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The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Act I

1. Elsinore. A platform before the Castle.
2. Elsinore. A room of state in the Castle.
3. Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius.
4. Elsinore. The platform before the Castle.
5. Elsinore. The Castle. Another part of the fortifications.

Act II

1. Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius.
2. Elsinore. A room in the Castle.

Act III

1. Elsinore. A room in the Castle.
2. Elsinore. hall in the Castle.
3. A room in the Castle.
4. The Queen's closet.

Act IV

1. Elsinore. A room in the Castle.
2. Elsinore. A passage in the Castle.
3. Elsinore. A room in the Castle.
4. Near Elsinore.
5. Elsinore. A room in the Castle.
6. Elsinore. Another room in the Castle.
7. Elsinore. Another room in the Castle.

Act V

1. Elsinore. A churchyard.
2. Elsinore. A hall in the Castle.

Act I, Scene 1

Elsinore. A platform before the Castle.

Enter Bernardo,

Bernado paces up and down the battlements, enter Horatio and Marcellus

Bernado:

Holla, who goes there?

Marcellus:

Holla, Bernardo!

Bernardo.

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Say-...What, is Horatio there ?

Horatio.
A piece of him.

Bernardo.
Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus.

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

Bernardo.
I have seen nothing

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

Horatio.
Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

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

Horatio.
Well, stay we by,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Bernardo.
Last night of all,
When yond same star that's westward from the pole
Had made his course t' illume that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one-

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Enter Ghost.

Marcellus.

Peace! break thee off! Look where it comes again!

Bernardo.

Looks it not like the King? Mark it, Horatio.

Horatio.

Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

Bernardo.

It would be spoke to.

Marcellus.

Question it, Horatio.

Horatio.

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

Marcellus.

It is offended.

Bernardo.

See, it stalks away!

Horatio.

Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee speak!

Exit Ghost.

Marcellus.

'Tis gone and will not answer.

Bernardo.

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

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Horatio.

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

Marcellus.

Is it not like the King?

Horatio.

As thou art to thyself.

Marcellus.

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

Horatio.

In what particular thought to work I know not;
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Horatio; But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.
Break we our watch up; and by my advice
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?
Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most conveniently.

Exeunt.

Act I Scene 2

Elsinore. A room of state in the Castle.

Flourish. [Enter Claudius, King of Denmark, Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet,
Polonius, Laertes and his sister Ophelia, Lords Attendant.

Claudius.

Though yet of King Hamlet our 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,

172 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
173 That we with wisest sorrow think on him
174 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
175 Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state,
176 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,
177 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
178 Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd
179 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
180 With this affair along. For all, our thanks.
181 And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
182 The head is not more native to the heart,
183 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
184 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

185
186 Laertes.
187 My dread lord,
188 Your leave and favour to return to France;
189 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
190 To show my duty in your coronation,
191 Yet now I must confess, that duty done,
192 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
193 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

194
195 Claudius.
196 Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

197
198 Polonius.
199 He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
200 By laboursome petition, and at last
201 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.
202 I do beseech you give him leave to go.

203
204 Claudius.
205 Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,
206 And thy best graces spend it at thy will!
207 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son-

208
209 Hamlet.
210 [aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind!

211
212 Claudius.
213 How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

214

215

Hamlet.

216

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

217

218

Gertrude.

219

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,

220

And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

221

Do not for ever with thy veiled lids

222

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

223

Thou know'st 'tis common. All that lives must die,

224

Passing through nature to eternity.

225

226

Hamlet.

227

Ay, madam, it is common.

228

229

Gertrude.

230

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

231

232

Hamlet.

233

Seems, madam, Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'

234

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

235

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

236

'That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,

237

For they are actions that a man might play;

238

But I have that within which passeth show-

239

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

240

241

Claudius.

242

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

243

To give these mourning duties to your father;

244

But you must know, your father lost a father;

245

That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound

246

In filial obligation for some term

247

To do obsequious sorrow.

248

We pray you throw to earth

249

This unprevailing woe, and think of us

250

As of a father; for let the world take note

251

You are the most immediate to our throne,

252

And with no less nobility of love

253

Than that which dearest father bears his son

254

Do I impart toward you. For your intent

255

In going back to school in Wittenberg,

256

It is most retrograde to our desire;

257 And we beseech you, bend you to remain
258 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
259 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

260
261 Gertrude.
262 Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.
263 I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

264
265 Hamlet.
266 I shall in all my best obey you, madam.
267 Claudius. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.
268 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come.
269 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
270 Sits smiling to my heart; come away.

271
272 Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.

273
274 Hamlet.
275 O that this too too solid flesh would melt,
276 Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
277 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
278 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
279 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
280 Seem to me all the uses of this world!
281 Fie on't! ah, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden
282 That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
283 Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
284 But two months dead! Nay, not so much, not two.
285 So excellent a king, that was to this
286 Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
287 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
288 Visit her face too roughly Why, she would hang on him
289 As if increase of appetite had grown
290 By what it fed on; and yet, within a month-
291 Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman!
292 A little month, or ere those shoes were old
293 With which she followed my poor father's body
294 (O God! a beast that wants discourse of reason
295 Would have mourn'd longer) married with my uncle;
296 My father's brother, but no more like my father
297 Than I to Hercules. Within a month,
298 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
299 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,

300 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
301 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
302 It is not, nor it cannot come to good.
303 But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

304
305 Enter Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.

306
307 Horatio.
308 Hail to your lordship!

309
310 Hamlet.
311 I am glad to see you well.

312
313 Horatio!
314 or I do forget myself.

315
316 Horatio.
317 The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

318
319 Hamlet.
320 Sir, my good friend- I'll change that name with you.
321 And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?
322 Marcellus?

323
324 Marcellus.
325 My good lord!

326
327 Hamlet.
328 I am very glad to see you.- [To Bernardo] Good even, sir.-
329 But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

330
331 Horatio.
332 A truant disposition, good my lord.

333
334 Hamlet.
335 I would not hear your enemy say so,
336 But what is your affair in Elsinore?
337 We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

338
339 Horatio.
340 My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

341
342 Hamlet

343 I prithee do not mock me, fellow student.
344 I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

345
346 Horatio.
347 Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

348
349 Hamlet.
350 Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral bak'd meats
351 Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
352 Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
353 Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
354 My father- methinks I see my father.

355
356 Horatio
357 . O, where, my lord?

358
359 Hamlet.
360 In my mind's eye, Horatio.

361
362 Horatio.
363 My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

364
365 Hamlet.
366 Saw? who?

367
368 Horatio.
369 My lord, the King your father.

370
371 Hamlet.
372 The King my father?

373
374 Horatio.
375 Season your admiration for a while
376 With an attent ear, till I may deliver
377 Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
378 This marvel to you.

379
380 Hamlet.
381 For God's love let me hear!

382
383 Horatio.
384 Two nights together had these gentlemen
385 (Marcellus and Bernardo) on their watch

386 In the dead vast and middle of the night
387 Been thus encount'ed. A figure like your father,
388 Garbed in uniform Cap in hand
389 Appears before them and with solemn march
390 Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd
391 By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
392 Within his truncheon's length; whilst they distill'd
393 Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
394 Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
395 In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
396 And I with them the third night kept the watch;
397 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
398 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
399 The apparition comes. I knew your father.
400 These hands are not more like.

401
402 Hamlet.

403 But where was this?

404
405 Marcellus.

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

407
408 Hamlet.

409 Did you not speak to it?

410
411 Horatio.

412 My lord, I did;

413 But answer made it none.

414 It simply lifted up it's head

415 And vanish'd from our sight.

416
417 Hamlet.

418 'Tis very strange.

419
420 Horatio. A

421 s I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;

422
423 Hamlet:

424 Hold you the watch to-night?

425
426 Marcellus. [with Bernardo] We do, my lord.

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Hamlet.
And look'd he frowningly?.

Horatio.
A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Hamlet.
Pale or red?

Horatio.
Nay, very pale.

Hamlet.
And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Horatio.
Most constantly.

Hamlet.
I would I had been there.

Horatio.
It would have much amaz'd you.

Hamlet.
Very like, very like. I will watch to-night.
Perchance 'twill walk again.

Horatio
. I warr'nt it will.

Hamlet.
If it assume my noble father's person,
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
Let it be tenable in your silence still;
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
Give it an understanding but no tongue.
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well.
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

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All. Our duty to your honour.

Hamlet.

Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[Exeunt [all but Hamlet].]

My father's spirit- in arms? All is not well.

I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!

Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,

Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

Exit.

Act I Scene 3

Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius.

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

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, a toy, not permanent-

not lasting; the suppliance of a minute;

No more.

Ophelia.

No more but so?

Laertes.

Think it no more.

Perhaps he loves you now, 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,

Choose for himself, for on his choice depends

The safety and health of this whole state,

515 Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,.
516 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
517 If with too credent ear you list his songs,
518 Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
519 To his unmast'ed importunity.
520 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
521 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
522 Out of the shot and danger of desire
523 Best safety lies in fear,
524 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

525
526 Ophelia.

527 I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep
528 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
529 Do not as some ungracious pastors do,
530 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
531 Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
532 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads.

533
534 Laertes.

535 O, fear me not!
536 [Enter Polonius.]
537 I stay too long. But here my father comes.

538
539 Polonius.

