

Power in The Winter's Tale

Leontes

- He was a wise and trusted king, but his jealousy found its way to his ruling and changed him to a tyrant: "the crown and comfort of my life . . . I do give lost, for I do feel it gone, but know not how it went"
- "They should not laugh if I could reach them, not shall she within my power" – Leontes power allows him to succumb to his delusions and enables his destructive emotions. He rules without wisdom here
- Believes his power is being threatened. Although this begins with Pollixenes 'influence' over Hermione, he convinces himself that his position as king is also threatened: "There is a plot against my life, my crown; All's true that is mistrusted" – shows his descent into jealousy and anger
- Power twists his reason and judgement – orders Camillo to kill Pollixenes, despite other characters' comments he is not himself
- Abuses power in a domestic sense too – tries his wife for treason - and son and wife dies because of it
- Power itself does not cause destruction (unlike MacBeth, Leontes passions are familial matters) but Leontes power does allow his irrational views to cause destruction, acting as an outlet. Because he is a king and does not have to listen to anyone, he cannot and will not be stopped: "this most cruel usage of your queen – not able to produce more accusation than your weak-hinged fancy"

Pollixenes

- Similar to Leontes in that they both have a burst of anger – Pollixenes anger over his son and Perdita. It is more that in his actions have more consequences as they're kings
- His anger is not as irrational as Leontes however, as it was a scandal to marry below your station at the time

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