

‘AN ART THAT NATURE MAKES’?: SHAKESPEARE’S AMBIGUOUS GARDEN IN
THE WINTER’S TALE

A Thesis
by
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ABSTRACT

“AN ART THAT NATURE MAKES”?: SHAKESPEARE’S AMBIGUOUS GARDEN IN
THE WINTER’S TALE. (August 2010)

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Throughout *The Winter’s Tale*, Shakespeare incorporates images of the garden to represent the bodies of female characters in the play. During the Early Modern period, the garden had a host of connections for readers and audiences; while writers recognized the garden as a site of amusement and pleasure, they also acknowledged it as reminiscent of a fallen Edenic paradise. Given the manner in which *The Winter’s Tale* links the garden with the female body, the garden trope is even more vexed, and the play thus interrogates the Early Modern garden as a site of morally ambivalent sensual pleasure. Shakespeare exploits a space where procreation is fundamental to its very existence to communicate the play’s fixation on the issues of adultery and illegitimate offspring. Through the analysis of primary texts from the period, including pamphlets, garden manuals, and engravings, it is clear that representations of the garden in *The Winter’s Tale* come to symbolize the major female characters in the play: Hermione, Perdita, and Paulina.

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Chapter 1

An Introduction to Shakespeare's Garden

There planted is a Garden (not by Art) nor any cunning of the Craftsmans skill, But even by *Nature*, who hath playd her part, to be our chiefe and speciall worker still: Whose essence takes she from the makers will, That frameth all things by his mightie power, Both trees and Plants, and every prety flower.

—Dymoke Tailboys, *Caltha Poetarum*, 1599

Nature was ubiquitous in Early Modern writing and always controversial. From Protestant Reformers to Baconian empiricists, the matter of human control over nature was debated constantly among English authors, artists, and philosophers. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed crucial changes, social and theological, in how the English understood their relationship to the natural world. However inconsistently these changes may have occurred across social strata, the debate surrounding this flux of attitudes was located not just in academic settings and elite social circles, but in the outpouring of common garden literature both practical and theoretical. Ideas about the garden were changing and gardening itself was becoming a profession and a business. The steady publication of flower, fruit, and vegetable-growing manuals during the period is symptomatic of the garden's popularity as occupation and recreation, but inside the pages of these handbooks are veins of a larger discourse where nature is contested, scrutinized, and even catechized.

As England was exposed to garden texts and plants from other cultures, there came to be more debate about the garden's moral profit. The gardener's role as laborer was juxtaposed with the garden's ability to pleasure the senses, and the threat of an imbalance

between the two provoked the uncertainty of gardening as a practice. Handbook authors began proclaiming their distrust in gardening even while praising it as a godlike endeavor, an equivocation evident in some of the garden's Christian and medieval associations. Before man's fall from paradise the garden was a cornucopia of flora and fauna, and as illustrated in several literary and cultural texts from the period, the cultivation of gardens often functioned as the gardener's effort to recreate his own piece of pre-lapsarian Eden. However, as Benedict S. Robinson points out in his discussion of the importation and propagation of tulips, there was also a tendency among gardeners to believe that certain horticultural practices could replicate the Fall and in so doing, actually corrupt the garden's "most innocent pleasure[s]" (102). The garden, then, is situated as a site of moral ambiguity in the instructional narratives of ordinary English husbandmen and its dubiety is reflected accordingly in literary texts from the period, Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* being one of the most prolific examples.

Contemporary editors generally classify *The Winter's Tale* as a "romance" or a tragic-comedy because it is, at once, a tragedy and a comedy. Prior to the character Time's interference, the play is tragic indeed, with Leontes left to live in "shame perpetual" after the deaths of Hermione and Mamillius. The second half of the play resembles Shakespeare's earlier comedies by culminating in the reunion of Hermione and Leontes and the promise of marriage for Perdita and Florizel, though as Jean Howard notes in the *Norton Shakespeare*, *The Winter's Tale* is "permeated by sadness, even during its festive conclusion" (2881). The revival of her statue appears to reconcile the adulterous accusations put against Hermione, and yet its metamorphosis into a visibly aged, living woman is wildly perplexing. Her body is symbolic of the Early Modern debate over nature versus art. This debate is ongoing in

Shakespeare's play, and its characters are bound together by a series of spectacular events that, while theatrically alluring, defy the laws of nature and compel spectators to suspend disbelief. As is the case in many sixteenth- and seventeenth- century garden manuals, the play's participation in these discourses interrogates more than art versus nature and questions the construction of the Early Modern garden as a site of morally ambivalent sensual pleasure.

One of the most perturbing aspects of *The Winter's Tale* is Leontes' sudden and seemingly irrational jealousy. Unlike Othello, whose rage is carefully constructed and developed in the first half of the play, as early as the second scene, Leontes erupts in a passion that is at once unmotivated and deeply troubling. There have been several analyses of what, exactly, motivates Leontes' rage in Act 1 of the play, some of which argue for his belief in the Early Modern notion of superfetation (the belief that a woman could conceive a child by another man during the same pregnancy), while others focus on his melancholic disposition.¹ I tend to agree with Amy Tigner, who argues that the play's garden images represent the corporeal bodies of its female characters. Given the manner in which *The Winter's Tale* links the garden with the female body, the garden trope is even more vexed. Shakespeare exploits a space where procreation is fundamental to its very existence to communicate the play's fixation on adulterous sexual intercourse and illegitimate reproduction. Hermione is figured as an Eve-like temptress during the tragic first half of the

¹ For a full discussion of the role of superfetation in Hermione's pregnancy, see Michelle Ephraim, "Hermione's Suspicious Body: Adultery and Superfetation in *The Winter's Tale*." *Performing Maternity in Early Modern England*, eds. Kathryn Moncrief and Kathryn R. McPherson. Ashgate: Burlington, 2007. 45-58. Ephraim argues that the many allusions to twinning and adultery toward the beginning of the play indicate Leontes' belief in superfetation. Because Hermione is pregnant when we first meet her, Ephraim explains that she could have gone undetected in an affair with Polixenes, especially if the child does not resemble the father as Leontes claims after the birth of Perdita. See also, David Houston Wood, "'He Something Seems Unsettled': Melancholy, Jealousy, and Subjective Temporality in *The Winter's Tale*," *Renaissance Drama* 31 (2002): 185-213. Wood analyzes Leontes' rage through an examination of Early Modern humoral theory, specifically that which caused melancholia. Wood relies on cultural texts such as Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, which outline symptoms of the disease that Wood believes visible in Leontes' lines.

play, and Leontes remains unshakably convinced of her infidelity until the closing of Act 2. The remainder of the play works toward restoring the paradise lost in its beginning with the hope of returning to an Edenic utopia where all is restored and second chances are possible.

I do not seek to suggest that interest in the Early Modern garden is in any way new, nor that any post-lapsarian period in recorded literary history has been impervious to remorse about a fallen Eden. But each time I read *The Winter's Tale*, I continually find myself baffled by Leontes' startling suspicion over Hermione's pregnant body, and I would argue that Early Modern perceptions of the garden are critical in understanding the impetus for his fury. In this project my goal is to expand upon existing scholarship on *The Winter's Tale* and connect it with ideas about the Early Modern garden, thus contextualizing and historicizing the gardens in the play. Specifically, I am concerned with the garden as a site of morally ambivalent sensual pleasure in *The Winter's Tale*. Although my subject matter seems narrowly focused, the garden's roots in the Christian myth of creation prevent me from limiting my study historically or nationally; further, Italian gardening practices influenced the composition of several horticultural manuals from the period, and authors inherited the French literary tradition of the *Roman de la Rose* that was so popular during the late Middle Ages as well as the Biblical tradition. Though my primary concern is with Early Modern England, it is important to make sense of the conventions that Shakespeare assumed and reimagined to understand the ways in which the garden was articulated in medieval English texts and then reiterated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Through several primary texts from the period, including pamphlets, garden manuals, and engravings, I will illustrate that Shakespeare's presentation of Hermione's body begins and ends in the garden. While Tigner has compellingly analyzed the significance of the

garden through its relationship with each of the major female characters in the play—Hermione, Perdita, and Paulina—I argue that each character’s respective garden comments directly upon Hermione’s sexual body. There are three gardens in *The Winter’s Tale* I discuss in the following chapters: first, I provide the literary and cultural background to the garden. Chapter 2 addresses Hermione’s pleasure garden in Sicilia as a dangerous space and as an allegory for a fallen paradise; Chapter 3 focuses on Perdita’s “rustic garden” as a site of renewal and as a reclaiming of the paradise lost in Act 1 of the play. Finally, in Chapter 4, I investigate Paulina’s revival of Hermione’s statue in what scholars seldom recognize as a garden.

Shakespeare, and certainly his audience, would have had access to several literary texts that predate the Early Modern period where the garden is interpreted as sexually suggestive and morally obscure. Illicit love has been linked to the garden since the Middle Ages, and the medieval tradition of the *hortus conclusus*, or enclosed garden, appears in several canonical texts from the period. The *hortus conclusus* is surrounded by a wall and filled with intricately designed paths, labyrinths, secret arbors, flower beds, statues and fountains, all of which provide concealed and isolated spaces convenient for secrecy. Because aristocratic homes were largely public spaces, the garden was both a mark of high social ranking and, as *hortus conclusus*, a much-needed private space for the use of the family during both the medieval and Early Modern periods. In her discussion of public and private outdoor spaces in Early Modern England, Mary Thomas Crane observes that enclosed gardens “seem to have functioned as a kind of outdoor extension of the house, often offering more opportunity for solitude and privacy than the interior” (8).² Because they were

² Tigner similarly notes, “within the structure of [the] Renaissance Italian garden, the *giardino segreto*, the descendent of the *hortus conclusus*, was an enclosed area set aside for private use” (116).

secluded, gardens afforded a space for illicit activity and are in many cases highly charged with sexual innuendo in romances and tales of the late Middle Ages.

Further, medieval authors were influenced by the *paradys d'amours*, or garden of love, which is believed to have originated in the work of Guillaume de Lorris (c.1220), Guillaume de Machaut (c.1300), and Jean Froissart (c.1337). Chaucer was certainly acquainted with the works of these French authors, especially de Lorris' *Roman de la Rose*, which was perhaps the most popular and influential secular poem of the late Middle Ages. Chaucer even completed his own fragmentary translation of the poem, *The Romaunt of the Rose*, and as Chaucerian scholar Larry Benson affirms, "Chaucer was more deeply influenced by the [*Roman*] than any other French or English work" (685).³ Laura Howes indicates that Chaucer treats the garden differently from de Lorris, though, as most of the garden conventions he inherited from his medieval and classical predecessors "stress positive aspects of the garden and its perfection in the service of human comfort both physical and spiritual" (20). de Lorris left the *Roman* unfinished, likely as a result of his death, and when Jean de Meun (c.1250) undertook its completion some forty years later, Chaucer found a template for the garden's "dark side" in which it graduates from "a delightful pleasure park to a garden of sinful delights—a *hortus deliciarum*" (Howes 21).

The *paradys d'amours* and the *hortus conclusus* are recurrent images in the Chaucerian canon but especially clear in *The Parliament of Fowls*, *The Franklin's Tale*, and *Troilus and Criseyde*, the latter of which Shakespeare almost certainly drew upon for his own dramatic interpretation of the poem nearly two centuries later, *Troilus and Cressida*. In *The Parliament of Fowls*, a consistent plot does not materialize until after the speaker enters the

³ Other scholars have argued that Shakespeare, like Chaucer, was influenced by the *Roman de la Rose*. According to Tigner, a translation of the *Roman* accredited to Chaucer and printed by William Thynne in 1532 would have been available for Shakespeare to read (117).

garden. Affricanus explains, “Thorgh me men gon into that blyful place / Of hertes dedly woundes cure; / Thorgh me men gon into that welle of grace, / There grene and lusty May shal ever endure” (*PF* 17-30). By describing the garden with words such as “blyful” and “lusty,” Chaucer gestures to its potential to arouse sexual desire. In some medieval contexts such as the Platonic ladder of love, acknowledging a woman’s beauty could lead to a more intimate understanding of God or what is “good,” yet Chaucer’s gardens largely ignore these contexts by functioning instead as sites of adulterous passion and lost innocence.

