

# ***The Winter's Tale***

By William Shakespeare

Edited by John Dilworth Newman

13 m, 13 w, and bear, Time Chorus & Musicians

Here is the story of good versus evil and the power of time to heal all wounds. Leontes, without warning, suddenly believes his visiting boyhood friend, Polixenes, is in love with Leontes' wife Hermione. Leontes even goes so far as to order his friend poisoned and Hermione thrown in jail where she has a baby girl. It never occurs to Leontes he could be wrong, even though the Oracle of Apollo showed the couple's innocence. Sixteen years later the child, Perdita, who has been raised by a shepherdess, becomes engaged to Prince Florizel, Polixene's son. After a joyful reunion with his lost daughter, Leontes sees a statue which comes alive, revealing itself as Hermione who has waited all this time to return to her husband. In this adaptation, great effort has been made to create more female roles such as Cleomenes, Dion, Archidamas, and the old shepherdess of Bohemia. The minor female roles have been expanded in some places, especially in Act 5, Scene 2 where they participate in the description of the reunion between the kings and the lost princess. In addition, there are "freeze frame" moments, mostly in the first act, which allow the audience to get familiar with the identities of the characters and to view the relationships of the characters through telling tableaux.

## **Cast of Characters:**

**Leontes:** King of Sicilia.  
**Hermione:** Queen of Sicilia.  
**Mamillius:** Young Prince of Sicilia.  
**Perdita:** Lost Princess of Sicilia.  
**Polixenes:** King of Bohemia.  
**Paulina:** Physician to Leontes.  
**Florizell:** Prince of Bohemia.  
**Emilia:** Lady-in-Waiting to Hermione.  
**Camillo:** Counselor to Leontes.  
**First Lady:** Lady of Sicilia.  
**First Lord:** Lord of Sicilia.  
**Antigonus:** A Sicilian Courtier.  
**Second Lady:** Lady of Sicilia.  
**Second Lord:** A Lord of Sicilia.  
**\*Cleomenes:** A messenger of Sicilia.  
**\*Dion:** A messenger of Sicilia.  
**\*Archidamas:** A messenger of Bohemia.  
**Officer:** of Sicilia.  
**Jailer:** of Sicilia.  
**Old Shepherdess:** of Bohemia.  
**Mariner:** Voyaging from Sicilia.  
**Dorcas:** A shepherdess of Bohemia.  
**Clowne:** A shepherd of Bohemia.  
**Mopsa:** A shepherdess of Bohemia.  
**Autolycus:** a Merchant of Bohemia.  
**\*Time Chorus:** one or several players.

\*Written as a male role in Shakespeare's original script.