

Grating so harshly all his days of quiet  
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

*Ros.* He does confess he feels himself distracted, 5  
But from what cause, he will by no means speak.

*Guil.* 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. 10

*Quee.* Did he receive you well?

*Ros.* Most like a gentleman.

*Guil.* But with much forcing of his disposition.

*Ros.* Niggard of question, but of our demands  
Most free in his reply. 15

*Quee.* Did you assay him to any pastime?

*Ros.* Madam, it so fell out, that certain Players  
We o'erraught 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, 20  
And as I think, they have already order  
This night to play before him.

*Pol.* 'Tis most true.

And he beseech'd me to entreat your Majesties  
To hear and see the matter. 25

*King.* 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 into these delights. 30

*Ros.* We shall my Lord. *Exeunt Ros. & Guil.*

*King.* Sweet *Gertrude*, leave us two;

For we have closely sent for *Hamlet* hither,  
That he as 'twere by accident, may here

Affront *Ophelia*; her father and myself lawful espials 35  
Will so bestow ourselves, that seeing unseen,  
We may of their encounter frankly judge,

And gather by him as he is behaved,

If 't be th'affliction of his love or no

That thus he suffers for. 40

*Quee.* 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, 45  
 To both your honours.

*Ophe.* Madam, I wish it may. [Exit *Queen.*]

*Pol.* *Ophelia* walk you here, gracious so please you,  
 We will bestow ourselves; read on this book,  
 That show of such an exercise may colour 50  
 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.

*King.* O 'tis too true. 55

How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience.  
 The harlot's cheek beautied with plast'ring art,  
 Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it,  
 Than is my deed to my most painted word:  
 O heavy burthen. 60

*Enter Hamlet.*

*Pol.* I hear him coming, let's withdraw my Lord. [Exeunt.]

*Ham.* 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, 65  
 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, 70  
 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: 75  
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
 Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,  
 The pangs of despisèd love, the law's delay,  
 The insolence of office, and the spurns  
 That patient merit of th'unworthy takes, 80

When he himself might his quietus make  
 With a bare bodkin; who would fardels bear,  
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
 But that the dread of something after death,  
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn 85  
 No traveler 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 90  
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
 And enterprises of great pitch and moment,  
 With this regard their currents turn awry,  
 And lose the name of action. Soft you now,  
 The fair *Ophelia*, Nymph in thy orisons 95  
 Be all my sins remember'd.  
*Ophe.* Good my Lord,  
 How does your honour for this many a day?  
*Ham.* I humbly thank you well, well, well.  
*Ophe.* My Lord, I have remembrances of yours, 100  
 That I have longed long to redeliver.  
 I pray you now receive them.  
*Ham.* No, not I, I never gave you aught.  
*Ophe.* My honor'd Lord, you know right well you did,  
 And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd 105  
 As made these 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.  
*Ham.* Ha, ha, are you honest. 110  
*Ophe.* My Lord.  
*Ham.* Are you fair?  
*Ophe.* What means your Lordship?  
*Ham.* That if you be honest & fair, your honesty should admit no  
 discourse to your beauty. 115  
*Ophe.* Could beauty my Lord have better commerce  
 Than with honesty?  
*Ham.* Ay truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform hon-  
 esty 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. 121

*Ophe.* Indeed my Lord you made me believe so.

*Ham.* 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.

*Ophe.* I was the more deceived. 125

*Ham.* 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?

*Ophe.* At home my Lord.

*Ham.* Let the doors be shut upon him, 135  
That he may play the fool nowhere but in's own house.  
Farewell.

*Ophe.* O help him you sweet heavens.

*Ham.* 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, 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.

*Ophe.* O heavenly powers, restore him. 144

*Ham.* I have heard of your paintings well enough, God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another, you jig & amble, and you lisp and nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness ignorance; go to, I'll no more on't, it hath made me mad, I say we will have no mo marriage, those that are married already, all but one shall live, the rest shall keep as they are: to a Nunnery, go. *Exit.*

*Ophe.* O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The Courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,  
Th'expectancy and Rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mold of form,  
Th'observed of all observers, quite quite down, 155  
And I of Ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music'd 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 160

Blasted with ecstasy, O woe is me  
 T'have seen what I have seen, see what I see. *Exit.*

*Enter King and Polonius.*

*King.* 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 165  
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,  
 And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose  
 Will be some danger: which for to prevent,  
 I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to *England*, 170

For the demand of our neglected tribute,  
 Haply the seas, and countries different,  
 With variable objects, shall expel  
 This something settled matter in his heart,  
 Whereon his brains still beating 175

Puts him thus from fashion of himself.

