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"The Wildest Stock": Service, Monarchical Grafting, and Environmental Engagement in The Winter's Tale

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“THE WILDEST STOCK”: SERVITUDE, MONARCHICAL GRAFTING, AND
ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN *THE WINTER’S TALE*

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate School of
Clemson University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
English

by
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Accepted by:
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ABSTRACT

William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* opens by expressing the friendship of King Leontes of Sicilia and King Polixenes of Bohemia in horticultural terms and explaining how the friendship "branch[es]" with the aid of servants when the monarchs cannot meet in person (1.1.24). The tyrannical Leontes conveys the depth of his relationship to his servant Camillo by discussing the trust that establishes that relationship as a physical connection. He calls Camillo "a servant grafted in my serious trust" (1.2.247). Using lines like these, the play asks us to read its discussion of service in terms of early modern horticultural practice. However, existing criticism lacks an intersection between horticultural and service studies. This project aims to deliver the kind of reading the play asks us to perform. Servants direct monarchs' courses; monarchs read as slips grafted to servants' rootstocks. Tyranny occurs as a natural product of Leontes' attempt to reclaim the agency he has delegated to those around him – severing his grafts to family, friends, and servants – and threatening the livelihood of those who depend on his recognition of their gentility, as the Winter threatens certain flora. John Scholl provides an insightful discussion of the play's emphasis on streaked gillyvors and explains how gardeners perpetuate gillyvor streaks. Building from his work, I demonstrate how Hermione and Perdita read as streaked gillyvors, preserved through Leontes' tyrannical season and restored by servants. As I will show, these streaks manifest as the royals' gentility. This project reveals how *The Winter's Tale*'s servants maintain their monarchs' gentility.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, John and Karen Hixon, as a small token of my appreciation for their ongoing support and encouragement. I would like to thank them as well as Bobbie Broach, Adam Hixon, and Karleigh Hixon for inspiring my persistence in my graduate studies, for providing shoulders to cry on, and for countless pep talks.

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“THE WILDEST STOCK”: SERVITUDE, MONARCHICAL GRAFTING, AND ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT IN *THE WINTER’S TALE*

“It is very true that one may set a tree which that beare divers sorts of fruit at once, if he be grafted with divers kind of graffes.”

-- Leonard Mascall, 1572¹

INTRODUCTION

William Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale* creates an environment in which its characters inhabit the roles of “the gentler scion” and “wildest stock” (4.4.93). They serve as garden-variety actors cultivated in their social climate; the system that would place Leontes and Polixenes as monarchs ruling over Sicilia and Bohemia brings them and their servants together so that they may fulfill their roles in service to their states. “Service” means much more to Shakespeare’s characters than “useful or complimentary,” as the *Oxford English Dictionary* describes the term; it suggests not only a condition of employment but also a fruit-bearing tree.² *The Winter’s Tale*’s servants act as this tree for their masters so that masters endure as the fruit of servants’ efforts. The play’s master-servant relations demonstrate an interdependence much like that of plants sutured together to share traits. Though the play resolves when Hermione and Perdita – whom, as I will demonstrate, we can read as streaked gillyvors amongst the other flora – return as

¹ From *A Booke of the Arte and Maner How to Plant and Graffe All Sortes of Trees*, 21.

² This tree is known as the “*Pyrus domestica*” (OED).

nobles to rule over Sicilia, servants Camillo and Paulina engineer their preservation and return.³ Servants enable their monarchs to remain gentle.

Leontes tells Camillo that he is “a servant grafted in my serious trust” (1.2.345-346) and, in doing so, introduces the metaphor in which *The Winter’s Tale’s* masters and servants depend upon each other like the components of grafted plants.⁴ Although, as I will show, Leontes inverts the order of the relationship with this description, he establishes this relationship as something quantifiable and physical: trust becomes a physical connection between characters, one that can be severed. Leontes’ and Camillo’s actions throughout the play demonstrate that Leontes has grafted to Camillo as a scion

³ *The Winter’s Tale* is neither the first nor the last of Shakespeare’s dramas to use horticulture to describe human relationships. In *II Henry VI*, the Earl of Warwick describes Gloucester’s sons as “fair slips” from his “stock” (2.2.1014): children manifest as growths from their parents’ stems. In *All’s Well That Ends Well*, the Countess describes her adoption of Helena as “a native slip to [herself] from foreign seeds” (1.3.141). Again, Shakespeare explains human relationships in terms of horticulture, but this time he recognizes how non-biological relationships can carry the same weight as the physical relationships through which he describes them. Their connection is so strong that, for the Countess, it is like Helena has grown from herself. (See Erin Ellerbeck’s “Adoption and the Language of Horticulture in *All’s Well That Ends Well*.”) *Henry V’s* Lewis the Dauphin provides an overt discussion of human beings as scions and stock that act both as elements *grafted* to others and as *grafters* forging these relationships. “Shall a few sprays of us,” he asks, “Our scions, put in wild and savage stock, / . . . / . . . overlook their grafters?” (3.5.1395, 1397-1399). He speaks of their children as slips they may graft to wild stock – invaders – and of himself and his peers as grafters. As parents, they must remove their slips – their children – from their own roots; they must act as gardeners upon themselves. Finally, Henry IV establishes non-familial relations as grafts, speaking to his son as one who has “grafted to” such “rude society” as Falstaff (*I Henry IV* 3.2.1839, 1838). He insinuates that his son has become part of “rude society,” complete with its “low desires” (3.2.1835). Henry V reflects the characteristics of the company he keeps, much as the monarchs in *The Winter’s Tale* reflect the achievements of their servants.

⁴ Grafting is a popular early modern horticultural device: attaching a secondary plant to a primary so that the secondary benefits from the stronger roots of the primary and the primary displays (in part) the appearance of the secondary. As Leonard Mascall writes in *A Booke of the Arte and Maner How to Plant and Graffe All Sortes of Trees*, the horticulturalist cuts into the stem of the rootstock and places a slip, or an offshoot of the secondary plant, into the slit, making sure the slip fits in snugly. Below ground, the rootstock extends its influence independent of the slip’s presence; still, its roots feed and support the slip, serve its needs. Both grafts imposed between different types of plants and grafts naturally occurring between plants of the same kind reflect the interdependence of their components: the need to connect to others for strength, companionship, convenience, etc. If the slip rejects the graft, as a monarch might refuse to acknowledge this interdependence, the harm is to the “gentler scion,” not the “wildest stock” (4.4.93). Although there is some contention surrounding early modern understanding of grafted reproduction (there is evidence that early modern gardeners believed grafts reproduced hybrids), later early modern manuals attest that any fruit budding from the scion mimics the scion and not the base stock.

grafts to a rootstock. Similarly, Paulina protects and sustains Hermione in her garden when Leontes threatens her. Leontes, Polixenes, Hermione, and even Perdita rely on Camillo and Paulina to support and restore them as the play progresses. The royals' livelihoods (as well as Hermione's and Perdita's lives) depend on servants' responses to masters' orders. Thus, the play warrants a reading that combines horticultural and service studies, which existing criticism has yet to examine.

