

HAMLET

Scn. 1 Opening: Ghost and Hamlet

Scn. 2 Polonius finds the cause of Hamlet's madness

Scn. 3 G & R against Hamlet and towards King and Queen

Scn. 4 Go to the Nunnery: Farewell Ophelia

Scn. 5 Play in Play - Puppets

Scn. 6 Queen's Bedroom - Slain of Polonius

Scn. 7 To England - Death of G & R / Homecoming Laertes - Revenge determined and Ophelia's Death

Scn. 8 At the grave of Ophelia: Homecoming Hamlet / Vengeful Laertes

Scn. 9 Duel of Prince of Denmark and His Dead Lover's Brother

HAMLET

Scene I

House Lights Down

Stage center spot starts to go down

Voice 1

Ha----- (8 beats)

Voice 2

Hamlet, Hamlet, Hamlet

Voice 1

Hamlet, Hamlet, Hamlet (starts on last 'Hamlet' of Voice 2)

Voices 1 and 2

Hamlet, Hamlet, Hamlet

Ghost

Hamlet. (8 beats)

(From the first floor entrance of the audience: Noises of several men's feet; rushing)

HORATIO

(Scream) Look, my lord, it comes!

HORATIO

You shall not go, my lord.

HAMLET

Hold off your hands.

HORATIO

Be ruled; you shall not go.

HAMLET

My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!
I say, away! Go on; I'll follow thee.

(Hamlet enters the theater from the 2nd floor entrance, comes down to the stage from the stairs.)

HAMLET

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

HAMLET

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
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me! (Echo Voice 1 & 2)
Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
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?
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Both Voice 1&2: Ha!! (Long inhale with furious surprise)

Ghost

(Long silence) Mark me.

HAMLET

I will. (Puts his sword down)

Ghost (Voice 1 & 2 echoes whichever the words underlined. Also, which ever Italic words, needs to be said together.)

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

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost

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

HAMLET

Speak; I am bound to hear.

Ghost

So art thou to *revenge*, when thou shalt hear.

HAMLET

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--

HAMLET

O God!

Ghost

Revenge his foul and most unnatural *murder*.

HAMLET

Murder!

Ghost

Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, *strange* (only with voice 1) and *unnatural* (only with Voice 2).

HAMLET

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

Ghost

I find thee apt;
Hamlet, hear:
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown

HAMLET

O my prophetic soul! My uncle!

Ghost

Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,--
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!
--won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:

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.
(To HAMLET)
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.
(She comes down the steps and pulls Hamlet to the side.)
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 suspiration of forced breath,
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:

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!

KING CLAUDIUS

but to persever
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

HAMLET

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; tings rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!

KING CLAUDIUS

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,

HAMLET

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 beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!

KING CLAUDIUS

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; (Gertrude hugs King Claudius.)

Ghost King

O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage, and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

HAMLET

Must I remember? Why, she would hang on hm.
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what is fed on: and yet, within a month—
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman!

The Ghost

But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on *garbage*.

HAMLET

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.

The Ghost

But, soft! methinks I scent the morning air;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous distilment;

CLAUDIUS (interrupting)

whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood

The Ghost

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd:
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
Adieu (Echo 1 & Echo 2), adieu (Echo 1 & Echo 2)! Hamlet, remember me.

HORATIO

My lord, my lord,--
Heaven secure him!
(Entering the stage) What news, my lord?

HAMLET

O, (pause) wonderful!

HORATIO

Good my lord, tell it.

HAMLET

No; you'll reveal it.

HORATIO

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

HAMLET

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

HORATIO

There's no offence, my lord.

HAMLET

But there is, and much offense.

good friend,

As you are friend, scholar and soldier,

Give me one poor request.

HORATIO

What is't, my lord? I will.

HAMLET

Never make known what you have seen to-night.

HORATIO

My lord, I will not.

HAMLET

Nay, but swear't.

HORATIO

In faith,

My lord, not I.

HAMLET

Upon my sword.

Ghost

Swear.

HAMLET

Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,
truepenny?

Come on--you hear this fellow in the cellarage--

Consent to swear.

HORATIO

Propose the oath, my lord.

HAMLET

Never to speak of this that you have seen,

Swear by my sword.

Ghost

Swear.

HAMLET

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

A worthy pioner! Remove, good friend.

HORATIO

O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

HAMLET

And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

Ghost

Swear.

HAMLET

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!
(They swear)
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
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.
The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!
Nay, come, let's go together.

HAMLET

O all you host of heaven! O earth! what else?
And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
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 villain!
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.

SCENE II A room in the castle.

