


Investigate!

The Winter's Tale: Act II

 refers to links on www.crossref-it.info

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❖ **Act II, Scene i:**


- Look back over Act I scene ii and this scene – the two scenes in which Mamillius appears
 - What character has Shakespeare established for him?
 - Why is it important for the audience to remember him with affection, and as an innocent?
- Read again the speeches of Leontes and Hermione, from Leontes' 'You my lords, Look on her' to Hermione's exit
 - How do Shakespeare's language choices reflect Leontes' violence and Hermione's dignity?
- Antigonus is to have a crucial, though unwilling, role in the outcome of events
 - What do you make of his character in this scene?
 - How does Shakespeare present him, and by what means?
 - Consider how an actor might portray him.

❖ **Act II, Scene ii:**

- This scene introduces the audience to Paulina, who is to play a key role in the play.

- What characteristics of Paulina are evident in this scene?
- Why might Shakespeare have waited until Act II to introduce her, when she could presumably have appeared with Hermione in Act I, scene ii?

❖ **Act II, Scene iii:**

- Shakespeare uses juxtaposition to great effect in the structure of the scene
 - Look at the arrival of Paulina and of the news of Cleomenes and Dion
 - How do these change the mood and the course of the action?
 - Begin to make a list of other significant moments of juxtaposition in the structure of the play
 - See also  Texts in detail > *The Winter's Tale* > The structure of the play: Juxtaposition.
- Make a list of key words used by Paulina in this scene (e.g. honour, honest, good, innocent)
 - Compare them with Leontes' violent and abusive vocabulary.