Horticultural studies of *The Winter's Tale* tend to produce feminist readings of the play or focus on the art/nature debate, relegating service to the background. Jennifer Munroe and Amy Tigner apply ecocritical methodology to their studies of gender roles in *The Winter's Tale*. By focusing on Perdita's assessment of gillyvors, Munroe argues for the superiority of housewifery to husbandry. Perdita, she argues, is a much stronger gardener than Leontes, so that the play challenges men's superiority to women. Tigner examines gardens as individual bodies (for Hermione and Perdita) and as representative of the state. She demonstrates that Leontes' suspicions of adultery grow when Hermione speaks of walking with Polixenes in the garden, indicating that the garden is her body. Because she is queen, an act upon her body is an act upon Sicilia. Richard Hillman, on the other hand, examines "the gillyvors exchange" between Perdita and Polixenes, arguing that Polixenes' advocacy of art indicates a fear of mortality while Perdita's objections show support for natural cycles of life and death. Finally, John Scholl writes specifically on the making of streaked gillyvors, arguing that Perdita recognizes them not as grafted hybrids but as slips preserved through their off seasons and planted anew. These readings address collapsing boundaries between man and Nature and provide a

foundation for my investigation of how these same boundaries speak to the boundaries between master and servant.

Similarly, service studies on *The Winter's Tale* tend to read relationships between masters and servants closely without considering how the play's emphasis on horticulture speaks to these relationships. Paul Stegner traces servants' roles as priests in the play, hearing confessions and offering penance to help absolve their rulers, marking rulers' spiritual dependence on their servants. He presents Paulina's bold tactics as a means of overcoming Leontes' reluctance to take advice from a woman and argues that Paulina is influential enough to change Leontes after Hermione's apparent death. Richard Strier traces evolving conceptions of the morality of servants' disobedience and resistance to their masters, which Shakespeare would likely have encountered, and follows these ideas temporally through Shakespearean drama. Strier and David Schalkwyk propose that service often takes the form of noncompliance. I, too, hold that Shakespeare's servants sometimes best serve by choosing not to follow their masters' orders. While each of these readings discusses servants' strong influence on their masters, none connects this influence to the play's horticultural framework.

The Winter's Tale's manual-like discussion of grafting calls our attention to the diverse audiences that the play and manuals share. In *Green Desire*, Rebecca Bushnell surveys several early modern horticultural manuals and determines that their readership ranges from royalty to gardeners working as servants. She details how John Parkinson's 1629 publication of *Paradisi in Sole* is dedicated to the French Queen Henrietta Maria while Gervase Markham's 1613 *The English Husbandman* addresses husbandmen by

profession, regardless of social rank. *The Winter's Tale*'s discussion of grafting reads much like William Lawson's⁵: "the reforming of the fruit of one tree with the fruit of another, by an artificiall transplacing or transposing of a twigge, bud or leafe [*sic*]..." (60). The play talks of "wildest stock," "gentler scion," and of ennobling the former with the latter, as Lawson talks of "reforming" one with the other. This parallel suggests that the play speaks to the diverse audience of early modern garden manual readers. *The Winter's Tale* dates circa 1610, first performed in 1611 both in and out of court,⁶ bringing together diverse classes in its audience much as its contemporary horticultural manuals do. The play's discussion of service in terms of horticulture demonstrates that master and servant approach each other on more equal footing in the garden; they "occup[y] the same garden space" (Bushnell 22).

In order to demonstrate my claims about master-servant relations as grafts, I have divided my argument into three sections. The first discusses how Leontes and Polixenes graft to Camillo. I will begin this section by showing how the play invites us to read characters in terms of horticultural metaphor and follow this discussion with how Leontes' "grafted" trust in Camillo as his confessor allows Camillo to impede Leontes' actions, as roots hold a grafted slip in place. I will examine the imperatives Camillo gives Leontes in order to show how Camillo establishes himself as servant to Leontes and Camillo at once, providing the "branches" he predicts between them. I will then demonstrate, through the play's discussion of forming gentles, how Polixenes grafts to

⁵ From *A New Orchard and Garden*, dedicated to "Sir Henry Belloses, Knight and Baronet," and published alongside his *The Country Housewives Garden*.

⁶ Rivlin discusses the diversity of the play's audience in *The Aesthetics of Service in Early Modern England*.

Camillo as his son. I will show how Polixenes' advocacy of grafting reflects his relationship with Camillo and how he, like Leontes, delegates agency to his servant. In the next section, I will discuss how Paulina, too, serves Leontes in an ecclesiastic capacity and how she uses this influence to replace "the root of his opinion" by directing his perpetual penitence (2.3.89). By perpetuating this penitence, she preserves Hermione's role as Queen of Sicilia so that Hermione manifests as a streaked gillyvor, which the play acknowledges as the most valuable of early modern flora. Gillyvor streaks disappear with Winter's arrival unless they are transplanted in another location until their season resumes. By sheltering Hermione from Leontes' tyranny, Paulina preserves her royal status. Finally, I will demonstrate how Perdita also functions as a gillyvor slip. I will end with a discussion of how Perdita's restoration to Sicilia, which Camillo enacts, turns the play from tragedy to comedy in demonstrating that Leontes' tyrannical Winter, the product of an attempt to assert his independence, has subsided to allow the gillyvors to survive in Sicilia.

CAMILLO AS “THE WILDEST STOCK”

At the play’s opening, Camillo explains, “there rooted betwixt” Leontes and Polixenes “such an affection which cannot choose but branch now” (1.1.23-24). And branch it does – Camillo simultaneously implies the growth of the friendship and foreshadows its weakening. As the branches form, the two grow in separate directions, relying on “encounters, [that] though not personal, have been royally attorneyed,” grafting bits of themselves to their servants in relying on these “attorneys” to continue their friendship (1.1.26-27). As Camillo exchanges pleasantries with Archidamus of Bohemia to credit the hospitality of the state each monarch represents, he establishes himself as one of these attorneys who maintain this branching friendship. When the friendship ultimately breaks, the root between the two severs, and both must graft onto another. Camillo moves from Leontes’ service to Polixenes’, thus maintaining, as Peter Erickson asserts, a link between the two.⁷

Beyond his dependence on Camillo as one of these attorneys connecting the two monarchs, Leontes consents to depend on Camillo as his confessor. He tells Camillo he has trusted him

With all the nearest things to my heart, as well
My chamber councils, wherein, priest-like, thou
Hast cleans’d my bosom; I from thee departed
Thy penitent reform’d. (1.2.236-239)

⁷ Erickson writes that Camillo, “as the connecting link between Leontes and Polixenes, ... preserves the possibility of their friendship” (823).

