

Hamlet

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

ADAPTED BY JAMES RICE & AMANDA KARR

Cast of Characters

Hamlet/Core - Nephew of Claudius, son of Gertrude. Patient Zero

Hamlet/ Vengeance - Embodiment of key emotional trait of Hamlet.

Hamlet/Justice - Embodiment of key emotional trait of Hamlet.

Hamlet/Wisdom - Embodiment of key emotional trait of Hamlet.

Hamlet/Innocence - Embodiment of key emotional trait of Hamlet.

Claudius - Hamlet's Uncle, King of Denmark. Chief Doctor in Prologue

Gertrude - Hamlet's Mother, Queen of Denmark. Matron in Prologue

Polonius - Lord Chamberlain - Claudius' court. Doctor in Prologue

Laertes - Polonius' son, Ophelia's brother. Visitor in Prologue

Ophelia - Polonius' daughter, Laertes' sister. Patient in Prologue

Horatio - Hamlet's close friend. Orderly in Prologue

Marcellus - Soldier who sees ghost with Hamlet. Orderly in Prologue

Chorus (6)- Ghost/Rosencrantz/Guildenstern/Player King/Player Queen/Clown/Priest/Osric/patients in prologue

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Prologue

AT RISE, THE STAGE IS MINIMALLY DECORATED. THERE IS A THREE-LEVEL RISE UPSTAGE. THERE IS A PIT EXIT AT THE TOP FOR ESCAPES, ENTRANCE OF SUBORDINATE HAMLETS AND OPHELIA'S DEATH. THERE MAY BE A NUMBER OF CHESTS POSITIONED AROUND FOR FUTURE COSTUME CHANGES.

THE ENTIRE CAST EXCEPT THE ADDITIONAL HAMLETS ARE SPREAD ABOUT THE STAGE. THE WOMEN IN THE CHORUS, OPHELIA, AND CORE HAMLET ARE DRESSED AS PATIENTS IN A 19TH CENTURY ASYLUM. MEN IN THE CHORUS, HORATIO, MARCELLUS, ROSENCRANTZ, AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DRESSED AS PATIENTS AND ORDERLIES. GERTRUDE IS COSTUMED AS HEAD MATRON. CLAUDIUS AND POLONIUS ARE COSTUMED AS DOCTORS. LAERTES, OPHELIA'S BROTHER, IS COSTUMED AS A VISITOR.

CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE ARE UPSTAGE LEFT. POLONIUS IS UPSTAGE RIGHT WITH A PATIENT. REST OF CAST IS DISPERSED ABOUT THE STAGE IN ACTIVITY WITH EACH OTHER.

CORE HAMLET IS FOUND CENTER STAGE WITH HORATIO. SHE IS IN URGENT SUBVOCALIZED CONVERSATION WITH HORATIO, HER ATTENDING ORDERLY. AS LIGHTS COME UP, SHE BREAKS FROM HORATIO AND SCUTTLES TO CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE. HER DEMEANOR IS AGITATED AND SHE SPEAKS WITH GREAT URGENCY. AFTER CLAUDIUS, SHE MOVES ABOUT ROOM. ORDERLIES TRY TO WRANGLE HER UNDER CONTROL.

CLAUDIUS:

Get these women in their cells.

HAMLET (TO MATRON GERTRUDE):

Let the bloat king temp you again to bed, pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse. Confess yourself to heaven! Repent what's past, avoid what is to come!

CLAUDIUS:

Get away from her! She's mine now!

HAMLET:

Fie on't. 'Tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed. But two months dead!

LAERTES:

Where is my sister?

POLONIUS:

There.

(POLONIUS CROSSES WITH LAERTES TO OPHELIA.)

OPHELIA:

Oh brother, take me home!

LAERTES:

Not yet. You're doing better but you must stay here where father can take care of you.

HAMLET: (RUNS TO OPHELIA)

The fair Ophelia! Get thee to a nunnery! Go! (*Laertes pushes Hamlet away*).
What wilt thou do? Woot weep? Woot fight? Woot fast? Woot tear thyself?

LAERTES TRIES WREST HAMLET AWAY FROM OPHELIA. HORATIO INTERCEDES.

HORATIO:

Her father was murdered. Her mind broke. She only communicates through the play Hamlet.

HAMLET:

It is not nor it cannot come to good. The serpent that did sting my father's life now wears his crown!

HAMLET BOLTS UPSTAGE CENTER TO RISER. HORATIO PURSUES HER.

HORATIO:

These are but wild and whirling words.

HAMLET:

Observe mine uncle. If his occulted quilt do not unkennel itself in one speech, it is a damned ghost that we have seen. Give him heedful note!

HAMLET PUSHES HORATIO AWAY AND GOES TO TOP LEVEL AND WHAT FOLLOWS IS A STREAM OF CONSCIOUSNESS CHANT. ALL BUT HAMLET EXIT

HAMLET:

Mark me! Angels and ministers of grace defend us. The play, the play, the play's the thing. But two months dead. So excellent a king. The play, the play, the play's the thing. Oh most pernicious woman! To live in the rank sweat of an enseamed bed! Frailty thy name is woman! The play, the play, the play's the thing. Marry with mine uncle? A cut purse of the empire and the rule that from the shelf stole the precious diadem and put it in his pocket! A king of shreds and patches! Villain! The play, the play, the play's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscious of the king!

