edition of *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. As to the why of this particular edition? Personally, all the productions of Shakespeare that I have directed have used this (large format) edition. But in terms of the thesis, it is the final statement at the end of the introduction, which ‘justifies’ the use of ‘their’ text:

Performance is the end to which they [the plays] were created, and in this edition we have devoted our efforts to recovering and presenting texts of Shakespeare’s plays as they were acted in the London playhouses which stood at the centre of his professional life.<sup>4</sup>

All references to the plays of Shakespeare will be from this collected work. All the conjectured dates of Shakespeare’s plays, and the stage directions included in the first printing of *The Winter’s Tale*, are from Wells and Taylor’s *William Shakespeare, A Textual Companion*. Three other, single volume, editions of the

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<sup>3</sup> *As You Like It* 2 vii 141-2

<sup>4</sup> Wells and Taylor *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works* p. xxxvii



play, will also be referred to: Pafford's *Arden Shakespeare*; Orgel's *Oxford Shakespeare* and Pitcher's *Arden Shakespeare*.

There are two other works that have influenced the ideas behind this thesis. Both are a consequence of a production of the play that I directed, some years prior to the commencement of this thesis. The first is, *Theatricality and Mimesis in The Winter's Tale: The Instance of 'Taking One by the Hand'* by S. Viswanathan. The second is Nevill Coghill's *Six Points of Stage-Craft in The Winter's Tale*. My thinking on this play is intransigently bound up in these two articles. They heavily informed how I approached the play, in terms of actors saying words and performing actions, on a stage, for an audience.

The purpose of the thesis is to look at each of the 'theatrical pictures' and to investigate the ideas that underpin the action. Consideration is given to: how the 'picture' fits into the unfolding sequence of the play; where the shape and style of the action on stage may have come from, both from Shakespeare's own work and those of his contemporaries; what the 'auditors' would read into and understand from the 'picture' being presented to them, and how Shakespeare has placed 'inside' the text all the acting 'clues' that are required, to enable his (or any other) acting company, to interpret and then stage each of the 'pictures' in a performance of the play.

The 'pictures' themselves, are the 'body and soul' of the thesis. Consequently the purpose is not to analyse and investigate the language and poetry of the play, but rather to discuss how the words help to 'frame' the pictures that the playwright has created. It must also be noted that, while this thesis deals with questions of staging and playing, the purpose is not to undertake a review of the many and varied means and methods that have been employed by particular productions to present the 'pictures'.

The argument of the thesis will follow the structure of the play. Each of the moments will be discussed in the order that they appear on stage. However, that

being said, 'the taking of hands' is a 'signal', a visual signifier, that is repeated three times: at the beginning; in the middle of the second half, and finally at the end of the play. Hence they will be discussed individually and sequentially in the progression of the 'tale'.

The thesis will begin a section entitled 'Surveys'. First the question of date and authorship of the play will be addressed. This will be followed by a brief discussion of the major source of the play - Robert Greene's *Pandosto*.<sup>5</sup> Finally a short overview of the performance history of the play will be essayed, from Simon Foreman's 1611<sup>6</sup> account through until the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - the age that the play, once again, began to be performed in its entirety.

After this opening section (or prologue), the thesis will engage with the play directly. This will be undertaken in essentially the four sections named above: Signals, Surprises, Stories and Stones.

The signal is the 'taking of hands' - the visual signifier that changes the nature and direction of the play. It is simple, but public, and it the cause of the tragedy that unfolds in the first half of the play.

The surprise is the 'entrance' (and exit) of the bear. This straightforward movement across the stage changes the very tenor of the play and ushers in the new mood - that of pastoral comedy - that is the second half of the play.

The story is the appearance of the personification of Time. The play now moves, literally, 'in Time' forward. The 'auditors' (like the play itself) are transported, and what they now will hear (and see), as the play progresses, is set sixteen years into the 'future'.

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<sup>5</sup> All references to *Pandosto* will be to the text of the play reproduced in Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* Appendix IV p. 181-225.

<sup>6</sup> The full text, *Foreman's Account*, is reproduced in Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* Appendix A p. 233. All references will be to this printing of the text.

The stone is the denouement of the play. It is the performance of a statue by an actor. The character, which the statue represents, is to be believed to be dead. And then ‘the moment’, when words ‘breathe’ life into art and create theatre.

Each of these sections will be discussed in relation to similar actions and words, in previous plays, of the author and other playwrights of his time. The technical means employed to create these ‘new’ and reverberating theatrical solutions to the questions asked by the problem of visually dramatising a written narrative. Each moment will also be considered in terms of placing the action in a wider social context.

The section entitled ‘signals’ has three parts to it - as the signal is echoed through the play. And so, it will therefore be discussed three times - as it occurs, sequentially, in the progression of the play.

The overarching theme of this thesis is that Shakespeare, even towards the close of his career when he had become as well-respected and successful as any of his contemporaries, still was as vital, engaged, innovative and challenging an artist as he had ever been. That he was not content to just repeat and re-cycle what had worked before, but rather seems to have relished the challenge of the new. This thesis will arguably show that *The Winter’s Tale* is possibly the finest example of the skill and creativity, and wide-ranging capacity of his theatrical thought, which lead Coleridge to describe Shakespeare as being ‘myriad-minded’.

## Chapter 2: Surveys

### 2.1: the shape of the words

*“Pray you sit by us, And tell’s a tale”<sup>7</sup>*

*The Winter’s Tale* is an evocative title – conjuring up a sense of ‘unreality’ and ‘make-believe’ about the story that is about to be told. Schanzer in his introduction to the New Penguin edition of the play describes the title as being “*not simple and single but complex and elusive.*”<sup>8</sup> Possibly this observation is due not only to the words themselves, individually having a myriad of meanings, but that also collectively as an expression, it too had meaning. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* gives as a definition, from Middle English (1150-1349), for Tale as “*a story or narrative, true or fictitious told for interest or entertainment.*”<sup>9</sup> And winter itself, in addition to its primary function as a defined period of time, also had a secondary figurative sense attached to it, that of “*a time or state of old age, decay, affliction, hostility and emotional coldness, etc.*”<sup>10</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* in the ‘examples’ given, in the entry for ‘winter’ has: “*winter’s tale an idle tale.*”<sup>11</sup> The expression ‘winter’s tale’ was in common usage at the time, and Shakespeare himself had used the sense of the expression a number of times

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<sup>7</sup> 2 i 23-4

<sup>8</sup> Schanzer p. 7 He groups it with *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595) and *Measure for Measure* (1603) as comedies whose titles give a meaning. *Measure for Measure* as a title, while it has an open-ended sense of possibility, is essentially self-referential and as such does not ‘give anything away’. *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is far closer (though not totally similar) to *The Winter’s Tale* in the sense or feeling that it invokes - primarily through the use of ‘Dream’ and ‘Tale’ as descriptors of the nature of the entertainment on offer. *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 747 Gives a late Middle English (1350-1469) definition for Dream as “*a state of mind in which awareness of immediate reality is shut out.*” There is a definite sense of similarity or connection of mood between the ‘natures’ of the two words. Curiously it is the ‘nature words’ where the difference emerges, midsummer unlike winter, while not in itself a specific time period, is a quite simply a temporal marker and has no ‘greater meaning’.

<sup>9</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 3210

<sup>10</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 3697

<sup>11</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 3697 With a symbol attached indicating that it is now obsolete.

previously in his plays.<sup>12</sup> In *Richard II* (1595) he wrote - “*In winter’s tedious night’s, sit by the fire With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales.*”<sup>13</sup> Marlowe, in *The Jew of Malta* (1589-90) had been even more specific in the use of the expression, when he wrote - “*Now I remember those old woman’s words Who in my wealth would tell me winter’s tales And speak of sprites and ghosts.*”<sup>14</sup> Shakespeare ‘echoes’ Marlowe’s words when Mamillius (the ill-fated son of Hermione and Leontes) begins to tell his story to his mother - “*A sad tale’s best for winter; I have one Of sprites and goblins.*”<sup>15</sup>

Shakespeare could have used the expression ‘old wives tale’ as the title for his play, for as Newcomb comments, “*Both expressions figure story-telling as an acceptable pastime only because labour is no longer an option: to the old wives because they are past are past labouring, to their fireside listeners because it is too dark to do anything useful.*”<sup>16</sup> But George Peele had already ‘trade-marked’ the name in 1595 with his play *Old Wives Tale*, wherein he wrote, “*This sport dooes well: But methinks, Grammer, [a character] a merry winters tale would drive away the time trimly.*”<sup>17</sup> The sense that Peele associates with the ‘expression’ – drive away the time trimly - would, one could surmise, be indeed the sense that the groundlings had about the ‘entertainment’ they were about to witness.<sup>18</sup>

*The Winter’s Tale* is one of the very few plays for which a ‘contemporary’ account of a performance survives - it is in fact the first written record of the play – by one Simon Foreman, the “*notorious quack doctor and astrologer*”<sup>19</sup> and occasional play-goer, who wrote:

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<sup>12</sup> 3*Henry VI* (1591) 5 v 25; *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 1 i 203-4; *As You Like It* (1599-1600) 1 ii 110-11, and *Macbeth* (1606) 3 iv 64-5

<sup>13</sup> *Richard II* (1595) 5 i 40-1

<sup>14</sup> Marlowe *The Jew of Malta* (1589-90) 2 i 24-6

<sup>15</sup> 2 i 27-8

<sup>16</sup> Newcomb p. 780 Note 56

<sup>17</sup> Peele *Old Wives Tale* (1595) line 82-3

<sup>18</sup> To some the time spent at the theatre ‘driving the time away’ was of considerable concern and actively discouraged.

<sup>19</sup> Pafford p. xxi Pafford describes Foreman’s observations as being “*presumed ... [to be] ... for his [Foreman’s] general guidance in the affairs of life.*”

In *The Winter's Tale* at the Globe 1611 the 15 of may Wednesday, observe there how Leontes the King of Sicilia was overcome with jealousy of his wife with the King of Bohemia, his friend that came to see him, and how he contrived his death and would have had his cupbearer to have him poisoned, who gave the king of Bohemia warning thereof and fled with him to Bohemia.

Remember also how he sent to the oracle of Apollo, and the answer of Apollo, that she was guiltless and that the King was jealous, etc., and how except the child was found again that was lost the King should die without issue, for the child was carried into Bohemia and there laid in a forest and brought up by a shepherd. And the king of Bohemia his son married that wench, and how they fled into Sicilia to Leontes, and the shepherd having showed the letter of the nobleman by whom Leontes sent a was [away?] that child, and the jewels found about her, she was known to be Leontes daughter, and was then sixteen years old.

Remember also the rogue that came in all tattered like a colt-pixie, and how he feigned him sick and to have been robbed of all that he had, and how he cozened the poor man of all his money, and after came to the sheep-shear with a pedlar's pack and there cozened them again of all their money, and how he changed apparel with the King of Bohemia his son, and then how he turned courtier, etc. beware of trusting feigned beggars or fawning fellows.<sup>20</sup>

In itself, it is but a brief and incomplete plot summary. The most important 'fact' in the account is that the play was 'on the boards' by early 1611 – as this sets an upper date for its completion as a play that was being performed.

The dating of plays, from this period, is an inexact science. *The Winter's Tale* though has always been regarded as a 'late play'. Due no doubt to Foreman's specifically dated account, it has long been argued that it was written in 1611 or

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<sup>20</sup> Foreman's Account Orgel p. 233

late 1610. Pyle suggests somewhere between the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1611 and the performance date of the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1611.<sup>21</sup> A good deal of the justification for this rests on a particular dance in the fourth act – which will be discussed later. Pafford nearly concurs, suggesting late 1610 through 1611 as the date. Orgel states the same thought in a slightly vaguer way, as “*there is no reason to doubt that the play was new to the stage in the season when Foreman saw it in 1611.*”<sup>22</sup> Wells and Taylor however, place the play in the year 1609.<sup>23</sup> Further they argue that *The Winter’s Tale* is followed, compositionally, by *The Tragedy of King Lear* (1610), *Cymbeline* (1610) and *The Tempest* (1611) – which is somewhat at odds with ‘popular mythology’ that has had *The Winter’s Tale* as the second to last of Shakespeare’s solo authored plays. As this thesis is based on the Wells and Taylor edition of *The Complete Works*, their dating will be ‘observed’ with regard to all of the plays. And consequently any references to the plays, as dated by Wells and Taylor, written after *The Winter’s Tale* will be only in passing.

The first printing of the play was in the *First Folio* of 1623 - “*Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories & Tragedies.*”<sup>24</sup> It is one of the sixteen plays that survive due to the printing of this collected work<sup>25</sup>, as it was not printed previously in quarto form. In that edition *The Winter’s Tale* was placed as the last of the comedies. The significance of this is questionable at best as *The Tempest* (1611), the last play to be fully credited to Shakespeare, is placed first in the sequence of comedies and *Cymbeline* (1610), which is now regarded (when classified under those three original groupings) as a comedy, was placed amidst the tragedies, and *Pericles* (1607), a collaboration with Middleton, was simply not included. Some plays, notably *Hamlet* (1600-1) and *The History of King Lear* (1605-6) exist in ‘quarto’ form as well as the *First Folio* and consequently there

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<sup>21</sup> Pyle p. 179

<sup>22</sup> Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 80

<sup>23</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 131

<sup>24</sup> Murphy p. 42 Folio refers to the size of paper used for the printing. Quarto (which is smaller) was the other standard size, and primarily used for the printing of single plays.

<sup>25</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 It is one of the seven plays, in that first collection, that includes a list of characters: “*The Names of the Actors.*” However, ‘Time, as Chorus’ is not included in the list.

is much discussion as to what constitutes the ‘correct’ text for those plays. In the case of *The Winter’s Tale*, the text that is used today (given the influences of changing fashion, mutable style and editorial prerogative) remains as it was in that first printing.

That Shakespeare wrote the play is now a ‘non-question’. All the plays that were included in the *First Folio* have remained as part of the canon. *Pericles* (1607) was added soon after, and then, quite recently: *Henry VIII* (1613); *Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613-14) and most recently *Edward III* (c. after 1590)<sup>26</sup> - but none have been ‘taken away’. Alexander Pope, who in the preface to ‘his’ 1725 edition of the *Complete Works*, wrote with editorial authority of *The Winter’s Tale* (and some other of plays) that “... *only some characters, single scenes, or perhaps a few particular passages were of his hand.*”<sup>27</sup> But despite this somewhat definite dismissal of the work, Pope still included it in the collection. Why *The Winter’s Tale* was included in this grouping might have been based on the practical observation that the play had not been revived since the theatres had been re-opened in 1660. It was not until 1741 (some sixteen years after Pope’s edition) that the play was staged again. Maybe, the play being ‘back on the boards’ is why Warburton wrote in 1747 that, “*This play throughout, is written in the very spirit of its author.*”<sup>28</sup> Since then questions of Shakespeare’s authorship of *The Winter’s Tale* have declined in importance, and now cease to be of any great consequence. The acceptance of Shakespeare as author is neatly stated by Pafford in ‘his’ 1963 edition, that “*There are no convincing arguments that any part of The Winter’s Tale is not by Shakespeare.*”<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> The inclusion of *Edward III* (entered Stationers’ Register 1595 and first printed 1596) has only ‘become standard’ in the last few years. Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 137 State that “*we have excluded Edward III in part because of uncertainties about the date, in part because Shakespeare’s share of the early plays is itself problematic.*” Their edition of *The Complete Works* was printed in 1989.

<sup>27</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 25 Cites Pope in the preface to his 1725 edition of Shakespeare.

<sup>28</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 27 Citing W. Warburton, 1747.

<sup>29</sup> Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* p. xxiv



## 2.2: the source of the words

***“This is fairy gold, boy, and t’will prove so”***<sup>30</sup>

Muir states that *The Winter’s Tale* echoes Robert Greene’s *Pandosto* more fully than “any other novel used by Shakespeare.”<sup>31</sup> *Pandosto* was the “best-selling work of non-didactic fiction,”<sup>32</sup> (or “wonder book”) of the seventeenth century. The oldest existing printing is one copy from 1588.<sup>33</sup> It was published again in 1592, and then again in 1595, 1600, 1607 (and 1609) prior to Shakespeare’s writing of *The Winter’s Tale*.<sup>34</sup> The question of ‘where’ *Pandosto* came from is still being debated, for as Mussio observes, “scholars have not yet traced definitively the origin of *Pandosto*.”<sup>35</sup> The actual physical text remained fairly stable;<sup>36</sup> however, between the 1600 and 1607 editions one difference of note occurred. The wording of the pronouncement from the Oracle changed from “*the King shall live without an heir*” to “*the King shall die without an heir*”. Just the one word changed, that of ‘live’ to ‘die’, and this would indicate that Shakespeare was, presumably, working from a pre-1607 edition.<sup>37</sup>

We would now describe Greene as the ‘literary super-star’ of his time.<sup>38</sup> Not only was he prolific, with some 15 works of fiction in the 1580’s, but he also transformed the art of authorship from being reliant on patronage into a

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<sup>30</sup> 3 iii 119

<sup>31</sup> Muir *Shakespeare Sources* p. 240-51

<sup>32</sup> Newcomb p. 756

<sup>33</sup> Newcomb p. 756 Suggests a “probable first edition of circa 1585, which has left its only ghostly trace in the inventory of a forgotten bookshop.”

<sup>34</sup> The story itself remained in constant print for over a hundred and fifty years (with some twenty-one seventeenth century editions and sixteen eighteenth century editions).

<sup>35</sup> Mussio Endnote 5 p. 238 He posits that Greene may well have been using Bandello’s novel *Timbreo-Fernicia* (1554) and Belleforest’s translation of Bandello’s tale (1571) as a source for *Pandosto*. McNeil p. 453 Puts forward the suggestion that *Pandosto* was possibly derived from Chaucer’s *The Clerk’s Tale* (c. late 1380’s).

<sup>36</sup> Salzman p. 758 As indeed did the issuing of each successive edition, up until 1619, out of the “same bookseller’s shop, the Great Bible near the North Door of St. Paul’s.”

<sup>37</sup> Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 234

<sup>38</sup> Bate p. 167 Bate comments of Greene (born 1558) that he was “England’s first celebrity author, he wrote for money in every genre available ... [and] he died of fever in extreme poverty aged thirty-four.”

marketable professional trade. As he wrote of himself in his 1592 work *Repentance*, “I became an Author of Playes, and a penner of Love Pamphlets, so that I soone grew famous in that qualitie, that who for that trade growne so ordinary about London as Robin Greene.”<sup>39</sup> He wrote in various modes and styles, and was quite adept at incorporating the prevailing literary fashion into his work.<sup>40</sup> This ‘wide-ranging capacity’ and indeed prolific output was enabled by the practice, which we now decry, of plagiarism. It was not at that time considered to be “*especially disreputable*”<sup>41</sup> and by no means confined solely to Greene. Wells describes Greene as “*a conventionally minded writer who picked up his material where he could find it, with no concern for originality.*”<sup>42</sup> What Greene had done, as Wells observes, is to organise “*stereotypical elements into a pattern.*”<sup>43</sup> *The Winter’s Tale* though, is not *Pandosto*. Certainly it is derived from the novella, but it is very much ‘its own man’. As Williams comments, though not specifically about *The Winter’s Tale*, yet most appropriately to this play:

To be sure most of Shakespeare’s plots are borrowed. But the really significant question is this; just why was he attracted to certain plots in preference to others that he could have borrowed equally well? Originality lies in his selection if in nothing else. Besides, as everyone knows, he did not borrow slavishly. He took old plots, added to them, subtracted from them, shuffled their characters, shifted emphasis, combined them with other plots, changed them as he pleased and generally made them uniquely Shakespearian. Notwithstanding his borrowing, Shakespeare was original.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Newcomb p. 757

<sup>40</sup> Salzman p. 59 Citing Walter R. Davis *Idea and Art* p.139 Davis suggests four major stylistic periods: 1580-84 - euphuistic; 1585-88 - novella; 1588-89 - pastoral romances and 1590-92 - pamphlets of repentance and roguery.

<sup>41</sup> Salzman p. 59

<sup>42</sup> Wells *Shakespeare and Romance* p. 64

<sup>43</sup> Wells *Shakespeare and Romance* p. 65 Indeed it could be said of Shakespeare himself that he rarely came up an ‘original’ storyline.

<sup>44</sup> Williams p. 313

Famously, there is a prior connection between Greene and Shakespeare. In a now oft quoted passage, Robert Greene wrote in the posthumously published work *Greenes Groatworth of Wit* (1592):

There is an upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers,  
that with his Tygers hart wrapt in a Players hyde,  
supposes he is as well able to bomnast out a blanke  
verse as the best of you: and being an absolute Johannes  
fac totum, is in his owne conceit the onley Shake-scene  
in a countrey.<sup>45</sup>

Bate suggests that Greene's criticism of Shakespeare may have been based on the 'quality of his birth'. Shakespeare was of the country, a public schooled Warwickshire lad. Greene was from the city and university educated. Shakespeare's writing career began, in the sense of complete plays, in and about 1590. His success was enough even just a few years later, for Greene not only to pen the above quoted lines, but a little further down in the same tract "*he goes on to call Shake-scene a 'rude-groom' and 'peasant.'*"<sup>46</sup> His intent, it would seem, was to annoy and insult - to remind him of his 'rustic' roots. This is something that Shakespeare was not seemingly trying to forget. From the very start of his writing, in those works that seemed to so peeve Greene, he made mention of from whence he came. In the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew* (1590-1)<sup>47</sup> Christopher Sly proclaims:

Am not I Christopher Sly - old Sly's son of  
Burton Heath, by birth a pedlar, by  
education a cardmaker, by transmutation a  
bearherd, and now by present profession a

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<sup>45</sup> Bate p. 40 Mentz Endnote 24 p. 87-8 Comments that there was some 'doubt' if Greene actually wrote that text, "*but by 1610 it had been published and reprinted under Greene's name.*" Ironically, that descriptor of Shakespeare has now been 'adopted' as the name for a journal devoted to Shakespeare, *The Upstart Crow*, published by Clemenson University.

<sup>46</sup> Bate p. 40

<sup>47</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 111-15 Places the play as second in the canon, just after *Two Gentlemen of Verona* both dated 1590-1, and before *2 Henry VI* (1591). They also list: *3 Henry VI*; *1 Henry VI* and *Titus Andronicus* as being written in 1591 through 1592. All are works that Greene could have known of.

tinker? Ask Marian Hacket, the fat ale-wife  
of Wincot, if she know me not.<sup>48</sup>

Bate suggests that those lines could possibly have been spoken, on stage, by the playwright himself, and with a sub-text that could be read as:

Am not I William Shakespeare - old  
Shakespeare's son of Stratford-upon-Avon,  
by birth a glover, by education a reader, by  
transmutation an actor and now by present  
profession a tinkerer with other men's  
plays?<sup>49</sup>

This 're-imagining' of the text not only draws a line between 'bears and actors', which shall be discussed later, but raises the notion of 'tinkering with other men's plays' (or for that matter novellas). Mentz sees *The Winter's Tale* as an example of "a writer appropriating a former rival in a non-antagonistic fashion."<sup>50</sup> This is based on a reading of the play which sees 'ghosts (of Greene) haunting' the text. Apart from *Pandosto*, he cites Greene's *Cony-Catching* pamphlets (1591-92) which are embodied in the character of Autolycus<sup>51</sup>, and also the redemptive conclusion of the play which recall the above mentioned posthumous 'repentance tracts'. Both examples that Mentz cites, are elements that Shakespeare has 'added' to the somewhat straightforward story that is *Pandosto*. While Autolycus certainly caught Foreman's eye, he makes no mention of the re-animation of the statue at the end of the play that gives it its 'real' redemptive quality - and this will be discussed later.

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<sup>48</sup> *The Taming of the Shrew* Induction 2 16-21 Bate p. 44 Geographically "Wincot is a tiny hamlet south of Stratford; there was a Hacket family there in 1591. Burton Heath is Burton on the Heath, where Shakespeare had relatives ..."

<sup>49</sup> Bate p. 44

<sup>50</sup> Mentz p. 74

<sup>51</sup> Mowat Endnote 8 p. 72 Mowat cites Quiller-Couch's 1931 introduction to *The New Cambridge Edition*, where he writes, "let anyone turn to Greene's *Second Part of Conny-catching* (1592), he will find the trick played by Autolycus on the Clown so exactly described as to leave no doubt that poor Greene was again drawn upon."

Greene himself described his story as a *“pleasant history for encouraging age to avoid drowsy thoughts and youth to eschew wanton pleasures.”*<sup>52</sup> Nowadays we would use the term ‘Elizabethan prose romance’ as the descriptor. Romance is an old style, with Felperin describing Homer’s *The Odyssey* not only as an epic, but also as the first Romance. He says the *“common denominator of romance, in all its manifestations, is that it is a ‘success story,’*<sup>53</sup> and he defines a success story as a *“story in which difficulties of any number of kinds are overcome, and a tall story in which they are overcome against impossible odds or by miraculous means.”*<sup>54</sup> Romance fiction is *“noted - and valued - for its neglect, even its defiance, of the canons of logic; in their place we are given magic, surprise, providential intervention, and other manifestations of an alogical domain.”*<sup>55</sup> Fuch observes that *“Romance is a notoriously slippery category. Critics disagree about whether it is a genre or mode, about its origins and history, even about what it encompasses. Yet, paradoxically, readers are often able to identify romance when they see it.”*<sup>56</sup> Wells states that *“it is important, then that the romances were written, not to be studied, but to be read primarily for enjoyment - or ‘entertainment’, if the word may be allowed.”* Adding too, that it is only by *“reading in fact as children read”* that a full response can be achieved, by becoming *“caught up in the swirl of the story, rapt in wonder and tense with anticipation.”*<sup>57</sup> This is a ‘mood’ that Shakespeare ‘caught’.

When Polonius reads the ‘advertising flyer’ - that precedes the actors’ arrival at Elsinore - he is effectively defining many of the different genres of plays:

The best actors in the world, either for  
tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral,  
pastorical-comical, historical-pastoral,  
tragical-historical, tragical-comical-

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<sup>52</sup> Battenhouse p. 124

<sup>53</sup> Felperin p. 9

<sup>54</sup> Felperin p. 10

<sup>55</sup> McDonald p. 39

<sup>56</sup> McDonald p. 38 Cites Barbara Fuchs, *Romance*, (London: Routledge, 2004) p. 1-2

<sup>57</sup> Wells *Shakespeare and Romance* p. 55

historical-pastoral, scene indivisible or  
poem unlimited.<sup>58</sup>

Despite the list's seemingly complete inclusivity, *The Winter's Tale* - apart from its initial placement among the Comedies of the *First Folio* - is not covered. Orgel though, reminds us that "*Genres for us are exclusive and definitive, whereas for the Renaissance they tended to be inclusive and relational.*"<sup>59</sup> *The Winter's Tale* may well be best viewed through that Renaissance viewpoint. Indeed 'new' categories have since been both created and transferred to accommodate *The Winter's Tale*. This 'sub-division' could be said to have started with Coleridge, when he described *The Tempest* as a 'Romantic Drama'. Then in 1877, Dowden 'refined and expanded' the term's usage:

There is a romantic element about these plays. In all there is the same romantic incident of lost children recovered by those to whom they are dear ... In all there is a beautiful romantic background of sea or mountain. The dramas have a grave beauty, a sweet serenity, which seem to render the name 'comedies' inappropriate; we may smile tenderly, but we never laugh loudly, as we read them. Let us, then name this group consisting of four plays, Romances.<sup>60</sup>

This sobriquet has stuck, with the four plays being: *Pericles*; *The Winter's Tale*; *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest*. Other descriptors have subsequently been applied not only to *The Winter's Tale* - individually - and 'The Romances' - collectively - but indeed to other groupings of his plays which may or may not include all or some of those plays.<sup>61</sup> Of these, the term 'Tragicomedy' is of significance, and will be discussed later.

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<sup>58</sup> *Hamlet* 2 ii 398-402

<sup>59</sup> Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 3

<sup>60</sup> Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 2-3 Cites Dowden *Shakespeare*, (New York, 1877) p. 55-6

<sup>61</sup> Hunter p. 87 Defines a group, that of the "*Romantic comedies of forgiveness*", comprising of: *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598); *All's Well That Ends Well* (1604-5); *The Winter's Tale* (1609) and

What is clear is that the nature of the plays that Shakespeare wrote did change, some time in the early Jacobean age. Bate suggests a quite ‘practical’ reason for the ‘change’ in Shakespeare’s writing. Shakespeare had started “*as a player, probably in the late 1580’s*” but by “*1592 he is clearly identified as an actor turned playwright in Greene’s Groatworth of Wit.*”<sup>62</sup> He had also, by this time, become a ‘sharer’ in the playing company<sup>63</sup> that he wrote for. So, one can say of Shakespeare, that he “*was not a solitary writer in his garret but one of the working tragedians of the city*”<sup>64</sup> living and working in the city. This dual role carried through until about 1603/4<sup>65</sup>, when records of Shakespeare as still being a working actor cease. Shakespeare was effectively ‘freed’ of the burden of being a working actor either in London or on the road. This time also coincides with the start of numerous outbreaks of the plague in London which closed the theatres. In all “*during the first six and a half years of James’s English reign, the public theatres were closed for over four years and open for under two.*”<sup>66</sup> This meant that the King’s Men had to play ‘out of town’ and, also have suitable plays ready for whenever a summons arrived from the Court for a performance.<sup>67</sup> Bate suggests these factors and conditions led to the change in the ‘nature’ of the stories he wrote around from this time on. The Comedies were replaced by Tragedies. The plays of this period are “*among his longest and poetically grandest*”<sup>68</sup> and consequently, along with this shift, Shakespeare’s yearly output

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*Cymbeline* (1610). Frye p. 156 Places seven plays in what he call Shakespeare’s “*romance period*”: *Timon of Athens* (1605); *Pericles* (1607); *The Winter’s Tale* (1609); *Cymbeline* (1610); *The Tempest* (1611), and *All Is True* (1613).

<sup>62</sup> Bate p. 354

<sup>63</sup> Bate p. 354 In 1594, Shakespeare and his ‘close associates’ had formed a ‘joint stock company’ “*under the patronage of Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon, who was Queen Elizabeth’s Lord Chamberlain*” whose position gave them their name - ‘Lord Chamberlain’s Men’. This was a new fiscal venture, following on from a looser and less ‘rewarding’ aggregation that operated as ‘Lord Strange’s Men’. Then in the first few months of the reign of King James (1603) they essentially ‘transferred’ their allegiance to the new King and became the King’s Men with the (p. 344) “*formal status of Grooms of the Chamber.*”

<sup>64</sup> Bate p. 381

<sup>65</sup> Bate p. 355

<sup>66</sup> Bate p. 355 Closed: May 1603 – April 1604; May 1604 - September 1604; October 1605 - December 1605, and most of the period July 1606 - February 1610 (excepting April 1608 - July 1608).

<sup>67</sup> Wells *Shakespeare: For All Time* p. 61 The King’s Men “*played at court more often than all the other theatre companies put together.*”

<sup>68</sup> Bate p. 356

declined. The plays themselves also had a different ‘sense’ about them - they now “move[d] *conspicuously between two worlds*”<sup>69</sup>: *Othello* (1603-4) - Venice and Cyprus; *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) - Rome and Egypt; *Coriolanus* (1608) - Rome and ‘a world elsewhere’. Bate suggests that Shakespeare himself, at this time, started to live more in Stratford than London, but travelled between the two when necessary. The plays that he then began to write were effectively mirroring the consequences and realities of his physical circumstances. *The Winter’s Tale* most definitely ‘moves between two worlds’, but then that physical ‘reality’ pre-existed in the source novella.

Russ McDonald argues for a shift in the style of Shakespeare’s writing after the great tragedies, which he dates as 1607, when “*Shakespeare was drawn to a new kind of story and, at the same time, gave his characters a new kind of poetry to speak.*”<sup>70</sup> On that time-frame, seven plays are included: *Pericles*; *All is True*; *Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Cardenio* (which no longer exists) - these are plays he co-wrote - and: *The Winter’s Tale*; *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* - which he wrote himself. The plays prior to this ‘group’ he lists as: *Macbeth*; *Anthony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*. McDonald sees, in these ‘late plays’, a shift in Shakespeare’s writing:

... from tragedy to the new form  
coincid[ing] with and is related - both by  
cause and effect - to his development of a  
poetic style like nothing he (or anybody  
else) had composed before: it is audacious,  
irregular, ostentatious, playful and  
difficult.<sup>71</sup>

McDonald’s sequence of ‘describing words’, do indeed describe *The Winter’s Tale*.

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<sup>69</sup> Bate p. 357

<sup>70</sup> McDonald p. 1

<sup>71</sup> McDonald p. 1



### 2.3: the stage-history of the play

*“Come, Sir, now I am for you again ... And tell’s a tale”*<sup>72</sup>

After Shakespeare’s death in 1616, the play continued to be well received (by some) with records of performances at court on the 7<sup>th</sup> of April 1618 and ‘possibly’ in 1619.<sup>73</sup> That 1618 performance was on Easter Tuesday<sup>74</sup> and Laroque observes that *“Indeed one can only agree that the parallel between Christ’s resurrection and the coming to life of the statue of Hermione is as apposite as it is inevitable.”*<sup>75</sup> Court records give a further date of the 18<sup>th</sup> of January 1624 for a performance before the Duchess of Richmond, and finally before the Caroline court, *“The Winter’s Tale was acted on Thursday night at Court the 16 Janua 1633, by the K[ing’s] players, and lik’t.”*<sup>76</sup> Overall, in the early part of the seventeenth century on the open stage at Whitehall, *“The Winter’s Tale was performed more often than King Lear”*<sup>77</sup> with *“six recorded performances between 1611 and 1624.”*<sup>78</sup>

The first record of a performance of *The Winter’s Tale* after the re-opening of the theatres, in 1660, was not until 1741. In the advertising for the ‘concert’ (as the play itself was sandwiched between two pieces of music) the wording ran *“a play (not acted these Hundred Years) call’d The Winter’s Tale Written by Shakespeare.”*<sup>79</sup> It was not considered to be a success, running for four nights in January, three in February and one in April of that year. Another production

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<sup>72</sup> 2 i 21-3

<sup>73</sup> Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 80

<sup>74</sup> G. E. Bentley *Jacobean and Caroline Stage*.

<sup>75</sup> Laroque p. 27 *“An appropriate lesson for Easter Tuesday is Luke 24 1-12 for matins and I Corinthians for evensong.”*

<sup>76</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 24 Citing *Office Book*.

<sup>77</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 12

<sup>78</sup> Smith, J., p. 319 And *“according to Heywood pirate ‘stenographers’ would sit through performances, taking down the play.”*

<sup>79</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 28 Citing the *London Daily Post*, January 15, 1741.

opened later the same year, the 10<sup>th</sup> of November. It closed after the one performance.<sup>80</sup>

A decade or so later however, two competing ‘truncated versions’ performing the pastoral elements of the play found popular acclaim; Macnamara Morgan’s *The Sheep-Shearing, or Florizel and Perdita* at Covent Garden in 1754 and Garrick’s *Florizel and Perdita, a Dramatic Pastoral* at Drury Lane in 1756.<sup>81</sup> Essentially the play was considered to be worthy of performance only as a sheep-shearing feast. In Morgan’s production “*the tragic first half ... is only a memory.*”<sup>82</sup> Leontes and Hermione don’t appear at all and there was certainly no need for a bear. But it did do very well, remaining in the playing repertoire until the end of the century with the final performance in 1798. Garrick’s version ran until 1795.