Leontes, as a penitent, is “under the direction of a confessor,” Camillo (*OED*). The absolution Camillo gives is a sacrament that restores Leontes to that from which his unclean bosom separates him. Though the confessor has the authority to absolve (or not absolve) the penitent, the penitent chooses whether and when to confess. Leontes willfully relies on Camillo to absolve him. Camillo has served as the conveyance for the nourishment of Leontes’ soul as roots serve to pull nutrients from the earth to feed that which has been grafted to them.

While Camillo supports Leontes as a confessor, he also has the power to root Leontes in place, to prevent Leontes from fulfilling his plans. In his rage over the relationship he imagines between Hermione and Polixenes, Leontes rejects the reliance he has just admitted. Even while describing Camillo’s power to “restrain... / From course requir’d,” he names Camillo to be “a servant grafted in my serious trust” (1.2.246-247). Leontes’ confusion here reflects his desire to direct Camillo’s course, so that Camillo becomes the scion and Leontes the stock. Leontes’ words hold some validity in suggesting Camillo’s benefit from his trust: that which allows him to advise the king and carry the court’s authority. And trust does serve as the graft’s medium. Leontes chooses to depend on Camillo – to create the graft – because experience has taught him that Camillo is faithful. But Camillo has the power to “restrain” Leontes’ course (as when his refusal to kill Polixenes interferes with Leontes’ plans). The privilege shared between master and servant mirrors that which Miranda Wilson identifies with reproductive ties (which she identifies as grafts): the monarch and servant share unfavorable experiences

as well as favorable. Camillo restrains Leontes' course by warning Polixenes, but he does so when confronted by Leontes' tyrannical tendencies.

While Leontes vacillates between Camillo's power to restrain him and Camillo's reliance upon him, he demonstrates how Camillo restrains his course by agreeing to Camillo's assertions. Regarding Hermione's alleged adultery, Leontes orders Camillo, "Say it be, 'tis true" (1.2.298). While Carol Thomas Neely cites Camillo's monosyllabic "No, no, my lord" as a sign of defeat, a capitulation to Leontes' tyranny, Camillo is at no loss for words before or after this instance (1.2.299). Rather, his reply reads as a direct refutation of Hermione's defamation. When Camillo doubts Leontes' claim regarding Hermione's dishonesty, Leontes ceases his criticism of Camillo and instead appeals to Camillo by asking him whether he (Leontes) might make such a mistake as to falsely accuse his queen. He suggests Camillo poison Polixenes, and – seeing that asserting Hermione's innocence has no effect on Leontes – Camillo agrees on the condition that Leontes not punish Hermione. Leontes claims this condition as his own, following in the path Camillo has set when he remarks, "Thou dost advise me / Even so as I mine own course have set down" (1.2.339-340). *After* Camillo asserts, "If from me [Polixenes] have wholesome beverage, / Account me not your servant," Leontes offers the tyrannical ultimatum, "Do't, and thou hast the one-half of my heart; / Do't not, thou splitt'st thine own" (1.2.345-346, 347-348). Leontes speaks to remind his servant that the power is his own and that he may use it as he sees fit. But by vocalizing his course of action, he only confirms what Camillo has already stated – follows the course Camillo directs.

Camillo's commands for Leontes, however, allow Camillo to continue to serve Leontes even as he refuses to act according to Leontes' expressed wishes. "Account me not your servant," Camillo issues as an imperative to Leontes, ostensibly to assure Leontes that he will poison Polixenes. But this concise statement serves multiple functions. If we take the first half of this statement – "If from me he have wholesome beverage" – to mean "if I do not poison him," then Camillo tells Leontes that he (Leontes) can no longer use his (Camillo's) services. If we read the statement literally, it becomes more complex: Polixenes receives neither poison nor "wholesome beverage" from Camillo. In sparing Polixenes, Camillo performs his first act of service to Polixenes. Because the delivery of a "wholesome beverage" is Camillo's condition for leaving Leontes' service, his phrasing allows him to remain in Leontes' service even as he enters Polixenes'. Camillo simultaneously convinces Leontes that he will poison Polixenes and establishes a means for remaining servant to both.

Polixenes enters his graft with Camillo by making himself part of Camillo's family. As Erin Ellerbeck tells us, plants only successfully graft to generally similar plants. Citrus plants will graft to other citrus plants, for example, but not to tulips ("A Bettering of Nature"). Demonstrating this principle, Leonard Mascall instructs horticulturalists to graft mulberry slips to pear trees or the like in order to ripen them early. The play confirms that gentility passes through a family's success – expansion of a gentle family bears more gentles. For the Shepherd and Clown, a verbal declaration suffices to turn them gentle: "I was a gentleman born before my father," says the Clown, "for the king's son took me by the hand and called me brother; and then the two kings

called my father brother” (5.2.135-138). Florizel, Polixenes, and Leontes offer the Shepherd and Clown gentility by calling them brothers. By describing them as relatives, the royals agree that they are similar enough to be family. When the royals adopt these men as family, they read as slips grafted to the family tree.

Although the play’s monarchs and courtiers are certainly of a different social status, the courtiers, as advisors to their monarchs, rank above the general population and are not so different from their masters as citrus plants are from tulips. Grafts between these ranks are sustainable. When Polixenes attempts to assert his royal authority over Camillo by ordering Camillo to reveal Leontes’ affliction, Camillo refuses him. He instead places himself on equal footing with the king:

Sir, I will tell you,
Since I am charged in honor and by him
That I think honorable. (1.2.405-407)

He continues to mimic Polixenes’ own appeal to success as a means of authority, aiming to convince Polixenes of his veracity by invoking “the honor of [Camillo’s] parents” (1.2.441). Camillo replaces Polixenes’ appeal to gentility with one to honor, demonstrating how the two are alike.

This likeness allows Polixenes to graft to Camillo as his adopted son. He tells Camillo, “I will respect thee as a father if / Thou bear’st my life off” (1.2.460-461). With this declaration, he modifies the early modern concept of the family tree. As Ellerbeck, Wilson, and Feerick all demonstrate, children manifest in early modern horticultural metaphor as buds produced from their parents. Polixenes verbally adopts Camillo as a

father, requesting that Camillo “bear’st” his life, carry him safely from Sicilia but also sustain him. This adoption creates a graft that attaches Polixenes to Camillo in lieu of Camillo producing offspring.