HAMLET BREAKS DOWN. DURING THE BREAKDOWN, LIGHTS COME DOWN ALL BUT HAMLET. WE MOVE FROM THE REAL WORLD TO THE INTERNAL WORLD OF HAMLET'S MIND. MUSIC COMES UP. ONE BY ONE, HAMLET'S JUSTICE, VENGEANCE, WISDOM AND INNOCENCE RISE FROM THE PIT, BEING BORN INTO EXISTENCE. THEY BEGIN INTERACTION WITH CORE HAMLET. THEY HELP TO COSTUME HER MORE MASCULINELY, WITH A FEW COSTUME PIECES. THE MOVEMENT IS STYLIZED, ALMOST A GHOST DANCE. ONCE TRANSITION IS COMPLETED, THEIR ATTENTION IS DRAWN DOWNSTAGE.

DURING TRANSITION, CAST HAS REASSEMBLED DOWN STAGE. THROUGH A DUMBSHOW, THEY REENACT CLAUDIUS' CORONATION. GERTRUDE IS AT HIS SIDE, VERY AFFECTIONATE WITH HIM.

HAMLET WISDOM

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!

HAMLET

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!

HAMLET VENGEANCE

O God!

ALL HAMLETS

God!!

HAMLET

How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Fie on't! ah fie! -

HAMLET JUSTICE

'-tis an unweeded garden,
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

That it should come to this!
But two months dead: -

HAMLET VENGEANCE

- nay, not so much, not two!

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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. -

HAMLET

- Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? -

HAMLET JUSTICE

- why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on: -

HAMLET VENGEANCE

- and yet, within a month-

HAMLET

Let me not think on't—

HAMLET VENGEANCE

- Frailty, thy name is woman!

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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—

HAMLET VENGEANCE

O, God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer!--

HAMLET INNOCENCE

--married with my uncle,
My father's brother, -

HAMLET WISDOM

- but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules: -

HAMLET INNOCENCE

- within a month: She married.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

O, most wicked speed, to post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

HAMLET JUSTICE

It is not nor it cannot come to good:

CORE HAMLET

But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

[Act I Scene 2 - Coronation](#)

KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, LAERTES, OPHELIA, HORATIO, MARCELLUS,
AND CHORUS DRESSED AS LORDS, AND ATTENDANTS HAVE REACHED UPSTAGE.

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.
And now, Laertes, what's the news with you? You told us of some suit; what is't,
Laertes?
Loose your voice: what wouldst thou beg, 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,--

CORE HAMLET, STARTLED BY INCLUSION, QUICKY TURNS TO CLAUDIUS. AS HE DOES, WISDOM
STEPS AND WHISPERS IN HIS EAR.

HAMLET WISDOM

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

KING CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

CORE HAMLET & WISDOM

[VOICED IN UNISON WITH CORE HAMLET SLIGHTLY BEWILDERED]

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 vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

CORE HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

CORE HAMLET

Seems, madam! nay it is; I know not 'seems.'
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
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 persevere
In obstinate condolement is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief;
It shows a heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
An understanding simple and unschool'd:
Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd. 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.
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!

HAMLET INNOCENCE

I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

KING CLAUDIUS

Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply: Madam, come.
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart.
Come away.

THEY EXIT AFTER A LONG AND SENSUOUS EMBRACE. EXEUNT ALL BUT HAMLETS, HORATIO AND MARCELLUS.

HORATIO

Hail to your lordship!

HAMLET CORE

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. Marcellus?

MARCELLUS

My good lord,

HAMLET

I am very glad to see you.
But what is your affair in Elsinore?

HORATIO

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

HAMLET

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

HORATIO

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

HAMLET

Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral bak'd meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio!
My father, methinks I see my father.

HORATIO

O! 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.

MARCELLUS

My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

HAMLET

Saw who?

MARCELLUS

My lord, the king your father!

ALL HAMLETS

The king, my father!

HORATIO

Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
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.
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

Did you not speak to it?

HORATIO

My lord, I did;
But answer made it none; yet once methought
It lifted up its head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanish'd from our sight.

HAMLET

'Tis very strange.

HORATIO

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

HAMLET

I would I had been there.

HORATIO

It would have much amaz'd you.

HAMLET

I will watch tonight;
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.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

HORATIO AND MARCELLUS

Our duty to your honour.

HAMLET

Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

HORATIO AND MARCELLUS EXIT. THE HAMLETS START TO EXIT BUT PAUSE WHEN LAERTES AND OPHELIA ENTER. THEY STAY TO OBSERVE.

Act I Scene 3 – Laertes takes off

LAERTES

My necessaries are embark'd: farewell:
And, sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

OPHELIA

Do you doubt that?

LAERTES

For Hamlet and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;
No more.

OPHELIA

No more but so?

LAERTES

Think it no more;
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,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
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.
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.