The garden, then, carries with it a long tradition of being connected to female sexuality, and as Tigner points out, it actually comes to be figured as the female body in texts such as Boccaccio’s *Decameron*, where, she argues, it is not difficult to discern the luxuriant garden of the Third Day as analogous to the female genitalia (116). Even in *The Franklin’s Tale*, descriptions of gardens sound strikingly similar to a woman’s beauty. Chaucer’s garden is “ful of leves and of floures; / And the craft of mannes hand so curiously / Arrayed hadde this gardyn trewely, / That nevere was the gardyn of swich prys / But if it were the verray paradys, / The odour of floures and the fresshe sighte / Wolde han maken any herte light” (*FT* 907-14). Just as a woman’s body does, the flowers’ fragrance and the garden’s physical attractiveness would beg the attention of any man and make his “herte light.” Chaucer’s description is muddled by his use of the word “paradys,” which evokes a pre-lapsarian Eden. The squire Aurelius first notices the married Dorigen’s beauty while she walks in her private garden longing for the return of her husband, but her “paradys” collapses when Aurelius grants her wish to make the black rocks disappear from the coast. For Dorigen, the fulfilling of this wish means that she must be intimate with someone other than her husband, and rather than a paradise, her garden now threatens the dissolution of her marriage.

Medievalists such as Brian Daley suggest that authors' fascination with the "Song of Songs" and its iconography of the Virgin Mary accounts for the garden's prevalence in medieval texts (257-8). The "Song of Songs" is a set of poems with the combination of woman and garden at its core and where the term "*hortus conclusus*" first originated. Christine Coch notes in her discussion of gender and the garden in late Elizabethan poetry that the "Song" is, "at its most literal level" a celebration of "human love and the institution of marriage. As such, it is frankly erotic" (119). The imagery in the "Song" is titillating as the bride exclaims, "Arise, o North, and come o South . . . and blowe on my gardyn that the spices thereof may flowe out: let my welbeloved come to this garden, and eat his pleasant frute" (qtd. in Coch 119). To an extent, the bride almost seems proto-feminist in her blatant expression of female sexuality, but when she beckons her "welbeloved" to enter her garden and eat "plesant frute," we are offered a series of complex images. The consumption of her "plesant frute" glaringly suggests her genitalia, but it also evokes Adam's regrettable decision to eat fruit from the tree of knowledge.

William Baldwin's rendering of the "Song" in *The Canticles or Balades of Salomon* (1549) similarly figures the bride as "A garden well locked tho art my sister my spouse, a garden well locked, and sealed wel. The frutes that growe in thee, are lyke a Paradise of Pomegranades, with fruite trees" (28). Baldwin's translation figures the bride as a chaste, "well locked" garden, "sealed wel" and not yet penetrated. Her abundant production of fruits is likened to an Edenic paradise and Baldwin provides ample comparisons of the bride to a garden of chastity and fecundity. This sort of imagery was in some ways unsettling to readers of the "Song" during the Middle Ages and to early Christians who considered Mary to be the "new" Eve. As Coch observes, Early Modern England would "[inherit] both the allegorical

readings of the ‘Song’ and the uneasiness that helped to produce them” (119). Around 1400, Western interpretations of the Annunciation began to depict iconographic images of the Virgin in and as the *hortus conclusus*, positioning her in a sumptuously flowering garden, a metaphor that poets and painters would later adapt for illustrations of Elizabeth I. In his analysis of the garden’s symbolism in medieval poetry, Derek Pearsall adds that authors during the Middle Ages could “barely resist the urge to allegorize the poem that had so explicitly associated gardens with sexual pleasure” (240).⁴ The eroticization of the garden and the Virgin was complicated by the caveat that if the garden’s appeal was like a woman’s, as the “Song” intimates, then perhaps like Eve, it could tempt a man into esteeming the temporal over the spiritual.

In addition to its Christian and medieval connections, there were a host of other concerns pertaining to the garden’s actual structure and design that perpetuated its moral ambivalence. As Crane has recognized, we so readily associate the idea of privacy with domesticity that we tend not to acknowledge its vastly different “spatial” dimensions during the Early Modern period: “We are accustomed to comfortable homes with interior doors and locks, shades, [and] curtains,” confirms Crane, “and a cultural sense that members of a family need (indeed, have a right to) privacy from each other” (5-6). This sense of privacy was far from reality during the Early Modern period, and as Crane argues, critics often neglect to consider the fact that “real privacy was, until well into the seventeenth century, most often represented as ready attainable only outdoors” (5). The attendance of servants, especially in wealthier households, meant that even a closet could provide only negligible privacy; when one entered and exited the home or made any sort of distinct noise could all be

⁴ Pearsall also describes the tradition of the *locus amoenus*, or the beauty of the garden, in which the beauty of the woman and the beauty of the garden are to be concurrently enjoyed. The *locus amoenus* is often referenced in courtly lyrics from Mediterranean countries from the twelfth century (243).

within an attendant's periphery (6). Even the courtly home would have been an uncomfortable space due to its lack of central heating and running water. A pleasure garden would have actually been more accommodating for quiet and relaxation for most of the year. Even during colder months the garden would not have been too much cooler than the inside of the home (Crane 10).

In aristocratic homes servants would have likely slept in the same bedchamber as the husband or wife. A garden would have been one of the few places reserved for seclusion, or according to Tigner, "potential amorous activity" (116). Outdoor secrecy was associated with both the uncultivated spaces of woodlands and meadows and the cultivated areas of pleasure gardens. "In truly rustic spaces," observes Crane, "privacy is a function of isolation and solitude, when actions take place far away from other prying eyes" (8), hence the advice found in several garden manuals explaining how to situate private gardens away from potential onlookers. These texts often pay specific attention to the literal function of the garden, presenting it as a space less susceptible to the intrusion of servants and other attendants who worked inside the home. Roy Strong observes in his history of the Renaissance garden that the evolution of "smaller" privy gardens in larger, wealthier households almost always involved "a division between the private and public domains," which suggests that portions of gardens were partitioned off to ensure isolation (49).

A Brief Declaration for what manner of speciall Nuisance concerning private dwelling Houses, a man may have his remedy by Assise (1639) illustrates the need for the garden's seclusion from servants when Robert Monson warns, "if you make your windows into our garden, this is a wrong unto us, for by this means I cannot talk with my friends in my private garden but your servant may see what I do" (21-2). Other authors, such as Gervase Markham,

connect private gardens with courting and secret conversations. In *The English Husbandman* (1639), one of the more popular manuals from the period, Markham educates his reader in the location of the garden in reference to a gardener's home: "Now, for the situation of the garden plot for pleasure, you sha'l understand that it must ever be placed so neare unto the dwelling house as is possible, both because the eye of the owner may be a guard and support from inconveniences" (62). Whereas Monson uses his garden to obtain privacy, Markham seems more concerned with unwanted visitors, preferring to keep a close watch on his garden's entrance.

In his *Anatomie of Abuses* (1595), notorious pamphleteer Phillip Stubbes attacks the customs, manners, and pastimes of his era not without paying special attention to the garden. In a section that aptly precedes his account of "The Horrible Vice of Whoredom in England," Stubbes designates the *hortus conclusus* as the prime locale for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman, a place "wherein they may (and doubtlesse do) many of them play the filthy persons. And for that their Gardens are locked, some of them have three of foure keyes a peece" (58). Stubbes seems to anticipate Markham's suggestion that private gardens be monitored and moralizes, "Then these Gardens they repare when they list, with a basket, where they meeting their sweet harts, receive their wishes desire," which situates gardens as private meeting spots.⁵ Stubbes continues his tirade by attacking the garden's structure as "palled, or walled around round about very high, with their barbers, and bowers fit for the purpose, And lest they might be espied in these open spaces, they have their banqueting houses with Galleries, Turrets, and what not els therein sumptuously erected" (58). Stubbes lambastes those fearful of being watched and argues against their "need" for privacy.

⁵ Crane offers an example of such an instance through an ecclesiastical court from 1567: ". . . one Marion Rogers was 'charged by hyr parents not to come in the company of William Austen nor talke with him,' but nevertheless, met with him in the garden and there promised to marry him," (11).

The concerns of these handbook authors are reiterated in several contemporaneous literary texts where characters' sexual exploits take place in enclosed gardens. Shakespeare in particular has a propensity for locating courtship and carnal encounters inside private gardens. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, for example, the King of Navarre describes an instance during which he spies an affair between Costard and Jaquenetta, remarking,

I did encounter that obscene and most preposterous
 event that draweth from my snow-white pen the ebon-
 coloured ink which here thou viewest, beholdest, surveyest,
 or seest. But to the place where. It standeth north-north-east and
 by east from the west corner of thy curious-knotted garden.
 There I did see that low-spirited swain, that base minnow of
 thy mirth (1.1.230-6).

The fact that Shakespeare attributes these lines to Navarre suggests the garden's close proximity to his estate. We learn that his garden is modeled after the traditional *hortus conclusus* when Biron urges the King to "Climb o'er the house to unlock the little gate," which the editors of the *Norton Shakespeare* gloss as "set[ting] about things in a senseless, backward way—rather than climbing over the gate to unlock the house" (780). Biron's use of the word "gate," then, indicates the garden's enclosure by a fence, as "gate," in addition to being a slang term for the female genitalia (specifically the vulva), was synonymous with "fence" during the period.⁶ Because Costard and Jaquenetta are not married, Navarre punishes them for their promiscuous liaison. Jaquenetta, who is notably described as "the child of our grandmother Eve," must be kept within the "park," which is also another term for "garden."

⁶ In *Shakespeare's Bawdy*, Eric Partridge also confirms that the word "gate" was slang for "vulva" (144).

Even the “bed trick” meeting between Angelo and Mariana in *Measure for Measure* (which likely includes no bed at all) takes place in “a garden circummered with brick, / Whose western side is with a vineyard backed; / And to that vineyard is a placked gate, / That makes his opening with a bigger key” (4.1.25-8; 116). Shakespeare employs the word “gate” to suggest the rendezvous between Angelo and Mariana, and as Tigner clarifies, “the correlation of the gated, enclosed garden with the female body and female duplicity” situates their relationship as a “love tryst” and the play only emphasizes this connection by using “highly sexualized language with all the references to gates making openings with keys and keys commanding doors” (117). Shakespeare’s repetitive mention of “key” echoes Stubbes’ claim that gardeners could have up to four locks on their garden gates, as if to prevent the “penetration” of the garden’s walls.

Shakespeare’s gardens thus seem to exist, at least in part, to supply privacy for playful sexuality—for Costard and Jaquenetta and Angelo and Mariana. But this was not always the case for other authors. The complex theories of nature significant to the Early Modern period affected the language used by some handbook authors in describing the cultivation of gardens. Human mastery over nature was an uncertain subject at best and the legacy of Eden only exacerbated its confusion.⁷ While many authors acknowledged gardens as godlike creations, there were some religious zealots and emphatic Puritans who denigrated the garden’s pleasures as immoral and even irreligious. As Coch points out, by harping on post-lapsarian Eden, “where desire fatally overpowered reason,” some writers chose to focus

⁷ In *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*, Robert N. Watson attempts an ecocritical analysis of the period’s preoccupation with nature and begins by describing the culture’s participation in what he terms “the search for Eden,” in which absolute truths are sought through scientific means (39). During the Elizabethan era, scholars endeavored to obtain knowledge primarily by opposing superstition and other beliefs associated with Catholicism. The tendency of Catholic superstition to establish healing powers in physical objects was vehemently opposed by Protestants and, as Watson explains, some reformers even began to “dismiss the symbolic and homeopathic potential of plants, and to distrust their engagement with human needs and sentiments” (22).

instead on the garden's "dark side of sensual indulgence" (114). For example, in *The Booke Named the Governour* (1531), Thomas Elyot cautions male readers to restrain themselves from entering gardens, for "swete herbes and floures shall meve [you] to wanton courage" (qtd. in Coch 111). Elyot's warning seems ludicrous as he imagines herbs and flowers containing the potential to literally corrupt a man. While illustrating his struggle to reconcile the repercussions of original sin, he treats the garden as a dangerous space.