540 Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for shame!
541 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
542 And you are stay'd for. There- my blessing with thee!
543 And these few precepts in thy memory
544 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
545 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
546 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:
547 Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
548 Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel;
549 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
550 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware
551 Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,
552 Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee.
553 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;
554 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
555 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
556 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,.
557 Neither a borrower nor a lender be;

558 This above all- to thine own self be true,
559 And it must follow, as the night the day,
560 Thou canst not then be false to any man.
561 Farewell. My blessing season this in thee!

562
563 Laertes.
564 Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

565
566 Polonius.
567 The time invites you. Go, your servants tend.

568
569 Laertes.
570 Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
571 What I have said to you.

572
573 Ophelia.
574 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
575 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

576
577 Laertes.
578 Farewell.
579 Exit.

580
581 Polonius.
582 What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

583
584 Ophelia.
585 So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

586
587 Polonius.
588 Marry, well bethought!
589 'Tis told me he hath very oft of late
590 Given private time to you, and you yourself
591 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous. .
592 What is between you? Give me up the truth.

593
594 Ophelia.
595 He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
596 Of his affection to me.

597
598 Polonius.

599 Affection? Pooh! You speak like a green girl,
600 Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.
601 Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?
602

603 Ophelia.
604 I do not know, my lord, what I should think,
605

606 Polonius.
607 Marry, I will teach you! Think yourself a baby
608 That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
609 Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly,
610 Or you'll tender me a fool.
611

612 Ophelia.
613 My lord, he hath importun'd me with love
614 In honourable fashion.
615

616 Polonius.
617 Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to!
618

619 Ophelia.
620 And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,
621 With almost all the holy vows of heaven.
622

623 Polonius.
624 Ay, springes to catch woodcocks I do know!
625 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth
626 Have you so slander any moment leisure
627 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
628 Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.
629

630 Ophelia.
631 I shall obey, my lord.
632 Exeunt.
633

634
635 Act I Scene 4
636 Elsinore. The platform before the Castle.
637 Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.
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639 Hamlet.
640 The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

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Horatio.
It is a nipping and an eager air.

Hamlet.
What hour now?

Horatio.
I think it lacks of twelve.

Marcellus.
No, it is struck.

Horatio.
Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws near the season
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

Enter Ghost.

Horatio.
Look, my lord, it comes!

Hamlet.
Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane. O, answer me?
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell
What may this mean
That thou, dead corse, appear for battle garb'd?
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
So horribly to shake our disposition
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
Say, why is this? wherefore? What should we do?

Ghost beckons Hamlet.

Horatio.
It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

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Marcellus.

Look with what courteous action
It waves you to a more removed ground.

But do not go with it!

Horatio. No, by no means!

Hamlet.

It will not speak. Then will I follow it.

Horatio.

Do not, my lord!

Hamlet.

Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee;
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Horatio.

What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff
And there assume some other, horrible form
And draw you into madness?

Hamlet.

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

Marcellus.

You shall not go, my lord.

Hamlet.

Hold off your hands!
By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that stays me!

Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.

Horatio.

He waxes desperate with imagination.

Marcellus.

Let's follow. 'Tis not fit thus to obey him.

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Horatio.
Have after. To what issue will this come?

Marcellus.
Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Horatio.
Heaven will direct it.

Marcellus.
Nay, let's follow him.
Exeunt.

Act I Scene 5
Elsinore. The Castle. Another part of the fortifications.

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Hamlet.
Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak! I'll go no further.

Father's Ghost.
Mark me.

Hamlet.
I will.

Father's Ghost.
My hour is almost come,
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Hamlet.
Alas, poor ghost!

Father's Ghost.
Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

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Hamlet.

Speak. I am bound to hear.

Father's Ghost.

So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Hamlet.

What?

Father's Ghost.

I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love-

Hamlet. O God!

Father's Ghost.

Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Hamlet. Murder?

Father's Ghost.

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

Hamlet.

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

Father's Ghost.

I find thee apt;

Now, Hamlet, hear.

'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Denmark

813 Is by a forged process of my death
814 Rankly abus'd. But know, thou noble youth,
815 The serpent that did sting thy father's life
816 Now wears his crown.

817
818 Hamlet.
819 O my prophetic soul! My uncle?

820
821 Father's Ghost.
822 Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
823 With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts-
824 O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
825 So to seduce!- won to his shameful lust
826 The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
827 O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there,
828 But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
829 Will sate itself in a celestial bed
830 And prey on garbage.
831 But soft! methinks I scent the morning air.
832 Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,
833 My custom always of the afternoon,
834 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
835 With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
836 And in the porches of my ears did pour
837 The leperous distilment; whose effect
838 Holds such an enmity with blood of man
839 That swift as quicksilver it courses through
840 The natural gates and alleys of the body,
841 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust
842 All my smooth body.
843 Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand
844 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;
845 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
846 Unhous'led, disappointed, unanel'd,
847 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
848 With all my imperfections on my head.

849
850 Hamlet.
851 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!

852
853 Father's Ghost.
854 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.
855 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

856 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
857 But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
858 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive
859 Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven,
860 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge
861 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.
862 The glowworm shows the matin to be near
863 And gins to pale his uneffectual fire.
864 Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me.
865 Exit.

866
867 Hamlet.
868 O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
869 And shall I couple hell? Hold, hold, my heart!
870 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
871 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee?
872 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
873 In this distracted globe. Remember thee?
874 Yea, from the table of my memory
875 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
876 And thy commandment all alone shall live
877 Within the book and volume of my brain,
878 Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!
879 O most pernicious woman!
880 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
881 My tables! Meet it is I set it down
882 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
883 At least I am sure it may be so in Denmark.
884 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word:
885 It is 'Adieu, adieu! Remember me.'
886 I have sworn't.

887
888 Horatio.
889 [within] My lord, my lord!

890 Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

891
892
893 Marcellus.
894 Lord Hamlet!

895
896 Horatio.
897 Heaven secure him!

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Marcellus.

How is't, my noble lord?

Hamlet.

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

Horatio.

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

Hamlet.

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

Horatio.

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

Hamlet.

I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith, heartily.

Horatio.

There's no offence, my lord.

Hamlet.

Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Horatio.

What is't, my lord? We will.

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Hamlet.
Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Marcellus.
[with Horatio] My lord, we will not.

Hamlet. Nay, but swear't.

Horatio.
In faith, My lord, not I.

Marcellus.
Nor I, my lord- in faith.

Hamlet. Upon my heart.

Marcellus. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Hamlet. Indeed, upon my heart, indeed.

Father's Ghost.(beneath)
Swear.

Hamlet. Aha boy, say'st thou so? Art thou there, truepenny?
Come on! You hear this fellow in the cellarage.
Consent to swear.

Horatio.
Propose the oath, my lord.

Hamlet.
Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear on my heart.

Father's Ghost.[beneath]
Swear.

Hamlet.
Hic et ubique? Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my heart.
Never to speak of this that you have heard:
Swear on my heart.

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Father's Ghost. [beneath]
Swear on his heart.

Hamlet.
Well said, old mole!
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

Horatio.
O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Hamlet.
And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come!
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself
(As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on),
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
With arms encumb'red thus, or this head-shake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me- this is not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,
Swear.

Father's Ghost. [beneath]
Swear.
[They swear.]

Hamlet.
Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do t' express his love and friending to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
The time is out of joint. O cursed spite
That ever I was born to set it right!
Exeunt.

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Act 2 Scene 1

Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius
Enter Polonius and Ophelia.

Polonius

How now, Ophelia? What's the matter?

Ophelia.

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

Polonius.

With what, i' th' name of God?

Ophelia.

My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet, with his clothing all dishev'ld,
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.

Polonius.

Mad for thy love?

Ophelia.

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

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 rais'd 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,

1071 For out o' doors he went without their help
1072 And to the last bended their light on me.

1073

1074

Polonius.

1075

Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.

1076

This is the very ecstasy of love,

1077

Whose violent property fordoes itself

1078

And leads the will to desperate undertakings

1079

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

1080

1081

Ophelia.

1082

No, my good lord; but, as you did command,

1083

I did repel his letters and denied

1084

His access to me.

1085

1086

Polonius.

1087

That hath made him mad.

1088

I am sorry that with better speed and judgment

1089

I had not quoted him. I fear'd he did but trifle

1090

And meant to wrack thee; but beshrew my jealousy!

1091

By heaven, it is as proper to our age

1092

To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions

1093

As it is common for the younger sort

1094

To lack discretion. Come, go we to the King.

1095

This must be known; which, being kept close, might move

1096

More grief to hide than hate to utter love.

1097

Exeunt.

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Act 2 Scene 2

1101

Elsinore. A room in the Castle.

1102

Flourish. [Enter King and Queen, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,

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Claudius.

1105

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

1106

Moreover that we much did long to see you,

1107

The need we have to use you did provoke

1108

Our hasty sending. Something have you heard

1109

Of Hamlet's transformation. So I call it,

1110

Sith nor th' exterior nor the inward man

1111

Resembles that it was. What it should be,

1112

More than his father's death, that thus hath put him

1113

So much from th' understanding of himself,

1114 I cannot dream of. I entreat you both
1115 That, being of so young days brought up with him,
1116 And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humor
1117 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
1118 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather
1119 So much as from occasion you may glean,
1120 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

1121
1122 Gertrude.
1123 Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you,
1124 And sure I am two men there are not living
1125 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
1126 To show us so much gentry and good will
1127 As to expend your time with us awhile
1128 For the supply and profit of our hope,
1129 Your visitation shall receive such thanks
1130 As fits a king's remembrance.

