

4.1

How does this verse differ from earlier verse in the play?

According to Time, how much time has passed since the end of Act 3?

In the meantime, what happens to Leontes and Sicilia? To Polixenes and Bohemia? Who are Florizel and Perdita?

4.2

What do Polixenes and Camillo disagree about? Note the use in ll. 6 and 22 of *penitent*—to emphasize what? In this conversation, what other key words do you discover?

What do we learn about Florizel—and about Polixenes's attitude toward him? Why do Polixenes and Camillo don disguises?

4.3

Who is Autolycus? What do we learn about his past? About his present means of support? Why does he sing—and what does the song reveal about him? What is the season of the year, and how do we know? (Please read carefully the footnotes about Autolycus and Mercury on p. 60).

What is Clown's errand? Where does he encounter Autolycus? How do Clown's good nature and generosity assist Autolycus in tricking and robbing him? Why does Autolycus eventually insist that Clown offer him no money?

4.4

Note that here we return to iambic pentameters. Why did we not see them earlier in this act? Why do Florizel and Perdita speak in this verse?

How did Florizel and Perdita meet? What disguise does Florizel now wear? Why?

Identify two or three causes of Perdita's embarrassment. How does Florizel attempt to allay her discomfort? Does that work? What does Florizel plan for Perdita?

What do we learn about Shepherd's station in life in this scene? What does he chide Perdita about? How does WS reveal the relations between Shepherd and Clown and Perdita?

As you remember from *Hamlet*, Shakespeare is fond of using flowers symbolically. What flowers does Perdita offer Polixenes and Camillo—why?

Read closely Polixenes's and Perdita's conversation about Nature and Art: ll. 79-108. What do they mean?

What tone does mention of Proserpina introduce into the scene? What about Florizel's mention of "a corpse"?

What flowers would Perdita give to Florizel, and why? Notice how easily she turns "the corpse" into "the quick" (129-132).

Where do you discover particular praises Florizel offers her? Where do you discover Polixenes's admiration for her (despite himself)? Such a wonderful line given to Camillo: he finds Perdita "the queen of curds and cream" (l. 161).

What goods does Autolycus offer to sell? What do the young shepherdesses want? (Remind me to say something about Robert Armin, the actor who played Autolycus.). Why are the ballads so popular?

Virtually all of WS's plays include songs. What do you think of the songs in this play? Usually music signals harmony—and we certainly hear lots of delightful music and see a spectacular dance in this scene.

But even while the rustics celebrate and enjoy themselves, Polixenes prepares to destroy his son's happiness. He begins by asking what treasure Florizel bought for his beloved (ll. 344-355). Read closely Florizel's answer (ll. 355-364)—what do these lines reveal about the quality of Florizel's love?

See. ll. 369ff—what unpleasant truth does Polixenes learn here? With what does Polixenes threaten Florizel, Perdita, and Shepherd if they proceed as planned? Whom does he seem to echo?

Note that about l. 447, Perdita begins to speak of dream—where else in this play has dream been especially important?

How does Camillo prove yet again disloyally loyal? What outcomes does he expect, promise the young lovers if they obey him? What does Florizel say about faith, honor, love, honesty?

Why do Clown and Shepherd follow, board ship, and sail to Bohemia? What's in the fardel?

At the end of most festive comedies and romances, Shakespeare reintegrates all the characters into the play (not true in problem plays such as *MV*, others). In this play, how specifically does he include Autolycus in the resolution? How is even Autolycus surprised by his own goodness?