

She places the baby down near Leontes. He recoils at the sight of the bundle. It's too much for him.

LEONTES

Out!
A mankind witch! Hence with her, out o' door!
A most intelligencing bawd.

PAULINA

Not so.
I am as ignorant in that as you
and no less honest
than you are mad.

LEONTES

Traitors!
Will you not push her out?
(to Antigonus)
Give her the bastard, thou dotard; thou art woman-
tired, unroosted
By the Dame Partlet here.
Take't up, I say; give't to thy crone.

PAULINA

(to Antigonus)

For ever
Unvenerable be thy hands if thou
Tak'st up the princess by that forced baseness
Which he has put upon't.

LEONTES

He dreads his wife.

PAULINA

So I would you did. Then 'twere past all doubt
You'd call your children yours.

LEONTES

A nest of traitors!

ANTIGONUS

I am none, by this good light.

PAULINA

Nor I, nor any
But one that's here and that's himself.

LEONTES

This brat is none of mine.
It is the issue of Polixenes.
Hence with it, and together with the dam
Commit them to the fire.

PAULINA

It is yours.

She bring the baby over to Antigonus and the guards. They can't help be drawn to it.

PAULINA (CONT'D)

Behold, my lords,
Although the print be little, the whole matter
And copy of the father-eye, nose, lip--

LEONTES

Once more, take her hence!
I'll ha' thee burnt.

PAULINA

I care not.
It is an heretic that makes the fire,
Not she which burns in't.

One of the guards subtly nudges Paulina-- she should really go. The king is in a lot of anguish from all this.

PAULINA (CONT'D)

I pray you do not push me, I'll be gone.

Paulina sets the baby down, urging Leontes to acknowledge it.

PAULINA (CONT'D)

(to Leontes)

Look to your babe, my lord, 'tis yours--
Jove send her a better guiding spirit.

She leaves.

The room is silent, except for the soft sound of the baby cooing. The men don't really know what to do now.

Finally, after a moment:

LEONTES

(to Antigonus)

Thou, traitor, has set on thy wife to this.
My child? Take it hence,
And see it instantly consumed with fire.
Within this hour bring me word 'tis done,
And by good testimony, or I'll seize thy life.

GUARD #2

Beseech your highness.
We have always truly served you.
Now on our knees we beg
That you do change this purpose.
We all kneel.