





HAMLET

HAMLET

William Shakespeare

Design

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Text

1599 William Shakespeare

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CREDITS

Minion

Robert Slimbach . 1990 . Adobe Systems

Futura

Paul Renner, Edwin Shaar . 1927 .
Bauer Type Foundry, Neufville Digital

Gill Sans

Eric Gill . 1926 . Monotype

Rockwell

Frank Hinman Pierpont . 1934 . Monotype

Garamond

Claude Garamond . 1913

HAMLET

William Shakespeare

ACT I

scene I

Elsinore

A platform before the castle

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO

BERNARDO

Who's there?

FRANCISCO

Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO

Long live the king!

FRANCISCO

Bernardo?

BERNARDO

He.

FRANCISCO

You come most carefully upon your hour.

BERNARDO

'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO

For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

BERNARDO

Have you had quiet guard?

FRANCISCO

Not a mouse stirring.

BERNARDO

Well, good night.
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

FRANCISCO

I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who's there?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

HORATIO

Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS

And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO

Give you good night.

MARCELLUS

O, farewell, honest soldier:
Who hath relieved you?

FRANCISCO

Bernardo has my place.
Give you good night.

Exit

MARCELLUS

Holla! Bernardo!

BERNARDO

Say,
What, is Horatio there?

HORATIO

A piece of him.

BERNARDO

Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

MARCELLUS

What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

BERNARDO

I have seen nothing.

MARCELLUS

Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have entreated him along
With us to watch the minutes of this night;
That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

HORATIO

Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

BERNARDO

Sit down awhile;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story
What we have two nights seen.

HORATIO

Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

BERNARDO

Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one,-

Enter Ghost

Hamlet

MARCELLUS

Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

BERNARDO

In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

MARCELLUS

Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

BERNARDO

Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

HORATIO

Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

BERNARDO

It would be spoke to.

MARCELLUS

Question it, Horatio.

HORATIO

What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? by heaven I charge thee, speak!

MARCELLUS

It is offended.

BERNARDO

See, it stalks away!

HORATIO

Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

Exit Ghost

MARCELLUS

'Tis gone, and will not answer.

BERNARDO

How now, Horatio! you tremble and look pale:
Is not this something more than fantasy?
What think you on't?

HORATIO

Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

MARCELLUS

Is it not like the king?

HORATIO

As thou art to thyself:
Such was the very armour he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

MARCELLUS

Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

HORATIO

In what particular thought to work I know not;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

MARCELLUS

Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,

And foreign mart for implements of war;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:
Who is't that can inform me?

HORATIO

That can I;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet—
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him—
Did slay this Fortinbras; who by a seal'd compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldry,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanquisher; as, by the same covenant,
And carriage of the article design'd,
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolutes,
For food and diet, to some enterprise
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other—
As it doth well appear unto our state—
But to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

BERNARDO

I think it be no other but e'en so:

Well may it sort that this portentous figure
Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
That was and is the question of these wars.

HORATIO

A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets:
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse:
And even the like precurse of fierce events,
As harbingers preceding still the fates
And prologue to the omen coming on,
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
Unto our climatures and countrymen.—
But soft, behold! lo, where it comes again!

Re-enter Ghost

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:
If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
Speak to me:

Cock crows

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, happily, foreknowing may avoid, O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

Hamlet

MARCELLUS

Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

HORATIO

Do, if it will not stand.

BERNARDO

'Tis here!

HORATIO

'Tis here!

MARCELLUS

'Tis gone!

Exit Ghost

We do it wrong, being so majestic,
To offer it the show of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

BERNARDO

It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

HORATIO

And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
The extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine: and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

MARCELLUS

It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes

Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

HORATIO

So have I heard and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill:
Break we our watch up; and by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

MARCELLUS

Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently.

Exeunt

William Shakespeare

And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons.

-Hamlet

ACT I

scene II

A room of state in the castle

*Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants*

KING CLAUDIUS

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,-
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,-
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Colleagued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,-fontboo
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,-to suppress

His further gait herein; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject: and we here dispatch
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway;
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope
Of these delated articles allow.
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

CORNELIUS VOLTIMAND

In that and all things will we show our duty.

KING CLAUDIUS

We doubt it nothing: heartily farewell.

Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, Laertes?
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
And loose your **voice**: what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?
The head is not more native to the heart,
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

LAERTES

My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To show my duty in your coronation,
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

KING CLAUDIUS

Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

LORD POLONIUS

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
By laboursome petition, and at last
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent:
I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

KING CLAUDIUS

Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,–

HAMLET

[Aside] A little more than **kin**, and less than kind.

KING CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET

Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the sun.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis **common**; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

HAMLET

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy **suspuration** of forced breath,

Hamlet

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,
That can denote me truly: these indeed seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within which passeth show;
These but the trappings and the suits of **woe**.

KING CLAUDIUS

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to your father:
But, you must know, your father lost a father;
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound
In filial obligation for some term
To do obsequious sorrow: but to persever
In obstinate condolment is a course
Of **impious** stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
For what we know must be and is as common
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
Why should we in our peevish opposition
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the **dead**, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd: whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
This unprevailing woe, and think of us
As of a father: for let the world take note,
You are the most immediate to our throne;
And with no less **nobility** of love
Than that which dearest father bears his son,
Do I impart toward you. For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire:
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our **chiefest** courtier, cousin, and our son.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Let not thy mother lose her **prayers**, Hamlet:
I pray thee, stay with us; go not to Wittenberg.

HAMLET

I shall in all my best obey you, **madam**.

KING CLAUDIUS

Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply:
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come;
This gentle and unforced accord of **Hamlet**
Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens all **bruit** again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

Exeunt all but HAMLET

HAMLET

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-**slaughter**! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months **dead**: nay, not so much, not two:
So excellent a king; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not betwixt the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. **Heaven** and earth!
Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: and yet, within a month-
Let me not think on't-Frailty, thy name is woman!-
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,

Like Niobe, all **tears**:—why she, even she—
O, God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: within a month:
Ere yet the salt of most **unrighteous** tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good:
But break, my **heart**; for I must hold my tongue.

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO

HORATIO

Hail to your lordship!

HAMLET

I am glad to see you well:
Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

HORATIO

The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

HAMLET

Sir, my good **friend**; I'll change that name with you:
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? Marcellus?

MARCELLUS

My **good** lord—

HAMLET

I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

HORATIO

A truant disposition, good my lord.

HAMLET

I would not hear your enemy say so,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know you are no truant.
But what is your affair in **Elsinore**?
We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

HORATIO

My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

HAMLET

I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student;
I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

HORATIO

Indeed, my **lord**, it follow'd hard upon.

HAMLET

Thrift, thrift,	in heaven
Horatio!	Or ever
the funeral	I had seen
baked meats	that day,
Did coldly	Horatio!
furnish forth	My
the marriage	father!—
tables.	methinks
Would I	I see my
had met my	father.
dearest foe	

HORATIO

Where, my lord?

HAMLET

In my **mind's eye**, Horatio.

HORATIO

I saw him once; he was a goodly **KING**.

HAMLET

He was a **man**, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hamlet

HORATIO

My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

HAMLET

Saw? who?

HORATIO

My lord, the king your father.

HAMLET

The king my father!

HORATIO

Season your **admiration** for awhile

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

HAMLET

For God's love, let me hear.

HORATIO

Two nights together had these GENTLEMEN,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,

Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his **truncheon's** length; whilst they, distilled
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did;

And I with them the third night kept the **watch**;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The **apparition** comes: I knew your FATHER;
These hands are not more like.

HAMLET

But where was this?

MARCELLUS

My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

HAMLET

Did you not speak to it?

HORATIO

My lord, I did;
But answer made it nope: yet once **methought**
It lifted up its **head** and did address
Itself to *m o t i o n*, like as it would speak;
But even then the **morning** cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrank in haste **away**,
And **vanish'd** from our sight.

HAMLET

'Tis very strange.

HORATIO

As I do ^{live}, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;
And we did think it writ ^{dowⁿ} in our duty
To let you know of it.

HAMLET

Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this **troubles** me.
Hold you the watch to-night?

MARCELLUS BERNARDO

We do, my lord.

HAMLET

Arm'd, say you?

MARCELLUS BERNARDO

Arm'd, my lord.

HAMLET

From top to toe?

MARCELLUS BERNARDO

My lord, from ^{head} to ^{foot}.

HAMLET

Then saw you not his **face**?

HORATIO

O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver ^{UP}.

HAMLET

What, look'd he frowningly?

HORATIO

A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

HAMLET

Pale or **red**?

HORATIO

Nay, very pale.

HAMLET

And fix'd his eyes upon you?

HORATIO

Most constantly.

HAMLET

I would I had been there.

HORATIO

It would have much **amazed** you.

HAMLET

Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

HORATIO

While one with **moderate haste** might tell a HUNDRED.

MARCELLUS BERNARDO

Longer, l o n g e r.

HORATIO

Not when I saw't.

HAMLET

His beard was **grizzled**-no?

HORATIO

It was, as I have seen it in his **life**,
A sable silver'd.

HAMLET

I will watch to-night;
Perchance 'twill walk again.

HORATIO

I warrant it will.

HAMLET

If it **assume** my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,

Let it be tenable in your silence **still**;

And whatsoever else shall hap ^{to-night},
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:

I will requite your loves. So, fare you **well**:

Upon the platform, **'twixt eleven and twelve**,
I'll visit you.

All

Our duty to YOUR honour.

Hamlet

HAMLET

Your *loves*, as mine to you: *farewell*.

Exeunt all but HAMLET

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;

I doubt some **foul play**: would the night were come!