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! 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.
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,
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

LAERTES

Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

LORD POLONIUS

The time invites you; go.

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, he hath said to you?

OPHELIA

So please you, something touching 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 bounteous:
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,
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:
Tender yourself more dearly;
Or--not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Running it thus--you'll tender me a fool.

OPHELIA

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

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,

Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,
You must not take for fire. 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,
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,
The better to beguile.
Look to't, I charge you: come your ways.

OPHELIA

I shall obey, my lord.

Act 1 Scene 4 – Ramparts

GHOSTLY SOUNDS ARE HEARD. FOG STARTS TO FILL THE UPSTAGE PLATFORM.

ENTER HORATIO, AND MARCELLUS MID STAGE

MARCELLUS

The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

HORATIO

It is a nipping and an eager air.

MARCELLUS

What hour now?

HORATIO

I think it lacks of twelve.

MARCELLUS

No, it is struck.

[FLOURISH SOUNDS]

HORATIO

Look, my lord, he comes!

THE GHOST IS FORMING ON THE PLATFORM. THE HAMLETS ENTER UPSTAGE AND CLIMB UP THE STAIRS TO THE UPPER PLATFORM.

CORE 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
That I will speak to thee.

Let me not burst in ignorance; but tell
What may this mean,
That thou, dead corse,
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?

[GHOST BECKONS HAMLET]

GHOST

Mark me.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I will.

HAMLET VENGEANCE PUSHES CORE HAMLET INTO THE GHOST. ONE BY ONE THE HAMLET ARE SWALLOWED BY THE GHOST.

Act 1 Scene 5 - Ramparts

MARCELLUS

He waxes desperate with imagination.

HORATIO

Let's draw near.

MARCELLUS

Have after. To what issue will this come?

HORATIO

Heaven will direct it.
Nay, let's draw near him.

THE GHOST EXPELS THE HAMLET TO CENTER STAGE AND MOVES AROUND

GHOST 1

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

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost!

GHOST 2

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

HAMLET

Speak; I am bound to hear.

GHOST 3

So art thou to revenge, -

GHOST 4

- when thou shalt hear.

HAMLET

What?

GHOST 4

I am thy father's spirit,
If thou didst ever thy dear father love--

HAMLET

O God!

GHOST 1

Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET

Murder!

GHOSTS 2 & 3

Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Haste me to know't, that I
May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST 4

Now, Hamlet, hear:
Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

HAMLET

My uncle!

GHOST 5

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:
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From him, 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!

GHOST 2

But brief let me be.
Sleeping within my orchard,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon this secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,
And in the porches of his ears did pour
The leperous distilment;

GHOST 3 (MULTIPLE

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of Queen, at once dispatch'd:

CORE HAMLET

O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!

GHOST 1

If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and damned incest.
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her.
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.

CORE HAMLET MOVES TO DOWN CENTER SPOT.THE GHOST DISPERSSES

CORE 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 stilly up.

WISDOM & INNOCENCE

Remember him!

CORE HAMLET

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!

VENGEANCE & JUSTICE

Remember him!

HAMLET & WISDOM

Yea, from the table of our memory
We'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 our brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter:

HAMLET JUSTICE

Yes, by heaven!

HAMLET VENGEANCE

O most pernicious woman!
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
... meet it is you set it down,

HAMLET JUSTICE

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark:

CORE HAMLET

[Cutting the word Claudius into her own arm]
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
I have sworn 't.

HORATIO AND MARCELLUS ENTER. FOLLOWING LINES OVERLAP AS HAMLET RAMPS UP

MARCELLUS & HORATIO

My lord, my lord,--

MARCELLUS

Lord Hamlet,--

HORATIO

Heaven secure him!

CORE HAMLET

So be it!

HORATIO

Ho, my lord!

CORE HAMLET

Ho, boy! come, bird, come.

HAMLET SQUARES OFF, MAD, TO FIGHT HORATIO. HORATIO AND MARCELLUS SUBDUE HAMLET.

MARCELLUS

How is't, my noble lord?

HORATIO

What news, my lord?

CORE HAMLET

O, wonderful!

HORATIO

Good my lord, tell it.

HAMLET & VENGEANCE

No; you'll reveal it.

HORATIO

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord.

HAMLET & VENGEANCE

How say you, then; you'll be secret?

HORATIO & MARCELLUS

[In unison] Ay, by heaven, my lord.

CORE HAMLET

There's a villain dwelling in Denmark

HORATIO

[*Sarcastically*] There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the
To tell us this.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

[Sharply] Why, right; you are i' the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

HORATIO

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

CORE HAMLET

I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;

HORATIO

There's no offence, my lord.

CORE HAMLET

Yes, but there is, Horatio, And much offence too.!

HORATIO

O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

CORE HAMLET

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. But come;
So grace and mercy at your most need help you, Swear.

GHOST (FULL CHORUS)

[Beneath] Swear.

HORATIO

Propose the oath, my lord.

GHOST (FULL CHORUS)

[Beneath] Swear.

