ACT I, SCENE 3

Summary

In this scene, Laertes is saying goodbye to Ophelia, his sister, before he departs for France. Acting As a concerned and bossy older brother, he warns Ophelia not to reciprocate Hamlet's advances and

Professions of love, reminding her that princes are not free to choose their own wives. Ophelia accepts Laertes' advice with reluctance.Polonius enters and gives his son some last minute advice about his conduct abroad. As Laertes leaves, he reminds Ophelia to follow his advice. Polonius immediately asks Ophelia what her brother has been talking to her about and is pleased to hear that Laertes has discussed Hamlet with her. This provides Polonius with an opportunity to talk to his daughter himself. Ophelia admits that

Hamlet has expressed his love for her on many occasions. Unlike Laertes, who never doubts the genuine nature of Hamlet's feelings for Ophelia, Polonius scoffs at the idea that Hamlet's love is true and tells Ophelia that she is too young and inexperienced to see the Prince's insincerity.

Ophelia tries in vain to assert the honorable nature of Hamlet's love, but Polonius cannot be convinced. He tells her to be more reserved in her associations with men and forbids her from meeting Hamlet again. Ophelia, a dutiful daughter, obediently agrees to do so.

Notes

In this scene, Ophelia (the daughter of Polonius, the sister of Laertes, and the sweetheart of Hamlet) is introduced in person for the first time. It becomes apparent through Laertes' conversation with her that she Is the object of Hamlet's true affection. Laertes, however, is anxious to protect Ophelia from Hamlet, believing a union between them will never happen. Laertes explains the reason why Ophelia should discourage the advances of the Prince. He says that Hamlet, as a royal figure, is not at liberty to choose his own wife, who will become the future queen. As a public figure, he is simply not entitled to a personal life, for the safety of Denmark will depend upon him. Additionally, Laertes, as a concerned big brother, warns Ophelia to guard her virginity. Ophelia accepts Laertes' advice with a hint of irony, telling him that he wants her to travel a steep and thorny way to heaven while he goes off to have fun.This ironic reply shows Ophelia's sense of humor and loving acceptance of her brother's ways; It also points out that Laertes is known for being a bit wild. Polonius himself gives Laertes advice

About curbing his conduct during his travels and later he will dispatch Reynaldo to spy on Laertes' conduct, certain that It is less than proper.

Being a man of the world, Polonius thinks that Hamlet intends to deceive Ophelia. When Ophelia talks about Hamlet's love, he has a rebuttal. When Ophelia says that Hamlet has made "many tenders / Of affection," Polonius develops it into a derogatory meaning of "offer for contract." When she asserts that Hamlet has protested his love in honorable fashion, her father dismisses his vows as fraudulent, like a snare set as "springs to catch woodcocks." He claims that Hamlet's vows are "mere implorators of unholy suits" that presumably have the sole goal of obtaining Ophelia's " chaste treasure." Obviously, Polonius is exceedingly suspicious by nature. The fact that he doubts Hamlet makes him appear foolish to the audience, for everyone, including Laertes, recognizes

Hamlet's depth of feeling for Ophelia. She, however, is an obedient daughter and agrees to her father's wishes for her not to see Hamlet again.

n Act 1, Scene 3 of Shakespeare's Hamlet, several literary techniques are employed to develop characters and themes. Here are some key techniques used in this scene: 1. Dialogue and Characterization - The conversation between Laertes and Ophelia reveals their relationship and individual personalities. Laertes gives Ophelia advice about her relationship with Hamlet, demonstrating his protective nature and setting up Ophelia's vulnerability. 2. Foreshadowing - Laertes warns Ophelia about Hamlet's affections, hinting at the complexities of their relationship and foreshadowing the turmoil that will arise later in the play. 3. Imagery - The use of imagery, particularly in Laertes' advice, creates vivid pictures that enhance the emotional weight of his warnings. For example, he advises Ophelia to guard her heart, suggesting the dangers of romantic entanglement. 4. Symbolism - Ophelia’s character represents innocence and the conflict between familial duty and personal desire. Her interactions with Laertes and Polonius symbolize the pressures placed on her by her family. 5. Themes of Advice and Caution - The conversation emphasizes themes of trust and deception, as Laertes and Polonius both caution Ophelia about Hamlet, reflecting the wider themes of appearance versus reality in the play. 6. Motif of Madness - This scene begins to introduce the motif of madness, as Ophelia's later descent into madness can be traced back to the pressures and warnings she receives about love and loyalty. 7. Irony - There is an irony in Laertes' advice; while he warns Ophelia to be wary of Hamlet, the audience knows that Hamlet is also struggling with his own turmoil and madness.