Till then sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise,

Exit

William Shakespeare

| The memory be green.

-Hamlet

ACT I

scene III

A room in Polonius' house

Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA

LAERTES

My necessaries are
embark'd: **farewell:**

And, sister, as the
winds give benefit

OPHELIA

Do you *doubt* that?

And convoy is as-
sistant, do not sleep,

But let me hear

LAERTES

from you.
to gnillint ert bno telmoH 1o7

,uovot zih

γot o bno noirzot o ti bloH

bold ni

toiv A

ntuoy ent ni

,euton ymitq to

OPHELIA

No more but so?

,tneonmeq ton ,browio7

,gnitzal ton ,**sewa**

LAERTES

Think it no more;

-ilqpuz bno emutheq ertT

.eom ol7 ;etunim o 7o ecrno

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone

In thews and bulk, but, as this temple waxes,

The inward service of the mind and soul

Grows wide withal. Perhaps

he **loves** you now,

And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch

The virtue of his will: but you must fear,

weigh'd, his will is not his own;
His **GREATNESS**

For he himself is subject to his birth:

He may not, as unvalued persons do,

Carve for himself; for on his choice

depends

The safety and health of this whole state;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof he is the head. Then if he says

he loves you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed; which is

no further

Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
 Then **weigh** what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent **ear** you list his

songs,

Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd **importunity**.
 Fear it, **Ophelia**, fear it, my dear sister,
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough,
 If she unmask her ^{beauty} to the moon:

spring,

Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes:
 The canker galls the infants of the
 Too oft before their buttons be disclosed,
 And in the morn and liquid dew of **youth**
 Contagious blastments are most im-

minent.

BE WARY THEN; BEST SAFETY LIES IN **FEAR**:
 YOUTH TO ITSELF REBELS, THOUGH NONE ELSE **NEAR**.

OPHELIA

I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some **ungracious** pastors do,
 Show me the steep and **thorny** way to heaven;
 Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance **treads**,
 And recks not his own rede.

LAERTES

O, fear me not.
 I stay too long: but here my father comes.

Enter **POLONIUS**

A double **blessing** is a double grace,
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

LORD POLONIUS

Yet here, **Laertes!** aboard, aboard, for shame!
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
 And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
 And these few precepts in thy **memory**
 See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
 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. Beware
 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.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not express'd in *fancy*; **rich**, not **gaudy**;
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
 And they in France of the best rank and station
 Are of a most select and generous chief in that.
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 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.
 Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

Hamlet

LAERTES

Most **humbly** do I take my leave, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

The time invites you; go; your **servants** tend.

LAERTES

Farewell, Ophelia; and **remember** well
What I have said to you.

OPHELIA

'Tis in my **memory** lock'd,
And you yourself shall keep the **key** of it.

LAERTES

Farewell.

Exit

LORD POLONIUS

What is't, Ophelia, be
hath said to you?

OPHELIA

My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.

OPHELIA

So please you, some-
thing **touching** the lord
Hamlet.

LORD POLONIUS

Marry, well bethought:

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and **bounte-**
ous:

If it be so, as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of **caution**, I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so
clearly

As it behoves my **daughter** and your honour.
What is between you? give me up the truth.

OPHELIA

He hath, my lord, of late made many **tenders**
Of his affection to me.

LORD POLONIUS

Affection! pooh! you speak like a GREEN GIRL,
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
Do you believe his **tenders**, as you call them?

OPHELIA

I do not know, my **LORD**, what I should **think**.

LORD POLONIUS

Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a **baby**;
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly;
Or-not to **crack** the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus-you'll tender me a fool.

LORD POLONIUS

Ay, **fashion** you may call it; **GO TO, GO TO.**

OPHELIA

And hath given
countenance to
his speech, my lord,
With almost all the
holy vows of heaven.

LORD POLONIUS

Ay, springes to catch **woodcocks**. I do know,
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows: these blazes, daughter,
more light than heat, **extinct** in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. From this time
Be somewhat scancer of your **maiden** presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a **command** to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
Believe so much in him, that he is young
And with a larger **tether** may he walk
Than may be given you: in few, Ophelia,

Do not
believe
his vows; for they are
brokers,
Not of that dye which their investments show,
But mere implorators of unholy suits,
like sanctified and
pious bawds,
The better to beguile. This is
for all:
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
Have you so **slander** any moment leisure,
As to give words or talk with the **Lord Hamlet**.
Look to't, I charge you: come your ways.

OPHELIA

I shall obey, my **LORD**.

Exeunt

ACT I

scene IV

The platform

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS

HAMLET

The air bites shrewdly; it is very **cold**.

HORATIO

It is a *nipping* and an eager air.

HAMLET

What hour now?

HORATIO

I think it lacks of twelve.

HAMLET

No, it is struck.

HAMLET

The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his **draughts** of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

HORATIO

Is it a custom?

**That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!**
William Shakespeare

Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell

HAMLET

Ay, marry, is't:

But to my **mind**, though I am native here

And to the manner born, it is a custom

More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

This heavy-headed revel east and west

Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:

They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase

Soil our addition; and indeed it takes

From our achievements, though perform'd at height,

The pith and marrow of our attribute.

**So, oft it chances in particular men,
That for some vicious mole of nature in them,**

HORATIO

Indeed? I heard it not: then it
draws near the season

Wherein the spirit held his
wont to walk.

A flourish of trumpets, and ord-
nance shot off, **within**

What does this mean, my
lord?

Shall in the general censure take corruption

From that particular fault: the dram of eale

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt

To his own scandal.

HORATIO

Look, my lord, it comes!

Enter Ghost

HAMLET

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

**Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape**

HORATIO

It beckons you to go away with it,

As if it some impartment did desire

To you **alone**.

MARCELLUS

HORATIO

No, by no means .

HAMLET

It will not speak; then I will follow it.

HORATIO

Do not, my lord.

HAMLET

Hamlet

When they are not guilty,
To lose his origin-
The pale complexion,
the pales and forts of reason,
Too much o'er-leavens
The manners, that these men,
The sign of one defect,
The fortune's star,-
As pure as grace,
Undergo-

HORATIO

What if it tempt
You toward the flood, my
lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness? think of it:

That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

HAMLET

It waves me still.
Go on; I'll follow thee.

MARCELLUS

You shall not go, my lord.

Hold off your hands.

HORATIO

Be ruled; you shall not go.

What should be the fear?
To set my life in a pin's fee;
My soul, what can it do to that,
The thing **IMMORTAL** as itself?
Send me forth again: I'll follow it.

Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET

HORATIO

He waxes desperate with imagination.

MARCELLUS

Why thy canonized bones, hearsed in death,
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre,
Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
Hath oped his ponderous and marble jaws,
To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
Making night hideous; and we fools of nature
So horridly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the
reaches of our souls? **MARCELLUS**

Say, why is this? where-
fore? what should we
do?

Something is ROTTEN in the state of Denmark.

HORATIO

MARCELLUS

Nay, let's follow him.

Exeunt

HAMLET

HAMLET

With every elvish, airy, and
nimble spirit of the air,
The very place but of separation

Heaven will direct it.

When the blood burns,
how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows.

-Hamlet

ACT I

scene V

Another part of the **platform**

Enter GHOST and HAMLET

HAMLET

Where wilt thou lead me? **Speak**; I'll go no further.

Ghost

Mark me.

HAMLET

I will.

G h o s t

My **hour** is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost!

G h o s t

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall **unfold**.

HAMLET

Speak; I am bound to hear.

G h o s t

So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

What?

Ghost

I am thy father's spirit,
 Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
 And for the day confined to fast in fires,
 Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
 Are burnt and purged away. But that I am forbid
 To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
 I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
 Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
 Thy knotted and combined locks to part
 And each particular hair to stand on end,
 Like quills upon the fretful porpentine:
 But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love-

O God!

G h o s t
 Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET

Murder!

G h o s t
 MURDER most foul, as in the best it is;
 But this most foul, strange and *unnatural*.

Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
 As meditation or the thoughts of love,
 May sweep to my revenge.

G h o s t

HAMLET

If I find thee apt,
 And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
 That roots itself in ease on lethargy, half,
 Wouldst thou rest in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
 'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
 A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
 Is by a forged process of my death
 Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,
 The serpent that did sting thy father's life
 Now wears his crown.

HAMLET

O my prophetic soul!
 My uncle!

Ghost

HAMLET

Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
 With traitorous whistles, with traitorous sighs,
 Ow'd to my father, had he not my uncle's bed,
 Solicit'd my mother, he had been still
 The king: my mother's sister, and my aunt,
 O that he had not profan'd the womb
 Of me, whose bed was his incest's bed,
 That went hand in hand, and white and
 In marriage made, and made the bed
 Upon which I was bred, and made the bed
 To be a bed
 But white as snow, and white as snow,
 Though he was cut in the shape of heaven,
 So I thought to be cut in the shape of heaven,
 Whose bed was his incest's bed,
 And my incest's bed,
 But still he thinks the marriage,
 But still he thinks the marriage,
 My incest's bed, and my incest's bed,
 Upon my incest's bed, and my incest's bed,
 Whose bed was his incest's bed,
 And in the bed of my incest's bed,

HAMLET

Hamlet

The peace that's woven
 Hiss'd in my ear, which doth from
 This scolded cause hang
 Their judgments by the body,
 And whoside in guard pass
 And leag'd dipping
 The hard who's red blood
 And am in the table
 Make, while I do some
 Ah, my mad body
 This was being by
 Of down, down, down
 Cude in the blood
 Uth and disappointed
 No being made, but
 Whom in the
 O, table, O, table
 Frustrated in the
 In the table
 By the
 In the
 Against the
 And the
 To the
 The
 And
 Adieu, adieu!