What think you on't?

*Pol.* It shall do well.

But yet do I believe the origin and commencement of his grief,  
 Sprung from neglected love: How now *Ophelia*? 180

You need not tell us what Lord *Hamlet* said,  
 We heard it all: my Lord, do as you please,  
 But if you hold it fit, after the play,

Let his Queen-mother all alone entreat him  
 To show his grief, let her be round with him, 185

And I'll be plac'd (so please you) in the ear  
 Of all their conference, if she find him not,  
 To *England* send him: or confine him where  
 Your wisdom best shall think.

*King.* It shall be so, 190  
 Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. *Exeunt.*

## [Act 3, Scene 2]

*Enter Hamlet, and three of the Players.*

*Ham.* Speak the speech I pray you as I pronounc'd it to you, trip-  
 pingly on the tongue, but if you mouth it as many of our Players do,

I had as lief the town crier spoke my lines, nor do not saw the air too much with your hand thus, but use all gently, for in the very torrent-tempest, and as I may say, whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness, O it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows, and noise: I would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'erdoing Termagant, it out-Herods Herod, pray you avoid it. 11

*Player.* I warrant your honour.

*Ham.* Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor, suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature: For anything so o'rdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end both at the first, and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere the Mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature; scorn her own Image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure: Now this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskillful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve, the censure of the which one, must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole Theatre of others. O there be Players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that neither having th'accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted & bellowed, that I have thought some of Nature's Journey-men had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 28

*Player.* I hope we have reform'd that indifferently with us Sir.

*Ham.* 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 meantime, 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: and then you have some again, that keeps one suite of jests, as a man is known by one suit of apparel, and Gentlemen quotes his jests down in their tables, before they come to the play, as thus: Cannot you stay till I eat my porridge? and, you owe me a quarter's wages: and, my coate wants a cullison: and your beer is sour: and, blabbering with his lips, and thus keeping in his cinkapace of jests, when, God knows, the warm Clowne cannot make a jest unless by chance, as the blind man catcheth a hare: mas-

ters tell him of it.

*Players.* We will my Lord.

*Ham.* Well, go, make you ready. 45

How now my Lord, will the King hear this piece of work?

[*Exit Players.*]

*Enter Polonius, Guildenstern, and Rosencrantz.*

*Pol.* And the Queen too, and that presently.

*Ham.* Bid the Players make haste. Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros.* Ay my Lord. *Exeunt the two.*

*Ham.* What ho *Horatio*. *Enter Horatio.* 50

*Hora.* Here sweet Lord, at your service.

*Ham.* *Horatio*, thou art e'en as just a man.

As e'er my conversation coped withal.

*Hora.* O my dear Lord.

*Ham.* Nay, do not think I flatter, 55

For what advancement may I hope from thee

That no revenue hast but thy good spirits

To feed and clothe thee, why should the poor be flatter'd?

No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,

And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee 60

Where thrift may follow fawning; dost thou hear,

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice,

And could of men distinguish her election,

S'hath seal'd thee for herself, for thou hast been

As one in suffering all that suffers nothing, 65

A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards

Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those

Whose blood and judgment are so well commeddled,

That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger

To sound what stop she please: give me that man 70

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him

In my heart's core, ay in my heart of heart,

As I do thee. Something too much of this,

There is a play tonight before the King,

One scene of it comes near the circumstance 75

Which I have told thee of my father's death,

I prithee when thou seest that act afoot,

Even with the very comment of thy soul

Observe my Uncle, if his occulted guilt

Do not itself unkennel in one speech, 80

It is a damnèd ghost that we have seen,  
 And my imaginations are as foul  
 As Vulcan's stithy; give him heedful note,  
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,  
 And after we will both our judgments join 85  
 In censure of his seeming.