Nearly a century after Elyot's warning, John Sweetnam's *The Paradise of Delights* (1620) urges readers to "bridle the inordinate desire of thy flesh, if . . . desir[ing] to approach," illustrating that skepticism toward the garden still outwardly lingered in the writings of Early Modern authors (5). In his exaggerated account of human sexuality Sweetnam imagines that the garden merits a bridle to tame the body's excessive desires. Similarly, in *A Garden of Spirituall Flowers* (1610), Richard Rogers and William Perkins encourage, "You who have walked in this little Garden . . . smelling sweet unto your soules . . . be not lesse minded to apply the soveraigne value of these sacred comforts to the upholding of your soules, then men are used to be for preserving and curing of their weake . . . bodies" (33). Rogers and Perkins argue that the human body is too weak to resist the garden's "sweet smells." These negative elucidations of the garden are far less common and not indicative of a holistic attitude toward the garden during the Early Modern period. They do, however, explain instances in literature where the garden seems a dangerous space and a threat to characters' morality.

Other writers were not quite as blatant when acknowledging the garden's potential iniquity. Beneath their cheerful narratives, some writers struggle with the garden's Biblical associations and attempt to mask their worry by conjuring up images of a paradisiacal Eden.

“Most of them privileged practical instruction for labor over discussing how a garden could be enjoyed as an aesthetic experience,” notes Coch, and even when they did acknowledge its sensuality, “any doubts about idleness or vanity . . . were counterbalanced by much lengthier discussions of a garden’s usefulness, and the dangers of earthly seduction were easily dispatched by appeals to God’s visibility in his vegetable creations” (112). In *Back to Nature: The Green and the Real in the Late Renaissance*, Robert N. Watson argues that literary writers such as Shakespeare approach nature “in more of a psychological, less of a theological vein—often suggest[ing] that the green world offers an escape from culture, back to basic instinctual truths” (37). However, several of Shakespeare’s contemporaries borrow from these dangerous interpretations to recreate man’s fall from paradise.

Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*, for example, figures the garden as an ambiguous space by consistently locating amorous liaisons within gardens throughout his text. By using words such as “arber,” “cabinet,” “mound,” and “bowre,” Spenser invokes the *hortus conclusus* to “enshroud” the woman to seek pleasure. In Book 2, he describes the “warlike elfe” as curious about a tree, observing, “Of this great gardin compast with a mound, / Which over-handing, they themselves did steepe, / In a blacke flood which flow’d about it round; / That the river of Cocytus deepe, / In which full many soules do endless waile and weepe” (2.7.500-4). Spenser’s use of the word “mound” denotes an enclosed garden and the fact that it is surrounded by the “river of Cocytus,” or hell,” suggests its establishment as a fallen space. While the Bower of Bliss seems in line with these descriptions of a post-lapsarian Eden, the Garden of Adonis presents a more positive garden, even though it is blatantly figured as a female body, and what Spenser intends for the garden to symbolize is obscured by its contrasting presentations.

Though occurring much later in the seventeenth century, Milton's *Paradise Lost* is one of the most iconic renderings of the Fall. Adam and Eve follow God's directions to "till and keep" paradise by shearing trees, attaching vines to them, and maintaining the aesthetic beauty of flowers. Milton genders the garden as female and consistently uses female pronouns when describing it. God instructs Adam and Eve to "trim" the garden, however, which indicates that female sexualities are unmanageable and require some sort of control. Prior to their fall from paradise, Milton explains that

much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two, gardening so wide
 Our pleasant task enjoined, but till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows
 Luxurious by restraint: what we by day
 Lop overgrown or prune or prop or bind
 One night or two with wanton growth derides
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:
 Let us divide our labors (9.202-14).

If Eve's body is a figuration of the garden, as the poem implies it is, Milton suggests that the flourishing of her sexuality requires Adam and Eve to tend to their labors separately, which results in Eve's encounter with the fiendish serpent. Even the growth of the garden's greenery is described as "wanton."

Returning to *The Winter's Tale*, we see that Shakespeare likewise employs the medieval tradition of the *hortus conclusus* as the motivation behind Leontes' jealousy of

Hermione's purported relationship with Polixenes. Even in his chief source for the play, Robert's Greene's *Pandosto* (1588), the garden's association with illicit romance is unequivocal. Greene's Bellaria visits Egistus in his bedchamber, which lays the groundwork for accusations of an affair between the two characters. Pandosto becomes heedful of their affections for one another only after their visit to the private garden, and Bellaria's body is a threat to the patriarchal structure of the story after her perceived tryst with Egistus.

Shakespeare seems to intend for a similar reaction from Leontes. As Crane illustrates, outdoor spaces, especially gardens, were used to "achieve . . . privacy and freedom from regulation," (8) and certainly it is this sort of seclusion and unsanctioned autonomy that allows authors to distinguish the garden as a questionably immoral space in Early Modern texts both cultural and literary, one in which characters could succumb to their bodily desires.

Whether these nuances were witnessed during the production of a play or accessed through horticultural handbooks, the garden held a host of connections for Early Modern readers and viewers. Historians such as Tigner, Bushnell, and Crane have all traced the development of the garden in England during the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. While Early Modern writers recognize the garden as a site of amusement and pleasure, they also acknowledge it as reminiscent of a lost Eden. In the following chapters, I illustrate how Shakespeare's language in *The Winter's Tale* illustrates the ambivalence surrounding the Early Modern garden. While Hermione's body is figured as a mark of post-lapsarian Eden, Perdita's catalog of flowers offers the opportunity for regeneration and attempts to reclaim paradise. Perdita's language suggests that she is wary of her "rustic garden" becoming a threat like her mother's. Indeed, this threat is difficult to reconcile, and the statue scene only perpetuates this struggle in that Hermione's transformation occurs in an

enclosed pleasure garden. Leontes' accusations against Hermione are hence not completely reconciled and her sexuality remains ambiguous even as the tragicomedy draws to a close, as later chapters seek to show.

Chapter 2

Hermione's Dangerous Body: "We Are Yours i'the Garden"

And all eyes
 Blind with the pin and web but theirs, theirs only,
 That would unseen be wicked? Is this nothing?
 Why then the world and all that's in't is nothing,
 The covering sky is nothing, Bohemia nothing,
 My wife is nothing, nor nothing have these nothings
 If this be nothing.

The Winter's Tale, 1.2.292-98

Criticism surrounding the character Hermione affords a great deal of attention to her pregnant body, its relationship to the Early Modern practices of churching and midwifery, and the curious awakening of her statue, all of which comment directly upon Leontes' sudden accusation of her infidelity. However, scholars have scarcely mentioned the role of Hermione's garden as the catalyst for his jealous outburst. Hermione's mention of the garden prior to exiting with Polixenes—"If you would seek us / We are yours i'th' garden"—provokes Leontes to imagine his wife as a descendant of Eve, replicating her fall from paradise and spawning the dissolution of his own Sicilian kingdom (1.2.178-9). When Hermione enters this garden with her husband's childhood friend, Leontes subsequently arraigns her on charges of adultery, but it is not until after Shakespeare invokes images of a fallen world that Leontes envisions Hermione and Polixenes "mingling bloods" (1.2.111).

Leontes' jealousy is rooted in the cultural practices that in Jacobean England made men decidedly reliant upon women's reproductive capabilities to produce legitimate heirs, a

practice that later enables Leontes to bring Hermione to trial after the birth of Perdita. An illegitimate child would have undoubtedly compromised the succession of Leontes' throne and as Archidamus makes clear in the first scene of the play, "If the King had no son they would desire to live on / crutches till he had one," which illustrates the importance of producing a rightful, and preferably male, heir (1.1.39-40). The legacy of Eden exacerbates Leontes' belief in Hermione's pregnancy with an illegitimate child. Traditional associations with the garden thus play a crucial role in laying the groundwork for Leontes' anger toward his wife.

Although functioning predominantly as a space of corruption as constructed in Leontes' imagination, Shakespeare's depiction of Hermione's pleasure garden also participates in a larger discourse of the garden's moral ambivalence in Early Modern garden theory. The theory of the Early Modern garden itself is one that incorporates ambiguity. Before Shakespeare first makes reference to original sin, the garden is a positive construct, for why would Hermione have an enclosed pleasure garden in the first place if not to enjoy it? Gardens were, in one sense, imitations of God's creation; but, as in the case of Leontes and Hermione, there were a host of other connections that described the garden as capable of encouraging immorality and explain the cultural source of Leontes' jealousy.

The drama begins when Polixenes, at the request of Hermione, agrees to postpone his return to Bohemia and remain in Sicilia for "one sennight longer" (1.1.34). After agreeing to stay, Hermione asks that Polixenes tell stories of their mischievous "tricks" when they were boys; however, Polixenes imagines instead a pastoral world of chastity and innocence in which Eden was purged of the contaminating influence of Eve. As "twinned lambs that did frisk i'th' sun," Polixenes and Leontes "knew not / The doctrine of ill-doing," and had they

retained their boyish innocence, they would have remained free even of the charge of original sin (1.2.74-7). Having now been exposed to the “stronger blood” of their wives, Polixenes and Leontes will never be able to “[answer] heaven / Boldly, ‘Not guilty,’ the imposition cleared, / Hereditary ours” (1.2.78-9). Polixenes’ use of the phrase “Hereditary ours” indicates liberation from original sin, and as the editors of the *Norton* explain, “original sin is linked to the sexual desire that comes with maturity” (2895). After graduating from the “unfledged days” of their youths and progressing into adulthood, “temptations have since then been born to [them],” specifically that of their wives, and they have become corrupted by their own sexual desires for women.

Hermione defensively responds to Polixenes’ incrimination of the female body and argues, “Of this make no conclusion, lest you say / Your queen and I are devils,” which suggests her own awareness of the garden’s potential to become a fallen space (1.2.89-90). Her use of ‘devil’ evokes the serpent’s influence of Eve in the Garden of Eden, and she seems to try to reconcile this image by justifying, “Th’offences we have made you do we’ll answer, / If you first sinned with us, and that with us / You did continue fault, and that you slipped not / With any but with us” (1.2.86-8). Hermione explains that Polixenes and Leontes have not ‘sinned’ with any women but those to whom they are married. If they believe sexual intercourse with their own wives to be evidence of their existence in a fallen world, it seems relatively unsurprising that Leontes becomes so incensed by Hermione’s retreat to her pleasure garden, as he seems to imagine all the potential ‘pleasures’ she and Polixenes will share there. Hermione’s body is seen not only as a threat to pre-lapsarian innocence, but also as a mark of the Fall itself, and it is worth noting that the sexual appeal of women was

threatening at all. Clearly, Early Modern culture placed a great deal of emphasis on the story of original sin.

Directly following this discussion of a fallen Eden, Leontes learns of Hermione's plan to visit her garden with Polixenes. As to be expected, he becomes enraged and churlishly warns Hermione, "To your own bents dispose you. You'll be found, / Be you beneath the sky," which parallels Polixenes' earlier contention that, had he and Polixenes not yielded to their own sexual desires, perhaps they would not have to answer for their guilt after their deaths. Leontes begins imagining that Hermione "holds up the neb, the bill of [Polixenes]" and how he "arms her with the boldness of a wife / To her allowing husband" (1.2.184-6). As he imagines the flirtation between the two after their exit to the garden, Leontes' senseless repetition of the word "nothing" emphasizes his anxiety over the birthing of an illegitimate "something" from Hermione's "no-thing," or in Renaissance slang, vagina. Shakespeare's linguistic play here is not unlike the bawdy exchange between Hamlet and Ophelia in which the word "nothing" suggests the female genitalia, or as Hamlet so eloquently puts it, "what [lie]s between maids' legs" (*Hamlet*, 3.2.107). In the case of *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes is clearly threatened by Polixenes' alleged violation of Hermione's "nothing," and he provides a perfect—and perfectly maniacal—illustration of the play's obsession with the reproductive process.

Clearly, there are several clues that make plain the garden's role in Leontes' jealousy over his wife's body in *The Winter's Tale*; furthermore, a look at some of the gardening and horticultural manuals from the period suggests the garden's role in spurring his anger. For example, when Gervase Markham discusses the garden's reproductive elements in *The English Husbandman* (1613), he offers, "the naturall goodnesse of the earth . . . will bring

forth whatsoever is cast into her: but when I behould upon a barraine, dry, and directed earth . . . I say to behould a delicate, rich, and fruitfull garden, it shewes great worthiness in the owner” (78). To “behold” a garden suggests that a man has some level of control over a woman’s reproductive capabilities. Markham’s account of the garden’s fertility is comparable to the pressures often placed on Early Modern aristocratic women to produce an heir, particularly when he notes that a “fruitfull” garden is indicative of a worthy owner, or perhaps husband.