HAMLET

(To ghosts) Rest, rest perturbed spirit!
(To Marcellus & Horatio) Never to speak of this that you have seen tonight.

ALL HAMLETS

Swear!!

HORATIO

In faith,
My, lord, not I.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord, in faith.

CORE HAMLET

The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!

HAMLET RACES OFF.

HORATIO

Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

HORATIO AND MARCELLUS EXIT. HAMLET MEETS OPHELIA. HAMLET VENGEANCE ENACTS THE SCENE SHE WILL DESCRIBE IN THE NEXT SCENE. VENGEANCE TAKES OPHELIA BY THE HAND AND HOLD HER. WITH HIS OTHER HAND HE STROKES HER FACE. NODDING THREE TIMES HE SIGHS AND LETS HER GO. HAMLET CORE AND JUSTICE DRAG HAMLET VENGEANCE OUT WHILE VENGEANCE LOOKS BACK AT OPHELIA. OPHELIA RUNS. POLONIUS ENTERS. THEY MEET CENTER STAGE.

ACT II - Scene 1 - Castle

LORD POLONIUS

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 ancle;

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.

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.

POLONIUS AND OPHELIA EXIT.

[Act II Scene 2 – Throne Room](#)

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 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:
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!

EXIT ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, AND SOME ATTENDANTS. ENTER POLONIUS.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thou long 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

LORD POLONIUS

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 heir 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.
Mad let us grant him, then: and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect,
Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
Perpend. 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 a letter*]
'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.'
This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me,
And more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means and place,
All given to mine ear.

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. 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 Hamlet 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

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: 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 and carters.

KING CLAUDIUS

We will try it.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

LORD POLONIUS

Away, I do beseech you, both away:
I'll board him presently.

EXIT KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, AND ATTENDANTS. ENTER HAMLET, READING

LORD POLONIUS

O, give me leave:
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Well, God-a-mercy.

LORD POLONIUS

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Excellent well; you are a fishmonger.

LORD POLONIUS

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Then I would you were so honest a man.

LORD POLONIUS

Honest, my lord!

HAMLET WISDOM

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—

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Have you a daughter?

LORD POLONIUS

I have, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 potently
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,

HAMLET VENGEANCE

(to Core Hamlet) except my life,

HAMLET JUSTICE

(to Core Hamlet) except my life.

LORD POLONIUS

Fare you well, my lord.

POLONIUS WALKS AWAY

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 friend!

ROSENCRANTZ

My most dear friend!

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 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.

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

No such matter: I will not sort you with the rest of my servants, for man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you here?

ROSENCRANTZ

To visit you, no other occasion.

HAMLET

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: (pleading & agitated) come, come; nay,

GUILDENSTERN

What should we say, my lord?

HAMLET JUSTICE

(to Core Hamlet) Why, anything, but to the purpose. (to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) 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 JUSTICE

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.

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 moult 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 (Core Hamlet chokes)

HAMLET WISDOM

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

HAMLET WISDOM & HAMLET JUSTICE

me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the
paragon of animals!

HAMLET

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.
What players are they?

ROSENCRANTZ

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

FLOURISH OF TRUMPETS WITHIN

GUILDENSTERN

There are the players.

HAMLET

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. 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 INNOCENCE

Hark you, Guildenstern; 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 INNOCENCE

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

My lord, I have news to tell you.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

(mocking)My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,--

LORD POLONIUS

The actors are come hither, my lord.

ALL HAMLETS

(repeating sing-song fashion)
Buz, buz!

LORD POLONIUS

Upon mine honour,--

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Then came each actor on his ass,--

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 poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!

LORD POLONIUS

What a treasure had he, my lord?

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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

LORD POLONIUS

[Aside] Still on my daughter.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah?

LORD POLONIUS

If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Nay, that follows not.

LORD POLONIUS

What follows, then, my lord?

HAMLET

Look, where my abridgement comes.

[ENTER FOUR OR FIVE INMATES FROM THE CHORUS AS THE PLAYERS]

HAMLET

You are welcome, mistresses; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. Comest thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer to heaven than when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Mistresses, 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.

FIRST PLAYER

What speech, my lord?

HAMLET

I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million. 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.

FIRST PLAYER

But who, O, who had seen the mobled Queen--'

HAMLET INNOCENCE

The mobled Queen?
That's good; 'mobled Queen' is good.

SECOND 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,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason 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 milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.'

LORD POLONIUS

Look, whether she has not turned her colour and has tears in'r eyes. Pray you,
no more.

HAMLET

'Tis well: I'll have thee speak 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, friends

HAMLET

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

EXIT POLONIUS WITH ALL THE PLAYERS BUT THE FIRST

HAMLET

Dost thou hear me, old 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 lord and look you mock him not.

[EXIT FIRST PLAYER]

HAMLET

(to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to Elsinore.

ROSENCRANTZ

Good my lord!

EXIT ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

HAMLET

Ay, so, God be wi' ye;
Now I am alone.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 her soul so to her own conceit
That from her working all her visage wann'd,
Tears in her eyes, distraction in'r aspect,
A broken voice, and her whole function suiting
With forms to her conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to her or she to Hecuba,
That she should weep for her? What would she do,
Had she the motive and the cue for passion
That I have?