1131
1132 Rosencrantz.
1133 Both your Majesties
1134 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
1135 Put your dread pleasures more into command
1136 Than to entreaty.

1137
1138 Guildenstern.
1139 But we both obey,
1140 And here give up ourselves, in the full bent,
1141 To lay our service freely at your feet,
1142 To be commanded.

1143
1144 Claudius.
1145 Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

1146
1147 Gertrude.
1148 Thanks, Guildenstern and gentle Rosencrantz.
1149 And I beseech you instantly to visit
1150 My too much changed son.- Go, some of you,
1151 And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

1152
1153 Guildenstern.
1154 Heavens make our presence and our practices
1155 Pleasant and helpful to him!

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Gertrude.
Ay, amen!

Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, [with some Attendants].
Enter Polonius.

Polonius.
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 us'd to do- that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

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

Polonius;
My liege, and madam, to expostulate
What majesty should be, what duty is,
Why day is day, night is night, and time is time.
Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad.
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Gertrude.
More matter, with less art.

Polonius. M
adam, 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.

1199 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
1200 Perpend.
1201 I have a daughter (have while she is mine),
1202 Who in her duty and obedience, mark,
1203 Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise.
1204 [Reads] the letter.]
1205 'To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia,'-
1206 That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is a vile phrase.
1207 But you shall hear. Thus:
1208 [Reads.]
1209 'In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.'
1210
1211 Gertrude.
1212 Came this from Hamlet to her?
1213
1214 Polonius.
1215 Good madam, stay awhile. I will be faithful. [Reads.]
1216 'Doubt thou the stars are fire;
1217 Doubt that the sun doth move;
1218 Doubt truth to be a liar;
1219 But never doubt I love.
1220 'O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not art to
1221 reckon my groans; but that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.
1222 'Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him, HAMLET.'
1223 This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me;
1224 And more above, hath his solicitings,
1225 All given to mine ear.
1226
1227 Claudius.
1228 But how hath she
1229 Receiv'd his love?
1230
1231 Polonius.
1232 What do you think of me?
1233
1234 Claudius. A
1235 s of a man faithful and hon'rabable.
1236
1237 Polonius.
1238 I would fain prove so. But what might you think,
1239 When I had seen this hot love on the wing
1240 (As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
1241 Before my daughter told me), what might you,

1242 Or my dear Majesty your queen here, think,
1243 If I had play'd the desk or table book,
1244 What might you think? No, I went round to work
1245 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
1246 'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star.
1247 This must not be.' And then I prescripts gave her,
1248 That she should lock herself from his resort,
1249 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice,
1250 And he, repulsed, a short tale to make,
1251 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
1252 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
1253 Thence to a lightness, and, by this declension,
1254 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
1255 And all we mourn for.

1256 Claudius.

1257 Do you think 'tis this?

1258 Gertrude. it may be, very like.

1259 Polonius.

1260 [points to his head and shoulder] Take this from this, if this be otherwise.

1261 Claudius.

1262 How may we try it further?

1263 Polonius.

1264 You know sometimes he walks for hours together
1265 Here in the lobby.

1266 Gertrude.

1267 So he does indeed.

1268 Polonius.

1269 At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.
1270 Be you and I behind a curtain then.
1271 Mark the encounter. If he love her not,
1272 Let me be no assistant for a state,
1273 But keep a farm and carters.

1274 Claudius.

1275 We will try it.

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Enter Hamlet, reading on a book.

Gertrude.

But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

Polonius.

Away, I do beseech you, both away
I'll board him presently. O, give me leave.
[Exeunt King and Queen, [with Attendants].]
How does my good Lord Hamlet?

Hamlet.

Well, God-a-mercy.

Polonius.

Do you know me, my lord?

Hamlet.

Excellent well. You are a fishmonger.

Polonius.

Not I, my lord.

Hamlet.

Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius.

Honest, my lord?

Hamlet.

Ay, sir. To be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man
pick'd out of ten thousand.

Polonius.

That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet.

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

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Polonius.

I have, my lord.

Hamlet.

Let her not walk i' th' sun. Conception is a blessing, but not
as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

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 suffred much extremity
for love- very near this. I'll speak to him again.- What do you
read, my lord?

Hamlet.

Words, words, words.

Polonius.

What is the matter, my lord?

Hamlet.

Between who?

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; 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 you yourself, sir,
should be old as I am if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Polonius.

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

Hamlet.

Into my grave?

Polonius.

1369 Indeed, that is out o' th' air. [Aside] How pregnant sometimes
1370 his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on, which
1371 reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of.
1372 My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

1373

1374 Hamlet.

1375 You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more
1376 willingly part withal- except my life, except my life, except my life,

1377

1378 Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

1379

1380 Polonius.

1381 Fare you well, my lord.

1382

1383 Hamlet.

1384 These tedious old fools!

1385

1386 Polonius.

1387 You go to seek the Lord Hamlet. There he is.

1388

1389 Rosencrantz. [to Polonius] God save you, sir!

1390

1391 Exit [Polonius].

1392

1393 Guildenstern.

1394 My honour'd lord!

1395

1396 Rosencrantz.

1397 My most dear lord!

1398

1399 Hamlet.

1400 My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah,
1401 Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

1402

1403 Rosencrantz.

1404 As the indifferent children of the earth.

1405

1406 Guildenstern.

1407 Happy in that we are not over-happy.

1408 On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

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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 news ?

Rosencrantz.

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

Hamlet.

Then is doomsday near! But your news is not true.

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' th' 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.

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Hamlet.

O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell 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 outstretch'd
heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we to th' court? for, by my
fay, I cannot reason.

Rosencrantz.

[with Guildenstern] We'll wait upon you.

Hamlet.

No such matter! I will not sort you with the rest of my
servants; But in the beaten way of friendship, what
make you at Elsinore?

Rosencrantz.

To visit you, my lord; 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. Come, come! Nay, speak.

Guildenstern.

What should we say, my lord?

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Hamlet.

Why, anything- but to th' purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you.

Rosencrantz. To what end, my lord?

Hamlet.

That you must teach me. But let me conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no.

Rosencrantz.

[aside to Guildenstern] What say you?

Hamlet.

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

Guildenstern.

My lord, we were sent for.

Hamlet.

I will tell you why. So shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moults no feather. I have of late- but wherefore I know not- lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire- why, it appeareth no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! 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! 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.

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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; and the lady shall say her mind
freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.
What players are they?

Rosencrantz.

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

Flourish for the Players.

Guildenstern.

There are the players.

Hamlet.

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come! Th'
appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony. Let me comply
with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players (which I
tell you must show fairly outwards) should more appear like
entertainment than yours. You are welcome. But my uncle-father
and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

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.

Polonius. Well be with you, gentlemen!

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Hamlet.

Hark you, Guildenstern- and you too- That great baby
you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts.

Rosencrantz.

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

Hamlet. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it.-
You say right, sir; a Monday morning; twas so indeed.

Polonius.

My lord, I have news to tell you.

Hamlet.

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

Polonius. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Hamlet. Buzz, buzz!

Polonius. Upon my honour-

Hamlet. Then came each actor on his ass-

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.

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

Polonius.

What treasure had he, my lord?

Hamlet.

Why,
'One fair daughter, and no more,

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The which he loved passing well.'
Polonius. [aside] Still on my daughter.

Hamlet.
Am I not i' th' right, old Jephthah?

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

Hamlet.
Nay, that follows not.

Polonius.
What follows then, my lord?

Hamlet.
The first row of the pious chanson will show you more; for look
where my abridgment comes.
[Enter four or five Players.]
You are welcome, masters; welcome, all.- I am glad to see thee
well.- Welcome, good friends.- O, my old friend? Why, thy face is
valanc'd since I saw thee last. Com'st' 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. Masters, you are
all welcome. Come, give us a taste of your quality.
Come, a passionate speech.

First Player.
What speech, my good lord?

Hamlet.
I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted;
I remember, pleas'd not the million, but it was (as I
receiv'd it) an excellent play. One speech in't
I chiefly lov'd. 'Twas AENEAS' tale to Dido, and thereabout of it
especially where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in
your memory, begin at this line- let me see, let me see:
'The rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast-'
'Tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus:
'The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,

1669 Hath now this dread and black complexion s
1670 With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
1671 That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
1672 To their lord's murder. Roasted in wrath and fire,
1673 And thus o'ersized with coagulate gore,
1674 With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
1675 Old grandsire Priam seeks.'

1676
1677 Polonius.

1678 Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.
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1680 First Player. 'Anon he finds him,
1681 Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide;
1682 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
1683 Th' unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
1684 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
1685 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
1686 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear. For lo! his sword,
1687 Which was declining on the milky head
1688 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' th' air to stick.
1689 So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,
1690 And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
1691 Did nothing.