In 1802, Kemble presented the play, as the play. His production was entitled *The Winter’s Tale* and included ‘both halves’ of the play and all the characters with the exception of Time - but it too was “*badly scarred by cuts made in both halves of the play.*”<sup>83</sup> Hazlitt though, in 1817, in reference to the 1802 version, wrote, “*The Winter’s Tale is one of the best acting of our author’s plays. We remember seeing it with great pleasure many years ago.*”<sup>84</sup> Subsequent productions until about the middle of the century essentially used the ‘Kemble text’.<sup>85</sup> It was Kean in 1856 that restored Time to the play, but overall “*cut and shaped Shakespeare’s text more than Kemble or Phelps*”<sup>86</sup> and also, in the interests of ‘historical accuracy’, relocated the second half of the play to Bithynia – which had a sea-coast!

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<sup>80</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 28

<sup>81</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 28 From the Prologue to *Florizel and Perdita* 1756 (adapted from *The Winter’s Tale*) - “*The five long acts from which our three are taken Stretch’d out to sixteen years, lay by, forsaken. Lest then this precious liquor run to waste, ‘Tis now confin’d and bottled for your taste. ‘Tis my chief wish, my joy, my only plan To lose no drop of that immortal man!*”

<sup>82</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 29

<sup>83</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 42

<sup>84</sup> Muir p. 29 Cites William Hazlitt *Characters of Shakespear’s* (sic) Plays, 1817.

<sup>85</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 43 Cites: Young - 1819; Macready - 1823; Vandenhoff – 1834, and Phelps - 1845.

<sup>86</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 83

Just prior to Kean's London staging, William Burton in New York, presented the play - first in 1851 and then again in 1856, two months before Kean. Not much is recorded of the '51 production, however there is more information pertaining to the '56 staging.<sup>87</sup> Burton did not cut Time and also retained Act 3, scene iii, - with Cleomenes and Dion. He also "*was the first director to place the first act firmly in Sicily.*"<sup>88</sup> The play was subsequently revived in early 1857 in a larger theatre with more room and capacity for 'spectacular effects'. By this time news of Kean's production had reached New York and Burton 'amended' his staging to be 'in-synch' with what was happening in London.<sup>89</sup>

The longest running season of *The Winter's Tale* in the nineteenth century was the 1887 production that began in Nottingham, and then transferred to London where it ran for some one hundred and sixty four nights at the Lyceum theatre, and then toured the United States. It was a production 'for its time', heavily cut both in individual word and scene, to the extent that the play had a running time of two hours and eight minutes - with the intervals needed to change the scenes taking an extra thirty seven minutes. The play had become "*a series of tableaux or scenes illustrated by words.*"<sup>90</sup>

That approach reached a nadir with Beerbom-Tree's 1906 production, in which the play itself was reduced to three acts, and the time and effort expended on creating a 'spectacular realism'. Bartholomeusz observes on Tree's art, that "*its great appeal lay in its sheer luxuriance and abundance, achieved not merely at great financial expense but, in its worse excesses, at the expense of Shakespeare's poetry.*"<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 102

<sup>88</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 104 This was achieved through the use of a cut-out of Mount Etna. This did not please some reviewers as they found the 'out of proportion' volcano 'unconvincing' - "*but it pleased the majority of the audience.*"

<sup>89</sup> Bartholomeusz p.108 For as Bartholomeusz observes, "*the sense of colonial inferiority dies hard even after political freedom has been obtained in the outposts of an empire, and it was too swiftly assumed that London represented standards of unquestionable excellence.*"

<sup>90</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 118

<sup>91</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 130

Not long after, 'a sea-change' occurred, first in New York and then in London, with Winthrop Ames in 1910, and Granville-Barker in 1912 respectively. Ames' production was, as Bartholomeusz writes, "*The first 'Elizabethan' production of The Winter's Tale after 1634 ... it was a revolution ... original because it was an attempt to return to origins.*"<sup>92</sup> Firstly it had a permanent set, which achieved a sense of continuity - no long set changes to interrupt the flow of the play - and only one short intermission. Secondly, by the building of a thrust stage over the orchestra pit, a sense of intimacy was created between actor and audience - as opposed to scenic distance. However the text was 'liberally' cut, including Time, and a good deal of Act 5, scene ii, as well as the bawdy and the sexually allusive.<sup>93</sup>

Granville-Barker though came 'very close' to presenting the 'entire text' - it is not known exactly how many lines he cut, with estimates varying between six and fifteen. But all the scenes were there. Barker also extended the stage, beyond the 'fourth wall' of the proscenium. And at the same time did away with the footlights, so "*to light the stage, a system of lighting both novel and elaborate for the time was devised.*"<sup>94</sup> The effect was when the actors - under the 'changeable and evocative lighting - stepped off the stage out onto the platform, they "*suddenly came alive within a new convention, which took intimacy between actor and audience for granted.*"<sup>95</sup> Barker also, in playing the whole play, had come to the conclusion that "*every minor character, every short scene, sometimes discarded in the past ... was essential to the whole design.*"<sup>96</sup> This was most evident in the fifth act and the long 'descriptive' scene of the reunion of father and daughter - which Dr. Johnson had so decried - which precedes the scene in which the reunion of husband, wife and daughter is enacted. Barker said of the combination, that the statue scene "*is elaborately held back by the preceding one, which though but preparation actually equals it in length, and its poetry is*

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<sup>92</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 132-33

<sup>93</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 138

<sup>94</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 146

<sup>95</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 147

<sup>96</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 160

*heightened by such contrast with fantastic prose and fun.*"<sup>97</sup> 'The Bear' too was re-interpreted, no longer a symbolic bear but a realistic bear - as the "*statement of accounts shows 'one complete bear skin and head' ... [with] reviewers [noting] that Shakespeare's stage direction, 'Exit, pursued by a bear', was followed seriously and with literal fidelity.*"<sup>98</sup> The play had, after nearly some three hundred years, arrived back on the stage.

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<sup>97</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 160 Cites Granville-Barker in the preface to his acting edition p. ix

<sup>98</sup> Bartholomeusz p. 161

## Chapter 3: Signals

### 3.1: seeing the signal

***“Give me thy hand; Be pilot to me”***<sup>99</sup>

*The Winter’s Tale* begins with a small, short scene involving just two lords - Camillo (Sicilia) and Antigonus (Bohemia).<sup>100</sup> There is nothing unusual in this style of opening a play. *The History of King Lear* (1605-6) opens with a similarly constructed scene, where Kent and Gloucester discuss the imminent division of the kingdom. The purpose, in both plays, is to ‘set the scene’ – which is done quite successfully. Information is given about where the play is set, and who are to be the main protagonists and what the nature of their relationship is. In the case of *The Winter’s Tale* it also establishes that the scene is set in winter, for Archidamus comments, *“I think this coming summer”*<sup>101</sup> and also that Leontes has a young son called Mamillius.<sup>102</sup> Overall, the scene may well be described as simple and direct.

All, though, is not quite as it seems. Coghill, in his celebrated defence of the play - *Six Points of Stage Craft in The Winter’s Tale* - describes the scene as operating in the *“technique of the prepared surprise”*<sup>103</sup> as opposed to *Lear*, where it is the *“technique of gratifying expectation raised.”*<sup>104</sup> Consequently, *Lear* proceeds as the opening scene implies it will, but *The Winter’s Tale* does not. Leontes and Polixenes, we learn in that first scene, were childhood friends and have remained so over the subsequent years. The surface impression

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<sup>99</sup> 1 ii 441-2

<sup>100</sup> The second half of the play – which is effectively Act 4, scene ii, – begins with a scene very similar in the number of characters, length and tone. Furthermore Camillo is involved in both.

<sup>101</sup> 1 i 5 Also it must be remembered that the play is indeed called *The Winter’s Tale*.

<sup>102</sup> Mentz p. 73 *“His name masculinises the name of Mamillia, the heroine of Greene’s first printed romance in 1583.”*

<sup>103</sup> Coghill p. 32

<sup>104</sup> Coghill p. 32

therefore is of great amity and the most cordial of relations. However the final words of this section of information delivery are somewhat ominous, “*The heavens continue their loves!*” which is responded to with “*I think there is not in the world either malice or matter to alter it.*”<sup>105</sup> And, as we are very soon to see, there is indeed ‘matter’ and ‘malice’ that will change the course of the play from the path we are being led to believe we are on. But unlike the capricious turnings of Fortune’s wheel in *Pandosto*, the events that unfold in *The Winter’s Tale* have nothing to do with the gods.

What actually unfolds is that Leontes, very quickly explodes into a jealous rage. And this is but one hundred and ten lines into the scene.<sup>106</sup> This is not what we had expected, especially after that opening scene, so full of fine sentiment about the closeness of the relationship between the two Kings. But friendships do not exist in the same condition forever, as Shakespeare had observed in *Coriolanus* (1608):

Friends now fast sworn  
Whose double bosoms seems to wear one heart,  
Whose heart, whose bed, whose meal and exercise  
Are still together, who twin, as t’were, in love  
Unseperable, shall within this hour  
On the dissention of a doit, break out  
To bitterest enmity.<sup>107</sup>

Greene describes Pandosto’s fevered imaginings (Leontes being Pandosto’s equivalent) as “*a long time smothering in his stomach, began at last to kindle in his mind a secret mistrust, which, increased by suspicion, grew at last to a flaming jealousy that so tormented him as he could take no rest.*”<sup>108</sup> Shakespeare, as the playwright, did not have that same luxury, afforded the

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<sup>105</sup> 1 i 33-4

<sup>106</sup> Though it is not until line 275, that Leontes directly expresses his suspicions to Camillo, that “*my wife is slippery.*”

<sup>107</sup> *Coriolanus* (1608) 4 iv 12-18

<sup>108</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 186

prose novelist, of a sequence of describing words to indicate and explain the growth of such a strong emotion. He has to present the ‘auditors’ with ‘something’ that would, simply and directly present and convey that sense.<sup>109</sup> An ‘explanatory’ speech would be a possibility, but he had already covered that ground in *Richard III* (1592-3). And such an approach would, as in *Richard III*, place the ‘auditors’ - via ‘personal privileged information’ - firmly on the side of the speaker.<sup>110</sup> Also, *The Winter’s Tale* is not just a story about Leontes (and Hermione), there is a second story - that of Perdita (and Florizel) - also to tell. Shakespeare’s purpose, in this first part of the play, is to delineate the consequences of said passion and not, so much, its causes. It is as if he has taken the line he wrote to conclude Iago’s time on stage in *Othello* (1603-4) “*Demand me nothing. What you know, you know*”<sup>111</sup> as the starting point.

The expectation, prior to the start of the second scene is ‘we’ - the ‘auditors’ - will now get to meet the two Kings described in the first scene. We are not disappointed. We also get to ‘see’ the Sicilian king’s son - who was also mentioned in the first scene. They are also accompanied by Camillo. All this is quite ‘expected’. What is not expected however, is that included in the ‘entrance procession’, is a pregnant woman. This is the first ‘mention’ or ‘sight’ of Hermione.

The depiction of a pregnant woman is unusual for Shakespeare. Tamora (Queen of the Goths and subsequently Empress of Rome) in *Titus Andronicus* (1592) gives birth to a never named child. The pregnancy of Tamora is not shown on

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<sup>109</sup> Pandosto Pafford p. 186 Greene could ‘condense’ time and describe events for Pandosto to misconstrue. “*When Pandosto was busied with such urgent affairs that he could not be present with his friend Egistus, Bellarius would walk with him in the garden, where they two in private and pleasant devices would pass away the time to both their contents.*” Such descriptions do not ‘translate’ well into dramatic theatrical action.

<sup>110</sup> The ‘downplaying’ of the heroic status of Leontes and the ‘importance’ of his story is observed by Estrin p. 41, as “*that not once in the ‘tragic phase’ of The Winter’s Tale does a character refer to Leontes’ goodness, or praise a single of his virtues.*” Even the proposed poisoning of Polixenes, as a means of despatch, would be viewed as unfair and cowardly. This implies that Shakespeare did not want the ‘auditors’ to relate too strongly to Leontes – at this point in the story.

<sup>111</sup> *Othello* (1603-4) 5 ii 309



stage or indeed mentioned until she delivers the child. For all intents and purposes ‘it does not exist’. In *All’s Well that Ends Well* (1604-5) the consummation of the marriage between Helen and Bertram is achieved by a bed-trick - where, the already married, Bertram thinks he is illicitly ‘bedding’ a young maiden by the name of Diana. But it is in fact his legal wife Helen. Then at the conclusion of the play, the ‘trick’ is exposed. This is done first by Diana stating that “*He [Bertram] knows himself my bed he has defiled, And at that time he got his wife [Helen] with child.*”<sup>112</sup> Bertram by this time thinks Helen to be dead. Then Helen appears on stage before Bertram, and reads back to him a letter he wrote, that states that “*‘When from my finger you can get this ring, And are by me with child,’ et cetera. This is done.*”<sup>113</sup> Helen is now pregnant. The play concludes a few lines later. This is the first mention of her pregnancy. The time scheme of the play means that the consummation of the marriage could well have taken place very recently. Consequently, while Helen is a pregnant woman, she is not an ‘obviously’ pregnant woman. This is backed up by the call for proof by both Bertram and the King - indicating that they cannot ‘see’ the condition. In the other example, *Pericles*, the style of depiction almost reverts back to *Titus Andronicus*. The conception is first announced by Gower, The Presenter. Thaisa becomes pregnant to Pericles soon after their marriage.<sup>114</sup> Gower then delicately explains the consequence of that event, “*A babe is moulded.*”<sup>115</sup> Time is now condensed, from inception to delivery, with a simple “*Be attent, And time that is so briefly spent With your fine fancies quaintly eche.*”<sup>116</sup> Gower’s choric speech then gives way to a ‘dumb show’, and included in the ‘directions’ is that “*Then enter Thaisa with child.*”<sup>117</sup> She then departs with Pericles, and that is all that we get. In the subsequent scene, (which is enacted as if onboard a ship in a storm), Marina (Thaisa’s recently delivered babe) is brought onto the stage (deck of the ship) by her nurse Lychorida. Thaisa

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<sup>112</sup> *All’s Well That Ends Well* (1604-5) 5 iii 302-3

<sup>113</sup> *All’s Well That Ends Well* (1604-5) 5 iii 314-5

<sup>114</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 10 line 112-3

<sup>115</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 10 line 11

<sup>116</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 10 line 11-13

<sup>117</sup> *Pericles* (1607) sd. Dumb Show scene 10 line 14

is then ‘discovered’ appearing to be dead and summarily buried at sea - mother and child are separated, so they can then be re-united at the conclusion of the play. By this sequence the actual condition of pregnancy is avoided once again - as with Tamora. Hermione is the first fully pregnant woman to be formally written as a pregnant woman to appear and talk, in person, on stage in a Shakespearean play.

The stage direction is straightforward enough and gives no hint of what is being presented, “*Enter Leontes, Hermione, Mamillius, Polixenes, Camillo.*”<sup>118</sup> However, the one female character that is named as entering is pregnant.<sup>119</sup> Simply, and indeed very effectively, the plot is advanced as soon as the actors step onto the stage at the beginning of the second scene – and without a word being spoken. That Hermione is indeed pregnant, must, as with so many ‘things’ in Shakespeare’s plays, and this play in particular, be surmised from a ‘back-reading’ of the text. The pregnancy is first mentioned in the first scene of the second act, when the First Lady observes in her conversation with Mamillius, that “*The Queen, your mother, rounds apace.*”<sup>120</sup> The Second Lady concurs, observing that “*She is spread of late into a goodly bulk.*”<sup>121</sup> The question of how pregnant Hermione is, is ‘solved’ in the next scene, when Emilia<sup>122</sup> announces that “*She is, something before her time, delivered.*”<sup>123</sup> Hermione herself does not appear in the scene, as she is recovering from the birth. And with that Perdita, the heroine of the ‘other half’ of the play, has arrived.

This is a major change from *Pandosto*, where Bellaria (Hermione’s equivalent) finds that she is pregnant only after Egistus (Polixenes pre-cursor) has been accused of

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<sup>118</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 1 ii 1 Different editions list ‘different’ characters as entering. Some mention Archidamus (the Bohemian lord) - some don’t. Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* sd. 1 ii 1 also lists “[and Attendants].”

<sup>119</sup> It is ‘curious’ to note that no subsequent editor (that I have found) inserts into the entrance stage direction for Act 1, scene ii, that Hermione enters ‘visibly pregnant’, or even just ‘pregnant’.

<sup>120</sup> 2 i 16

<sup>121</sup> 2 i 19-20

<sup>122</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 Listed in “*The Names of the Actors*” as “*a lady.*” The name is a ‘curious’ echo from *Othello* (1603-4), which has an Emilia - who is wife to Iago and lady-in-waiting to Desdemona.

<sup>123</sup> 2 ii 25

adultery and fled, and she is already in prison. Shakespeare however has put her pregnancy 'front and centre'. Greene lightly skips over the time between the realisation of pregnancy and Bellaria giving birth, with a simple, "*which happened presently after.*"<sup>124</sup> Shakespeare though decided to show - give the visual proof of - the pregnancy right from Hermione's first entrance. As with so many 'things' in this play, Shakespeare is charting a new course. Creating new and innovative solutions to the dramatic problems he is faced with.

The assumption can be made that not only through the influence of the opening scene, but by the entrance sequence, the positioning on stage and the costuming and indeed by the 'attitude' of the attendant lords - Camillo (and Archidamus) - that it is indeed clear that 'we' are viewing the two kings and a queen. What we do not know is who is who, or who is 'associated' with whom. The first words that are declaimed are, "*Nine changes of the wat'ry star hath been The shepherd's note since we have left our throne Without a burden*"<sup>125</sup> and, as Coghill observes - "*These things are not done by accident.*"<sup>126</sup> Shakespeare has chosen to time Polixenes visit so that it coincides, quite simply and very neatly, with Hermione's pregnancy. The question of which of the kings (or rather characters on stage) is the father is being left open to doubt. The pregnant queen could be wife to Polixenes or wife to Leontes. And both kings could, by the specificity of the time in residence, be the procreator. While Hermione is not, one can assume, about to actually give birth any moment, Shakespeare has used the simplest 'time-code' - that of nine months - so that the doubt may be placed in the 'auditors' minds. It is not until line twenty-seven that the matter is cleared up, when Leontes addresses the pregnant woman for the first time, with the somewhat brief and quite terse statement - "*Tongue-tied our queen?*"<sup>127</sup> The 'auditors' now know the nature of the formal relationships. The pregnant woman

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<sup>124</sup> Pandosto Pafford p. 192

<sup>125</sup> 1 ii 1-3 While the 'entrance list' at the beginning of the scene does not specifically encourage this interpretation, I would suggest, that this is a public scene. And the public (rather than private) nature of the scene is also a contributing factor to Leontes' jealousy.

<sup>126</sup> Coghill p. 33

<sup>127</sup> 1 ii 26 Coghill p. 33 Reads the line as "'our Queen' ... cold vocables for married love and 'tongue-tied' ... a familiar epithet for guilt."

is the wife of the king of Sicilia, and the man who is desperate to return home, after nine months, is the king of Bohemia. But ‘we’ still have ‘our doubts’ as to ‘who is the father’.

Overall in the opening of the scene, Leontes does not say very much at all, he “utters only forty-odd, mainly monosyllabic words. These constitute a mere 4 per cent of the wordage at a court where a vigorous king’s voice might well be expected to be dominant.”<sup>128</sup> This contrasts with Polixenes who employs, as Sokol comments, “the language of court compliment, at once flowery and formal, like Jacobean embroidery.”<sup>129</sup> Once Hermione has been invited to speak she takes it with both hands and assumes centre stage, with Leontes not speaking again for some sixty lines. The effect of this distribution of lines is that ‘an impression’ is created, of a free and easy capacity of conversation between Leontes’ wife and his friend, while Leontes himself is ‘excluded’. Complementing this distribution of lines is the style of language used by Hermione, which is characterised by Coghill as being “at once outlandish and effusively courteous.”<sup>130</sup>

It takes Hermione a modest thirty lines to cajole, threaten and ultimately convince Polixenes to stay - for just that little bit longer. His acquiescence does not stop their conversation. And Hermione and Polixenes do not attempt to engage, or re-engage Leontes in the ‘idle chatter’. It is not until line eighty-eight that Leontes ‘re-enters’ the fray, on his own volition, with a typically monosyllabic question “Is he won yet?”<sup>131</sup> There have been sixty-odd lines without the host king speaking. The queen has done all the talking, and achieved what the king could not. It is now only twenty-one lines until the ‘explosion’ occurs that sets the play on its tragic downwards spiral.

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<sup>128</sup> Sokol p. 33

<sup>129</sup> White p. 19

<sup>130</sup> Coghill p. 32

<sup>131</sup> 1 ii 88

### 3.2: understanding the signal

*“I take thy hand, this hand”*<sup>132</sup>

From the time of Dryden, the sudden explosion of jealousy exhibited by Leontes, which is “grounded on impossibilities”,<sup>133</sup> has been used as one justification for the ‘lesser’ nature of the play. Mrs Inchbald in 1822 wrote, “There are two occurrences in the drama, quite as improbable as the unprovoked jealousy of Leontes.”<sup>134</sup> In 1907 Robert Bridges wrote - “In *The Winter’s Tale* the jealousy of Leontes is senseless.”<sup>135</sup> And in 1946 Bethell wrote - “then suddenly with no more hint of preparation - no hint at all on the psychological plane - Leontes jealousy comes full upon him.”<sup>136</sup> The debate has continued on, with Nathan observing, in 1968, that “perhaps the major scholarly dispute surrounding *The Winter’s Tale* concerns the motivation of Leontes’ jealousy.”<sup>137</sup> Breton wrote of jealousy in 1600, that:

It workes, and watches, pries and peeres about,  
takes counsel, staies; yet goes on with intent,  
bringes in one humour, puts another out,  
And findes out nothing but all discontent,  
And keepes the spirit still so passion-rent,  
that in the world, if there be a hell,  
Aske, but in love, what jalousie can tell.<sup>138</sup>

We cannot know how the King’s Men played the scene. Foreman has no issue with the portrayal of the onset of Leontes’ incendiary rage, for he simply states

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<sup>132</sup> 4 iv 360

<sup>133</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 24 Citing John Dryden *Defence of the Epilogue to the Second Part of The Conquest of Grenada*, (1672).

<sup>134</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 31 Citing Mrs Inchbald *British Theatre*, XII, (1822).

<sup>135</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 57 Citing Robert Bridges *The Influence of the Audience on Shakespeare’s Dramas*, (1907).

<sup>136</sup> Nathan p. 19 Citing S. L. Bethell *The Winter’s Tale*, (London, 1946).

<sup>137</sup> Nathan p. 19

<sup>138</sup> Breitenburg p. 379 Endnote 2 p. 396 Nicholas Breton, *Pasquils Mistresse: Or the worthie and unworthie woman: With his description and passion of that Furie, Jealousie*, (London, 1600).

that “*Leontes ... was overcome with jealousy of his wife.*”<sup>139</sup> And we must remind ourselves that the play itself was popular in Shakespeare’s time - indeed up until the closing of the theatres in 1642. We may, consequently, conclude that Shakespeare gave his ‘auditors’ - his Jacobean ‘auditors’ - enough information for them to understand and accept and indeed believe what was unfolding before them. What to us may seem inexplicable, improbable and senseless did not seem to trouble them.

The image, or visual cue, of a pregnant woman on stage, would carry with it certain and definite associations, as Jardine observes “*the pregnant woman is the Renaissance image of sexuality.*”<sup>140</sup> Ephraim suggests that Shakespeare is alluding to the possibility that “*Hermione has physically consummated her desire for Polixenes while pregnant with Leontes’ child.*”<sup>141</sup> That ‘under the cover’ of her pregnancy, Hermione had been able to indulge her adulterous desires. That Leontes himself “*is the cause*”<sup>142</sup>. That “*by impregnating her, Leontes has served as agent and enabler of Hermione’s extramarital liaisons.*”<sup>143</sup> Matchett observes that “*whether anyone is guilty should, at the beginning of the play, be an open question.*”<sup>144</sup> Shakespeare is certainly doing nothing at all to dispel any random and wild thoughts that the ‘auditors’ may have, as to what is going on. If anything, he is encouraging such imaginings, through first the ‘stage picture’<sup>145</sup> he has painted and then with the ‘careful’

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<sup>139</sup> Foreman’s Account Orgel p. 233

<sup>140</sup> Kaplin p. 140-1 Cites Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare*, (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1989) p. 130

<sup>141</sup> Ephraim p. 46 If, this was the case, then the possibility of superfetation arises. She cites Sharp, *The Midwives Book: or the Whole Art of Midwifry Discovered*, (1671) ed. Elaine Hobby, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) 59-60 “*That is, the woman may conceive again when she has conceiv’d of one child before she is delivered of that.*”

<sup>142</sup> *Othello* (1604) 5 ii 1

<sup>143</sup> Ephraim p. 51

<sup>144</sup> Matchett p. 95

<sup>145</sup> Desai though suggests something more fundamental. Polixenes is of Slavic descent, as is Hermione (whose father was the Emperor of Russia). Leontes is not - he is of ‘Mediterranean’, and therefore darker, extraction - as is every one else who is on stage. The expectation would be that ‘like is with like’. That of course is not the case. This is not a ‘popular’ theory - Desai being the only proponent that I can find. There is ‘one line’ that might support this line of thinking. Leontes describes Hermione as having a “*white hand*”. While it could denote actual skin colour, it could also denote a purity of heart and spirit. The consequences of this observation would be

language he has written. Maus observes that “*anxiety about sexual betrayal pervades the drama of the English Renaissance*” and “*Not only does jealousy dominate the plots of many plays, but songs about the cuckolded and the abandoned, jokes and saws about the unreliability of wives and lovers turn up in other plays on the slightest of pretexts.*”<sup>146</sup> With the which, Bruster concurs, stating that “*it is difficult to overestimate the predominance of cuckoldry in the popular drama of the period.*”<sup>147</sup> It was not just a ‘theatrical’ preoccupation, as there was an actual physical representation of the condition - ‘cuckold’s haven’. Henry Machyn recorded the landmark in his diary in 1562, “*the same day [15 May 1562] was set up at the cuckold haven a great May-pole by butchers and fisher-men, full of horns; and they made great cheer.*”<sup>148</sup>

Hermione is successful in persuading Polixenes to stay, something that Leontes was unable to do. Kalpin suggests that it is the manner of this ‘success’ that lights the fuse for Leontes’ furious explosion of jealousy. She argues that the ‘conversation’ between her and Polixenes is portrayed as if she were a wife ‘lecturing’ her husband in a private and personal moment. The implication is that they (Hermione and Polixenes) had ‘shared’ a bed, and that ‘common experience’ would give her the ‘right’ and indeed the ‘ability’ to speak to him in this manner. The term used for this style of wifely speech is ‘curtain lecture’.<sup>149</sup> Heyward in his work entitled *A Curtaine Lecture* specifically states that this type of ‘womanly speech’ is the domain of the wife, as maids “*as yet ... are not come*

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far-reaching. A line may then be drawn back through Othello to Aaron. The play then becomes a story that deals, albeit softly and quietly, with race. With the conclusion that skin colour is no impediment to regret and redemption and the eventual triumph of love. As innovative and radical as this play I believe is, I think that that would be a step or two, too far.

<sup>146</sup> Maus p. 561 *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (1594-5) 5 ii 883-887 Songs ‘dedicated’ to cuckoldry, exemplified by the chorus of Spring’s ‘dialogue’: “*The cuckoo then on every tree Mocks married men, for thus sings he: Cuckoo! Cuckoo, cuckoo - O word of fear, Unpleasing to a married ear.*”

<sup>147</sup> Bruster p. 197

<sup>148</sup> Bruster p. 195 Endnote 1 p. 212 Citing *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London*, ed. John G. Nichols, (London: Camden Society, 1848, rpt. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1968), 48:283. Bruster p. 195 This was some “*three miles east of St. Paul’s and on the Surry shore, ... [and] provided London’s playwright’s with a popular local reference point ... [exemplified by] Northward Ho! (1605) and The Isle of Gulls (1607)*” and he describes “*Cuckhold’s Haven [as] a makeshift arrangement of wooden pole topped by animal horns.*”

<sup>149</sup> Kalpin p. 145 Endnote 2 The term ‘curtain lecture’ is cited as first appearing in print in 1633.

to the rudiments of reading a Curtaine Lecture, for that only belongs to wives.”<sup>150</sup> As Hermione is not Polixenes’ wife<sup>151</sup>, the only inference that could be drawn from the manner of her ‘conversation’ with Polixenes is that because, she has ‘shared’ a bed with him she feels able to speak so ‘freely’ to him. Leontes does not participate in the conversation - he is removed from the action. This places him in a position of knowing less than the ‘auditors’ - who are privy to the ‘curtain lecture’. Essentially Hermione has talked until Polixenes has bent to her will. Hermione may well have done this to Leontes on previous occasions, and indeed at private and intimate moments. Now she has done ‘the same thing’, and in the same style, but this time it is with his friend, and “*When a wife is suspected of giving a curtain lecture, she is thus, by extension, suspected of taking that man to her bed.*”<sup>152</sup> But it is to the ‘auditors’ that Shakespeare is actually addressing the scene. So when, from line 110 onwards, Leontes states what is on his mind, the ‘auditors’ - with their privileged information - are open to believing the accusation of adultery. They have seen Hermione in ‘solitary’ conversation with Polixenes. And they have seen Leontes ‘side-lined’ while Hermione bends Polixenes to her will.

Shakespeare, by giving Hermione the ‘words’ to convince Polixenes, has led her into the perceived ‘traps’ in public female speech, that of “*the double injunction, to speak and remain silent at the same time.*”<sup>153</sup> It may be said that it is her fluidity and fulsomeness with language that places her in a position to be suspected. Brietenburg quotes Breton, “*A woman should take heede, that she give not men occasion to thinke hardly of her, either by her Deedes, Wordes, Lookes or Apparell*” and then goes on to observe that “*these four semiotic fields correspond exactly to the media of the theatre: action, speech, expression and*

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<sup>150</sup> Kaplin p. 146 Endnote 11

<sup>151</sup> Polixenes’ wife is ‘pointedly’ absent from the stage picture. She is only mentioned the once, 1 ii 84, in passing, as “*your queen.*” Gibbons p. 115 Observes that this “*gives visual emphasis to an exclusive triangular relationship.*”

<sup>152</sup> Kaplin p. 143

<sup>153</sup> Van Elk p. 429



costume.”<sup>154</sup> Of the four fields Hermione, has possibly ‘transgressed’ three. Just the ‘costume’ is missing.<sup>155</sup>

But then Shakespeare had already utilised ‘costume’ to anatomise jealousy before. *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice* is Shakespeare’s most lauded<sup>156</sup> example of a play that deals with the “green-eyed monster.”<sup>157</sup> The purpose, or plot, of *Othello* is completely different to *The Winter’s Tale*. It is the story of the Moor, who is in essence “but a poor player That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,”<sup>158</sup> being first directed and then stage-managed by “brave Iago, honest and just.”<sup>159</sup> The plot essentially revolves around those two characters<sup>160</sup> and its purpose is to delineate the manipulation of one by the other.<sup>161</sup>

Leontes however, is not the ‘centre’ of the play and also has no ‘Iago’ equivalent.<sup>162</sup> His jealousy comes from ‘within’ himself. Girard suggests that by the ‘removal’ of an Iago equivalent, or “props from under the superficial play”<sup>163</sup> that Shakespeare has created “the most intelligent, the most depressive, the most destructive of all [his] hypermimetic characters.”<sup>164</sup> Leontes’ jealousy

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<sup>154</sup> Breitenburg p. 386, Endnote 18 p. 397 Citing Breton *The Court of Good Counsell: Wherein is set downe the true rules, how a man should choose a good wife from a bad, and a woman a good husband from a bad*, (London: 1607) fol. D3.

<sup>155</sup> Hermione would, I suspect, be costumed so as to overtly indicate that she is pregnant.

<sup>156</sup> Girard p. 202 Argues that Leontes should be the “greatest symbol of jealousy in the theatre of Shakespeare” but that the depiction is “too stark for universal consumption” and that Leontes is “the most intelligent, most depressive, the most destructive of all Shakespearean hypermimetic characters.”

<sup>157</sup> *Othello* (1603-4) 5 i 32 Other Shakespeare plays contain portrayals of jealousy, notably *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598). But, none are so concerned with this particular affliction as *Othello* or *The Winter’s Tale*.

<sup>158</sup> *Macbeth* (1606) 5 v 23-4

<sup>159</sup> 2 iii 170

<sup>160</sup> In *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598), the Claudio - Don John story-line is very much a sub-plot.

<sup>161</sup> Three acts to lead up to the idea of infidelity, one hundred and eighty lines for the ‘confirmation’ of infidelity, and then a further one and a half acts, to bring the tragedy to its conclusion.

<sup>162</sup> Girard p. 202 Comments on Iago (and ‘villains’ in general) that the “sacrificial scapegoat must polarize their [the auditors] hostilities in such a way to deflect them from the hero whose identical double he really is.”

<sup>163</sup> Girard p. 202

<sup>164</sup> Girard p. 202

comes upon him – as the ‘auditors’ perceive it - quite quickly. Shakespeare does not - specifically - introduce Leontes into the play as already suffering from that particular malady.<sup>165</sup> There is no direct indication in the words that Leontes speaks that he is about to explode. Knapp suggests that if Shakespeare had ‘made’ Leontes a tyrant from the beginning, he would then be unable to ‘un-make’ tyrannical. While Leontes does respond to the perceived ‘insult’ in a tyrannical manner, he is not inherently a tyrant.<sup>166</sup>

The Moor did not just accept Iago’s ‘suggestions’ of Desdemona’s infidelity - “*No, Iago, I’ll see before I doubt.*”<sup>167</sup> He demands of Iago that he gives him some “*oracular proof.*”<sup>168</sup> Maus comments that English dramatists of the age placed much emphasis on “*the jealous husband’s desire for a specifically visual corroboration of his suspicions.*”<sup>169</sup> What Iago furnishes, is a napkin - a small, casual thing, unimportant and innocent, until ‘loaded’ with meaning and significance.<sup>170</sup> The *First Folio* does not indicate, via stage directions, how the napkin is first introduced and then moved around the various characters - who briefly have hold of it. It must be deduced from the words. The first mention and appearance of the napkin is in Act 3, scene iii. It quickly moves from Desdemona to Emilia (Iago’s wife and companion to Desdemona) and then on to Iago. Iago now improvises and makes the napkin the ‘visual signifier’ of Desdemona’s cuckolding of the Moor. To achieve this, Iago gives the napkin to Cassio (who is the ‘fall guy’ for Iago’s plan), who then gives it to Bianca (a courtesan in love with Cassio). Desdemona now cannot produce the napkin when asked by the Moor, and then Iago engineers for the Moor to ‘see’ Bianca with the napkin while she talks to Cassio. All this has been ‘embedded’ in the text. The napkin, that

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<sup>165</sup> Pandosto Pafford p. 185 Greene does give some ‘circumstantial’ evidence for a possible liaison, by describing how Bellaria, “*oftentimes coming herself into his [Egistus] bedchamber.*”

<sup>166</sup> Knapp p. 254 Cites the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas and his concept of ‘alterity’, a term given to “*the unknown and unknowable other person.*” Leontes is reacting to an image beyond his understanding.

