# Hamlet

By William Shakespeare

Scanned by Richard L. Leed

№ 22 in the series *Shakespeare Scanned*

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**Preface to the Series:**

***Shakespeare Scanned***

## Purpose

The purpose of this edition of Shakespeare’s plays is to identify all of the lines of pentameter verse whose metrical status is noteworthy or problematical. It is intended to be descriptive, not prescriptive: the ‘solutions’ to metric problems given in the footnotes are suggestions as to how the lines can be interpreted so as to conform to the Elizabethan rules, not instructions as to how a modern reader or actor should pronounce the lines in performance. The series comprises 33 plays—all but those done in collaboration or with prose predominating.

## Scansion

Accentuation and syllabification are marked typographically with boldface and with the grave accent in the case of the ending *-èd* (as in *belovèd*). Deviations in stress pattern from the standards of Modern American English are discussed in footnotes, *e.g.* British vs. American pronunciation, Elizabethan vs. Modern English, *etc*.

In some cases of syncopation (elision) the dropped vowel in normal orthography is enclosed in parentheses in the text, *e.g.*

Whose **ran**soms **did** the **gen**(e)ral **coff**ers **fill**;

In other cases a phonemic transcription specifies the syllabicity of the word or words, with the dropped vowel enclosed in parentheses, *e.g.* Made **glor**ious **sum**mer **by** this **son** of **York**, /glór(i)yis/

## Metric Analysis

For the most part this study concentrates on so-called iambic pentameter. The rules governing this form of verse are presented at the beginning of each Introduction, along with a classification of other forms of accentual-syllabic verse that occur in the plays. The general principle of analysis in this work is based on the three-way distinction of linguistic *stress*, verse *accent*, and performance *beat.*

## Lists

Lines exhibiting certain metrical features, such as line-initial accent, violations of the Accent Rules, regular stress/accent mismatches (inverted feet), dactylic line-ends, vowel insertion, and syncopation, are collected in the Introduction to each play. A few other features affecting the distribution of syllables in the line, such as contractions, are illustrated and discussed, but examples of them are not listed exhaustively.

## Summary of the Pentameter Rules

P A R

A line contains *five accented* syllables; *one and only one unaccented* syllable must occur between every two accented ones, *e.g.* The **la**dy **doth** pro**test** too **much**, me**thinks**.

S A R

A *half-line* normally contains two or three accented syllables, *e.g. Soothsayer* Be**ware** the **Ides** of **March**.

*Caesar*  What **man** is **that**?

R R

In certain circumstances, words containing an unstressed vowel before a resonant phoneme /r l n m y w/ can be read without that vowel, *e.g.*

The **clam**(o)rous **owl** that **nightl**y **hoots** and **won**ders

## Contents

The introduction to each play contains the following topics. The illustrations and exhaustive lists of examples under each topic are taken from the particular play being introduced.

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The Resonant Rule: ambiguous syllabicity

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**List of symbols**

( ) parentheses Do not pronounce:

The **mul**ti**tud**(i)nous **seas** in**car**na**dine**

\_ underline (between words)

Pronounce the end of one word together with the next:

I\_(woul)d **break** a **thou**sand **oaths** to **reign** one **year**.

~ tilde

Vowel insertion: pronounce the resonant as a whole syllable:

’Tis **monst**~r**ous**. I**a**go, **who** be**gan’t**? (/mánstiris/)

// double slash

Mid-line break between two half-lines, marking a violation of the Primary Accent Rule, as in this line with two contiguous unaccented syllables:

His **acts** being **sev**en **a**ges.// At **first** the **in**fant, /…/ single slashes enclose phonemic transcription: **glor**ious /glóryis/.

èd grave accent

Pronounce the ending *-ed* as a syllable:

The **good** is **oft** in**terr**èd **with** their **bones**. boldface

Accent slots, mostly filled with stressed syllables: The **qual**i**ty** of **merc**y **is** not **strained**.

bold italic

Accent slot, but not the stressed syllable of the word: Op***en*** the **tomb**, lay **me** with **Ju**li**et**.

F First Folio edition

Q First Quarto edition

## Phonemic transcription

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| /j/ as in *jeer* | /ng/ as in *sing* | /sh/ as in *shin* | /th/ as in *ether* |
| */g/* as in *gear* | /ch/ as in *chin* | /zh/ as in *azure* | /*th*/ as in *either* |
| /æ/ as in *bat* | /e/ as in *bet* | /o/ as in *bought* | /u/ as in *book* |
| /a/ as in *barn* | /ey/ as in *bait* | /ow/ as in *boat* | /uw/ as in *boot* |
| /ay/ as in *bite* | /i/ as in *bit* | /oy/ as in *boy* | /û/ as in *but* |
| /aw/ as in *bout* | /iy/ as in *beet* |  |  |

**Introduction**

## The Primary Accent Rule

A line of *monosyllabic* alternating pentameter verse, commonly known as *iambic* and *trochaic pentameter*, contains *five accented* syllables; *one and only one unaccented* syllable must occur between every two accented ones.