A couch for luxury and damned **incest**

Exit

HAMLET

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
 That youth and observation copied there;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned

My tables,—meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain,
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark:

Writing

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
 It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
 I have sworn 't.

MARCELLUS HORATIO

[With Him]

My lord, my lord,—

MARCELLUS

[With Him]

Lord Hamlet,—

HORATIO

[With Him]

Heaven secure HIM!

HAMLET

So be it!

HORATIO

[With Him] **Hillo, Ho, Ho,** my lord!

ou host of heaven! O earth! what else?
 all I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
 u, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 ar me stiffly up. Remember thee!
 u poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 distracted globe. Remember thee!
 om the table of my memory

Hillo, Ho, Ho, boy! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS

MARCELLUS

How is't, my noble lord?

HORATIO

What news, my lord?

O, wonderful!

HORATIO

Good my lord, tell it.

HAMLET

No; you'll

HORATIO

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord.

man once think it?

How say you, then; would heart of
But you'll be secret?

HORATIO MARCELLUS

Ay, by heaven, my lord.

There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.

HORATIO

HAMLET

There needs no
my lord, come from the grave
To tell us this.

HAMLET

Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:
You, as your business and desire shall point you;
For every man has business and desire,
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

HAMLET

HORATIO

These are but *wild and whirling* words, my lord.

HAMLET

I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, 'faith heartily.

HORATIO

There's no offence, my lord.

HAMLET

Yes, by Saint
Patrick, but there is,
Horatio,
And much offence
too. **Touching**

this vision
here,

It is an **honest**
ghost, that let me tell
you:

For your desire

HAMLET

to know what is
between us,
O'ermaster 't as
you may. And now,
good friends,
As you are friends,
scholars and soldiers,
Give me one ~~request~~
request.

HAMLET

NEVER

HAMLET

HORATIO

What is't, my lord? we will.

Hamlet

The **HORATIO MARCELLUS**
 My lord, we will not.

time is **HORATIO**
 Nay, but swear't.

out of **HORATIO**
 In faith,
 My lord, not ✓

joint: **MARCELLUS**
 Nor I, my lord, in

OW
 upon my sword.

cursed **MARCELLUS**
 We have sworn, my lord, already.

spite, **HORATIO**
 Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

That **Ghost**
 [Beneath] Swear.

ever **HORATIO**
 Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,
 truepenny?
 Come on—you hear this fellow in the cellarage—
 Consent to swear.

I was **HORATIO**
 Propose the oath, my lord.

born **HORATIO**
 Never to speak of this that you have seen,
 Swear by my sword.

to set it **Ghost**
 [Beneath] Swear.

right!

HAMLET

Hic et ubique? then we'll shift our ground.

Come hither, gentlemen,

HAMLET

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost

[Beneath] Swear.

HAMLET

Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so fast?

HAMLET

A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

HORATIO

O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

HAMLET

And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

HAMLET

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,

Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,

As I **perchance** hereafter shall think meet

HAMLET

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this headshake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,

As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'

Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know aught of me: this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you, Swear.

HAMLET

Ghost

[Beneath] **Swear.**

H

HAMLET

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!

They swear
So, gentlemen,
With all my LOVE I do commend me to you:

May do, to **express** his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your **fingers** on your **lips**, I pray.
Nay, come, let's go together.

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

Exeunt

ACT II

scene I

A room in POLONIUS' house.

Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO

LORD POLONIUS

Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

REYNALDO

I will, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquire
Of his behavior.

REYNALDO

My lord, I did intend it.

LORD POLONIUS

Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him: ' do you mark this, Reynaldo?

REYNALDO

Ay, very well, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

'And in part him; but' you may say 'not well:
But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;

Addicted so and so:’ and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

REYNALDO

As gaming, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing: you may go so far.

REYNALDO

My lord, that would dishonour him.

LORD POLONIUS

’Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That’s not my meaning: but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

REYNALDO

But, my good lord,—

LORD POLONIUS

Wherefore should you do this?

REYNALDO

Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

LORD POLONIUS

Marry, sir, here’s my drift;

And I believe, it is a fetch of wit:
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As ’twere a thing a little soil’d i’ the working, Mark you,
Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assured
He closes with you in this consequence;
’Good sir,’ or so, or ’friend,’ or ’gentleman,’
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

REYNALDO

Very good, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

And then, sir, does he this—he does—what was I
about to say? By the mass, I was about to say
something: where did I leave?

REYNALDO

At ’closes in the consequence,’ at ’friend or so,’
and ’gentleman.’

LORD POLONIUS

At ’closes in the consequence,’ ay, marry;
He closes thus: ’I know the gentleman;
I saw him yesterday, or t’ other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was a’ gaming; there o’ertook in’s rouse;
There falling out at tennis.’ or perchance,
’I saw him enter such a house of sale,’
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.
See you now;
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses and with assays of bias,
By indirections find directions out:
So by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not?

Hamlet

REYNALDO

My lord, I have.

LORD POLONIUS

God be wi' you; fare you well.

REYNALDO

Good my lord!

LORD POLONIUS

Observe his inclination in yourself.

REYNALDO

I shall, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

And let him ply his music.

REYNALDO

Well, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

Farewell!

Exit REYNALDO

Enter OPHELIA

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

OPHELIA

O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

LORD POLONIUS

With what, i' the name of God?

OPHELIA

My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ankle;
Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
And with a look so piteous in purport
As if he had been loosed out of hell
To speak of horrors,—he comes before me.

LORD POLONIUS

Mad for thy love?

OPHELIA

My lord, I do not know;
But truly, I do fear it.

LORD POLONIUS

What said he?

OPHELIA

He took me by the wrist and held me hard;
Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
He falls to such perusal of my face
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so;
At last, a little shaking of mine arm
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,
He raised a sigh so piteous and profound
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being: that done, he lets me go:
And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
For out o' doors he went without their helps,
And, to the last, bended their light on me.

LORD POLONIUS

Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.
This is the very ecstasy of love,
Whose violent property fordoes itself
And leads the will to desperate undertakings
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

OPHELIA

No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his fetters and denied
His access to me.

LORD POLONIUS

That hath made him mad.
I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle,
And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known; which, being kept close, might move
More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

Exeunt

ACT II

scene II

A room in the castle.

Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants

KING CLAUDIUS

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!
Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need we have to use you did provoke
Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's ^{transformation}; so call it,
Sith nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be,
More than his father's ^{death}, that thus hath put him
So much from the understanding of himself,
I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
That, being of so young days brought up with him,
And sith so neighbour'd to his youth and havior,
That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
Some little time: so by your companies
To draw him on to ^{pleasures}, and to gather,
So much as from occasion you may glean,
Whether aught, to us unknown, ^{afflicts} him thus,
That, open'd, ^{lies} within our remedy.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you;
And sure I am two men there are not living
To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
To show us so much ^{will}
As to expend your time with us awhile,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
Your ^{visitation} shall receive such thanks
As fits a king's remembrance.

ROSENCRANTZ

Both your majesties
Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

GUILDENSTERN

But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz:
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

GUILDENSTERN

Heavens make our presence and our practises
Pleasant and helpful to him!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Ay, amen!

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and some Attendants

Enter POLONIUS

LORD POLONIUS

The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thou still hast been the father of good news.

LORD POLONIUS

Have I, my lord? I assure my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king:
And I do think, or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

KING CLAUDIUS

O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

LORD POLONIUS

Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

Exit POLONIUS

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I doubt it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

KING CLAUDIUS

Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS

Welcome, my good friends!
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

VOLTIMAND

Most fair return of greetings and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress

Hamlet

His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: whereat grieved,

That so his sickness, age and impotence
Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from ^{Norway}, and in fine
Makes vow before his uncle never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
And his commission to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shown,
Giving a ^{paper}
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprise,
On such regards of safety and allowance
As therein are set down.

KING CLAUDIUS

It likes us well;
And at our more consider'd time well read,
Answer, and think upon this business.
Meantime we thank you for your wellhook labour:
Go to your rest; at night we'll ^{feast} together:
Most welcome home!

Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS

LORD POLONIUS

This business is well ended.
My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, ^{night night}, and time is time,
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,

I will be brief: your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

More **matter**, with less art.

LORD POLONIUS

Madam, I swear I use no art at
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a **foe**
But farewell it, for I will use no c
Mad let us grant him, then: and
That we find out the cause of thi c
Or rather say, the cause of this c
For this effect ^{defective} comes b
Thus it remains, and the remainc
I have a daughter-have while st
Who, in her duty and obedienc
Hath given me this: now gather,

Reads

'To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia,'-
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is
a **vile** phrase: but you shall hear. Thus:

Reads

'In her excellent white bosom, these, & c.'

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Came this from Hamlet to her?

LORD POLONIUS

Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

Reads

'Doubt thou the **stars** are fire;

Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love.
'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers;
I have not art to reckon my groans: but that
I love thee ^{best}, O most ^{best} believe it. Adieu.
'Thine evermore most dear lady, whilst
this machine is to him, HAMLET.'

all.
'tis pity; ^{obedience} As they fell out by time, by means and place,
figure given to mine ^{ear}.

now remain **KING CLAUDIUS**
s effect, But how hath she
defect, Received his love?

y cause:
der thus. **LORD POLONIUS**
ie is mine- What do you think of me?

e, mark,
and surmise **KING CLAUDIUS**
As of a man faithful and honourable.