<sup>167</sup> *Othello* (1603-4) 3 iii 193-4

<sup>168</sup> *Othello* (1603-4) 3 iii 365

<sup>169</sup> Maus p. 564

<sup>170</sup> Wilson p. 261 George Bernard Shaw, in a piece entitled *Tolstoy: Tragedian or Comedian?*, wrote that “*Othello is spoilt by a handkerchief, as Shakespear (sic) found out afterwards when he wrote A Winter’s Tale.*”

arrived on stage in Act 3, scene iii, is gone, from the stage, by Act 4, scene i, as it is not physically needed anymore. The Moor cannot be dissuaded from what he saw, his mind cannot be changed, he has seen ‘the proof’. Leontes is about to ‘see his proof.’ He is about to be convinced that “*his pond [has been] fished by his next neighbour, by Sir Smile, his neighbour.*”<sup>171</sup>

### 3.3: interpreting the signal

***“And take her by the hand”***<sup>172</sup>

Hermione’s reply to Leontes’ question is that Polixenes has now agreed to stay. This provokes a somewhat churlish retort from Leontes that “*At my request he would not.*”<sup>173</sup> And then Leontes moves the conversation around to the remembrance of how long it took him to win her love:

Why, that was when  
Three crabbed months had soured themselves to death  
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand  
And clap thyself my love. Then didst thou utter,  
‘I am yours forever.’<sup>174</sup>

‘Thy white hand’ is the second direct reference, in the play, to hands. The first occurs in the opening scene, when Camillo in cataloguing the depth of the friendship between the two Kings – even though they had been long apart – describes them as having “*shook hands, as over a vast.*”<sup>175</sup> The picture is of the two Kings ‘hand in hand’, as sign of their innocent love for each other. The

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<sup>171</sup> 1 ii 196-7

<sup>172</sup> 5 iii 145

<sup>173</sup> 1 ii 89

<sup>174</sup> 1 ii 103-7

<sup>175</sup> 1 i 30

image of the 'taking of hands' is now about to be physically reproduced on stage.<sup>176</sup> Hermione responds to Leontes, for him, loquacious speech, with:

'Tis grace indeed.  
Why lo you now; I have spoke to th'purpose twice.  
The one for ever earned a royal husband;  
Th'other, for some while a friend.<sup>177</sup>

Hermione has, unwittingly, equated Leontes with Polixenes. And the memory of the moment when she took Leontes' hand, and by doing that consented to be his wife, is now about to be inverted and re-fashioned by the simple action that follows her words.

The *First Folio* has no stage direction at this line. Wells and Taylor have three. In the Oxford Edition of *The Complete Works*, this is a very busy moment of stage business,<sup>178</sup> requiring three separate instructions to indicate how the action unfolds.<sup>179</sup> The first, in broken brackets,<sup>180</sup> is, "*She [Hermione] gives her hand to Polixenes.*"<sup>181</sup> It is at this particular moment that Shakespeare decides that he has prepared the ground well enough for the 'auditors' to be able to understand what is happening. Hermione, just after calling Polixenes 'a friend' has taken his hand. The pregnant Queen, calls their long stayed guest - 'friend'. Crystal & Crystal have three definitions for the use of 'friend' as a noun. The first being "*lover, sweetheart, suitor.*"<sup>182</sup> The other two are 'more innocent'. Shakespeare has, through careful choice of words, left 'things' open to interpretation.

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<sup>176</sup> Bennett p. 83 Comments that there is a visual element involved (un-stated as to exactly what by Bennett) but that did "*not mean that the meaning was not determined in Shakespeare's day.*"

<sup>177</sup> 2 i 107-110

<sup>178</sup> From my investigations, this is the 'busiest' moment 'stage direction-wise' that I can find in the Wells and Taylor edition. The next busiest is in *Hamlet* 5 ii 255 which has one actual 'direction', but it comprises of three actions - which flow on from each other.

<sup>179</sup> Not all editions are so numerous or loquacious. Pafford, Orgel and Pitcher all have two.

<sup>180</sup> Wells and Taylor *The Complete Works* p. xxxvii The use of broken brackets is described in the *Introduction* as being "*to identify dubious action or placing.*" This is the first 'added' stage direction that Wells and Taylor have placed in the play.

<sup>181</sup> sd. 1 i 110

<sup>182</sup> Crystal & Crystal p. 188

Hermione, right in front of Leontes, has taken Polixenes by the hand. Shakespeare, as playwright, was not unaware of the significance of hands and their actions and meanings. As Lynch observes “*there can be little doubt of the important, even pivotal, role that hands play among images in Shakespeare’s Macbeth, attracting to themselves no fewer than thirty-two major references in the course of the play.*”<sup>183</sup> They range from the formal and direct “*Give me thy hand*”<sup>184</sup> by Duncan to Lady Macbeth, through the potentially murderous imaginings of “*Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?*”<sup>185</sup> To the stained consequences of unnatural slaughter in, “*What, will these hands ne’er be clean?*”<sup>186</sup> Each of these references, one assumes, is accompanied, on stage, by a definite action. The hands embellish the telling of the story.

Shakespeare, as the individual man, was also aware of how hands signified ‘connections’. Formal records of Shakespeare in London are few and far between - indeed there is a void between the years of 1604 and 1612.<sup>187</sup> However, in the autumn of 1604<sup>188</sup> he presided over a hand-fasting ceremony between Mary Mountjoy<sup>189</sup> and Stephen Belott. In England - unlike the rest of Europe (both catholic and protestant) - the exchange of the present tense statement ‘I take thee as my wife’<sup>190</sup> by both parties was enough for a marriage to have taken place. No witness was required.<sup>191</sup> They had performed a

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<sup>183</sup> Lynch p. 29

<sup>184</sup> *Macbeth* (1606) 1 vi 28

<sup>185</sup> *Macbeth* (1606) 2 i 33-4

<sup>186</sup> *Macbeth* (1606) 5 i 41

<sup>187</sup> There are records of Shakespeare outside of London. This is the last ‘confirmed’ record of Shakespeare being in London prior to a record in the Court of Request in May 1612.

<sup>188</sup> Bate p. 357

<sup>189</sup> Bate p. 357 Shakespeare was a lodger at the Mountjoy household in the early 1600’s.

<sup>190</sup> In *As You Like It* (1599-1600) Rosalind, while pretending to be Ganymede pretending to be Rosalind, convinces Orlando to take part in a ‘mock’ wedding. Orlando states “*I take thee Rosalind for wife*”, to the which ‘Rosalind’ replies “*I...*” but then breaks off and ‘changes tack’, before actually completing the call and response required for a ‘legal’ marriage.

<sup>191</sup> David Cressy p. 542 Endnote 38 Chapter 11 Citing Guildhall Library Ms. 9064/115 fo. 196; Oxfordshire Archives, Diocesan Papers, d. 11, fo 177. cited in, *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*, (Oxford University Press, 1997) “*John Symonds and Elizabeth Playster similarly pledged themselves before adequate witnesses at Kidlington, Oxfordshire, in 1606, using the proper form of hand-holding and an*

‘clandestine’ or ‘hand-fast’ marriage.<sup>192</sup> “*Spousals were of two kinds, de praesenti and de futuro. The latter, de futuro, was more akin to modern engagement promises: a future intent to marry. De praesenti contracts amounted to a full-fledged marriage.*”<sup>193</sup> The strength of such contacts is observed by Stone, in that it “*was regarded in ecclesiastical law as an irrevocable commitment which could never be broken, and which nullified a later church wedding to someone else.*”<sup>194</sup> In *The Book of Common Prayer*, “*they give their troth to each other*” by ‘taking hands’. First the man takes the woman by the hand and repeats after the Minister that “*I [he] plight thee my troth*”. The action is then repeated, but with “*the Woman, with her right hand taking the Man by his right hand*”<sup>195</sup> and repeating the same words.

Ranald comments that “*osmotic knowledge of matrimonial law was probably even more comprehensive and precise in Shakespeare’s time than today.*”<sup>196</sup> And that “*Shakespeare ... wrote two plays, All’s Well That Ends Well [(1604-5)] and Measure for Measure [(1603)] that require an understanding of English matrimonial law for interpretation.*”<sup>197</sup> Other plays relied on ‘popular’ understandings of the marriage process. In *The Taming of the Shrew* (prior to 1594) Petruccio states that he will marry Kate - on Sunday next. Kate’s only response, early in the sequence is to say that she’ll “*see thee [Petruccio] hanged on Sunday first.*”<sup>198</sup> Undeterred Petruccio presses on, taking Kate’s hand towards the end of his speech. Kate does not ‘verbally’ respond. Petruccio finishes speaking, and Kate is still silent, and “*silence means consent [and] she*

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*acceptable form of words. The only reason we know about this otherwise unexceptional contract is that after they had ‘carnal knowledge’ John ‘went away’ leaving Elizabeth to cope with an illegitimate pregnancy.”*

<sup>192</sup> Harmon p. 117 Citing James A. Brundage *Law, Sex and Christian Society in Medieval Europe*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950) p. 552-3 “*On the Continent, the Catholic, Lutheran, and reformed Churches recognized the problem of private marriage and made a public, Church-witnessed ceremony necessary to marital validity.*”

<sup>193</sup> Harmon p. 139 Endnote 1

<sup>194</sup> Stone p. 32

<sup>195</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer* section 20 The Form of the Solemnization of Matrimony

<sup>196</sup> Ranald p. 68

<sup>197</sup> Ranald p. 69

<sup>198</sup> *The Taming of the Shrew* (1509-1) 2 i 295

is considered to have agreed to the union.”<sup>199</sup> Baptista (a gentleman of Padua) understands what has happened, and declares “*I know not what to say, but give me your hands. God send you joy, Petruccio! ‘Tis a match.*”<sup>200</sup> The other gentlemen present concur and agree to be witnesses. The ‘ceremony’ is concluded with a kiss a few lines later. In *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) Hero also effectively consents by silence. She is silent from the time of her entrance in Act 2, scene i, however Don Pedro announces that “*Here, Claudio, I have wooed in thy name, and fair Hero is won.*”<sup>201</sup> Hero remains silent. Claudio a few lines later responds:

Silence is the perfectest herald of joy. I  
were but little happy if I could say how  
much. (*To Hero*) Lady, as you are mine,  
I am yours. I give away myself for you,  
and dote upon the exchange.<sup>202</sup>

Hero still remains silent. So Beatrice exhorts her to “*stop his mouth with a kiss.*”<sup>203</sup> Ranald observes that Hero’s “*silence constitutes constructive consent, which is then ratified by the spousal kiss.*”<sup>204</sup> This, combined with Claudio’s ‘present tense’ statement, is enough for them to be properly regarded as husband and wife. Ranald also observes that “*Shakespeare [as usual] gives enough detail so that the situation will be recognizable.*”<sup>205</sup> Not only recognizable, but also understandable, by those that Shakespeare was writing for - ‘his auditors’.

In *As You Like It* (1599-1600), when Hymen, the god of Marriage, appears on stage, he speaks of marriage - “*Here’s eight that must take hands To join in*

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<sup>199</sup> Ranald p. 71

<sup>200</sup> *The Taming of the Shrew* (1590-1) 2 i 314-5

<sup>201</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 2 i 279-80

<sup>202</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 2 i 287-90

<sup>203</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 2 i 291-2

<sup>204</sup> Ranald p. 75

<sup>205</sup> Ranald p. 75

*Hymen's bands, If truth holds true contents.*"<sup>206</sup> This is just how Wells and Taylor describe the action - that Hermione 'gives' her hand to Polixenes, with the unwritten but implied consequence that he takes it. In the sequence ordained in the 'prayer book' there is contained the symbolism that the bride has sacrificed parts of her body to the groom.<sup>207</sup> And as such, it could be used in an inverted or manipulated sense to present an image that would signify - very directly - what the playwright was trying to achieve. Shakespeare had alluded to this before in *Titus Andronicus* with the mutilation of Lavinia. After her rape - "*she has her hands cut off – the body part that demonstrates consent*"<sup>208</sup>, and also her tongue, the vocal counterpart to the hand. Hermione has, in the view of Leontes, with both her tongue and her hand 'demonstrated' consent, albeit a belated admission of such. The hand-clasp is the 'thing'. That is the 'something', some 'thing' simple and understandable and that 'thing' is a 'hand-clasp'.

As with the advanced pregnancy of Hermione, we must 'deduce' what this 'signal' is from the text to come. Seven lines later we have our answer: "*But to paddling palms, and pinching finger, As now they are.*"<sup>209</sup> Hermione and Polixenes are holding hands, and they continue to do so for a little while, for nine lines later Leontes observes, "*Still virginalling Upon her palm!*"<sup>210</sup> These are 'stage directions' written into the body of the text. All the four editions: Wells and Taylor; Pafford; Orgel, and Pitcher, have an inserted stage direction, which invariably describes the action as Hermione 'giving' her hand to Polixenes.<sup>211</sup> The offer is made by Hermione and accepted by Polixenes. So, it is

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<sup>206</sup> *As You Like It* (1599-1600) 5 iv 126-9

<sup>207</sup> Ray p. 23 "*In 1579 Elizabeth I demanded the amputation of the right hands of John Stubbs and William Page after they wrote and published a treatise decrying the queen's proposed marriage to the Duke of Alencon.*" Cressy p. 337 If they had no hands they could not themselves, by the taking of hands, get married. The form of the ceremony required that both the taking of hands and the placement of rings was done with the right hand.

<sup>208</sup> Ray p. 22

<sup>209</sup> 2 i 115-16

<sup>210</sup> 2 i 125

<sup>211</sup> sd. 1 ii 110 "[broken bracket] *She gives her hand to Polixenes* [broken bracket]". Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* sd. 1 ii 108 "[*giving her hand to Pol.*]". Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* sd. 1 ii 107 "[*She gives her hand to Polixenes*]". And Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* sd. 1 ii 108 "[*Gives her hand to Polixenes*]".



Polixenes who ‘takes’ the hand of Hermione. The ‘visual signal’ is there, for all to see. The interpretation of the ‘signal’ is another matter. Leontes ‘reads’ it, as proof of Hermione’s infidelity.

The Wells and Taylor edition then has a second stage direction immediately after that of the ‘the hand-holding’, and this is not encased by brackets, “*They stand aside.*”<sup>212</sup> Again, there is no source in the *First Folio*. ‘The couple’, hand-in-hand, move off, promenading and parading for all to see. Smith comments that “*Shakespeare’s plays contain nearly three thousand directions for stage business ... in the dialogue compared to fewer than three hundred marginal notations in the basic texts.*”<sup>213</sup> He goes further, to illustrate his point, that “*of the 2,928 directions I [Smith] count in the plays, fewer than 880 actually precede the action to which they allude.*”<sup>214</sup> He suggests that is because of the three-sided construction of the playing space of the public playhouse, so consequently, sometimes the ‘auditors’ could not actually see what is going on. The playwright (and he includes Shakespeare’s contemporaries in this) therefore had to include descriptions of the action for those who may not - at any given moment - be able to see what was going on.<sup>215</sup> Smith uses the example of this moment in *The Winter’s Tale* to illustrate his point:

Thus to guarantee that spectators on all three sides of his platform stage simultaneously will perceive the by-play between Hermione and Polixenes ... , as well as call attention to the reaction of the jealous husband, Shakespeare has Leontes describe the action, as it occurs, in detail.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> sd. 1 ii 110

<sup>213</sup> Smith, W., p. 311

<sup>214</sup> Smith, W., p. 311 Footnote 2

<sup>215</sup> This practical ‘reality’ of the ‘playhouse’, has been of immense value to directors.

<sup>216</sup> Smith, W., p. 313

Hermione and Polixenes have, in full view of the Leontes, joined hands. They had enacted, what could be ‘read’ as, a hand-fasting ritual. They have also moved, so that all on-stage can see and, more importantly, all the ‘auditors’ can see too. The image, and all its attendant significances and meanings, are now, visually or aurally in the minds of the ‘auditors’. What Leontes has just seen is effectively a ‘troth-plight’. This action that they have just done, in his mind, was done just to taunt him, *“Because the only resolution to this interpretive frustration is empirical, visible proof, the jealous man reads and over-reads those signs available to him.”*<sup>217</sup> The visual signal is being not only inverted, but brazenly and wilfully flaunted - and with him as the primary witness.<sup>218</sup> Shakespeare understood, as did his ‘auditors’, the formal significance of the gesture. Leontes now explodes - *“Too hot, too hot!”*<sup>219</sup>

The words that now vent from Leontes have been subjected to a number of psychological and sociological readings, and consequently many and various ‘theories’ or ‘explanations’ have been proposed as to why he behaves as he does. And while it is not the purpose of this discussion to analyse the psychology of Leontes, it is interesting to note how ‘understandable’ Shakespeare’s delineation of said passion seems to be.<sup>220</sup> However, we must remember we are ‘watching’ a dramatic presentation and dramatic motivation is quite a different beast. Matchett reminds us that Shakespeare prepared his scripts for actors and not for

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<sup>217</sup> Breitenberg p. 379

<sup>218</sup> White p. 23 Comments that *“his [Leontes] logic is binary or in Elizabethan rhetorical terms disjunctive ... a given word or event can only signify one thing, and if it suggests both an innocent and a malign meaning, then the malign meaning must assume priority since the word itself is double.”*

<sup>219</sup> I i 110-111

<sup>220</sup> Girard p. 194 Suggests that *“this great scene contains all that is needed for a full understanding of this hero’s jealousy.”* His argument is that Leontes intensely distrusts himself, and so suspects all those around him. White argues it is a question of belief - the continuing belief required by Leontes in Hermione’s truth, and that he is unable to deal with perceived ambivalence of Hermione’s words and consequently her honour. Colley puts forward that Leontes is faced with two incompatible emblems, that of Polixenes (his boyhood friend) - the past, and Hermione (his pregnant wife) - the future. The consequence of which is to (p. 48) *“throw Leontes’ sense of ‘the present’ into confusion.”* Sokol proposes that Leontes is suffering from a condition named as the ‘couvade syndrome’ - a condition peculiar to expectant fathers, who experience strange emotions. Bristol makes sense of Leontes’ actions through a ‘gift-exchange economy’. But however the words and the scene itself are interpreted; ‘something’ needs to happen.

readers, and that there could well have been “*conceptions of his characters passed verbally by the author to his fellow actors, moulding their presentations and therefore needing no redundant place in the script.*”<sup>221</sup> The need to make sense of and then ‘show’ what is about to happen, absorbs directors of the play as well as its critics. Orgel wryly encapsulates this with, “*Directors ... sometimes give Hermione and Polixenes a suspiciously intimate pantomime to justify Leontes’ outburst.*”<sup>222</sup>

The first ‘rational’ words that Leontes utters after the ‘taking of hands’ relates directly to what Hermione has just said: “*To mingle friendship far, is mingling bloods.*”<sup>223</sup> He is in no doubt that he has been cuckolded<sup>224</sup> for, as Orgel notes, “*scholastic philosophy, descending from Aristotle, held that the basic component of semen was blood and therefore sexual intercourse was a mingling of bloods.*”<sup>225</sup> The rest of the first ‘tragic’ half of the play is a consequence of that moment, which Leontes has witnessed - as have the audience - when to Leontes’ imaginings, Hermione made public what was private, when she “*mistook, ... Polixenes for Leontes.*”<sup>226</sup>

Grotowski describes the ‘theatrical relationship’ as “*what takes place between spectator and actor*”<sup>227</sup> And here Shakespeare is manipulating that relationship, by casting Leontes as a virtual spectator in his own scene, and consequently seeming to place the audience in a ‘faux-Leontes’ position. Leontes still remains in the scene, with all the ‘privileged’ information that that position allows him -

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<sup>221</sup> Matchett p. 94

<sup>222</sup> Orgel *Arden Shakespeare* p. 22

<sup>223</sup> 1 ii 111

<sup>224</sup> Maus p. 561 “Traditionally the material of comedy, cuckoldry or the fear of cuckoldry becomes a tragic theme ... in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.” Maus p. 561-2 Also comments that “extraliterary evidence certainly reinforces the view that anxiety about female sexual fidelity ran high in English Renaissance culture; historians report, of instance, that the opprobrious terms cuckold, whore, whore-master account for the most defamation suits brought in sixteenth century church courts.”

<sup>225</sup> Orgel *Arden Shakespeare* p. 100 Footnote to 1 ii 108 Pafford makes no mention, in his notes to the text, of the possible sexual meaning of blood.

<sup>226</sup> 2 i 83-4

<sup>227</sup> Grotowski p. 32

the audience too is 'granted' access. So, when Leontes 'declares' Hermione to be unfaithful, the 'auditors' have been 'conditioned by proximity' to believe him over her. Pafford comments that, "*The play must be judged as by a spectator who is allowing himself [or herself] to be caught up by it in performance and to be carried away into its illusion.*"<sup>228</sup> Leontes later observes of himself:

There may be in the cup  
A spider steeped, that one [we] may drink, depart,  
And yet partake no venom, for his [our] knowledge  
Is not infected; but if one [we] present  
Th'abhorred ingredient to his [our] eye, make known  
How he [we] have drunk, he [we] crack his [our] gorge,  
his [our] sides  
With violent hefts. I [we] have drunk, and seen  
the spider."<sup>229</sup>

That 'spider' orchestrates the first half of the play. That 'simple' action of taking hands has been so infused with meaning, that the 'auditors' are able to 'read' it, as complete justification to create the violent, surging cascade of jealous energy that drives this first part of the story, through three acts, to its tragic and fatal conclusion.

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<sup>228</sup> Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* p. li

<sup>229</sup> 2 i 41-7

## Chapter 4: Surprises

### 4.1: preparing the surprise

*“bear it to some remote and desert place”*<sup>230</sup>

It could be said that ‘*exit stage left*’ is probably the most famous of all stage directions.<sup>231</sup> The functionality of the instruction and its ubiquitousness renders it as ‘belonging to all’ - and so it is impossible to ascribe it to any one author, or individual compositor. And it is also inherently pointless. “*Exit pursued by a beare*”<sup>232</sup> though, may well be the second most quoted italicised line in the theatre, and it definitively belongs to the ‘*First Folio*’ printing of *The Winter’s Tale*. Curiously though there is no preceding direction stating - ‘*Enter a beare*’.<sup>233</sup> Possibly it was ‘too self-evident’, as Shakespeare was only too well aware of the need to enter onto the stage before it was possible to exit. The question of the part of ‘the bear’ though, and who ‘played’ that part, has over the years generated ‘some degree’ of discussion and comment - as to whether the bear who played the part, was a ‘real bear’ or an actor in costume. Today however, with our third millennium sensibilities, it would be absolutely inconceivable that a real bear would be so tormented as to be put on a theatre stage, in a play, for our entertainment.

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<sup>230</sup> 2 iii175-6

<sup>231</sup> That the expression is not ‘exit stage right’, is ‘curious’. Maybe it is because when we write, we ‘enter’ on the right side of the page and ‘exit’ on the left, so to ‘exit stage left’ is the opposite of what and how we visualise ‘ends’.

<sup>232</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 3 iii 57

<sup>233</sup> At the 2008 ANZSA Conference at Otago University, David Carnegie presented a paper entitled “*Signalling the Body*” where he discussed “*how and why we might signal the potential presence of or absence on stage of bodies/characters, both dead and alive, in edited texts.*” In the paper he proposed that a new category of bracketed stage directions might be appropriate, that of, “*the not in, but probable*”, indicated by a set of set of curly brackets, ie: { }. If, this addition to the typographical language of stage directions was to be adopted, then, {Enter a bear} might be one such emendation. No doubt it would ‘offend’ some, who would lament the demise of the written/readers joke, that of the sudden disappearance off, of a bear that was not known to be on.

This was not always the case. Bears had been a source of ‘sport’ since the Middle Ages. At first bear baiting was as an aristocratic pastime, but by the end of the fifteenth century it had assumed a commercial dimension, with the bears being toured around country houses and the bearwards wearing the liveries of their patrons. ‘Rings’ for the baiting of animals: bears; bulls and even horses appeared in London long before any ‘theatre-buildings’ were constructed. A “*report of a baiting match*” survives from 1562: “*They take into the ring - which is fenced around, so that one cannot get out unless a gate is opened - a cheap horse ...*”<sup>234</sup> The bear baiting rings, or ‘bear-gardens’, were located in the south of the city. The first theatre to be built as a theatre, was the eponymously named ‘the Theater’ - built in 1576 by James Burbage<sup>235</sup> in the north of the city. It was not until the construction of the Rose (1587) that the playhouses moved south of the river. With that, real bears and players started to occupy the same geographical space. In 1598 Paul Hentzner, a German jurist, wrote, “*There is still another Place, built in the Form of a Theatre, which serves for the baiting of Bulls and Bears.*”<sup>236</sup> And in ‘a picture’ of London, drawn by Wenceslas Hollar, known as the ‘Long View’, he “*mistakenly labels the Bear Garden ‘The Globe’ and the Globe ‘Beere bayting’.*”<sup>237</sup> Dickey cites an undated song - ‘*A North Country Song*’ - that expresses this ‘sharing’:

When I’ve come there, I was in a rage,  
 I ray’d on him that kept the Beares,  
 Instead of a Stake was suffered a Stage  
 And in Hunkes his house a crue of Players.<sup>238</sup>

The surrounding environs of the theatres are described by Dickey as a “*deplored ambiance of shambles, stews, and tenements*”<sup>239</sup> and had “*the baiting houses for*

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<sup>234</sup> Scott-Warren p. 70 Citing a letter by Alessandro Magno, 1562

<sup>235</sup> Hosley p. 37 This was followed by: the Curtain 1577; the Rose 1587; the Swan 1595; the Globe 1599; the Fortune 1600; the Red Bull c.1605; the Hope 1613-14; the second Globe 1614, and the second Fortune 1623. James Burbage was the father of Richard Burbage, the leading actor of the King’s Men.

<sup>236</sup> Dickey p. 260 Citing *A Journey into England* trans. Horace Walpole, (1757).

<sup>237</sup> Dickey p. 263 “*Hollar pictorially represents the interchangability of these forms of popular entertainment.*”

<sup>238</sup> Dickey p. 264 Citing E. K. Chambers *Shakespearean Stage*, vol. 4, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1923) p. 307

its immediate neighbours.”<sup>240</sup> As Antonio advises Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* (1601), who is wishing to stay out of the way of the authorities, that “*In the south suburbs at the Elephant Is best to lodge.*”<sup>241</sup> Dickey comments, that “*for Shakespeare’s contemporaries, bearbaiting and theatre were culturally isomorphic events.*”<sup>242</sup> Even the price of admission was the same, such as to go to the “*Parisgardein ..., or Theatre, to beholde beare Baiting, Enterludes, or fence play... [they cannot enter] ... unlesse they first pay one pennie at the gate.*”<sup>243</sup>

Practically too, they were connected. Central to this was Philip Henslowe (as too was his son-in-law, the actor Edward Alleyn<sup>244</sup>). Henslowe was directly involved not only in the building of two theatres, firstly the Rose in 1587<sup>245</sup> and then the Hope in 1613/14, but also “*as landlord and paymaster for at least six playing companies between 1592 and his death in 1616.*”<sup>246</sup> Concurrently with his theatrical endeavours Henslowe also had been “*running the Beargarden near the Rose under license from Jacob Meade, Keeper of the Royal Bears since 1594. Henslowe’s son-in-law Edward Alleyn actually bought the baiting house but Henslowe ran it.*”<sup>247</sup> This ‘franchise arrangement’ carried on until 1604 when he and Alleyn finally managed to jointly buy the Mastership of the Royal Bears from Meade’s successor, John Dorrington. Since the mid 1980’s a lot of excavation and archaeological work has been done on the remains of the

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<sup>239</sup> Dickey p. 262

<sup>240</sup> Gurr *Bears and players* p. 31

<sup>241</sup> *Twelfth Night* 3 iii 39-40 While *Twelfth Night* (1601) is set in Illyria and not London, the use of “the Elephant” (a tube station stop that still exists) does suggest that Shakespeare was ‘really meaning’ London.

<sup>242</sup> Dickey p. 255

<sup>243</sup> Dickey p. 261 A penny was indeed currency of worth, Smith, Bruce R., *Reading Lists of Plays* p. 129 “*A quart of ale split among four friends, a plug of tobacco, a mug of beer for oneself, a one-sheet printed story, love lyric, or moral poem to read and sing to oneself, to read and sing to others, to paste up on a wall, to get by heart, to use as waste paper. ... All things that cost a penny at the time Shakespeare was writing for the Globe.*”

<sup>244</sup> Edward Alleyn was along with (his rival) Richard Burbage, the leading actors of their time. In 1604 he was sworn in as the principal actor of the Prince’s Men.

<sup>245</sup> Lenz p. 836-7 “*On 24 March 1584/5 Henslowe acquired lease for the Little Rose, an ‘inn’ with extensive grounds in Southwark and, as it happens, one of the original ‘Bankside stews’ licensed by Henry II in 1161.*”

<sup>246</sup> Gurr *Bears and Players* p. 31

<sup>247</sup> Gurr *Bears and Players* p. 34

foundations of the Rose.<sup>248</sup> What has emerged is that “*Henslowe seems to have made the Rose markedly smaller than its playhouse predecessors to the north, more the size of the baiting houses.*”<sup>249</sup> Wickham suggests that the Rose was essentially a bear-baiting pit that sometimes was used as a theatre<sup>250</sup> prior its conversion in 1592, when it became primarily a theatre, that occasionally had bear-baiting.<sup>251</sup> When he built the Hope (very soon after the Globe burned down and left Bankside with only one theatre, the Swan) he requested “*a place or Plaiehouse fitt & convenient in all thinges, bothe for players to playe In, And for the game of Beares and Bulls to be bayted in the same.*”<sup>252</sup> The Hope was designed as a dual purpose arena - bear garden and playhouse.<sup>253</sup> And, like the actors of the plays, we even have records of the names of some of the more famous of the bears: Tom of Lincoln; Sackerson and Harry Hunks<sup>254</sup> – the blind bear.

This ‘physical inter-contextuality’ is possibly what has led some to state that it ‘was’ a real bear that trod the boards in the King’s Men performances of the play. But the main argument used, is that of the ‘masque bear’. On New Years’ Day 1611, Johnson presented his *Masque of Oberon* before James the First, at Whitehall during the Court Revels. The *Masque of Oberon* is often cited in regard to the dating of *The Winter’s Tale*. This is due to a particular dance in Act 4, scene iv, which not only ‘bears’ uncanny resemblance to a dance in the

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<sup>248</sup> The Rose remained a place of public entertainment until about 1604 when the lease expired and it was demolished - probably for its materials.

<sup>249</sup> Gurr *Bears and Players* p. 32

<sup>250</sup> Hosley p. 45 “*We have no record of the use of a baiting house as a theatre.*” However “*it would seem reasonable to suppose that, during the period immediately preceding the construction of the first public playhouses, the players occasionally set up a booth stage within a baiting-house.*”

<sup>251</sup> Dickey p. 261

<sup>252</sup> Scott-Warren p. 64

<sup>253</sup> Scott-Warren p. 64

<sup>254</sup> In 1614 the Hope staged the premiere of Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair*, but by 1620 the Hope had become almost exclusively a bear pit and eventually - colloquially at least - became known as the Bear Garden.

<sup>254</sup> Dickey p. 259 Footnote 15 Citing G. E Bentley *The Jacobean and Caroline Stage*, 7 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941-68), vol. 6, p. 210-11 That there were at least two bears named Hunks, and that “*as with theatrical performances, the starring role of ‘Hunks’ was played by more than one ‘actor’.*”



masque but also alludes - in the text - to having been performed before the King. The significance of this will be discussed later. But if the dance was 'taken' from the masque to the play, then it can also be suggested that the 'masque bear' was 'transferred and moulded' into the 'winter bear'. This however would seem 'unlikely'.

The 'role' the 'masque bear' had to undertake was that of pulling a chariot - essentially straightforward but potentially catastrophic, as the chariot contained no less a figure than that of the heir to the throne, the young Prince Henry. Consequently they had seven bearwards, costumed as 'sylvans', to ensure his safety.<sup>255</sup> The 'masque bear' is actually a pair of white bears.<sup>256</sup> Biggins suggests that while it is possible, but difficult, to train Polar bears, brown bears - painted white - could have fulfilled the role. But he concludes that "*it is equally possible, and far more probable, that Oberon's chariot-drawers were bear costumed actors.*"<sup>257</sup> Randall disagrees, stating that "*quite likely these Jonsonian bears were real.*"<sup>258</sup> Jonson himself may provide the deciding vote, for in his 1622 *Masque of Augers* he wrote in three dancing 'Beares', but he also wrote into the masque "*various humourous references ... in the dialogue that actors impersonated the bears.*"<sup>259</sup>

One of the most comprehensive documents about theatre life in Elizabethan and Jacobean times to survive is a diary kept by Philip Henslowe. In his diary, Henslowe has a list of what we would call 'props and costumes' from the Rose, dated 1598/99. Amongst the items listed, and remembering that Henslowe at this time was running real bears at the Beargarden, are: "*j lyone skin; j beare's skyne; ... ij lyone heads.*"<sup>260</sup> The 'keeper of the bears', kept bear-costumes.

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<sup>255</sup> Randall p. 93

<sup>256</sup> Rooney p. 259 "*Two polar bear cubs [were] given to King James I in 1609.*" Consequently they became charges of Henslowe. Grant p. 312 Suggests that these cubs were the ones used in the *Masque of Oberon*.

<sup>257</sup> Biggins p. 3

<sup>258</sup> Randall p. 93

<sup>259</sup> Biggins p. 3

<sup>260</sup> Wright p. 658

Chambers observes on the list that “*Animals and monsters were freely introduced. Living dogs and even horses may have been trained; but your lion, or bear or dragon was a creature of skin and brown paper.*”<sup>261</sup> So the means were there for an actor to portray ‘the bear’. And, quite significantly, there is no record that survives which mentions or even alludes to the use of a real bear in a performance, of what was a popular play both at court and in the public arena, prior to the closing of the theatres in 1642. Indeed as R. K. Turner has observed, that if the ‘winter bear’ were real, “*the stage history [of the play] ...would be thick with bears, but not a single production on record employs one.*”<sup>262</sup>

Early in his writing Shakespeare did, on two occasions, call for animals. In the first and most famous instance, he used a real live dog, namely Crab<sup>263</sup> (Launce’s dog) in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1595). In many ways the appearance of Crab (and indeed Launce) could be described as a ‘variety show turn’, as the scenes do not advance the action or even qualify as a sub-plot, and are essentially ‘humorous interludes’. This was to be an experiment that he did not repeat.<sup>264</sup> Middleton wrote in a cat, in *The Witch* (1609) in Act 1, scene ii, and the stage direction reads: “*Hecate conjures; and enter a cat playing on a fiddle, and Spirits with meat.*”<sup>265</sup> Wright describes the scene as having “*no dramatic purpose except to conclude the act with a touch of buffoonery*”<sup>266</sup> - much the same function as Crab. Other playwrights also wrote in animals, such as: dogs; ducks; goats and even “*highly trained apes [that] were often employed as entertainers in Elizabethan England.*”<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Wright p. 658 Footnote 12 Citing E. K. Chambers *Elizabethan Stage*, vol. 1, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1923) p. 372

<sup>262</sup> Williams p. 105-6 Citing R. K. Turner *Notes to the Variorum Edition of The Winter’s Tale*

<sup>263</sup> Crab is not listed as a member of the cast, despite having his (or her) name being used extensively during the play.