There are a few examples of monosyllabic alternating *tetrameter* verse (with four accents, as in the following passage) in Shakespeare’s plays, and a very few examples of *disyllabic* alternating verse (with two and only two unaccented syllables permitted between every two accented ones, as in the last two lines below); they are restricted to special occasions, as in Ariel’s song in the last act of *The Tempest*:

**Where** the **bee** sucks, **there** suck **I**; **In** a **cow**slip’s **bell** I **lie**;

**There** I **couch** when **owls** do **cry**; **On** the **bat’s** back **I** do **fly Aft**er **sum**mer **mer**ri**ly**.

**Mer**rily, **mer**rily, **shall** I live **now**,

**Un**der the **bloss**om that **hangs** on the **bough**.

In *Cymbeline* there is a song in Act IV Scene 2 which contains both tetrameter and trimeter monosyllabic alternating verse: All **lov**ers **young**, all **lov**ers **must** Con**sign** to **thee** and **come** to **dust**.

No **ex**or**ci**zer **harm** thee,

**Nor** no **witch**craft **charm** thee.

**Ghost** un**laid** for**bear** thee.

**Noth**ing **ill** come **near** thee.

**Qui**et **con**sum**ma**tion **have**,

**And** re**now**nèd **be** thy **grave**.

The ghost scene in Act IV of *Cymbeline* is in heptameter, e.g.

Hath **my** poor **boy** done **aught** but **well**, whose **face** I **nev**er **saw**?

I **died** whilst **in** the **womb** he **stayed**, at**tend**ing **na**ture’s **law**,

In *The Winter’s Tale* Autolycus sings in non-alternating tetrameter, where the number of unaccented syllables between accented ones is variable:

When **daff**o**dils** be**gin** to **peer**,

With **heigh**, the **dox**y **o**ver the **dale**,

Why **then** comes **in** the **sweet** o’the **year**,

For the **red** blood **reigns** in the **wint**er’s **pale**.

The **white** sheet **bleach**ing **on** the **hedge**, With **heigh**, the **sweet** bird, **O** how they **sing**!

Doth **set** my **pugg**ing **tooth** on **edge**, For a **quart** of **ales** is a **dish** for a **king**.

These lines near the end of the last scene of *The Taming of the Shrew* are in disyllabic alternating tetrameter:

*Vincentio* ’**Tis** a good **hear**ing when **child**ren are **tow**ard.

*Lucentio* **But** a harsh **hear**ing when **wom**en are **frow**ard.

*The Taming of the Shrew* also contains couplets that rhyme but lack metrical regularity; they are sometimes called *rhymed prose*, sometimes *doggerel verse*:

If this be not that you look for, I have no more to say But bid Bianca farewell for ever and a day.

In this book the syllables that occur in accented position are printed in boldface, as illustrated in the preceding examples. Without such typographical help, you can tell whether the even-numbered or oddnumbered syllables are accented by comparing the two possibilities with the words’ normal stress in ordinary English. Compare, for example, the following two lines, where the accented position is marked by boldface, and the stressed vowels of ordinary speech are marked with an acute:

1. Thou **wrétch**ed, **rásh**, in**trú**ding **fóol**, fare**wéll**.
2. **Áy**, or **drínk**ing, **fénc**ing, **swéar**ing, **quár**relling,

In example (1) the accented syllables are the even-numbered ones, beginning with the second, and in example (2) the accented syllables are odd-numbered ones. If the accentual pattern were reversed, there would be a mismatch between accent and stress:

1. **Thou** wrétch**ed**, rásh, **in**trúd**ing** fóol, **fare**wéll.
2. Áy, **or** drínk**ing**, fénc**ing**, swéar**ing**, quár**rell**ing, Certain stress/accent mismatches are allowable, but only in certain positions in the line; they are discussed in more detail below.

Full lines beginning with an accented syllable, such as example (2), are uncommon in Shakespeare, though half-lines (for which see below) more commonly begin that way. Some scholars and editors consider lines beginning with an accented syllable to be unmetrical.

