Polixenes, King of Bohemia, has been on a nine-month visit to the court of his childhood friend Leontes, King of Sicilia, and his wife, Queen Hermione.

Leontes becomes convinced that his pregnant wife has been having an affair with Polixenes.

He tries to persuade his most trusted courtier, Camillo, to poison Polixenes. Convinced of the queen's innocence, Camillo warns Polixenes of this and they depart for Bohemia together.

**LOST CHILDREN**

While imprisoned by her husband's command, Hermione gives birth to a daughter, whom her dear friend Paulina brings to Leontes with the hope of softening his heart. But Leontes orders Paulina's husband, the courtier Antigonus, to leave Hermione's newly born daughter on a desert shore.

Meanwhile, Leontes tries Hermione for treason; when he declares her guilty, his son Mamillius dies and, shortly afterward, the queen also dies from grief.

Antigonus leaves the baby girl on the coast of Bohemia, naming her Perdita as commanded by Hermione in a dream, but before he can return he is torn to pieces by a bear. An old shepherd and his clownish son find the baby and raise her as a member of their family.

**16 YEARS LATER**

Perdita is being courted by Polixenes' son, Prince Florizel, who has disguised himself as a shepherd named Doricles.

Polixenes and Camillo come in disguise to the countryside to spy on Florizel when they hear rumors that he’s fallen in love with a shepherd’s daughter. When Polixenes denounces his son for courting a low-born shepherdess, Florizel and Perdita flee to Sicilia, with the assistance of Camillo.

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**THE TRUTH COMES OUT**

The shepherd and his son the clown follow the lovers to Sicilia, bringing tokens that reveal Perdita's true identity. King Polixenes also returns to Sicilia pursuing his son. Perdita and her father Leontes are reunited and the lovers receive permission to marry. Later Paulina, the lady most loyal to Hermione, reveals a statue of the dead queen and tells the assembled company to prepare themselves for a great wonder…

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