<sup>264</sup> As those that have shared the stage with a real dog will sadly attest, the final score is invariably: dog 1, human 0.

<sup>265</sup> Wright p. 667 Wright goes on the say “*It may be objected that this was an artificial cat, a boy dressed in a skin; an artificial cat would have been the easiest method of staging the scene, but the late Elizabethans were seeking sensations, and a real animal performance would have been more effective.*”

<sup>266</sup> Wright p. 667

<sup>267</sup> Wright p. 656 Cites examples of animals being ‘written’ into plays: Peele *Old Wives Tale* (1595) – dog; Jonson *Everyman and his Humour* (1599) - dog and cat; Marston *Histriomastix*

The other slightly earlier, and much less significant, example is that of *Titus Andronicus* (1594), when Clown enters, late in the play, “*with a basket, and two pigeons in it.*”<sup>268</sup> Essentially they are ‘warm props’, for not they are not actually required to ‘do’ anything at all. Titus just asks Clown to “*but give your pigeons to the Emperor.*”<sup>269</sup> Clown does what he is asked, entering the next scene, Act 4, scene iv, with the pigeons and then departs a few lines later. It is not completely clear, via the text, what happens to the pigeons - as they are not referred to again in the scene.

Shakespeare did though write in a ‘dog’ as appearing in the mechanicals performance of *Pyramus and Thisbe* in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1595). In Act 5, scene i, Moonshine (played by Starveling) does, under some pressure, abandon his poetical script and state directly to the wedding party that “*this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; this dog, my dog.*”<sup>270</sup> The ‘dog’ in question has not been mentioned before in the ‘rehearsals for the play’. Moonshine stays on (with attendant dog) through most of the gratuitously glorious final death speech of Bottom’s Pyramus, until he (the leading man) demands that Moonshine, with his ‘dog’, leaves. It would seem, unlikely, that a ‘real dog’ would allow Bottom/Pyramus to have sole charge of centre stage for this magnificent moment. If we accept that, then we must ask why, would sensible working actors put a real dog – which has no dramatic justification or inherent reason to be included in the scene – on stage, to upstage the lead comic of the company? However that may be exactly the reason, in the hope that ‘the dog’ will indeed upstage the actor and thereby add to the comedic business on the stage.<sup>271</sup>

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(1599) - dog and duck; Heywood, *If you know not me you Know Nobody* (1604) – goat; *Eastward Ho* (1605) – monkey. He describes each of the examples as being ‘similar’ to the function of crab.

<sup>268</sup> *Titus Andronicus* (1592) 4 iii 75

<sup>269</sup> *Titus Andronicus* (1592) 4 iii 95

<sup>270</sup> I have been involved with productions of the play and in my experience a real dog does indeed ‘somewhat’ draw focus from the actor. The audience spends a lot of its time watching the dog, wondering what it is going to do, while Bottom ‘heroically’ struggles on. A small and tattered, lime green and white, terrier shaped bundle of wool makes a perfect ‘dog’ – it gets the initial laugh on entrance and then sits quietly and patiently until it is time to exit.

<sup>271</sup> In *The Tempest* (1611), (written after *The Winter’s Tale*) as Prospero’s ‘project gathers to a head’, he sends Ariel (an airy spirit) to plague the drunken ‘conspirators’ and bring them, drenched and muddled, to the place where the reconciliation of brother and brother is taking

With the exception of *The Winter's Tale* Shakespeare did not write any other 'real' animals into his plays - for as Randell observes, that "*when Shakespeare wished to do so, he certainly was capable of depicting animals that are ostensibly nearby and thus not required onstage.*"<sup>272</sup> However, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, as the 'actors' rehearse, much ado is made about the panic and consternation that will undoubtedly occur, when the timorous Snug dons a lion's costume, with the consequence that "*the ladies [will] be afeared of the lion.*"<sup>273</sup> The mechanicals reason that their best defence against this happening (and the ensuing terrible consequences) is to insert a prologue into their performance of *Pyramus and Thisbe* to state quite directly that "*he is not a lion ... and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck and he himself must speak thus ... and tell them plainly that he is Snug the joiner.*"<sup>274</sup> Snug's lion that eventually roars so 'fearsomely and so well', is not real.

In *Twelfth Night* (1601) the 'sense' of bears and bear-baitings pervade the whole play.<sup>275</sup> From Fabian's anger at Malvolio for "*bringing him out o' favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here*"<sup>276</sup>, through Act 4, scene ii, which is

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place. The stage direction, (sd. 4 i 253) reads "*Enter divers spirits in shape of dogs and hounds*" This is very clear, the 'spirits' are impersonating dogs. This is quite acceptable as Prospero is a magician, and a magician of some considerable power, who has conjured images and sounds in the shape of spirits, before in the play. No question then that 'the dogs and hounds,' are actors being spirits, being dogs.

<sup>272</sup> Randall p. 89 Randall p. 91 Suggests that the 'winter bear' is Shakespeare's "*wry and witty allusion to Horace.*"<sup>272</sup> Horace in his *Epistles* (II 1) states, when talking about theatre, that "*Often even the bold poet is frightened and put to rout, when those who are stronger in number, but weaker in worth and rank, unlearned and stupid and ready to fight it out if the knights dispute with them, call in the middle of a play for a bear or for boxers; 'tis in such things the rabble delights.*"

<sup>273</sup> *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595) 3 i 25

<sup>274</sup> *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595) 3 i 31-42

<sup>275</sup> Other plays in the Canon also contain references to bear-baitings: *The First Part of the Contention* 2 *Henry VI* (1591) 5 i 146-8 "*Are these thy bears? We'll bait they bears to death, And manacle the bearherd in their chains, If though dar'st bring them to the baiting place*"; *The History of King Lear* (1605-6) scene 14 52 "*I am tied to th' stake, and must stand the course*" and *Macbeth* (1606) 5 vii1-2 "*They have tied me to a stake. I cannot fly, But bear-like I must fight the course.*"

<sup>276</sup> *Twelfth Night* (1601) 2 v 6-7

‘constructed’ as if it were a bear-baiting, to Malvolio’s parting line - “*I’ll be revenged on the whole pack of you.*”<sup>277</sup>

## 4.2: setting the surprise

***“He haunts, wakes, fairs and bear-baitings”***<sup>278</sup>

The ‘winter bear’ though, is required to be on the stage. It is a creation of Shakespeare. Greene has no bear in his story. Porrus (the pre-cursor of Old Shepherd in *The Winter’s Tale*) is only concerned that an eagle or wolf might have taken one of his sheep, when he stumbles upon the abandoned babe - Fawnia (Perdita’s equivalent). Old Shepherd ‘alludes’ to his ‘pre-cursor’, when after the ‘winter bear’s’ exit he shares his fear that “*the wolf will sooner find*”<sup>279</sup> his lost sheep than he will. Shakespeare has ‘found’ the bear somewhere else. The commonly cited stage ante-cedant to the ‘winter bear’, is the bear from the very popular and anonymous ‘old play’ of *Mucedorus*<sup>280</sup> - which was printed seventeen times between 1598 and 1668.<sup>281</sup> The first two printings of ‘*Mucedorus*’, were in 1598 and 1606, and neither edition of the play had a specific playing company attached to it, on the title page. The third printing in 1610 did - that of the King’s Men. The title page of that 1610 - third quarto - advertises the fact, with the inscription:

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<sup>277</sup> *Twelfth Night* (1601) 5 i 374 Scott-Warren p. 67 Jonson’s *Epicoene* (1609) also “*alludes explicitly to the baiting of animals.*” Scott-Warren argues that while *Twelfth Night* and *Epicoene* were ‘framed’ as bear-baitings in part, there was an underlying ‘disquiet’ at the reality of such cruel entertainments. And that the energy of the bear-baitings that helped to propel theatre forward in the late 1500’s, was now beginning to pale, leading to a complete separation by the time of the ‘restoration drama’.

<sup>278</sup> 4 iii 100-1

<sup>279</sup> 3 iii 65

<sup>280</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 139 The play has been ‘sometimes’ ascribed to Shakespeare. “*Charles II’s library included ‘Mucedorus’, ‘Edmonton’ and ‘Fair Em’ in a volume described as ‘Shakespeare. Vol. I.’*”

<sup>281</sup> Rooney p. 259 “*It was the most printed play of its age.*”

Amplified with new additions, as it  
was acted before the Kings Maiestie  
at White-hall on Shrove-sunday  
night. By his Highnes Seruantes  
usually playing at the Globe.<sup>282</sup>

Once again, the question of the date of composition is of some relevance here. If, *The Winter's Tale* was written 1610-11 then the third edition is of interest. If, however it was written earlier, then not quite so much. Kirschbaum qualifies his reading of the title page by stating: "*I myself am loathe to posit a revival by the King's men on the basis of the title-page alone. All that is sure is that there was a revival by some company between 1603 and 1610.*"<sup>283</sup> However, between the second and third editions the part of 'the bear' had been significantly enlarged. In that third quarto of 1610, 'the bear' now had two scenes. Her first appearance (but later, 1610, addition to the text<sup>284</sup>) as detailed in the respectably complicated stage directions reads, "*As he [Mouse - a character] goes backwards the Beare comes in, and he tumbles over her, and he runnes away and leaues his bottle of Hay behind him.*"<sup>285</sup> The second entrance (though earlier edition, 1606, stage direction) is comparatively straightforward, "*Enter Seganto runing with Amadine after him, being persued with a beare.*"<sup>286</sup> Essentially, the part had been expanded to include a 'new knock-about' routine involving now a specifically female bear.<sup>287</sup> Without the additional choreography though, an argument 'could' be made for a tame bear, for 'all' it had to do was cross the stage, and this is 'theoretically possible' to be carried out by a tame bear. The complexity of the new instructions though, combined with the occasional and

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<sup>282</sup> Kirschbaum p. 1

<sup>283</sup> Kirschbaum p. 5

<sup>284</sup> Tucker Brooke p. xxv "*The additions are certainly not by the original author and are superior to the rest of the comedy.*"

<sup>285</sup> Kirschbaum p. 5

<sup>286</sup> Tucker Brooke p. 107 *Mucedorus* sd. 1 ii 15

<sup>287</sup> Rooney p. 260 Suggests that "*since the bear was female, her part might have been assigned to a boy actor*" but then goes on to put forward a different – older – actor as the most likely candidate.

variable playing schedules of any given play would seem to lend weight to the notion that ‘the bear’ was but an actor – playing ‘one of his many parts’.<sup>288</sup>

There is however, a reference as to how the bear may have been staged in *Mucedorus*, in a later play - Abraham Crowley’s *The Guardian*, first published in 1650:

Bla : ... Thou wast wont to be a very precious  
knave, and a great actor too, a very Roscius.  
Didn’t thou not act the Clown in *Mucedorus*?

Serv: No, Sir, but I plaid the Bear there.

Bla: The Bear! Why that’s a good part; th’art  
an actor then, I’ll warrant thee. The Bears a  
well-pen’d part.<sup>289</sup>

The tone is certainly mocking, for the part is not ‘well-penned’ or even ‘good’, but the observation is sound. The ‘servant’ is indeed an actor, for he has ‘trod the boards’, even if it was just ‘playing the bear’.

What can be said is that, the ‘idea’ of the bear is not a Shakespearean idea. There are also two other plays, one prior to *Mucedorus* and one after that include bears. The first is the anonymous *Locrine* (first published 1595)<sup>290</sup>. In the Prologue, the stage directions call for “*Ate [the Goddess of Revenge] to enter presently let there come forth a Lion running after a Beare or any other beast*”<sup>291</sup> – but that is all. And ‘the beast’ is not even necessarily a bear. Curiously, the other mention

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<sup>288</sup> Rooney p. 260 The first and second quarto printings include cast lists, which indicate that the play may be played by eight actors. The third quarto and all subsequent printings, increase that number to ten. None of the editions actually name the part of ‘the bear’. However, there are a couple of non-speaking parts that are also omitted from all the cast lists.

<sup>289</sup> Rooney p. 260 and p. 262 Endnote 12 Citing Abraham Crowley *The Guardian* (1650) V.v.

<sup>290</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 138 Entered Stationers’ register on “20 July 1594.” A 1595 printing of the play had on its title page the “*ambiguous declare[ation] [that it was] “Newly set forth, ouerseene and corrected, By W.S.”*, and “*it was included in the 1664 Folio.*” Tucker Brooke p.xx: “*This W.S. ‘may’ have been William Shakespeare or William Smith, or any one else possessed of those initials.*”

<sup>291</sup> Randall p. 93

of a bear in a play is by Simon Foreman - who so notably did not mention 'our bear' in his brief notes on *The Winter's Tale*. On the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 1600, Foreman watched the Admiral's Men at the Rose perform a (now lost) play written by John Day and William Haughton, for a fee of five pounds, paid to them by Henslowe<sup>292</sup> - *Cox of Collumpton*. The plot involves five members of one family all dying. The deaths are all linked to a plot of land. The deaths take place over nine years, and all on the same day - St. Mark's Day, the 25<sup>th</sup> of April. Foreman's account is once again brief and essentially only describes the manner of each death. Two of the three sons of Cox (Peter and John) slew their elder brother Henry, and then a year later, when they sat down to divide the land they inherited as a consequence of the murder, they were themselves "*fronted wt the sight of a beare vz a sprite ... in the likness of a beare & ther Peter fell out of his wites and was tyed in a dark house & beat out his brains against a post & Jhon stabed his self.*"<sup>293</sup> The 'Cox Bear' could, maybe, possibly, have been real. Pitcher is insistent it is not<sup>294</sup>, as it had to 'impersonate' a sprite - which could only be done by a man dressed as a half-bear / half-sprite. But if all it had to do was appear, the argument can be made that a real bear would not only be available at the Rose<sup>295</sup>, a tame bear could also be costumed, and might just provide the 'shock' that is required to essentially 'boil their brains'. Once again, I think, this falls, into the possible but very unlikely category. We return to Turner's observation that, no actual, definite record of a 'real bear', on stage, survives.

In *Cox of Collumpton* it is an avenging bear that appears - the sprite 'underneath' the bear<sup>296</sup>. Ten years later in the amended and enlarged *Mucedorus*, Mouse almost mocks the convention when he, after seeing a bear enter, declaims:

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<sup>292</sup> Pitcher *Fronted with the sight of a bear* p. 47

<sup>293</sup> Pitcher *Fronted with the sight of a bear* p. 48-9 The full text of Foreman's account is reproduced.

<sup>294</sup> Pitcher *Fronted with the sight of a bear* p. 50

<sup>295</sup> In 1989 the skull of a bear was discovered during the excavations of the Rose.

<sup>296</sup> Similar to Nashe's earlier tale, that of *Piers Penniless* (1592), where the Knight of the Post comments that "*haue I not described a right earthly Diuell vnto thee, in the discourse of this bloodie minded Beare?*"



O horrible, terrible! Was euer poore Gentleman  
 so scared out of hiss seasuen Senses? A  
 Beare? nay, sure it cannot be a Beare, but  
 some Diuell in a Beares Doublet: for a Beare  
 could neuer haue had that agilitie to haue  
 frighted me ...<sup>297</sup>

As Pitcher asks, was Mouse specifically referring to *Cox of Collumpton* or “to a tradition, now lost, of playing the bear in public playhouses?”<sup>298</sup> What we can infer is that, by the time of the revival of *Mucedorus* in the early 1600’s, the role of ‘the bear’ had changed - from fearsome avenger and terrifying beast to that of a slap-stick tumbler and fodder for an in-house actor joke. In *The Winter’s Tale*, I would suggest that, ‘the bear’ sits between these two states. One might almost say, on a tightrope connected to each theatrical understanding of ‘the bear’.

### 4.3: the surprise

***“I fear, sir, my shoulder blade is out”***<sup>299</sup>

The first, Sicilian, section of the play concludes with Leontes’ line, “Come, and lead me To these sorrows.”<sup>300</sup> Ostensibly Paulina is to take Leontes to see the dead bodies of the Queen and the Prince. He has destroyed the world around him. His story is effectively done. The play though, is but half over. There is only one character left who has the potentiality to tell a new story.<sup>301</sup> And that is the yet un-named babe, who has been taken away to be abandoned.

The pronouncement of the Oracle has stated that the “innocent babe [is] truly

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<sup>297</sup> Tucker Brooke p. 107 *Mucedorus* 1 ii 1-6

<sup>298</sup> Pitcher *Fronted with the sight of a bear* p. 52

<sup>299</sup> 4 iii 72-3

<sup>300</sup> 2 iii 241-2

<sup>301</sup> Polixenes (and Camillo) cannot do this.

*begotten.*”<sup>302</sup> So if she is now to die, the catastrophe would be complete. All that would then be left is a penitent old man, crying over the graves of his wife and son. The Oracle has however, also given a glimmer of hope, with the statement that “*the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost is not found.*”<sup>303</sup> The story is now to be about that which is ‘about to be’ lost. The stage direction in the *First Folio*, at the beginning of Act 3, scene iii, does for the first time, actually state that the still un-named child is to be present on stage - “*Enter Antigonus, a Mariner, Babe.*”<sup>304</sup> The child has been present once before, but her appearance was not ‘sanctioned’ by an individual listing in the appropriate stage direction twenty six lines into Act 2, scene iii.<sup>305</sup> That the child is actually there is contained in a later piece of text - “*The good Queen ... hath brought you forth a daughter - Here ‘tis.*”<sup>306</sup> The daughter is now ‘required’ to appear again - so she can be lost. The story is now to be ‘her story’ - of how she is found and then ‘found’ again.

And her story is to be found first, in Bohemia. That the stage is no longer Sicilia, and is now to be viewed and understood to be Bohemia<sup>307</sup>, is stated immediately as the actors enter - “*Art thou perfect then our ship hath touched upon The deserts of Bohemia?*”<sup>308</sup> This ‘geographical error’ has caused much comment. Bohemia has never had a sea-coast - not then and not now. Greene had a ‘Bohemian sea-coast’ in *Pandosto*, for Egistus sailed from Sicily to Bohemia.<sup>309</sup> Shakespeare was straightforwardly, on this occasion, copying his source. Jonson has the ‘honour’ of having the first recorded remarks lambasting Shakespeare’s ‘lack of geography’ - “*Shakspear in a play brought in a number of men saying*

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<sup>302</sup> 2 iii 134

<sup>303</sup> 3 ii 134-5

<sup>304</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 3 iii 1

<sup>305</sup> There is no mention of ‘the babe’ in the *First Folio*. The Wells and Taylor edition has a stage direction for the babe to appear on stage with the entrance of Paulina sd. 2 iii 26.

<sup>306</sup> 2 iii 65-7

<sup>307</sup> 3 iii 54-5 Words had to do ‘the work’ for locations, sets and props - *Henry V* (1598-9) 1 i 12-4 “*Or may we cram within this wooden O the very casques that did affright the air at Agincourt?*” and also for the time of day or night - *Romeo and Juliet* (1595) 2 ii 1-2 “*The grey-eyed morn smiles on the frowning night, Chequ’ring the eastern clouds with streaks of light.*”

<sup>308</sup> 3 iii 1-2

<sup>309</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 185

they had suffered Shipwrack in Bohemia wher yr is no sea neer by some 100 miles.”<sup>310</sup> Steffes describes this as ‘poetic geography’<sup>311</sup> and “*What the play shows is the assimilation of Bohemia into the imaginative world of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in a meaningful way.*”<sup>312</sup> The other ‘geographical error’ in the play is the reference to the location of the Oracle. “*I have dispatched in post To sacred Delphos, to Apollo’s temple.*”<sup>313</sup> This follows Greene again.<sup>314</sup> The ‘confusion’ is over ‘Delphos’. The most famous classical oracle and temple to Apollo, was in Delphi. So the ‘thought’ arose that Shakespeare had, as he was so ‘careless’ over geographical accuracy, made another mistake. However, Spencer argues that “*there were many Englishmen in the first half of the seventeenth century who had not only seen ‘the island of Delphos’, not only landed on its shores, but had even endeavoured to remove Apollo from its shores.*”<sup>315</sup> And that not only Shakespeare, but also Greene, was writing in accordance with the geographical knowledge of the time.

In *Pandosto* the babe is simply abandoned in a boat at sea, and then by ‘Fortune’ is ‘sailed’ to the sea coast of Sicilia (Shakespeare’s Bohemia). However, in *The Winter’s Tale*, Antigonus deliberately chooses Bohemia as the location for the abandoning. The choice is the consequence of a dream that he had, which he recounts to the babe as a last good bye to her. The speech is full of information, some of it true and some of it not. ‘Hermione’ had appeared to him, and ‘told’ him to leave “*the poor babe*”<sup>316</sup> in Bohemia. Shakespeare, unlike Greene, is not merely dramatising a series of events bound to and controlled by, the inexorable

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<sup>310</sup> Gurr *The Bear, the Statue, And Hysteria* p. 422 Citing *Ben Jonsons Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden*, (Bodley Head Quarto, 1619).

<sup>311</sup> In this respect Shakespeare has ‘suffered’ more than Greene. Muir p. 27 Citing *Tristram Shady* VIII 19 “*This unfortunate King of Bohemia, said Trim, - Was he unfortunate then? cried my uncle Toby ... The King of Bohemia, an’ please your honour, replied the corporal, was unfortunate as thus - That taking great pleasure and delight in navigation and all sort of sea affairs - and there happening throughout the whole kingdom of Bohemia, to be no sea-port whatever- How the deuce should there - Trim? Cried my uncle Toby; for Bohemia being totally inland, it could have happened no otherwise - It might said Trim, if it had pleased God.*”

<sup>312</sup> Steffes p. 32

<sup>313</sup> 2 i 184-5

<sup>314</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 195

<sup>315</sup> Spencer p. 199

<sup>316</sup> 3 iii 29

and capricious turnings of 'Fortune's wheel'. This is considered, not chance. Antigonus has the option to reject his 'vision' and all that is contained in it. He does not, but rather he believes it all. He also does as the 'dream' Hermione asks, and names the child Perdita - the lost one. So, not only are they in Bohemia, the land of the other "*twinned lamb*"<sup>317</sup> but the child now has a name. These are signs that there is hope. The speech also contains some 'other' information, some of which is, at best, just simply wrong. And some more, which is to put it bluntly, an out and out lie – and this pertains directly to Hermione, and will be discussed later. Siemon observes that Shakespeare chose "*to give Antigonus a vision of Hermione's ghost [that] can only mean that he intended to re-inforce the audience's belief in her death. There can be doubt that Hermione is, this point in the play, dead.*"<sup>318</sup> Why he believes what he believes is not nearly as important as the actuality that he does, and from that belief he has made a considered decision. And the play is now in the land of Polixenes, who at the beginning of the play made passing reference to the fact that he too had a son. With that in mind, all that is needed for a possible future reconciliation between the two kingdoms is present - a Bohemian Prince and now a Sicilian Princess. And both are living in the same land. What is crucial though, at this 'stage' of the play, is that Perdita is alive and on Bohemian soil.

Their arrival on the 'imaginary' coast line of Bohemia has coincided with an ominous turn in the weather. The Mariner, with a sailor's eye observes that "*the skies look grimly And threaten present blusters*"<sup>319</sup>, which he quickly follows up with, "*'tis like to be loud weather.*"<sup>320</sup> A storm is brewing and the ill-fated mariner departs the scene. Antigonus then, in accordance with Leontes' command, leaves the babe "*without more mercy, to it own protection And favour of the climate.*"<sup>321</sup> The mood darkens considerably at this point, Antigonus even

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<sup>317</sup> 1 ii 69

<sup>318</sup> Siemon p. 14 True dreams occur from Clarence's dream in *Richard III* (1592-3) onwards.

<sup>319</sup> 3 iii 3-4

<sup>320</sup> 3 iii 10

<sup>321</sup> 2 iii 178-9

commenting that “*I never saw The heavens so dim by day.*”<sup>322</sup> The ‘*First Folio*’ does not provide an actual stage direction at this very atmospherically charged moment. Wells and Taylor though insert a broken bracketed “*Thunder.*”<sup>323</sup> Shakespeare however, makes his intentions clear in the text, with Antigonus exclaiming, “*A savage clamour!*”<sup>324</sup> Biggins suggests that “*storms in Shakespeare, besides symbolising tragedy, often represent a disturbed moral order or outraged cosmos, or they are the forerunners or companions of disaster.*”<sup>325</sup> Hunt describes the storm by means of ‘stir’ which he opposes to ‘stasis’. The ‘winter bear’ is ‘stir’ (in conjunction with the storm) and while it “*appears destructive is actually redemptive*”<sup>326</sup> and will be directly opposed – in the final scene – by the ‘stasis’ of ‘the statue’. And at this same time, the loud action on the Bohemian coast follows the ‘stasis’ that has settled around the King in the previous scene, that of “*naked, fasting, Upon a barren mountain, and still winter In storm perpetual.*”<sup>327</sup> The stage is set. The babe, as required, has been abandoned.<sup>328</sup> This leaves Antigonus effectively standing alone<sup>329</sup>, on a deserted beach, in the middle of a tempestuous storm.

The wording of the last line of the pronouncement of the Oracle not only hints at the death of Mamillius to come, but that the babe - and now sanctioned ‘heir’ - will survive her imminent abandonment. The disaster that the storm implies can therefore only tragically descend upon Antigonus. Perdita has to survive so that the veracity of the Oracle can be maintained. The Oracle has pronounced that

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<sup>322</sup> 3 iii 54-5

<sup>323</sup> sd. 3 iii 55

<sup>324</sup> 3 iii 55

<sup>325</sup> Biggins p. 9

<sup>326</sup> Hunt *Stir and Work in Shakespeare's Last Plays* p. 286

<sup>327</sup> 3 ii 210-12

<sup>328</sup> Estrin p. 27 “*Her [Perdita's] tale is that of the archetypal foundling.*”

<sup>329</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 The stage direction in the ‘*First Folio*’, for the opening of the scene, includes in the list of characters to enter at the top of the scene, “*Sheepe-Heard and Clowne.*” This would, the direction was followed literally, place them on stage during the abandonment and the entrance/exit of the bear. Many subsequent editions remove them from the initial entrance and then place the entrance of the Old Shepherd after the exit of Antigonus, with the Clown entering later, in response to the Old Shepherd’s call to him. Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 350 Suggests that this was due to the ‘peculiarities’ of Ralph Crane (the compositor) who had “*learnt to set out plays in the manner of Renaissance editions of classical drama... [where] ... characters due to appear in the scene were all listed in its heading.*”

*"Hermione is chaste [and] Polixenes blameless."*<sup>330</sup> That truth is required to be completely and utterly believed, in the greater arc of the story. The important plot development required here and now, is that no-one must know what has become of Perdita - if she is dead, or, if she is alive. Consequently, all who know what has happened to her, and where it has happened, need to die.<sup>331</sup> She can then grow up, innocent and unknown, and years later, after many trials, her true nobility can emerge and she can find happiness. So, to keep what is lost, lost, Antigonus will have to die. As will all of the poor mariners. It is the storm that does for them, as Clown comments, *"but to make an end of the ship - to see how the sea flap-dragoned it!"*<sup>332</sup> Antigonus 'could' perish with them - it makes no difference to Perdita. Shakespeare though, has another idea.

It is here, in the solving of this 'problem', that Shakespeare creates, to use the words of Coghill, *"a dazzling piece of avant-garde work [for the which] no parallel can be found."*<sup>333</sup> Essentially, Shakespeare created Antigonus for this very moment - to abandon Perdita to the mercy of the elements, and then to die himself. Antigonus<sup>334</sup> has no named pre-cursor in *Pandosto*, he is a concretisation out of a vague collection of nobles and lords. He is Shakespeare's creation.

The play in the first three acts, up until this desolate moment, has been operating in the world of the court, in a realistic mode with a pervading sense, recently made tangible, by the deaths of Hermione and Mamillius, of the tragic. Gurr observes that *"the teasing games with stage illusion, which are so characteristic of the late plays, do not appear until [this] scene"*<sup>335</sup> - this 'half-way' point in

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<sup>330</sup> 3 ii 132

<sup>331</sup> It is conceivably possible that at this point Antigonus (and the mariners) could just sail away, Odysseus like, and wander the world for years, returning only just in time to recount what happened and save the now grown but imperilled Perdita from death - but that would just be *Pericles* re-writ.

<sup>332</sup> 3 iii 15-6

<sup>333</sup> Coghill p. 35

<sup>334</sup> Wells *Shakespeare and Romance* p. 256 Gives the meaning of his name as *"against life/creation."*

<sup>335</sup> Gurr *The Bear, the Statue, And Hysteria* p. 421

the play. The end of the play contains another moment of pure theatre, when Hermione is 're-animated'. Her 'lifeless' statue moves. The 'silent stone' talks. Hermione is once again of the world. The scene, in all its glory, will be discussed later, but, to take a point or two out of that discussion now, it is slow, affecting, quiet, musical and inherently beautiful. Much effort is expended in creating the conditions for such an 'un-believable' event to occur. An actor is playing a character, who is dead, who is then a statue, who then slowly, slowly comes back to life. It is an illusion of epic proportions. That is a long way away from this point in the play, on the wild, loud and threatening Bohemian coastline. There is but 'one hour's traffic' left to move from mode of tragic realism to the wonder of faith.

As with the 'hand-clasp', some 'thing' needs to happen to move the story forward. Not just incrementally but with a leap worthy of a saltier, and they could by their own report "*jump twelve foot and a half by th' square.*"<sup>336</sup> Time, as chorus, is about to move the story into the future - which is indeed a jump, and that will also be discussed later. But right now, Shakespeare had to sweep away the past to allow the future to grow. It must be simple and direct, and yet able to 'carry' all the various meanings and symbolic associations that either need to be brought in, or be taken away.

The storm is at its height. And into that Shakespeare introduces 'the bear', with that now most famous of stage directions: "*Exit, pursued by a bear.*"<sup>337</sup>

There is noise and then movement, roaring and then running. The un-heralded entrance of 'the Bear' is 'shock and awe' writ large. This was what Shakespeare was exploiting when he introduced his bear. Suddenly ... a bear bursts forth onto the stage.<sup>338</sup> The audience is jolted. Gurr cites Roland Barthes, and his concept

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<sup>336</sup> 4 iv 334

<sup>337</sup> sd. 3 iii 57

<sup>338</sup> Randall p. 90 Observes that "*In act 3 scene iii ... at the middles of the play, with seven scenes having been played and seven to go, Shakespeare placed his bear.*"

of ‘reader responses’, of which “*the most basic level is ‘l’hysterique’* ... [where the] *audience takes the text as literal truth.*”<sup>339</sup> Gurr believes that this would fit well with the reaction that the Shakespearean ‘auditors’ would have had. A bear! On stage!! A real bear!!! Are they somehow now at a bear-baiting, and if so, where are the bearwards to protect them.<sup>340</sup> Shakespeare is delivering a most unexpected shock to them. It is not his stock-in-trade as a playwright, but none the less here it is. He is utilising the immediate collective reaction that a real, live and dangerous bear could quite possibly be in this environment, to startle, if not downright scare his audience. Essentially Shakespeare is manipulating the audience and the environment to create one of the play’s unique theatrical moments. He is, momentarily, causing confusion in the minds of the ‘auditors’. Wickham suggests that the words ‘sport, game or play’ were freely interchangeable.<sup>341</sup> That combined with the ‘possible’ interchangeability of the use of the ‘venue’, and indeed their proximity, could cause them to re-consider, just briefly, where they are, and what they are watching.

It is essentially a sharp intake of breath - fight or flight, if you will. Then – as the bear locates itself as a ‘creature of skin and brown paper’ – comes the release. The relaxing smile, the comforting sense of relief as the bear awkwardly and ‘humanly’ bounds across the stage. Followed by the almost involuntary laugh, as the ‘auditors’ understand the trick that has just been played, so well, on them. Gurr suggests that then, with this ‘realisation’, ‘the bear’ would be pushing “*the*

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<sup>339</sup> Gurr *The Bear, the Statue, And Hysteria* p. 424 Citing Roland Barthes *Le Plaisir du Texte*, Editions Tel Quel, (Paris, 1973) 99-100.

<sup>340</sup> Dickey p. 259 Cites an incident on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 1609, when a bear killed a child left in the bear house. The consequence for the bear was that it was to be killed. James the First, who had a penchant for “*experiment[ing] in matching bestial opponents*” arranged for first a lion to be introduced, then two dogs - which attacked the lion, then a horse (which just grazed), then six more dogs, but they chose to attack the horse., and then finally more lions were ‘thrown in’, but they ignored the bear. The baiting was ‘not a success’! So it was ‘re-held’ a few days later, with the ultimate demise of said bear. In this second baiting, the bear was “*bayted to death upon a stage.*”

<sup>341</sup> Pitcher *Fronted with the sight of a bear* p. 3



level of audience response higher up the scale by [its] blatant challenge to credulity.”<sup>342</sup> The tragic has given way to the comedic.

#### 4.4: recovering from the surprise

*“What, pray you, became of Antigonus, that carried hence the child”*<sup>343</sup>

Upon reflection, we can understand that while ‘the bear’ did just suddenly appear, Shakespeare had also subtly prepared the audience for ‘a beast’, and quite possibly a bear, to become involved in the story of the babe. At the close of Act 2, scene iii, Leontes commands Antigonus, with regard to the un-named babe, to “bear it to some remote and desert place”<sup>344</sup> to the which, Antigonus reluctantly agrees, exiting with the lines:

... . Come on, poor babe  
Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens  
To be thy nurses. Wolves and bears, they say,  
Casting their savageness aside, have done  
Like offices of pity.<sup>345</sup>

In some editions, the straightforward stage direction which appears, just after the above mentioned speech in the *First Folio* of “exit”<sup>346</sup>, is emphatically enlarged, as Antigonus disappears from the stage, to read “he bears away the child.”<sup>347</sup> It is not a common emendation though, as most editors think that Shakespeare’s words do enough just by themselves. When he re-enters, a scene later, on the

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<sup>342</sup> Gurr *The Bear, the Statue, And Hysteria* p. 424 On the Barthes ‘scale’ it would move up to ‘paranoique’ - the rationalisation of the story and identification of the private games employed in its construction.