HAMLET JUSTICE

She 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.

HAMLET

Yet 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. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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!

ALL HAMLETS

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!

HAMLET

O, vengeance!

HAMLET WISDOM

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,

HAMLET VENGEANCE

A scullion!

HAMLET (OTHER HAMLETS ECHO THE WORDS IN BOLD)

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 quick: if he but blench,
I know my course. The spirit 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.

HAMLETS EXIT

Act III Scene 1 – Throne Room

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.

EXIT 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. (to Claudius)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.

EXIT KING CLAUDIUS AND POLONIUS AND OPHELIA. ENTER HAMLET DOWNSTAGE. THE OTHER HAMLETS AND THE CHORUS ENTER UPSTAGE.

CHORUS (CHANTING):

To be or not to be. To be or not to be.

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?

ALL HAMLETS AND CHORUS

To die: to sleep; no more;

HAMLET

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.

ALL HAMLETS AND CHORUS

To die, to sleep; To sleep:

HAMLET

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.

OPHELIA ENTERS. THE CHORUS MELTS AWAY. THE HAMLETS STAY.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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 composed
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 VENGEANCE

Ha, ha! are you honest?

OPHELIA

My lord?

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Are you fair?

OPHELIA

What means your lordship?

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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.

HAMLET VENGEANCE & CORE HAMLET

I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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.

CORE HAMLET

Get thee to a nunnery: -

HAMLET VENGEANCE

- 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.

HAMLET WISDOM

Go thy ways to a nunnery.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Where's your father?

OPHELIA

At home, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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.

CORE HAMLET

Get thee to a nunnery, go: farewell.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them.

CORE HAMLET

To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.

OPHELIA

O heavenly powers, restore him!

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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.

CORE HAMLET

(aside) Go to, I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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.

THE HAMLETS DRAG HAMLET VENGEANCE OFF

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,
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. 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,
Confine him where your wisdom best shall think.

KING CLAUDIUS

It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

EXIT ALL

ACT III Scene 2 – Throne Room

[Enter Hamlet and Players]

CORE 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 out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

SECOND PLAYER

I warrant your honour.

CORE 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 observance, that you 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.

CORE HAMLET

Go, make you ready.

EXEUNT PLAYERS. ENTER POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, AND GUILDENSTERN]

CORE HAMLET

How now, my lord! 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. [Exit Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] 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;
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?

CORE 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.

CORE HAMLET

No, nor mine now.

HAMLET INNOCENCE (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 VENGEANCE

What did you enact?

LORD POLONIUS

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

HAMLET JUSTICE

(Aside) It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there.

CORE HAMLET

Be the players ready?

ROSENCRANTZ

Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

No, good mother, here's metal more attractive. (moves to Ophelia)

LORD POLONIUS

[To King Claudius] O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

OPHELIA

No, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I mean, my head upon your lap?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Do you think I meant country matters?

OPHELIA

I think nothing, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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

OPHELIA

What is, my lord?

HAMLET JUSTICE

Nothing.

OPHELIA

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 JUSTICE

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.'

PLAYERS/CHORUS

For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently. [Exit]

HAMLET JUSTICE

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

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

ALL HAMLETS

As woman's love.

[ENTER TWO PLAYERS, KING AND QUEEN. DURING THIS SCENE, THERE IS A MODERN MOVEMENT CHOREOGRAPHY STEMMING FROM THE MIME SHOW.]

PLAYER KING

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

ALL HAMLETS

[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.
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!

CORE 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]

CORE HAMLET

(TO Gertrude) Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

The lady protests too much, methinks.

HAMLET JUSTICE

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

HAMLET JUSTICE

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

KING CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

CORE 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; '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 PLAYER LUCIANUS) This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

OPHELIA

You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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

OPHELIA

Still better, and worse.

CORE 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]

CORE 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 (VENGEANCE & JUSTICE)

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!

EXIT ALL BUT HAMLETS AND HORATIO

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

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

CORE HAMLET

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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.

CORE HAMLET

Sir, a whole history.

Guildestern
The king, sir,--

CORE HAMLET

Ay, sir, what of him?

GUILDENSTERN

Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

CORE HAMLET

With drink, sir?

GUILDENSTERN

No, my lord, rather with choler.

CORE 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.

CORE HAMLET

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

GUILDENSTERN

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

CORE 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.

CORE HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

GUILDENSTERN

What, my lord?

CORE 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.

CORE HAMLET

O wonderful! that I 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 (WISDOM AND CORE)

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 WISDOM

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 WISDOM

Sir, I lack advancement.

ROSENCRANTZ

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

CORE HAMLET

Ay, but sir, 'While the grass grows,'--the proverb

[RE-ENTER PLAYERS WITH RECORDERS]

HAMLET INNOCENCE

O, the recorders! let me see one.

GUILDENSTERN

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

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

CORE HAMLET

Tis as easy as lying:

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

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

CORE 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; There is much music in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, 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]

HAMLET INNOCENCE

God bless you, sir!

