

BARNARDO

Who's there?

FRANCISCO

Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.

BARNARDO

Long live the king!

FRANCISCO

Barnardo?

BARNARDO

He.

FRANCISCO

You come most carefully upon your hour.

BARNARDO

'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, Francisco

FRANCISCO

For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,

BARNARDO

Good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

FRANCISCO

I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

HORATIO

Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS

And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO

Give you good night.

MARCELLUS

Farewell, honest soldier.

Exit FRANCISCO.

MARCELLUS

Bernardo!

BERNARDO

Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus.

Horatio

What, has this thing appeared again tonight?

BARNARDO

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.

MARCELLUS

Peace. Look where it comes again.

BARNARDO

In the same figure like the king that's dead.

MARCELLUS

Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

BARNARDO

Looks a not like the king? Mark it, Horatio.

HORATIO

Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

MARCELLUS

Speak to 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.

BARNARDO

See, it stalks away.

HORATIO

Stay. Speak, speak. I charge thee, speak.

Exit GHOST.

MARCELLUS

'Tis gone and will not answer.

BARNARDO

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

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.
Such was the very armor he had on
When he the ambitious Norway combated.
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.
Break we our watch up, and Let us impart what we have seen
tonight Unto young Hamlet, for upon my life
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

CLAUDIUS

Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves.
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,

Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole.
Taken to wife.

HAMLET

O that this too too sullied flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God, God,
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed.
That it should come to this,
But two months dead, nay, not so much, not two,
So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr.
Heaven and earth, must I remember?
Why, she would hang on him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on, and yet within a month-
Let me not think on't; frailty, thy name is woman-
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body
All tears, why she-
O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
Would have mourned longer- married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,
She married. O, most wicked speed,
It is not nor cannot come to good.
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

CLAUDIUS

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son -

HAMLET

A little more than kin, and less than kind!

CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET

Not so, my lord. I am too much in the sun

GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

HORATIO

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

HAMLET

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

HORATIO

Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon

HAMLET

My father - methinks I see my father.

HORATIO

Where, my lord?

HAMLET

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HORATIO

I saw him once. A was a goodly King.
My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

HAMLET

Saw? Who?

HORATIO

My lord, the king your father.

HAMLET

The King my father?
For god's love let me hear!

LAERTES

My necessities are embarked.
let me hear from you.

Ophelia

Do you doubt that?

LAERTES

For Hamlet,
Think it no more.

Perhaps he loves you now,
but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own.
On his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state,
And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
Unto the voice and yielding of that body
Whereof he is the head.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,

OPHELIA

I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart, but, good my brother,
Do not as some ungracious pastors do,
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
Whiles like a puffed and reckless libertine
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads
And recks not his own rede.

Enter POLONIUS.

LAERTES

I stay too long. But here my father comes.

POLONIUS

Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory.
Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Beware Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;
For loan oft loses both itself and friend.
This above all: to thine ownself be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

HAMLET

The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

HORATIO

Look, my lord, it comes!
It beckons you to go away with it,
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

HAMLET

Where wilt thou lead me? speak; I'll go no further.

GHOST

Mark me.

HAMLET

I will.

GHOST

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

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost!

GHOST

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.
I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. If thou didst ever thy dear
father love—
Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET

Murder!

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 May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST

The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

HAMLET

O my prophetic soul! My uncle!

GHOST

Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast.
Hamlet, remember me.

HAMLET

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
My tables,--meet it is I set it down,
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark

CLAUDIUS

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern!

GERTRUDE

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

GUILDENSTERN

We both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

CLAUDIUS

Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildenstern.

GERTRUDE

I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.

CLAUDIUS *and* GERTRUDE *exit*.

GUILDENSTERN

My honored lord!

ROSENCRANTZ

My most dear lord!

HAMLET

My excellent good friends! How dost thou,
Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz What news?

ROSENCRANTZ

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

HAMLET

Your news is not true.
fortune, sends you to prison.

GUILDENSTERN

Prison, my lord!

HAMLET

Denmark's a prison.

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.

GUILDENSTERN

There are the players.

HAMLET

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN *exit*.

HAMLET

About, my brain! I have heard
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul.
I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
the play 's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

*The PLAYERS ready to perform, CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE take
their place with the rest of the "audience."*

PLAYER KING

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

PLAYER QUEEN

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!