<sup>343</sup> 5 ii 58-9

<sup>344</sup> 2 iii.175-6

<sup>345</sup> 2 iii 185-9

<sup>346</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603

<sup>347</sup> Wilson *The Cambridge Text* sd. 2 iii 192.

Bohemian seashore, the Mariner tells him that “*this place is famous for the creatures of prey that keep upon’t.*”<sup>348</sup> The text is placing ‘the bear’ back in the frame.<sup>349</sup>

In the Early Modern Period, ‘the bear’ was understood to be more than a popular afternoon entertainment. As Bristol comments, “*The bear is a figure of boundaries and of transformations, marking both the moment of ending or death and the moment of beginning or birth.*”<sup>350</sup> There has always been a symbolic association between bears and winter throughout European folklore, with “*a bear, usually a man dressed in furs or animal skins, appear[ing] in a variety of popular festive observances, occasionally during the Christmas season but more often in the latter stages of the winter cycle.*”<sup>351</sup> The arrival of ‘the bear’ symbolises that the winter - of the play - is soon to be over.

The ‘warm’ tone of the opening scene of the play, has cooled, and cooled, until by the conclusion of the trial scene, a deep, deep cold pervades Sicilia. Leontes, through his ultimately unfounded jealousy, has in effect created a permanent state of winter in Sicilia. The Queen and her son, the heir to the throne, both have died - Mamillius because of the treatment of the Queen, and the Queen because of the death of Mamillius. These deaths are a direct consequence of Leontes’, now proven to be unfounded, jealousy. Leontes is to blame. And amends must be made. A sacrifice is required - a tangible, real sacrifice. And that ‘role’ falls to the “*most accursed*”<sup>352</sup> Antigonus. Antigonus is that sacrifice. Randall comments that “*the effect of Antigonus’ death is to help set the moral ledger straight without killing the father-king.*”<sup>353</sup> Steffes suggests that, as “*Apollo is the most prominent divinity in the play; Diana his twin, has strong*

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<sup>348</sup> 3 iii.12

<sup>349</sup> Palmer *Jacobean Muscovites* p. 339 Cites a letter, from Sir William Lower to Thomas Hariot, written around the time of the composition of *The Winter’s Tale* which speaks of earlier voyages of discovery (c. 1590) by “*dutch men that were eaten by bears in Nova Zembla*” (islands off the northern coast of Russia).

<sup>350</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 161

<sup>351</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 159

<sup>352</sup> 3 iii 51

<sup>353</sup> Randall p. 94

associations - with bears and women in childbirth”<sup>354</sup> ‘the Bear’ is actually acting ‘on behalf’ of Diana, and consequently “*Diana does not need to appear on the stage in *The Winter’s Tale* as she does in *Pericles*, because the bear appears in her place.*”<sup>355</sup> Bristol argues that this moment also has a further significance, for “*it is Antigonus’s destiny not just to die as a substitute for Leontes but specifically to be devoured by a bear during a late-winter thunderstorm.*”<sup>356</sup> He argues that the bear is a prognosticating temporal marker. When a bear appeared during a storm in late winter, then spring was soon to arrive, sooner than if the bear appeared in fine weather. Prognostication was not ‘an unknown science’ to Shakespeare, or his ‘auditors’. Autolycus, towards the end of the ‘sheep-shearing’ scene, when describing the punishment that may well be handed out to Clown, states that the particular day, of the punishment, will be “*the hottest day that prognostication proclaims.*”<sup>357</sup> The arrival of ‘the bear’, during a late winter storm indicates to the audience that the play is about to move from winter to spring/summer. Perdita, who has been ‘overlooked’ by the hungry bear, is to be the focus and location of this renewal.

‘The Bear’ could well have savaged the helpless babe. But instead ‘he (?)’ chases away, and eventually kills (and eats) the man. By this choice, ‘the bear’ is emblematically marking the ‘shift’ in the tone of the play. The entrance, and subsequent exit of ‘the bear’, has changed the play. In what has become a much quoted comment, Coghill said, “*the terrible and the grotesque come near to each other in a ‘frisson’ of horror instantly succeeded by a shout of laughter; and so the bear, this unique and perfect link between the two halves of the play, slips into place and holds.*”<sup>358</sup> It is a bold move. And a successful one, as indicated by the number times the play was performed prior to the closing of the theatres in 1642. In one moment of heightened theatre, Shakespeare had wiped

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<sup>354</sup> Steffes p. 37 And Steffes also suggests, that this is relevant to a full understanding of *The Winter’s Tale*.

<sup>355</sup> Steffes p. 38

<sup>356</sup> Bristol *In search of the Bear* p. 159

<sup>357</sup> 4 iv 788-89

<sup>358</sup> Coghill p. 35

away tragedy and left comedy in its place - “it turn[ed] the audience instantly from grief to joy, from tragedy to comedy and to romance.”<sup>359</sup> Evans says the same thing, but from a slightly different perspective, “While *Perdita* lies alone, the bear may return, and all will end. It may return – or it may not: the instant is precariously suspended between past and future.”<sup>360</sup>

The success of the recently revived ‘old tale’ of *Mucedorus* - with its tumbling bear - may well have put Shakespeare in mind of this means of dispatch. Shakespeare throughout his writings was very adept at taking ‘old’ things and making them ‘new’. ‘The bear’ may well have begun to ‘lick itself into shape’<sup>361</sup> from, as Muir suggests, an earlier work of fiction:

It may be worth mentioning that in Emmanuel Ford’s *Famous and pleasant History of Parismus, the Valiant and renowned Prince of Bohemia* (1597) there is also a coast of Bohemia. In this novel a child is abandoned to the mercy of a nurse, who flies with it into the wilderness, and is eventually devoured by a lion.<sup>362</sup>

A lion though is not a bear, even though they were often ‘lumped together’, as exemplified in the scriptures: “As a roaring lion and a ranging bear, so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.”<sup>363</sup> And by Shakespeare himself, who also on occasion, placed the two creatures ‘side by side’ in his imagery of “hideousness,

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<sup>359</sup> Williams p. 108

<sup>360</sup> Evans p. 198

<sup>361</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 160 Bears also symbolised creativity and nurture. Folklore had it that “the she-bear licked her whelps into shape from a formless mass of her own bodies secretions.”

<sup>362</sup> Biggins p. 7 Quoting Muir *Shakespeare’s Sources: I Comedies and Tragedies*, (London, 1957) p. 244

<sup>363</sup> *Proverbs* 28. 15 and also 2 *Kings* 2. 23-24

*ferocity and savage, remorseless cruelty.*”<sup>364</sup> But a bear is a far more useful and versatile symbol than a lion or indeed a wolf. Bears have resonance.<sup>365</sup>

If it was just a question of the King’s men not having a lion costume - well, Henslowe did. But despite Snug’s fears of the verisimilitude of a man in a lion costume to an actual lion, a man dressed as a bear is far more convincing - at least initially - and much easier to play, if for no other reason than its occasional habit of standing and running on two legs. And they would have had an actor who had already ‘conned’ the part.

The ‘Mucedorean bear’ would have shown Shakespeare how the ‘playing of a bear’ could work, and to ‘present day’ popular acclaim. And then hovering in the background is the older ‘Cox Bear’, with its connotations of violence and retribution. For the sake of ‘the story’ he needed to close one chapter and open the next. It needed to be surprising and effective and able to bear the weight of many different ideas. And ‘the bear of many parts’ did exactly that, and more. The ‘Winter Bear’ is a new departure. The old ‘Cox Bear’ just appears, then, disappears. The con-current ‘Mucedorean Bear’ mugs and runs - and is then killed. But the ‘Winter Bear’ is a ‘new bear’. And the mood has been carefully set for the arrival of the bear. Shakespeare is firstly drawing on the ‘older tradition’ of ‘the bear’ as retributive punisher, then as the ‘reality’ of ‘the bear’ lumbers across the stage, he with unerring dramatic instincts, realises that the initial effect will subside and that the ‘newer comic understanding’ of a ‘man in a bear suit’ will take over and the laugh will come. This is quite possibly the first ‘proper’ laugh in the play. Granted, previously in Act 2, scene i, Mamillius and the Ladies of the Court share gentle, wry and innocent observations about life, which may elicit some smiles, but not I think, laughter.

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<sup>364</sup> Biggins p. 10 He cites the examples: *Troilus and Cressida* (1602) 1 ii 20; *Timon of Athens* (1605) 3 vii 94 and *Macbeth* (1606) 3 iv 100-1.

<sup>365</sup> Mahood p. 51 Mahood ranks ‘bear’ as the twelfth most played upon Shakespearean word. Twelfth is certainly a higher ranking than ‘wolf’ or ‘lion’ could ever hope to achieve, but it must be remembered that ‘bear’, as a word, can be both a noun and a verb, and consequently has numerous possible applications.

Matchett observes that the effect *“forces us out of mere passive participation in an ongoing story into an active disorientation which leaves us no choice but to question our own responses.”*<sup>366</sup> Shakespeare was often self-referential about the act of ‘playing’ and the nature of theatre, but always through the words. Here he is making that point in a visceral manner. The connections between the audience and the play are effectively and violently cut.

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<sup>366</sup> Matchett p. 102

## Chapter 5: Stories

### 5.1: setting up the story

*“makes a July’s day short as December”*<sup>367</sup>

If, ‘the bear’ functions as a ‘new beginning’, then ‘Time, as Chorus’, functions as ‘an end’ - an end of the ‘new beginning’. And together, they create the “*great hinge*.”<sup>368</sup> While it is ‘the bear’ that has captured the popular imagination, it is really ‘Time, as Chorus’ that orchestrates this transitional phase. The ‘hinge’ does not really start at the top of the new scene on the Bohemian coastline, even though the location of the play has changed and the play is in a new land. The ‘actors’ are the same. No new characters<sup>369</sup> are introduced – until ‘the bear’ enters. The stage direction in the *First Folio*, for the opening of Act 3, scene iii, has included in the list of characters to enter at the top of the scene, both “*Sheepe-heard, and Clowne*.”<sup>370</sup> This would, if the direction was followed literally, place them on stage during the abandonment and the entrance/exit of the bear. Many subsequent editions have removed them from the initial entrance and then placed the entrance of the Old Shepherd after the exit of Antigonus, with the Clown entering later, in response to the Old Shepherd’s call to him. Pitcher suggests that this was due to the ‘peculiarities’ of Ralph Crane (the compositor) who had “*learnt to set out plays in the manner of Renaissance editions of classical drama... [where] ... characters due to appear in the scene were all listed in its heading*.”<sup>371</sup> Old Shepherd and Clown belong to the ‘second half’ of the tale -

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<sup>367</sup> 1 ii 170

<sup>368</sup> Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* p. xxxix Footnote 5 “*This may be the first examination of the structure. ... A tragic followed by a comic element, fused into a whole, a romantic play*” Citing T. R. Price ‘The Construction of *The Winter’s Tale*’, *Shakespeariana*, (Oct 1890) 195-207

<sup>369</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 3 iii 1 The “*Marriner*” who enters the scene with Antigonus is a character in the formal sense of an actor appearing on the stage, but is not a ‘character’ in the meaning of having a sense of individuality or singularity. He is rather a ‘composite creation’, necessary for the functioning of the story.

<sup>370</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 3 iii i

<sup>371</sup> Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 350

they ‘are’ Bohemia. They are not involved in any action on stage until the bear has ‘entered and exited’. Wells and Taylor and Orgel and Pafford and Pitcher have Old Shepherd actually entering as ‘the bear’ leaves. It is only then, after ‘the bear’, that Old Shepherd finds Perdita.<sup>372</sup> The play though is still in the final throws of the ‘first half’. With the Old Shepherd ‘discovering’ Perdita, the one loose end left - that of Perdita - has been resolved. The future is secure. The play can now progress, for there is ‘new matter’. What will happen to Perdita? And also, the Oracle has stated that “*the King shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found*”<sup>373</sup> and that leaves another question ‘floating in the wind’ - how will Leontes ‘find’ Perdita? And for that ‘new matter’ to be told, the story has to move forward – significantly forward. So, once again, some ‘thing’ is required to achieve this. Enter, ‘Time’.

*The Winter’s Tale* is one of the few plays in the *First Folio* which has “*The Names of the Actors*”<sup>374</sup> printed after the play. However, there is no mention of Time, as an individual character, in that list. The stage direction though, for Act 4, scene i, line 1, reads “*Enter Time, the Chorus.*”<sup>375</sup> It is here, for Time ‘himself’ never says so, that ‘we’ learn that Time is to be viewed as a ‘Chorus’. ‘Chorus’ is a name given to “*a character in a play whose function is to speak the prologue and epilogue and comment upon the events.*”<sup>376</sup> This Choric figure does not directly function as the dictionary definition would suggest. The positioning of Time’s one and only appearance, at just about the actual mid-point of the play, is at odds with the ‘beginning and ending’ attributes assigned to such a character. And ‘our Time’ does not really comment on the play as such. ‘He’ instead is far more concerned that the ‘auditors’ forgive him for moving the story, suddenly, into the future. ‘Time, as Chorus’ does ask for the indulgence of the ‘auditors’ to

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<sup>372</sup> Old Shepherd has speech of some ten lines before ‘seeing’ Perdita. If nothing else this gives the ‘auditors’ time enough to recover from ‘the bear’ and re-focus on the play, and so, hopefully, be paying attention again when Old Shepherd ‘discovers’ Perdita.

<sup>373</sup> 3 ii 134-5

<sup>374</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603

<sup>375</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 4 i 1

<sup>376</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 394



accept what is happening, to “*Impute it not a crime To me or my swift passage that I slide O’er sixteen years.*”<sup>377</sup> But he does not do any more than that.

Aristotle had urged writers to observe the unities of time (as well as place and action). That is to have the ‘stage time’ play out more or less akin to ‘real time’(and in a ‘real space’, and with no superfluous characters). Ben Johnson in *The Alchemist* (1610) – possibly written as a retort to *The Winter’s Tale* - did just that, with all the action taking place in one day and in one location.<sup>378</sup> Shakespeare was most capable of doing this, as he demonstrated in *Comedy of Errors* (1594)<sup>379</sup>. But here, in this play, he overtly flouts that particular classical precept. In *Pandosto* Greene moves the ‘time-narrative’ forward with first a hop: “*At last when it [the as yet un-named Fawnia – Perdita’s pre-cursor] grew to ripe years, that was about seven years old*”; and then a step - “*when Fawnia – for so they named the child – came to the age of ten years*”; and finally a jump - “*when she came to the age of sixteen years.*”<sup>380</sup> This ‘growth’ happens over a couple of hundred words, and with that Fawnia is suddenly developed and she has become a character in her own right. Shakespeare could not, as a dramatist, sequentially ‘enter and exit’ sundry and aging children to show the passage of time through to Perdita becoming a young woman.<sup>381</sup> Perdita could also not just appear, suddenly, all grown up. ‘Some thing’ had to happen to ‘move’ the auditors to accept that the abandoned babe has now become a young woman. A personification of Time is indeed the ‘vehicle’ to achieve this necessary ‘piece of stage business’.

The unapologetic directness of this ‘time-travelling’ has annoyed some commentators. It was for a while quite contentious - mainly in respect to a perceived failing of his artistic powers. And even as recently as the late middle of the twentieth century, Panofsky described the presence of ‘Time, as Chorus’, as

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<sup>377</sup> 4 i 4-6

<sup>378</sup> Wells *Shakespeare & Co.* p. 153 “*Jonson had calculated the action so that it takes place at the exact time in 1610 at which he expected the play to be first performed, and at the very same place in London, the Blackfriars, were it was to be played.*”

<sup>379</sup> The ‘classical unities’ were to be observed, again, in *The Tempest* (1611).

<sup>380</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 201

<sup>381</sup> Shakespeare did present in *Macbeth* (1606) sd. 4 i 127 “*a show of eight Kings*”

no more than a “*mere device to indicate the lapse of months, years, or centuries.*”<sup>382</sup> Curiously ‘Gower, the Presenter’ in *Pericles* (1607) has not attracted such criticism. Gower moves the play from country to country, as well as from month to month and year to year. In what could be seen as an ‘early version’ of the ‘Time, as Chorus’ speech, Gower asks the ‘auditors’ to believe him:

Th’unborn event  
I do commend to your content,  
Only I carry winged Time  
Post on the lame feet of my rhyme,  
Which never could I so convey  
Unless your thoughts went on my way.<sup>383</sup>

Even the ‘fact’ that Shakespeare wrote Act 4, scene i, has saddened some. Quiller-Couch in ‘his’ edition of the play, wrote that “*in this play of ours, having to skip sixteen years after Act 3, he desperately drags in Father Time.*”<sup>384</sup> But those ‘types of commentary’ now seem to be passing, with ‘Time, as Chorus’ being considered as an essential and integral part of the construction of the play. Bethell states that “*Time the Chorus is not central at all but a necessary mechanism of the plot.*”<sup>385</sup> Wickham goes even further in the significance of the appearance of ‘Time, as Chorus’, opining that “*Central to The Winter’s Tale is the personification of Time.*”<sup>386</sup>

Primarily ‘Time’ was a device of the pageant and the masque, and “*probably no personification was more familiar to Jacobean playgoers than the figure whom Shakespeare brings to the stage in The Winter’s Tale: Time.*”<sup>387</sup> The ‘auditors’

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<sup>382</sup> Rundus p. 123 Citing Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology*, (New York, 1962), p. 81.

<sup>383</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 15 45-50 Curiously this scene, overall, has the same purpose as Act 4, scene i, in *The Winter’s Tale*, to explain away the passage of some fifteen or sixteen years - so that Marina (like Perdita) can now, as a young woman, play a part in the story.

<sup>384</sup> Coghill p. 35 Citing Quiller-Couch and Wilson eds., *The Winter’s Tale New Cambridge Shakespeare* p.

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<sup>385</sup> Coghill p. 35 Citing S. L. Bethell *The Winter’s Tale: A Study*, (1946), p.47

<sup>386</sup> Rundus p. 124 Citing Wickham, *Shakespeare’s Dramatic Heritage*, (London, 1968), p. 249

<sup>387</sup> Kiefer p. 49

would ‘understand’ the character as soon as they saw him.<sup>388</sup> They would also understand what ‘he’ could do. That he could usher in a ‘new time’. ‘Time’, as Ewbank comments, “*had become a popular figure in the allegorical masque, ... [and] could be used as an effective ‘deus ex machina’ to solve the central conflict and turn masque into anti-masque*”<sup>389</sup>, or tragedy into pastoral comedy.

Time also had a restorative side or aspect. The title page of Greene’s romance reads:

Pandosto. The Triumph of Time. Wherein  
is discovered by a pleasant History, that  
although by the means of sinister fortune  
Truth may be concealed, yet be Time, in  
spite of fortune, it is most manifestly  
revealed ... Temporis filia veritas.<sup>390</sup>

Mueller comments of *The Winter’s Tale* that “*The triumph of time in the play is the triumph of the next generation, and this triumph restores even the dead to life.*”<sup>391</sup> In *The Whore of Babylon*, written by Dekker and performed c. 1606, the play begins first with a prologue, followed by a dumb show. The prologue tells his ‘auditors’ that “*winged Time that long agoe flew hence You must fetch backe, with all thos golden yeares He stole, and here imagine still hee stands.*”<sup>392</sup> Then the dumb show unfolds:

He drawes a curtaine, discovering Truth in  
sad abliments, uncrownd: her haire  
disheueled and sleeping on a Rock: Time (her  
father) attired likewise in black, and al his  
properties (as Sithe, Howreglasse and

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<sup>388</sup> Kiefer p. 50 Also makes the point that this ‘shared understanding’ is different to the classical understanding. “*In antiquity time was conceived as ‘the divine principle of eternal and inexhaustible creativeness’ a concept symbolised by the ouroboros, a snake swallowing its tail.*”

<sup>389</sup> Muir *Shakespeare ‘The Winter’s Tale’: A Casebook* p. 106 Citing Inga-Stina Ewbank *The Triumph of Time*.

<sup>390</sup> Wells, M., *Mistress Taleporter and the Triumph of Time* p. 247 The motto translates to - ‘Truth is the daughter of Time’.

<sup>391</sup> Mueller p. 299

<sup>392</sup> Bowers p. 499 Dekker *The Whore of Babylon* (c.1606) Prologue 12-14

wings) of the same Cullor, vsing all meanes  
to waken Truth, ... Trueth suddenly  
awakens ... shews (with her father)  
arguments of Ioy, and exuent, returning  
presently: Time being shifted into light  
Cullors, his properties likewise altred into  
siluer ...<sup>393</sup>

Actual representations of Time<sup>394</sup> appear to be, in Early Modern England, fairly standard - old in appearance and sometimes bearded, and with three chief features, a scythe, an hourglass and a pair of wings.<sup>395</sup> Kiefer comments that “*the scythe represents the destructive effects of transience; the hourglass is the visual metaphor of time’s passage; and the wings suggest our psychological sense of time’s rapidity.*”<sup>396</sup> Not all images of Time had each of these aspects and indeed some had other ‘props’ but overall the ‘image’ was extremely recognisable.<sup>397</sup>

Shakespeare made mention of ‘certain’ of the general attributes assigned to time. Exemplified in *Henry V* (1598-9) were in the very first speech, the Chorus exhorts ‘the auditors’ to play their part, “*For ‘tis your thoughts that now must deck our kings, Carry them here and there, jumping o’er times, Turning the accomplishment of many years Into an hourglass*”<sup>398</sup> and in *Pericles* ‘Gower, the Presenter’, states “*Only I carry winged Time Post on the lame feet of my*

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<sup>393</sup> Bowers p. 500 Dekker *The Whore of Babylon* (c.1606) Dumb Show

<sup>394</sup> Shakespeare never actually represented ‘figuratively’, on stage, the figure of Death. MacMullan p. 400 Observes that “*the death imagery in Shakespeare’s early plays seems largely to be drawn from conventional figure of Death as he is personified and equipped in paintings, etchings and emblemata.*”

<sup>395</sup> Kiefer p. 50 These symbols arrived through a confusion, by the Romans, between Chronos (the Greek expression for time) and Kronos (the oldest and most formidable of the Greek gods, and pre-cursor to the Roman god Saturn). Kiefer p. 51 Ben Jonson in a marginal note to his 1606 masque *Hymenaei*: “*Truth is feigned to be the daughter of Saturn, who indeed with the ancients was no other than Time, and so his name alludes, Kronos.*”

<sup>396</sup> Kiefer p. 50

<sup>397</sup> Kiefer p. 50-2 Sometimes Time held a whip, or was supported by a crutch, or had coloured hair, or had iron teeth. Or was even devouring children, “*a clear sign of the confusion with Kronos, or Saturn, who ate his offspring in order to forestall a prophesy that his children would overthrow him.*”

<sup>398</sup> *Henry V* (1598-9) 1 i 28-31

rhyme.”<sup>399</sup> ‘Time, as Chorus’ refers to two of these, “*Now take upon me, in the name of Time, To use my wings*”<sup>400</sup> and “*I turn my glass*”<sup>401</sup>, but not to the scythe.<sup>402</sup>

## 5.2: the shape of the story

“‘tis

time”<sup>403</sup>

Shakespeare had utilised the Choric form previously. In *The Second Part of Henry the Fourth* (1597-8) the Choric representation is portrayed by two differently named characters, ‘Rumour, the Presenter’ who opens the play, in the Induction, and ‘Epilogue’, who concludes the performance. They do sit, respectively, as convention requires, at the beginning and at the end of the play. Rumour ‘announces’ who ‘he’ is by the second line, with a direct statement to the ‘auditors’ to “*Open your ears; for which of you will stop the vent of hearing when loud Rumour speaks?*”<sup>404</sup> This statement, as Evans comments, “*marks out the theatre as a place where we [the ‘auditors’] cannot fail to hear, where the ear’s vulnerability is played upon, its impartiality assaulted.*”<sup>405</sup> Within the speech, Rumour mentions ‘his’ own name five times, and refers to ‘himself’ eight times by ‘I’ and five times by ‘me’ or ‘my’. The ‘auditors’ are left in no doubt as to what they are seeing and hearing. This pre-cursor is the closest, by this ‘numerical’ method, to ‘Time, as Chorus’, who mentions ‘himself’ as Time - four times and uses personal pronouns (‘I’, ‘me’ and ‘my’) nineteen times.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 15 47-8

<sup>400</sup> 4 i 3-4

<sup>401</sup> 4 i 16

<sup>402</sup> The 1969 Penguin edition of the play, edited by Ernest Schanzer, has on its cover just an hourglass and a scythe – no wings or figure of Time.

<sup>403</sup> 5 iii 99

<sup>404</sup> 2 *Henry IV* (1597-8) 1 i 1-2

<sup>405</sup> Evans p. 5

<sup>406</sup> ‘He’ also uses the terms ‘himself’ and ‘he’, once each.

In *Henry the Fifth* (1599/1600) the character detailed as ‘Chorus’, essentially fulfils the dictionary definition. He introduces the play, comments upon the action as it progresses and finally delivers the epilogue. It is only in the final few lines of the opening speech that ‘Chorus’ names and refers to ‘himself’ directly with the plea to “*Admit me Chorus to this history, Who prologue-like, your humble patience pray gently to hear, kindly to judge, our play.*”<sup>407</sup> Indeed it is not until Act 5, scene zero, (the last ‘Choric’ scene) that ‘Chorus’ again refers to ‘himself’ in the first person. Between those two examples ‘Chorus’ uses ‘we’ - as if ‘he’ was actually part of the play itself.<sup>408</sup> ‘Time, as Chorus’ does not seem to wish for that. ‘He’ is a mechanism of the play rather than a part of it. The version of *Troilus and Cressida* (1602/3) that appeared in the 1623 *First Folio* has a character named as ‘Prologue’ to open the play. The quarto printing from 1609 does not.<sup>409</sup> The speech is thirty two lines long. The first twenty one and a half lines, spoken by the ‘Prologue’, have set the scene of the play. It is only after that, that ‘Prologue’ finally begins to explain ‘himself’:

And hither am I come,  
A Prologue armed – but not in confidence  
Of author’s pen or actor’s voice, but suited  
In the like conditions as our argument –  
To tell you, fair beholders, that our play  
Leaps o’er the vaunt and firstlings of those broils,  
Beginning in the middle.<sup>410</sup>

It is possible that Shakespeare, after this, began to think more about the idea of ‘beginning in the middle’ or rather, ‘re-beginning’ in the middle of a play.

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<sup>407</sup> *Henry V* (1598-9) 1 i 32-4

<sup>408</sup> In the Prologue, each time ‘Chorus’ refers to ‘we’ or ‘us’, he balances it out with a ‘you’ or ‘yours’.

<sup>409</sup> The *First Folio* also has an epilogue, spoken by ‘Pandarus’ (a Trojan lord). Wells and Taylor *Complete Works* p. 807 Print his speech in the ‘additional passages’ rather than the play proper. They comment “*certain features of the text suggest that it [First Folio] does so by accident, and that the epilogue had been marked for omission.*”

<sup>410</sup> *Troilus and Cressida* (1602) Prologue 22-8

The final, prior, example<sup>411</sup> is from *Pericles* (1607/8). Here it is the character of John Gower who functions, in a fairly straightforward and conventional manner, as the Chorus. *Pericles* was not included in the *First Folio*. However a quarto edition was printed in 1609<sup>412</sup>, where Gower is named simply as ‘Gower’.<sup>413</sup>

Wells and Taylor describe Gower as, ‘Gower, the Presenter’, and with that title, Gower is quite directly a functioning component of the play. In *Henry V* the ‘Chorus’ speaks in the same verse pattern as the rest of the play, and by this simple device, he becomes very much part of the action as it unfolds. The ‘history’ is essentially current. *Pericles* opens with ‘John Gower, the Presenter’ entering “as Prologue”<sup>414</sup> and with the lines “To sing a song that old was sung From ashes ancient Gower is come.”<sup>415</sup> Felperin suggest that this style is “dramatically appropriate poetry calculated to persuade us to accept certain impossibilities, to establish, on the spur of the moment, a convention crucial for our understanding of what is to follow.”<sup>416</sup> From the sound of that first couplet the ‘auditors’ know what is about to be presented to them. Gower with his ‘old song’ is not of the now, he is of the past, and to emphasise this, he speaks in an ‘old’ fashion<sup>417</sup> - that of the formal 4-beat rhythm.<sup>418</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> *All Is True* (1613) has a prologue and an epilogue, with ‘comment’ during the action, but was written around 1613 and in collaboration with John Fletcher - who may well have penned those scenes. *Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613) did as well. *Romeo and Juliet* (1594/5) begins with a prologue spoken by the Chorus, but does not end with an epilogue. Similarly Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1594/5) acts as the Chorus in *Pyramus and Thisbe*, opening ‘the play’ with a prologue, but most ‘sadly’ is not allowed to recite his epilogue to formally conclude the performance.

<sup>412</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 559 *Pericles* was reprinted in 1609, 1611 and 1619 prior to the printing of the *First Folio* in 1623.

<sup>413</sup> In the New Penguin edition of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, ed. Philip Edwards, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981) p. 47 Gower is described as ‘John Gower, the Presenter’. In the *Arden Shakespeare Pericles* ed. Suzanne Gossett, (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004) p.166 Gower is listed as ‘Gower, the chorus’.

<sup>414</sup> *Pericles* (1607) sd. scene 1 1

<sup>415</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 1 1-2

<sup>416</sup> Felperin p. 366

<sup>417</sup> One must remember that there is still debate over the question of authorship of *Pericles* (1607). What are the ‘bits’ that Shakespeare wrote? *Pericles* was not included in the *First Folio*. The Goddess Diana, when she speaks in scene 21 225-235, speaks in the language of the play.

<sup>418</sup> All the other ‘personifications’ in the ‘late plays’ (written after *The Winter's Tale*) speak in the ‘contemporary language’ of the play they are a part of: ‘Jupiter’ in *Cymbeline* (1610); ‘Iris’ and ‘Ceres’ and ‘Juno’ in *The Tempest* (1611); ‘Prologue’ and ‘Epilogue’ in *All Is True* (1613); ‘Prologue’ and ‘Epilogue’ in *Two Noble Kinsmen* (1613). Even the servant spirit Ariel and the howling moon-calf Caliban, of *The Tempest*, speak in the language of the play.

‘Time, as Chorus’ speaks ‘differently’. Not as differently as Gower, but still significantly different to all other characters in the play. Shakespeare gave to ‘Time, as Chorus’ a very particular vocal sound - for ‘he’ speaks “*in a way that evokes the personification of Elizabethan and Jacobean pageantry*,”<sup>419</sup> that of a regular, shorter rhythm, with a two-line rhyme. ‘Time, as Chorus’ has verse that is somewhat stiff and awkward, a marked change from the quite free and supple verse of the rest of the play.<sup>420</sup>

“*If he wrote this one [the character of Time], it must have been in some uninspired moment after the rest of the play was finished - possibly at the request of some manager who thought the gap in action ought to be bridged over in that way.*”<sup>421</sup> Curiously, there is no suggestion that Act 4, scene ii, was consequently re-written to accommodate the ‘necessary interpolation’ of the character of ‘Time, as Chorus’. For as the play stands, the scene does not adequately explain to the ‘auditors’, that the play has moved in time, and moved so significantly. “*It is fifteen years since I saw my country*”<sup>422</sup> states Camillo – information that could easily, in the hub-ub of the theatre, pass unheard. Polixenes, some few lines later (while attempting to convince Camillo to stay rather than return to Sicilia) does briefly talk of time having passed. It is somewhat circuitous, as Polixenes asks Camillo not to speak of Sicilia, as such talk “*Punishes me with the remembrance*”<sup>423</sup> and that the “*loss of his [Leontes] most precious Queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented.*”<sup>424</sup> These are slim and slightly obscure pickings for the ‘auditors’ to realise just how far, in terms of time, the play has moved. Shakespeare, I would venture to suggest, would not make such a

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<sup>419</sup> Kiefer p. 53

<sup>420</sup> The only other two examples, of a ‘different’ speech pattern, that I have been able to find, are those of Hymen in *As You Like It* (1599-1600), and the Witches in *Macbeth* (1606). Both examples have verse written in the same 4 beat pattern.

<sup>421</sup> Rundus p. 123 Citing W. J. Rolfe *Shakespeare’s Comedy of The Winter’s Tale*, (New York, 1892) p. 181.

<sup>422</sup> 4 ii 4 In Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 161 Note to line 4 ii 4 he suggests that the ‘fifteen’ may be a “*scribal or compositing misreading of the Roman numeral xvi for xv*” and that this ‘error’ was sometimes amended by editors in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

<sup>423</sup> 4 ii 21-2

<sup>424</sup> 4 ii 23-5



large ‘leap’ in the narrative line and then explain the ‘jump’ with such paltry snippets of dialogue - so much so that ‘a manager’ had to invent a justification with the creation of ‘Time, as Chorus’. He is, undoubtedly, Shakespeare’s doing.

### 5.3: the shape of the story

*“the noble combat that ‘twixt joy and sorrow was fought”*<sup>425</sup>

In between the two highly theatrical ‘moments’ of ‘the bear’ and ‘Time, as chorus’, Perdita is ‘found’ and all the loose ends of the tragic half are all tidied up. Old Shepherd finds Perdita, and his son Clown ‘observes’ (off-stage) the grizzly demise of Antigonus, and also the perishing of the ship and all the sailors. Once all this information has been conveyed, Old Shepherd observes to Clown that, *“Thou metst with things dying, I with things new-born.”*<sup>426</sup> Gurr comments that the actual line is a quote from Evanthius. And that Shakespeare, as a school boy, would have been made aware of Evanthius’ *De Tragoedia et Comedia* as indeed would *“every twelve or thirteen year old who had reached the third form of grammar school. Evanius was defining Tragedy and Comedy.”*<sup>427</sup> The line also corresponds to what John Florio wrote in 1598, in his *Worlde of Wordes*, where he defined tragicomedy as *“halfe a tragedie and halfe a comedie.”*<sup>428</sup> *The Winter’s Tale* fits this particular description, very, very neatly - with a sad part and then a happy part, and a small ‘connecting’ part in between. Tragicomedy was a new form of theatre, which was to become the pre-eminent form in the years after *The Winter’s Tale*, as McMullan says, *“Tragicomedy was arguably the single most important dramatic genre of the period 1610-1650.”*<sup>429</sup> The theoretical articulation of tragicomedy as ‘a dramatic idea’ evolved in Italy in the late fifteenth century. Its prime proponent was Giambattista Guarini, who between

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<sup>425</sup> 5 ii 71-2

<sup>426</sup> 3 iii 110-11

<sup>427</sup> Gurr *The Bear, the Statue, And Hysteria* p. 421

<sup>428</sup> McMullan p. 1 Citing Marvin T. Hendrick *Tragicomedy: Its Origin and Development in Italy, France and England*, (Urbana: Illinois University Press, 1955) p. 317

<sup>429</sup> McMullan p. 1

1580 and 1585 wrote a pastoral tragicomedy *Il Pastor Fido*.<sup>430</sup> In 1608-9 (around the time Wells and Taylor suggest for the writing of *The Winter's Tale*) John Fletcher<sup>431</sup> penned the spectacularly unsuccessful *The Faithful Shepherdess*. Then later, when the play was published (c.1609), he placed before the play proper, an explanation of the new style (after Guarini) that he was writing - that of tragicomedy:

A tragie-comedie is not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants death, which is enough to make it no tragedie, yet brings some near it, which is enough to make it no comedy: which must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life be questioned, so that a God is as lawful in this as in a tragedie, and mean people in a comedie.<sup>432</sup>

Guarini had advocated “*mixed tragedies*”<sup>433</sup>, Fletcher a “*middle mood*.”<sup>434</sup> Shakespeare though, as Hardman observes, “*eschewed this dilution ... he was determined to ignore any way of making the transition from tragedy to comedy easier, less abrupt, or less unnatural.*”<sup>435</sup> Krier uses the word “*cleave*”<sup>436</sup> to describe the style of connection, yet dislocation, of the two halves of the play. The first half is staged in a realistic mode, a tragedy. The second half is where the ‘oppositions’ and ‘contrasts’ appear. The second half does not blend into the first, yet it can and does ‘absorb’ aspects of the first. The ‘story’ of Camillo, for example, illustrates this. In the ‘first half’ he begins as a trusted advisor (to

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<sup>430</sup> The play was subsequently published in 1590. Arabitis p. 20 The play aroused some debate, led by Giason Denores “*who argued that Aristotle had not admitted tragicomedy into his Poetics*, and such a ‘unification’ violates the precepts of not only Aristotle but also Plato and Cicero, as well as nature. The debate raged between the two, with Guarini’s collected responses being published in 1601 under the title of *The Compendium of Tragicomic Poetry*.