LORD POLONIUS

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

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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

LORD POLONIUS

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

HAMLET JUSTICE

Methinks it is like a weasel.

LORD POLONIUS

It is backed like a weasel.

HAMLET WISDOM

Or like a whale?

LORD POLONIUS

Very like a whale.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Then I will come to my mother by and by.

HAMLET WISDOM

(Aside) They fool me to the top of my bent.

CORE HAMLET

I will come by and by.

LORD POLONIUS

I will say so.

CORE HAMLET

By and by is easily said.

[EXIT POLONIUS]

CORE HAMLET

Leave me, friends.

[EXEUNT ALL BUT HAMLETS]

ALL HAMLETS

Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world:

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Now could I drink hot blood
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Soft! Now to my mother.

CORE HAMLET

O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Let me be cruel,

HAMLET JUSTICE

not unnatural:

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I will speak daggers to her,

HAMLET JUSTICE

but use none;

CORE HAMLET

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 UP PLATFORM TO CENTER UPPER LEVEL.

Act III Scene 3 - Claudius plots with R&G.

[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,
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?
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 HAMLETS]

CORE HAMLET

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

HAMLET VENGEANCE

And now I'll do't.

HAMLET JUSTICE

And so he goes to heaven;

HAMLET VENGEANCE

And so am I revenged.

HAMLET JUSTICE

That would be scann'd:
A villain kills my father; and for that,
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven.
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?

HAMLET WISDOM

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!

CORE HAMLET

Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:
(to Vengeance) 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;

HAMLET WISDOM

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.

[HAMLETS EXIT]

KING CLAUDIUS

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

[CLAUDIUS EXIT]

Act III Scene 4 - 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.

ALL HAMLETS

[OFF STAGE] Mother, mother, mother!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

POLONIUS HIDES BEHIND THE ARRAS. ENTER HAMLETS

HAMLET WISDOM

Now, mother, what's the matter?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET WISDOM

Mother, you have my father much offended.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Why, how now, Hamlet!

HAMLET JUSTICE

What's the matter now?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Have you forgot me?

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

[Drawing sword] 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?

CORE HAMLET

Nay, I know not: Is it the king?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

CORE HAMLET

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

As kill a king!

CORE 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,

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

CORE 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?

CORE 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:

HAMLET INNOCENCE

This was your husband.

CORE HAMLET

Look you now, what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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. -

HAMLET JUSTICE

- 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.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

A king of shreds and patches,--

[ENTER GHOST]

CORE HAMLET

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, he's mad!

CORE 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!

GHOST (FULL CHORUS)

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 fighting soul: Conceit in weakest bodies strongest
works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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?

CORE 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?

CORE HAMLET

Do you see nothing there?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

CORE HAMLET

Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No, nothing but ourselves.

CORE 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] (CORE HAMLET COLLAPSES)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

HAMLET WISDOM

Ecstasy!
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

HAMLET WISDOM

O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.

CORE HAMLET

Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
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 master ev'n 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.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

One word more, good lady.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What shall I do?

CORE HAMLET

Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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 VENGEANCE

This man shall set me packing:
I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Mother, good night.

CORE HAMLET

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.

ALL HAMLETS

Good night, mother.

[GERTRUDE EXITS SCREAMING.]

INTERMISSION

Act IV Scene 1 - A room in the castle.

SCREAM IN THE BLACKNESS IS HEARD. ENTER KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN 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]

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!
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]

KING CLAUDIUS

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 OUT THE HOUSE]

KING CLAUDIUS

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done. So haply slander
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE EXIT.

Act IV Scene 2 - Another room in the castle.

ENTER HAMLETS. CORE HAMLET IS IN CONTROL. THE OTHERS HANG BACK.

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.

CORE HAMLET AND R&G EXIT. THE OTHER HAMLETS FOLLOW.

Act IV Scene 3 - 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?

CORE HAMLET

At supper.

KING CLAUDIUS

At supper! where?

CORE 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!

CORE 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?

CORE 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 VENGEANCE

In heaven; send hither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself.

HAMLET WISDOM

But indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

KING CLAUDIUS

(to some attendants) Go seek him there.

HAMLET JUSTICE

He will stay till ye come.

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.

CORE HAMLET

Good.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

HAMLET

I see a cherub that sees them. Farewell, dear mother!

KING CLAUDIUS

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

CORE HAMLET

My mother: father and mother is man and wife; man and wife is one flesh; and so, my mother.

HAMLETS EXIT

KING CLAUDIUS

Follow him at foot;
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.

EXIT ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

KING CLAUDIUS

The present death of Hamlet.
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 CLAUDIUS

Act IV Scene 5 Elsinore. A room in the castle.

ENTER QUEEN GERTRUDE, HORATIO, AND ATTENDANTS

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I will not speak with her.

HORATIO

She is importunate, indeed distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What would she have?

HORATIO

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Let her come in.
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) How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff,
And his sandal shoon.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

OPHELIA

Say you? nay, pray you, mark. [Sings]
He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nay, but, Ophelia,--

OPHELIA

Pray you, mark. [Sings]
White his shroud as the mountain snow,--

[ENTER KING CLAUDIUS]

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, look here, my lord.