LORD POLONIUS
I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
When I had seen this hot love on the wing-
As I perceived it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me-what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
If I had play'd the desk or table-book,

Or given my ^{heart} a winking, mute
and dumb,

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round to

work,
And my young ^{mistress} thus I did bespeak:

'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star;
This must not be:' and then I precepts gave

her,
That she should lock herself from his

resort,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;
And he, repulsed-a short tale to make-
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a watch, thence into a ^{weakness}
Thence to a lightness and, by this declension,
Into the ^{madness} wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

KING CLAUDIUS
Do you think 'tis this?

QUEEN GERTRUDE
It may be, very likely.

LORD POLONIUS
Hath there been such a time-I'd fain know that-
That I have ^{positively} said 'Tis so,'
When it proved otherwise?

KING CLAUDIUS
Not that I know.

LORD POLONIUS
[Pointing to his head and shoulder]
Take this from this, if this be otherwise:
If ^{circumstances} lead me, I will find
Where ^{truth} is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

KING CLAUDIUS ^{further?}
How may we try it

LORD POLONIUS
You know, sometimes he walks four hours together
Here in the ^{lobby}.

QUEEN GERTRUDE
So he does indeed.

LORD POLONIUS

At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;

Hamlet Think the encounter: if he love her not

And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,

Let me be no assistant for a state,

But keep a

farm carters.

KING CLAUDIUS

We will try it.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

But, look, where the wretch comes reading.
sadly the poor

LORD POLONIUS

Away, I do beseech you, both away:

I'll board him presently.

Exeunt KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, and Attendants

Enter HAMLET, reading

O, give me leave:

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET

Well, God-a-mercy.

LORD POLONIUS

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET

Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

LORD POLONIUS

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET

Then I would you were so honest a man.

LORD POLONIUS

Honest, my lord!

HAMLET

Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be
one man picked out of ten thousand.

LORD POLONIUS

That's very true, my lord.

HAMLET

For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a
god kissing carrion, Have you a daughter?

LORD POLONIUS

I have, my lord.

HAMLET

Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a
blessing: but not as your daughter may conceive.

Friend, look to 't.

LORD POLONIUS

[Aside] How say you by that? Still harping on my
daughter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I
was a fishmonger: he is far gone, far gone; and
truly in my youth I suffered much extremity

for
love; very near this. I'll speak to him again.

What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET

Words, words, words.

LORD POLONIUS

What is the matter, my lord?

HAMLET

Between who?

LORD POLONIUS

I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

HAMLET

Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here
that old men have grey beards, that their faces are
wrinkled, their eyes ^{purging} thick amber and
plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful lack of
wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir,
though I most powerfully and **potent-**
ly believe, yet
I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down,
for
yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like
a crab
you could go backward.

LORD POLONIUS

[Aside] Though this be madness, yet
there is method
in 't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET
Into my
grave.

LORD POLONIUS

Indeed, that is out o' the air.

Aside

How **pregnant** sometimes his replies
are! a happiness
that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity
could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will
leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of
meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable
lord, I will most ^{humbly} take my leave of you.

HAMLET

You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will
more willingly part withal: except my life, except
my life, except my life.

LORD POLONIUS

Fare you well, my lord.

HAMLET

These tedious **old fools!**

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

LORD POLONIUS

You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there _{he} is.

ROSENCRANTZ

[To POLONIUS] God save you, sir!

Exit POLONIUS

GUILDENSTERN

My **honoured** lord!

ROSENCRANTZ

My most **dear** lord!

HAMLET

My excellent good friends! How dost thou,
Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

ROSENCRANTZ

As the indifferent children of the earth.

GUILDENSTERN

Happy, in that we are not over-happy;
On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

HAMLET

Nor the ^{soles} of her shoe?

ROSENCRANTZ

Neither, my lord.

HAMLET

Then you live about her ^{waist}, or in the middle of her favours?

GUILDENSTERN

'Faith, her ^{privates} we.

HAMLET

In the ^{secret parts of fortune?} O, most true; she is a ^{strumpet}. What's the news?

ROSENCRANTZ

None, my lord, but that the world's grown honest.

HAMLET

Then is doomsday near: but your news is not true. Let me question more in ^{particular}: what have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN

Prison, my lord!

HAMLET

Denmark's a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ

Then is the world one.

HAMLET

A goodly one; in which ^{Denmark} there are many confines, wards and dungeons, being one o' the worst.

ROSENCRANTZ

We think not so, my lord.

HAMLET

Why, then, 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either ^{good} or ^{bad}, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a ^{prison}.

ROSENCRANTZ

Why then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too ^{narrow} for your mind.

HAMLET

O God, I could be ^{bounded} in a nut shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

GUILDENSTERN

Which ^{dreams} indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the ^{shadow} of a dream.

HAMLET

A ^{dream} itself is but a ^{shadow}.

ROSENCRANTZ

Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a ^{shadow's shadow}.

HAMLET

Then are our ^{beggars} bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched ^{heroes} the ^{beggars'} shadows. Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

ROSENCRANTZ GUILDENSTERN

We'll wait upon you.

HAMLET

man, I am most ^C beaten way of frien

ROSENCRANTZ

To visit ^{you}, my lord;

HAMLET

^{Begg} thank you: and sure too dear a halfpenn your own inclining? deal justly with me:

GUILDENSTERN

What should we se

HAMLET

Why, any thing, bu for; and there

end,
my lord?

No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, nor, to speak to you like an honest attendant. But, in the friendship, what make you at Elsinore?

no other occasion.

If that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I, dear friends, my thanks are many. Were you not sent for? Is it not a free visitation? Come, come, nay, speak.

ay, my lord?

It is to the purpose. You were sent as a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

ROSENCRANTZ
To what

HAMLET

That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consistory of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

ROSENCRANTZ

[Aside to GUILDENSTERN] What say you?

HAMLET

[Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you. If you love me, hold not off.

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, we were sent for.

HAMLET

I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moults no feather. I have of late—but wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel!

in apprehen-

Hamlet

sion
how like a god!
the beauty of the

world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me,
what is this quintessence of ^{dust?} man delights not
me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling
you seem to say so.

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, there was ^{no such} stuff in my thoughts.

HAMLET

Why did you **LAUGH** then, when I said 'man delights not me'?

ROSENCRANTZ

To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what
lenten **ENTERTAINMENT** the ^{players} shall receive from
you: we coted them on the way; and hither are they
coming, to offer you service.

HAMLET

He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty
shall have tribute of ^{me}; the adventurous knight
shall use his foil and target; the lover shall not
sigh gratis; the ^{humorous} man shall end his part
in peace; the clown shall make those **LAUGH** whose
lungs are tickled o' the sere; and the lady shall
say her mind freely, or the ^{blank} verse shall halt
for't. What ^{are they?} ^{players}

ROSENCRANTZ

Even those you were wont to take ^{delight} in, the
tragedians of the city.

HAMLET

How chances it they ^{travel?} their residence, both
in reputation and **PROFIT**, was

bet-
ter both ways.

ROSENCRANTZ

I think their inhibition comes by the means of the
late ^{innovation}.

HAMLET

Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was
in the city? are they so followed?

ROSENCRANTZ

No, indeed, are they **NOT**.

HAMLET

How comes it? do they ^{grow} ^{rusty?}

ROSENCRANTZ

Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: but
there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases,
that cry out on the ^{top of} ^{most}
TYRANNICALLY clapped for't: these are now the
fashion, and so berattle the common stages-so they
call them-that many wearing ^{rapiers} are afraid of
goose-quills and dare scarce come ^{thither}.

HAMLET

What, ^{are they children?} ^{who} maintains 'em? ^{are}
they escoted? ^{they} pursue the quality no
longer than ^{if} ^{will} they can sing? ^{they} not say
afterwards, ^{if} ^{will} they should grow themselves to common
players-as it is most like, ^{if} ^{will} their means are no
better-their writers do them wrong, to make them
exclaim against their own succession?

William Shakespeare

**ROS-
ENCRANTZ**

'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no **sin to tarre** them to controversy: there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

HAMLET

Is't possible?

GUILDENSTERN

O, there has been much throwing about of **brains**.

HAMLET

Do the boys carry it away?

ROSENCRANTZ

Ay, that they do, my lord; **HERCULES** and his load too.

HAMLET

It is not very strange; for mine uncle is king of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give **twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred** ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this **more than natural**, if philosophy could find **IT** out.

Flourish of trumpets within

GUILDENSTERN

There are **THE** players.

HAMLET

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your **hands**,

come then: the appurtenance of welcome is **fashion** and ceremony: let me comply with you in this **garb**, lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you,

must **show** fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment, than yours. You are welcome: but my **uncle-father** and **aunt-mother** are **DECEIVED**.

GUILDENSTERN

In what, my dear lord?

HAMLET

I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Enter POLONIUS

LORD POLONIUS

Well be with you, gentlemen!

HAMLET

Hark you, **Guildestern**; and you too: at **each ear** a **hearer**: that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

ROSENCRANTZ

Happily he's the second time come to them; for they say an **old man** is **twice** a child.

HAMLET

I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players; mark it. You say right, sir: o' Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.

LORD POLONIUS

49 My lord, I have news to tell **you**.

Hamlet

HAMLET
My lord, I have news to tell **you**.
When **Roscius** was an **ACTOR** in Rome,-

LORD POLONIUS

The actors are come **hither**, my lord.

HAMLET

BUZ, BUZ!

LORD POLONIUS

Upon mine honour,-

HAMLET

Then **each** actor on his ass,-
came

LORD POLONIUS

The best actors in the world, either for
tragedy,
comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical,
historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-
comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or
unlimited: Seneca cannot be too **heavy**, nor
Plautus too **light**. For the **LAW OF WRIT** and the
liberty, these are the only men.