*Hora.* Well my Lord.

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

*Enter Trumpets and Kettle Drums, King, Queen,  
 Polonius, Ophelia [and Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and other Lords  
 attendants with his guard carrying Torches.]*

*Ham.* They are coming to the play. I must be idle, 90  
 Get you a place.

*King.* How fares our cousin *Hamlet*?

*Ham.* Excellent i' faith,  
 Of the Chameleon's dish, I eat the air,  
 Promise-crammed, you cannot feed Capons so. 95

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

*Ham.* No, nor mine now my Lord.  
 You played once i' th' University you say.

*Pol.* That did I my Lord, and was accounted a good Actor. 100

*Ham.* And what did you enact?

*Pol.* I did enact *Julius Caesar*, I was killed i' th' Capitol,  
*Brutus* killed me.

*Ham.* It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there,  
 Be the Players ready? 105

*Ros.* Ay my Lord, they stay upon your patience.

*Quee.* Come hither my dear *Hamlet*, sit by me.

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

*Pol.* O ho, do you mark that.

*Ham.* Lady shall I lie in your lap? 110

*Ophe.* No my Lord.

*Ham.* I mean my Head upon your Lap?

*Ophe.* Ay my Lord.

*Ham.* Do you think I meant country matters?

*Ophe.* I think nothing my Lord. 115

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

*Ophe.* What is my Lord?

*Ham.* Nothing.

*Ophe.* You are merry my Lord.

*Ham.* Who I?

120

*Ophe.* Ay my Lord.

*Ham.* 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.

*Ophe.* Nay, 'tis twice two months my Lord.

125

*Ham.* So long, nay then let the Devil wear black, for I'll have a suite of sables; O heavens, die two months ago, and not forgotten yet, then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year, but byrlady he must build Churches then, or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the Hobby-horse, whose Epitaph is, for O, for O, the hobby-horse is forgot.

131

*The trumpets sound. Dumb-show follows.*

*Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly the Queen embracing him, and he her, he takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck, he lies him down upon a bank of flowers, she seeing him asleep, leaves him: anon comes in another man, takes off his crown, kisses it, pours poison in the sleeper's ears, and leaves him: the Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action, the poisoner with some two or three comes in again, seeming to condole with her, the dead body is carried away, the poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts, she seems harsh awhile, but in the end accepts his love.*

[Exeunt.]

*Ophe.* What means this my Lord?

*Ham.* Marry this miching Mallecho, it means mischief.

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

*Ham.* We shall know by this fellow. *Enter Prologue.*

135

The Players cannot keep counsel, they'll tell all.

*Ophe.* Will he tell us what this show meant?

*Ham.* Ay, or any show that you will show him, be not you asham'd to show, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

*Ophe.* You are naught, you are naught, I'll mark the play. 140

*Prologue.* For us and for our Tragedy,  
Here stooping to your clemency,  
We beg your hearing patiently.

*Ham.* Is this a Prologue, or the posy of a ring?

*Ophe.* 'Tis brief my Lord. 145

*Ham.* As woman's love.

*Enter King and Queen.*

*King.* Full thirty times hath *Phoebus'* cart gone round  
*Neptune's* salt wash, and *Tellus'* orbèd ground,  
 And thirty dozen Moons with borrowed sheen  
 About the world have times twelve thirties been 150  
 Since love our hearts, and *Hymen* did our hands  
 Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

*Quee.* 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, 155  
 So far from cheer, and from your former state,  
 That I distrust you, yet though I distrust,  
 Discomfort you my Lord it nothing must.

For women fear too much, even as they love,  
 And women's fear and love hold quantity, 160  
 In neither aught, or in extremity,  
 Now what my love is proof hath made you know,  
 And as my love is sized, my fear is so,  
 Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear,  
 Where little fears grow great, great love grows there. 165

*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,  
 Honored, belov'd, and haply one as kind,  
 For husband shalt thou. 170

*Player Quee.* O confound the rest,  
 Such love must needs be treason in my breast,  
 In second husband let me be accurst,  
 None wed the second but who kill'd the first. *Ham.* That's  
 The instances that second marriage move wormwood.  
 Are base respects of thrift, but none of love,  
 A second time I kill my husband dead  
 When second husband kisses me in bed.