Though the two share no bloodline, Polixenes’ adoption of Camillo allows us to think of the way Camillo provides for Polixenes much as we think of the way parents care for their children in the traditional reading of the metaphor.⁸ The appeal to Camillo to nourish him, to “bear’st” his life, serves for Polixenes as a willful delegation of his agency. By his own request, he becomes a child dependent upon a parent. As Wilson notes, “Grafting elides notions of . . . strict ideas of kinship, introducing uncertainty into Renaissance distinctions between high and low, animal and plant, human and nonhuman” (107). In naming Camillo his father, Polixenes makes Camillo his rootstock and confuses his (Polixenes’) notions of nobility. In all his gentility, Polixenes makes himself into Camillo’s successor and shows that it is Camillo’s “success” that keeps him (and his son, as we will see) “gentle.”⁹

Grafted to Camillo, Polixenes becomes benefactor of Camillo’s services.

Polixenes introduces the metaphor that links gentility to grafting when he tells Perdita,

⁸ Examining the Countess’ adoption of Helena in *All’s Well That Ends Well*, Erin Ellerbeck also analogizes adoptive relationships to horticultural grafts: “Shakespeare’s use of the grafting metaphor in *All’s Well* suggests, within the context of the play, that legitimate families might be synthetically produced, or based on nonbiological ties” (“Adoption and the Language of Horticulture in *All’s Well That Ends Well*” 306). But Polixenes’ adoption of Camillo as a father places Polixenes in the unique position of choosing his own family tree onto which to graft.

⁹ See Polixenes’ discussion of gentility and success:

As you are certainly a gentleman, thereto
Clerk-like experienced, which no less adorns
Our gentry than our parents’ noble names,
In whose success we are gentle,—I beseech you. (1.2.390-393)

“We . . . make conceive a bark of baser kind / By bud of nobler race,” (4.4.92, 94-95).¹⁰

Polixenes becomes the child that grows as a bud (“of nobler race”) on a family tree when he names himself Camillo’s son. He is bud to Camillo, and their joining is not reproductive but productive. The graft itself is a new conception. Wilson writes, “The best graft is the one that most fully gives itself up to the vigor of its host plant” (107). By Polixenes’ admission, he has given himself up to the vigor of Camillo’s services. When they have joined together, Polixenes tells Camillo, “The need I have of thee thine own goodness hath made. Better not to have had thee than thus to want thee. Thou, having made me business which none without thee can sufficiently manage, must stay to execute them thyself or take away with thee the very services thou hast done” (4.2.11-17).

Elizabeth Rivlin points out, “Twice Polixenes says that Camillo has ‘made’ things: first, in fostering Polixenes’ dependence on him, and second, in making ‘businesses’ for Polixenes that cannot continue in Camillo’s absence. Rather than merely executing the prince’s will, Camillo has gained the prerogative to fashion it as well” (147). This reciprocal relationship – that which gives Camillo the “prerogative to fashion” Polixenes’ business and gives Polixenes the benefit of this business – is born of their adoptive graft.

¹⁰ Critics tend to read Polixenes’ praise for grafting as praise for marriage between the classes, so that the lower class bloodline might be ennobled by mixing with and reproducing nobler blood. But Polixenes quickly follows his advocacy of grafting with a denunciation of Prince Florizel’s relationship with the shepherdess Perdita. He tells his son, upon learning of his engagement,

Thou art too base
To be acknowledged. Thou a shepherd’s heir
That thus affects a sheephook! (4.4.417-419)

Because Florizel wishes to marry a shepherdess, he will become as a shepherd “too base to be acknowledged.” Rather than ennoble her blood, his blood cheapens from mingling with hers. He finds her suitable, remarking on her decorum as becoming of a noble, with exception to her social status. He says of her, “Nothing she does or seems / But smacks of something greater than herself” (4.4.157-158). It is that “greater than herself” that causes his discontent; it does not matter for him how well she presents herself if “herself” is not of noble lineage. His advocacy of grafting, then, does not act as advocacy of marriage between classes.

The benefits he finds in his relationship to Camillo offer reason why Polixenes might advocate or justify this sort of relationship to Perdita. When Perdita likens artificially produced flowers to “bastards,” he defends his name against that title,¹¹ proclaiming the legitimacy of grafted relationships (4.4.83). By his own admission, severing his graft to Camillo would leave Polixenes weaker than if he had remained alone. Though he has managed without Camillo in the past, he has come to rely on Camillo and worries Camillo’s departure would leave him in the need that Camillo’s “goodness hath made.”

In a grafted plant, the base stock nourishes the scion, but the graft deprives the scion of its own roots; similarly, monarchs have the benefit of their servants’ actions, but trusting servants’ performance limits monarchs’ own actions. Wilson writes, “When writers imagine humanity as both grafter and grafted, they also allow new, sometimes disturbing, images of the hybrid human” (106). Wilson’s description fits Polixenes’ case. He adopts Camillo as a father on which to graft himself. Because Polixenes sets the conditions of the adoption – “if thou bear’st my life off” – he takes the role of grafter. But since he depends on Camillo’s services even to get out of Sicilia safely, he also relinquishes his independence.

Evidence of the agency that, in part, led Aristotle to name man separate from flora¹² begins to disappear when Polixenes attaches himself to Camillo. Polixenes

¹¹ “Do not call them bastards,” he tells her (4.4.99).

¹² See Erica Fudge, “Calling Creatures by Their True Names: Bacon, the New Science and the Beast in Man,” for a discussion of Francis Bacon’s belief in rationality as that which separates man from animals. Bacon, Shakespeare’s contemporary, argues for man’s dominion over animals and plants but also notes that “Man has something of the brute; the brute has something of the vegetable; the vegetable has something of the inanimate body; and so all things are truly bifurmed and made up of a higher species and a lower” (qtd.

ultimately goes where Camillo directs. For example, the play offers no reason why Polixenes cannot escape Sicilia on his own following Leontes' accusation, once Camillo has warned him. But Polixenes does not show that fleeing even occurs to him. Instead, he continues to ask questions of Camillo:

POL. How should this grow?

CAM. I know not. But I am sure 'tis safer to

Avoid what's grown than question how 'tis born. (1.2.430-432)¹³

Polixenes makes no decision, even to flee Sicilia to perpetuate his own safety, without Camillo's instruction. Polixenes is more interested in discussing the threat than addressing it. Camillo declares, "For myself, I'll put / My fortunes to your service" (1.2.438-439). Camillo understands that his relationship with Leontes has ceased to benefit him, so he decides he will serve Polixenes instead. His decision does not read as an offer but as a statement of fact. "I *will* put myself in your service," Camillo confidently announces in the above lines. He then commands Polixenes to "be not uncertain," to stop asking questions and to flee (1.2.440). Leaning on Camillo's authority, Polixenes finally takes action: he adopts Camillo as a father and leaves for Bohemia with him. He depends upon Camillo to save him from Leontes' wrath, and Camillo benefits from the situation because his service to Polixenes earns him a new home in Bohemia, which shelters him from his punishment for refusing to poison Polixenes.

in Fudge 97). Bacon's work contextualizes *The Winter's Tale's* contribution to the ongoing conversation about man's place among these other natural constituents.