Even Camillo suggests in the first scene of the play that, had Leontes and Hermione not produced a male heir, Mamillius, “there were no other excuse why they should desire to live” (1.1.34-6). Markham concludes this section on the garden’s fertility by affirming, “the more rich [the garden] is, [the] lesse cost of such labour and more curiositie in weeding . . . and trimming the earth: for, as the first is too slow, so the latter is too swift, both in her increase and multiplication” (78). For the second time, Markham refers to the garden as “her,” constructing it as a figuration of the female body and as a site of positive fertility; nonetheless, though fertility in itself is not negative, it could be if someone other than a woman’s husband pollinates her seed.

Perhaps more than anything, it is the garden’s appeal to the various senses that troubles handbook writers and sets it up as a potential site of immoral behavior. For example, in *The Gardener’s Labyrinth* (1586), Thomas Hill posits, “when the Sences are not pleased . . . and what rare object can there be on earth . . . then a beautifull and Odoriferous plat Artificially of the great Creator, in Plants and Flowers; for if he observeth with a judicial eye, and a serious judgement their variety of Colours, Sents, Beauty . . . it is most admirable to behold, and meditate upon the same” (122). According to Jennifer Munroe in her discussion

of gendered gardens in Early Modern England, *The Gardener's Labyrinth* was reissued at least thirteen times between the years of 1558 and 1608. Not only Shakespeare, but theatergoers as well would have likely been acquainted with Hill's multiply interpreted garden. Hill's more practical slant on the garden permits him to gloss over its moral ambiguity, though his suggestions to observe its beauty with a "judicial eye" and sound "judgement" hint toward iniquitous possibilities. As Coch notes, several handbook writers believed that "the way to a man's heart was through his senses and recognized that a garden's pleasures were uniquely suited to satisfy them" (120). While pleasure itself is hardly negative, perhaps the garden's ability to satisfy the senses explains why Leontes envisions Hermione and Polixenes "leaning cheek to cheek," "meeting noses," and "skulking in corners" (1.2.287-91).

The defining feature of the sixteenth-century garden was the knot, and handbook authors continually liken the literal design of the garden to the female body, providing yet another ambiguous association. A garden knot is essentially a regular flowerbed with a geometrical pattern, usually square, and the borders generally consist of small evergreens. Garden knots could be assimilated into even the simplest of garden designs. As Rebecca Bushnell observes in her analysis of Early Modern flower, fruit, and vegetable-growing manuals, a garden's design "might be purely geometrical, a circle within a square, or something more elaborate—and its lines might cross each other, 'under' and 'over' as in embroidery, thus giving the appearance of entwined or interlacing threads—a 'knot'" (90). Bushnell notes the relationship between the garden's design and its likeness to an embroidered pattern. Her observation illustrates a connection between the garden's figuration

as female body and the fact that knots were modeled after a largely feminine pastime during the period.

Handbook authors continually praise garden knots for their intricacies and elaborate designs, but their comparisons of knots to “mazes” and “labyrinths” express the garden’s uncertainty. A maze’s narrowly designed pathways could indicate the garden’s function as a private space used perhaps for illicit activity. Consider Hill’s illustrations of garden knots in Fig. 1 and 2. His caption over Fig. 1 states that this particular knot should be replicated only if there is “sufficient roome” (80). Though Hill describes such restricted spaces as being part of the garden’s appeal, he seems equally skeptical of its narrowness. The knot illustrated in Fig. 1 certainly resembles an embroidered pattern, but if we look closely, the knot is in the shape of a flower itself. There appear to be four petals and the complicated overlapping of the lines in these “petals” seems to represent its veins. Perhaps what is most curious, though, is the circular hole in its center, which could be interpreted as both a flower’s center, formally known as the “stigma,” or the opening of the female genitalia. The stigma is, of course, part of the reproductive system of a flower. Interestingly, in the next eight garden knots illustrated in Fig. 2, even the simplest knot located in the bottom left corner includes four petal-like ovals and a hole in its center, and each knot illustrates these “nothing”-like qualities.

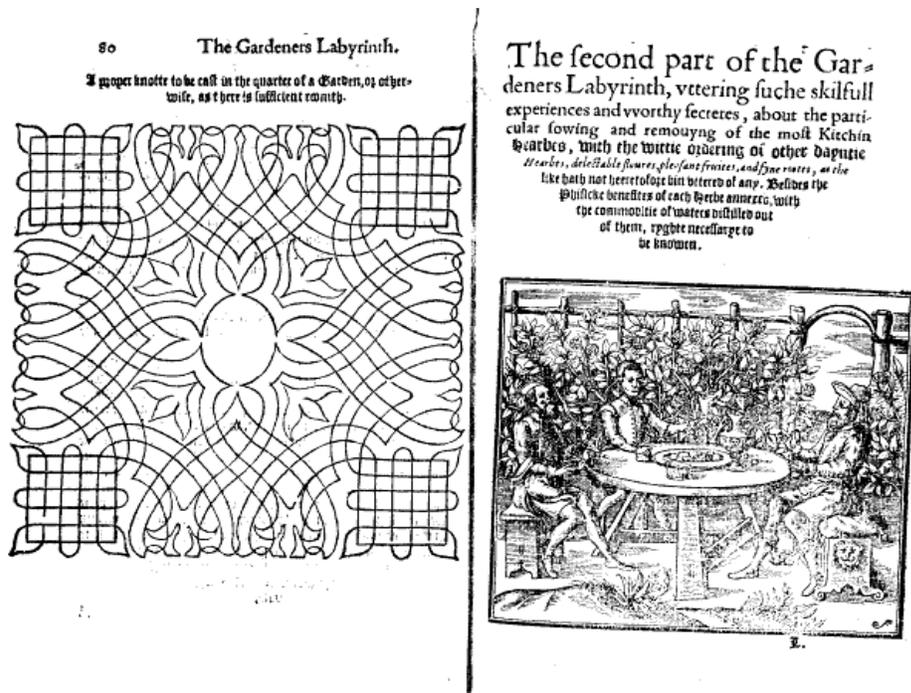


Fig. 1 Garden Knot, Thomas Hill, *The Gardener's Labyrinth*, 1586

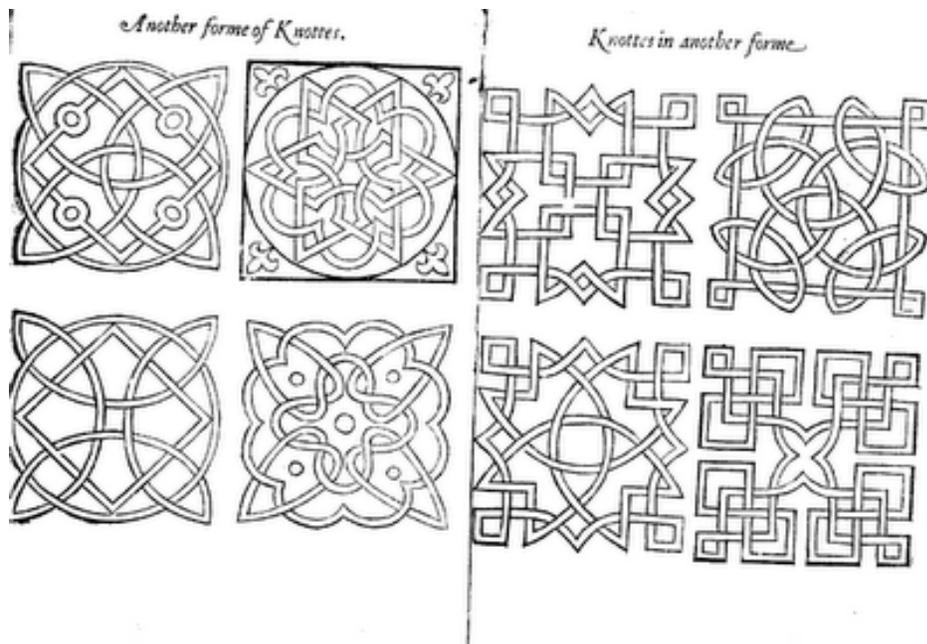


Fig. 2 Garden Knots, Thomas Hill, *The Gardener's Labyrinth*, 1586

In *The English Husbandman*, Markham also suggests the ambivalence surrounding the garden's design. By stressing the importance of wide walking spaces, Markham gestures toward the garden's ability to please more than the senses if there is not adequate space to move about. Markham explains that in regard to the "alleys and Walkes in this garden of pleasure, it is very meete that your ground, being spacious and large . . . that you cut through the midst of every Alley an ample and large path or walke, the full depth of the roote of the greene-swarth, and at least the breadth of seaven or eight foote" (26). Markham provides an example in Fig. 3 of a basic garden design in which there are four quadrants that should be utilized for the garden's knots, and the garden's alleys connect in the patterns of a circle and a square. While Hill's knots mirror the shape and structure of a flower, Markham's plan for the husbandman's entire garden mimics a flower; there are four petals and a stigma, though if we interpret Markham's design as we do Hill's, the center of the garden also seems symbolic of the female genitalia. While Markham and Hill literally and figuratively illustrate that the design of the garden was part of its attraction, they seem equally skeptical of the very features that make it so appealing.

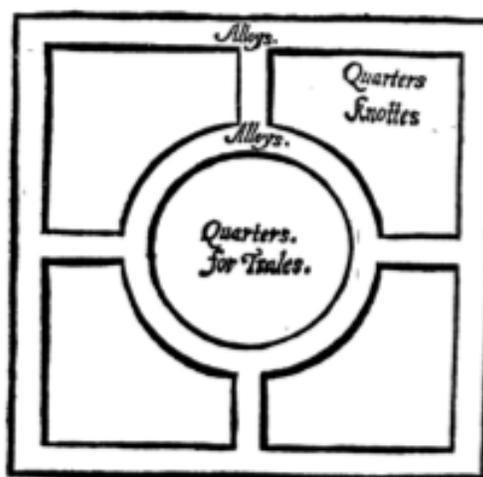


Fig. 3 Plan of an Enclosed Garden, Gervase Markham, *The English Husbandman*, 1613

Beyond the physical design of the garden and its evocation of various sensual pleasures, garden theorists often liken aspects of the garden, in addition to its knots, to the female body. Some Early Modern garden handbooks convey the pleasuring of the senses offered by the garden by describing a flower's beauty in the same manner as a woman's. For example, in his conclusion to *The English Husbandman*, Markham explains, “. . . first the mixture of colours, is the onely delight of the eye above all other: for beauty being the onely object in which it toyleth, that beautie is nothing but an excellent mixture, or consent of colours, as in the composition of a delicate woman the grade of her cheeke is the mixture of redde and white, the wonder of her eye black and white, and the beauty of her hand blewe and white . . .” (104). Markham believes that just as the allure of the garden is a combination of the different colors of flowers, so is the beauty of a woman a mixture of reds, whites, blacks, and blues.

In the *Paradise of Delights*, John Sweetnam follows the tradition of figuring the woman as flower or garden by describing the Virgin Mary as a rose: “First the Rose is most beautifull to behould, and most pleasing to the eye, especially being bestewed with some sweet morning shower, which if we apply to our blessed Lady, we shall find that, a naturall beauty came neere unto her, or could be compared with her, as we have already proved” (165). He continues his description by using red and white imagery, offering, “The third resemblance of this dainty flower [to the Virgin] is in colour; for as some are white, some red, others damaske; so our holy Mother the Church doeth present our Blessed Lady unto us, sometye white, as in her immaculate Conception; sometimes red, as in her unspotted purification” (166). Adapting imagery traditionally used to illustrate the sexual appeal of a woman, Sweetnam describes the purity and chastity of the Virgin Mary; these doubled

connotations of sex and virginity will surface in the revival of Hermione's statue as I discuss in Chapter 4.