1692 A silence in the heavens: the wrack stood still
1693 The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
1694 As brash as death. Anon the dreadful thunder
1695 Doth rend the region; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
1696 Aroused vengeance sets him new awork;
1697 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
1698 On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
1699 With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
1700 Now falls on Priam.

1701 Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune!
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1703 Polonius.

1704 This is too long.
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1706 Hamlet.

1707 It shall to the barber's, with your beard.-
1708 Prithee say on., come to Hecuba.
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First Player.

'But who, O who, had seen th'innobled queen-'

Hamlet. 'The innobled queen'?

Polonius. That's good! 'innobled queen' is good.

First Player.

'Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd.
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.'

Polonius.

Look, whe'r he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's
eyes. Prithee no more!

Hamlet.

'Tis well. I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.-
Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you
hear? Let them be well us'd; 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.

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.

Polonius.

Come, sirs.

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Hamlet.
Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play to-morrow.
[Exeunt Polonius and Players [except the First].]
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.]
My good friends, I'll leave you till night. You are welcome to
Elsinore.

Rosencrantz.
Good my lord!

Hamlet. Ay, so, God b' wi' ye!
[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern]
Now I am alone.
O what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That, from her working, all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Yet I,

1798 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak
1799 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
1800 And can say nothing! No, not for a king,
1801 Upon whose property and most dear life
1802 A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
1803 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
1804 Tweaks me by th' nose? gives me the lie i' th' throat
1805 As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this, ha?
1806 'Swounds, I should take it! for it cannot be
1807 But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall
1808 To make oppression bitter, or ere this
1809 I should have fatted all the region kites
1810 With this slave's offal. Bloody bawdy villain!
1811 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kind-less villain!
1812 O, vengeance!
1813 Hoo, what an ass am I! Ay sure, tis most brave,
1814 That I, the son of a dear father murther'd,
1815 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
1816 Must (like a whore) unpack my heart with words
1817 And fall a-cursing like a very drab,
1818 A scullion!
1819 Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard
1820 That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
1821 Have by the very cunning of the scene
1822 Been struck so to the soul that presently
1823 They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
1824 For murther, though it have no tongue, will speak
1825 With most miraculous organ, I'll have these Players
1826 Play something like the murther of my father
1827 Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks;
1828 I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,
1829 I know my course. The spirit that I have seen
1830 May be a devil; and the devil hath power
1831 T' assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
1832 Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds
1833 More relative than this. The play's the thing
1834 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King. Exit.
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Act 3 Scene 1

Elsinore. A room in the Castle.

Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and Lords.

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.

Gertrude.

Did he receive you well?

Rosencrantz.

Most like a gentleman.

Guildenstern.

But with much forcing of his disposition.

Gertrude.

Did you assay him To any pastime?

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

Polonius.

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

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Claudius

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

Rosencrantz.

We shall, my lord.
Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

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
If't be th' affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

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.]

Polonius.

Ophelia, walk you here.- Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.- [To Ophelia] Read on this book,
That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.- We are oft to blame in this,
'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er The Devil himself.

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Claudius. [aside]

O, 'tis too true!

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!

Polonius.

I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my lord.

Exeunt King and Polonius].

Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be- that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them. To die- to sleep-
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die- to sleep.
To sleep- perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub!
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would these fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death-
The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns- puzzles the will,
And makes us rather bear those ills we have
Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
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

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And lose the name of action.- Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!- Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins rememb'red.

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

Hamlet.
I humbly thank you; well, well, well.

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

Hamlet.
No, not I!
I never gave you aught.

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

Hamlet.
Ha, ha! Are you honest?

Ophelia.
My lord?

Hamlet.
Are you fair?

Ophelia.
What means your lordship?

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Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

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

Hamlet

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

Ophelia.

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

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

Ophelia. I was the more deceived.

Hamlet.

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

Where's your father?

Ophelia. At home, my lord.

Hamlet.

Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may play the fool
nowhere but in's own house. Farewell.

Ophelia.

O, help him, you sweet heavens!

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Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

O heavenly powers, restore him!

Hamlet.

Go to, I'll no more on't! it hath made
me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages. Those that are
married already- all but one- shall live; the rest shall keep as
they are. To a nunnery, go.
Exit.

Ophelia.

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
Th' observ'd 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
T' have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Enter King and Polonius.

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;
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England
For the demand of our neglected tribute.
Haply the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart,

2096 Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
2097 From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

2098
2099 Polonius.

2100 It shall do well. But yet do I believe
2101 The origin and commencement of his grief
2102 Sprung from neglected love.- How now, Ophelia?
2103 You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said.
2104 We heard it all.- My lord, do as you please;
2105 But if you hold it fit, after the play
2106 Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
2107 To show his grief. Let her be round with him;
2108 And I'll be plac'd so please you, in the ear
2109 Of all their conference. If she find him not,
2110 To England send him; or confine him where
2111 Your wisdom best shall think.

2112
2113 Claudius
2114 It shall be so.

2115 Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go.
2116 Exeunt.

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2118
2119 Act 3 Scene 2

2120 Elsinore. hall in the Castle.

2121
2122 Enter Hamlet and three of the Players.

2123
2124 Hamlet.

2125 Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you,
2126 trippingly on the tongue. But if you mouth it, as many of our
2127 players do, I had as live the town crier spoke my lines. Nor do
2128 not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all
2129 gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say)
2130 whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a
2131 temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the
2132 soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to
2133 tatters. Pray you avoid it.

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2135 First Player.

2136 I warrant your honour.

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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: O, there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise,
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 reform'd that indifferently with us, sir.

Hamlet.

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

[Exeunt Players.]

[Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.]

How now, my lord? Will the King hear this piece of work?

Polonius.

And the Queen too, and that presently.

Hamlet.

Bid the players make haste,

[Exit Polonius.]

Will you two help to hasten them?

Rosencrantz. [with Guildenstern] We will, my lord.

Exeunt they two.

Hamlet. What, ho, Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Horatio.

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

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Hamlet.

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

Horatio.

O, my dear lord!

Hamlet.

Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?

Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
In my heart of heart, As I do thee.

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 my soul
Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
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.

Sound a flourish. Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz,
Guildenstern, and other Lords attendant.

Hamlet

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

Claudius.

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

Hamlet.

Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish. I eat the air,
promise-cramm'd. You cannot feed capons so

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Claudius.

I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet. These words are not mine.

Hamlet

. No, nor mine now. [To Polonius] My lord, you play'd once
i' th' university, you say?

Polonius.

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

Hamlet.

What did you enact?

Polonius.

I did enact Julius Caesar; I was kill'd i' th' Capitol;
Brutus kill'd me.

Hamlet.

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

Rosencrantz. Ay, my lord. They stay upon your patience.

Gertrude. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Hamlet. No, good mother. Here's metal more attractive.

Polonius. [to the King] O, ho! do you mark that?

Hamlet. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
[Sits down at Ophelia's feet.]

Ophelia. No, my lord.

Hamlet. I mean, my head upon your lap?

Ophelia.

Ay, my lord.

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Hamlet.

Do you think I meant country matters?
Ophelia. I think nothing, my lord.

Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

What is, my lord?

Hamlet.

Nothing.

Ophelia.

You are merry, my lord.

Hamlet.

Who, I?

Ophelia.

Ay, my lord.

Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

Nay 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Hamlet.

So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a
suit of sables. O heavens! die two months ago, and not forgotten
yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life
half a year.

Enter Prologue.

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

[Exit.]

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Hamlet.

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

Ophelia

'Tis brief, my lord.

Hamlet.

As woman's love.

Enter [two Players as] King and Queen.

Player King.

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrowed sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been,
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite comutual in most sacred bands.

Player Queen.

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But woe is me! you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state.
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must;
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, belov'd, and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou-

Player Queen.

O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.
When second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who killed the first.

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Hamlet.

[aside] Wormwood, wormwood!

Queen.

A second time I kill my husband dead
When second husband kisses me in bed.

Player King.

I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
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,
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Hamlet.

If she should break it now!

Player King.

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

Player Queen.

Sleep rock thy brain,
He sleeps.]

Player Queen.

And never come mischance between us twain!

Exit.

Hamlet.

Madam, how like you this play?

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Gertrude.

The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Hamlet.

O, but she'll keep her word.

Claudius.

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

Hamlet.

No, no! They do but jest, poison in jest; no offence i' th'world.

Claudius.

What do you call the play?

Hamlet.

'The Mousetrap.' 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.

Enter Lucianus. This is one Lucianus, nephew to the King.

Ophelia.

You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Hamlet.

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

Ophelia.

Still better, and worse.

Hamlet. So you must take your husbands.- Begin, murderer. Pox, leave thy damnable faces, and begin! Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

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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 in his ears)

Hamlet.

He poisons him i' th' garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago.
The story is extant, and written in very choice Italian. You
shall see anon how the furtherer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Ophelia.

The King rises.

Hamlet.

What, frighted with false fire?

Gertrude.

How fares my lord?

Polonius. Give o'er the play.

Claudius.

Give me some light! Away!

Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.

Hamlet.

Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The Hart ungalled play
While some must watch, while some must sleep
Thus runs the world away.
Would not this, sir, get me a fellowship in a cry of players?

Horatio.

Half a share.

Hamlet. A whole one I!

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

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Horatio.
Very well, my lord.