Very few lines of pentameter verse in *Hamlet* begin with an accented syllable. Here is a complete list of such full lines:

**Shall** I **strike** it **with** my **par**ti**san**?…

**Armed** at **point** ex**act**ly, **cap**-à-**pie**,…

**Fo**~r**ward**, not **perm**(a)nent, **sweet**, not **last**ing,…

**Áy**, or **drínk**ing, **fénc**ing, **swéar**ing, **quár**relling…

**That** he’s **mad** ’tis **true**; ’tis **true** ’tis **pi**ty;

**No**, not **I**. I **nev**er **gave** you **aught**.…

**Yes**, it **is** al**read**y **gar**ri**soned**.…

**I** will **do’t**. Dost **thou** come **here** to **whine**,…

**It** is **he**~re, **Ham**let. **Thou** art **slain**.…

**To** have **proved** most **roy**(a)l;\_and **for** his **pass**age,…

**Ha**, ’swounds, **I** should **take\_(i)t**: for\_(i)t **can**not **be**…

A line may begin with one unaccented syllable or none, as illustrated above. As for the end of the line, it most frequently ends with no unaccented syllables, occasionally with one, or very occasionally with two, *e.g.*

What’s **Hec**u**ba** to **him**, or **he** to **Hec**uba,…

I **pray** thee **stay** with **us**, go **not** to **Wit**tenberg.…

And **he** be**seeched** me **to** en**treat** your **Maj**esties…

To **give** th’as**say** of **arms** a**gainst** your **Maj**esty,…

And **meant** to **wrack** thee. **But** be**shrew** my **jeal**ousy!… Some lines can be read as having only one unaccented syllable at the end if the unaccented vowel (in parentheses) is dropped according to the Resonant Rule (for which see below):

I’ll **be** your **foil**, La**er**tes. **In** mine **ig**n(o)rance…

My **lord**, I **came** to **see** your **fath**er’s **fu**n(e)ral.…

**Ay**, or **drink**ing, **fenc**ing, **swear**ing, **quarr**(e)lling,…

Have **you** your **fath**er’s **leave**? What **says** Po**lon**ius?… /palówn(i)yis/.

Have **of** your **au**dience **been** most **free** and **boun**teous.…

/báwnt(i)yis/ O **hor**ri**ble**! O **hor**ri**ble**! most **horr**(i)ble!

And **meant** to **wrack** thee. **But** be**shrew** my **jeal**(ou)sy!…

And **te**dious**ness** the **limbs** and **out**ward **flour**(i)shes,…

None of these lines ending in two unaccented syllables are irregular, as they all follow the rule that requires one and only one unaccented syllable *between* every two accented ones.

Some readers consider a line ending in two unaccented syllables to be irregular, and would prefer to interpret such lines as having six accents: What’s **Hec**u**ba** to **him**,// or **he** to **Hec**u**ba**,

## Accent *vs*. Stress *vs*. Beat

When reading aloud, it is almost never appropriate to pronounce all accented syllables with equal stress. The most important words should get the most stress, just as in ordinary speech. One way of reading this line from *Macbeth* is with these three main *beats*, as underlined: It **is** too **full** o’th’ **milk** of **hu**man **kind**ness

This book doesn’t mark beats. Beats aren’t part of the metric rule, because there is no rule for beats. The placement of beats depends on the reader’s interpretation of the meaning of the passage, and readers may disagree. In the above example, with the beat on *kindness*, the meaning is ‘kindness, a good feeling that humans have for each other’, but if you put the beat on *human*, then the phrase is equivalent to the word *humankind* ‘human nature’.

It **is** too **full** o’th’ **milk** of **hu**man **kind**ness

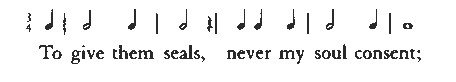
*Stress* is a characteristic of words in ordinary speech: some syllables are more prominent than others, as in the noun pérmit *vs*. the verb permít.

*Accent* is a feature of metrics in poetry. It can be viewed as a kind of empty slot that is ordinarily, but not always, filled by a stressed syllable.

Syllables on which the beat does not fall, whether stressable (as the first syllable of *néver* in the following line) or not (as in the first syllable of *consént*), may be spoken at a faster pace.

To **give** them **seals**, ne***ver*** my **soul** con**sent**;

George T. Wright, in *Shakespeare’s Metrical Art*, illustrates this with musical notation, where the half notes and the whole note at the end represent beats:



Half-lines often begin with rhythmic triplets, as in the second half-line above (‘never my’). These triplets ignore the matching of stress with accent in various ways; they are described variously in traditional terminology (*inverted feet, trochaic feet…*) and are not considered to be unmetrical.

A stress/accent *mismatch* occurs when the accent slot is occupied by a syllable that is never or rarely stressed in normal speech, as for example the boldfaced word *the* in the following speech from *Macbeth*: More **needs** she **the** di**vine** than **the** phy**sic**ian.