The color imagery evoked in garden theory echoes that of literature. Especially among Early Modern literary authors, there was a tradition of describing a woman's beauty through the use of the colors red and white, where red is symbolic of a woman's beauty, and perhaps menstrual blood or the spotting of her sheets after losing her virginity, and white symbolizes chastity or innocence. One of the more well-known literary descriptions of a woman's sexuality using red and white imagery occurs in Shakespeare's own highly sexualized poem *The Rape of Lucrece*, in which he marks Lucrece's beauty by observing, “. . . the red should fence the white. / This heraldry in Lucrece' face was seen, / Argued by beauty's red and virtue's white” (63-5). The association of ‘whiteness’ with virtue is everywhere present in the literature of the period, a whiteness that must not be sullied by another's touch. Even Leontes describes falling in love with Hermione as, “Ere I could make thee open thy white hand / And clap thyself my love” (1.2.104-5). And later, he inquires of Camillo, “Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled, / To appoint myself in this vexation? / Sully the purity and whiteness of my sheets— / Which to preserve is sleep, which being spotted / Is goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps— / Give scandal to the blood o'th' prince, my son” (1.2.327-32). Leontes uses red and white imagery in his attempt to convince Camillo of Hermione's infidelity. His references to “thorns, nettles, and tails of wasps” suggest the phallus and thus Polixenes' penetration of Hermione within the “whiteness” of his sheets.

Leontes' use of red and white imagery clearly parallels language used by garden theorists to figure the woman as flower, but Shakespeare manipulates other conventions

found in Early Modern garden literature to communicate Leontes' belief in Hermione's infidelity as well. Leontes states to Mamillius, "Go play boy, play. Thy mother plays, and I / Play too; but so disgraced a part, whose issue / Will hiss me to my grave" (1.2.188-90).

Leontes puns on 'play' as meaning an actor's role in a play as well as to 'play' sexually. This is indicative of his belief in his wife's affair, and he continues by adding that her 'issue,' or child, will be an utter disgrace to his existence if Polixenes is truly the father. This excerpt is particularly interesting because Leontes seems solely concerned with how this supposed illegitimate child will affect his honor, which parallels Polixenes' earlier assertion that male honor and the patriarchal structure of the play could have been preserved if it were not for the possibility of the female body's inherent threat. What is most telling here is Leontes' use of the word 'hiss,' which aligns the locale of Hermione's perceived sexual affair with the Eden in which the serpent first persuades Eve to sin. Further, 'hiss' serves as evidence of the fact that Polixenes' remarks in regard to original sin are what initially motivated Leontes' jealousy of his wife.

In this same passage, Leontes' anger can be associated with the Early Modern garden and its evocation of the female body through his use of the word 'gate,' which, while a slang term for the female genitalia, was also an important component of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century garden. Leontes proclaims that Hermione "little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence, / And his pond fished by his next neighbour, but / Sir Smile, his neighbour, Nay, there's comfort in't, / Whiles other men have gates, and those gates opened, / As mine, against their will" (1.2.195-9). Here Shakespeare seems to outwardly construct the garden as a space that must be protected, fenced off, in order to spare it from intruders and other dangers. A gate was indicative of an enclosed garden, rather like a fence, and William

Lawson outlines the function of gates in *A New Orchard and Garden* (1623) by explaining that gardeners should have “convenient, strong, and seemly” fences, perhaps to ensure that there are no unwanted visitors (8). Even Shakespeare’s use of the word ‘sluice’ is bawdy in connotation. According to the editors of the *Norton Shakespeare*, a ‘sluice’ was a “trough or channel through which water could be directed. To be sluiced was to have water poured down one’s ‘channel.’” This is an appalling insinuation of Polixenes’ use of Hermione, and by making her body analogous to the garden, Shakespeare suggests that she is merely a receptacle for semen.

Because it is the tradition of the *hortus conclusus* that enrages Leontes, the word ‘gate’ plays a particularly important role in analyses of gardens in *The Winter’s Tale*, as one had to enter through the gate to access the enclosed garden. A thorough description of garden gates occurs in *The English Husbandman* when Markham describes that gardeners should “repaire and maintaine [the fence] as occasion shall require from time to time, till your quickest be growne up, and, but continuall plashing and interfoldings, be made able and sufficient to fence and defend your garden” (64). Markham’s use of “defend” suggests that the gate protects the inside of the garden against intruders as well as the uncultivated landscape outside its bounds.

Markham provides several diagrams illustrating the design of the garden gates such as those featured in Fig. 3 and 4, the latter of which illustrates that “the foure inward corners of the hall would be convenient for foure turrets, and the foure gavell ends, being thrust out with bay windowes might be formed in any curious manner: and where I place a gate and plaine pale, might be a either a tarrisse or a gatehouse” (23). Markham then provides an alphabetized list by which he identifies each part of the diagram regarding the purpose of the

gate by adding, “the scope of my booke tendeth only to the use of the honest Husbandman, and not to intrust men of dignitie, who in Architecture are able wonderfully to controle me” (23). It seems that Markham modifies his description of garden gates to ensure that readers do not lewdly interpret the purposes of his book, or more specifically, the gate, identified on his illustration with an “O.” Given what we noticed earlier about the circle imagery in both Markham and Hill’s garden knots and designs, it is not unlikely that Markham uses the letter “O” intentionally to suggest the “nothing,” or vagina, in his labeling of the gate.

Markham’s design in Fig. 4 significantly illustrates a latch to ensure the enclosure of the garden (23). He describes this image as “the great gate to ride in at the halldore,” which seems to suggest the sexual conquering of a woman. If the gate’s latches function metaphorically for the guarding of a woman’s vagina or chastity, Markham’s description of “riding in” can be read as a pun on sexual intercourse. Even the “halldore” evokes a man’s entering of a woman’s vagina. The gate, then, acts metaphorically for the female genitalia; if Hermione’s body is coded as a post-lapsarian garden as Polixenes suggests, Leontes insinuates that she opens her “gate” to Polixenes for sex. Leontes’ reference to the gate thus perpetuates an interpretation of Hermione’s body as *hortus conclusus*, especially in reference to the child she carries in her womb.

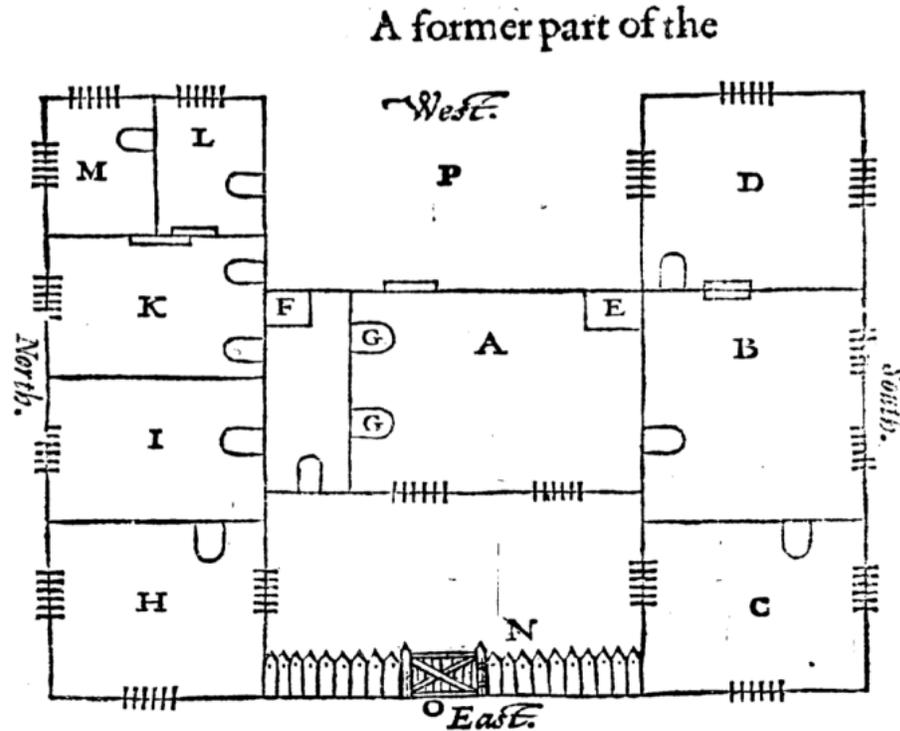


Fig. 4 Garden Gate, Gervase Markham, *The English Husbandman*, 1613

‘Gate’ is not the only garden term used to suggest Hermione’s infidelity, however. Still in a jealous rage, Leontes states to Camillo, “Or else thou must be counted / A servant grafted in my serious trust” (1.2.247-8). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word “graft” was used to describe the union or joining of two people during the Early Modern period. More importantly, “graft” pertains as well to the cross-pollination of flowers, and if Hermione’s body is a figuration of the garden, then Polixenes will be its fertilizer and create a fallen paradise as Leontes suggests. Shakespeare thus uses language reflected in contemporary garden texts to convince Leontes of Hermione’s infidelity, and in addition to the ambiguous cultural implications of the garden theory itself, Shakespeare proves successful in this endeavor. Even when he brings her to trial in 3.2, Leontes is too deeply rooted in his own anger to realize Hermione’s innocence. The oracle of Apollo does not persuade him to believe her chastity, and as Tigner notes, Cleomenes’ description of Delphos

“implies future possibilities, the paradisiacal vision of the island itself promises a new golden age” (119). Tigner suggests that his description foreshadows the garden’s function as a space of renewal in the comedic second half of the play, specifically Act 4, and we move from Hermione’s post-lapsarian pleasure garden to Perdita’s Edenic “rustic garden.”

During this first half of the play, however, the garden is figured as something ambiguous and sexually provocative. Its associations with Eden and with the Fall—and their concomitant fall into sexuality, specifically lust—mark Hermione herself as suspect in Leontes’ eyes. Because Shakespeare connects Hermione so intimately with the literal garden, garden theory from the period can provide a gloss that helps explain Leontes’ seeming irrationality.

Chapter 3

Like Mother Like Daughter: Perdita's "Rustic Garden"

. . . for what is Art more than a provident and skillfull collectrix of the faults of nature in her particular workes, apprehended by the senses?

–William Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden*, 1623

The second half of Shakespeare's tragicomedy moves outside the realm of Sicilia's cultivated pleasure garden and into the wild, uncultivated landscape of the Bohemian coast. Now having realized that he has "too much believed [his] own suspicion," Leontes vows to live in "shame perpetual" after the death of Mamillius and the oracle of Apollo finally proves true (3.2.149; 236). But before realizing the falseness of his allegations against Hermione, Leontes exiles the bastardized Perdita "To some remote and desert place," leaving her "without mercy, to [her] own protections / And favour of the clime" (2.3.193; 174-6). When Antigonus arrives in Bohemia to abandon the newborn babe, the climate's "favour" is dismal at best, and he is greeted by skies that "look grimly / And threaten present bluster" (3.3.3-4). Bohemia appears to be a savage and thunderous land, one that Antigonus acknowledges as "famous" for the creatures / Of prey that keep upon't," and after one of the most famous stage directions in English drama, "Exit, pursued by a bear," Antigonus is mauled and eaten by a wild bear before he can return to the ship (3.3.11-2). Thus before we access the floricultural landscape of Act 4, we are presented with the untamed rawness of nature, as if the environment of the play has rebelled against Leontes' tyranny. And yet, something even more fantastic happens: after the Old Shepherd and the Clown discover the newborn babe,

the character Time enters to “slide / O’er sixteen years and leave the growth untried,” marking the play’s transition from tragedy to comedy (4.1.5-6).

As Tigner points out, in Act 4 “the play’s landscape changes to recall the Italian *bosco* or wood, which is meant to appear wild and unnatural but is in fact planted and cultivated” (120). The play’s landscape is transformed from the barren, wintry world of Sicilia into one of flora and fauna in which fertility prevails. We are greeted by the play’s rogue, Autolycus, who sings of daffodils and celebrates the play’s liberation from Leontes’ “red blood [reign] in the winter’s pale” (4.3.4). Shakespeare shifts from the fallen world of Sicilia, in which the female body is held responsible for its ruin, to a Bohemian garden of fecundity and renewal. These contrasting explications of the garden illustrate its multiple interpretations during the Early Modern period, and vastly different from the Sicilian pleasure garden, Perdita’s ‘rustic garden’ is an attempt to reclaim the Edenic paradise lost during the first half of the play. Shakespeare’s language in Act 4 is riddled with allusions to the garden, and while criticism surrounding Perdita affords ample attention to her catalog of flowers and its relationship to the Early Modern debate concerning art versus nature, I would argue that her ‘rustic garden’ functions as a counterpart to Hermione’s cultivated pleasure garden. Perdita’s positive representation of the garden seeks to redeem her Eve-like mother, and while this reading may seem transparent, it is in fact much more complicated.