Hamlet.
Upon the talk of the poisoning?

Horatio.
I did very well note him.

Hamlet.
Aha! 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!

Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Guildenstern.
Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Hamlet.
Sir, a whole history.

Guildenstern.
The King, sir-

Hamlet.
Ay, sir, what of him?

Guildenstern.
Is in his retirement, marvellous distemper'd.

Hamlet.
With drink, sir?

Guildenstern.
No, my lord; rather with choler.

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

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Guildenstern.

2527

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

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Hamlet.

2531

I am tame, sir; pronounce.

2532

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Guildenstern.

2534

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

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Hamlet.

2538

You are welcome.

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Guildenstern.

2541

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.

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Hamlet.

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Sir, I cannot.

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Guildenstern.

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What, my lord?

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Hamlet.

2553

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseas'd. 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-

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Rosencrantz.

2558

Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into
amazement and admiration.

2559

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Hamlet.

2562

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

2563

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Rosencrantz.

2566

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

2567

Hamlet. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any

2568 further trade with us? My lord, you once did love me.

2569

2570 Hamlet.

2571 And do still, by these pickers and stealers!

2572

2573 Rosencrantz.

2574 Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do surely

2575 bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to

2576 your friend.

2577

2578 Hamlet.

2579 Sir, I lack advancement.

2580

2581 Rosencrantz.

2582 How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself

2583 for your succession in Denmark?

2584

2585 Hamlet.

2586 Ay, sir, but 'while the grass grows'- the proverb is something

2587 musty.

2588 [Enter the Players with recorders.]

2589 O, the recorders! Let me see one. To withdraw with you- why do

2590 you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me

2591 into a toil?

2592

2593 Guildenstern.

2594 O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

2595

2596 Hamlet.

2597 I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

2598

2599 Guildenstern.

2600 My lord, I cannot.

2601

2602 Hamlet.

2603 I do beseech you.

2604

2605 Guildenstern.

2606 I know, no touch of it, my lord.

2607

2608 Hamlet.

2609 It is as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your
2610 fingers and thumbs, give it breath with your mouth, and it will
2611 discourse most excellent music. Look you, these are the stops
2612

2613 Guildenstern

2614 . But these cannot I command to any utt'rance of harmony. I
2615 have not the skill.
2616

2617 Hamlet.

2618 Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You
2619 would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would
2620 pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my
2621 lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music,
2622 excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it
2623 speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be play'd on than a
2624 pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me,
2625 you cannot play upon me.

2626 [Enter Polonius.]

2627 God bless you, sir!
2628

2629 Polonius.

2630 My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently.
2631

2632 Hamlet.

2633 Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?
2634

2635 Polonius.

2636 By th' mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.
2637

2638 Hamlet.

2639 Methinks it is like a weasel.
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2641 Polonius.

2642 It is back'd like a weasel.
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2644 Hamlet.

2645 Or like a whale.
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2647 Polonius.

2648 Very like a whale
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Hamlet.

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

Polonius.

I will say so.

Exit.

Hamlet.

'By-and-by' is easily said.- Leave me, friends.

[Exeunt all but Hamlet.]

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft! now to my mother!
O heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom.
Let me be cruel, not unnatural;
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites-
How in my words somever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent! Exit.

Act 3 Scene 3

A room in the Castle.

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Claudius.

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

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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 cesse of majesty Is a massy wheel,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which when it falls,
Each small annexment,
Attends the boist'rous ruin. Never alone
Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

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.

[with Guildenstern] We will haste us.

Exeunt Gentlemen.

Enter Polonius.

Polonius.

My lord, he's going to his mother's closet.
Behind the arras I'll convey myself
To hear the process. I'll 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.

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 murther! Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.

2738 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
2739 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
2740 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
2741 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
2742 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
2743 To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy
2744 But to confront the visage of offence?
2745 And what's in prayer but this twofold force,
2746 To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
2747 Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up;
2748 My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer
2749 Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?
2750 That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
2751 Of those effects for which I did the murder-
2752 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
2753 May one be pardon'd and retain th' offense?
2754 Try what repentance can. What can it not?
2755 Yet what can it when one cannot repent?
2756 O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
2757 O limed soul, that, struggling to be free,
2758 Art more engag'd! Help, angels! Make assay.
2759 Bow, stubborn knees; and heart with strings of steel,
2760 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe!
2761 All may be well. He kneels.

2762
2763 Enter Hamlet.

2764
2765 Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying;
2766 And now I'll do't. And so he goes to heaven,
2767 And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd.
2768 A villain kills my father; and for that,
2769 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
2770 To heaven.
2771 Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge!
2772 He took my father grossly, full of bread,
2773 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
2774 And how his audit stands, who knows save heaven?
2775 'Tis heavy with him; and am I then reveng'd,
2776 To take him in the purging of his soul,
2777 No. Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent.
2778 When he is drunk asleep; or in his rage;
2779 Or in th' incestuous pleasure of his bed;
2780 At gaming, swearing, or about some act

2781 That has no relish of salvation in't-
2782 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
2783 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black
2784 As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays.
2785 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. Exit.
2786 Claudius. [rises] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
2787 Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

2788
2789 Exit.

2790
2791
2792 Act 3 Scene 4
2793 The Queen's closet.
2794 Enter Queen and Polonius.

2795
2796 Polonius.
2797 He will come straight. Look you lay home to him.
2798 Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
2799 And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
2800 Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here.
2801 Pray you be round with him.

2802
2803 Hamlet. [within]
2804 Mother, mother, mother!

2805
2806 Gertrude.
2807 I'll warrant you; fear me not. Withdraw; I hear him coming.
2808 [Polonius hides behind the curtain.]

2809
2810 Enter Hamlet.

2811
2812 Hamlet.
2813 Now, mother, what's the matter?

2814
2815 Gertrude.
2816 Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

2817
2818 Hamlet.
2819 Mother, you have my father much offended.

2820
2821 Gertrude.
2822 Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

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Hamlet.

Go, go, you question with an idle tongue.

Gertrude.

Why, how now, Hamlet?

Hamlet.

What's the matter now?

Gertrude.

Have you forgot me?

Hamlet.

No, by the rood, not so!

You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife,
And (would it were not so!) you are my mother.

Gertrude.

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

Hamlet.

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

Gertrude.

What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murther me?

Help, help, ho!

Polonius. [behind]

What, ho! help, help, help!

Hamlet. [draws]

How now? a rat? Dead for a ducat, dead!

[Makes a pass through the arras and] kills Polonius.

Polonius. [behind]

O, I am slain!

Gertrude.

O me, what hast thou done?

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Hamlet. Nay, I know not. Is it the King?

Gertrude. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

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

Gertrude. As kill a king?

Hamlet. Ay, lady, it was my word.
[Lifts up the arras and sees Polonius.]
Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune.
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.
Leave wringing of your hands. Peace! sit you down
And let me wring your heart; for so I shall
If it be made of penetrable stuff;
If damned custom have not braz'd it so
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Gertrude.
What have I done that thou darts wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Hamlet.
Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;
Calls virtue hypocrite;. O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words! Heaven's face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.

Gertrude.
Ah me, what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

Hamlet.
Look here upon th's picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See what a grace was seated on this brow;

2909 Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
2910 An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
2911 A station like the herald Mercury
2912 New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill:
2913 A combination and a form indeed
2914 Where every god did seem to set his seal
2915 To give the world assurance of a man.
2916 This was your husband. Look you now what follows.
2917 Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear
2918 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
2919 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
2920 And batten on this swine? Ha! have you eyes
2921 You cannot call it love; for at your age
2922 The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble,
2923 And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
2924 Would step from this to this? What devil was't
2925 That thus hath cozen'd you at woodman-blind?
2926 O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
2927 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
2928 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax
2929 And melt in her own fire. Proclaim no shame
2930 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
2931 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
2932 And reason panders will.

2933
2934 Gertrude.
2935 O Hamlet, speak no more!
2936 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul,
2937 And there I see such black and grained spots
2938 As will not leave their tinct.

2939
2940 Hamlet
2941 . Nay, but to live
2942 In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed
2943 Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
2944 Over the nasty sty!

2945
2946 Gertrude.
2947 O, speak to me no more!
2948 These words like daggers enter in mine ears.
2949 No more, sweet Hamlet!

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Hamlet.

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

Gertrude. No more!

Enter the Ghost

in his nightgown.

Hamlet.

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

Gertrude.

Alas, he's mad!

Hamlet.

Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
Th' important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

Father's Ghost.

Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Hamlet.

How is it with you, lady?

Gertrude

. Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with th' encorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;

2995 And, as the sleeping soldiers in th' alarm,
2996 Your bedded hairs, like life in excrements,
2997 Start up and stand an end. O gentle son,
2998 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
2999 Sprinkle cool patience! Whereon do you look?

3000
3001 Hamlet.
3002 On him, on him! Look you how pale he glares!
3003 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
3004 Would make them capable.- Do not look upon me,
3005 Lest with this piteous action you convert
3006 My stern effects. Then what I have to do
3007 Will want true colour- tears perchance for blood.

3008
3009 Gertrude.
3010 To whom do you speak this?

3011
3012 Hamlet.
3013 Do you see nothing there?

3014
3015 Gertrude.
3016 Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

3017
3018 Hamlet.
3019 Nor did you nothing hear?