*Player King.* I do believe you think what now you speak,  
 But what we do determine, oft we break. 180  
 Purpose is but the slave to memory,  
 Of violent birth, but poor validity,  
 Which now like fruit unripe sticks on the tree,

But fall unshaken when they mellow be.  
 Most necessary 'tis that we forget 185  
 To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt,  
 What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
 The passion ending, doth the purpose lose,  
 The violence of either, grief, or joy,  
 Their own enactures with themselves destroy, 190  
 Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament,  
 Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accedent,  
 This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange,  
 That even our loves should with our fortunes change:  
 For 'tis a question left us yet to prove, 195  
 Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.  
 The great man down, you mark his favourite flies,  
 The poor advanc'd, makes friends of enemies,  
 And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,  
 For who not needs, shall never lack a friend, 200  
 And who in want a hollow friend doth try,  
 Directly seasons him his enemy.  
 But, orderly to end where I begun,  
 Our wills and fates do so contrary run,  
 That our devices still are overthrown. 205  
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own,  
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed,  
 But die thy thoughts when thy first Lord is dead.  
*Player Quee.* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light,  
 Sport and repose lock from me day and night, 210  
 To desperation turn my trust and hope,  
 An Anchor's cheer in prison be my scope,  
 Each opposite that blanks the face of joy,  
 Meet what I would have well, and it destroy,  
 Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife, *Ham.* If she should  
 If once a widow, ever I be a wife. break it now.  
*King.* 'Tis deeply sworn, sweet leave me here awhile,  
 My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile  
 The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*]  
*Quee.* Sleep rock thy brain, 220  
 And never come mischance between us twain. *Exeunt.*  
*Ham.* Madam, how like you this play?  
*Quee.* The Lady doth protest too much methinks.

*Ham.* O but she'll keep her word.

*King.* Have you heard the argument? is there no offense in 't?

*Ham.* No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest, no offence i' th' world.

*King.* What do you call the play? 228

*Ham.* 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 of that? your Majesty, and we that have free souls, it touches us not, let the galled Jade wince, our withers are unwrung. This is one *Lucianus*, Nephew to the King.

*Enter Lucianus.*

*Ophe.* You are as good as a Chorus my Lord. 235

*Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love,  
If I could see the puppets dallying.

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

*Ham.* It would cost you a groaning to take off mine edge.

*Ophe.* Still better and worse. 240

*Ham.* So you must take your husbands. Begin murderer, Pox leave thy damnable faces and begin, come, the croaking Raven doth bellow for revenge.

*Luc.* Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,  
Confederate season else no creature seeing, 245  
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.*]

*Ham.* He poisons him i'th' Garden for his estate, his name's *Gonzago*, the story is extant, and written in very choice Italian, you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of *Gonzago's* wife.

*Ophe.* The King rises.

*Ham.* What, frighted with false fire.

*Quee.* How fares my Lord? 255

*Pol.* Give o'er the play.

*King.* Give me some light, away.

*Pol.* Lights, lights, lights! *Exeunt all but Ham. & Horatio.*

*Ham.* Why let the stricken Deer go weep,  
The Hart ungallèd play, 260  
For some must watch while some must sleep,

Thus runs the world away. Would not this sir & a forest of feathers,  
if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with two Provincial  
roses on my raz'd shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of Players?

*Hora.* Half a share. 265

*Ham.* A whole one ay.

For thou dost know O *Damon* dear,  
This Realm dismantled was  
Of *Jove* himself, and now reigns here  
A very very pajock. 270

*Hora.* You might have rhym'd.

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

*Hora.* Very well my Lord.

*Ham.* Upon the talk of the poisoning. 275

*Hora.* I did very well note him.

*Ham.* Ah ha, come some music, come the Recorders,  
For if the King like not the Comedy,  
Why then belike he likes it not perdy.  
Come, some music. 280

*Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

*Guil.* Good my Lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

*Ham.* Sir a whole history.

*Guil.* The King sir.

*Ham.* Ay sir, what of him?

*Guil.* Is in his retirement marvelous distemp' red. 285

*Ham.* With drink sir?