HAMLET

Jephthah, judge of **ISRAEL**, what a **treasure** hadst
thou!

LORD POLONIUS

What a **treasure** had he, my lord?

HAMLET

Why,
'One fair **daughter** and no more,
The which he **loved**
passing well.'

LORD POLONIUS

On my daughter.

HAMLET

Am I not i' the **RIGHT**, old **Jephthah**?

LORD POLONIUS

If you call me **Jephthah**, my lord, I have a **daughter** and **mistress!** By'r **lady**, your **ladyship** is
that I **love** passing **well**.
nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the
altitude of a **chopine**. Pray **GOD**, your voice, like
apiece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the
ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en
to't like **FRENCH FALCONERS**, fly at any thing we see:
we'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste
of your quality; come, a **passionate** **speech**.

HAMLET

Nay, that follows not.

LORD POLONIUS

What follows, then, my lord?

HAMLET

Why,
'As by lot, **GOD** wot,'
and then, you know,

First Player

What speech, my lord?

HAMLET

'It came to pass, as most like it **was** heard thee speak me a **speech** once, but it was
the first row of the **pious** chanson, will show you, if it was, not **above** once, for the
more; for look, where my play I remember, pleased not the **million**; 'twas
caviare to the general: but it was-as I received
it, and others, whose **judgments** in such matters
cried in the top of mine-an excellent play, well
digested in the scenes, set down with as much
modesty as **CUNNING**. I remember, one said there
were no sallets in the **lines** to make the matter
savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might
indict the author of affectation; but called it an
honest method, as wholesome as **sweet**, and by very
much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I
chiefly loved: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido; and
thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of
Priam's **slaughter**: if it live in your memory, begin
at this line: let me see, let me see-
'The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian **beast**,'-
it is not so:-it **begins** with Pyrrhus:-

William Shakespeare

are wel-
my old
t:
young

'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion **SMEAR'D**
With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total ^{gules}; horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Baked and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a **tyrannous** and damned light
To their lord's murder: ^{roasted} in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate **gore**,
With **EYES** like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.'
So, proceed **YOU**.


LORD POLONIUS

'Fore **GOD**, my lord, well spoken, with good ^{accent} and
good ^{discretion}.

First Player

'Anon he finds him
Striking too short at **GREEKS**; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in **rage** strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind

of his fell **SWORD**
The unnerved father
falls. Then senseless
Ilium,
Seeming to
feel this

'But who, , who had seen the mobled **QUEEN**—'
HAMLET
'The mobled **QUEEN**?'

First Player

QUEEN—'
HAMLET
'The mobled **QUEEN**?'

h
Anc
CYCLOPS' h
On Mars's ar
proof eterne
With less remorse than

sword

Now falls on Priam.

Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All yc

In general synod 'take away her power;

Break all the spokes and ^{fellies} from her wheel.

And bowl the round nave down the hill of **hec**

As low as to the fiends!'

LORD POLONIUS

This is too long .

HAMLET

It shall to the barber's, with your ^{beard}. Prithee,
say on: he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he
sleeps: say on: come to Hecuba.

LORD POLONIUS

That's good; 'mobled **QUEEN**' is good.

First Player

'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With bisson rheum; a clout upon that ^{head}
Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,

blow,
with
flaming top
Stoops to his
base, and with a
hideous **crash**
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear:
for, lo! his **SWORD**,
Which was declining on the
milky ^{head}
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to
stick:
So, as a pointed tyrant, Pyrrhus ^{stood},
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.
But, as we often see, against some
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The **BOLD** winds speechless and the orb below
As ^{As} hush as death, anon the dreadful thun-
der

storm,
hush
thun-
der

A blanket, in the alarm of **fear** caught up;
 Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
 'Gainst Fortune's state would **Hamlet** reason have
 pronounced:
 But if the gods themselves did see her then
 When she **saw** Pyrrhus make *malicious* sport
 In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
 The instant burst of clamour that she made,
 Unless things mortal *move* them not at all,
 Would have made *move* milch the burning eyes of heaven,
 And passion in the gods.'

LORD POLONIUS

Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has
 tears in's eyes. Pray you, no more.

HAMLET

'Tis well: I'll have thee **speaking out** the rest soon.
 Good my **lord**, will you see the players well
 bestowed? Do you hear, let *them* be well used; for
 they are the *abstract* and *brief* chronicles of the
 time: after your *death* you were better have a bad
 epitaph than their **ill** report while you live.

LORD POLONIUS

My **LORD**, I will *use* them according to their *desert*.

HAMLET

GOD'S bodykins, man, **much** better: use every man
 after his desert, and who should 'scape *whipping*?
 Use *them* after your own *honour* and *dignity*: the less
 they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty.
 Take *them* in.

LORD POLONIUS

Come, sirs.

HAMLET

Follow him, friends: we'll hear a **play** to-morrow.

Exit POLONIUS with all the Players but the First

Dost thou hear me, *friend*; can you **play** the
MURDER of Gonzago?

First Player

Ay, my **LORD**.

HAMLET

We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could,
 for a need,
 study a **SPEECH** of some *dozen* or
sixteen lines, which
 I would set *down* and insert
 in't, could you not?

First Player

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

Very well.
 Follow
 that

ROSENCRANTZ
Good my lord!

HAMLET

Ay, so, **GOD** be wi' ye;

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Now I am *alone*.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
 Is it not **monstrous** that this player here,
 But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
 Could *force* his soul so to his own conceit
 That from her working all his visage wann'd,
 Tears in his eyes, *distraction* in's aspect,
 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
 With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
 For Hecuba!
 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
 That he should *weep* for her? What would he do,
 Had he the motive and the cue for passion
 That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
 And **CLEAVE** the general **ear** with horrid speech,
 Make *mad* the *guilty* and *appal* the free,
 Confound the ignorant, and *amaze* indeed
 The very faculties of **eyes** and **ears**. Yet I,
 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal,
 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
peak

And can say nothing; no, not for a I

Upon whose property and most de-
 A damn'd **defeat** was made. Am I a cov-

Who calls me *villain*? breaks my pate ac-

lord;
t n d
you

ck

ou till

Plucks off my ^{beard} and blows it in my ^{face}?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?
Ha!

'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
To make ^{oppression} bitter, or ere this

I should have **FATTED** all the region kites
With this slave's offal: bloody, bawdy **villain!**
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless
O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
Prompted to my revenge by **HEAVEN** and **HELL**,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very ^{drab},
A scullion!

Fie upon't! foh! About my brain! I have heard
That guilty **creatures** sitting at a play
Have by the very ^{cunning} of the scene

Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For **MURDER**, though it have no tongue, will speak
With most ^{miraculous} organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;

I'll tent him to the ^{spirit} if he but blench,
I know my course. The **devil** that I have seen
May be the **devil**: and the devil hath power

To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my ^{weakness} and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds

More ^{relative} than this: the play 's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the **conscience** of the **KING**.

EXIT

KING,
or life
vard?
ross?

ACT III

scene I

A room in the castle

Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

KING CLAUDIUS

And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

ROSENCRANTZ

He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

GUILDENSTERN

Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Did he receive you well?

ROSENCRANTZ

Most like a gentleman.

GUILDENSTERN

But with much forcing of his disposition.

ROSENCRANTZ

Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Did you assay him?
To any pastime?

ROSENCRANTZ

Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: they are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

LORD POLONIUS

'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

KING CLAUDIUS

With all my heart; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.
Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

ROSENCRANTZ

We shall, my lord.

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

KING CLAUDIUS

Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I shall obey you.
And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

OPHELIA

Madam, I wish it may.

Exit QUEEN GERTRUDE

LORD POLONIUS

Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.

To OPHELIA

Read on this book;
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,—
'Tis too much proved—that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

KING CLAUDIUS

[Aside] O, 'tis too true!
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

LORD POLONIUS

I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.

Exeunt KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS

Enter HAMLET

Hamlet

HAMLET

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office and the spurns
That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,
The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pith and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry,
And lose the name of action.—Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remember'd.

OPHELIA

Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

HAMLET

I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

OPHELIA

My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver;
I pray you, now receive them.

HAMLET

No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA

My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
Take these again; for to the noble mind
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
There, my lord.

HAMLET

Ha, ha! are you honest?

OPHELIA

My lord?

HAMLET

Are you fair?

OPHELIA

What means your lordship?

HAMLET

That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should
admit no discourse to your beauty.

OPHELIA

Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty?

HAMLET

Ay, truly; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness: this was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

HAMLET

You should not have believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

OPHELIA

I was the more deceived.

HAMLET

Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? I am myself indifferent honest; but yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my mother had not borne me: I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

OPHELIA

At home, my lord.

HAMLET

Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewell.

OPHELIA

O, help him, you sweet heavens!

HAMLET

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

OPHELIA

O heavenly powers, restore him!

HAMLET

I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

Exit

OPHELIA

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,

Hamlet

That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS

KING CLAUDIUS

Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like ^{madness} There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his **HEART**,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

LORD POLONIUS

It shall do well: but yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia!
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all. My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference. If she find him not,
To England send him, or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.

KING CLAUDIUS

It shall be so:

Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

Exeunt

William Shakespeare

Rich gifts wax poor when givers
prove unkind.

-Hamlet

ACT III

scene II

A hall in the castle.