¹³ Polixenes acknowledges Camillo's foundational role for Leontes in asking how Leontes' jealousy grows. But as Camillo serves as Leontes' rootstock behind the scenes, "command[ing] / the keys of all the posterns" (1.2.462-463), he does not share in producing the tyrannical buds born of Leontes' scion. Leontes' condemnation of Polixenes and Hermione grows further out from the rootstock, placing an ever-growing burden upon the sustaining stock.

Unlike Polixenes, who is willing to let Camillo choose his actions, Leontes expects those around him to conform to his will. Leontes does not doubt Camillo's commitment to his (Leontes') desires. "Grafted *in*" Leontes' "serious trust," Camillo ought to behave as Leontes commands. Rivlin provides insight on Leontes' expectations when she describes master-servant relationships as mimetic: "Leontes first demands of Camillo that he confirm an adulterous relationship between Hermione and Polixenes. Underlying and preceding this demand is the desire that those with whom he is most intimate serve as duplications of him" (145). He wants Camillo, Hermione, and Polixenes to be as extensions of himself – to serve, as it were, as offshoots from his stock. Rivlin explains that Leontes looks back nostalgically to his childhood with Polixenes, when they were alike "as twinned lambs," and looks for Hermione to take up his cause in persuading Polixenes to stay (1.2.68). In grafting Hermione to himself as his wife (to be discussed below) and Polixenes to himself as his friend, Leontes cultivates his fellow humans, whom he might imagine as unpredictable wilderness when they stand alone, conforming them to his purposes and his self.¹⁴

¹⁴ For a discussion of wilderness as the untouched and cultivation as imposition of will, see Leo Marx's "Shakespeare's American Fable."

PAULINA AND THE ART OF PRESERVATION

Because Paulina refuses to conform to Leontes' desires for mimesis, he depends on her fully in the wake of his tyrannical actions. Instead of giving in to his demands, she succeeds in commanding him directly. Camillo manages to trick Leontes and to situate himself surreptitiously between Leontes' service and Polixenes'. But Paulina has the advantage of Leontes' guilt. Leontes approaches Camillo as a willing penitent goes to confession, but with Paulina he adopts instead the role of the priest administering punishment. "I'll ha' the burnt," he tells her when she refuses to follow his orders to take Perdita away from him (2.3.13). Leontes envisions himself, since Camillo's departure, as penitent and confessor, standing independently, not in need of Camillo's or Paulina's absolution. Paulina corrects him, denying his priestly authority: "It is an heretic that makes the fire, / Not she which burns in't" (2.3.14-15). Not only does Leontes lack the authority to denounce Paulina, but he is the one deserving of punishment. Leontes' response does not combat Paulina's assertion or even address Paulina in conversation. He merely commands his other servants to remove her from his presence. Though he refuses to acknowledge the validity of her statement until Hermione's ostensive death, Paulina places herself in the role of his priest, authorized to denounce him as a heretic.

Even as Paulina's response to Leontes' threats establishes her as the superior ecclesiastic authority, she recognizes his situation in horticultural terms. "The root of his opinion," she asserts, "is rotten / As ever oak or stone was sound" (2.3.89-90). By threatening Polixenes' and Camillo's lives, Leontes has driven them to Bohemia, apparently severing his grafts to them and leaving him isolated. In lieu of their support,

he attempts to sustain himself with his “opinion” of Hermione’s infidelity. As a “root,” that which should secure and sustain Leontes, the opinion is “rotten.” It leads only to the deaths of his son and Antigonus and to his estrangement from his wife, his daughter, and Camillo. It forecloses the opportunity for grafting to a new rootstock. While he believes Hermione to be unfaithful, he resists Paulina’s counsel and works to isolate himself from his interpersonal relationships. Once Paulina declares Hermione dead, “the root of [Leontes’] opinion” vanishes. Leontes immediately eschews his accusations and looks to Paulina for guidance. She instructs him, “Betake thee / To nothing but despair” (3.2.207-208). He replies, “Thou canst not speak too much. I have deserved / All tongues to talk their bitt’rest” (3.2.213-214). Not only does he allow her to advise him without contradiction, but he also encourages her to advise him further and submits himself to the punishment she administers. No longer the priest denouncing Paulina as a heretic, Leontes becomes Paulina’s penitent to reform.

More than serving as Leontes’ confessor, Paulina exchanges “the root of his opinion” for penitence. She advises him to regret, to despair, but not to repent: “Do not repent these things, for they are heavier / Than all thy woes can stir” (3.2.206-207). She tells him his sorrow can accomplish nothing – the gods will not forgive him for his wrongdoing.¹⁵ The tone of this advice differs greatly from that of her counsel before Hermione’s ostensive death when she advises him as his “loyal servant” and “physician” to acknowledge Perdita as his own “with words as medicinal as true” (3.2.54, 37). Rather than seek to heal Leontes from his tyrannical acts, she confesses to him the futility of his

¹⁵ See Paul Stegner, “Masculine and Feminine Penitence in *The Winter’s Tale*.”

despair so that he will further despair. Paulina, Paul Stegner asserts, “seeks to graft Leontes’ ‘shame perpetual’ ... onto his identity, to refashion Leontes the tyrant into Leontes ‘the penitent king’” (190). But, as Stegner also points out, Leontes’ dominant function becomes penitence. Paulina does not simply graft shame onto him – she directs and nurtures his penitence.

Further, Paulina maintains Leontes’ ostensive widower status so that Hermione can regain her place as Queen. After sixteen years, Cleomenes and Dion ask Paulina to consider Leontes’ “benefit” and “royalty’s repair,” but she dismisses their concerns by speaking of Hermione’s unmatched virtues (5.1.22, 31).¹⁶ Cleomenes and Dion advise Leontes that he has repented sufficiently. He asserts, “I cannot forget / ... / The wrong I did” but does not trust his judgment of his own penitence (5.1.7-9). He immediately asks Paulina to confirm his assessment: “True?” (5.1.12). She responds, “Too true” (5.1.12). He trusts her and no one else to determine the course of his suffering. Paulina compounds Leontes’ despair so that he agrees not to take a wife until she so instructs him. She secures his promise not to marry until his “first wife’s again in breath” (5.1.83). Since Hermione is hidden in Paulina’s gallery, Paulina prevents Leontes’ marriage and directs him to mourn a death that has not occurred. Her interest is in preserving Hermione’s status as Queen of Sicilia rather than in Leontes’ recovery.

