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ENC 1102
Hamlet
By William Shakespeare
Act II, Scene II (partly)
Summary
Revision

William Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, presents the reader with a very interesting plot, which unfolds in five acts.

In Scene II of Act II, Polonius informs the king and the queen about Hamlet's behavior regarding his daughter, Ophelia. Polonius is willing to do whatever is necessary to protect the honor of his family. He is certain that Hamlet is in love with Ophelia and offers as proof a letter that Hamlet wrote to her. At first, the king and the queen don't seem to be convinced. Therefore, Polonius is ready to bet with his life, in order to prove that he is right. He is also proposing a plot: to allow Hamlet to meet Ophelia "accidentally," so Hamlet's actions may be observed.

Right after his meeting with the king and the queen, Polonius meets Hamlet. It is obvious from their encounter that they don't like each other. Hamlet considers Polonius to be an old fool.

In the same scene, Hamlet encounters his old friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. He immediately feels that something is wrong. In the name of their old friendship, he asks them to explain why they came to see him. They admit that the king and the queen sent them to find out what is wrong with him. Initially, Hamlet gives them a phony explanation on why he is behaving so strangely. Their discussion deviates toward a different subject—that is, the arrival

of the players in town. According to Rosencrantz, the troupe is not as good as it used to be, because they have changed their style, inclining now toward a violent show. With the arrival of the players, Hamlet welcomes his friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to Elsinore. He also tells them that he is only pretending to be crazy around the king and the queen.

Hamlet's discussion with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is interrupted by Polonius, who brings news. His news is mostly old, and Hamlet can't stop complaining to Polonius about that. Polonius has also some information about the players' great credentials, but their discussion starts to deviate toward personal matters. Luckily, the actors who enter the scene interrupt their unpleasant discussion.

That's all folks! We will continue with our summary next week.