

## Act IV, Scene v

### Gloucester's castle

Enter REGAN and OSWALD

REGAN

But are my brother's powers set forth?

"set forth" = *on the march*

OSWALD

Ay, madam.

REGAN

Himself in person there?

OSWALD

Madam, with much ado.

"with much ado" = *after much bother and persuasion. (Albany is evidently unsure where his loyalties should lie.)*

Your sister is the better soldier.

REGAN

Lord Edmund spake not with your lord at home?

OSWALD

No, madam.

"What might ... to him?" = *Why was my sister writing to him?*

REGAN

What might import my sister's letter to him?

OSWALD

I know not, lady.

"Faith, he ... serious matter" = *Indeed, he has ridden away in a hurry to deal with important business*

REGAN

Faith, he is posted hence on serious matter.  
It was great ignorance, Gloucester's eyes being out,  
To let him live. Where he arrives he moves  
All hearts against us. Edmund, I think, is gone,  
In pity of his misery, to dispatch  
His nighted life. Moreover, to descry  
The strength o' the enemy.

"ignorance" = *political folly*

"Where he ... against us" = *Wherever he goes, his pitiable condition will cause people to despise us*

"In pity of" = *taking pity on*

"dispatch" = *put an end to*

"nighted" = *darkened (because he is blind)*

"descry ... the enemy" = *determine the size of the French army*

OSWALD

I must needs after him, madam, with my letter.

"I must needs after" = *I need to go after*

REGAN

Our troops set forth tomorrow. Stay with us.  
The ways are dangerous.

OSWALD

I may not, madam.

My lady charg'd my duty in this business.

"charg'd my duty" = *insisted that I do faithfully what she commanded*

REGAN

Why should she write to Edmund? Might not you  
Transport her purposes by word? Belike,  
Some things—I know not what. I'll love thee much.  
Let me unseal the letter.

"Belike" = *probably*

"I'll love thee much" = *I'll be grateful to you (and will show her gratitude)*

OSWALD

Madam, I had rather—

REGAN

I know your lady does not love her husband.  
I am sure of that. And at her late being here  
She gave strange oellads and most speaking looks  
To noble Edmund. I know you are of her bosom.

"at her late being here" = *when she was here recently*

"oelliads" = *loving glances. (The word is pronounced eeliads.)*

"of her bosom" = *in her confidence*

OSWALD

I, madam?

REGAN

I speak in understanding. Y'are. I know't.  
Therefore I do advise you, take this note.  
My lord is dead. Edmund and I have talk'd,  
And more convenient is he for my hand  
Than for your lady's. You may gather more.  
If you do find him, pray you, give him this.  
And when your mistress hears thus much from you,  
I pray, desire her call her wisdom to her.  
So, fare you well.  
If you do chance to hear of that blind traitor,  
Preferment falls on him that cuts him off.

"I speak in understanding. Y'are" = *I know what I am talking about. You are*

"more convenient is he for my hand" = *more fitting is it that he should marry me (i.e. because Regan is a now a widow, while Goneril's husband is still alive)*

"You may gather more" = *You can come to other conclusions on your own*

"give him this" – Regan gives Oswald some token, perhaps a ring, to convey to Edmund.

"thus much" = *what I have told you*

"desire her call her wisdom to her" = *tell her to come to her senses*

"Preferment falls on him that cuts him off" = *a promotion will come to the man who kills Gloucester*

OSWALD

Would I could meet him, madam, I should show  
What party I do follow.

"Would" = *I wish*

REGAN

Fare thee well.

*Exeunt*