(Enter POLONIUS)

LORD POLONIUS

I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

LORD POLONIUS

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 all.
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
I have a daughter--have while she is mine--
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise.
(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.'

KING CLAUDIUS

But how hath she
Received his love?

LORD POLONIUS

What do you think of me?

KING CLAUDIUS

As of a man faithful and honourable.

LORD POLONIUS

I would fain prove so.
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
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.

KING CLAUDIUS

How may we try it further?

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;
Mark the encounter:

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

LORD POLONIUS

Away, I do beseech you, both away:
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

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

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

(Silence)

LORD POLONIUS

Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET

Into my grave.

LORD POLONIUS

Indeed, that is out o' the air.

--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!

Scene III

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.

HAMLET

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.

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.
(Rosencrantz and Guildenstern turns around towards the King and Queen)
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 gentry and good 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:

ROSENCRANTZ

Then is the world one.

HAMLET

A goodly one; in which there are many confines,
wards and dungeons, Denmark 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. Shall we
to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

ROSENCRANTZ GUILDENSTERN

We'll wait upon... you.

HAMLET

(Sharply) what make you at Elsinore?

ROSENCRANTZ

To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

HAMLET

(slowly spreads an evil smile) Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I
thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are
too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it
your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come,
deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

GUILDENSTERN

What should we say, my lord?

HAMLET

Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent
for; and there is 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 end, my lord?

HAMLET

That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by
the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy 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.

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?

HAMLET

Now I am alone.

ROSENCRANTZ

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

HAMLET

I, A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made.

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.

HAMLET

Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Did he receive you well?

ROSENCRANTZ

Most like a gentleman.

HAMLET

'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 villain!
O, vengeance!

GUILDENSTERN

But with much forcing of his disposition.

HAMLET

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!

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.

HAMLET

the play 's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

ROSENCRANTZ

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 AND GUILDENSTERN

We shall, my lord.

Scene IV

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 heart-ache 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.
 Who would these 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;

LORD POLONIUS

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

HAMLET (Only his lines are spoken, there is no Ophelia)

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remember'd.

HAMLET

I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

HAMLET

No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

HAMLET

Ha, ha! are you honest?

HAMLET

Are you fair?

HAMLET

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

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.

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.

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. Go thy ways to a nunnery.
Where's your father?

HAMLET

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

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.

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,

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.
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;
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.
(KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS exit)

Scene V PLAY IN PLAY

HAMLET

Bid the players make haste.
What ho! Horatio! (Enter HORATIO)

HORATIO

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET

There is a play to-night before the king;
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt
Give him heedful note;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,

HORATIO

Well, my lord: I will pay the theft.

HAMLET

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

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, you say?

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. (Puts a mask and get the back of the puppet stage)
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.

HORATIO

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.

[The puppet show begins. The puppet of Lucianus comes out, surveys the audience, and bows.]

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? (From the back stage)

GERTRUDE

'Tis brief.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

Puppet 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,
For women's fear and love holds quantity;
In neither aught, or in extremity.

Puppet 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--

Puppet 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.
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.

Puppet 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;
But, 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.

Puppet 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!

Puppet King

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

Puppet Queen

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

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.

KING CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? Tropically. This play

is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is
the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see
anon; This one is Lucianus, nephew to the king.

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

HAMLET (interrupting)

Confederate season, else no creature seeing;

Voice 1: Ha----- (8 beats)

Voice 2: Ha-----(8 beats)

Voice 1: Haha! (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.)

Voice 2: Ha----(8beats)

Voice 1: Haha! (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.)

Voice 2: Ha----(8beats)

LUCIANUS

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.

Voice1: Ha, aaaaaa (gets high-toned hysterically.)

Voice 2: Ha, aaaaaa (gets high-toned hysterically.)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How fares my lord?

LORD POLONIUS

Give o'er the play.

KING CLAUDIUS

Give me some light: away!

LORD POLONIUS

Lights, lights, lights!

Voice 1 & 2 keep going:

Voice:1: Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa (bring voice down, when it gets soften)

Voice 2: Haha.....(8 beats)

Voice 2:Haha....(8 beats)

[The Queen puppet transforms into the verse side; the monstrous beauty, then rises with Lucianus into the air. The Queen comes down the stairs, staring puppets as if she can not believe her sight. Then with anger and humiliation, Queen starts to hit Hamlet with her fan. As she hits him numerous times, Hamlet laugh like crazy.]

HAMLET

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!

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.

GUILDENSTERN

The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of
spirit, hath sent me to you.

HAMLET

You are welcome.

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.

LORD POLONIUS

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

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.

Scene VI

KING CLAUDIUS

O, my offence is rank it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder.

