

Winters tale

by Robert Owen

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Robert Owen

AP English IV

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Jealousy

[Aside] Too hot, too hot!

To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.
I have tremor cordis on me: my heart dances;
But not for joy; not joy. This entertainment
May a free face put on, derive a liberty
From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom,
And well become the agent; 't may, I grant;
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
As now they are, and making practised smiles,
As in a looking-glass, and then to sigh, as 'twere
The mort o' the deer; O, that is entertainment
My bosom likes not, nor my brows! Mammilius,
Art thou my boy? (1.2.11)

This is the quote that initially indicates Leontes's irrational fit of jealousy of his wife and Polixenes. Leontes, thinking rashly, is questioning the loyalty of his wife and the honesty of his friend. The paranoia is so extreme that he begins questioning if Mammilius is his true son. This quote epitomizes the theme of jealousy as it is the main issue in the play. It is highly significant to the play as a whole because this thought of Leontes's stimulates the entire following events.

Time and Healing

'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;
Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come,
I'll fill your grave up: stir, nay, come away,
Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him
Dear life redeems you. You perceive she stirs: (5.3.287)

This is the spell-like quote from Paulina that causes Hermione's statue to spring to life once again. The mysterious revival of Hermione is the strongest and most magical and literal form of time contributing to human healing in the play. The spell and revival of Hermione is the most significant detail of the play, as it establishes the romanticism of the work.

Time and Suffering

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

Sixteen years have past since the death of Mamillius and Hermione, and the loss of Leontes's only other child Perdita. One would think sixteen years of mourning, Leontes would finally have calmed down and forgiven himself of his mistakes. On the contrary, these years pass and Leontes only becomes more self-loathing and regretful. The memory of his sins terrorize Leontes as he mopes in a fit of depression. In this case, time has only destroyed Leontes's spirit. Shakespeare incorporates Leontes's feelings about what happened to characterize Leontes as a dynamic character, capable of goodness.

Retribution

Thou didst speak but well
When most the truth; which I receive much better
Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee, bring me
To the dead bodies of my queen and son:
One grave shall be for both: upon them shall
The causes of their death appear, unto
Our shame perpetual. Once a day I'll visit
The chapel where they lie, and tears shed there
Shall be my recreation: so long as nature
Will bear up with this exercise, so long
I daily vow to use it. Come and lead me
Unto these sorrows. (3.2.357)

Leontes, at the knowledge that he has been wrong all along about Hermione and Polixenes and feeling responsible for the death of Hermione and Mamillius, swears to live the remainder of his life in a strict retribution to punish himself for the wrongs that he has committed. Leontes is now showing a side of his character that the audience would not expect, as he turns from irrational, jealous, and vengeful, to remorseful and self-hating.

Reconciliation

Sir, spare your threats:
The bug which you would fright me with I seek.
To me can life be no commodity:
The crown and comfort of my life, your favour,

I do give lost; for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went. My second joy
And first-fruits of my body, from his presence
I am barr'd, like one infectious.

Hermione, when sentenced to death unfairly by Leontes, claims that as death is an inconvenience, she will be able to handle it because it will let her escape from the evilness of the palace. As she reconciles with the death penalty. This shows Hermiones strong character and emphasizes the unfairness of Leontes.

Illusion v. Reality

Her natural posture!
Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed
Thou art Hermione; or rather, thou art she
In thy not chiding, for she was as tender
As infancy and grace. But yet, Paulina,
Hermione was not so much wrinkled, nothing
So aged as this seems. (5.3.57)

This scene gives a good twist to appearance vs. reality. As Hermione stands as a statue, Leontes ponders why Hermione has aged. He says that there is a sort of air the statue seems to breath, and he comments on how lively it looks, when in reality (at least what the audience understands as reality at this point) is that she is just a statue. Then the tables are turned when the audience is convinced that she is a statue and then magically she springs to life, fooling the audience as well as Leontes. This play would lack its romantic features if Shakespeare did not implement his theme of illusion verses reality

Womans Roles

A callat
Of boundless tongue, who late hath beat her husband
And now baits me! (2.3.13)

The expectation of women by Leontes is that they should be obedient, which was what they were expected to do at the time period, but morally Shakespeare makes women out to be more pure than men, as Hermione is victimized by Leontes, Perdita is punished unjustly by Polixenes, and Paulina displays such courage to stand up to the king for his own good as well as Hermiones and Justice's in general.

Leontes getting Jealous so fast

Leontes: At my request he would not.
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spokest
To better purpose

Hermione: Never?

Leontes: Never but once,

King Leontes tells Hermione that her convincing of Polixenes to stay was carried out in such a flirtatious tone that reminded him of how she spoke to Leontes himself as they were falling in love. Immediately Leontes is having fits of jealousy. This is important because his jealousy is what underlines the dark side of his character.

GRADEMARK REPORT

FINAL GRADE
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GENERAL COMMENTS

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