

Hamlet abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 2

Disclosure

Situation: The late King Hamlet's brother, Claudius, has succeeded his brother as Denmark's king. As well, he has quickly married King Hamlet's widow, Gertrude, making her his queen. Claudius' marriage to Gertrude infuriates the young prince Hamlet, the queen's son.

Claudius to his court

Though the memory of our dear brother's
Death be green; befitting, his death transfers
Our hearts to saddest grief, yet with wisest
Sorrow, we must think with remembrance of
Ourselves. Therefore, serving with what be best,
We've taken this sometime sister we love
As queen, in equal scale weighing delight
And dole, thanking all, for you keep insight
And wisdom. Young Fortinbras, holding you
And I too weak in worth; our state to be
Out of frame and disjoint, hath not failed to
Pester us with message importing the
Surrender of lands lost by his father,
Within the law, to our valiant brother.

KING: Now for ourself and for this time of meeting. We have here writ to Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, who, bedrid, scarcely hears of this his nephew's purpose to suppress his further gait herein. We here dispatch you, good Cornelius, and you, Voltmand, for bearers of this greeting to old Norway.

He gives them a paper.

CLAUDIUS: Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

CORNELIUS/VOLTEMAND: In that and all things will we show our duty.