Hermione’s relationship with Leontes and Polixenes works as a graft, as well. “We are yours i’ th’ garden,” Hermione tells Leontes of herself and Polixenes (1.2.178). Literally, she reveals to Leontes that the two of them will be walking in the garden when

¹⁶ See Stegner also for a discussion of the “coercive” influence of Paulina’s behavior (191).

he is ready to join them. But the language also hints that they belong to him, are part of him, in a figurative garden – they have grafted to him. Leontes confirms the extent of their relationships when he confesses the cause of their destruction: “We were dissevered” (5.3.155). Being dissevered, these relationships manifest, intact, as physical connections – ones that he can cut. Wilson explains how early modern literature treats wives as slips grafted onto their husbands to become part of the husbands’ “family trees”: “A wife ... should occupy the position of a shoot, slip, twig, or scion – that section of stem cut off from another plant and inserted into a cut in the stock plant during grafting. This common representation of marriage marks [her] as dependent upon her husband, enfolded and invigorated by him, just as the grafted slip is contained and nurtured by the cleft stock” (104). The same applies to Hermione, whose marriage to Leontes transplants her from her family to Leontes’ – moves her from Russia into Sicilia’s court. Leontes desires a connection to Hermione and to Polixenes, to his wife and to his friend, whom he calls brother.

Though Leontes expects to provide the link between the two of them, it is Hermione who provides the link between Leontes and Polixenes. Leontes asks Hermione to help him convince Polixenes to stay in Sicilia. She does not succeed in speaking as if through Leontes (she advises Leontes to “Tell him...” [1.2.31]) or by suggesting that Leontes extend his forthcoming visit to Bohemia in exchange for Polixenes’ extended stay (1.2.41-43). Only when she refers to the offense Polixenes causes her by refusing does he agree to stay. “You put me off with limber vows,” she protests, “A lady’s ‘verily’ is / As potent as a lord’s” (1.2.48, 51-52). She asserts herself as her own spokeswoman

rather than Leontes', claiming validity for *her* words as well as her husband's. She makes her appeal her own and thus achieves Polixenes' stay herself. . As we have seen with Leontes' assertions of his role in supporting Camillo, he is not keen on admitting to interdependence with others in his life. To his mind, all others should graft onto him, leaving him to direct their course. It is when he senses Camillo's ability to restrain his direction that he tyrannously orders Camillo to kill Polixenes despite Camillo's objections. We see him react similarly in regards to his inability to sway Polixenes.

Leontes severs his relationships as means of asserting his independence. Flustered by his own ineffectiveness at achieving Polixenes' stay, relates Hermione's appeal to Polixenes to her consent to marry him (Leontes). This likeness makes apparent to him a similarity between himself and Polixenes that he wishes to destroy. "To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods," Leontes says in assessing their relationships (1.2.110). "Mingling bloods" in the early modern period refers to a sexual encounter¹⁷ and, of course, to offspring carrying the blood of both parents – hence Leontes' fear that Hermione and Polixenes have mingled their blood in Perdita. Wilson explains that buds produced from adulterous relationships grow from grafted wives to form floral shoots like cuckold's horns for husbands. This possibility is an immediate concern for Leontes, who worries over his growing "shoots" after he ponders Hermione and Polixenes "mingling bloods" (1.2.129). Jean Feerick explains how mingling bloods enter early modern horticultural metaphor: "Sap, the substance understood to pass between stock and scion in the grafting process and therefore the central site of exchange, was analogized to

¹⁷ See John Donne's "The Flea," for example.

blood” (98). Hermione thus enters to strengthen the relationship between Leontes and Polixenes, to create a new graft, undesirable to Leontes largely because of the mingling blood, which would link Leontes and Polixenes not only in trust but also by a physical bond. Wilson adeptly explains that grafting as a metaphor demonstrates the liminality of “boundaries between self and other” (105). Leontes cannot stand how much his self melds with Hermione’s and Polixenes’. Refusing to be convinced by Hermione’s plea of innocence marks his distinction from Polixenes. By accusing her and Polixenes of treason, he severs the ties between himself and each of them (and between them).

Leontes’ tyrannical impulses act as the Winter season threatening the lives of seasonal flora. As Autolycus declares when reporting the arrival of Spring, “The red blood reigns in the winter’s pale” (4.3.4). Passions like Leontes’ jealousy rise in the Winter. To sever a graft as Leontes’ tyranny does, to pull apart the “mingling bloods” and saps, is a violent act that destroys relationships forged for the benefit of both scion and stock. But this violence does not render the act unnatural. Leontes’ frustration at his dependence upon others comes as a natural byproduct of holding the title king yet proving personally impotent. He simply desires to collect the agency he has delegated to those around him. It comes about as a cycle, as does the arrival of Winter. The severance is a reversal of grafting, which Polixenes and Perdita agree is an art that “itself is nature” (4.4.97).

In our horticultural metaphor, Hermione manifests as a streaked gillyvor, which Paulina preserves in her gallery¹⁸ until Spring returns. Leontes' severance of Hermione's graft to him leaves Hermione rootless and facing death (literally, as she awaits the fulfillment of Leontes' sentence). Paulina becomes her roots, feeding and nurturing Hermione as a rootstock does for a grafted slip. Paulina removes Hermione from her environment to preserve her from conditions she may not survive, much like the gardener must do in the Winter to maintain a gillyvor's streaks.

Reading Hermione as a preserved gillyvor requires an exploration of how gillyvors function in the play's garden settings. Perdita has an intriguing view on the art that "shares" in gardening "with great creating nature" (4.4.86-88). She agrees with Polixenes' conclusion that the "art" of grafting "is nature": "So it is," she assents (4.4.97). But she continues to tell Polixenes, "I'll not put / The dibble in earth to set one slip of [streaked gillyvors]" (4.4.99-100). It stands to reason that setting the slips *in earth*, rather than grafting a slip to a stock, is the art to which she objects. In fact, the dibble serves as a tool to create a hole in the earth to plant seeds or slips (*OED*). It does not take part in grafting. Further, John Scholl tells us that grafting does not produce gillyvors. To perpetuate any streaks that naturally occur, one must cut gillyvor slips and preserve them elsewhere until their next season. Streaked gillyvors left in their original location when Winter arrives return in their next season without streaks. Scholl posits that Perdita disdains the "selection and preservation" required to maintain the streaks in gillyvors

¹⁸ Amy Tigner, in "*The Winter's Tale: Gardens and the Marvels of Transformation*" calls attention to the fact the Paulina's gallery, where Hermione stands, is above her garden and that the artist she credits with sculpting the Hermione "statue" has a reputation for gardening. Tigner works throughout her essay to establish the garden as a metaphor for body. Borrowing from Tigner's observations on Hermione's placement, we might see how Hermione, too, has grafted onto Paulina and survives via Paulina's roots.

(Scholl 178).¹⁹ Her conversation with Polixenes, coupled with the play's overall presentation of people as flora, introduces us to the idea that some characters take the role of these gillyvors.