<sup>431</sup> He was to become Shakespeare’s eventual successor as chief playwright for the King’s Men.

<sup>432</sup> Abaratis p. 30 Citing Fletcher, whose play eventually became a popular playhouse hit, but not until 1634.

<sup>433</sup> Hardman p. 231

<sup>434</sup> Krier p. 342 Citing Ellis-Fermor *The Jacobean Drama*, (London: Methuen, 1936) p. 205.

<sup>435</sup> Hardman p. 231

<sup>436</sup> Krier p. 346

Leontes), he then becomes the betrayer (fleeing with Polixenes), and then his actions are vindicated (the oracle). In the second half he opens as the trusted advisor (to Polixenes), then the betrayer (organising the flight of Perdita and Florizel) and finally is again vindicated (by Perdita's true identity). And on 'more practical' level, it is quite possible that the actor, who played Antigonus, in the 'first half', returns to the stage as Autolycus in the second. Shakespeare may even have made it into a joke, for Clown describes "*how the bear tore out his [Antigonus'] shoulder-bone*"<sup>437</sup>, and then when Autolycus is picking the purse of Clown, he cries out "*O, good sir, softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.*"<sup>438</sup>

The revival of *Mucedorus* that the King's Men staged in 1610, may, as well as 'licking the bear into shape', have also have influenced Shakespeare's thinking. In the Induction there is an exchange between Envy and Comedy:

Enuie:

Make thee mourne, where most thou ioiest  
Turning thy mirth into a deadly dole,  
Whirling thy measures with a peale of death.  
And drench thy methodes in a sea of bloud<sup>439</sup>

Comedy:

I scorne what thou canst doe;  
Ille grace it so, thy selfe shall it confesse,  
From tragick stuffe to be a pleasant comedie.<sup>440</sup>

Abartis quotes a line from Guarini's work, that "*he [Aristotle] did not forbid us from making new graftings on the trunk of natural poetry.*"<sup>441</sup> Polixenes in his

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<sup>437</sup> 3 iii 93

<sup>438</sup> 4 iii 72-3 Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 61-2 Suggests that Shakespeare was "*connect[ing] the plots through a form of literary typology, or corresponding 'types'. ... Superficially, the action of the play may seem disjointed, but at a deeper level, where types and antitypes, large and small, were articulated between the plots, the fiction would show itself as a pleasing whole.*"

<sup>439</sup> Tucker Brooke p. 106 *Mucedorus* Induction 56-9

<sup>440</sup> Tucker Brooke p. 106 *Mucedorus* Induction 68-9

<sup>441</sup> Abaratis p. 20

debate with Perdita over the rights and wrongs of ‘genetic manipulation’ observes that:

... we marry  
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,  
And make conceive a bark of baser kind  
By bud of nobler race. This is an art  
Which does mend nature - change it rather; but  
The art itself is nature.<sup>442</sup>

Perdita rejects his arguments with a firm, “*I’ll not put The dibble in the earth to set one slip of them*”<sup>443</sup> almost as if she is speaking on behalf of the playwright and his construction of the play. Shakespeare has quite definitively rejected the ‘middle path’, preferring to fit the seasons of the play to their respective modes - tragedy for winter, and spring/summer for comedy.

## 5.4: speaking the story

***“His part Performed in this wide gap of time”***<sup>444</sup>

Numerically speaking, the middle lines of a thirty-two line speech are lines sixteen and seventeen, which in Time’s soliloquy, turns out to be, “*I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing As you had slept between.*”<sup>445</sup> And that is the actual moment of transition. Schanzer comments upon the line that:

Time marks the great break between the two halves of the play, but also creates in us a feeling that the action is starting all over again. Both parts of the hour-glass

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<sup>442</sup> 4 iv 92-7

<sup>443</sup> 4 iv 99-100

<sup>444</sup> 5 iii 154-5

<sup>445</sup> 4 i 16-17

look alike, and it may not be too fanciful to think that this fact enhances our sense of the similarity of the shape and structure of the two halves of *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>446</sup>

The 'glass' one may assume is an hour-glass.<sup>447</sup> The hour-glass is an object symmetrically constructed, pivoting on a small central channel, through which the sand slowly moves. While it is not the 'exact' centre of the play, from this moment on the events of the play work to restore what has been lost and to right the wrongs that have been done. The sands had flowed through the top half of the 'glass' and so with 'the turn', the new top half is full again, indicating "*a potential for growth-life renewed*"<sup>448</sup> and that the play is now to concern itself with the young lovers in the spring of their lives.

*The Winter's Tale* is not however unique in having a bilateral symmetry. *Timon of Athens* (1602-3) divides into quite opposing parts, with the second half inversely mirroring the first. Affluence and sentimental benevolence in one half is contrasted with destitution and cynical malevolence in the other. It is a play that divides into two. The 'first half' effectively concludes with a feast. It is not standard dinner fare. Timon rages that "*Smoke and lukewarm water Is your perfection*"<sup>449</sup> and the scene ends with the fourth Lord commenting "*One day he gives us diamonds, next day stones.*"<sup>450</sup> *The Winter's Tale* it could be said, is the 'inverse mirror' of 'Lord no. 4's' observation. The play that has given us 'stones', is about to give us 'diamonds'.

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<sup>446</sup> Schanzer p. 35

<sup>447</sup> Rundus p. 124-5 Does note that the 'glass' could possibly (although he does state that it is somewhat unlikely to be so) refer to a mirror - "... in some of the popular device of the period Time had as an attribute a mirror in which death was reflected, either behind a human figure or behind Time himself, indicating the relentless intrusion of the future and its attendant decay upon the vitality of the present." Effectively, I think, Death is banished from the 'play to come' by 'Time, as Chorus', so the 'glass' is unlikely to be a mirror. However, the observation does indicate that concept/reality of 'Time' did have many associated qualities and significances that would have been in the minds of the 'auditors' and Shakespeare would have been quite aware of those resonances.

<sup>448</sup> Rundus p. 125

<sup>449</sup> *Timon of Athens* (1605) 3 vii 88-9

<sup>450</sup> *Timon of Athens* (1605) 3 vii 114

The ‘idea’ of Time has, along with the ‘feel’ of the play, changes too. The straightforward ‘passage of time’, continues as before - but not quite, the same, as before. ‘Time itself’ is different now. The notion of time in the play has moved from *chronos* to *kairos*.<sup>451</sup> It is an interplay between those two concepts - ‘*chronos*’ and ‘*kairos*’ - from “*time as duration ... [to] ... time as crisis or fulfilment.*”<sup>452</sup> The first three acts, prior to the entrance of ‘Time, as Chorus’, move with great speed. Events begin to tumble after each other, rushing and gaining haste as the story unfolds. Exemplified by “... *wishing clocks more swift Hours minutes, noon midnight*”<sup>453</sup> and “*Nor night nor day no rest*”<sup>454</sup> and “... *lastly, hurried There, to this place, I’th’open air, before I have got strength of limit.*”<sup>455</sup> In the last two acts, after the exit of ‘Time, as Chorus’, the references to the passage of time are leisurely and full of space. Exemplified by “... *the year growing ancient Not yet a summer’s death, nor the birth Of trembling winter*”<sup>456</sup> and “*Here’s another ballad, of a fish the appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore of April*”<sup>457</sup> and “*My Lord’s almost so far transported that He’ll think anon it lives. O sweet Paulina, Make we so to think twenty years together.*”<sup>458</sup>

Bristol has a ‘different’ take on the notion and significance of time in the play. He places *The Winter’s Tale* in a very specific calendar, the years of 1610 and 1611 - the years that the play would, as witnessed by Foreman, be ‘new’ to the stage. These years are in themselves quite unusual, in that the end of Christmastide is

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<sup>451</sup> Wells M., p. 250 A later seventeenth century writer – John Fox – described the difference as, “*Time is under a double notion; there is the space of time, and there is the opportunity of time: Time and opportunity differ: time is the duration or succession of so many minutes, hours, days, one after the other, from the beginning of an man’s life to the end thereof <chronos> ... Opportunity is the time appointed and fitted, in order to this or that work or business, viz. A meeting of time and means together, to affect the end. <kairos>.*”

<sup>452</sup> Wells M., p. 250

<sup>453</sup> 1 ii 291-2

<sup>454</sup> 2 iii 1

<sup>455</sup> 3 ii 103-5

<sup>456</sup> 4 iv 79-81

<sup>457</sup> 4 iv 273-5

<sup>458</sup> 5 iii 69-71

followed very, very closely, by Lent - which consequently limits the time available for 'carnival'. The calendar of those years (as all years) is governed by "two great ritual programmes: the immovable (solar) and the moveable (lunar) feasts."<sup>459</sup> Essentially these are Christmastide, beginning on All Souls and ending on Candlemass, and Lent, which begins 40 days before Palm Sunday - which is the Sunday prior to Easter Sunday, which is in turn the first Sunday on or after the first full moon following the vernal equinox - and ends with almost at Midsummer with Trinity Sunday. The 'gap' between Christmastide and Lent is Shrovetide - ending on Shrove Tuesday. This is the time for carnivalesque observances. The purpose of this 'gap' is to transition from the 'expenditure' of Christmastide to the abstinence and repentance of Lent. "In 1610 and 1611 ... Shrove Tuesday fell on or was near its earliest possible date of 3 February."<sup>460</sup> This restricted 'the gap' to but a day. This 'gap' is a liminal time, a time almost outside prescribed and ordered behaviours, and that Candlemass is as a 'hinge', between two great epochs. Bristol is positing that *The Winter's Tale* is effectively mimicking - or is organised akin to - the calendar cycle of the years of the play's composition and first performance. That the liminal time, the time for the 'change' between the two 'states' of the play, is restricted and short - as the concurrent calendar years would be. Shakespeare's 'auditors' would be very aware of the duration of this time - carnival.<sup>461</sup> Hassel describes carnival as a "farewell to the flesh, because it hosts a final explosion of riotous misrule just before the somber restraints of Lent."<sup>462</sup> In *The Winter's Tale*, the 'direction' is inverted, as the play is moving, symbolically, from Lent to Christmastide, but still 'travelling briefly through' carnival. Bristol describes carnival as a time when "the ordinary relationship between signifier and signified is disrupted and conventional meaning is parodied."<sup>463</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 152

<sup>460</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 161

<sup>461</sup> Bristol *In Search of the Bear* p. 152 Comments that there was an "enormous popularity during the period of printed texts that make available a combination of almanac and prognostication."

<sup>462</sup> Hassell p. 113

<sup>463</sup> Bristol *Carnival and the Institutions of Theater* p. 641 And carnival was, as Bristol observes, p. 640, "an active cultural and social process in Renaissance society, particularly during the early period of organised professional theatrical activity."

What began with ‘the bear’ now concludes with ‘Time as Chorus’. The entrance of ‘the bear’ is but the beginning of the ‘hinge’, which concludes with the exit of ‘Time, as Chorus’ one hundred and ten lines later. This brief ‘mid-section’ of the play is the ‘great hinge’ – that joins the two ‘halves’ or stories together. And while ‘the bear’ does the tonal shift, ‘Time’ does the temporal shift. The ‘hinge’ has to both connect and transform a number of elements in the play. ‘The bear’ gives us the first jolt of change - the laugh - which moves us out of the inexorable grind of the tragic. The Old Shepherd and the Clown conclude what has been and give us hope for what will be - with the rescuing of the innocent babe. And then ‘Time’ gives us ... time ... for a ‘different future’ to come into being. Even at a hundred lines or so, it is quick.

‘Time, as Chorus’ is a personification, not a ‘real character’ in the story but an abstraction made concrete. His purpose is to remind us, once again - after ‘the bear’ - that we are watching a performance on a stage. Peter Brook writes that:

Alienation is a call to halt: alienation is cutting, interrupting, holding something up to the light, making us look again. Alienation is above all an appeal to the spectator to work for himself, so become responsible for accepting what he [she] sees.<sup>464</sup>

Shakespeare had no thought of the ‘theory of alienation’ as a theatrical form, he was concerned with the simple need to carry his ‘auditors’ along with him as he changed the focus of his ‘tale’. Wiener posits that the Greek chorus was there to arouse both emotion and passion in the audience while making it think at the same time. This notion is based on the function of the dancing and singing component of the role of the Chorus. The Chorus is a ‘theatrical’ element, and *“it exists only in the theatre. We must see the chorus dance and hear it sing or it*

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<sup>464</sup> Brook p. 72



*does not exist.*”<sup>465</sup> In a way, it may be argued that it is the combination of ‘the bear’ – dancing - and ‘Time’ – singing - that create ‘the Chorus’.

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<sup>465</sup> Weiner p. 212

## Chapter 6: Signals Part II

### 6.1: echoing the signal

*“took me by the hand and called me brother”*<sup>466</sup>

The great ‘sheep-shearing’ scene that is Act 4, scene iv, turns on a thwarted marriage ceremony. Everything in the scene leads up to that point, and everything after that moment is a consequence of it. If, Perdita and Florizel had managed to be married, in the full flush of enthusiasm, right then and right there, the play would never have been able to move the ‘auditors’ to Paulina’s chapel, in the final scene, to bear witness to the ‘re-animation’ of Hermione.

It could be said that it was a necessary plot device demanded by the form of the genre. The young lovers had to have obstacles placed in front of them, so they had to flee and thereto face further trials, and eventually overcome them. In *Pandosto*, Fawnia and Dorastus, do effectively get married at the ‘equivalent’ moment, with Greene describing it with a most simple sentence, that “*thus having plight[ed] their troth each to the other,*”<sup>467</sup> they then have to flee because Dorastus’ father, Egistus, would not approve of “*so mean a match.*”<sup>468</sup> This all happens effectively in secret. They are the ‘witnesses’ to their own marriage. Shakespeare decided that this was a ‘moment’ worthy of being dramatised. Not only to show the build up to the moment, but also to include Polixenes, and indeed give him a ‘starring role’ in the actual moment.

Greene spent a lot of words describing the courtship of the young lovers, from even before they first actually met. Shakespeare, once again cannot, dramatically,

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<sup>466</sup> 5 ii 138-9

<sup>467</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 212

<sup>468</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 212

afford that luxury, so, right from the start of the ‘second half’ of the play he introduces the young lovers as being ‘entangled’. Polixenes replies to Camillo’s report of a shepherd’s “*daughter of most rare note*”<sup>469</sup> with agreement and concern about “*the angle that plucks our son thither.*”<sup>470</sup> They then decide to ‘see’ for themselves what is going on and to attend the sheep-shearing festival, and to do so in disguise. And that concludes the opening scene of the ‘second half’. Shakespeare then, right at the top of the following scene, introduces a new character entirely of his own devising - Autolycus.<sup>471</sup> Unlike the character in the play, ‘our’ Autolycus is but a ‘bit-part player’ in this thesis, for what matters is that with his arrival, music enters the play - “*Enter Autolycus singing.*”<sup>472</sup> And “*its [music’s] first appearance in the play is, appropriately, at the precise moment where the process of winning order out of chaos is begun, when the winter of the tale looks forward to spring.*”<sup>473</sup> The songs themselves are also not the concern of this thesis. Their presence though does confirm that the play is now in a different season. The opening line of the first song - “*When daffodils begin to peer*”<sup>474</sup> - indicates that the play is now ‘in’ spring. Almost as soon as the songs arrive, they are gone, for “*all the singing is confined to the short 4 iii and to the first 32[1] lines of 4 iv [and] it all comes within some 450 consecutive lines at the beginning of the second half of a play of 3074 lines.*”<sup>475</sup> But what the songs do is allow the dancing to happen. “*Statistical minds have found out that of 237 Elizabethan plays 68 call for dancing in their actual texts.*”<sup>476</sup> Dancing was of great significance in early modern England. Elizabeth I was renowned as a dancer, and James I, while not partaking so much himself, certainly appreciated the capacity of others to do so. The theatre reflected this, for “*dancing was a*

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<sup>469</sup> 4 ii 42

<sup>470</sup> 4 ii 45

<sup>471</sup> Autolycus is a thief from classical Greek mythology, who was sired by Apollo’s brother Mercury.

<sup>472</sup> sd. 4 iii 1

<sup>473</sup> Nosworthy p. 67

<sup>474</sup> 4 iii 1

<sup>475</sup> Pafford *Music and Songs in The Winter’s Tale* p. 163

<sup>476</sup> Sorell p. 369

*necessary accomplishment for all actors, ... [and] he that was not a good dancer or fencer was not considered a good actor.*"<sup>477</sup>

The stage direction at line 166 in Act 4, scene iv, calls for "*a dance of shepherds and shepherdesses.*"<sup>478</sup> Sorell suggests that for this dance "*some of the many variations of the French brawl [or branle] would serve our purpose best.*"<sup>479</sup> Howard describes the style of the dance as "*a linked-couple dance in which the chain of dancers move from side to side*"<sup>480</sup>, and could be danced by young or old, competent or not. It was a popular dance, Shakespeare had previously 'extolled its virtues' in Love's *Labour's Lost* (c. 1593-4) where Mote asks Armado, "*Master, will you win your love with a French brawl?*" And then continues, describing the dance:

but to jig of the tune at the tongue's end,  
canary to it with your feet, humour it  
with turning up your eyelids, sigh a note  
and sing a note, sometimes through the  
throat as if you had swallowed love with  
singing love, sometimes through the nose  
as if you snuffed up love by smelling  
love ...<sup>481</sup>

Most importantly it allows the dancers to be in 'close' proximity to each other. Howard observes that "*dancing was praised for providing both an opportunity for courtship and an emblem of its optimal result*"<sup>482</sup> - marriage. Elyot wrote in 1531 that "*the association of a man and a woman in daunsigne may be signified matrimonie.*"<sup>483</sup> The suggestion for the dance comes from Florizel, who realises

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<sup>477</sup> Sorell p. 367

<sup>478</sup> sd. 4 iv 166

<sup>479</sup> Sorell p. 380 He cites Sir Philip Sidney's prose romance *Arcadia* (1590) as confirmation, p. 381: "*a dance by two groups of shepherd 'as if it were a braule' which only confirms that we cannot go wrong with a brawl in the shepherd's scene of the Winter's Tale.*"

<sup>480</sup> Howard p. 332 Footnote 32

<sup>481</sup> *Love's Labour's Lost* (c. 1593-4) 3 i 7-8 & 10-15

<sup>482</sup> Howard p. 330

<sup>483</sup> Howard p. 330 Citing Sir Thomas Elyot *The boke named the Gouernour*, (London: Tho. Bertheleti, 1531)

that a dance would give him the opportunity to be in physical contact with Perdita. He says as much - *"But come, our dance, I pray; Your hand, my Perdita."*<sup>484</sup> He is able, with all decorum and propriety, to 'take' his beloved's hand.<sup>485</sup> The 'hand-clasp' is once again 'back in the frame'.

Shakespeare did not necessarily need to have them actually dance. The dancing could still have occurred, but Perdita and Florizel need not have taken part. Shakespeare though, wants the 'auditors' to see the 'signal' once again - Perdita and Florizel 'hand-in-hand'. To see the daughter of Hermione, and the son of Polixenes - holding hands as they dance. 'Their' children, the only possible means of reconciliation and redemption, are not only 'together' but are visually united by the simple act of 'taking hands', echoing the 'signal' that unleashed 'the tragic' back in Sicilia, all those years ago.

## 6.2: reading the signal - again

*"you shall bear witness to't"*<sup>486</sup>

If, plays and playhouses were the entertainment of the multitudes, then the Masque was the delight of the court. Masques were organised dances - protracted and edifying. They followed a set pattern, and had at their heart, a message. They too evolved, as plays and playwrighting did, becoming increasingly intricate and clever, both in word and spectacle. Shakespeare never wrote a masque. His contemporaries did: Middleton; Fletcher; even Munday, and most important of all - Jonson. *"From 1604 ... up until his death in 1637, Jonson produced an almost continuous succession of masques for the Court (up to the number of twenty-*

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<sup>484</sup> 4 iv 153-4

<sup>485</sup> Not everyone was enamoured of dancing. Sorrel p. 372 cites Philip Stubbes' *Anatomy of Abuses* (1583) *"every leap or skip in dance is a leap toward hel."*

<sup>486</sup> 4 iv 382

five).<sup>487</sup> Anne, wife and Queen to James, took a special delight in masques. She herself took 'starring' roles in some 'productions' - notably in Jonson's *The Masque of Blackness* (1605) where she and her ladies-in-waiting donned 'blackface' to perform. Her involvement was not confined to the occasional appearance. For as Mark observes, "*the suggestion for the anti-masque ... apparently came from the Queen [Anne] herself ... In the 'Masque of Queens' (1609) ... an anti-masque of twelve witches was introduced as the 'foil' to the real 'Masque of the Twelve Queens'.*"<sup>488</sup> The 'anti-masque' is so-named because "*if the dances of the masque people were stately and decorous, those of the anti-masque would be grotesque and licentious.*"<sup>489</sup> And there is a second dance in *The Winter's Tale*, some one hundred and seventy-six lines after the first dance, and this is "*a dance of twelve satyrs.*"<sup>490</sup> That dance is the last music in the scene and indeed the play, until the end of the final 'act'. Between these two dances in the fourth scene of Act four, Autolycus has arrived at the sheep-shearing festival, sung, and sung again and again, and then left. The songs themselves are of 'no particular interest', but the effect is. They are an integral part of the 'musical' that Shakespeare now turns his play into. First Perdita 'consents' to Florizel, not only to dance with him, but also to take his hand - and by this effectively to marry him. The essence of the 'call and response' required is fundamentally there. Florizel describes 'them' as a pair of turtles "*that never mean to part*" and then Perdita replies with a most definite *I'll swear for 'em.*"<sup>491</sup> They have affirmed their love. Now the music for the dance starts. Then there is dancing. Then there is singing. Then there are fantastical 'in print' ballads. Then there is more singing. And then there is "*a gallimaufry of gambols.*"<sup>492</sup> The play has suddenly swirled and spun, floated and dived in an intoxicating cloud, and then soared again.

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<sup>487</sup> Mark p. 359

<sup>488</sup> Mark p. 363

<sup>489</sup> Mark p. 363

<sup>490</sup> sd. 4 iv 340

<sup>491</sup> 4 iv 155

<sup>492</sup> 4 iv 326 Jonson *The Alchemist* (1610) p. 5 In the address "*To The Reader*" Jonson decries the popular nature of 'modern art', the mixing of plays and masques - "*for thou wert never more fair in the way to be cozened (that in this age) in poetry, especially in plays: wherein, now, the concupiscence of dances and antics so reineth, as to run away from Nature, and be afraid of her, is the only point of art that tickles the spectators..*" Greenblatt in his introduction to the play in *The Norton Shakespeare*

Just before that, Florizel has a speech that essentially contains everything that is about to happen:

What you do  
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet  
I'd have you do it ever; when you sing,  
I'd have you buy and sell so, so give alms,  
Pray so; and for the ord'ring your affairs,  
To sing them too. When you do dance, I wish you  
A wave o'th' sea, that you might ever do  
Nothing but that, move still, still so,  
And own no other function. Each your doing,  
So singular in each particular,  
Crowns what you are doing in the present deeds,  
That all your acts are queens.<sup>493</sup>

When the 'pair of turtles' emerge from that 'timeless moment' they, and it is most definitely 'they', decide then and there, formally and publically to marry. The music, the songs and the dances have 'transported' them; carried them from where they are to where they really wish to be. The sequence starts with a dance, and ends with a dance - the wild and extravagant 'dance of the twelve satyrs'.

The 'last dance' is regarded as an 'anti-masque' dance, and "*the anti-masque, consisting of grotesque dances by 'antic personages.'* ... *The antic dancers were almost actors from the public theatres.*"<sup>494</sup> The date of this 'innovation' is of significance. The Court kept good records of what it spent its money on, so the date of *The Masque of Queens* is agreed upon, February 2 1609.<sup>495</sup> The anti-masque from then on became a regular feature of any new masque that was performed. On the first of January 1611 Jonson and Indigo Jones staged *The*

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p. 2873 suggests that Jonson may well have been out of step: "*While Jonson found such concoctions unpalatable, most of Shakespeare's contemporaries did not.*"

<sup>493</sup> 4 iv 135-46

<sup>494</sup> Thorndike p. 114

<sup>495</sup> Lawrence p. 53

*Masque of Oberon* and included in it was “*an antimasque of satyrs*.”<sup>496</sup> The first confirmed date for *The Winter’s Tale* is that of Foreman’s account of a performance on 15<sup>th</sup> of May 1611. The relationship between those dates has ‘always’ been used as ‘evidence’ for the dating of *The Winter’s Tale* as having been written around 1610 or even 1611. Justified generally as Thorndike states, “*we may note that the dance is an integrant part of ‘The Masque of Oberon’, while it is a pure addition to the play*.”<sup>497</sup>

I would suggest that it is not ‘an addition’. It is a necessary conclusion, required to ‘move’ the lovers to make their public declaration of love and fidelity and marriage. Without that final dance and in the ‘form and style’ that it is, the conclusion of the play simply could not be reached. Sorell observes that “*dances in Shakespearian plays come necessarily out of the plot, are carefully planned and prepared for. Moreover he likes to introduce them with descriptive words*.”<sup>498</sup> All of what Sorell observes as occurring regularly in Shakespeare’s plays, exists prior to the ‘final dance’.

As the Masque was a courtly entertainment, to be played before the King and the assembled nobility, it has ‘assumed’ great significance. There is a sense that of all the ‘performative arts’ of the time, it was the grandest, the most important, the pinnacle, and therefore ‘must’ have led the way - behind which everything else followed. Cutts expresses this viewpoint, stating that “*the success at Court of ‘Oberon’ led to the transference of the antimasque of satyrs to the Blackfriars stage, in a King’s Men production of ‘The Winter’s Tale’ ... [and that] the emphasis has moved from that of being a rude foil to a lordly masque to the agility of the dancers*.”<sup>499</sup> Indeed the skill of the dancers is specifically mentioned in the text, along with the ‘endorsement’ that “*One of the three, by their own report, sir, hath danced before the King*.”<sup>500</sup> This in itself is not

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<sup>496</sup> Thorndike p. 116

<sup>497</sup> Thorndike p. 118

<sup>498</sup> Sorell p. 380

<sup>499</sup> Cutts p. 196 Commentary 83

<sup>500</sup> 4 iv 335-6



‘conclusive’, as actors were also the dancers for the court anti-masque - so it is quite likely that the ‘play dancers’ had indeed danced before the King. Shakespeare ‘could’, upon report of ‘his’ actors, have realised the dramatic potential of the anti-masque style of dance, ‘premiered’ in 1609 - around the time, according to the dating of Wells and Taylor, that he was writing *The Winter’s Tale*. Some ‘thing’ was needed to precipitate the sudden and impulsive desire of the young lovers to wed. And to wed - right then and there. The sequence needed a final, extravagant and wild expressive moment, and “*the leaping, jumping satyr figures, [are] symbols of lust and total disruption of order*”<sup>501</sup> - are exactly what is required to achieve this.

That Jonson ‘borrowed’ the idea of the dance for *The Masque of Oberon* is ‘quite conceivable’. There were direct links between the two forms, not only the actor-dancers but that of the music. Music scores still survive, “*composed by Robert Johnson, who was intimately connected with both Blackfriars and Court entertainments at this time.*”<sup>502</sup> Lawrence cites the example of the ‘witch dances’ from *The Masque of Queens* (1609), where “*both dances - doubtless with original music - were subsequently transferred to Middleton’s tragi-comedy of The Witch on its production at Blackfriars ca. (sic) December, 1609.*”<sup>503</sup>

But which ever way it went, “*a dance of satyrs ‘full of gesture and swift motion’ was certainly an innovation. ... Such a dance of satyrs is not found in any court-masques before (or, for that matter, after) 1611.*”<sup>504</sup> The dance, when all is said and done, is but a prelude to the next instalment of the recurring motif of the ‘taking of hands’. For that is what the young lovers do. In *Pandosto* they just run away. Shakespeare though wants the ‘auditors’ to see them attempt to “*take hands, a bargain.*”<sup>505</sup> This is the point at which the scene ‘turns’. Polixenes

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<sup>501</sup> Studing p. 72

<sup>502</sup> Cutts p. 196

<sup>503</sup> Lawrence p. 53 He also states, p. 54, that “‘*The Satyres Masque*’ [from Jonson’s *Masque of Oberon*] was shortly after reproduced in ‘*The Winter’s Tale*.’”

<sup>504</sup> Thorndike p. 118

<sup>505</sup> 4 iv 381

discards his disguise and intervenes and halts the marriage before it can 'properly' be concluded. The suddenly 'not-wed' lovers have no option but to flee. And so begins the journey to Paulina's chapel. Shakespeare specifically chose to take the young lovers to the brink of a 'hand-fast'. In many respects, it could be said that Perdita and Florizel do actually 'do enough' to be considered married. Simon Foreman, who never mentioned 'the bear' or 'Time, as Chorus' or indeed the 'statue scene', in his reflections on the play, certainly thought that they had married - for he wrote, "*And the king of Bohemia his son married that wench.*"<sup>506</sup> There is a sense - for even though the 'marriage' was thwarted - that the young lovers did state, out loud to each other, that they now belonged to each other. Leontes confirms this in his very last comment on the play, when he tells Hermione that the "*son unto the King, [Polixenes] whom heavens directing Is troth-plight to your daughter.*"<sup>507</sup>

He had 'played' with this idea before in *As You Like It* (1599-1600) when Rosalind (disguised as Ganymede) ((but 'pretending' to be Rosalind)) almost completes a 'mock' wedding with Orlando.<sup>508</sup> She (he) has Celia (Aliena) be the priest (like Old Shepherd), but just before the hands are formally 'joined' she pulls out. The 'moment' can be interpreted as an 'actual' marriage ceremony, even if it is not fully and formally completed, as all the necessary component parts are present. In terms of the play, it is a pre-cursor to the arrival of Hymen and the proper wedding that occurs at the end of the play. Here, in *The Winter's Tale* it is an echo, or rather a re-interpretation of the mis-read 'hand-fast' that started the tragic sequence of the first half of the play. As Shakespeare wrote for the 'same' company his entire working life, and for the same actors, he would not have felt the need nor had the necessity and requirement, to write every last 'stage direction' into the actual margins of the page. He could place his 'authorial' directions into the actual text and trust his actors to be able to find those playing suggestions and then extrapolate them - backwards or forwards - to other

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<sup>506</sup> Foreman's Account Orgel p. 233

<sup>507</sup> 5 iii 151-2

<sup>508</sup> *As You Like It* (1599-1600) 4 i 116-131

moments in the play, and so perform what he had in mind. Leontes' observation on the 'troth-plight' status of the young lovers is one more small, final 'signal' for the actors to base their performance on, to read all the way back to the second scene of the first act, and that 'moment' which needed some 'thing' to show to the 'auditors' what was unfolding before them. This 'hand-fasting' is a more obvious 'signal' that gives credence to the 'signal' of Act 1, scene ii. If, Shakespeare had followed *Pandosto* and allowed the 'marriage' to be properly completed (as opposed to implying it was), then the final, redemptive, 'taking of hands' in Act 5, scene iii, would not be so powerful.

## Chapter 7: Stones

### 7.1: finding the stone

***“Then, all stand still”***<sup>509</sup>

The stage direction, in the *First Folio*, which opens the last scene of the play, is a quite straightforward listing of the characters that are to enter. Last on the list - of ‘named’ characters - is Hermione, with a bracketed instruction, to be “(like a Statue:)”<sup>510</sup> This in itself does not necessarily mean that Hermione actually enters at this point, remembering Crane’s habit of listing all the characters that are in the scene in one list, at the top of the scene. The next, and final, stage direction of the scene is, after the very last line of the play, a simple “*exeunt.*”<sup>511</sup> Coghill describes Act 5, scene ii, as “*Of all Shakespeare’s coups de theatre, the descent of Hermione from her pedestal is perhaps the most spectacular and affecting.*”<sup>512</sup> Hermione is transformed from cold stone to warm flesh, from stillness to movement and from art to life.