HAMLET

Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;

KING CLAUDIUS

Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will:

HAMLET

And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven;

KING CLAUDIUS

My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;

HAMLET

And so am I revenged. That would be scann'd:

KING CLAUDIUS

And, like a man to double business bound,

HAMLET

A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.

KING CLAUDIUS

I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect.

HAMLET

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.

KING CLAUDIUS

What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,

HAMLET

He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May.

KING CLAUDIUS

Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow?

HAMLET

And how his audit stands who knows save heaven?

KING CLAUDIUS

Whereto serves mercy
But to confront the visage of offence?

HAMLET

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid bent:
When his is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;

KING CLAUDIUS

And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardon'd being down?

HAMLET

Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
And this soul may be as damn'd and black
As hell, whereto is goes.

KING CLAUDIUS

Then I'll look up;
My fault is past.

HAMLET

My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

KING CLAUDIUS

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.

HAMLET

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
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.
(HAMLET exits)

KING CLAUDIUS

[Rising] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

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.

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

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

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!

LORD POLONIUS

I am slain!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not:
Is it the king?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

HAMLET

A bloody 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?

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.

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,

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

Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
 Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
 Over the nasty sty,--

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O, speak to me no more;
 These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;
 No more, sweet Hamlet!

HAMLET

A murderer and a villain;
 A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
 Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings;
 A cutpurse 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,— [he speaks to and sees now a ghost that is not there]
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 command? O, say!

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?
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?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

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!

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 pursy 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. For this same lord,
I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
One word more, good lady.

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 his 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;

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Be thou assured, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

HAMLET

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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Where is your son?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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!
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one.
This mad young man: but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit;
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!
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho, 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.
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;

ROSENCRANTZ: GUILDENSTERN

Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

HAMLET

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

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.

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.

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

KING CLAUDIUS

Alas, alas!

HAMLET

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

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.

HAMLET

He will stay till ye come.

KING CLAUDIUS

Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,--
must send thee hence With fiery quickness:
and every thing is bent
For England.

HAMLET

For England!

KING CLAUDIUS

Ay, Hamlet.

HAMLET

(Pause) Good.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

HAMLET

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

KING CLAUDIUS

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

HAMLET

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

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.
And, England,
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us--thou mayst not coldly set
Our sovereign process; which imports at full,
By letters congruing to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me: till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[Sailing scene. Guildenstern helps Rosencrantz aboard. Hamlet throws his necklace to the sea, and scorns
Guildenstern's help boarding]

Scene VII HAMLET ON JOURNEY / HOMECOMING LAERTES

LAERTES

Where is this king?
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.

KING CLAUDIUS

What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person:

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.

LAERTES

How now! what noise is that?
Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.
This nothing's more than matter.
A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.
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.
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,
To you in satisfaction; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us,
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

LAERTES

Let this 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.

HORATIO

[Reads] 'Horatio,
You do remember all the circumstance?
in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutines in the bilboes.

HAMLET (interrupting)

Rashly,
And praised be rashness for it, let us know,
Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall: and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will,--
Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Groped I to find out them; had my desire.
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,--
O royal knavery!--an exact command,
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
Importing Denmark's health and England's too,
With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,
That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

HORATIO

Is't possible?

HAMLET

I have the commission: I will show it to you at more leisure.
Being thus be-netted round with villainies,--
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play--I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:
An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
As love between them like the palm might flourish,
As peace should stiff her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

HORATIO

How was this seal'd?

HAMLET

Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other,
Subscribed it, gave't the impression, placed it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, 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
With as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I
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.

HORATIO

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

HAMLET

They are not near my conscience; their defeat
Does by their own insinuation grow:
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

HORATIO

Why, what a king is this!

HAMLET

Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon--
He that hath kill'd my king and whored my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage--is't not perfect conscience,
To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be damn'd,
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?
It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.
It will be short: the interim is mine;
'He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

LAERTES

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;

LAERTES

And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms,
but my revenge will come.

KING CLAUDIUS

Break not your sleeps for that:
I loved your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine--
(Enter Horatio)
How now! what news?

KING CLAUDIUS

From Hamlet! who brought them?

HORATIO

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.
'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?

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

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

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

Will you do this,
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,
Under the moon, can save the thing from death
I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

KING CLAUDIUS

Let's further think of this;
How now, sweet queen!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow; Laertes, your sister...

LAERTES

where?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
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,
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.

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.

Scene VII The Graveyard. Homecoming Hamlet and Vengeful Laertes

HAMLET

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

First Clown

Mine, sir.

HAMLET

What man dost thou dig it for?

First Clown

For no man, sir.