*Guil.* No my Lord, rather with choler.

*Ham.* Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to  
the Doctor, for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps  
plunge him into far more choler. 290

*Guil.* Good my Lord put your discourse into some frame,  
And start not so wildly from my affair.

*Ham.* I am tame sir, pronounce.

*Guil.* The Queen your mother in most great affliction of spirit, hath  
sent me to you. 295

*Ham.* You are welcome.

*Guil.* 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. 300

*Ham.* Sir I cannot.

*Guil.* What my Lord.

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

*Ros.* Then thus she says, your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration. 307

*Ham.* O wonderful son that can so astonish a mother, but is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration, impart.

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

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

*Ros.* My Lord, you once did love me. 313

*Ham.* And do still by these pickers and stealers.

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

*Ham.* Sir, I lack advancement. 318

*Guil.* How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmarke?

*Enter the Players with Recorders.*

*Ham.* Ay sir, but while the grass grows, the proverb is something musty, O the recorders, let me see one, to withdraw with you, why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil? 324

*Guil.* O my Lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmanly.

*Ham.* I do not well understand that, will you play upon this pipe?

*Guil.* My Lord I cannot.

*Ham.* I pray you.

*Guil.* Believe me I cannot. 330

*Ham.* I do beseech you.

*Guil.* I know no touch of it my Lord.

*Ham.* 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your fingers, & thumb, give it breath with your mouth, & it will discourse most eloquent music, look you, these are the stops. 335

*Guil.* But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony, I have not the skill.

*Ham.* Why look you now how unworthy a thing you make of me, you would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, you

would pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass, and there is much music excellent voice in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak, 'Sblood do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe, call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me. God bless you sir. 345

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* My Lord, the Queen would speak with you, & presently.

*Ham.* Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a Camel?

*Pol.* By the mass and 'tis, like a Camel indeed.

*Ham.* Methinks it is like a Weasel.

*Pol.* It is back'd like a Weasel. 350

*Ham.* Or like a Whale?

*Pol.* Very like a Whale.

*Ham.* Then I will come to my mother by and by.

They fool me to the top of my bent, I will come by & by.

*Pol.* I will, say so. [Exit.] 355

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 360

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, 365  
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]

*Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.*

*King.* 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 5  
 Hazard so near's as doth hourly grow  
 Out of his brows.

*Guil.* We will ourselves provide,  
 Most holy and religious fear it is  
 To keep those many many bodies safe 10  
 That live and feed upon your Majesty.

*Ros.* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
 With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
 To keep itself from noyance, but much more 15  
 That spirit, upon whose weal depends and rests  
 The lives of many, the cease of Majesty  
 Dies not alone; but like a gulf doth draw  
 What's near it, with it or it is a massy wheel  
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,  
 To whose huge spokes, ten thousand lesser things 20  
 Are mortised and adjoin'd, which when it falls,  
 Each small annexment petty consequence  
 Attends the boisterous ruin, never alone  
 Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

*King.* Arm you I pray you to this speedy voyage, 25  
 For we will fetters put about this fear  
 Which now goes too free-footed.

*Ros.* We will haste us. *Exeunt Gent.*

*Enter Polonius.*

*Pol.* My Lord, he's going to his mother's closet,  
 Behind the Arras I'll convey myself 30  
 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, 35  
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed.

And tell you what I know. *Exit.*

*King.* Thanks dear my Lord.  
 O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven,  
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't, 40  
 A brother's murder, pray can I not,

Though inclination be as sharp as will,  
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,  
 And like a man to double business bound,  
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin, 45  
 And both neglect, what if this cursèd hand  
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,  
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet Heavens  
 To wash it white as snow, whereto serves mercy  
 But to confront the visage of offense? 50  
 And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,  
 To be forestalled ere we come to fall,  
 Or pardoned being down, then I'll look up.  
 My fault is past, but oh what form of prayer  
 Can serve my turn, forgive me my foul murder, 55  
 That cannot be since I am still possess'd  
 Of those effects for which I did the murder;  
 My Crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen;  
 May one be pardon'd and retain th'offence?  
 In the corrupted currents of this world, 60  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself  
 Buys out the law, but 'tis not so above,  
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies  
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd, 65  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults  
 To give in evidence, what then, what rests,  
 Try what repentance can, what can it not,  
 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?  
 O wretched state, O bosom black as death, 70  
 O limèd soul, that struggling to be free,  
 Art more engaged; help Angels make assay,  
 Bow stubborn knees, and heart with strings of steel,  
 Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe,  
 All may be well. 75

