

Hamlet abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 2

Friendship

Situation: As the players in the evening's play gather, Hamlet gives them certain instructions, such as "suit the action to the word, the word to the action." He tells them that he has often been disappointed with actors who "imitated humanity so abominably." Hamlet instructs his friend Horatio, who plans to attend the performance with him, to at a specific moment "observe my uncle."

HORATIO: Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET: Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man as e'er my conversation coped withal.

HORATIO: O, my dear lord---

Hamlet to Horatio, No. 2

Think not, Horatio, that I flatter,
For what advancement hast thou to offer
Me, having no revenue but thy good
Spirits to feed and clothe thee? The absurd
Pomp that flows from those with candied tongues should
Be for gifts that may follow fawning heard.
My mistress soul choose thee for herself as
One who suffers not, having suffered, has
Bourne Fortune's buffets and rewards, has been
Blessed with the balanced judgment of the brave;
Those who let not Fortune's fickleness win.
Give me that man that is not passion's slave
And I will wear him in the core of me,
Ay, in my heart of heart as I do thee.

HAMLET: There is a play tonight before the King. One scene of it comes near the circumstance which I have hold thee of my father's death. When thou seest that act afoot, observe my uncle. Give him heedful note, for I mine eyes will rivet to his face, and, after, we will both our judgments join in censure of his seeming.

A flourish sounds.

HAMLET: They are coming to the play. I must be idle. Get you a place.