

## Hamlet abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 3

### Father to Daughter

**Situation:** Having just offered his son some of Shakespeare's very best lines, Polonius turns to his daughter Ophelia, suggesting to her (as had her brother) that she distance herself from Prince Hamlet.

OPHELIA: He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders of his affection to me.

POLONIUS: Affection! You speak like a green girl naive in such perilous circumstance.

OPHELIA: I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

POLONIUS: Tender yourself more dearly, or you'll tender me a fool.

OPHELIA: My lord, he hath importuned me with love in honorable fashion.

POLONIUS: Ay, "fashion" you may call it.

OPHELIA: And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord, with almost all the holy vows of heaven.

### Polonius to Ophelia

**Ay, I know when the blood burns how lightly  
The soul lends the tongue vows. Do believe me  
Daughter, those blazes giving more light than  
Heat extinguish themselves as they are made,  
Not to be taken for fire. This is an  
Occurrence replayed, so as a fair maid,  
Be more meager. For Lord Hamlet, believe  
In him that he is young and free to leave  
With a larger tether than you. His vows  
Are not in true reports heard and in large  
Measure beyond what good judgment allows.  
This is for all: from this time forth I charge  
You not misuse any leisure minute  
To give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.**

OPHELIA: I shall obey, my lord.