[*He kneels.*]                      *Enter Hamlet.*

*Ham.* Now might I do it pat now he is a praying,  
 And now I'll do't, and so he goes to heaven,  
 And so am I revenged, that would be scann'd  
 A villain kills my father, and for that,  
 I his sole son, do this same villain send 80

To heaven.  
 O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.  
 He took my father grossly, full of bread,  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May,  
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven, 85  
 But in our circumstance and course of thought,  
 'Tis heavy with him: and am I then revenged  
 To take him in the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?  
 No. 90  
 Up sword, and know thou a more horrid hent,  
 When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage,  
 Or in th'incestuous pleasure of his bed,  
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act  
 That has no relish of salvation in't, 95  
 Then trip him that his heels may kick at heaven,  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black  
 As hell whereto it goes; my mother stays,  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. *Exit.*  
*King.* My words fly up, my thoughts remain below 100  
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. *Exit.*

### [Act 3, Scene 4]

*Enter Gertrude and Polonius.*

*Pol.* He will come straight, look you lay home to him,  
 Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,  
 And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between  
 Much heat and him, I'll sconce me even here,  
 Pray you, be round with him. 5  
*Ham.* Mother, mother, mother!

*Enter Hamlet.*

*Quee.* I'll warrant you, fear me not,  
 Withdraw, I hear him coming.  
 [*Polonius hides behind the arras.*]  
*Ham.* Now mother, what's the matter?  
*Quee.* *Hamlet*, thou hast thy father much offended. 10

*Ham.* Mother, you have my father much offended.  
*Quee.* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.  
*Ham.* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.  
*Quee.* Why how now *Hamlet*?  
*Ham.* What's the matter now? 15  
*Quee.* Have you forgot me?  
*Ham.* 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.  
*Quee.* Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak. 20  
*Ham.* 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.  
*Quee.* What wilt thou do, thou wilt not murder me,  
 Help, help, ho! 25  
*Pol.* What ho help, help, help!  
*Ham.* How now, a Rat, dead for a Ducat, dead.  
*Pol.* O I am slain. [Kills *Polonius*.]  
*Quee.* O me, what hast thou done?  
*Ham.* Nay I know not, is it the King? 30  
*Quee.* O what a rash and bloody deed is this.  
*Ham.* A bloody deed, almost as bad, good mother  
 As kill a King, and marry with his brother.  
*Quee.* As kill a King.  
*Ham.* Ay Lady, it was my word. 35  
 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 40  
 If it be made of penetrable stuff,  
 If damnèd custom have not brass'd it so,  
 That it is proof and bulwark against sense.  
*Quee.* What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue  
 In noise so rude against me? 45  
*Ham.* Such an act  
 That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
 Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the Rose  
 From the fair forehead of an innocent love,  
 And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows 50

As false as dicers' oaths, O such a deed,  
 As from the body of contraction plucks  
 The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
 A rhapsody of words; heaven's face does glow  
 O're this solidity and compound mass 55  
 With heated visage, as against the doom,  
 Is thought sick at the act.

*Quee.* Ay me, what act,  
 That roars so loud, and thunders in the Index,  
*Ham.* Look here upon this Picture, and on this, 60  
 The counterfeit presentment of two brothers,  
 See, what a grace was seated on this brow,  
*Hyperion's* curls, the front of *Jove* himself,  
 An eye like *Mars*, to threaten and command,  
 A station like the herald *Mercury*, 65  
 New lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,  
 A combination, and a form indeed,  
 Where every God did seem to set his seal  
 To give the world assurance of a man,  
 This was your husband, look you now what follows, 70  
 Here is your husband like a mildewed ear,  
 Blasting his wholesome brother, have you eyes,  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this Moor; ha, have you eyes?  
 You cannot call it love, for at your age 75  
 The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgment, and what judgment  
 Would step from this to this, sense sure you have  
 Else could you not have motion, but sure that sense  
 Is apoplex'd, for madness would not err 80  
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd  
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice  
 To serve in such a difference, what devil was't  
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind;  
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight, 85  
 Ears without hands, or eyes, smelling sans all,  
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense  
 Could not so mope: O shame where is thy blush?  
 Rebellious hell,  
 If thou canst mutine in a Matron's bones, 90

