SCENE. Another room in the castle.

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS, attended)

KING CLAUDIUS
I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.  
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!  
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:  
He's loved of the distracted multitude,  
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;  
And where tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,  
But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,  
This sudden sending him away must seem  
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown  
By desperate appliance are relieved,  
Or not at all.

(Enter ROSENCRANTZ)

How now! what hath befall'n?

ROSENCRANTZ  
Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,  
We cannot get from him.

KING CLAUDIUS  
But where is he?

ROSENCRANTZ  
Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

KING CLAUDIUS  
Bring him before us.
ROSENCRANTZ
Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

(Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN)

KING CLAUDIUS
Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

HAMLET
At supper.

KING CLAUDIUS
At supper! where?

HAMLET
Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service, two dishes, but to one table: that's the end.

KING CLAUDIUS
Alas, alas!

HAMLET
A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and cat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

KING CLAUDIUS
What dost you mean by this?
HAMLET
Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

KING CLAUDIUS
Where is Polonius?

HAMLET
In heaven; send hither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

KING CLAUDIUS
[To some Attendants] Go seek him there.

HAMLET
He will stay till ye come.

(Exeunt Attendants)

KING CLAUDIUS
Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself; The bark is ready, and the wind at help, The associates tend, and every thing is bent For England.

HAMLET
For England!
KING CLAUDIUS
Ay, Hamlet.

HAMLET
Good.

KING CLAUDIUS
So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

HAMLET
I see a cherub that sees them. But, come; for England! Farewell, dear mother.

KING CLAUDIUS
Thy loving father, Hamlet.

HAMLET
My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother. Come, for England!

(Exit)

KING CLAUDIUS
Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard; Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night: Away! for every thing is seal'd and done That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.

(Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN)

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught— As my great power thereof may give thee sense, Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red After the Danish sword, and thy free awe Pays homage to us—thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

(Exit)