OPHELIA

[Sings] Larded with sweet flowers
Which bewept to the grave did go
With true-love showers.

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.

OPHELIA

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

[Sings] 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Pretty Ophelia!

OPHELIA

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

[Sings] 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.

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.

[OPHELIA 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.

SOUNDS OF SHOUTING

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alack, what noise is this?

KING CLAUDIUS

What is the matter?

MARCELLUS

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.

KING CLAUDIUS

The doors are broke.

ENTER LAERTES, ARMED;

LAERTES

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

CHORUS

No, let's come in.

LAERTES

I pray you, give me leave.

CHORUS

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.

KING CLAUDIUS

What is the cause, Laertes,
That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?
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.

CHORUS [WITHIN]

Let her come in.

LAERTES

How now! what noise is that? [Re-enter Ophelia and Horatio]
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!
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] They bore him barefaced on the bier;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear:--
[Speaks] Fare you well, my dove!

LAERTES

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

OPHELIA

[Sings] You must sing a-down a-down,
An you call him a-down-a.
[Speaks] O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward, that stole his
master's daughter.

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,--

[Sings]

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

LAERTES

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

OPHELIA

[Sings] 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,

All flaxen was his poll:

He is gone, he is gone,

And we cast away moan:

God ha' mercy on his soul!

[Speaks] And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye.

[OPHELIA EXITS, GERTRUDE FOLLOWS HER.]

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,

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.

CLAUDIUS AND LAERTES MOVE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STAGE TALKING IN PATOMIME. THE CHORUS PURSUES OPHELIA. THE MUSIC IS MENACING. THE CHORUS OVERTAKES OPHELIA AND BEARING HER ALOFT, THEN "SWALLOWS" HER IN THEIR MIDST. THE DROWNING OF OPHELIA. SHE SINKS AND RISES IN THE PIT UNTIL SHE IS SEEN NO MORE.

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

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;
The Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; 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:
[Enter Marcellus]
How now! what news?

MARCELLUS

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

KING CLAUDIUS

From Hamlet! who brought them?

MARCELLUS

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 Marcellus
[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 diest 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. 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,
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

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;
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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Let's further think of this; 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,
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.

LAERTES 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.

CLAUDIUS AND GERTRUDE EXIT

Act V - Scene I A churchyard.

CLOWN IS HEARD SINGING IN THE DARK.

CORE HAMLET

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

FIRST CLOWN

Mine, sir. [Sings]
O, a pit of clay for to be made For such a guest is meet.

HAMLET

I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

FIRST CLOWN

You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET

'Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

FIRST CLOWN

'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away gain, from me to you.

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 INNOCENCE

But soft! but soft! aside: here comes the king.

ENTER PRIEST, &C. IN PROCESSION; THE CORPSE OF OPHELIA, LAERTES AND MOURNERS FOLLOWING; KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, HORATIO.

HAMLET WISDOM

The Queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo its own life: 'twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile, and mark.

LAERTES

What ceremony else?

FIRST PRIEST

Her obsequies have been as far enlarged
As we have warrantise: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Till the last trumpet: for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments and the bringing home Of bell and burial.

LAERTES

Must there no more be done?

FIRST PRIEST

No more be done:
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

LAERTES

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.

ALL HAMLETS

What, the fair Ophelia!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
[*Scattering flowers*]
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: [*Leaps into the grave*]
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 VENGEANCE

[*Advancing*] 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. [*Leaps into the grave*]

LAERTES

The devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him*]

CORE 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!

ALL

Gentlemen,--

HORATIO

Good my lord, be quiet.

[THE ATTENDANTS PART THEM, AND THEY COME OUT OF THE GRAVE]

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O my son, what theme?

HAMLET JUSTICE

I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

What wilt thou do for her?

KING CLAUDIUS

O, he is mad, Laertes.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

For love of God, forbear him.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

'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:
I'll rant as well as thou.

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.

CORE HAMLET

Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;

HAMLET JUSTICE

(aside) Let Hercules himself do what he may,

CORE HAMLET

The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

HAMLETS EXIT

KING CLAUDIUS

I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
[Exit Horatio] [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.

THE ROYALS EXIT. THE CHORUS REMAINS. THEY ONCE AGAIN "SWALLOW" OPHELIA UP AND TAKE HER OFF STAGE.

Act V Scene 2 A hall in the castle.

[ENTER HAMLET AND HORATIO]

CORE HAMLET

So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance?

HORATIO

Remember it, my lord?

CORE HAMLET

Up from my cabin,
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,
No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
My head should be struck off.

HORATIO

Is't possible?

CORE HAMLET

Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

HORATIO

I beseech you.

CORE HAMLET

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:

HORATIO

Ay, good my lord.

HAMLET

An earnest conjuration from the king,
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

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

CORE HAMLET

Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
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!

CORE 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?

HORATIO

It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

CORE HAMLET

It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours.
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

HORATIO

Peace! who comes here?