From the moment that Hermione first steps onto the stage, in the second scene of the play, resplendent and redolent with life and passion, her tale is that of increasing constriction and containment, culminating in her ‘death’ at the news of her son’s demise - as part of the tragic conclusion to the first half of the play. Her opening appearance, in the second scene of the first act, gives no hint of what is to come. What the ‘auditors’ see, is that she is pregnant. Her movement is free and unfettered. And when she exits, it is her choice to do so. She even chooses where she is going - “*we are yours i’t’h’ garden.*”<sup>513</sup> She does not appear again in

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<sup>509</sup> 5 iii 95

<sup>510</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 5 iii 1

<sup>511</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 5 iii 156

<sup>512</sup> Coghill p. 39

<sup>513</sup> 1 ii 179

the scene. Hermione next enters at the beginning of the following scene, Act 2, scene i, and her action is to sit. Her movement to stillness has begun. That she sits is indicated by her request to Mamillius, to “*Come sir, ... pray you sit by us*”<sup>514</sup> and indeed she is quite insistent, repeating the request, “*Nay, come sit down*”<sup>515</sup> a few lines later. But when she exits from this scene, her liberty and her capacity to freely move has started to be restricted. For Leontes has commanded that she is to be escorted to prison. Her confinement is now to be tangible. Her ‘next’ scene, in which she does not actually appear, is Act 2, scene ii, and is located just outside the prison cell where she is now being held under lock and key. Her final actual appearance, in the ‘first half’ of the play, is at her trial. The *First Folio* has after her name in the entrance stage direction, a bracket containing the information “(as to her Triall).”<sup>516</sup> Pitcher suggests that Hermione would have been brought to her trial “most likely in an open cart like a prostitute.”<sup>517</sup> This suggestion further indicates the reduction in her personal capacity to move. Then at the trial, she would be required to essentially stand in one spot. Hermione can no longer move and she is not ‘being moved’ anymore. There has been, through the sequence of her scenes, a ‘movement towards stillness’. Hermione’s capacity to move has been systematically and increasingly restricted. Visually she is now akin to a statue - fixed to one specific location - but she still has the inherent capacity for motion. Then, towards the end of the scene, with news of Mamillius’ death, even that potentiality is removed, with her ‘last’ movement - “*Hermione falls to the ground*.”<sup>518</sup> Now her animating force has gone. Gone so completely that she now ‘appears’ dead, and her exit has to be undertaken by others - “*Exuent Paulina and Ladies, carrying Hermione*.”<sup>519</sup>

The next reference to her, or her ‘image’, being on the stage, is as ‘a statue’, in the final scene of the play. In *Pandosto*, Bellaria does not, in any shape or form,

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<sup>514</sup> 2 i 22-3

<sup>515</sup> 2 i 31

<sup>516</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 603 sd. 3 ii 1

<sup>517</sup> Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 66

<sup>518</sup> sd. 3 ii 146

<sup>519</sup> sd. 3 ii 152

return to the story after hearing the same news about her son, when “*her vital spirits were so stopped that she fell down presently dead, and could never be revived.*”<sup>520</sup> Shakespeare has, once again, changed the source material and created, by means of wonder and faith, a new and quite unexpected redemptive conclusion to ‘his’ play.<sup>521</sup>

Prior to *The Winter’s Tale* there are four plays which require ‘statues’ or rather ‘images’ to actually appear on the stage.<sup>522</sup> The ‘images’ are representations of deities, either pagan as the image of Cupid in *Cupid’s Revenge* by Fletcher and Beaumont (1608), or religious, specifically Catholic, images in *Fedele and Fortunio* by Anthony Munday (1584) and *Whore of Babylon* by Dekker (1607). The exception is *Woman in the Moon*’ by John Lyly (1593) where the ‘image’ is discovered “*before Nature’s shop*” and the “*the image walks about fearfully*” and also “*Image speaks.*”<sup>523</sup> Shakespeare is the first playwright to use the actual word ‘statue’ in the stage directions. There is only one other example, prior to the closing of the theatres, of the use of the word ‘statue’ - in a 1624 play *A Game at Chess* by Middleton.<sup>524</sup> However, after the play had begun to be played, a number of ‘statues’ start to appear in other styles of performance. In 1611, in Munday’s civic pageant *Chruso-thriambos: The Triumphs of Golde* to celebrate the appointment of a goldsmith to the position of Lord Mayor of London, “*Munday*

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<sup>520</sup> Pandosto Pafford p. 198

<sup>521</sup> An argument has been advanced that ‘possibly’, primarily due to the ‘lack of evidence’ in Foreman’s account of the play. That the original version did not contain a statue scene. That Hermione was not ‘restored to life’. As mentioned previously - there is no real debate that the play was not written by Shakespeare. So, ‘if’ this was the case, then Shakespeare, at some point prior to his death, decided to re-write the fifth act. A re-vision of this scale would be quite anomalous in the cannon. Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare*. Pitcher p. 91-2 ‘Neatly’ summarizes why this ‘theory’ may have come into being, that “*One is left with the suspicion that some critics think The Winter’s Tale would be a more credible play if Shakespeare hadn’t ruined it with the spectre, the Bear and the statue.*”

<sup>522</sup> Dutton p. 370 Citing O’Connor There are five further examples in the years up until the closing of the theatres in 1642. This is out of a survey of “*some 500 plays written for the English professional theatre between 1580 and 1642.*”

<sup>523</sup> Dessen p. 119

<sup>524</sup> Dutton p. 384 Endnote 8 Citing O’Connor This reference is ‘confined’ to one manuscript of the play - in Middleton’s hand. However, in two other manuscripts, the stage directions use the word ‘Images’.

brought Leofstane back from the dead.”<sup>525</sup> It was presented in the streets of London on the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 1611.<sup>526</sup> Palmer makes a direct connection between Munday and Shakespeare through one John Lowen - who played the ‘lead role’ of Leofstane and who was resurrected by Time. Lowen was a member of the King’s Men.<sup>527</sup> Ewbank also makes the point that no masque-writer had used the ‘device’ of a statue coming to life prior to *The Winter’s Tale*, but “both *Campion and Beaumont in their respective masques for the Princess Elizabeth’s wedding* [1613] *made use of statues coming alive.*”<sup>528</sup>

Shakespeare however had ‘alluded’ to statues previously. First in *Julius Caesar* (1599), when describing the positioning of Caesar’s murdered body, Brutus observes “*That now on Pompey’s basis lies along, No worthier than dust!*”<sup>529</sup> Porter suggests that from the opening scene of the play, the stage has an ‘image’ of Caesar on it. There is also a ‘statue’ of old Brutus<sup>530</sup>, which Porter suggests “*Balanced the “image” of Caesar, standing both of them on the ground floor level flanking the rear-front stage. A tragic anti-thesis!*”<sup>531</sup> And finally there is reference to a statue of Pompey - and it is upon that which Caesar dies.<sup>532</sup> These are then removed during the chaos of the plebeians rioting at the end of Act 3, scene ii. Statues are also mentioned in Calpurnia’s dream, related by Caesar to Decius, that “*she dreamt tonight she saw my statue, which like a fountain with a hundred spouts Did run pure blood.*”<sup>533</sup>

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<sup>525</sup> Palmer *Metropolitan Resurrection* p. 375 Leofstane was London’s first Provost, during the reign of Henry I. ‘Raising’ was the theme of the spectacle - the raising of the dead and the raising of a goldsmith to the office of Lord Mayor - the pageant being commissioned by the Goldsmith’s Guild.

<sup>526</sup> Palmer *Metropolitan Resurrection* p. 373 “*Munday was to the streets, what Shakespeare was to the stage.*”

<sup>527</sup> Palmer *Metropolitan Resurrection* p. 375 Lowen was also a goldsmith.

<sup>528</sup> Ewbank Endnote 15 p. 115

<sup>529</sup> *Julius Caesar* (1599) 3 i 116-7

<sup>530</sup> *Julius Caesar* (1599) 1 iii 146

<sup>531</sup> Porter p. 286 Also includes in the list of stage properties are: a chair; a window; benches and a ‘seate’. It is ‘curious’ that the living Caesar has an ‘image’ of himself, while the two dead men - have a ‘statue’.

<sup>532</sup> *Julius Caesar* (1599) 3 ii 186 The reference to Caesar’s death is after the fact, so once again, the ‘stage direction’ is embedded in the text and it is required to be ‘read-back’ into the staging.

<sup>533</sup> *Julius Caesar* (1599) 2 ii 76-8

In *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606), as Cleopatra is awaiting the return of Anthony, she enters “aloft.”<sup>534</sup> Then when the news of Anthony’s arrival and of his mortal wound is brought to Cleopatra, Diomedes (an attendant) tells her, so she may see him, to “Look o’th’ other side of your monument.”<sup>535</sup> Then, after a brief conversation “They heave Anthony aloft to Cleopatra.”<sup>536</sup> As Smith comments, the stage directions “turn Anthony’s death in Cleopatra’s arms into a heroic tableau set on a pedestal.”<sup>537</sup> Cleopatra’s two ‘ladies’, Iras and Charmian, are “transformed into the traditional weepers normally appearing in twos and adorning on either side the death-pose of their mistress.”<sup>538</sup> Then, when Cleopatra herself prepares to die, she describes her situation and herself as “My resolution’s placed, and I have nothing Of woman in me. Now from head to foot I am marble-constant.”<sup>539</sup> Cleopatra now makes the final preparations for her death. She does not die alone - Iras and Charmian die with her. When Caesar sees the ‘collective’ death he commands that his men “Take up her [Cleopatra’s] bed, And bear her women from the monument.”<sup>540</sup> Caesar is describing the visual effect of the deaths - a tableau - and that the three women have become “still and complete in living art.”<sup>541</sup> Life has been transformed into marble.

“The sculptor’s art in Elizabethan England was almost exclusively the tomb-maker’s art.”<sup>542</sup> Shakespeare’s England did not have classical statues and only a very few medieval statues survived through the destructive phases of the Reformation. In 1605, James I had commissioned statues of both Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart. These “gigantic effigies were produced by the ... sculptors of Southwerk<sup>543</sup> (sic) ... and for many years these ... were the most widely known

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<sup>534</sup> *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) sd. 4 xvi 1

<sup>535</sup> *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) 4 xxvi 8

<sup>536</sup> *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) sd. 4 xxiv 38

<sup>537</sup> Smith Bruce R., p. 13

<sup>538</sup> Bowers p. 289

<sup>539</sup> *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) 5 ii 234-6

<sup>540</sup> *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) 5 ii 350-1

<sup>541</sup> Bowers p. 289 Endnote 24 p. 296 Citing Anne Barton “Nature’s piece ‘gainst Fancy”: *The Divided Catastrophe of Anthony and Cleopatra*, (London, 1973) p. 20.

<sup>542</sup> Smith, Bruce R., p. 2

<sup>543</sup> As with ‘the bear’, Shakespeare is using the ‘life’ around him as raw material for his art.



throughout the entire kingdom.”<sup>544</sup> Funerary styles had begun to change, around the sixteenth century, when representations of human decay after death began to be replaced by fuller figured shapes that also began to recline or even sit, rather than lie flat.<sup>545</sup> The funeral effigies, that were the standard sculptural monuments of the day, could be described as ‘three dimensional paintings’, as the style was for them to be richly decorated. In 1624, Sir Henry Wotton, an English Ambassador to Venice and part of the ‘new sculpturists’, wrote, “*the fashion of colouring, euen Regall statues, which I must take leave to call an English Barbarisme.*”<sup>546</sup> Sokol places the beginnings of this rejection of the ‘old style’, as about 1608-9<sup>547</sup>, though some place it to be a bit later, from about 1614 through to the 1620’s. What Sokol is suggesting, is that - by either date - the scene can be read as a critique of the ‘old style’, which then places Shakespeare as part of a new, almost ‘avant-garde’ appreciation of sculptural art. The argument rests on the final realisation, that the statue is ‘false’. Sculpture as ‘art’ – to be collected, as opposed to ‘monuments’ – as memorials, only became a ‘gentleman’s pastime’ in the early part of the 1600’s. Henry Peacham’s second edition of *The Complete Gentleman* published in 1634, lists connoisseurship of sculpture as an accomplishment, the first edition some eighteen years earlier does not. The date of the beginnings of this ‘movement, is ‘around’ the time of *The Winter’s Tale*.

Paulina goes to some pains to point out that “*the colour’s Not dry*”<sup>548</sup> and that “*The ruddiness upon her lip is wet*”<sup>549</sup>, as if it was a funeral monument. But then after Hermione ‘awakes’, it is revealed that she never died and has been sequestered away all those long years:

For thou shalt hear that I,

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<sup>544</sup> Bowers p. 290 Citing Stanley *Historical Monuments* 211-15

<sup>545</sup> Bowers p. 288 Gives the example of Catherine de’ Medici, who died in 1589. She “*was so horrified by the macabre effigy provided for her tomb that she commissioned a second statue representing her as a voluptuous Venus.*”

<sup>546</sup> Sokol p. 57 Citing Sir Henry Wotton, *The Elements of Architecture*, Royal Presentation Copy, British Library C.45.c.6., (London, 1624).

<sup>547</sup> Sokol p. 58

<sup>548</sup> 5 iii 47-8

<sup>549</sup> 5 iii 81

Knowing by Paulina that the Oracle  
Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserv'd  
Myself to see the issue.<sup>550</sup>

A 'possible' implication that can be drawn is that the 'old style' no longer replicates 'truth' and, that only unadorned marble conjures beauty and implies truth.

## 7.2: cutting the stone

***"I have heard, but not believed, the spirits o'th' dead May walk again"***<sup>551</sup>

A potential classical source for Shakespeare, or possible influence upon him, is Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. In that poem, Shakespeare would have found "*a pattern of stories in which life hardens into stone or stones soften into life.*"<sup>552</sup> There are two stories that would appear to be quite relevant - that of Pygmalion<sup>553</sup>, and that of Deucalion and Pyrrha. The story of Deucalion and Pyrrha is in the first book of *Metamorphoses*, a translation of which was published by William Golding in 1567. Deucalion is the son of Prometheus<sup>554</sup>, the "*exemplary sculptor of statues that come to life.*"<sup>555</sup> A great flood had drowned the earth, but Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha survived and were then faced with the task of re-populating the earth. Unfortunately the husband and wife were not able to re-create life, so they asked for divine guidance and the goddess Themis told them: "*And both of you your*

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<sup>550</sup> 5 iii 126-9

<sup>551</sup> 3 iii 15-16

<sup>552</sup> Barkan *Living Sculptures* p. 641 Barkan also notes that "*stones are only second to birds in the frequency that they appear in the Metamorphoses.*"

<sup>553</sup> Rico p. 288 *Measure For Measure* (1603) 3 i 312-14 This is the only time Shakespeare directly 'references' the Pygmalion myth and he "*uses the term to suggest a harlot.*"

<sup>554</sup> The 'animae' that he, Prometheus, gave to his creations, combines both the physical (breath) and spiritual (soul) and from this it may be said that the art of sculpture is derived.

<sup>555</sup> Barkan *Living Sculptures* p. 642

*grandames bones behind your shoulders cast.*"<sup>556</sup> Effectively what that meant, was to throw behind them the stones (bones) of the earth (great mother). Deucalion and Pyrrha did so, and "*the stones (who would believe the thing, but that the time of olde / reportes it for a steadfast truth?) of nature tough and harde, / began too warre both soft and smoothe.*"<sup>557</sup> Barkan describes this moment as a "*transition between a primordial age, in which the gods or godlike figures 'created' human beings, and our own times, in which human beings can 'precreate'.*"<sup>558</sup> Human life had begun to begin. So too had artistic creation. In the story of Pygmalion, which is found in 'the tenth booke' of *Metamorphoses*, it is he who creates a statue-woman - a wondrous abstract, both real and idealised at the same time, which does not actually exist. What was required for the statue to come alive is for Pygmalion to demonstrate piety, faith in the goddess Venus and the ability to love. "*Then he stood no longer dumb, / But Thanked Venus with his hart.*"<sup>559</sup> As Pyle states, Pygmalion was "*the prototype of love's power to give life to the inanimate.*"<sup>560</sup> This is what is to be asked of Leontes.

Crider suggests that the statue scene needs to be 'read' as "*both mythic animation and theatrical performance.*"<sup>561</sup> He argues that the generally recognised source material, the Pygmalion tale, is not actually the source. The source is the tale, as told by Orpheus. And that it is the 'tale-within-the-tale' that is of import. It is a romantic tale that Orpheus "*fashions to make his own tragic circumstances*"<sup>562</sup> *intelligible to himself ... [and it] enacts Orpheus' desire for a mimesis which can transform the real.*"<sup>563</sup> The argument is that 'if' the Orphic frame is included in the reading of the 'statue scene' then the possibility of Hermione actually re-animating has to be 'allowed'. So that "*art, faith and love might be able to triumph, if only briefly, over death; this is a Renaissance, pagan mystery in which*

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<sup>556</sup> Rouse p. 29 l. 452.

<sup>557</sup> Rouse p. 30 l 476-78

<sup>558</sup> Barkan *Living Sculptures* p. 641

<sup>559</sup> Rouse p. 207 l 316-7

<sup>560</sup> Pyle p. 3

<sup>561</sup> Crider p. 154

<sup>562</sup> Orpheus tells 'his tales' after the death of Eurydice (his wife) which is his fault.

<sup>563</sup> Crider p. 154

*mimesis can transform the real.*”<sup>564</sup> With that in mind, if, the scene is ‘read’ as theatrical – then Hermione is but an actor acting. But, if, it is read as ‘mythic’ – then Hermione herself is the one who comes to life, and Leontes is cast as Orpheus, when he imagines Pygmalion. ‘Both’ have suffered through ‘doubt’. It is through ‘the madness of love’ that art can conquer death. Pitcher comments that “*Romance is the literary form in which contradictions like these thrive*” and that “*Hermione, in romance, is and isn’t dead; she exists as a factual woman but also a counterfactual spectre and statue.*”<sup>565</sup>

Euripedes’ play *Alcestis* has also been put forward as a classical pre-cursor.<sup>566</sup> “*In both plays, the wife is brought back from supposed death to be re-united with the husband who has acquired, through a period of mourning, a new sense of her worth.*”<sup>567</sup> There are, as Dewar-Watson details, differences between the two plays – but Shakespeare was never narrow-minded in his borrowings. Pitcher puts forward one ‘unusual’ similarity between the two plays – that of the ‘silence’ between Hermione and Leontes after her re-animation, which ‘echoes’ *Alcestis*’ silence towards her husband Admentus, when she is brought back from the dead.<sup>568</sup> Popular lore has for a long time ‘demanded’ that Shakespeare could not have possibly used Greek sources for his plays – as he knew ‘little Latin and less Greek’. However, that opinion has changed. Shakespeare, it is now considered, would have been able, due to his schooling, to read Latin. *Alcestis* was a Greek work that was translated into Latin<sup>569</sup>, and furthermore there was a very popular 1576 English version.<sup>570</sup>

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<sup>564</sup> Crider p. 154

<sup>565</sup> Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 6

<sup>566</sup> Dewar-Watson Footnote 20 p. 80 “*Euripedes was in the period regarded as a pioneer of tragicomedy.*”

<sup>567</sup> Dewar-Watson p. 74 Cites an engraving of Garrick’s production (c.1780) of the play, where Hermione leans on a pedestal bearing images from *Alcestis*.

<sup>568</sup> In *Alcestis*, Alcestis agrees to die in place of her husband. This happens. But then Hercules intervenes, wrestles with Death at the funeral and wins, and so brings her back into life.

<sup>569</sup> Dewar-Watson p. 73 George Buchanan translated the play from the Greek into Latin in 1539.

<sup>570</sup> Dewar-Watson p. 77 Citing George Pettie *A Pettie Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure* ed. Herbert Hartman, (London: Oxford University Press, 1938) It was not the ‘full’ play, but “*a prose reduction.*”

The ‘idea’ of a statue coming to life was “*as common as blackberries in June*”<sup>571</sup> in the literature of the Middle Ages. In the contemporary theatre two plays contain a ‘possible’ pre-cursor, *An Alarum for London* and *The Tryall of Chevalerie*, both dated 1600.<sup>572</sup> In both plays a character pretends to be dead and then ‘comes back to life’. In “‘*An Alarum For London*’ (1600), ascribed by some to Shakspere (sic) himself ...[and] it was acted by Shakspere’s (sic) company, the Chamberlain’s men. ... Shakspere (sic) could hardly fail to be impressed by the remarkable device of the Duke of Alva, being carried as dead through the streets, but once inside the walls coming to life.”<sup>573</sup> In *The Tryall of Chevalerie* the character is more specifically pretending to be a statue.

Shakespeare, just prior to *The Winter’s Tale*, had ‘assembled’ all the necessary ingredients, for the re-animation of a statue - in *Pericles*. Thaisa, wife of Pericles, upon giving birth to Marina is ‘believed’, by ‘actors’ and ‘auditors’ alike, to die. She is then buried at sea. However, by ‘Fortune’ she washes up on the coast of Ephesus and is brought to the Lord Cerimon, who by the use of “*fire and cloths* ... [and] ... *still and woeful music*”<sup>574</sup> revives her. The seemingly dead Queen re-animates. Then upon her ‘re-awakening’, Thaisa calls out to Diana - the ‘*deux ex machina*’ of the play. Diana ‘herself’ makes an appearance in the play, descending from the heavens. She instructs Pericles to go to her temple at Ephesus - which he does. Just prior to that scene, Gower - the Presenter - reiterates what is going to happen - that ‘everyone’ is going to Diana’s Temple at Ephesus. Pericles’ first words on arrival at the Temple are “*Hail, Dian*”<sup>575</sup> and as Smith comments, “*Perhaps, then, a statue of Diana in a ‘temple’ stage mansion presided over the denouement.*”<sup>576</sup> The combination of the two ‘scenes’ indeed do suggest the ‘statue scene’.

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<sup>571</sup> Taylor, George C., p. 85

<sup>572</sup> Taylor, George C., p. 85

<sup>573</sup> Taylor, George C., p. 85

<sup>574</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 12 85-7

<sup>575</sup> *Pericles* (1607) scene 22 21

<sup>576</sup> Smith, Bruce R., p. 16

### 7.3: shaping and polishing the stone

***“Our kindred, are going to see the Queen’s picture”***<sup>577</sup>

In *Pandosto*, Bellaria, upon hearing the news of Garinter’s (Mamillius’ precursor) death, just after the reading of the Oracle, was so “*surcharged before with extreme joy and now suppressed with heavy sorrow, her vital spirits were so stopped that she fell down presently dead and never could be revived.*”<sup>578</sup>

Greene’s text is unequivocal. *The Winter’s Tale* follows this ‘plot sequence’. Shakespeare though, at this point immediately sets to work perpetrating the ‘one lie’ that is to be found in all his work. The sequence of actions, that now ‘play out’, are contained in the body of the text. Wells and Taylor, once again, insert explanatory stage directions. After the news of Mamillius’ death, Hermione “*falls to the ground*”<sup>579</sup> Paulina reacts, somewhat enigmatically, by crying out “*This news is mortal to the Queen. Look down And see what death is doing.*”<sup>580</sup> The ‘actor direction’ is contained in the ‘instruction to ‘look down’ - Hermione ‘must’ have fallen to the ground. The use of the words ‘mortal’ and ‘death’ imply ‘the sense’ that Hermione is dead, but the structure of the sentence does not actually convey that information. It is associative and somewhat vague, and not a declaration of fact, but rather a precursor statement, that ‘plants a seed’ that will soon grow into a ‘fact’. The ‘fact’ that she is indeed dead is made directly to the King and court and, as importantly, the ‘auditors’, a ‘few’ lines later, when Paulina declaims “*The Queen, the Queen, The sweet’st, dear’st creature’s dead.*”<sup>581</sup> The ‘few lines’ is a speech of some twenty-seven and a half lines. The statement that Hermione is dead arrives midway through the twenty-sixth line. McDonald observes that” *the speech throws all its force upon the ‘fact’ of*

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<sup>577</sup> 5 ii 171-2

<sup>578</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 198

<sup>579</sup> sd. 3 ii 146

<sup>580</sup> 3 ii 147

<sup>581</sup> 3 ii 198-9 The final ‘line’ concludes with, “*and vengeance for’t Not dropped down yet.*”

McDonald p. 165 Comments that the words “*drop down*’ with a monosyllabic flatness, alliteration and assonance establishing acoustically the hollowness denoted.”

death.”<sup>582</sup> The speech is an exercise in “*grammatical deferral and surprise*.”<sup>583</sup> The *First Folio* has eight questions in the first five lines. Then a long sentence, six lines in length. And then finally, one more sentence for the rest of the speech, some sixteen and a half lines in length.<sup>584</sup> The ending – the announcement of death – is a surprise. McDonald describes this ‘grammatical suspension’ of a sentence or passage (depending on each individual editor), as “*engage[ing], frustrate[ing], and then finally satisfy[ing] the listener, often in an unexpected fashion*”, and he continues, expanding the significance to larger units of dramatic action, where the meaning or event is “*altered and clarified by a highly theatrical conclusion, sometimes even a surprise ending*.”<sup>585</sup> The final scene, the ‘re-animation’ of Hermione, when considered in relation to the entirety of the play, is the very pinnacle of this technique.

Hermione is now still. The “*fell sergeant*”<sup>586</sup> has arrived. But Shakespeare though, through Paulina, is doing something that he has never done before. He is lying. Lying to the characters on stage, lying to the ‘auditors’ standing there and watching and listening. Both ‘groups’, effectively, have no choice, but to believe what is told them. Previously, Shakespeare had always allowed the ‘auditors’ in on ‘the trick’ that was being played by one character upon another.

In *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598), when Hero is ‘jilted’ at the altar, she “*falls to the ground*.”<sup>587</sup> Claudio, the ‘jilter’, who is completely convinced of Hero’s infidelity, leaves the stage, unsure of what condition Hero is in. The Friar then suggests, by way of revenge on Claudio that “*Let her [Hero] a while be kept in,*

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<sup>582</sup> McDonald p. 163

<sup>583</sup> McDonald p. 163

<sup>584</sup> Wells and Taylor have four questions in the first five lines. Then, like the *First Folio* a sentence six lines long. The rest of the speech is then split into seven sentences. Orgel has five questions in the same section. Then the same six line sentence, and concludes with five sentences in the last section. Pafford has eight questions in the first five lines. The rest of the speech is but one sentence (even though it has two exclamation marks). Pitcher has four questions, the six line sentence, and concludes with six sentences.

<sup>585</sup> McDonald p. 156

<sup>586</sup> *Hamlet* (1600-1) 5 ii 288

<sup>587</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) sd. 4 i 109

*And publish that she is dead indeed.*”<sup>588</sup> All those on stage, as well as the ‘auditors’, know that Hero is alive. The plan being hatched is designed to fool those who are off-stage. What will subsequently happen is essentially known by the ‘auditors’, just as it is by the characters present, and all will all ‘share’ the ‘joke’. What the Friar is hoping will happen, by suggesting this ruse, is that “*this, well carried, shall on her behalf Change slander to remorse.*”<sup>589</sup> This indeed is the result. Claudio becomes penitent, and subsequently makes an on-stage pilgrimage to the tomb of Hero - the he vows to repeat yearly. This is essentially the same type of scenario as occurs in *The Winter’s Tale*, except that the ‘auditors’ in *Much Ado About Nothing* know that Hero is innocent and that she is not really dead, while in *The Winter’s Tale* they do not.

Paulina has said Hermione is dead, and there is no reason to doubt Paulina. She has been a loyal and faithful friend to Hermione, spoken directly and honestly to Leontes. Shakespeare is ‘trading’ on her good name, counting on the ‘auditors’ to believe what she says at this emotional moment. If, Paulina says Hermione is dead - then Hermione must be dead. Any possible ‘dis-belief’ is immediately and directly challenged by Paulina herself:

I say she’s dead. I’ll swear’t. If word nor oath  
Prevail not, go and see. If you can bring  
Tincture or lustre in her lip, her eye,  
Heat outwardly or breath within, I’ll serve you  
As I would do the gods.<sup>590</sup>

Leontes is convinced. The Sicilian court is convinced. The ‘auditors’ are convinced. Hermione is dead.

The scene, and indeed the Sicilian ‘first half’ of the play, then concludes with Leontes, in the full flow of remorse, requesting “*Prithee, bring me to the dead*

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<sup>588</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 4 i 205-6

<sup>589</sup> *Much Ado About Nothing* (1598) 4 i 212-13

<sup>590</sup> 3 ii 201-206



*bodies of my Queen and son: one grave shall be for both.*"<sup>591</sup> And everyone exits. It would appear incontrovertible that Hermione is dead. And still. Quite, quite still.

#### 7.4: waiting the see the stone

*"something rare, Even then will rush to knowledge"*<sup>592</sup>

The action now moves to Bohemia. Once the mariner exits to board his doomed boat, Antigonus begins to relate a dream that he had the night before, to the as yet unnamed babe: *"I have heard, but not believed, the spirits o'th' dead may walk again. If such a thing be, thy mother Appeared to me last night."*<sup>593</sup> The 'auditors' are immediately reminded that Hermione is dead. This follows hard on the picture of Leontes sadly leaving the stage the scene before, to view *"these sorrows."*<sup>594</sup> The speech itself contains a number of 'bytes' of information - all of which are 'true'. Antigonus though, interprets the fact that he had the dream as proof of Hermione's guilt, which is 'wrong', but necessary, at this point, to 'help' perpetrate the 'lie'. By not 'showing' the apparition, Shakespeare left open the question of 'what' it exactly was: a figment of the imagination; a dammed devil, or the providential intercession of Apollo. But *"whatever it is, this offstage dream spectre is as real and necessary as any ghost in Shakespeare, and it proves, almost certainly we say, that Hermione is dead."* Shakespeare had used dreams previously to convey information, notably Hamlet's father in *Hamlet*, and *"it is invariably true of such dreams that the ghosts who appear in them are ghosts of the dead."*<sup>595</sup> The 'ghost of Hermione' is

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<sup>591</sup> 3 ii 234-6

<sup>592</sup> 3 i 20-1

<sup>593</sup> 3 iii 15-17

<sup>594</sup> 3 ii 240

<sup>595</sup> Siemon p. 14. As Siemon also points out, Shakespeare could have had Apollo visit Antigonus in a dream – exemplified by Diana in *Pericles* (1607) – but chose to 'use' Hermione, thereby emphasising that she was dead.

slightly different in that it is not shown - but related.<sup>596</sup> And the 'dream Hermione' then "*with shrieks ... melted into air*"<sup>597</sup> and she is 'gone' from the play. Not until the story returns to Sicilia, in Act 5, is Hermione 'mentioned' again.

From the very opening of Act 5, scene i, all the talk is of how long and conscientiously Leontes has "*performed a saint-like sorrow*"<sup>598</sup> in the mourning of Hermione (and Mamillius). Leontes, in his first line, 'almost' mentions Hermione by name "*Whilst I remember Her and her virtues.*"<sup>599</sup> Paulina then reiterates the 'fact' that Hermione is dead, with a very direct "*she you killed.*"<sup>600</sup> The discussion is then about the possibility of Leontes re-marrying - predicated on the need for an heir. This is raised and then quashed, with Leontes acquiescing to Paulina's advice that "*The crown will find an heir.*"<sup>601</sup> The 'auditors' of course know that Perdita (the 'lost' heir) is even now on her way to Sicilia. This is the 'standard' arrangement, the 'auditors' knowing more than the 'characters' on stage. The expectation is that there will be a reunion, the Oracle fulfilled and a bitter sweet ending will eventuate.

Shakespeare though has another idea in mind. The next thirty-odd lines, up until the arrival of Perdita and Florizel at court, are given over to laying the groundwork for that moment of theatrical brilliance that is to come. First Leontes mentions his wife by name and allies her to Paulina, "*Who hast the memory of Hermione, I know, in honour.*"<sup>602</sup> Next, the hopeless but wonderful thought, that she might re-animate' is given 'room to breathe' and "*make her sainted spirit Again possess her corpse, and on this stage.*"<sup>603</sup> Then finally, just before the young lovers arrive, Paulina appears to close the door on such a thought, but by

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<sup>596</sup> Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 5 He observes that "*spirits of dead women were rarely shown on the Elizabethan stage.*"

<sup>597</sup> 3 iii 35-6

<sup>598</sup> 5 i 1-2

<sup>599</sup> 5 i 6-7

<sup>600</sup> 5 i 15

<sup>601</sup> 5 i 47

<sup>602</sup> 5 i 50-1

<sup>603</sup> 5 i 57-8

the simple mention of it, she actually places in the minds of the ‘auditors’ with:  
“*That shall be when your first queen’s in breath. Never till then.*”<sup>604</sup>

The ‘action’ is then abruptly stopped with the arrival of a servant with news of Florizel’s and Perdita’s arrival at court. In the report of the servant, the rare beauty of Florizel’s princess is mentioned. In *Pandosto*, “*Pandosto, contrary to his aged years began to be somewhat tickled with the beauty of Fawnia*”<sup>605</sup> and these ‘thoughts’ and their later consequent ‘actions’ eventually led Pandosto, upon reflection and after the confirmation that he was Fawnia’s father, to realise that he had “*contrary to the laws of nature lusted after his daughter.*”<sup>606</sup> And consequently, after Dorastus and Fawnia’s wedding, he killed himself. ‘Thankfully’ for Leontes, he has Paulina to remind him of his ‘dead’ wife - “*O Hermione, As every present time doth boast itself Above a better gone, so must thy grave give way to what’s seen now.*”<sup>607</sup> And she also mentions the dead (really dead) prince Mamillius, and that takes Leontes’ mind to a different and sadder place.

Florizel and Perdita then arrive on stage. What is actually ‘seen now’ is something quite ‘new’. It is not a re-union or reconciliation for Leontes and Florizel have never met before. The King of Sicilia greets and welcomes the heir to the throne of Bohemia for the first time. This is a new meeting, and that is all that is ‘actually seen’. Even though Perdita is standing right in front of him, Leontes does not ‘find what is lost’. The ‘auditors’, with their privileged information, know what is actually taking place on stage. Leontes is, as all who see her are, quite taken with Perdita, describing her as a “*goddess!*”<sup>608</sup> Then a Lord arrives with further news - Polixenes has arrived. The consternation that this engenders, leads to the revelation that Perdita is not actually the daughter of “*the*

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<sup>604</sup> 5 i 82-4

<sup>605</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 219

<sup>606</sup> *Pandosto* Pafford p. 225

<sup>607</sup> 5 i 95-8

<sup>608</sup> 5 i 130

*warlike Smalus*”<sup>609</sup> - for that was how she was introduced. Also that Polixenes is ‘rather annoyed’ at his son and his choice of bride-to-be. Leontes then agrees to intercede on their behalf with Polixenes. Paulina has been a silent observer to the conversation since the arrival of the young lovers. But, just before they are all about to depart the stage, and after Leontes has twice commented on the beauty of Perdita, Paulina reminds him of what he used to have when his queen was alive - “*Not a month Fore your queen died she was more worth such gazes Than what you look on now.*”<sup>610</sup> Leontes’ reply is, from the ‘auditors’ point of view, quite ironic: “*I thought of her Even in the looks I made.*”<sup>611</sup> Girard describes this as a “‘false’ resurrection of Hermione” which in the final scene is followed by “a ‘true’ one.”<sup>612</sup>

Nobody on stage realises what has really happened. Even Paulina - the keeper of the one big secret - is unaware of what has just unfolded. The ‘auditors’ though have witnessed the ‘near’ fulfilment of the Oracle. Father and daughter are reunited - they just don’t realise it. The expectation is now, not only with Polixenes’, but also Camillo’s arrival in Sicilia, that there will be a great scene of sequential revelations and forgiveness and ultimately a new collective harmony. All the players are ‘in situ’ for the myriad theatrical moments to take place: Leontes-Polixenes; Leontes-Camillo; Polixenes-Florizel; Polixenes-Perdita and most importantly of all, Leontes-Perdita.

‘*Pericles*’ contained equivalent moments of restitution and recognition – and they were staged.<sup>613</sup> Shakespeare could well have repeated himself, but in keeping with the mood and tenor of the rest of this inventive play, decided to eschew that approach. Emotionally, he is keeping ‘his powder dry’ for the greater and quite

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<sup>609</sup> 5 i 156

<sup>610</sup> 5 i 224-6

<sup>611</sup> 5 i 226-7

<sup>612</sup> Girard p. 210

<sup>613</sup> Wells and Taylor *The Complete Works* p. 1275 *Cymbeline* (1610) was to contain an “extraordinary series of revelations by which the play advances to its impossibly happy ending.”

un-expected restoration scene to come. When the statue of Hermione ‘metamorphoses’’, on stage, into Hermione herself.

