

Hamlet.

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

Horatio.

Remember it, my lord!

Hamlet.

Our indiscretions sometimes serve us well
And our ear plots do teach us,
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will-

Horatio.

That is most certain.

Hamlet.

Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire,
Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew
To mine own room again; making so bold
to unseal the grand commission giv'n
Rosencrantz and Guildenstern
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?

Hamlet.

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

Horatio.

I beseech you.

Hamlet.

Being thus benetted around with villanies,
I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair.
Wilt thou know
Th' effect of what I wrote?

Horatio.

Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet.

An earnest conjuration from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allow'd.

Horatio.

How was this seal'd?

Hamlet. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Horatio.

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Hamlet.

Why, man, they did make love to this employment!
They are not near my conscience; their debate
Does by their own insinuation grow.

Horatio.

Why, what a king is this!

Hamlet.

Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon-
He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popp'd in between th' election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such coz'nage- 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.

Hamlet.

It will be short; the interim is mine,
And a man's life is 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 tow'ring passion.