[ENTER OSRIC]

OSRIC

Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

CORE HAMLET

I humbly thank you, sir.

OSRIC

Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his
majesty.

CORE HAMLET

I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.

OSRIC

The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses: against the which he
has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as
girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy,
very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

CORE HAMLET

What call you the carriages?

HORATIO

I knew you must be edified by the margin ere you had done.

OSRIC

The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

CORE HAMLET

The phrase would be more german to the matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides: I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bet against the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it?

OSRIC

The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes between you and Laertes, he shall not exceed you three hits: he hath laid on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

CORE HAMLET

How if I answer 'no'?

OSRIC

I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Sir, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

OSRIC

Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

HAMLET JUSTICE

To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

OSRIC

I commend my duty to your lordship.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Yours, yours.

OSRIC

The king and Queen and all are coming down.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

In happy time.

OSRIC

The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

She well instructs me.

EXIT OSRIC

HORATIO

You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

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

HAMLET WISDOM

But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart:

HAMLET VENGEANCE

but it is no matter.

HORATIO

Nay, good my lord,--

HAMLET VENGEANCE

It is but foolery; but it is such a kind of gain-giving, as would perhaps trouble a woman.

HORATIO

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

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Not a whit, we defy augury: -

HAMLET JUSTICE

- there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all: since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?

[ENTER KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, LAERTES, LORDS, OSRIC, AND ATTENDANTS WITH FOILS, &C]

KING CLAUDIUS

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

[KING CLAUDIUS PUTS LAERTES' HAND INTO HAMLET'S]

CORE 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 ungored. But till that time,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

CORE 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 JUSTICE

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.

CORE HAMLET

No, by this hand.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 JUSTICE

This likes me well. These foils have all a length? [They prepare to play]

OSRIC

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;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
Now the king dunks to Hamlet.' Come, begin:
And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Come on, sir.

LAERTES

Come, my lord. [They play]

HAMLET JUSTICE (HITTING LAERTES)

One.

LAERTES

No.

HAMLET JUSTICE

Judgment.

OSRIC

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.
(Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within)
Give him the cup.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. Come.
(They play and Hamlet hits Laertes again)
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.

(GERTRUDE TAKES THE CUP FROM CLAUDIUS)

HAMLET INNOCENCE

Good madam!

KING CLAUDIUS

Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

KING CLAUDIUS

[Aside] It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.

HAMLET

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come, let me wipe thy face.

LAERTES

(to Claudius) My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING CLAUDIUS

I do not think't.

LAERTES

[Aside] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

CORE 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. [They play]

OSRIC

Nothing, neither way.

LAERTES

Have at you now!

HAMLET VENGEANCE TAKES THE SWORD AND LAERTES WOUNDS HIM; THEN IN SCUFFLING, THEY CHANGE RAPIERS, AND HAMLET WOUNDS LAERTES.

KING CLAUDIUS

Part them; they are incensed.

HAMLET VENGEANCE

Nay, come, again.

QUEEN GERTRUDE FALLS.

OSRIC

Look to the Queen there, ho!

HORATIO

They bleed on both sides. (to Hamlet)How is it, my lord?

OSRIC

How is't, Laertes?

LAERTES

Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAMLET INNOCENCE

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. [Dies]

HAMLET JUSTICE

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 practice
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.

CORE HAMLET

The point!--envenom'd too!
Then, venom, to thy work.

STABS KING CLAUDIUS AND HAMLET INNOCENCE DIES FALLING BACK INTO THE PIT.

ALL

Treason! treason!

KING CLAUDIUS

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

CORE HAMLET

(grabbing the poisoned cup)
Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,(forcing Claudius to drink)
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother. [King Claudius dies]

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. [Dies]

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, O, I could tell you--
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead; (Hamlet Vengeance dies falling back into the pit)
Thou livest; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

HORATIO

Never believe it:
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.

RESTORATION TO ORIGINAL SCENE BEGINS. CHORUS BEGINS TO CLEAR STAGE OF
ACCOUTREMENT AND TAPESTRIES, ETC.

CORE HAMLET

As thou'rt a man,
Give me the cup: let go; by heaven, I'll have't. (*drinks the cup and Wisdom and
Justice die falling back into the pit.*)
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart
Absent thee from felicity awhile,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.
O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit (Hamlet see the lost personalities
are gone):
The rest is silence. [*Core Hamlet Dies*]

SCENE FINISHES RESTORATION TO REAL WORLD ASYLUM. MUCH IS THE SAME AS WHEN WE
LEFT IT BUT HORATIO IS HOLDING HAMLET IN HIS ARMS UNDER A SPECIAL. THE CHORUS,
DRESSED IN THEIR ASYLUM CLOTHES, SLOWLY CRAWLS TOWARD HAMLET AND HORATIO
FROM ALL SIDES.)

HORATIO

Now cracks a noble heart Good night sweet prince:
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

THE CHORUS REACHES HAMLET AND HORATIO. THEY REACH OUT THEIR ARMS TO TOUCH
HAMLET. HAMLET WAKES UP. THE CYCLE BEGINS AGAIN.

The End