

William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale

Character: Hermione

Genre: Comedy

Tone: Serious

Style: Verse

Act/Scene: III ii

Approx. Run Time: 1.10

Scene Setting: Hermione declares her innocence to her husband, the King, who has accused her of infidelity and treason without any proof.

Since what I am to say must be but that Which contradicts my accusation and The testimony on my part
no other But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me To say 'not guilty:' mine integrity Being
counted falsehood, shall, as I express it, Be so received. But thus, if powers divine Behold our human
actions, as they do, I doubt not then but innocence shall make False accusation blush and tyranny
Tremble at patience. You, my lord, best know, Who least will seem to do so, my past life Hath been as
continent, as chaste, as true, As I am now unhappy; which is more Than history can pattern, though
devised And play'd to take spectators. For behold me A fellow of the royal bed, which owe A moiety of
the throne, a great king's daughter, The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing To prate and talk for
life and honour 'fore Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it As I weigh grief, which I would
spare: for honour, 'Tis a derivative from me to mine, And only that I stand for. I appeal To your own
conscience, sir, before Polixenes Came to your court, how I was in your grace, How merited to be so;
since he came, With what encounter so uncurrent I Have strain'd, to appear thus: if one jot beyond The
bound of honour, or in act or will That way inclining, harden'd be the hearts Of all that hear me, and my
near'st of kin Cry fie upon my grave!