HAMLET

What woman, then?

First Clown

For none, neither.

HAMLET

Who is to be buried in't?

First Clown

One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

HAMLET

How absolute the knave is!

How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

First Clown

Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day
that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

HAMLET

How long is that since?

First Clown

Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it
was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that
is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET

Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clown

Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits
there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

HAMLET

Why?

First Clown

'Twill, a not be seen in him there; there the men
are as mad as he.

HAMLET

How came he mad?

First Clown

Very strangely, they say.

HAMLET

How strangely?

Whose was it?

First Clown

This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

HAMLET

This?

First Clown

E'en that.

HAMLET

Let me see.

(Takes the skull)

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow
of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath
borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how
abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rims at
it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know
not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your
gambols? your songs?

Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let
her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must
come; make her laugh at that.

LAERTES

What ceremony else?

HAMLET

That is Laertes,

A very noble youth: mark.

LAERTES

What ceremony else?

Must there no more be done?

Lay her i' the earth:

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministering angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

HAMLET

What, the fair Ophelia!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

LAERTES

O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

HAMLET

What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

LAERTES

The devil take thy soul!

HAMLET

Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear: hold off thy hand.

KING CLAUDIUS

Pluck them asunder.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Hamlet, Hamlet!

HORATIO

Good my lord, be quiet.

HAMLET

Why I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O my son, what theme?

HAMLET

I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

KING CLAUDIUS

O, he is mad, Laertes.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

For love of God, forbear him.

HAMLET

'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:

QUEEN GERTRUDE

This is mere madness:
And thus awhile the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
His silence will sit drooping.

HAMLET

Hear you, sir;
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

KING CLAUDIUS

I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[To LAERTES]
Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.

This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.

Scene IX

HORATIO

You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET

I do not think so: since he went into France, I
have been in continual practise: I shall win at the
odds.

HORATIO

If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will
forestall their repair hither, and say you are not
fit.

HAMLET

Not a whit, we defy augury:

KING CLAUDIUS

Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

HAMLET

Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
This presence knows,
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
With sore distraction. What I have done,
That might your nature, honour and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet:
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
Who does it, then? His madness: if't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil
Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
And hurt my brother.

LAERTES

I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
I have a voice and precedent of peace,
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

HAMLET

I embrace it freely;
And will this brother's wager frankly play.
Give us the foils. Come on.

LAERTES

Come, one for me.

HAMLET

I'll be your foil, Laertes: in mine ignorance
Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
Stick fiery off indeed.

LAERTES

You mock me, sir.

HAMLET

No, by this hand.

KING CLAUDIUS

Give them the foils, Horatio.
Cousin Hamlet, You know the wager?

HAMLET

Very well, my lord
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

KING CLAUDIUS

I do not fear it; I have seen you both:
But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

LAERTES

This is too heavy, let me see another.

HAMLET

This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

HORATIO

Ay, my good lord.

KING CLAUDIUS

Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire:
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
'Now the king dunks to Hamlet.' Come, begin:
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

HAMLET

Come on, sir.

LAERTES

Come, my lord.

HAMLET

One.

LAERTES

No.

HAMLET

Judgment.

HORATIO

A hit, a very palpable hit.

LAERTES

Well; again.

KING CLAUDIUS

Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;

Here's to thy health.

Give him the cup.

HAMLET

I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. Come.

Another hit; what say you?

LAERTES

A touch, a touch, I do confess.

KING CLAUDIUS

Our son shall win.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

HAMLET

Good madam!

KING CLAUDIUS

Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

HAMLET

I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come, let me wipe thy face.

LAERTES

My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING CLAUDIUS

I do not think't.

HAMLET

Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

LAERTES

Say you so? come on.

HORATIO

Nothing, neither way.

LAERTES

Have at you now!

KING CLAUDIUS

Part them; they are incensed.

HAMLET

Nay, come, again.

HORATIO

Look to the queen there, ho!

They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord?

LAERTES

Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, ;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAMLET

How does the queen?

KING CLAUDIUS

She swounds to see them bleed.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No, no, the drink, the drink,--O my dear Hamlet,--

The drink, the drink! I am poison'd.

HAMLET

O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! Seek it out.

LAERTES

It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practise

Hath turn'd itself on me lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:

I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

HAMLET

The point!--envenom'd too!

Then, venom, to thy work.

KING CLAUDIUS

O, yet defend me, friends; I am but hurt.

HAMLET

Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother.

LAERTES

He is justly served;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me.

HAMLET

Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time--as this fell sergeant, death,
Is strict in his arrest--O, I could tell you--
But let it be.
Horatio, I am dead;