## 7.5: opening the doors to the inner stone

***“Who was most marble there changed colour”***<sup>614</sup>

The next scene is, in many respects, rather curious. What is ‘unfolded’ does not actually take place on the stage. It is by means of ‘reports’. The ‘action’ is recounted by three numerically ‘named’ gentlemen – who have not appeared in the play before. The ‘curiosity’ of the ‘conversation scene’ is that it is just that - a conversation - a report of what took place, in the imagined world of the play ‘off-stage’.<sup>615</sup> As Meek comments, *“We are asked to believe in happenings that are only described to us.”*<sup>616</sup> Essentially the information is conveyed to Autolycus, as he is the only person ‘on-stage’ that has appeared before. So it is reasonable for his character to be the focus of the information delivery – on stage. But effectively the scene is designed for the ‘auditors’, not Autolycus. What could (or to some – should) have been the very culmination of the drama ... is ‘hidden’ from view.

Autolycus enters, at the beginning of Act 5, scene ii, in the company of First Gentleman, who immediately begins describing what Shakespeare has decided to withhold from showing the ‘auditors’. A Second Gentleman arrives soon after, with more ‘reported news’. Then a Third Gentleman, who has even more news to tell. Shakespeare is very aware of what he is doing. At one point the very

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<sup>614</sup> 5 ii 89

<sup>615</sup> This has occurred before in the play, with the descriptive conversation between Cleomenes and Dion in Act 3, scene i, about just how full of awe and wonder their audience at the Temple of Apollo at Delphos had been. In a technical sense it provides a ‘breathing space’ between the announcement of Hermione’s trial and the actual trial itself – allowing both audience and actors to ‘gird their loins’ for what is to come.

<sup>616</sup> Meek p. 395

loquacious Third Gentleman asks of his listeners (and the ‘auditors’) “*Did you see the meeting of the two kings?*” To which, the brief reply is, “*no.*”<sup>617</sup> Indeed no-one in the theatre has - as it is not to be staged. The Third Gentleman is fully aware of this and to rub it in, declares “*Then you have lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of.*”<sup>618</sup> And then, without a pause, begins to describe what “*might you have beheld*”<sup>619</sup> if the playwright had decided to stage it - some sixty lines of description in all. For what is happening now is the telling of a ‘collection of tales’:

Tales are not tales when they are seen; rather they must be heard. The audience’s only hearing what has happened increases its wonder and it consequently desires to see and know directly what is occurring.<sup>620</sup>

Towards the end of the scene this ‘surprising, amazing and most of all, quite wonderful collection of tales’ move onto the subject of the ‘death’ of Hermione. And this tale causes “*Who was most marble there [to] change[d] colour.*”<sup>621</sup> A very appropriate choice of words - for that is what is about to happen. Coleridge discussed the ‘idea’ of what Shakespeare did with the statue scene, comparing it to how Fletcher might have done it, that “*Expectation in preference to surprise ... As the feeling with which we startle at a shooting star, compared with that of watching the sunrise at the pre-established moment, such and so low is surprise compared with expectation.*”<sup>622</sup> At some point during the “*audience of kings and princes*”<sup>623</sup>, most probably after the revelation that Florizel’s ‘princess’ is in fact Perdita, Paulina, thinking very quickly, devises (I would suggest) the ‘idea’ of

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<sup>617</sup> 5 ii 39-41

<sup>618</sup> 5 ii 39-43

<sup>619</sup> 5 ii 43-44

<sup>620</sup> Harp p.298

<sup>621</sup> 5 ii 89

<sup>622</sup> Krier p. 353 Quoting Coleridge ‘The Characteristics of Shakespeare’s Dramas’ in *Coleridge’s Essays and Lectures on Shakespeare and Some Other Old Poets and Dramatisits*, ed., Ernest Rhys, (London: Dent, 1907) p. 53

<sup>623</sup> 5 ii 79

‘the statue’. It is in keeping with her ‘character’ - for she ‘devised’ the death of Hermione with great speed of thought. And now again, she ‘extemporises’.

The report, by the Third Gentleman, of what unfolded, is ‘framed’ by Perdita’s reaction - that she wished to see the statue herself. Inside ‘the frame’ a description of the ‘work’ is given:

Her mother’s statue, which is in the keeping  
of Paulina, a piece many years in doing, and  
now newly performed by that rare Italian  
Guilio Romano, who, had he himself  
eternity and could put breath into his work,  
would beguile nature of her custom, so  
perfectly he is her ape.<sup>624</sup>

That one sentence contains all the ‘elements’ that Shakespeare needs to create the final moment of theatrical wonder in the play. The statue is mentioned, directly, for the first time. Paulina’s role as ‘presenter’ of the statue is established. The words ‘doing’ and ‘performed’ are used to describe the statue. The artist is named. The possibility of the animation of the statue is alluded to, and that the statue is indeed, very, very ‘life-like’.

Then, after hearing all that, ‘the court’ leaves to see the statue, which Paulina has ‘on display’ in a removed setting. They resolve to go and ‘see’ for themselves. The scene that has been a sequence of reports – of things described - is now starting to set up the next scene, which will be of ‘things revealed’.

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<sup>624</sup> 5 ii 93-99

## 7.6: Looking at the stone

*“every wink of an eye some new grace will be born.”*<sup>625</sup>

The artist is Giulio Romano (1499-1546), and ‘he’ is the only reference to a ‘contemporary’ of Shakespeare’s in all of his collected works.<sup>626</sup> In the first edition of Vasari’s *Lives of Artists* (1550), there appears an epitaph, which reads, *“Jupiter saw sculpted and painted bodies breathe and the homes of mortals made equal to those in heaven through the skill of Giulio Romano.”*<sup>627</sup> Romano, on the strength of that, would appear to be a ‘good’ choice of artist. However that was the 1550 edition, the epitaph was removed for the 1568 second edition.<sup>628</sup> In modern editions, exemplified by Bull’s 1971 translation, Romano is left completely out, which Bull justifies by *“including only those artists still regarded as great masters.”*<sup>629</sup> Giulio Romano has even not been considered to be a sculptor (despite of Vasari) by many critics of the play - who are only too eager to seize on its ‘errors’.<sup>630</sup>

Talvacchia suggests that *“Shakespeare counted on his audience’s recognition of an Italian master who was reputed to have brilliantly blurred the boundary between art and life, yet who, from another frame of reference, could spiritedly evoke the passage from cold stone to warm life, with all of its vivid eroticism.”*<sup>631</sup> That ‘eroticism’ was a book - *‘I Modi’* - a collection of drawings designed by Romano *“that showed imaginative variations on the positions taken by couples during the sexual act.”* The drawings were printed but were suppressed “by

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<sup>625</sup> 5 ii 109-10

<sup>626</sup> Indeed the only other reference to an actual contemporary of his, is to ‘Sackerson’ - the bear - in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597-8) 1 iii 274-6 *“I have seen Sackerson loose twenty times, and have taken him by The chain.”*

<sup>627</sup> Barkan *Living Sculptures* p. 656

<sup>628</sup> Sokol p. 85

<sup>629</sup> Vasari p. 21 But it must be said that Vasari did write about a large number of artists.

<sup>630</sup> Ziegler p. 204 Cites Warburton, who wrote that Shakespeare *“makes of this famous Painter a statuary ... but what is worst of all, a painter of statues.”*

<sup>631</sup> Talvacchia p. 172



*papal order*”<sup>632</sup> and the printmaker landed in prison. However the book still circulated, for as Talvacchia comments, “*the diffusion of ‘I Modi’ through northern Europe is unexpectedly documented.*” Shakespeare may, like some of his ‘auditors’, have come across this book “*in the whispered and largely unrecorded gossip around forbidden books.*”<sup>633</sup> Also Smith observes that “*Julio’s works were among the most frequently reproduced of any sixteenth-century Italian artists.*”<sup>634</sup> Since there was a lack of actual sculpture in early Modern England, the majority of knowledge about “*ancient sculpture came largely through prints ‘sculpted’ by engravers.*”<sup>635</sup> Coghill suggests that Shakespeare was “*borrow[ing] a kind of authenticity from the ‘real’ world of the audience*”<sup>636</sup> with the choice of Romano. And Ziegler makes a case for a possible avenue of knowledge of Romano by Shakespeare via the printing of the translation of a book about the instruction of young women written by Giovanni Bruto, and printed by Adam Islip<sup>637</sup> in 1598. Islip’s translation mentions Romano, as “*an excellent painter*”<sup>638</sup> by name. Barkan suggests that the name - may have been ‘conflated’ with another, slightly earlier, Italian artist (primarily sculptor) Giovanni Christoforo Romano (c. 1470-1512). Meek states that Romano was famous in Shakespeare’s time for making “*deceptively realistic frescos.*”<sup>639</sup> Barkan goes on to ‘round the argument off’ with the observation that:

The name Guilio Romano means a multiplicity of the arts ... [and] ... such a figure with whom he [Shakespeare] could credit the creation of a work of art that was, after all, both sculpted and painted and which finally proves to be not a work of art at all.<sup>640</sup>

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<sup>632</sup> Orgel *Imagining Shakespeare* p. 112

<sup>633</sup> Talvacchia p. 170

<sup>634</sup> Smith, Bruce R., *Sermons in Stones* p. 21

<sup>635</sup> Smith, Bruce R., *Sermons in Stones* p. 20

<sup>636</sup> Coghill p. 40

<sup>637</sup> Ziegler p. 207 Islip was the chief law printer and member of the Stationers’ Company.

<sup>638</sup> Ziegler p. 206 Ziegler goes on to detail how Shakespeare may well have known of the book.

<sup>639</sup> Meek p. 400

<sup>640</sup> Barkan *Living Sculptures* p. 657

That 'it' is not 'a work of art at all' is 'encoded' in the choice of words to describe the process of its creation. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* gives an early seventeenth century definition of the word - perform - as to "*Represent ... on stage or to an audience; act or play (a part).*"<sup>641</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford Dictionary* gives, as an example of the usage of the word, a line from *The Tempest* (1611) - "*Bravely the figure of the harpy has't though Perform'd my Ariel.*"<sup>642</sup> Ariel was 'pretending' to be the harpy. Talvacchia reads the word 'perform' in terms of "*a contemporary usage ... [which] connoted 'completion by painting'.*"<sup>643</sup> Paulina does indeed use the 'painted' quality of the statue to stop Perdita attempting to impulsively kiss the statue's hand with "*Patience! The statue is but newly fixed; the colour's Not dry.*"<sup>644</sup> The Third Gentleman has also prefaced the comment with the observation that it was "*a piece many years in the doing*"<sup>645</sup> and Crystal and Crystal give "*performance*" as a meaning for 'doing'.<sup>646</sup> Everything is leading to the statue not really being painted marble. The word 'sculptor' is never directly applied to Romano. As Talvacchia observes, "*The sculpture is not so much described as evoked, its qualities defined in terms of the virtues of the artist who created it.*"<sup>647</sup> Hermione indeed has been 'performing herself' over the sixteen years and now will 'perform' on the public stage for the first time<sup>648</sup> - to perform the 'role' of a statue.<sup>649</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 2159

<sup>642</sup> *The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* p. 2159 (*The Tempest* (1611) 4 i 83-4)

<sup>643</sup> Talvacchia p. 164

<sup>644</sup> 5 iii 46-8

<sup>645</sup> 5 ii 95

<sup>646</sup> Crystal and Crystal p. 137

<sup>647</sup> Talvacchia p. 163

<sup>648</sup> Orgel *Imagining Shakespeare* p. 127 "*Nicholas Rowe's Shakespeare, the first illustrated edition, published 1709, chose the statue scene for the plays frontpiece.*"

<sup>649</sup> Muir *Shakespeare 'The Winter's Tale': A Casebook* p. 25 Charlotte Lennox wrote in 1753 - "*How ridiculous also in a great Queen, on so interesting an occasion, to submit to such buffoonery as standing on a pedestal, motionless, her eyes fixed, and at last to be conjured down by a magical command of Paulina.*" Muir p. 41 And Heinrich Bulthaupt in 1884 - "*Hermione ... consents to this farce of a statue.*"

‘The statue’ itself, is revealed with a simple - “Behold”<sup>650</sup> by Paulina. The reaction to the ‘revealing’ of the statue of Hermione is silence. Silence by everyone. In ‘*Coriolanus*’ (1608) the silence Shakespeare requires between mother and son, is written in as a stage direction “*Holds her by the hand silent.*”<sup>651</sup> Here it is expressed, by Paulina, ‘inside’ the text, “*I like your silence; it the more shows off Your wonder.*”<sup>652</sup> For a moment, there is a pause, as everyone - actors and ‘auditors’ alike - gaze upon the incomparable work of art before them. The observation by Paulina, of what has just unfolded before her, ‘instructs’ the actors as to how they should react, but also strikes the first note in the creation of the ‘conditions’ required to enable this most ‘unrealistic’ of scenes to be believed. Paulina has interpreted, or rather defined, their silence as wonder. “*Silence, then, becomes the final language, the language of love and forgiveness which all can understand, the wordless communion in which the exchange is almost complete.*”<sup>653</sup> The play is back in the world of Romance. And “*Romance seeks to involve readers directly, inviting them to identify with the characters and vicariously to experience their sufferings, so that throughout and especially at the end, they may join the observers astonished at the events and delighted by all they have heard and seen.*”<sup>654</sup>

If there was any doubt that Paulina now controls the King and indeed the scene, her next line firmly establishes that she is in charge - akin to the Presenter of the masque-like events that are to play out, “*But yet speak; first you, my liege.*”<sup>655</sup> From this moment on, to paraphrase Time, “[what] *follows after, Is th’argument of [Paulina].*”<sup>656</sup> As Heiatt observes, Paulina, like Time, is now starting to ask ‘everyone’ (actors and ‘auditors’) “*to continue to suspend our disbelief and trust*

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<sup>650</sup> 5 iii 20

<sup>651</sup> Wells *A Textual Companion* p. 600, *Coriolanus* (1608) sd. 5 iii 183 This stage direction also ‘exercises’ directors (and actors) - as to just how long the silent hand holding should continue.

<sup>652</sup> 5 iii 21-2

<sup>653</sup> Matchett p. 104

<sup>654</sup> Hamilton *Elizabethan Romance* p. 290

<sup>655</sup> 5 iii 22

<sup>656</sup> 4 i 28-9

*in the verity of the artistic illusion.*”<sup>657</sup> Leontes gives a very ‘specific’ response to Paulina’s command, he exclaims on the ‘life-like’ quality of the statue, with the observation - “*Her natural posture.*”<sup>658</sup> Talvacchia observes that “*The deliberateness with which Shakespeare chose to use the word ‘posture’ can be deduced from the fact that it appears only six times in the corpus of plays.*”<sup>659</sup>

## 7.7: experiencing the stone

*“... move still. Still so ...”*<sup>660</sup>

A practical necessity of the ‘illusion’ is that Hermione must remain ‘still’ from that point through until lines 102-3 - some eighty-two lines later, before Paulina ‘releases’ Hermione. The onlookers though are ‘free’ to speak, but their physical actions are allowed or prohibited by her. Perdita may kneel before ‘the statue’ but not touch it. Leontes is also stopped from his desire to kiss ‘the statue’. It is Paulina who issues the command that all who are present should now be motionless - so that the ‘magic’ can work. And all the while she is ‘playing’ with Leontes, threatening to close the curtain - as ‘the statue’ seems to be heating his blood, too much - though she never does. Three times she makes to close the curtain. The first is an action “*She makes to draw the curtain*”<sup>661</sup> ... but she stops. Paulina then suggests, that if he gaze any longer, he might think that ‘the statue’ is about to move. A little bit later she goes to complete her action, but ... stops again. This time she suggests that Leontes might soon think it actually lives. Paulina has now ‘planted’ the idea that ‘the statue’ is not just able to move but now actually is alive. The third occasion, just after Leontes’ ‘outburst of passion’, when he attempts to kiss ‘the statue’, is simply a question “*Shall I draw the*

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<sup>657</sup> Heatt p. 248

<sup>658</sup> 5 iii 23

<sup>659</sup> Talvacchia p. 168 *Julius Caesar* (1599) 5 i 33; *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1606) 5 ii 221; *Coriolanus* (1608) 2 i 210, and the later plays *Cymbeline* (1610) and *All Is True* (1613).

<sup>660</sup> 4 iv 142

<sup>661</sup> sd. 5 iii 59

*curtain?*”<sup>662</sup> She now has them - particularly Leontes - where she needs them to be. And so, now, she can begin the final stanza of the score, “*If you can behold it, Ill make the statue move indeed, descend, and take you by the hand.*”<sup>663</sup> The ‘taking of hands’ is once again being placed, front and centre, on the stage.

The ritual is drawing to a close. The last elements need now to be put in place. First Paulina ‘demands’ “*You [actors and audience both] do awake your faith.*”<sup>664</sup> Hiatt notes of this instruction that “‘*faith*’ assumes its literal meaning, denoting the fidelity mutually sworn in anticipation of formal wedlock; as elsewhere in ‘*The Winter’s Tale*’, the term is synonymous with ‘*trothplight*’ and ‘*contract*’.”<sup>665</sup> Even at this ‘atmospheric’ moment Shakespeare is preparing for the final ‘signal’ - when the ‘signal’ is returned to its ‘proper’ meaning. Paulina then requires that “*all stand still.*”<sup>666</sup> All movement is to stop. Leontes commands that this happens. This command, I would suspect, applies to the ‘auditors’ as well. One statue has become many. The last ritualistic element is in place. The final movement may now take place. Paulina commences with a call for music:

Music; awake her: Strike!  
‘Tis time. Descend. Be stone no more. Approach.  
Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come,  
I’ll fill your grave up. Stir. Nay, come away.  
Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him  
Dear life redeems you.<sup>667</sup>

Coghill when writing about this particular passage - as first printed - states “*it is the most heavily punctuated passage that [he has] found in Folio.*”<sup>668</sup> The ‘*First Folio*’ count is: eleven colons; one semi-colon and two commas, as well as a pair

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<sup>662</sup> 5 iii 83

<sup>663</sup> 5 iii 87-9

<sup>664</sup> 5 iii 94-5

<sup>665</sup> Hiatt p. 247

<sup>666</sup> 5 iii 94-5

<sup>667</sup> 5 iii 98-103

<sup>668</sup> Coghill p. 40

of brackets, but no full stops - all in the space of forty-one words. Pafford has: three colons; six semi-colons; two full stops and two exclamation marks, while Orgel edits the passage with: no colons; four semi-colons; four commas; two full stops and two hyphens. Wells and Taylor (above) present: no colons; two semi-colons; three commas; eight full stops and one exclamation mark. To tabulate the 'results': the *First Folio* is at the top of the list with fifteen; Wells and Taylor second on fourteen; Pafford in third with thirteen and Orgel 'last', punctuating with just twelve 'marks'.

However the punctuation is read - as to what the 'marks' mean in terms of the voice (speed and purpose) of the actor - the 're-animation' of Hermione is an exercise in precision and restraint. It would seem to be indicating for 'the actor' to ... slow down, even after the eighty lines that the 'actor/actress' has already had to stand motionless since 'the statue' was first unveiled. As if Shakespeare was trying to 'halt' time for a brief moment "*that you might ever do Nothing but that, move still, still so, And own no other function.*"<sup>669</sup>

Underneath these words, music plays. Nosworthy notes that "*The Winter's Tale is quantitatively far in advance of its predecessors, yet only a relatively small proportion of the play has musical embellishment.*"<sup>670</sup> There has been no 'music' since the 'saytrs dance' in the middle of Act 4, scene iv. Music was considered to be more than just sound. It reflected and contained both the secrets and elements that created harmony in the universe.<sup>671</sup> "*By imitating in musica instrumentalis the ideal order of musica mundana, man might again achieve the perfection of*

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<sup>669</sup> 4 iv 141-43

<sup>670</sup> Nosworthy p. 66

<sup>671</sup> Dunn p. 392 "*By musica mundana Boethius meant the order and proportion of the heavens and the elements in both their properties and movement – 'the harmony of the universe' ...it is part of this concept that the myths relating the power of music to control material objects and elemental forces first appeared ... By musica humana Boethius denoted the rapport existing between the parts of the body and the faculties of the soul, particularly the reason, a relationship which paralleled cosmic music in causing a blending of the body's elements ...Musica instrumentalis – a general term including all the 'practical' aspects of music as opposed to the 'speculative', whether they refer to singer, instrumentalist, or composer.*"

*musica humana which had been impaired by the Fall.*"<sup>672</sup> Effectively the music is doing just that. Without it, the 're-animation' simply could not happen. Ketterer comments that the 'music', while it plays, draws Hermione and the rest on stage into "*a sort of immortality as her grave is filled up and she is redeemed from death.*"<sup>673</sup>

Paulina is the next to speak. It is still 'her' speech. She is still being the 'Presenter' - "*Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him Dear life redeems you.*"<sup>674</sup> In Wells and Taylor the line ends there - with Paulina's next words "*you perceive she stirs*"<sup>675</sup> on the 'next line down'.<sup>676</sup> "*The royal form seems stone before it moves; it moves before it speaks. When language is added to form and motion, drama as an art is born within the play.*"<sup>677</sup> Between those two 'lines' the 'magic' happens. Victor Hugo wrote in 1868 that:

... in *The Winter's Tale*, the poet keeps the secret to himself ... He wishes us to be involved in the despair of the characters; he would have us, like Leontes, believe in the death of Hermione, and to the very last he leaves us the dupes of Paulina's device. Hence it is that the denouement is profoundly solemn. Then our anxiety is at its height; and when the statue stirs, when marble becomes flesh, when the Queen descends from the pedestal, it cannot be but that we are present at some magic invocation by a supernatural power, and at this unexpected resurrection, we feel an indescribable emotion of wonder and surprise.<sup>678</sup>

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<sup>672</sup> Dunn p. 392

<sup>673</sup> Ketterer p. 11

<sup>674</sup> 5 iii 102-3

<sup>675</sup> 5 iii 103

<sup>676</sup> Pafford *Arden Shakespeare* p. 159 Has Paulina's observation on the same line. As does Orgel *Oxford Shakespeare* p. 229, and Pitcher *Arden Shakespeare* p. 344 .

<sup>677</sup> Livingston p. 353

<sup>678</sup> Muir *Shakespeare 'The Winter's Tale': A Casebook* p. 37

Paulina finishes with a very specific ‘you’ aimed directly at Hermione. She now continues with a general ‘you’. Wells and Taylor insert a stage direction, in brackets, that the statement is to be directed to Leontes.<sup>679</sup> But I would suggest that while it is ‘aimed’ at Leontes, it is intended for a wider audience - that of all the actors and, more importantly, the ‘auditors’. Between the ‘you’ and the ‘you’, the magic, the wonder, the grace, happens. The reaction, once again contained in the text, is one of surprise! “*Start not.*”<sup>680</sup> The situation has been turned on its head - for the only movement is coming from Hermione. Everyone else is still stationary.

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<sup>679</sup> sd. 5 iii 103

<sup>680</sup> 5 iii 104



## Chapter Eight: Signals Part III

### 8.1: “the hand was fair before”<sup>681</sup>

Paulina has to exhort Leontes into action, and Shakespeare quite deliberately, chooses this ‘echo’ from the past to be the means of ‘re-connecting’ husband and wife:

Nay, present your hand.  
When she was young, you wooed her. Now, in age,  
Is she become the suitor?<sup>682</sup>

The symbolism is there for all to see. Leontes will, as he did before the play began, offer his hand. And Hermione, it is hoped, will once again “*open [her] white hand and clap [herself his] love.*”<sup>683</sup> In terms of the reconciliation, it is important that it is Leontes offers his hand, and that it is Hermione who takes it. As Paulina’s words indicate, it is the offer that is important. Leontes has to ‘make the offer’. He has to give to Hermione, the gift of the choice. The decision has to be hers.

Memories of that first, performed hand-clasp are revived, where Hermione ‘gave’ her hand to Polixenes. And Leontes misconstrued what it meant. So to show that indeed ‘Truth is the daughter of Time’, after all these years, Leontes has to offer his hand, in full knowledge of the truth of what happened all those years ago, and with a penitent soul.

That she accepts his gift is contained in the text, for Leontes exclaims “*O, she’s warm!*”<sup>684</sup> Hermione has placed her hand in his. It is the simplest of actions. But, it has a myriad of meanings attached to it.

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<sup>681</sup> 4 iv 365

<sup>682</sup> 5 iii 107-9

<sup>683</sup> 1 ii 105-6

<sup>684</sup> 5 iii 109

Colley observes that “*the mystery of the sudden jealousy is linked in complex ways to the mystery of the happy ending.*”<sup>685</sup> Shakespeare is though, doing his best to make the connection clear. First through the ‘thwarted’ hand-fasting ceremony in Act 4, scene iv<sup>686</sup> - the ‘focal point’ of the scene (if not the ‘second half’ of the play, prior to this moment). Then, this repetition, of that simple action. And, behind the overt visual signals, Shakespeare has placed ‘auditory’ signals to make sure his ‘auditors’ are attuned to what is unfolding. The actual word - ‘hand’ is repeatedly written into the script.

The rest of Act 4, scene iv, has three uses of ‘hand’ - each straightforward and having no greater resonance. Curiously, also in the scene, is the first use of the word ‘handfast’ in any of the plays.<sup>687</sup> Act 5, scene i, has no ‘hand’ references. But then, in the next scene, Act 5, scene ii, the word ‘hand’ appears again – three times<sup>688</sup>. Then in Act 5, scene iii, the word is used three times leading up to the ‘moment of clasping’. And each of the three uses suggests, or refers to, a physical action. Also, but in a different sense, the plural ‘hands’, is used four times in Act 5, scene ii, - three of which appear in the last few lines. Though this usage is ‘expressionistic’, the ‘word’ is suddenly back in circulation, and being said, and repeated.<sup>689</sup> Hands are back in the ‘auditors’ mind. Then, the singular word and associated action are played out on the stage - three times. The ‘hand’ is now in the ‘auditors’ eye, as well as their mind.

The word ‘hand’ has a number of meanings and possible uses: Crystal & Crystal have six entries<sup>690</sup>, and Shelmaker twenty-seven<sup>691</sup>. And yet, despite the word’s ‘multi-functionality’, it may well be considered unusual for it to appear so often in such a

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<sup>685</sup> Colley p. 43

<sup>686</sup> Foreman’s Account Orgel p. 233 Foreman had the impression that Perdita and Florizel did actually get married - “*And the King of Bohemia his son married that wench, and how they fled into Sicilia ...*”

<sup>687</sup> 4 iv 768 The only other usage is in the yet to be written *Cymbeline*.

<sup>688</sup> Spevack p. 532 The word ‘hand’ appears a total of twenty-four times in *The Winter’s Tale*: three times in Act 5, scene ii, and five times in Act 5, scene iii - a full one-third.

<sup>689</sup> Spevack p. 534 The word ‘hands’ appears eleven times in *The Winter’s Tale*, four of which are in Act 5, scene ii - just over a third.

<sup>690</sup> Crystal & Crystal p. 212

<sup>691</sup> Shelmaker p. 250-1

brief space of time, purely by 'poetical chance'. Shakespeare, I would suggest, has deliberately written the word, repeatedly, into the text as he leads up to this momentous action – that of 'the taking of hands'. If, this 'action' is significant, does it not therefore ensue that its predecessor, that first 'momentous' action, is also of significance? By the repetition of this simple, but obvious action, Shakespeare wrote into his text, his own signal, as to how the play should be performed.

And then, as if to make sure that he would be 'read correctly', there is one more physical 'taking of hands' before the play concludes. In the final speech of the play, Leontes turns 'match-maker' for Paulina and Camillo - he 'pairs' them up. He suggests, cajoles, or maybe commands, that they agree to be married. That they 'accept' his pronouncement, is to be indicated then and there on the stage, by the instruction for the action to happen, and happen now - "*Come, Camillo, And take her by the hand.*"<sup>692</sup> An echo ... of an echo ... of a simple, silent, signal.

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<sup>692</sup> 5 iii 144-5

## Chapter Nine: Conclusion

### 9.1: “*I heard thee speak me a speech once*”<sup>693</sup>

If one had to choose a play, from the canon, that is the most extravagant in scope and radical in construction, it may very well be *The Winter's Tale*. This thesis has explored specific visual elements overtly placed in the play that, it may be said, gives *The Winter's Tale* such extravagance and radicalism.

Lytton Strachey wrote in 1904, of the ‘last plays’ that they were the faded and dull scribblings of a poet who was, at this point in his life “*bored with people, bored with real life, bored with drama, bored, in fact with everything except poetry and poetical dreams.*”<sup>694</sup> This thesis contends that in ‘this late play’ Shakespeare brought all his amassed knowledge and skill about the art of plays and playing, to bear on the story that he was dramatising.

We do not know why Shakespeare chose this particular and most successful of novellas, as the source of his play - but he did. For that book, *Pandosto*, presented Shakespeare with some quite singular questions and problems of staging - how to convey, simply and efficiently, those moments when the tale turns. This thesis has taken the solutions and answers that Shakespeare devised, created or borrowed, to portray the unfolding of the plot-line, original or not, and examined them.

The scope of this study has been quite specific - that of the ‘visual theatre’. Consequently other aspects of the play: the language; the psychology of the characters and the observational detail on life, have not been considered in any depth at all. Rather the study has been quite specifically concentrated onto particular and

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<sup>693</sup> *Hamlet* 2 ii 437

<sup>694</sup> Pafford Arden *Shakespeare* Footnote 4 p. xxxix Citing Lytton Strachey *Books and Characters*, (1922) p. 47-64

overt moments of visual theatricality. To this end, the body of this thesis is compartmentalised into one 'background' section, and then four 'performance' sections.

The background section is entitled: Surveys. The brief was to undertake a brief survey of the framework that supports the play today. Questions of authorship, date of composition, and the primary source of the play are essayed. Then a short performance history is undertaken. The salient points being that: it is a play by Shakespeare; written in the latter part of his career between the dates of 1609 and 1611, and it is primarily based on *Pandosto*. That, while the play 'fared well' up until the closing of the theatres in 1642, it was not re-staged, in its full form and shape, 'till the early years of the 1900's.

The four performances sections are entitled: Signals; Surprises; Stories and Stones. Each of these sections strive to place their particular 'visual moment' within the context of the progression of the play - what exactly was required to 'move the story ahead' at that juncture. They consider where the 'action' may have come from. What pre-cursors may exist within the body of Shakespeare's work and that of the other playwrights of his and the preceding ages. How Shakespeare prepared the 'auditors', through the language he employed, to be ready to accept the daring theatrics he placed before them, to tell his tale. Also how Shakespeare 'embedded' within the text, clues and instructions for his actors, as how to 'play' the scenes. Each section also endeavours to place Shakespeare's creative responses within a wider socio-cultural setting.

The conclusion shall now move to the end - stones', and work backwards to the beginning - 'signals'.

The re-animation from stone, of Hermione, to flesh, from cold to warm, is undoubtedly a moment of theatrical magnificence. It is also as close as one can get to an original idea. The story that he was dramatising did not require him to solve this problem, he decided to end 'his' tale with this 'moment'. While the 'notion' of such a

transformation had existed in literature for centuries, Shakespeare was the 'first' to actually attempt to stage such an unbelievable metamorphosis. The method and manner of how he imbued the script with hints and references to what was about to unfold on stage, is detailed. Shakespeare's physical 'construction' of the scene is discussed, leading up to the final, magical, sequence. How Shakespeare moved the play, to a virtual standstill, so that all the eyes - of both actors and 'auditors' - were watching and waiting, for that first stirring of life.

The arrival of Time, in person on stage, is the moment where the play gives way to the story. Shakespeare chose, in a blatant manner, to disregard the conventions of what, and more importantly how, theatre was 'supposed' to be. His solution, to a requirement of the story, was not new or original - but it was bold and direct and quick. Showing, through its economy of form and utilisation of a popularly understood 'mechanism', the skill Shakespeare had as a writer of plays. That his 'auditors' would immediately understand and accept what and how he was manipulating the theatrical form - to be able to continue to tell the story that he was dramatising. Shakespeare's previous 'Choric' figures are essayed, along with a general discussion of the use of the personification of Time by fellow dramatists and pageant writers.

The surprise ... is the bear. How Shakespeare used the very milieu of life surrounding the physical theatre building, that he spent so much of his life writing for, as inspiration. The relationship thereto, with the competing entertainment of bear-baiting, is investigated. The place and history of 'bears as entertainment' is discussed. How Shakespeare 'played' with the expectations and perceptions of the 'auditors', to achieve that required moment of surprise - to change the very mood and tenor of the play from tragic to pastoral comic. And, that of all the moments, it was the simplest. The 'trick', and it is a 'trick', being how he took a 'pre-used costume' and en-livened it, so much so that it still resonates today.

This leaves us with the signal. A simple action that is, quite literally, the 'taking of hands'. The consequences of which, span the entire play. Hamlet observed that

*“there is nothing either, good or bad, but thinking makes it so”*<sup>695</sup> and Shakespeare so loaded ‘the signal’, that at different moments, when it was repeated, it made the ‘auditors’ think different thoughts. After the voice and the eyes, the hands are the next most communicative tool that an actor has in his, or her, armoury. They are a semiotic well that he dipped into, to present an ocular ‘truth’ that would be read through the eyes, so that the tale could properly begin. That this was his intent is then argued through the detailing of the overt repetition of the action, not just once, but twice. The action remained the same, but its significance and meaning changed. The ‘taking of hands’ begins the play proper, exploding it into tragic, wild jealousy. Then there is a ‘thwarted hand-fasting’, that is the end of a sequence of song and dance, which re-fuels the play with life and energy. The last signal, the ‘final’ ‘taking of hands’, serenely closes the play, allowing reconciliation and redemption and forgiveness to swell and settle gently over the stage. And then, as if to make it even more definite, a brief coda is then ‘en-acted’ - with one last ‘taking of hands’. Of all the sections this one ‘rests’ much more on the text - the use and repetition of certain words. Most significantly, and directly, the word itself - hand. It is argued that Shakespeare, knowing he had to do ‘something’ to move his story along, created a visual moment that he overlaid with reverberating possibilities, that the ‘auditors’ would understand and accept. So that the full consequence of the story that is the first half of the tale, could continue to be told to and heard by, the ‘auditors’, untroubled - for they believed.

Shakespeare understood the theatre. He understood the physical limitations of the buildings he wrote for. The practical realities of actors delivering the lines that he wrote for them. That his ‘auditors’ on the whole, stood and watched his plays unfold before them. He did not ‘see’ these things as limitations, rather as opportunities for him to match his wits against. In *The Winter’s Tale*, even in just those four ‘pictures’, he crafted moments of magnificent visual theatre from the simplest of materials. His ingenuity complemented his daring. He could fundamentally change the story that he was dramatising, for he knew he could create the visuals to stand alongside the

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<sup>695</sup> Hamlet

words. The scale of the story that *The Winter's Tale* encompasses is such, that to be able to compress all that it contains into the 'standard time' of a play of his age, Shakespeare used all the understandings and skills he had at his disposal, to fashion 'moments' of theatre outside the 'world of words' that was his stock and trade, to enable the 'auditors' sit by 'the fireside' and become absorbed as they watched the telling of a tale. *The Winter's Tale*.



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