

The Winter's Tale

4.1

Enter Time, the Chorus

TIME

I that please some, try all; both joy and terror
Of good and bad; that makes and unfolds error,
Now take upon me in the name of Time
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime
To me or my swift passage that I slide 5
O'er sixteen years and leave the growth untried
Of that wide gap, since it is in my power
To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour
To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass
The same I am ere ancient'st order was 10
Or what is now received. I witness to
The times that brought them in; so shall I do
To th' freshest things now reigning, and make stale
The glistening of this present as my tale
Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing, 15
I turn my glass, and give my scene such growing
As you had slept between. Leontes leaving
Th' effects of his fond jealousies, so grieving
That he shuts up himself, imagine me,
Gentle spectators, that I now may be 20
In fair Bohemia, and remember well
I mentioneÁd a son o'th' King's, which Florizel
I now name to you; and with speed so pace
To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace
Equal with wond'ring. What of her ensues 25
I list not prophesy, but let Time's news
Be known when 'tis brought forth. A shepherd's
daughter
And what to her adheres, which follows after,
Is th' argument of Time. Of this allow,
If ever you have spent time worse ere now. 30
If never, yet that Time himself doth say
He wishes earnestly you never may.

Exit