PLAYER KING

'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;
My operant powers their functions leave to do:

PLAYER QUEEN

O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

PLAYER KING

I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

PLAYER QUEEN

Here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

PLAYER KING

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

Sleeps

PLAYER QUEEN

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

CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

The Mouse-trap. (*Enter LUCIANUS.*) This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.

OPHELIA

The king rises.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How fares my lord?

KING CLAUDIUS

Give me some light: away!

ALL

Lights, lights, lights!

All leave except HAMLET and HORATIO.

HAMLET

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

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

HAMLET

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

HORATIO *exits.*

HAMLET

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause: there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life;
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
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;
Soft you now!
The fair Ophelia!

Enter OPHELIA.

OPHELIA

My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
That I have longed long to re-deliver.

HAMLET

No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA

My honour'd lord, you know right well you did;

HAMLET

I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

HAMLET

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

OPHELIA

I was the more deceived.

HAMLET

Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a
breeder of sinners? Go thy ways to a nunnery!

HAMLET *exits*.

OPHELIA

O, help him, you sweet heavens! O, woe is me,
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

All exit. Enter CLAUDIUS and LAERTES.

CLAUDIUS

O heavy deed!
His liberty is full of threats to all;
To you yourself, to us, to every one!

LAERTES

It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,

CLAUDIUS

O. The queen his mother

LAERTES

revenge will come.

CLAUDIUS

Can you advise me?

LAERTES

My lord, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

CLAUDIUS

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this

LAERTES

I will do't: And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death

CLAUDIUS

this project Should have a back or second, Soft! let me
see: We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings I'll have
prepared him A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

All exit. HORATIO and HAMLET approach a gravesite.

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.

GRAVEDIGGER *sings. 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 it were
Cain's jaw-bone,

HORATIO

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

GRAVEDIGGER

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

HAMLET

How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

GRAVEDIGGER

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

HAMLET

How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

GRAVEDIGGER

I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die--as we have many pocky corpses now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in--he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

HAMLET

Why he more than another?

GRAVEDIGGER

Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while.
Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

HAMLET

Whose was it?

GRAVEDIGGER

A mad fellow's it was: a pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured aflagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

HAMLET

Let me see. *(Takes the skull.)*
Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rims at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Horatio, tell me one thing.

HORATIO

What's that, my lord?

HAMLET

Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

HORATIO

E'en so.

HAMLET

And smelt so? pah! (*Puts down the skull.*)

HORATIO

E'en so, my lord.

HAMLET

To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

HORATIO

'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

HAMLET

No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel? Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay, Might stop a hole to keep the wind away: O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe, Should patch a wall to expel the winter flaw!

Enter OSRIC.

OSRIC

Sweet lord, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

HAMLET

I will receive it.

OSRIC

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

HAMLET

Let the foils be brought, I will win.

OSRIC

I commend my duty to your lordship.

Exit OSRIC.

HORATIO

You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET

I do not think so: since he went into France,

HORATIO

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

HAMLET

Not a whit, we defy augury: 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.

All are set for the match.

CLAUDIUS

Come, begin! And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.
Give him the cup.

HAMLET

I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile. *(They play.)*
Another hit; what say you?

LAERTES

A touch, a touch, I do confess.

GERTRUDE

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

CLAUDIUS

Gertrude, do not drink.

GERTRUDE

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

CLAUDIUS

(*Aside.*) It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.

LAERTES

My lord, I'll hit him now.
Have at you now!

LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then in scuffling, they change
rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.

CLAUDIUS

Part them; they are incensed.

HAMLET

Nay, come, again.

GERTRUDE *falls*.

OSRIC

Look to the queen there!

HORATIO

They bleed on both sides.

LAERTES

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAMLET

How does the queen?

CLAUDIUS

She swoonds 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!

LAERTES

It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practise
Hath turn'd itself on me lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:
I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

HAMLET

The point!--envenom'd too!
Then, venom, to thy work. (*Stabs* CLAUDIUS.)
Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?
Follow my mother.

CLAUDIUS *dies*.

LAERTES

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Dies.

HAMLET

Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio. I am dead;
Thou livest; my dying voice;
So tell, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited. The rest is silence.

Dies.

HORATIO

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

Enter FORTINBRAS *and* AMBASSADOR.

FORTINBRAS

Where is this sight?
This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death,
What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
That thou so many princes at a shot
So bloodily hast struck?

AMBASSADOR

The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,

FORTINBRAS

Let four captains
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royally: and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies: such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

THE END