3020
3021 Gertrude.
3022 No, nothing but ourselves.

3023
3024 Hamlet.
3025 Why, look you there! Look how it steals away!
3026 My father, in uniform as he liv'd!
3027 Look where he goes even now out at the portal!

3028
3029 Exit Ghost.

3030
3031 Gertrude.
3032 This is the very coinage of your brain.
3033 This bodiless creation ecstasy
3034 Is very cunning in.

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Hamlet.
Ecstasy?

My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time
And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
That I have utt'red. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And do not spread the compost on the weeds
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue;
For in the fatness of these pursy times
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg-

Gertrude.

O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.
Hamlet. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half,
Good night- but go not to my uncle's bed.
Refrain to-night,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
Once more, good night;
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you.- For this same lord,
I do repent; but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this,
I will bestow him, and will answer well
The death I gave him. So again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind;
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

Gertrude.

What shall I do?

Hamlet.

Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know;

3080 For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
3081 Such dear concernings hide? Who would do so?

3082
3083 Gertrude.

3084 Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
3085 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
3086 What thou hast said to me.

3087
3088 Hamlet.
3089 I must to England; you know that?

3090
3091 Gertrude.
3092 Alack,
3093 I had forgot! 'Tis so concluded on.

3094
3095 Hamlet.
3096 This man shall set me packing.
3097 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.-
3098 Mother, good night.- Indeed, this counsellor
3099 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
3100 Who was in life a foolish peating knave.
3101 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
3102 Good night, mother.

3103
3104 [Exit the Queen. Then] Exit Hamlet, tugging in
3105 Polonius.

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3108 Act 4 Scene 1
3109 Elsinore. A room in the Castle.
3110 Enter King and Queen, with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

3111
3112 Claudius.
3113 There's matter in these sighs. These profound heaves
3114 You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them.
3115 Where is your son?

3116
3117 Gertrude.
3118 Bestow this place on us a little while.
3119 [Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]
3120 Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen to-night!

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Claudius.

What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Gertrude.

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

Claudius.

O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all-
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
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?

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.

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!
[Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.]
Friends both, go join you with some further aid.
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you haste in this.
[Exeunt [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern].]
Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends
And let them know both what we mean to do

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And what's untimely done. O, come away!
My soul is full of discord and dismay.
Exeunt.

Act 4 Scene 2
Elsinore. A passage in the Castle.
Enter Hamlet.

Hamlet.
Safely stow'd.

Rosencrantz [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?

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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. When he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you and,
sponge, you shall be dry again.

Rosencrantz.

I understand you not, my lord.

Hamlet.

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

Rosencrantz.

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

Hamlet.

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

Guildenstern.

A thing, my lord?

Hamlet.

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

Exeunt.

Act 4 Scene 3

Elsinore. A room in the Castle.

Enter 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 lov'd of the distracted multitude,
Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
And where 'tis so, th' offender's scourge is weigh'd,

3252 But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
3253 This sudden sending him away must seem
3254 Deliberate pause. Diseases desperate grown
3255 By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
3256 Or not at all.

3257 [Enter Rosencrantz.]
3258 How now O What hath befall'n?

3259
3260 Rosencrantz.
3261 Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
3262 We cannot get from him.

3263
3264 Claudius.
3265 But where is he?

3266
3267 Rosencrantz.
3268 Without, my lord; guarded, to know your pleasure.

3269
3270 Claudius.
3271 Bring him before us.

3272
3273 Rosencrantz.
3274 Ho, Guildenstern! Bring in my lord.

3275 Enter Hamlet and Guildenstern [with Attendants].

3276
3277
3278 Claudius.
3279 Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

3280
3281 Hamlet.
3282 At supper.

3283
3284 Claudius.
3285 At supper? Where?

3286
3287 Hamlet.
3288 Not where he eats, but where he is eaten. A certain
3289 convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your
3290 only emperor for diet. We fat all creatures else to fat us, and
3291 we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar
3292 is but variable service- two dishes, but to one table. That's the end..

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Claudius.

What dost thou mean by this?

Hamlet.

Nothing but to show you how a king may go a progress through
the guts of a beggar.

Claudius

. Where is Polonius?

Hamlet.

In heaven. Send thither to see. If your messenger find him not
there, seek him i' th' other place yourself. But indeed, if you
find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up
the stair, into the lobby.

Claudius.

Go seek him there. [To Attendants.]

Hamlet.

He will stay till you come.

[Exeunt Attendants.]

Claudius.

Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,-
Which we do tender as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,- must send thee hence
With fiery quickness. Therefore prepare thyself.
The bark is ready and the wind at help,
Th' associates tend, and everything is bent
For England.

Hamlet.

For England?

Claudius.

Ay, Hamlet.

Hamlet.

Good.

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Claudius.

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

Hamlet.

I see a cherub that sees them. But come, for England!

Farewell, dear mother.

Claudius.

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Hamlet.

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

Exit.

Claudius.

Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard.

Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night.

[Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,-

Our sovereign process, which imports at full,

By letters conjuring to that effect,

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;

For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,

Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

Exit.

Act 4 Scene 4

Near Elsinore.

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, [Guildenstern,] and others.

Rosencrantz.

Will't please you go, my lord?

Hamlet.

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

[Exeunt all but Hamlet.]

How all occasions do inform against me

And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,

3381 If his chief good and market of his time
3382 Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.
3383 Sure he that made us with such large discourse
3384 Looking before and after gave us not
3385 That capability nof godlike reason
3386 To fust in us unused I do not know
3387 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do,'
3388 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
3389 To do't.
3390 How stand I then,
3391 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
3392 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
3393 And let all sleep, O, from this time forth,
3394 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

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Exit.

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Act 4 Scene 5

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Elsinore. A room in the Castle.

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Enter Horatio, Queen, and a Gentleman.

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Gertrude.

I will not speak with her.

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Gentleman.

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She is importunate, indeed distract.

Her mood will needs be pitied.

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Gertrude.

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What would she have?

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Gentleman.

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She speaks much of her father; says she hears
There's tricks i' th' world, and hems, and beats her heart;

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Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,

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Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,
And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts.

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Horatio.

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

Gertrude.

Let her come in.

[Exit Gentleman.]

[Aside] 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.

Enter Ophelia distracted.

Ophelia.

Where is the beauteous Majesty of Denmark?

Gertrude.

How now, Ophelia?

Ophelia. [sings]

How should I your true-love know

From another one?

By his cockle bat and' staff

And his sandal shoon.

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.

Gertrude.

Nay, but Ophelia-

Ophelia.

Pray you mark.

(Sings) White his shroud as the mountain snow-

Enter King.

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Gertrude.
Alas, look here, my lord!

Ophelia. [Sings]
Larded all with sweet flowers;
Which bewept to the grave did not go
With true-love showers.

Claudius.
How do you, pretty lady?

Ophelia
. Well, God dild 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!

Claudius.
Conceit upon her father.

Ophelia.
Pray 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 bedtime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine.
Then up he rose and donn'd his clones
And dupp'd the chamber door,
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.

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 promis'd me to wed.'

3509 'So would I 'a' done, by yonder sun,
3510 An thou hadst not come to my bed.'

3511
3512 Claudius.
3513 How long hath she been thus?

3514
3515 Ophelia.
3516 I hope all will be well. We must be patient; but I cannot
3517 choose but weep to think they would lay him i' th' cold ground.
3518 My brother shall know of it; and so I thank you for your good
3519 counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies. Good night, sweet
3520 ladies. Good night, good night.

3521
3522 Exit

3523
3524 Claudius.
3525 Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you.
3526 [Exit Horatio.]

3527 O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
3528 All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
3529 When sorrows come, they come not single spies.
3530 But in battalions! First, her father slain;
3531 Next, your son gone, and he most violent author
3532 Of his own just remove; the people muddied,
3533 Thick and and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers
3534 For good Polonius' death, and we have done but greenly
3535 In hugger-mugger to inter him; poor Ophelia
3536 Divided from herself and her fair judgment,
3537 Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts;
3538 Last, and as much containing as all these,
3539 Her brother is in secret come from France;
3540 Feeds on his wonder, keeps, himself in clouds,
3541 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
3542 With pestilent speeches of his father's death,
3543 O my dear Gertrude,
3544 Give me superfluous death. A noise within.

3545
3546 Gertrude.
3547 Alack, what noise is this?

3548
3549 Claudius. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door
3550 .[Enter a Messenger.]
3551 What is the matter?

3552

3553

Messenger.

3554

Save Yourself, my lord:

3555

Young Laertes, in a riotous head,

3556

O'erbears Your offices. The rabble call him lord;

3557

They cry 'Choose we! Laertes shall be king!'

3558

Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds,

3559

'Laertes shall be king! Laertes king!'

3560

A noise within.

3561

3562

Gertrude.

3563

How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!

3564

O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs!

3565

3566

Claudius.

3567

The doors are broke.

3568

3569

Enter Laertes with others.

3570

3571

Laertes.

3572

Where is this king?- Sirs, staid you all without.

3573

3574

All. No, let's come in!

3575

3576

Laertes. I pray you give me leave.

3577

3578

All. We will, we will!

3579

3580

Laertes.