If Hermione’s body is a figuration of the *hortus conclusus*, then Perdita is figuratively its product—a mark of its growth and a flower in the garden. Prior to his death, Antigonus lays down the babe Perdita and encourages her to “blossom,” as if to reconcile her mother’s fault by regenerating a pre-lapsarian paradise. The first description we get of Perdita in Act 4 is through Florizel, Polixenes’ son and Perdita’s love interest, whose very name suggests

“flower.” Referring to Perdita’s clothing, Florizel praises, “These your unusual weeds to each part of you / Does give a life; no shepherdess, but Flora / Peering in April’s front” (4.4.1-3).

Perdita is no more a shepherdess, but rather a goddess of flowers through the eyes of Florizel.

As the “hostess-ship o’th’ day,” Perdita is the mistress of her sheepshearing festival and

begins by distributing flowers to her guests. Upon meeting the disguised Camillo and

Polixenes, Perdita greets them by remarking, “For you there’s rosemary and rue. These keep

/ Seeming and savour al the winter long. / Grace and remembrance be to you both,” to which

Polixenes responds, “Well you fit our ages / With flower of winter” (4.4.75-6; 78-9).⁸

Although unknowingly, Perdita invokes the memory of her mother by referencing the winter season, and her distribution of rue and rosemary imply remembrance of a fallen world.

The play then shifts its attention to the gillyflower, or we call it, the carnation. She continues, “Sir, the year growing ancient / Not yet on summer’s death, nor on the birth / Of trembling winter, the fairest flowers o’th’ season / Are our carnations and streaked gillyvors, / Which some call nature’s bastards. Of that kind / Our rustic garden’s barren, and I care not / To get slips of them” (4.4.79-84). Several scholars interpret this passage as commentary on Perdita’s social rank; though she is the daughter of a royal family, the characters in this section of the play think she is the daughter of the low-born Old Shepherd, and the gillyflower seems a manifestation not only of her mixed tutelage but Leontes’ proclamation that she is a “female bastard” (2.3.175). This point also seems apparent in the fact that a shepherdess is cultivating an aristocratic garden. For example, Tigner notes that it would be more plausible for Perdita to raise “vegetables or medicinal herbs,” which would “make

⁸ In “Singing Psalms to Hornpipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter’s Tale*,” Phebe Jensen interprets Perdita’s references to rosemary and rue “literally (as winter flowers, they are appropriate for older men) and conventionally (as symbols of ‘[g]race and remembrance’” (300).

sense in terms of her social status, but the fact that she cultivates flowers hints at her desire for upward mobility” (126), or in the case of this argument, her ambiguous parentage.

Though she makes clear her desire to leave the garden “barren” of its ability to produce such “bastards,” Polixenes continues to press the subject of the gillyflower. He endeavors to convince Perdita that the crossbreeding of flowers is actually a positive aspect of reproduction, offering, “nature makes that mean . . . that art / Which you say adds to nature is an art / That nature makes” (4.4.96-7). Polixenes imagines “art” as nature’s gift, which indicates that he supports the grafting of flowers because it is a form of control over the garden, one that allows “A gentler scion of the wildest stock” to “make conceive a bark of baser kind / By bud of nobler race” (4.4.92-5). Ironically, he completely denounces the union between Perdita, who is herself a “baser kind” of flower in his eyes, and Florizel, the princely “bud of nobler race.”

Though Perdita’s garden is a site of renewal, Shakespeare’s fixation on the gillyflower suggests the garden’s ambivalence by illustrating that it is not completely a redeemed space. For example, Tigner cites the herbalist John Gerard (1597) as explaining that gillyflowers are “not used in phisicke, except amongst certain Empericks and Quacksalvers, about love and lust matters, which for modestie I omit,” which conveys that there was perhaps a sexually illicit interpretation of the gillyflower. Even the *Norton* cites them as being “proverbially associated with sexual license” (2932). Perdita fervently claims not to want gillyflowers in her garden “no more than were [she] painted,” but the fact that she wishes to have “lilies of all kinds” to “strew [Florizel] o’er and o’er” suggests that she is not entirely opposed to crossbreeding or grafting, be it sexually or in reference to her garden since lilies, too, were often the result of cross-breeding (4.4.129). According to Tigner, lilies

were also esteemed for their potential to create variations in their color by means of grafting (124). John Parkinson, in his *Paradisi in Sole* (1629), documents there being a “wonderfull varietie of Lillies knowne . . . much more then in former times, whereof some are white, others blush, some purple, others red or yellow, some spotted, others without spots, some standing upright, others handing or turning downewards,” and as Tigner notes, “The floral categories . . . that Perdita defines . . . are themselves much more mutable than she or the play acknowledges” (qtd. in Tigner 124). Like Hermione’s garden, Perdita’s, too, is filled with ambiguities.

While her garden is full of changeable flowers, Perdita ironically associates the grafting of flowers with artifice and superstition, a discourse that will resurface in the final act of the play when Paulina curiously revives Hermione’s statue. Perdita warily acknowledges, “For I have heard it said / There is an art which in their piedness shares / With great creating nature,” which offers a partial explanation of her aversion toward crossbred flowers (4.4.87-8). As Phebe Jensen notes in “Singing Psalms to Hornpipes: Festivity, Iconoclasm, and Catholicism in *The Winter’s Tale*,” Perdita, by identifying grafted flowers with “dishonest forms of breeding, here also repeats the link Leontes first forged between illicit reproduction and representation” (299). Perdita, then, vilifies these creations of “human artifice” as “nature’s bastards” (Jensen 301). Like the garden itself, flowers had ambiguous connotations during the Early Modern period, which in the case of grafted flowers seems somewhat an iconoclastic implication. Jensen suggests that Perdita rejects crossbreeding “for the same reason she rejected festive disguise: because she does not believe Polixenes’ assertion that art can ‘mend nature—change it rather’” (299). The garden was, in a sense,

sacred and so grafted flowers seem sacrilegious to Perdita; they are false, not true to their essential nature.

Perhaps one of the most ambiguous of Perdita's passages involves her invocation of Ovid's myth of Prosperina, which constructs her garden as site of both pleasure and danger. She begins by philosophizing,

I would I had some flowers o'th' spring that might
 Become your time of day; and yours and yours,
 That wear upon your virgin branches yet
 Your maidenheads growing. O Prosperina,
 For the flowers now that frighted thou letst fall
 From Dis's wagon (4.4.113-8).

The myth of Prosperina is a rape narrative: Dis captures Prosperina, daughter of Ceres, while she gathers flowers and is taken in his "wagon" to his underworld kingdom. By incorporating this myth, Perdita creates a sort of "mental" scene in which, according to Tigner, "her own abduction is possible," or rather her abduction by Florizel to Sicilia later in Act 4 (119). Perdita wishes she had Prosperina's flowers to give out—her daffodils, violets, primroses, oxlips, lilies, and the "flower-de-luce," a strange desire as Prosperina obtained these flowers only prior to being raped by Dis. Prosperina is allowed to return to earth for six months of the year during the months of spring and summer, going back to the underworld for autumn and winter because she ate six pomegranate seeds while there. Her consumption of these seeds can be read as replicating Eve's transgressions in the Garden of Eden because Prosperina partook of something she shouldn't have; in essence, she succumbed to her appetite, be it

sexual or otherwise. That Perdita is analogous to Prosperina seems to situate her as an Eve-like character in this passage, much as Hermione is.

The myth of Prosperina alludes to the seasonal structure of Shakespeare's play. Perdita's banishment to the summery world of Bohemia parallels Prosperina's escape from the underworld during the months of spring and summer. Hermione seems figured as Prosperina's mother, the earth mother Ceres. In both the structure of the myth and the play, Shakespeare's manipulation of winter and spring reflects the Early Modern belief that part of the gardener's art was being able to tamper with the seasons. As Tigner observes, John Gerard references in the dedication of his *Herball or Generall History of Plantes* (1597) that "gardens, especialy such as your Honor hath . . . do singularly delight, when in them a man doth behold a flourishing shew of Summer beauties in the midst of Winters force, and goodly spring of flours, when abroad a leafe is not to be seene" (119). As the goddess of flowers, as Florizel suggests, Perdita symbolizes a spring flower in the midst of winter, and she is able to dole out flowers to Polixenes and Camillo that "savour all the winter long" (4.4.75). Her wish to behold flowers of both autumn and spring illustrates her wish for a pre-lapsarian garden, "one that contains both spring blossoms and autumn fruits" (Tigner 126).

Not only is Perdita figured as Prosperina, but Shakespeare also equates her with Queen Elizabeth. As Tigner explains, "As with Elizabeth, the virgin Perdita is symbolized by a garden; this image parallels the aristocratic cultural practice of cultivating an Elizabethan emblematic garden, a Protestant appropriation of medieval flower association with the Virgin Mary" (121). The relationship between Perdita and Elizabeth seems to work sentimentally. During the reign of Mary Tudor, Elizabeth was deemed the bastard child of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Like Elizabeth, the princess Perdita is bastardized by Leontes and declared

illegitimate. Elizabeth was constructed as a bastard by the Catholic Tudor, but when she gained the throne, Tigner argues that Elizabeth “created an image of herself as the Protestant Virgin Mary, saving the country from [Mary], whom Elizabeth’s faction had fashioned as Eve” (122). As Elizabeth would later restore England to its “Golden Age” after assuming the throne, so Perdita attempts to restore Sicilia to its original paradise by reconciling the image of Hermione as Eve. Peter Stallybrass also notes in his discussion of enclosed bodies that Nicolas Breton, in his “Elogy of Queen Elizabeth,” figures Elizabeth as a pre-lapsarian garden. Breton imagines Elizabeth as a “paradice on earth,” and Perdita’s dislike of “nature’s bastards” seems to suggest her worry over the possibility of her own paradise becoming corrupted.

When he learns that Florizel and Perdita plan to wed without his consent, Polixenes marks Perdita as a “fresh piece / Of excellent witchcraft” and believes that she “cop’st,” or fornicates, with Florizel. Polixenes warns Perdita that if “These rural latches to his entrance open, / Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,” he will “devise a death . . . for thee” (4.4.422; 426-9). This is a complex passage as it seems Polixenes figures Florizel’s body as the *hortus conclusus* rather than Perdita’s. His description of “rural latches” suggests the garden gate and remind us of the latches on the illustration of Markham’s gate we notice in Chapter 2. Further, the word “entrance” suggests the interior of the garden, yet Florizel anatomically has neither of these, if entrances and gates in the play are meant to evoke the vagina, as I suggested in Chapter 2. The editors of the *Norton* gloss the word “hoop” as to “encircle,” which is more in line with Perdita’s body as garden and implies the wall surrounding a garden. Nonetheless, here Polixenes reverts back to Leontes’ conception of the

garden in Act 1 where he believes the *hortus conclusus* responsible for the fallen Sicilian paradise.

Though she begins her sheepshearing feast by railing against the grafting of flowers, Perdita transitions into a rather bold articulation of her sexual desire for Florizel. While Hermione's alleged desire for Polixenes was threatening in the context of her pleasure garden, Perdita's desire for Florizel is a positive interpretation of the garden's productivity. She wishes to make garlands of flowers to "strew" over and over Florizel, who replies, "What, like a corpse?" and Perdita playfully answers, "No, like a bank, for love to lie and play on, / Not like a corpse—or if, not to be buried, / But quick and in mine arms. Come, take your flowers" (4.4. 127-9; 130-2). To "lie" with Florizel suggests sexual intercourse and in a bed of flowers nonetheless. This is only reiterated by her insinuation that he "take" her flowers, or perhaps her virginity—the ultimate spring flower. This apparent request is significant after her allocation of "Hot lavender, mints, savory, [and] marjoram" to Polixenes and Camillo; these are flowers she actually possesses and has taken from her own garden. Each flower she mentions thereafter is only a flower she *wishes* to possess. The "flower-de-luce," for example, was the French royal emblem during the Early Modern period. Her desire for this flower suggests her wish for Florizel to acknowledge his status as a prince, but perhaps also Perdita's own hidden desire to be a princess. Her wish for these flowers is not without sensuality, however, and as Tigner mentions, her yearning seems appropriate, for this flower, also known as the "crown imperial," is famous for its "stately beautifulness," even meriting "the first place" in Parkinson's "Garden of delight" (124).