Enter HAMLET and Players

HAMLET

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to

you, *trippingly* on the tongue:

but if you mouth it,
as many of your players do, I had as lief the
town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air
too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently;
for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say,
the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget
a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it
offends me to the soul to hear a robustious
periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to
very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who
for the most part are capable of nothing but
inexplicable dumbshows and noise: I would have such
a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it
outheroes Herod: pray you, avoid it.

First Player

I warrant your honour

HAMLET

Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion
be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the
word to the action; with this special o'erstep not
the modesty of nature: for any thing so overdone is
from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the
first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the
mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature,
scorn her own image, and the very age and **body** of

the time his form and **pressure**. Now this overdone,
or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful
laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the
censure of the which one must in your allowance
o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be
players that I have seen play, and heard others
praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely,
that, neither having the accent of Christians nor
the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so
strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of
nature's journeymen had made men and not made them
well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

First Player

I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us,
sir.

HAMLET

O, reform it altogether. And let those that play
your clowns speak no more than is set down for them;
for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to
set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh
too; though, in the mean time, some necessary
question of the play be then to be considered:
that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition
in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.

Exeunt Players

Enter *POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN*

How now, my lord! I will the king hear this piece of work?

LORD POLONIUS

And the queen too, and that presently.

HAMLET

Bid the players make haste.

Exit *POLONIUS*

Will you two help to hasten them?

ROSENCRANTZ GUILDENSTERN

We will, my lord.

Exeunt *ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*

HAMLET

What ho! Horatio!

Enter *HORATIO*

HORATIO

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET

Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

HORATIO

O, my dear lord,-

HAMLET

Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good **spirits**,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those
Whose **blood** and judgment are so well commingled,
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger

Hamlet

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart's core, ay, in my **HEART** of heart,
As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
There is a play to-night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations are as foul
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

HORATIO

Well, my lord:
If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

HAMLET

They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A flourish. Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE,
POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others*

KING CLAUDIUS

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET

Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's
dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed:
you cannot feed capons so.

KING CLAUDIUS

I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words
are not **mine**

HAMLET

No, nor mine now.

To POLONIUS

My lord, you played once i' the university, y'

LORD POLONIUS

That did I, my lord; and was accounted a good actor.

HAMLET

What did you enact?

LORD POLONIUS

I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the
Capitol; Brutus killed me.

HAMLET

It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf
there. Be the players ready?

ROSENCRANTZ

Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET

No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

LORD POLONIUS

[To KING CLAUDIUS] O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET

Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
lying down at OPHELIA's feet

OPHELIA

No, my lord.

HAMLET

I mean, my head upon your **LAP?**

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

Do you think I meant country matters?

OPHELIA

I think nothing, my lord.

HAMLET

That's a fair thought to lie **between** maids' legs.

OPHELIA

What is, my lord?

HAMLET

Nothing.

OPHELIA

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

O God, your only jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father **died** within these two hours.

OPHELIA

Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

HAMLET

So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die two

months ago, and not *forgotten* yet?
Then there's
hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half
a year: but, by'r lady, he must build churches,
then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with
the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is 'For, O, for, O,
the hobby-horse is forgot.'

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters

Enter a King and a Queen very lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exits.

The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love

Exeunt

OPHELIA

What means this, my lord?

HAMLET

Marry, this is miching mallecho; it means mischief.

OPHELIA

Belike this show imports the argument of the *play*. **63**

Enter Prologue

ou say?

Hamlet

HAMLET

We shall know by this fellow: the players cannot keep counsel; they'll tell all.

OPHELIA

Will he tell us what this show meant?

HAMLET

Ay, or any show that you'll show him: be not you ashamed to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

OPHELIA

You are naught, you are naught: I'll mark the play.

Prologue

For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,

We beg your hearing *patiently*.

Exit

HAMLET

Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King and Queen

Player King

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,

Since love our **HEART**s and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

Player Queen

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women's fear and love holds quantity;

In neither aught, or in **extremity**.
Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
And as my love is sized, my fear is so:
Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

Player King

'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, beloved; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou—

Player Queen

O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

HAMLET

[Aside] Wormwood, wormwood.

Player Queen

The instances that second **MARRIAGE** move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

Player King

I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget
To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt:
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose
lose.
The violence of either grief or joy
Their own enactures with themselves

destroy:

Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange
That even our loves should with our fortunes change;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
The great man down, you mark his favourite flies;
The poor advanced makes friends of enemies
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend;
For who not needs shall never lack a friend,
And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
Directly seasons him his enemy.
But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown;
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;

But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is **dead**.

Player Queen

Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
To desperation turn my trust and hope!

An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

HAMLET

If she should break it now!

Player King

'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.

Sleeps

Player Queen

Sleep rock thy **brain**,
And never come mischance between us twain!

Exit

HAMLET

Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

The lady protests too much, methinks.

HAMLET

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING CLAUDIUS

Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in 't?

HAMLET

No, no, they do but jest, **poison** in jest; no offence
i' the world.

Hamlet

KING CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropicallly. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled **jade** wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

OPHELIA

You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

HAMLET

I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

OPHELIA

You are **keen**, my lord, you are **keen**.

HAMLET

It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

OPHELIA

Still better, and worse.

HAMLET

So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come: 'the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.'

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,

Thy natural magic and dire property,

On wholesome life usurp immediately.

Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears

HAMLET

He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ in choice Italian: you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

OPHELIA

The king rises.

HAMLET

What, frightened with false fire!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How fares my lord?

LORD POLONIUS

Give o'er the play.

KING CLAUDIUS

Give me some light: away!

All

Lights, lights, lights!

Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO

HAMLET

Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

The hart ungalled play;

For

some must watch, while some must sleep:

So runs the world away.

Would not this, sir,

and a forest of

feathers-

if

the
rest
of my

fortunes turn Turk with me—with two
Provincial roses on my **RAZED** shoes, get me a
fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

HORATIO

Half a share.

HAMLET

A whole one, I.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very-pajock.

HORATIO

You might have rhymed.

HAMLET

O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's
word for a
thousand pound. Didst perceive?

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

HAMLET

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

HAMLET

Ah, ha! Come, some music! come, the recorders!
For if the king like not the comedy,
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some **music!**

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

GUILDENSTERN

Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

HAMLET

Sir, a whole **HISTORY**.

GUILDENSTERN

The king, sir,—

HAMLET

Ay, sir, what of him?

GUILDENSTERN

Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

HAMLET

With drink, sir?

GUILDENSTERN

No, my lord, rather with choler.

HAMLET

Your wisdom should show itself more richer to
signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him
to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far
more choler.

GUILDENSTERN

Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and
start not so *wildly* from my affair.

HAMLET

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

GUILDENSTERN

The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of

Hamlet

spirit, hath sent me to you.

HAMLET

You are welcome.

GUILDENSTERN

Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

GUILDENSTERN

What, my lord?

HAMLET

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,-

ROSENCRANTZ

Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her

into **amazement** and **admiration**.

HAMLET

O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

ROSENCRANTZ

She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

HAMLET

We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you once did love me.

HAMLET

So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

ROSENCRANTZ

Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

HAMLET

Sir, I lack advancement.

ROSENCRANTZ

How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

HAMLET

Ay, but sir, 'While the grass grows,'-the proverb is something musty.

Re-enter Players with recorders

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you:-why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

GUILDENSTERN

O, my lord, if my duty be too **bold**, my *love* is too unmannerly.

HAMLET

I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I **CANNOT**.

HAMLET

I pray you.

HAMLET
William Shakespeare
Methinks it is like a weasel.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET

'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

HAMLET

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the **HEART** of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'S**blood** do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS

God bless you, sir!

LORD POLONIUS

My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

HAMLET

Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

LORD POLONIUS

By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

LORD POLONIUS

It is backed like a weasel.

HAMLET

Or like a whale?

LORD POLONIUS

Very like a whale.

HAMLET

Then I will come to my mother by and by. They fool me to the top of my bent. I will come by and by.

LORD POLONIUS

I will say so.

HAMLET

By and by is easily said.

Exit POLONIUS

Leave me, friends.

Exeunt all but HAMLET

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: now could I drink hot **blood**
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother.
O **HEART**, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites;

How in my words soever she be shent,

To give them seals never, my soul,

consent!

Exit

ACT III

scene III

A room in the castle.

Enter KING CLAUDIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

KING CLAUDIUS

I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his **madness** range. Therefore prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

GUILDENSTERN

We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty.

ROSENCRANTZ

The single and peculiar life is bound,
With all the strength and armour of the mind,
To keep itself from noyance; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest

The lives of many. The cease of **majesty**
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it with it: it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest **MOUNT**,
To whose **HUGE** spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
Each small annexment, petty consequence,
Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

**KING
CLAUDIUS**

Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
For we will fetters put upon this fear,
Which now goes too free-footed.

ROSENCRANTZ GUILDENSTERN

We will haste us.

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Enter POLONIUS

LORD POLONIUS

My lord, he's going to his mother's closet:
Behind the arras I'll convey myself,
To hear the process; and warrant she'll tax him home:
And, as you said, and wisely was it said,
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,

And tell you what I know.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thanks, dear my lord.

Exit POLONIUS

O, my offence is rank it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
And, like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's **blood**,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
But

to confront the visage of
offence?

William Shakespeare

And
what's in
prayer but this two- fold
force,

To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
Of those effects for which I did the murder,

My **CROWN**, mine own ambition and my
queen.

May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?
In the **corrupted** currents of this world
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
Try what repentance can: what can it not?
Yet what can it when one can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, **HEART** with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe!
All may be well.

Retires and kneels

Enter HAMLET

HAMLET

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven;
And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

Hamlet

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?
But in our circumstance and course of thought,
'Tis heavy with him: and am I then revenged,
To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!
Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:

At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy **sickly** days.

