

Hamlet abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 2

Acceptance

Situation: Osric, a courtier, extends a challenge from the king to Hamlet to engage Laertes in a duel. Hamlet accepts the offer, to Horatio's dismay.

HORATIO: You will lose, my lord.

HAMLET: I do not think so. Since he went into France, I have been in continual practice.

HORATIO: Nay, good my lord.

HAMLET: It is such a kind of misgiving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

HORATIO: If your mind dislikes anything, obey it. I will forestall their coming hither and say you are not fit.

HAMLET: There is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be not now, yet it will come. The readiness is all.

A table is prepared with foils, daggers and wine. The king, queen, Osric and Laertes enter.

Hamlet to Laertes, No. 2

**As all in this presence know, I have done
You wrong, Laertes. Accept my pardon.
But, as you must have heard, I've been punished
With a sore distraction. 'Tis no one's guess
That what I did roughly awakened
Your honor resulted from my madness.
If madness takes Hamlet away, and when
He's not himself he wrongs Laertes, then
Hamlet does it not. His madness is host;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Hamlet is a faction wronged. In your most
Kind thoughts, from this evil please do free me
As if I had shot my arrow over
The house and by mistake hurt my brother.**

LAERTES: I am satisfied in nature. But in my terms of honor I stand aloof. I do receive your offered love like love and will not wrong it.

HAMLET: I embrace it freely. Give us the foils.