3581

I thank you. Keep the door.

3582

[Exeunt his Followers.]

3583

O thou vile king,

3584

Give me my father!

3585

3586

Gertrude.

3587

Calmly, good Laertes.

3588

3589

Laertes.

3590

That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard;

3591

3592

Claudius

3593

What is the cause, Laertes,

3594

That thy rebellion looks so giantlike?

3595 Let him go, Gertrude. Do not fear our person.
3596 There's such divinity doth hedge a king
3597 That treason can but peep to what it would,
3598 Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes,
3599 Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude.
3600 Speak, man.

3601
3602 Laertes.
3603 Where is my father?

3604
3605 Claudius.
3606 Dead.

3607
3608 Gertrude.
3609 But not by him!

3610
3611 Claudius.
3612 Let him demand his fill.

3613
3614 Laertes.
3615 How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:
3616 To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil
3617 Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit!
3618 I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
3619 Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
3620 Most throughly for my father.

3621
3622 Claudius.
3623 Who shall stay you?

3624
3625 Laertes.
3626 My will, not all the world!

3627
3628 Claudius;
3629 If you desire to know the certainty
3630 Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge
3631 That sweepstake you will draw both friend and foe,
3632 Winner and loser?

3633
3634 Laertes.
3635 None but his enemies.

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Claudius.

Will you know them then?

Laertes.

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

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 sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.
A noise within: 'Let her come in.'

Laertes.

How now? What noise is that?

[Enter Ophelia.]

O heat, dry up my brains! Tears seven times salt
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
O rose of May! Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens! is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

Ophelia. [sings]

They bore him barefac'd on the bier
(Hey non nony, nony, hey nony)
And in his grave rain'd many a tear.
Fare you well, my dove!

Laertes.

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

Ophelia.

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

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Laertes.

This nothing's more than matter.

Ophelia.

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray you, 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 of grace o' Sundays.
O, you must wear your rue with a difference! There's a daisy. I
would give you some violets, but they wither'd 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 deathbed;
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 'a'mercy on his soul!
And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God b' wi' you.

Exit.

Laertes.

Do you see this, O God?

Claudius.

Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,

3724 Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
3725 And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me.
3726 If by direct or by collateral hand
3727 They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
3728 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
3729 To you in satisfaction; but if not,
3730 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
3731 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
3732 To give it due content.

3733
3734 Laertes.
3735 Let this be so.
3736 His means of death, his obscure funeral-
3737 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
3738 That I must call't in question.

3739
3740 Claudius.
3741 So you shall;
3742 And where th' offence is let the great axe fall.
3743 I pray you go with me.

3744
3745 Exeunt

3746
3747
3748 Act 4 Scene 6
3749 Elsinore. Another room in the Castle.
3750 Enter Horatio with an Attendant.

3751
3752 Horatio.
3753 What are they that would speak with me?

3754
3755 Servant.
3756 Seafaring men, sir.

3757
3758 Horatio.
3759 Let them come in.

3760
3761 [Exit Attendant.]
3762 Enter Sailor

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Sailor.

There's a letter for you, sir,- it comes from th' ambassador that was bound for
England- if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Horatio

. [reads the letter] 'Horatio, Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of
very warlike appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too
slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I
boarded them. On the instant they got clear of our ship; so I
alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves
of mercy; but they knew what they did: I am to do a good turn for
them. Let the King have the letters I have sent, and repair thou
to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death. I have words
to speak in thine ear will make thee dum. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their
course for England. Of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.
'He that thou knowest thine, HAMLET.'

Exeunt.

Act 4 Scene 7

Elsinore. Another room in the Castle.

Enter King and Laertes.

Claudius.

Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And You must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Laertes.

It well appears. But tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats
The Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,-
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive
Is the great love the general gender bear him.
Laertes. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desp'rate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,

3809 Stood challenger on mount of all the age
3810 For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

3811
3812 Claudius.
3813 Break not your sleeps for that. You must not think
3814 That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
3815 That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
3816 And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more.
3817 I lov'd your father, and we love ourself,
3818 And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine-
3819 [Enter a Messenger with letters.]
3820 How now? What news?

3821
3822 Messenger.
3823 Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
3824 This to your Majesty; this to the Queen.

3825
3826 Claudius.
3827 From Hamlet? Who brought them?

3828
3829 Messenger.
3830 Sailors, my lord.

3831
3832 Claudius.
3833 Laertes, you shall hear them.
3834 Leave us.

3835 [Exit Messenger.]
3836 [Reads]'High and Mighty,-You shall know I am set naked on your
3837 kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes;
3838 when I shall (first asking your pardon thereunto) recount the
3839 occasion of my sudden and more strange return. 'HAMLET.'
3840 What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
3841 Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

3842
3843 Laertes.
3844 Know you the hand?

3845
3846 Claudius.
3847 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked!'
3848 And in a postscript here, he says 'alone.'
3849 Can you advise me?

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Laertes.

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

Claudius.

If it be so, Laertes
(As how should it be so? how otherwise?),
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laertes.

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

Claudius.

To thine own peace. If he be now return'd
As checking at his voyage, and that he means
No more to undertake it, I will work him
To 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 practice
And call it accident.

Laertes.

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

Claudius.

It falls right.
You have been talk'd of since your travel much,

Claudius.

Some made confession of you;
And gave you such a masterly report
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your rapier most especially,
Twas cried out 'would be a sight indeed
If one could match you. Sir, this report of you
Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
That he could nothing do but wish and beg

3895 Your sudden coming o'er to play with you.
3896 Now, out of this-

3897
3898 Laertes.
3899 What out of this, my lord?

3900
3901 Claudius.
3902 Laertes, was your father dear to you?
3903 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
3904 A face without a heart,'

3905
3906 Laertes.
3907 Why ask you this?

3908
3909 Claudius.
3910 Not that I think you did not love your father;
3911 But that I know love is begun by time,
3912 And that I see, in passages of proof,
3913 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
3914 Hamlet comes back. What would you undertake
3915 To show yourself your father's son in deed
3916 More than in words?

3917
3918 Laertes. To cut his throat i' th' church!

3919
3920 Claudius.
3921 No place indeed should murther sanctuarize;
3922 Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
3923 Will you do this?
3924 Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home.
3925 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
3926 And set a double varnish on your fame
3927 And wager on your heads. He, being remiss,
3928 Most generous, and free from all contriving,
3929 Will not peruse the foils; so that with ease,
3930 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
3931 A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice,
3932 Requite him for your father.

3933
3934 Laertes.
3935 I will do't!
3936 And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.

3937 I bought an unction of a mountebank,
3938 So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
3939 No cataplasm can save the thing from death
3940 This is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point
3941 With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
3942 It may be death.

3943
3944 Claudius.
3945 Let's further think of this,
3946 If this did blast in proof. Soft! let me see.
3947 I ha't!

3948 When in your motion you are hot and dry-
3949 As make your bouts more violent to that end-
3950 And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
3951 A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
3952 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
3953 Our purpose may hold there.-

3954 [Enter Queen.]
3955 How now, sweet queen?
3956

3957 Gertrude. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
3958 So fast they follow. Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

3959
3960 Laertes.
3961 Drown'd! O, where?
3962

3963 Gertrude.
3964 There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
3965 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
3966 There with fantastic garlands did she come
3967 Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
3968 There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
3969 Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
3970 When down her weedy trophies and herself
3971 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide
3972 And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
3973 Which time she chaunted snatches of old tunes,
3974 As one incapable of her own distress,
3975 Or like a creature native and indued
3976 Unto that element; but long it could not be
3977 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
3978 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay To muddy death.
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Laertes.
Alas, then she is drown'd?

Gertrude.
Drown'd, drown'd.

Laertes.
Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears;
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze
But that this folly douts it.

Exit.

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

Exeunt.

Act 5 Scene 1
Elsinore. A churchyard.

Enter two Clowns, [with spades and pickaxes].

First Clown. I
s she to be buried in Christian burial when she wilfully seeks her own salvation?

Second Clown.
I tell thee she is; therefore make her grave straight.
The crowner hath sate on her, and finds it Christian burial.

First Clown.
How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

Second Clown.
Why, 'tis found so.

Second Clown
But is this law?

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First Clown.

Ay, marry, is't- crowner's quest law.

Second Clown.

Will you ha' the truth an't? If this had not been a
gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

First Clown.

Why, there thou say'st! And the more pity that great folk
should have count'nance in this world to drown or hang themselves
more than their even-Christian. Come, my spade! There is no
ancient gentlemen but gard'ners, ditchers, and grave-makers.

Enter Hamlet and Horatio afar off.

First Clown.

Cudgel thy brains no more about it.
Go, get thee to Vaughn; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[Exit Second Clown.]

[Clown digs and] sings.

First Clown.

In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet;
To contract- O- the time for- a- my behove,
O, methought there- a- was nothing- a- meet.

Hamlet.

Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at
grave-making?

Horatio.

Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Hamlet.

'Tis e'en so.

First Clown. [sings]

But age with his stealing steps
Hath clawed me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me intil the land, 3
As if I had never been such.

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[Throws up a skull.]

Hamlet.

That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the
knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jawbone, that
did the first murder!

First Clown; (sings)

A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a Pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.
Throws up [another skull].

Hamlet.