Exit

KING CLAUDIUS

[Rising]

*My words fly
up, my thoughts
remain below:*

Exit

*Words
without
thoughts
never to
heaven go.*

When he is **drunk** asleep, or in his *rage*,
Or in the **incestuous pleasure** of his bed;

O, my offence is rank, it smells to
heaven.

-Hamlet

ACT III

scene IV

The Queen's closet.

Enter QUEEN GERTRUDE and POLONIUS

LORD POLONIUS

He will come straight. Look you lay home to him:
Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between
Much heat and him. I'll sconce me even here.
Pray you, be **round** with him.

HAMLET

[Within] Mother, mother, mother!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I'll warrant you,
Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.

POLONIUS hides behind the arras

Enter HAMLET

HAMLET

Now, mother, what's the matter?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET

Mother, you have my father much offended.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

HAMLET

Go, go, you question with a *wicked* tongue.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Why, how now, Hamlet!

HAMLET

What's the matter now?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Have you forgot me?

HAMLET

No, by the rood, not so:
You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And—would it were not so!—you are my mother.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nay, then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

HAMLET

Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

WHAT WILT THOU DO?
THOU WILT NOT MURDER ME?
HELP, HELP, HO!

LORD POLONIUS

[Behind] What, ho! help, help, help!

HAMLET

[Drawing] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead!

Makes a pass through the arras

LORD POLONIUS

[Behind] O, I am slain!

Falls and dies

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O, what a rash and **blood**y deed is this!

HAMLET

A **blood**y deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

As kill a king!

HAMLET

Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

Lifts up the array and discovers POLONIUS
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands: **peace!** sit you down,
And let me wring your **HEART**; for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brass'd it so
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What have I done, that thou dar'est wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Nothing at all;
yet all that is I see.

Hamlet

HAMLET

Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No, nothing but ourselves.

HAMLET

Why, look you there! look, how it **steals** away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

Exit Ghost

QUEEN GERTRUDE

This the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

HAMLET
ECSTASY!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: it is not **madness**
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which **madness**
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,

Lay not that mattering **unction** to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my **madness** speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
Whilst rank corruption, mining all within,

Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my
virtue;
For in the fatness of these pury times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O Hamlet, thou hast
cleft my **HEART** in twain.

HAMLET

O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery,
That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
And either [] the **devil**, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

Pointing to POLONIUS

I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Such
so?
No, in despite of
Unpeg the basket on
Let the birds fly, and, like
To try conclusions, in the
And break your own neck

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Be thou assured, if words be me
And breath of life, I have
What thou hast said to me.

HAMLET

I must to England; you

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alack,
I had forgot: 't

HAMLET

There's
Who
The
A

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What shall I do?

HAMLET

Not this, by no means, that I bid you
do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to
bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you to

mouse;

And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in **madness**
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know

For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
Would from a paddock, from a bat, a
gib,
dear concernings hide? who would do

sense and secrecy,
the house's top.
the famous ape,
basket creep,
down.

of **breath,**
to **breathe**

ade
eno **life**

know that?

DE

tis so concluded on.

letters seal'd: and my two schoolfellows,
m I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
ey bear the mandate; they must **sweep my way,**
nd marshal me to knavery. Let it work;

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer

Hoist with his own petard: and 't shall go hard

But I will delve one yard below their mines,

And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,

When in one line two crafts directly meet.

This man shall set me packing:

I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.

Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor

Is now most still, most secret and most grave,

Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.

Good night, mother.

v;

Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in POLONIUS

Forth at your eyes

your spirits wildly peep;

And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,

Your bedded hair, like life in **excrements**,

Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,

Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper

Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

HAMLET

On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,

Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;

Lest with this piteous action you convert

My stern effects: then what I have to do

Will want true colour; tears perchance for **blood**

QUEEN GERTRUDE

To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET

Do you see nothing there?

Exeunt

Hamlet

HAMLET

Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the **ROSE**
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven's face doth glow:
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the **doom**,
Is thought-sick at the act.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Ay me, what act,
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

HAMLET

Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination and a form indeed,
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for at your age
The hey-day in the **blood** is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? Sense, sure, you have,
Else could you not have motion; but sure, that sense

Is apoplex'd; for **madness** would not err,
Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
But it reserved some quantity of choice,
To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.

*O shame! where
is thy blush?
Rebellious hell,*

If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
Since frost itself as actively doth burn
And reason panders will.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O Hamlet, speak no more:
Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.

HAMLET

A murderer and a villain;
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithes
Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
A cupure of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No more!

HAMLET

A king of shreds and patches, -

Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious
figure?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, he's mad!

HAMLET

Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread com-
mand? O, say!

Ghost

Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted
purpose.

But, look, amazement on thy mother
sits:

O, step between her and her fight-
ing soul:

Conceit in weakest bodies
strongest works:

Speak to her, **HAM-
LET**.

HAMLET

How is it with you, lady?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?

ACT IV

scene I

A room in the castle.

Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN

KING CLAUDIUS

There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves:
You must translate: 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Bestow this place on us a little while.

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to-night!

KING CLAUDIUS

What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier: in his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, 'A rat, a rat!'
And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

KING CLAUDIUS

O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there:
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd and out of haunt,

This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

KING CLAUDIUS

O Gertrude, come away!
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, Guildenstern!

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;

ACT IV

scene II

Another room in the castle.

Enter HAMLET

HAMLET

Safely stowed.

ROSENCRANTZ: GUILDENSTERN:

[Within] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

HAMLET

What noise? who calls on Hamlet?
O, here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN

ROSENCRANTZ

What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

HAMLET

Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

ROSENCRANTZ

Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence
And bear it to the chapel.

HAMLET

Do not believe it.

ROSENCRANTZ

Believe what?

HAMLET

That I can keep your counsel and not mine own.
Besides, to be demanded of a sponge! what

replication should be made by the son of a king?

ROSENCRANTZ

Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

HAMLET

Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: he keeps them, like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouthed, to be last swallowed: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

ROSENCRANTZ

I understand you not, my lord.

HAMLET

I am glad of it: a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

HAMLET

The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing-

GUILDENSTERN

A thing, my lord!

HAMLET

Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after.

Exeunt

ACT IV

scene III

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

Go seek him there.

To some Attendants

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;

Hamlet

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 **only** 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

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

-Hamlet

ACT IV

scene IV

A plain in Denmark.

Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Soldiers, marching

PRINCE FORTINBRAS

Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Craves the conveyance of a promised march
Over his **KINGDOM**. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye;
And let him know so.

Captain

I will do't, my lord.

PRINCE FORTINBRAS

Go softly on.

Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Soldiers

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others

HAMLET

Good sir, whose **powers** are these?

Captain

They are of **Norway**, sir.

HAMLET

How purposed, sir, I pray you?

Captain

Against some part of **POLAND**.

HAMLET

Who commands them, sir?

Captain

The nephews to old **Norway**, Fortinbras.

HAMLET

Goes it against the main of **POLAND**, sir,
Or for some frontier?

Captain

Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to **Norway** or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

HAMLET

Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Captain

Yes, it is already garrison'd.

HAMLET

Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Captain

God be wi' you, sir.

Exit

ROSENCRANTZ

Wilt please you go, my lord?

HAMLET

I'll be with you straight go a little before.

Exeunt all except HAMLET

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull **revenge**! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he that made us with such large discourse,
Looking before and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason

To fust

in us unused. Now,

William Shakespeare

whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,
A thought which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom
And ever three parts coward, I do not know
Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do;'
Sith I have cause and will and strength and means
To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me:
Witness this army of such mass and charge

Led by a delicate and *tender* prince,
Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
Makes mouths at the invisible event,
Exposing what is mortal and unsure

To all that fortune, death and
danger dare,

Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
Excitements of my reason and my blood,
And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
The imminent death of twenty thousand men,

That, for a *fantasy* and trick of fame,
Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
Which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

Exit

ACT IV

scene v

Elsinore,
A room in the castle.

Enter QUEEN GERTRUDE, HORATIO, and a Gentleman

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I will not speak with her.

Gentleman

She is importunate, indeed distract:

Her **mood** will needs be pitied.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What would she have?

Gentleman

She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her heart;
Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;

Which, as her **winks**, and **nods**, and **gestures**
yield them,

Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

HORATIO

'Twere good she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Let her come in.

Exit HORATIO

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA

OPHELIA

Where is the beautiful majesty of Denmark?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How now, Ophelia!

OPHELIA

[Sings]

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

OPHELIA

Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

Sings

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nay, but, Ophelia,—

OPHELIA

Pray you, mark.

Sings

Enter KING CLAUDIUS

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, look here, my lord.

OPHELIA

[Sings]

KING CLAUDIUS

How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA

Well, God 'ild you! They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

KING CLAUDIUS

Conceit upon her father.

Sings

How should I your true love know

From another one?

By his cockle hat and staff,

And his sandal shoon.

He is dead and gone, lady,

He is dead and gone;

At his head a grass-green turf,

At his heels a stone.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

Larded with sweet flowers

Which bewept to the grave did go

With true-love showers.

Hamlet

*To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose, and donn'd his
clothes,
And dupp'd the chamber-door;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.
By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they
come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.
Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

OPHELIA

Pray you, let's have no words of this; but when they
ask you what it means, say you this:

Sings

KING CLAUDIUS

Pretty Ophelia!

OPHELIA

Indeed, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

Sings

KING CLAUDIUS

How long hath she been thus?

OPHELIA

I hope all will be well. We must be patient: but I

cannot choose but *weep*, to think they should lay him
i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it:
and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my
coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies;
good night, good night.