If we follow Perdita's perception of the "art which ... shares / With great creating nature," then Paulina's intervention is an overtly artificial intervention in the natural/cyclical process of Leontes' forging and severing of grafts – of his delegations and reclamations of agency. Rebecca Bushnell reports that Francis Bacon, whose work is contemporary to Shakespeare's, "thought that the color white was often a sign of the [gillyvor's] degeneration, or a lack of culture, since 'it is observed by some that gillyflowers, [...] that are colored, if they be neglected, and neither watered, nor new moulded, nor *transplanted*, will turn white'" (133, emphasis mine). Bushnell demonstrates that early modern horticultural writers often criticized each other for theorizing rather than testing their proposals. While Polixenes demonstrates reading knowledge of horticultural practice, Perdita informs us that she has worked in the garden and so has practical knowledge of which tactics have which effects on her garden. If she agrees that grafting is natural but protests that setting streaked gillyvors is artificial, it is doubtful she thinks the two processes the same. Her concerns about preserving gillyvor streaks lead us to consider how Paulina's intervention preserves Hermione's attributes.

Paulina preserves Hermione's streaks, which are Hermione's gentility. Hermione's feigned death rescues her from execution, and the scheme Paulina helps her to carry out ensures she can regain her place as Sicilia's queen. In the wake of Leontes'

¹⁹ See also F. C. Bradford ("Shakespeare and Bacon as Horticultural Prophets"), who traces the first pieces that allude to sexual reproduction in flora to after *The Winter's Tale* had been performed.

accusations, even a Hermione who escapes Leontes' threats would lose her gentility. In Sicilia, she is Queen because she is wife to the King. In denouncing her as an infidel, Leontes accuses Hermione of treason. Within Sicilia, her survival would leave her a traitor. Outside of Sicilia, she would live without her title. Leontes' moods have become unpredictable, much like the weather. Rather than risk Hermione's safety, Paulina preserves her until the time appointed by the Oracle: Perdita's return. Paulina engineers Leontes' repentance for sixteen years until he cedes even his choice of bride to her: "Give me the office / To choose you a queen," she directs him (5.1.77-78). In allowing her to make this decision, he allows himself to be fully dependent upon her and eradicates the last vestiges of the tyrant who resisted the notion of his dependence on those around him and who commanded his servants to perform acts they were unwilling to perform (such as his command that Camillo kill Polixenes). Simultaneously, Paulina's ability to keep Leontes from remarrying preserves Hermione's status as Queen of Sicilia. In Paulina's success, Hermione remains gentle.

The value other characters place on Hermione's person further suggests her relationship to the streaked gillyvor. Although Leontes leaves his wife a slip upon the ground, unable to provide for herself, he evaluates her as "the sweetest companion that e'er man / Bred his hopes out of" (5.1.11-12). Antigonus measures the honesty of every other woman against Hermione, asserting her honesty so vehemently that it becomes a physical characteristic: "Every dram of woman's flesh is false, / If she be" (2.1.138-139). Much as characters laud Hermione's goodness throughout the play, early modern gardeners prized "streaked gillyvors" as the most valuable flower (4.4.82). Gardeners

were unsure how to grow the multicolored flowers or how to reproduce them. Garden manuals varied in their advice on cultivating and maintaining streaked gillyvors and often admitted that the methods they proposed did not regularly succeed. Some even recommended setting slips of streaked gillyvors and then transplanting them beneath a full moon (Bushnell). Because gillyvors were comparatively rare manifestations and aesthetically pleasing in their diversity, those who traded in them considered them the most valuable flowers of the time. Single-colored flowers were comparatively plain, and flowers colored white alone were the least desirable.

This hierarchy holds true in *The Winter's Tale* when Perdita offers flowers to her sheep-shearing guests according to their perceived ranks. To Polixenes and Camillo, disguised so that their social classes are hidden, Perdita gives “flowers of winter,” which “well ... fit [their] ages” (4.4.79, 78). She also offers them “Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram” (4.4.104), which were believed to have medicinal properties, such as restoring energy or fighting colds; they are “meant to make [Polixenes and Camillo] hot again” (Bushnell 139). She then wishes she had springtime flowers to match Florizel’s age as well as “The crowne imperial” and “flower-de-luce” (4.4.126, 127). Bushnell glosses these choices with Parkinson’s assessment that “the Crowne Imperiall for his stately beautifullness, deserveth the first place in this our Garden of delight, to be here entreated of before all other Lillies” and with a reminder that the flower-de-luce serves as a symbol of royalty (139). Perdita, of course, knows of Florizel’s nobility, as she worries their families will disdain the discrepancy in their ranks. Her desire to offer Florizel the noblest flowers, the care of which Parkinson deems the gardener’s top priority,

demonstrates her respect for the social hierarchy of both man and plant, though she judges social station based on false appearances. Still, she has none of these to offer Florizel to honor his nobility. She claims she cannot offer him “the fairest flowers o’ th’ season [which] are our ... streaked gillyvors” (4.4.81-82). But, I submit, she honors Florizel’s nobility by presenting him with herself, acting as a streaked gillyvor preserved from Leontes’ tyranny in Bohemia.

Perdita functions as a slip cut from Hermione and transplanted in Bohemia. Antigonus transplants her as a “blossom” “upon the earth” in Bohemia when Winter appears in the form of Leontes’ tyranny in Sicilia (3.2.45, 44). For her, as for Hermione, nobility manifests itself in her physical attributes. The preservation of the streaked gillyvor slips removes them from their environments and preserves them so that they can be replanted when their season returns, streaks intact, while new gillyvor blooms lack this “piedness” (4.4.87). Camillo and Polixenes comment on the appearance of Perdita’s nobility. Polixenes concludes, “This is the prettiest lowborn lass that ever / Ran on the greensward” and adds that she is “Too noble for this place” (4.4.156-157, 159). Perdita’s removal to Bohemia keeps her safe from Leontes’ wrath and preserves the beauty in her that he prizes in Hermione, such as Hermione’s “stars” that make “all eyes else dead coals” (5.1.67-68). Perdita’s nobility depends on an end to Leontes’ tyranny, and so planting her in Bohemia preserves it. If she were to remain in Sicilia, Leontes would have failed to recognize her as his heir. So Antigonus takes on the role of gardener, transplanting her in Bohemia, where her streaks survive as the shepherd’s adoption grafts her to a new rootstock.

Hermione's discussion of Perdita's preservation as well as her own demonstrates their reliance on their servants. When she and Perdita reunite in Paulina's gallery, she says,

... Tell me, mine own,
Where hast thou been preserved? where lived? how found
Thy father's court? For thou shalt hear that I,
Knowing by Paulina that the oracle
Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved
Myself to see the issue. (5.3.123-128)

She asks Perdita *where* she has been preserved, acknowledging that Perdita has survived Leontes' tyranny outside of Sicilia. She speaks of Perdita's preservation in the passive voice, indicating that someone else has preserved Perdita. Though she speaks of her preservation as an action she has completed, she confirms that Paulina has made it possible. Just after Hermione's assertion that she has preserved herself, Paulina directs her, "There's time enough for that. / ... / ...Go together" (5.3.128-130). Paulina directs the royal family to leave her gallery, and her authority here demonstrates her active role in Hermione's preservation – her ability to direct Hermione's course. Her command follows Hermione's assertion so closely that it shares the same line. Once Paulina so directs her, Hermione quiets and does not speak again.