There's another. Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer?
Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock
him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him
of his action of battery?
I'll speak to this fellow. 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 'tis not yours.
For my part, I do not lie in't, 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 again from me to you.

Hamlet.

What man dost thou dig it for?

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First Clown.
For no man, sir.

Hamlet.
What woman then?

First Clown.
For none neither.

Hamlet.
Who is to be buried in't?

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

Hamlet.
How absolute the knave is! How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

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

Hamlet.
How long is that since?

First Clown.
Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the
very day that young Hamlet was born- he that is mad, and sent
into England.

Hamlet.
Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clown.
Why, because 'a was mad. 'A shall recover his wits there;
or, if 'a do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Hamlet.
Why?

First Clown.
'Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.

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Hamlet.
How came he mad?

First Clown.
Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet.
How strangely?

First Clown.
Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet.
Upon what ground?

First Clown.
Why, here in Denmark. I have been sexton here, man and boy
thirty years.

Hamlet.
How long will a man lie i' th' earth ere he rot?

First Clown.
Faith, if 'a be not rotten before 'a die (as we have many
pocky corsers now-a-days that will scarce hold the laying in, I
will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last
you nine year.

Hamlet.
Why he more than another?

First Clown.
Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade that 'a will
keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of
your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now. This skull hath lien
you i' th' earth three-and-twenty years.

Hamlet.
Whose was it?

First Clown.
A whoreson, mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

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Hamlet.
Nay, I know not.

First Clown.
A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'A pour'd a flagon of
Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's
skull, the King's jester.

Hamlet. This?

First Clown.
E'en that.

Hamlet.
Let me see. [Takes the skull.] Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him,
Horatio. A fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He
hath borne me on his back a thousand times. And now how abhorred
in my imagination it is! My gorge rises at it. Here hung those
lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes
now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment that
were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your
own grinning? Quite chap- fall'n? Now get you to my lady's
chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this
favour she must come. Make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio,
tell me one thing.

Horatio.
What's that, my lord?

Hamlet.
Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' th' earth?

Horatio. E'en so.

Hamlet.
And smelt so? Pah! Here comes the King-
Enter [priests with] a coffin [in funeral procession], King,
[Queen, Laertes, with Lords attendant.]
The Queen, the courtiers. Who is this they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken
The corse they follow did with desp'rate hand
Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate.

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Couch we awhile, and mark.
[Retires with Horatio.]

Laertes.
What ceremony else?
Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodged
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rites,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laertes.
Must there no more be done?

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

Laertes.
Lay her i' th' earth;
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring! I tell thee, churlish priest,
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling.

Hamlet.
What, the fair Ophelia?

Gertrude.
Sweets to the sweet! Farewell.
[Scatters flowers.]
I hop'd 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

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Hamlet.

I lov'd Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers
Could not (with all their quantity of love)
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

Claudius.

O, he is mad, Laertes.

Gertrude.

For love of God, forbear him!

Hamlet.

'Swounds, show me what thou't do.
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up esill? 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.
And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou.

Gertrude.

This is mere madness;
And thus a while the fit will work on him.
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever. But it is no matter.
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

Exit.

Claudius.

I pray thee, 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;

4365 Till then in patience our proceeding be.

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4367 Exeunt.

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4370 Act 5 Scene 2

4371 Elsinore. A hall in the Castle.

4372 Enter Hamlet and Horatio.

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4374 Hamlet.

4375 So much for this, sir; now shall you see the other.

4376 You do remember all the circumstance?

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4378 Horatio.

4379 Remember it, my lord!

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4381 Hamlet.

4382 Our indiscretions sometimes serve us well

4383 And our ear plots do teach us,

4384 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

4385 Rough-hew them how we will-

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4387 Horatio.

4388 That is most certain.

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4390 Hamlet.

4391 Up from my cabin,

4392 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark

4393 Grop'd I to find out them; had my desire,

4394 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew

4395 To mine own room again; making so bold

4396 to unseal the grand commission giv'n

4397 Rosencrantz and Guildenstern

4398 where I found, Horatio

4399 (O royal knavery!), an exact command,

4400 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,

4401 My head should be struck off.

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4403 Horatio.

4404 Is't possible?

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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.

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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.

Horatio.

Peace! Who comes here?
Enter young Osric, a courtier.

Osric.

Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Hamlet.

I humbly thank you, sir. [Aside to Horatio] Dost know this waterfly?

Horatio. [aside to Hamlet]

No, my good lord.

Hamlet. [aside to Horatio]

Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. .

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Osric.

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

Hamlet.

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

Osric;

His majesty bade me signify to you that
he has laid a great wager on your head. You are not ignorant of what excellence
Laertes for his weapon;

Hamlet.

What's his weapon?

Osric.

Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet:

That's two of his weapons, but well.

Osric. Th

e King, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses;
six French rapiers and poniards. The King, sir, hath laid that, in a dozen passes
between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three hits; and it would come to
immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Hamlet.

How if I answer no?

Osric.

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

Hamlet.

Sir, I will walk here in the hall. If it please his Majesty,
it is 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 if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my
shame and the odd hits.

Osric.

Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

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Hamlet.

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

Osric.

I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet.

Yours, yours. [

Exit Osric.]

Horatio.

That lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

You will most like lose this wager, my lord.

Hamlet.

I do not think so. Since he went into France I have been in continual practice. I shall win at the odds.

Horatio.

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

Hamlet.

Not a whit, we defy augury; 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 knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Osric, and Lords, with other Attendants with foils and gauntlets.
A table and flagons of wine on it.

Claudius.

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

[The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.]

Hamlet.

Give me your pardon, sir. I have done you wrong;

But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows,

4579 And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd
4580 With sore distraction. What I have done
4581 That might your nature, honour, and exception
4582 Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
4583 Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet.
4584 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
4585 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
4586 Sir, in this audience,
4587 Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
4588 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts
4589 That I have shot my arrow o'er the house
4590 And hurt my mother.

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4592 Laertes.
4593 I am satisfied in nature,
4594 Whose motive in this case should stir me most
4595 To my revenge. But in my terms of honor
4596 I do receive your offer'd love like love,
4597 And will not wrong it.

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4599 Hamlet.
4600 I embrace it freely,
4601 And will this brother's wager frankly play.
4602 Give us the foils. Come on.

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4604 Laertes.
4605 Come, one for me.

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4607 Hamlet.
4608 I'll be your foil, Laertes. In mine ignorance
4609 Your skill shall, like a star i' th' darkest night,
4610 Stick fiery off indeed

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4612 Laertes.
4613 You mock me, sir.

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4615 Hamlet.
4616 No, by this hand.

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4618 Claudius.
4619 Give them the foils, young Osric.
4620 Cousin Hamlet, You know the wager?

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Hamlet.
Very well, my lord.
Your Grace has laid the odds o' th' weaker side.

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

Laertes.
This is too heavy; let me see another.

Hamlet.
This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
Prepare to play.

Osrice. Ay, my good lord.

Claudius.
Set me the stoups of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
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;
'Now the King drinks to Hamlet.' Come, begin.
And you the judges, bear a wary eye.

Hamlet.
Come on, sir.

Laertes.
Come, my lord. They play.

Hamlet.
One.

Laertes.
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Hamlet.
Judgment!

Osric.
A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laertes.
Well, again!

Claudius.
Stay, give me drink.
Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.
Give him the cup.

Hamlet.
I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come. [They play.] Another hit. What say you?

Laertes.
A touch, a touch; I do confess't.

Claudius. Our son shall win.

Gertrude. He's fat, and scant of breath.
Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.
The Queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Hamlet.
Good madam!

Claudius.
Gertrude, do not drink.

Gertrude.
I will, my lord; I pray you pardon me. (Drinks.)

Claudius. [aside]
It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.

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

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Gertrude.
Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laertes.
My lord, I'll hit him now.

Claudius.
I do not think't.

Laertes. [aside]
And yet it is almost against my conscience.

Hamlet.
Come for the third, Laertes! You but dally.
Pray you pass with your best violence;
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laertes.
Say you so? Come on. Play.

Osric.
Nothing neither way.

Laertes. Have at you now!
[Laertes wounds Hamlet; then] in scuffling, they change rapiers, [and Hamlet
wounds Laertes].

Claudius.
Part them! They are incens'd.

Hamlet.
Nay come! again!
(The Queen falls.)

Osric.
Look to the Queen there, ho!

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

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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.

How does the Queen?

Claudius.

She sounds to see them bleed.

Gertrude.

No, no! the drink, the drink! O my dear Hamlet!
The drink, the drink! I am poison'd. [Dies.]

Hamlet.

O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd.
Treachery! Seek it out.
[Laertes falls.]

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.

Hamlet. The point envenom'd too?

Then, venom, to thy work. Hurts the King.

All. Treason! treason!

Claudius.

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

Hamlet.

Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion! Is thy union here?

Follow my mother.

(King dies)

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Laertes.

He is justly serv'd.

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 (as this fell sergeant, Death,

Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you-

But let it be. Horatio, I am dead;

Thou liv'st; 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.

Hamlet.

As th'art a man,

Give me the cup. Let go! By heaven, I'll ha't.

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'ercrows my spirit.

(Dies.)

Horatio.

Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince,

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

THE END