Exit

KING CLAUDIUS

Follow her close; give her good watch,
I pray you.

Exit HORATIO

O, this is the *poison* of deep grief; it springs

All from her father's *death*. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies

But in battalions. First, her father slain:
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: the people muddied,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done but greenly,
In ~~hugger-mugger~~ to inter him: poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France;
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,

And wants not **buzzers** to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places
Gives me superfluous death.

A noise within

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alack, what noise is this?

KING CLAUDIUS

Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

Enter another Gentleman

What is the matter?

Gentleman

Save yourself, my lord:
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;
And, as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry

'Choose we: Laertes shall be **KING**:'

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds:
'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!'

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

KING CLAUDIUS

The doors are broke.

Noise within

Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following

LAERTES

Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes

No, let's come in.

LAERTES

I pray you, give me leave.

Danes

We will, we will.

They retire without the door

LAERTES

I thank you: keep the door. O thou vile king,
Give me my father!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Calmly, good Laertes.

LAERTES

That drop of **blood** that's calm proclaims me bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot
Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow
Of my true mother.

Hamlet

KING CLAUDIUS

What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giantlike?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:
There's such divinity doth hedge a king,
That treason can but peep to what it would,
Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
Why thou art thus incensed. Let him go, Gertrude.
Speak, man.

LAERTES

Where is my father?

KING CLAUDIUS

Dead.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

But not by him.

KING CLAUDIUS

Let him demand his fill.

LAERTES

How came he **dead**? I'll not be juggled with:
To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil!
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes; only I'll be **revenged**
Most thoroughly for my father.

KING CLAUDIUS

Who shall stay you?

LAERTES

My will, not all the world:
And for my means, I'll husband them so well,

They shall go far with little.

KING CLAUDIUS

Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your **revenge**,
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser?

LAERTES

None but his enemies.

KING CLAUDIUS

Will you know them then?

LAERTES

To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican,
Repast them with my blood.

KING CLAUDIUS

Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

Danes

[Within] Let her come in.

LAERTES

How now! what noise is that?

Re-enter OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By **HEAVEN**, thy madness shall be paid by weight,
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!

Sings **William Shakespeare**

They bore him barefaced on the bier;

Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;

And in his grave rain'd many a tear:-

Fare you well, my dove!

You must sing a-down a-down,

An you call him a-down-a.

O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the

Exit
false

steward, that stole his master's daughter.

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

No, no, he is dead:

Go to thy death-bed:

He never will come again.

His beard was as white as snow,

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

And of all Christian souls, I pray

God. God be wi' ye.

O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
Should be as moral as an old man's life?
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

OPHELIA

[Sings]

LAERTES

Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

LAERTES

Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

OPHELIA

[Sings]

LAERTES

This nothing's more than matter.

OPHELIA

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance; pray,
love, remember: and there is **pansies**. that's for thoughts.

LAERTES

A document in **madness**, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

OPHELIA

There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue
for you; and here's some for me: we may call it
herb-grace o' Sundays: O you must wear your rue with
a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you
some violets, but they **withered** all when my father
died: they say he made a good end,-

Hamlet

LAERTES

Do you see this, O God?

KING CLAUDIUS

Laertes, I must commune with your grief,

Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

Make choice of whom your **WISEST** friends you will.

And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:

If by direct or by collateral hand

They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,

Our crown, our life, and all that we can ours,

you in satisfaction; but if not,

you content to lend your **patience** to us,

we shall jointly labour with your soul

to get our due content.

S

His be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral-

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,

No noble rite nor formal ostentation-

Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,

That I must call't in *question*.

KING CLAUDIUS

So you shall;

And where the **offence** is let the great axe fall.

I pray you, go with me.

Exeunt

He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone,
At his head a green-grass tuft;
At his heels a stone.

-Hamlet

ACT IV

scene VI

Another room in the castle.

Enter HORATIO and a Servant

HORATIO

What are they that would speak with me?

Servant

Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.

with as m

HORATIO

Let them come in.

Exit Servant

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors

First Sailor

God **ble**ss you, sir.

HORATIO

Let him **ble**ss thee too.

First Sailor

He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for
you, sir; it comes from the ambassador that was
bound for **ENGLAND**; if your name be Horatio, as I am
let to know it is.

HORATIO

[Reads] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked
this, give these fellows some means to the king:
they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old

at sea, a pirate of very **warlike** appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy: but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me

uch speed as thou wouldst fly death.

have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

'He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them.

Exeunt

ACT IV

scene VII

Another room in the castle.

Enter KING CLAUDIUS and LAERTES

KING CLAUDIUS

Now must your conscience my acquaintance seal,
And you must put me in your **HEART** for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

LAERTES

It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

KING CLAUDIUS

O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself-
My virtue or my **plague**, be it either which-
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;
Who, **dipping** all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,

Convert his gyves to graces; so that my **arrows**,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

LAERTES

And so have I a **noble** father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections: but my revenge will come.

KING CLAUDIUS

Break not your sleeps for that: you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine—

Enter a Messenger

How now! what news?

Messenger

Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

KING CLAUDIUS

From Hamlet! who brought them?

Messenger

Sailors, my lord, they say; I saw them
not:
They were given me by Claudio; he
received them
Of him that brought them.

KING CLAUDIUS

Laertes, you shall hear them. Leave us.

Exit Messenger Reads

HIGH AND MIGHTY, You shall know I

am set naked on
your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see
your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your
pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden
and more strange return. 'HAMLET.'
What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

LAERTES

Know you the hand?

KING CLAUDIUS

'Tis Hamlets character. **'Naked!'**
And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'
Can you advise me?

LAERTES

I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou.'

KING CLAUDIUS

If it be so, Laertes—
As how should it be so? how otherwise?—
Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES

Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

KING CLAUDIUS

To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,

Hamlet

But even his mother shall uncharge the practise
And call it **accident**

LAERTES

My lord, I will be ruled;
The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

KING CLAUDIUS

It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
Wherein, they say, you shine: your sum of parts
Did not together pluck such envy from him
As did that one, and that, in my regard,
Of the unworthiest siege.

LAERTES

What part is that, my lord?

KING CLAUDIUS

A very **riband** in the cap of youth,
Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
The light and careless livery that it wears
Than settled age his sables and his weeds,
Importing health and graveness. Two months since,
Here was a gentleman of Normandy:-
I've seen myself, and served against, the **FRENCH**,
And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
As he had been incorp'd and demi-natured
With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
Come short of what he did.

LAERTES

A **NORMAN** was't?

KING CLAUDIUS
A **NORMAN**.

LAERTES

Upon my life, Lamond.

KING CLAUDIUS

The very same.

LAERTES

I know him well: he is the brooch indeed
And gem of all the nation.

KING CLAUDIUS

He made confession of you,

And gave you such a *masterly* report
For art and exercise in your defence
And for your rapier most especially,
That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed,
If one could match you: the scrimers of their nation,
He swore, had had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
If you opposed them. Sir, this report of his
Did Hamlet so **envenom** with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg
Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
Now, out of this,-

LAERTES

What out of this, my lord?

KING CLAUDIUS

Laertes, was your father dear to you?
Or are you like the **painting** of a sorrow,
A face without a heart?

LAERTES

Why ask you this?

KING CLAUDIUS

Not that I think you did
not **love** your father;

But that I know love is begun by
time;

And that I see, in passages of proof,
Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

There lives within the very flame of love
A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;
And nothing is at a like goodness still;

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
Dies in his own too much: that we would do

We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes
And hath abatements and delays as many

As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,

That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:-
Hamlet comes back: what would you undertake,

To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

LAERTES

To cut his throat i' the church.

KING CLAUDIUS

No place, indeed, should **murder** sanctuarize;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,

Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.

Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home:

We'll put on those shall praise your excellence

And set a double varnish on the fame

The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together

And wager on your heads: he, being remiss,

Most generous and free from all **contriving**,
Will not peruse the foils; so that, with ease,

Or with a little **shuffling**, you may choose

A sword unbated, and in a pass of practise

Requite him for your father.

LAERTES

I will do't:

And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.

I bought an unction of a mountebank,

So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,

Collected from all simples that have virtue

Under the moon, can save the thing from death

That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point

With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,

It

may be
death.

William Shakespeare

KING CLAUDIUS

Let's further think of this;

Weigh what convenience both of time

and means

May fit us to our shape: if this should fail,

And that our drift look through our bad performance,

'Twere better not assay'd: therefore this project

Should have a back or second, that might hold,

If this should blast in proof. Soft! let me see:

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning: I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and dry-

As make your bouts more **violent** to that end-

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him

A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,

If he by chance **escape** your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

Enter **QUEEN GERTRUDE**

How now, sweet queen!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

One woe doth **TREAD** upon another's heel,

So fast they follow; your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

LAERTES

Drown'd! O, where?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,

That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;

There with fantastic garlands did she come

Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,

But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds

Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke;

When down her **weedy** trophies and herself

Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide;

And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up:

Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes;

As one incapable of her own distress,

Or like a creature native and indued

Unto that element: but long it could not be

Till that her garments, **heavy** with their drink,

Hamlet

Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

LAERTES

Alas, then, she is drown'd?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Drown'd, drown'd.

LAERTES

Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet

It is our trick; nature her **custom** holds,
Let shame say what it will: when these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord:
I have a speech of fire, that fain would

blaze,

But that this folly douts it.

Exit

KING CLAUDIUS

Let's follow, Gertrude:

How much I had to do to calm his *rage!*
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let's follow.

Exeunt

One woe doth tread upon another's
heel, So fast they follow.

-Hamlet

Hamlet

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William Shakespeare