Perdita's identification of streaked gillyvors as "nature's bastards" reflects her suspected relationship to Polixenes and her relationship to Bohemia (4.4.83). Between 1398 and 1852, the *Oxford English Dictionary* identifies the use of the term "bastard

slip” to mean “a shoot or sucker springing of its own accord from the root of a tree, or where not wanted.” This definition describes Leontes’ initial perception of Perdita: Hermione’s suspected affair with Polixenes produces her as an unwanted slip. Per Wilson’s analysis of the symbiosis between slip and stock, Hermione’s alleged infidelity tarnishes Leontes – cuckolds him. Desperate to detach himself from what he perceives as proof of Hermione’s infidelity, Perdita’s slip, he banishes Perdita. Though Perdita is unaware of her true paternity or any doubts surrounding it, Polixenes and Camillo can see that she does not fit the role of a shepherd’s daughter – she is illegitimate in this sense. When Antigonus transplants her in Bohemia, he declares,

It [Perdita] should here be laid,
Either for life or death, upon the earth
Of its right father. (3.3.43-45)

He comments on her illegitimacy by naming Polixenes her “right father” – as he places her in Polixenes’ kingdom – noting either Polixenes’ role in her birth or Leontes’ condition as an unfit or not “right” father. Leontes’ suspicions make her into “nature’s bastard,” estranged from her father in his attempt to assert his independence and transplanted/cultivated in a foreign land. She is not a product of Bohemia but of Sicilia, yet Bohemia nurtures and preserves her.

“WELCOM HITHER / AS IS THE SPRING TO TH’ EARTH”:
REPLANTING THE SLIPS

While Perdita’s actions – such as her offer of herself, “the fairest flower... o’ th’ season,” to Florizel – demonstrate support for social hierarchy, Camillo’s service restores her as heir of Sicilia and allows her to regain her claim to gentility. Planning to lure Polixenes to Sicilia so that he (Camillo) might see Leontes again, Camillo advises Florizel to go to Leontes and claim Polixenes has sent him. With Leontes’ blessing, Camillo advises, Polixenes will approve of Florizel’s marriage to Perdita. Florizel, whose name invokes the image of flowers, responds, “I am bound to you. / There is some sap in this” (4.4.563-564). Florizel confirms his graft to Camillo in speaking of their bond as that which contains sap. In her edition of *The Winter’s Tale*, Frances Dolan glosses “sap” as “life, potential.”²⁰ Florizel’s dependence on Camillo, then, is life-sustaining, as is a scion’s graft to its stock.

While Camillo advises Florizel to “embrace [Camillo’s] direction” so that he may achieve his own goal, this direction serves the interests of the other characters as much as it serves his (4.3.522). He covertly engineers Florizel’s, Perdita’s, Polixenes’, and his own movements all at once, just as roots simultaneously support many blossoms. In restoring Perdita (who, as her name suggests, has been lost), his efforts result in the restoration of grafts severed by Leontes’ tyranny. Perdita returns to Sicilia as part of a scheme to marry Prince Florizel, whom she meets because she has been transplanted in Bohemia. It is this transplant that allows her to retain her noble streaks and to return

²⁰ See the 1999 Pelican publication of *The Winter’s Tale*.

home after Leontes' tyranny – and Winter – subsides.²¹ As Florizel notes upon their arrival in Sicilia,

Camillo has betrayed me,
Whose honor and whose honesty till now
Endured all weathers. (5.1.193-5)

Since Camillo's actions reunite Sicilia and Bohemia and encourage Florizel's marriage to Perdita, we can read this betrayal as beneficial rather than injurious. More striking is Florizel's observation that Camillo has *endured all weathers*. Though Leontes' threats would sever his relationships, Camillo endures the Winter. Those grafted to him acquire his endurance.

Hermione's preservation, coupled with Perdita's return, turn the play's tragedy to comedy. Time tells us in the first scene of Act 4 that he "leave[s] the growth untried / of that wide gap" of sixteen years (4.1.6-7). "It is in my power," Time declares, "in one self-born hour / to plant and o'erwhelm custom" (4.1.7, 8-9). Until the time that Paulina has appointed – Perdita's reappearance – Leontes is not to have a wife. Time, which we may regard as a "natural" force, unalterable by man, has ceased growth in Sicilia, where Hermione has been preserved, until Perdita's return in order to mitigate the effects of Leontes' tyranny. Time "o'erwhelm[s]" the "custom" dictating gradual growth by allowing it to occur at once and overwhelms the custom that is the monarch's absolute authority. Time also moves from the Winter season of Perdita's birth to Spring sixteen years later, which the play rings in with Autolycus' songs about daffodils and Leontes'

²¹ The promise of their marriage joins Perdita and Florizel together in name, and as "Lost Flower," they return to their stations as heirs of their united kingdoms.

assurance that Florizel and Perdita are “Welcome hither, / As is the spring to th’ earth” (5.1.151-152). Paulina’s art in preserving Hermione shares with Time’s actions, restoring her when the play finally arrives at Spring.

In staging Polixenes’ debate with Perdita, the play asks us to consider whether Hermione’s and Perdita’s preservation “mends nature” in restoring to Leontes what he has lost in severing their grafts (4.4.96). Polixenes and Perdita agree that grafting is a natural process. Especially in ruling a kingdom, interdependence is a natural requisite. But Perdita objects to the preservation of gillyvors on the grounds that the process is artificial, like painting her face with cosmetics (4.4.101-103). Perhaps it is the fact that the gillyvors’ preservation displaces them from their environments and does not give them the opportunity to withstand conditions, while grafted plants, though reliant on each other, experience seasonal trials. Hermione’s and Perdita’s preservation interrupts the play’s action for sixteen years. Paulina’s restriction on Leontes’ marriage capabilities, and thus his ability to produce a new heir for Sicilia, prevents healing for individuals and the nation. The damage that Winter does to the earth each season is indisputably “natural.” The arrival of Spring should restore this damage, if creating a different landscape than that which has existed previously (bereft of streaked gillyvors).

Still, Perdita is by no means omnipotent, and we need not take her objection as truth. Camillo offers friendship and family to the kings while Paulina manages the eradication of Leontes’ tyranny and preserves Hermione from ruin. As wild stock and gentle scion join together for mutual benefit, so do masters in need of support and direction and servants in need of employment and influence. As the gardener preserves

the streaked gillyvors as the most valuable plants in the garden, so does Paulina preserve Hermione. The art to which Perdita objects is that which sustains her. That she would not live to condemn the art had the art not saved her invites our critique of her assessment.

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