

# Polonius' Advice to Laertes

*Hamlet I, iii, 55-81*

## LORD POLONIUS

Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame! 55

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,  
And you are stay'd for.

The ship is leaving soon and you're standing there  
There; my blessing with thee!

You have my blessing

And these few precepts in thy memory  
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportioned thought his act. 60  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.

Act appropriately and rationally at all times

Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledged comrade. Try your best to keep your  
friends, but don't give them too many chances?

Beware 65

Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,  
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.  
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.

Don't fight unnecessary battles, especially those that you are unsure  
of the outcome. Listen more than you talk

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70  
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;

For the apparel oft proclaims the man,  
Don't chop money on material goods  
And they in France of the best rank and station  
Are of a most select and generous chief in that.

Leave that for the French

Neither a borrower nor a lender be; 75  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

Be in control of your own wealth, dont lend nor borrow

This above all: to thine ownself be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80  
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Be true to yourself and change yourself for nobody but yourself