

# Polonius

My liege and Madam. If I were to tell you what majesty should be, what duty is, why day is day, night night, and time time, it would be a nothing but a waste of your majesty, my duty, night, day, and time. Since, brevity is the soul of wit, and all extraneous words and gestures nothing but a waste of night, day and time, I shall keep my explanation brief. Your noble son is mad. Mad, I say, for to define true madness, what other definition could there be but to call it mad, and leave it at that. Only a mad man would dare define mad as anything other than mad, so therefore, since I am not mad, I shall call your son mad, and mad shall be the only explanation. But let that go.

KING/QUEEN

What?

POLONIUS

He is mad, this we have decided. Now we must discover the source, the cause, the catalyst for this effect, or, shall I say, the source, cause and catalyst for this defect. It is clear that this defective effect comes from something, and it remains there, a remainder, and a reminder.

(Pause.)

I have a daughter: Have, only until she is married, then she will not be mine, and I shall no longer have her. But my daughter, in her duty and obedience, has given me this.

(He takes out the letter, and reads it.)

TO THE CELESTIAL,  
MY SOUL'S IDOL,  
THE MOST BEAUTIFIED OPHELIA

(Music stops.)

Beautified? That's a vulgar term. Beautified. But much like this you shall hear in this letter, things like, "In her excellent bosom," etcetera etcetera.

QUEEN

This letter is from Hamlet?

POLONIUS

Have patience, your highness. I will finish the letter.

(Music starts again.)

DOUBT THAT THE STARS ARE FIRE  
DOUBT THAT THE SUN DOTH MOVE  
DOUBT TRUTH TO BE A LIAR  
BUT NEVER DOUBT I LOVE.