

Hamlet

2.1

Enter old Polonius with his man Reynaldo

POLONIUS

Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

REYNALDO I will, my lord.

POLONIUS

You shall do marv'lous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him to make enquire
Of his behaviour.

REYNALDO My lord, I did intend it. 5

POLONIUS

Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,
Enquire me first what Danskers are in Paris,
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question 10
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him,
As thus: 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him'±±do you mark this, Reynaldo? 15

REYNALDO Ay, very well, my lord.

POLONIUS

'And in part him, but', you may say, 'not well,
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild,
Addicted so and so'; and there put on him
What forgeries you please±±marry, none so rank 20
As may dishonour him, take heed of that±±
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

REYNALDO As gaming, my lord? 25

POLONIUS Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing±±you may go so far.

REYNALDO

My lord, that would dishonour him.

POLONIUS

Faith, no, as you may season it in the charge.

You must not put another scandal on him, 30
That he is open to incontinency.

That's not my meaning±±but breathe his faults so quaintly

That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unrecleimeÁd blood,
Of general assault.

REYNALDO But, my good lord±±

POLONIUS

Wherefore should you do this?

REYNALDO Ay, my lord.

I would know that.

POLONIUS Marry, sir, here's my drift,

And I believe it is a fetch of warrant:

You laying these slight sullies on my son, 40

As 'twere a thing a little soiled i'th' working,
Mark you, your party in converse, him you would
sound,

Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes

The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured

He closes with you in this consequence: 45

`Good sir', or so, or `friend', or `gentleman',

According to the phrase and the addition

Of man and country.

REYNALDO Very good, my lord.

POLONIUS

And then, sir, does a this $\pm\pm$ a does $\pm\pm$

what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to 50

say something. Where did I leave?

REYNALDO

At 'closes in the consequence', at 'friend,

Or so', and 'gentleman'.

POLONIUS

At 'closes in the consequence'±±ay, marry,

He closes with you thus: 'I know the gentleman,' 55

I saw him yesterday'±±or t'other day,

Or then, or then $\pm\pm$ with such and such, and, as you

say.

There was a gaming, there o'ertook in 's rouse,

There falling out at tennis', or perchance
 'I saw him enter such a house of sale', 60
 Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth. See you now,
 Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;
 And thus do we of wisdom and of reach
 With windlasses and with assays of bias
 By indirections find directions out. 65
 So, by my former lecture and advice,
 Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

REYNALDO My lord, I have.
POLONIUS God b'wi' ye. Fare ye well.
REYNALDO Good my lord. 70
POLONIUS
 Observe his inclination in yourself.
REYNALDO I shall, my lord.
POLONIUS And let him ply his music.
REYNALDO Well, my lord.
Enter Ophelia
POLONIUS
 Farewell.
Exit Reynaldo
 How now, Ophelia, what's the matter? 75

OPHELIA
 Alas, my lord, I have been so affrighted.
POLONIUS With what, i'th' name of God?
OPHELIA
 My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber,
 Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced,
 No hat upon his head, his stockings fouled, 80
 Ungartered, and down-gyved to his ankle,
 Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,
 And with a look so piteous in purport
 As if he had been loose'd out of hell
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me. 85
POLONIUS
 Mad for thy love?
OPHELIA My lord, I do not know,
 But truly I do fear it.
POLONIUS What said he?
OPHELIA
 He took me by the wrist and held me hard,

Then goes he to the length of all his arm,
And with his other hand thus o'er his brow 90
He falls to such perusal of my face
As a would draw it. Long stayed he so.
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound 95
That it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,
And, with his head over his shoulder turned,
He seemed to find his way without his eyes,
For out o' doors he went without their help, 100
And to the last bended their light on me.

POLONIUS

Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings 105
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry±±
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

OPHELIA

No, my good lord, but as you did command
I did repel his letters and denied 110
His access to me.

POLONIUS

That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better speed and judgement
I had not quoted him. I feared he did but trifle
And meant to wreck thee. But beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age 115
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King.
This must be known, which, being kept close, might
move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love. 120

Exeunt