

Hamlet / Horatio

POLONIUS
Are you alright?

OPHELIA
Woe is me to have seen what I've seen.

KING
There is something brooding within him, a frightening thing. He sits on the edge of violence.
(Pause.)

To save him from himself I will send him away to England. His trip on the seas and his vacation from this place I hope will clear his unsettled mind.

POLONIUS
My lord, do as you wish, but, if you will allow it, let his mother meet him alone. I shall be near enough to hear the proceedings. If she cannot discern his problem, you can send him away, as you had planned, or confine him wherever you wish.

KING
As you say.
(As they exit.)
Madness in great ones must not go unwatched.
(Blackout.)

(Lights up on Hamlet. ANNIE/Horatio enters.)

HAMLET
Horatio!

HORATIO
Your humble servant arrives.

HAMLET
No, my good friend. I wouldn't have you as my servant.

HORATIO
I wouldn't be a good one.

HAMLET
All has been well?

HORATIO

START

Yes.

HAMLET

The play begins in a few minutes. I need your help, Horatio.

HORATIO

What can I do?

HAMLET

To catch the King's guilt, I have amended the play in several small but significant ways. One scene in particular comes very close to the matter in which my father was killed. When this moment arrives, watch the king's response. If he reveals his guilt to you, as I suspect he will, tell me so. An objective viewer will ensure that my prejudice is not obscuring my judgment.

HORATIO

I will do as you ask, but what sort of reaction should I look for?

HAMLET

If what I think will happen does, you'll know.

(Fanfare. The play is about to start.)

Come Horatio. The play is ready to begin.

(King, Queen, Ophelia, Polonius et al enter, and take their seats for the play.)

KING

I hope this play is better than the last one I saw.

HORATIO

I'll sit over there, Hamlet.

HAMLET

Good, thank you again Horatio.

QUEEN

Hamlet, please come sit by me.

HAMLET

No good mother. Here's a seat more attractive.

(He sits, and lays his head in Ophelia's lap.)

OPHELIA

end