

KING CLAUDIUS

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
 To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom  
 To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
 The imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,--  
 With an auspicious and a dropping eye,  
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,  
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,--  
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd  
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
 With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
 Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,  
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,  
 Colleagu'd with the dream of his advantage,  
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
 Importing the surrender of those lands  
 Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,  
 To our most valiant brother. . . .

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
 You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?  
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,  
 And loose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,  
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?  
 The head is not more native to the heart,  
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

LAERTES

My dread lord,  
 Your leave and favour to return to France;  
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,  
 To show my duty in your coronation,  
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,  
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France  
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon. . . .

KING CLAUDIUS

Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,  
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will!  
 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,--

HAMLET

[Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

KING CLAUDIUS

**Comment [ 1]:** Throughout this scene, compare the measured, balanced diction and regular meter of Claudius with the accelerating speech and syncopated, uneven meter of Hamlet.

**Comment [ 2]:** macrocosm / microcosm

**Comment [ 3]:** antithesis

**Comment [ 4]:** paradox

**Comment [ 5]:** antithesis

**Comment [ 6]:** antithesis

**Comment [ 7]:** alliteration

**Comment [ 8]:** hendiadys

**Comment [ 9]:** alliteration

**Comment [ 10]:** Note repetition of "Laertes..."

**Comment [ 11]:** Parison. Note analogies associated with eating.

**Comment [ 12]:** metonymy

**Comment [ 13]:** this whole section is an example of anadiplosis or symmetrical reversals.

**Comment [ 14]:** hendiadys

**Comment [ 15]:** hendiadys

**Comment [ 16]:** hendiadys

**Comment [ 17]:** Anadipolosis.

**Comment [ 18]:** antithesis

**Comment [ 19]:** alliteration, antithesis

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

**Comment [ 20]:** implied metaphor

HAMLET

Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

**Comment [ 21]:** Pun

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off. . .

**Comment [ 22]:** Metaphor (implies she didn't understand his last one, or didn't hear it).

HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

If it be,  
Why seems it so particular with thee?

HAMLET

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'  
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play:  
But I have that within which passeth show;  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

**Comment [ 23]:** Anaphora, Parison

**Comment [ 24]:** Asyndeton

**Comment [ 25]:** hendiadys