To flaming youth let virtue be as wax  
 And melt in her own fire, proclaim no shame  
 When the compulsive ardor gives the charge,  
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,  
 And reason panders will. 95

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

*Ham.* Nay but to live 100  
 In the rank sweat of an enseamèd bed  
 Stew'd in corruption, honeying, and making love  
 Over the nasty sty.

*Quee.* O speak to me no more,  
 These words like daggers enter in my ears, 105  
 No more sweet *Hamlet*.

*Ham.* 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, 110  
 That from a shelf the precious Diadem stole  
 And put it in his pocket.

*Quee.* No more.

*Enter Ghost [in his nightgown].*

*Ham.* A King of shreds and patches,  
 Save me and hover o'er me with your wings 115  
 You heavenly guards: what would your gracious figure?

*Quee.* Alas he's mad.

*Ham.* 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. 120

*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,  
 Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works, 125  
 Speak to her *Hamlet*.

*Ham.* How is it with you Lady?

*Quee.* Alas how is't with you?  
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy,

And with th'incorporal air do hold discourse, 130  
 Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep,  
 And as the sleeping soldiers in th'alarm,  
 Your bedded hair like life in excrements  
 Start up and stand on end, O gentle son  
 Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper 135  
 Sprinkle cool patience, whereon do you look?  
*Ham.* On him, on him, look you how pale he glares,  
 His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones  
 Would make them capable, do not look upon me,  
 Lest with this piteous action you convert 140  
 My stern effects, then what I have to do  
 Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.  
*Quee.* To whom do you speak this?  
*Ham.* Do you see nothing there?  
*Quee.* Nothing at all, yet all that is I see. 145  
*Ham.* Nor did you nothing hear?  
*Quee.* No nothing but ourselves.  
*Ham.* Why look you there, look how it steals away,  
 My father in his habit as he lived,  
 Look, where he goes, even now out at the portal. *Exit Ghost.*  
*Quee.* This the very coinage of your brain,  
 This bodiless creation ecstasy is very cunning in.  
*Ham.* Ecstasy?  
 My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time,  
 And makes as healthful music, it is not madness 155  
 That I have utter'd, bring me to the test,  
 And I the matter will reword, which madness  
 Would gambol from, mother for love of grace,  
 Lay not that: flattering unction to your soul  
 That not your trespass but my madness speaks, 160  
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
 Whiles rank corruption mining all within  
 Infects unseen, confess yourself to heaven,  
 Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,  
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds 165  
 To make them ranker, forgive me this my virtue,  
 For in the fatness of these pury times  
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,  
 Yea curb and woo for leave to do him good.

*Quee.* O *Hamlet*, thou hast cleft my heart in twain. 170  
*Ham.* 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,  
 Assume a virtue if you have it not,  
 That monster custom, who all sense doth eat 175  
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this  
 That to the use of actions fair and good,  
 He likewise gives a frock or Livery  
 That aptly is put on. Refrain tonight,  
 And that shall lend a kind of easiness 180  
 To the next abstinence, the next more easy:  
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,  
 And master ev'n the devil, or throw him out  
 With wondrous potency: once more good night,  
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd, 185  
 I'll blessing beg of you, for this same Lord  
 I do repent; but heaven hath pleased it so  
 To punish me with this, and this with me,  
 That I must be their scourge and minister,  
 I will bestow him and will answer well 190  
 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.  
*Quee.* What shall I do? 195  
*Ham.* 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, 200  
 Make you to ravel all this matter out  
 That I essentially am not in madness,  
 But mad in craft, 'twere good you let him know,  
 For who that's but a Queen, fair, sober, wise,  
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib, 205  
 Such dear concernings hide, who would do so,  
 No, in despite of sense and secrecy,  
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,  
 Let the birds fly, and like the famous Ape,