Shakespeare's mention of the marigold is treated differently from Perdita's other flowers, however. Perdita envisions the marigold as a crying woman who "goes to bed wi'th'

sun, / And with him rises, weeping,” separated from the sun while she sleeps. Shakespeare’s invocation of Ovidian myth would already seem to present the sun as masculine, especially considering the incorporation of Apollo, the sun god, into the first half of the play. Consider in *The Gardener’s Labyrinth* when Hill describes the marigold as, “in each month this reneweth of the owne accord, and is found to beare floure, as well in winter and sommer . . . Others name it the sunnes bride, and sunnes hearve, in that the floures of the same followe the sunne” (56). Hill also associates the marigold with the menstrual cycle, perhaps another connection to Hermione or even to Perdita’s womanhood and her potential as a mother. Hill’s mention of “winter and sommer” in terms of the marigold also seems to suggest a prelapsarian garden of “spring blossoms and autumn fruits,” (126) as I noted in Tigner previously.

In another description of the marigold, Hill discusses its medicinal attributes and notes that when the marigold is “dyed with ware and with the same make an smoke belowe, for this is sure and laudable experiement, to bring them downe (the child afore delivered) . . . For the pappes of women swelled, through the stopping and stay of the reddes, minister of the floures . . . in that the same crasset . . . and provoketh the monelithie course,” which suggests a woman’s menstrual cycle (32). Shakespeare, then, seems to situate the marigold as the bride of the sun, but Perdita’s separation from the sun parallels her departure from womb and her subsequent banishment to Bohemia, which separates her from her mother for 16 years, another reiteration of Prosperina’s severance from Ceres during the winter months.

As Jensen notes, Perdita also references Whitsuntide celebrations and May Games in this conversation, symbolizing the renewal of life and the coming of summer and because these refusals are notable for the many flowers and plants brought in to signify as much.

Perdita conjectures, “Methinks I play as I have seen them do / In Whitsun pastorals. Sure this robe of mine / Does change my disposition” (4.4.133-5). At the start of her grafting debate, Perdita seems completely opposed to discourses of artifice, and yet she now identifies herself with celebrations of Whitsun. While a positive elucidation of the garden’s renewal, Whitsuntide was also a Catholic festivity and often associated with popish idolatry (Jensen 299). Perdita thus begins to embrace “artifice” when she aligns herself with what contemporary Reformers construed as vehemently heretical. During the grafting debate, Perdita argues that she would not include gillyflowers in her garden “No more than, were I painted” (4.4.101). As Jensen explains, “comparing a grafted plant with a painted lady confirms that Perdita here attacks idolatry . . . the image of the painted woman—beautiful on the outside, disgustingly corrupt within—was a conventional figure for idolatry in general and for the idolatrous Catholic Church in particular” (299). Now that Perdita has more or less demonstrated an acceptance of her festive role, she is led “toward a form of artistic creativity that begins to identify her not with her iconoclastic father but with her lost mother” (301), and we begin to prepare for the metamorphosis of what is essentially a relic into a living woman. Until this point, we have witnessed a paradise fallen and its attempt to reestablish itself. It only makes sense that the final act of the play will illustrate a paradise fully realized.

Chapter 4

“Turn, Good Lady”: The Metamorphosis of Hermione’s Statue

First the Rose is most beautifull to behould, and most pleasing to the eye, especially being bestowed with some sweet morning shower, which if we apply to our blessed Lady, we shall find that, a naturall beauty came neere unto her, or could be compared with her . . .

— John Sweetnam, *The Paradise of Delights*

The transformation of Hermione’s statue has long been a subject of debate among critics of *The Winter’s Tale*. Its metamorphosis from inanimate object into living being contributes to the play’s fundamental epistemological dilemma between what is visually seen and what is true. Scholars have argued that the play’s final scene comments on Shakespeare’s participation in Early Modern discourses of skepticism, Calvinism, Stoicism, and especially Catholicism, all of which were part of the larger conversation surrounding the human mastery of nature.⁹ What critics seldom seem to recognize is where this transformation occurs. Hermione’s statue is awakened in a pleasure garden, or Paulina’s “gallery,” as Leontes notes. It is quite formulaic, actually: Hermione is held responsible for the fall of the Sicilian kingdom at the beginning of the play; Act 4 is spent cultivating a new garden within a landscape that symbolizes renewal. Now, it only seems reasonable for paradise to be realized and Hermione to reclaim her innocence within a new, uncorrupted garden. However,

⁹ Some of the scholars who have paid particularly close attention to these debates include: James A. Knapp, “Visual and Ethical Truth in *The Winter’s Tale*,” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 55.3 (2004): 253-78; Aaron Landau, “‘No Settled Senses of the World can Match the Pleasure of that Madness’: The Politics of Unreason in *The Winter’s Tale*,” *Cahiers Elisabethains* 64 (2003): 29-42; Walter S.H. Lim, “Knowledge and Belief in *The Winter’s Tale*,” *SEL* 41.2 (2001): 317-34; and Amelia Zurcher, “Stoicism, History, and the Problem of Utility in *The Winter’s Tale* and *Pericles*,” *ELH* 70.4 (2003): 903-27.

this is not quite what we get, and like Hermione's pleasure garden and Perdita's 'rustic garden,' Paulina's version of the *hortus conclusus* is not without ambiguity.

Hermione's body is still a site of contested sexuality at the end of *The Winter's Tale*; she is still inside the *hortus conclusus*, and the Catholic language with which her transformation is described only furthers this point as England was still under Protestant rule during the time in which Shakespeare composed *The Winter's Tale*. During the Elizabethan era, the Protestant Reformation prompted Early Modern culture to obtain knowledge primarily by opposing superstition, and the tendency of Catholic superstition to establish healing powers in physical objects was vehemently opposed by the Protestants. As Watson explains, some fanatical Reformers began to "dismiss the symbolic and even homeopathic potential of plants, and to distrust their engagement with human needs and sentiments" (22). Yet these association with the garden still permeates the last act of the play, and in a way similar to the "Song of Songs," Hermione is described with erotic iconography much as the Virgin Mary was. While such religious associations might at first seem redemptive, in some cases at this time Protestant fanatics began to construct the Virgin misogynistically. Thus, Hermione does not seem completely redeemed and neither does the garden. Both the garden and her sexuality remain ambivalent as the play draws to a close.

The uncertainty of Hermione's statue actually begins not in Act 5 where we first view it, but in 3.2 shortly after her perceived death. Paulina directly affirms, "This news is mortal to the Queen. Look down / And see what death is doing" (3.2.146-7). Leontes seems unconvinced of her death and offers, "Take her hence. / Her heart is but o'ercharged. She will recover," but Paulina seeks to convince him that she is deceased: "The Queen, the Queen, / The sweet'st, dear'st creature's dead . . . I say she's dead. I'll swear't. If word nor

oath / Tincture or luster in her lip, her eye, / Heat outwardly or breath within,” and vehemently urges that Hermione is actually dead (3.2.147-8; 197-203). Paulina is uncannily insistent on convincing Leontes of this news, and yet, her account of Hermione’s dead body parallels her later descriptions of Hermione’s statue when she finally reveals the figure at the end of the play. Paulina’s words are doubtful, and she here seems to prefigure her strange role in the erection of the statue, indeed, “for she hath privately twice or thrice a day, ever since the death of [her], visited that removed house” in which the statue was created (5.2.95-7).

The statue with which we are ultimately presented seems equally curious if Paulina has been secretly aware that Hermione lived these past sixteen years. Shakespeare seems to play with this possibility during Act 5 when Paulina and Leontes discuss the prospect of another wife for Leontes: “Unless another / As like Hermione as in her picture,” stipulates Paulina, “Affront his eye,” then he does not have her blessing for remarriage. Paulina urges that Leontes “give [her] the office / To choose [his] queen. She shall not be so young / As was the former, but she shall be such / As, walked your first queen’s ghost, it should take joy / To see her in your arms,” but then later adds that he shan’t marry until his “first queen’s again in breath. / Never till then” (5.1.73-81; 83-4). Paulina’s language suggests that she either knows or believes Hermione still to be living, and within the context of her statue seems portentous.

Curiously, Shakespeare omits the scene where we witness the interaction between Perdita, Leontes, and Paulina as they finally reunite. This event is instead communicated by the Third Gentleman, who relays,

The Princess, hearing of her mother's statue, which is in the keeping of Paulina, a piece many years in doing, and now newly performed by that rare Italian master Giulio Romano, who, had he himself eternity and could put breath into his work, would beguile nature of her custom, so perfectly is her ape. He so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of answer (5.2.85-92).

The narration of this scene is particularly important because it evokes the power of imagination; the resemblance of Hermione's statue to her life form is so close that it seems as if she never actually died. The fact that Paulina visited Hermione's statue so often—indeed, two or three times a day—suggests that she was somehow preserving or sustaining Hermione after she ostensibly dies. Even when Perdita expresses her desire to touch the statue's hand, Paulina cautions, “O, Patience! / The statue is but newly fixed; the colour's / Not dry,” as if she does not want Perdita to realize that Hermione lives until after she speaks her lines (5.3.47-8).

The real curiosity, though, and what contributes most to Hermione's ambiguity within the context of my argument, is the Third Gentleman's reference to Giulio Romano. The editors of the *Norton* explains that Romano was an Italian painter who was “most famous for a series of erotic drawings illustrating sexual positions,” and if his association with pornographic renderings of sex postures is how he was primarily recognized, it seems strange that Paulina would charter someone of his reputation to carve a statue in remembrance of Hermione (2956). It seems strange, however, that in a play with such fantastic events and

transformations that Shakespeare would insert a historical figure. Though famous for his paintings and architecture, Romano was also an Italian garden designer, and his heritage evokes the influence of Italian gardening practices on those in England. As Tigner points out, Romano designed a secret garden at the Palazzo de Te much like the one at the end of the play, a garden which Romano's contemporary, Giacomo Strada, explained was used "for the service of these apartments, which has all around and on the walls most beautiful compartments of figures." So as Tigner conjectures, "if Romano is the supposed author of the artwork, then the statue could also be placed in a secret garden setting, like the one which Romano designed at the Palazzo" (128). The Palazzo de Te was not serious architecture, however, and was never meant to be. Romano allotted more space in his design for gardens and pools than he did to rooms for living. The allusion thus seems to serve several purposes: it collapses the boundaries between the play world and the real world, but more importantly for my analysis, connects the statue with the garden, in particular, by a garden designer associated with ambivalent sexuality, with pornography.

Before further discussion of Paulina's garden as ambivalent space, it is worth pointing out that there actually *is* a garden in this final scene, although the gallery in which the statue comes to life is a less obvious construct than Hermione's or Perdita's gardens. While the cultural associations with Romano illustrate that Hermione's statue is related to the garden, what ultimately suggests its revival within a *hortus conclusus* is Leontes' use of the word "gallery." In anticipation of viewing the statue, Leontes states, ". . . we came / To see the statue of our queen. Your gallery / Have we passed through, not without much content / In many singularities" (5.3.9-12). If we recall Stubbes' description of the garden in Chapter 1 as he criticizes the design of gardens, we remember that he notes the "Galleries, Turrets, and

what not els therein sumptuously erected” (58). Stubbes confirms that a gallery could be part of the garden’s interior, and Leontes confirms this point when he notes that the characters have “passed through” the gallery. Further, in *The Garden of Eden* (1659), Sir Hugh Plat explains, “I hold it for most delicate and pleasing thing to have a fair Gallery, great Chamber or other lodging, that openeth fully upon the East of West sun, to be inwardly garnished with Hearbs and Flowers, yea and Fruit if it were possible” (54). While Stubbes’ use of ‘gallery’ predates *The Winter’s Tale*, Plat’s postdates the text, illustrating that the use of galleries lasted well into the seventeenth century.

Paulina seems intent upon refusing to allow Hermione’s statue to arouse any sort of eroticism as she prepares for its unveiling, perhaps due to her consciousness of Romano’s reputation for producing sexual drawings. Unlike its counterpart in Act 1, Paulina’s garden seeks to emphasize itself as a redeemed space, though, as I seek to show, its redemption is not completely fulfilled and Shakespeare’s mention of Romano seems to characterize Hermione’s statue as a sexualized piece of art. Though the final garden of *The Winter’s Tale* seems meant to function as a return to pre-lapsarian Eden, there is still sex in the garden, and Hermione’s body is still tempting, even if not necessarily threatening as it is earlier in the play. Leontes seems particularly sexually attracted to the statue, and Paulina urges him not to kiss Romano’s creation, warning, “The ruddiness upon her lip is wet. / You’ll mar it if you kiss, stain your own / With oily painting” (5.2.133-5). Joel Davis also makes this point by contending that Paulina literally and figuratively “paints” the statue of Hermione with her curious rhetoric. In his discussion of literally visible truths in *The Winter’s Tale*, Davis believes that Hermione’s touching of Polixenes’ hand is what enraged Leontes in the first act of the play and explains that Paulina’s choice to have the ruddiness of Hermione’s lips is

indicative of Hermione's sexuality. Paulina's pain thus creates a "disjunction" between visual and concrete knowledge because it constructs the statue solely as a visual object. Davis maintains that because Paulina's paint prevents characters from touching her body, all there is to know about Hermione is what can be visually seen (122). Thus, Hermione's body no longer creates jealous desire; rather, there is simply just desire at the closing of the play. She is untouchable now.

Paulina's use of 'ruddiness' again invokes the medieval and Early Modern traditions of describing the Virgin Mary within a *hortus conclusus*. For example, in *The Paradise of Delights*, John Sweetnam compares the Virgin's beauty to ivory, noting that, "Ivory amongst other properties hath this for one, that the older it is, the more it turnes to a beautifull red, or ruddy colour . . . more ruddy then the ancient Ivory which property befits best the Blessed Virgin" (175). As we saw in Chapter 1, a morally ambivalent side of the garden emerges also in Early Modern translations of the "Song of Songs." While Early Christians endeavored to diminish the garden's sexual connotations, largely interpreting the "Song" as analogous to the relationship between Christ and the Church, renderings of the Virgin in and as an enclosed garden grew popular in the late Middle Ages. Paulina thus uses the same language to describe the paint on Hermione's statue as Sweetnam does to describe the Virgin's beauty, a connection that evokes Marian iconography and further connects the statue with the *hortus conclusus* of the Virgin from the "Song of Songs" that we noted earlier. Further, if Hermione's body is likened to the Virgin Mary, her sexuality becomes even more ambiguous due to the Virgin's role in the Catholic religion that was so opposed by the Protestants during the Early Modern period.

Although Mary's image may have become somewhat tarnished during the period, she continued to be associated with the garden. In 1633, for example, when the Jesuit priest Henry Hawkins compiled an emblem book titled *Parthenia Sacra* to encourage public admiration of the Virgin, he represents her "in the habit of . . . a Garden, under the veyle of Symbols, to deliciate a while with her Devotes." Hawkins entreats, "ere thou leade thy Reader into the Maze or Labyrinth of the beauties therein contained, pause heer a while, to consider how to behave thy self, before (I say) thou let him in, to speculate that Magazin of beauties" (qtd. in Coch 119-20). Hawkins pressures the reader to compose himself before entering a garden surrounded by such 'beauties,' but also warns him to humble himself before being in the presence of the Virgin. His warning that one must enter a garden with composure and restraint suggests the same anxiety over the recreation of a post-lapsarian Eden that I noted earlier.

Similar to Hawkins, John Sweetnam's introduction to *The Paradise of Delights* explains that "it will not be amisse to imagine a private Garden, adorned with all kinds of delightfull flowers, amidst which the B. Virgin useth to walke, expecting the visitation of her deerest friends, and most devoted Clyents. Unto the gate of this mysticall garden, and Paradise, we must approach with all humility, desiring to be admitted to the pleasant view of those celestiall flowers" (7). Sweetnam imagines the Virgin Mary inside an enclosed garden elaborately adorned with beautiful flowers. The Virgin's "devoted Clyents" pay homage to her, celebrating her existence as Eve's redeemed counterpart; Sweetnam even describes her "mysticall garden" as a pre-lapsarian "Paradise" and a reclaimed Eden, hesitantly suggesting that upon approaching the garden's gate,—the Virgin's "Clyents" must "approach with all humility." Given the slang association of the gate with genitalia, not only does Sweetnam

warn against a fallen Eden, but his language hints perhaps unfittingly that the Virgin herself is a morally ambiguous figure.

When Paulina finally reveals Hermione's statue, her description again seems to convey her awareness that Hermione has been alive these past sixteen years. Paulina prefaces, "Prepare / To see the life as lively mocked as ever / Still sleep mocked death. Behold, and say 'tis well" (5.3.18-20). The stage direction for the statue's revival is strange as well: "She draws a curtain and reveals the figure of Hermione, standing like a statue." (Though Shakespeare likely did not write this stage direction, its inclusion in the *Norton* edition is still worthy of mention within the context of my argument.) The use of the words 'figure' and 'like' suggest that Hermione is perhaps not really a statue, for why would a statue have to stand *like* a statue? The word 'figure' almost connotes a ghost-like quality, yet it also suggests that Hermione is alive, which makes this a particularly difficult stage passage to interpret.

Hermione's likeness to a human seems supernatural even to Leontes, "Does not the stone rebuke me / For being more stone than it? O royal piece! / There's magic in thy majesty, which has / My evils conjured to remembrance, and / From thy admiring daughter took the spirits, / Standing like a stone with thee" (5.3.37-42). Leontes' references to "magic" and "evil" evokes Paulina's alleged involvement with witchcraft, and if Paulina uses witchcraft to awaken Hermione's statue, this only adds to its ambiguity. Critics have gestured toward the possibility of Paulina's involvement with witchcraft to justify the transformation of the statue. Consider, for instance, when Paulina states to Perdita, "Mark a little while. / Please you to interpose, fair madam. Kneel, / And pray your mother's blessing," and then to Leontes, "Were I the ghost that walked I'd bid you mark / Her eye, and tell me for what dull

part in't / You chose her" (5.1.63-5). As Paulina is described earlier in the play as "a mankind witch" and Perdita as a "fresh piece / Of excellent witchcraft," the theme of witchery is certainly present in *The Winter's Tale*. Significantly, Shakespeare's use of the word 'mark' recalls another use of the word during the Early Modern period, the witch's "mark," and this word shows up several more times in reference to Paulina throughout the course of the play.

Perdita is also negatively implicated in this scene when she kneels at her mother's statue, as she herself seems to infer when she states, "And give me leave, / And do not say 'tis superstition, that / I kneel and then implore her blessing. / Lady, Dear Queene, that ended when I but began, / Give me that hand of yours to kiss" (5.3.43-5). Again, Shakespeare invokes the Marian iconography of Hermione's statue that contributes to its ambivalence, thus connecting it to the reviled and superstitious Catholic Church, which lends a negative connotation to this scene. As Phebe Jensen notes, "The final scene [of *The Winter's Tale*] is saturated with Marian iconography . . . the queen is several times referred to as 'Lady,' and although she is never 'Our Lady,' the worship of her statue provides the unspoken possessive, as does Perdita's fear that her actions will be held 'superstition' " (303).

In *The Paradise of Delights*, John Sweetnam describes the Virgin Mary similarly to descriptions of Hermione's statue. He notes, for instance, "Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, N.N. do this day choose thee for my Lady, Patronesse, and Advocate," confirming Jensen's assertion that the Virgin Mary was also referred to as "Lady" during the Early Modern period. Sweetnam even suggests that Catholics "must desire, that whatsoever we shall gather out of this delightsome Paradise, may be to the honour & glory of her sweet Sonne Jesus, to the increase of devotion to her gracious Selfe" (3). Sweetnam also refers to

the Virgin as the “Domina Lady, or Mistress,” and that “she may be sayd to be Domina, a Lady, a powerfull Princesse, or might Empresse, by reason of the great power and authority she hath with her sweet Sonne” (10). It is interesting that Shakespeare chooses to address Hermione, a queen, as “Lady,” which is quite similar to Sweetnam’s royal description of the Virgin.

Sweetnam then situates the Virgin’s body as a figuration of the garden: “this that beautifull lylly of the humble vallies, which admitteth not the least touch or stain: it is that flourishing flower of the field, which being roted in the B. virgin, hath now sprouted forth so many branches, that we may wel see and see . . . Flowers have appeared in our Land” (43). Sweetnam compares the Virgin to a lilly, one that is unspotted and unstained, though it “flourishes,” which suggests a sexualized representation of the Virgin. Sweetnam becomes wary later in his text of his erotic descriptions of the Virgin, and states, “Neither was her virginal comelynes such as usually doth stir up wanton lustes, or inflame bad desires . . . behould the beautifull blush of her modest and virginall countenance . . . not chose, but be inflamed with most chast desires and fervent love towards this virtuous Queene” (64). His fear that Mary could provoke “wanton lustes, or inflame bad desires” obscures her role as the salvation of the female sex, and the fact that Hermione is continually referred to as “Lady,” just like the Virgin commonly was, perpetuates her figuration as a descendent of Eve.

The garden gate is also invoked in *The Paradise of Delights* and Sweetnam notes that worshippers “. . . must know at this beautifull gate the Blessed Virgin, who therefore by the holy Church is so intylted . . . by sinne the gate was shut against her, as rebels against Gods sacred Lawes, until Christ by his Omnipotent power did open it again unto us, and left thus beautifull gate patent unto all; that who so would enter into this blissfull paradise, should

first have this Gate well know . . . and therefore she is called *Felix cali porta*, the happy gate of heaven” (187-8). This particular passage is especially erotic, as the Virgin is literally figured as a gate into paradise. Sweetnam seems to figure heaven as the female body and the Virgin as its vagina, but warns that “we may consider, that if this gate be shut against us, we can have but little hope to be able to attain unto our longing desire of entrance . . .” (188). Sweetnam’s use of ‘desire’ suggests the garden’s ability to induce and satisfy sexual desire by entering through a woman’s ‘gate,’ and to address Hermione’s statue as “Lady” suggests that like the Virgin, Hermione’s body could be figured as a gate into paradise, be it sexual or otherwise.

In the course of *The Winter’s Tale*, paradise has been lost, replanted, and cultivated, but not necessarily regained. The mark of age upon Hermione’s body reveals that she is no longer able to reproduce. The fecundity that has preoccupied the characters for most of the play is no longer possible for Hermione, and we are reminded of her dead son, Mamillius. Speaking only once after the revival of her statue, Hermione’s lines are directed not toward Leontes, who is newly in love with Hermione again, but rather her daughter, Perdita. While Leontes has realized his transgressions, it is unclear whether Hermione has chosen to forgive him given that she does not acknowledge him during her final lines. In this regard, Shakespeare obscures the ending of *The Winter’s Tale* (much as he does in so many of the plays); as the characters all reunite within Paulina’s garden, Shakespeare’s tragicomedy comes to an end in exactly the location the controversy began.

Shakespeare’s decision to bring together the characters within a garden reminds us of Leontes’ adulterous accusations against Hermione at the beginning of the play and, as such, we are not necessarily convinced that all has been resolved. *The Winter’s Tale* thus seems to

end in more uncertainty than Shakespeare's traditional comedies. Of course we expect Perdita and Florizel to wed, but unlike *Twelfth Night*, in which Shakespeare ends the play with the declaration of marriage between the Duke and Viola, no character definitively states that Perdita and Florizel will marry. Further, Perdita has become somewhat of a curious character through her participation in traditional Catholic festivities in Act 4 and even more when she kneels at her mother's statue in Act 5, which, prior to the statue's revival, could be interpreted as a Catholic relic. Performed in 1611 in front of what would have likely been a predominantly Protestant audience, Shakespeare's gestures toward Catholicism contribute to the play's ambiguous ending.

All is not necessarily regenerated in *The Winter's Tale*, and the idolatrous implications of Hermione as statue, even after her revival, seem to perpetuate the confusing image of the garden with which the play begins. While her innocence has been proven, Hermione's body is still figured ambiguously. As an Eve-like seductress in Acts 1 and 2, she is later described as Eve's answer for salvation in Act 5—the Virgin Mary. It would seem that paradise is realized and Hermione can now reclaim her rightful position as queen of Sicilia; but, with the moral ambivalence inherent in Shakespeare's descriptions of the garden, it is difficult to accept that interpretation, especially since Hermione is no longer capable of reproduction.

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