Conversely, an unaccented slot may be filled with a word that is normally stressed. In the following example, the unaccented words *Pour* and *sweet* would both be stressed more than the word *the* in ordinary speech:

Pour **the** sweet **milk** of **con**cord **in**to **hell,**

Similarly, the contrast between us (real men) and the enemy (Breton bastards) in this passage from *Richard III* requires the main beat of the halfline to fall on unaccented *men,* and the tempo to be slowed down by three contiguous stressed syllables:

If **we** be **con**quered, **let** men **con**quer **us**,

And **not** these **bas**tard **Bret**ons…

When an unstressed syllable in a polysyllabic word falls in an accented slot, we print it in *italics* as a warning *not* to put the stress on it, e.g. nev***er*** in this example:

To **give** them **seals**, ne***ver*** my **soul** con**sent**;

Listed below are most of the instances of this kind of mismatch in *Hamlet.* (For the meaning of the symbol // in some of these examples, see below under *Secondary Accent Rule*.)

—Mismatch in the first word of the *first* half-line:

Giv***ing*** to **you** no **fur**ther **pers**(o)nal **pow**er…

Giv***ing*** more **light** than **heat**, ex**tinct** in **both**…

Touch***ing*** this **dread**ed **sight** twice **seen** of **us.**…

Hold***ing*** a **weak** sup**po**sal **of** our **worth**,…

Pass***ing*** through **na**ture **to** e**ter**ni**ty**.…

Runn***ing*** it **thus**—you’ll **ten**der **me** a **fool**.…

Breath***ing*** like **sanc**ti**fied** and **pi**ous **bawds**…

Carry***ing***, I **say**, the **stamp** of **one** de**fect**,…

Mak***ing*** night **hid**eous **and** we **fools** of **na**ture…

Be***ing*** a **thing** im**mort**al **as** it**self**?…

Hav***ing*** e(v)er **seen** in **the** pre**nom**(i)nate **crimes**…

Strik***ing*** too **short** at **Greeks**. His **an**tique **sword**,…

Seem***ing*** to **feel** this **blow**, with **fla**ming **top**…

Grat***ing*** so **harsh**ly **all** his **days** of **qui**et…

Blast***ing*** his **whole**some **broth**er. **Have** you **eyes**?…

Noth***ing*** at **all**; yet **all** that **is** I **see**.…

Look***ing*** be**fore** and **aft**er, **gave** us **not**…

Clamb’***ring*** to **hand**, an **en**vious **sliv**er **broke**,… Singe***ing*** his **pate** a**gainst** the **burn**ing **zone**,… Ne***ver*** make **known** what **you** have **seen** to**nigh**t.…

Ne***ver*** to **speak** of **this** that **you** have **seen**.…

Ne***ver*** to **speak** of **this** that **you** have **heard**,…

Ne***ver*** to **rise** a**gain**. Thy **moth**er’s **poi**soned.…

Wheth***er*** in **sea** or **fire**, in **earth** or **air**,…

Nei***ther*** a **borr**(o)wer **nor** a **lend**er **be**,…

Mur***der*** most **foul**, as **in** the **best** it **is**,…

Whe***ther*** ’tis **no**bler **in** the **mind** to **suf**fer…

An***swer***, and **think** u**pon** this **bus**i**ness**.…

Hon***ored***, be**loved**; and **hap**ly **one** as **kind**…

Mo***ther***, you **have** my **fath**er **much** of**fend**ed.…

Moth***er***, good **night** in**deed**. This **coun**sel**lor**…

Rich***er*** than **that** which **four** suc**cess**ive **kings**…

Win***ner*** and **los**er?…

Na***ture*** is **fine** in **love**, and **where** ’tis **fine**…

Fing***ered*** their **pack**et, **and** in **fine** with**drew**…

Ham***let***, thou **hast** thy **fath**er **much** of**fend**ed.…

Ham***let*** in **mad**ness **hath** Po**lo**nius **slain**,…

Ham***let***, this **deed**, for **thine** e**spec**ial **sa**fety—…

Ham***let*** comes **back**; what **would** you **un**der**take**…

Ham***let***, re**turned**, shall **know** you **are** come **home**;…

Ham***let*** the **Dane**.…

Ham***let*** is **of** the **fac**tion **that** is **wronged**;…

Pi***ty*** me **not**, but **lend** thy **ser**ious **hear**ing…

Cost***ly*** thy **hab**it **as** thy **purse** can **buy**,…

Rank***ly*** a**bused**—but **know**, thou **no**ble **youth**,…

Hap***ly*** the **seas** and **coun**tries **dif**fe**rent**,…

Tru***ly*** to **speak**,// **and** with **no** ad**dit**ion,…

Tru***ly*** de**liv**er.…

Rough***ly*** a**wake**, I **here** pro**claim** was **mad**ness.… Mar***ry***, I’ll **teach** you. **Think** your**self** a **ba**by

Prompt***ed*** to **my** re**venge** by **hea(ve)n** and **hell**,…

Blast***ed*** with **ec**sta**sy**. O **woe** is **me**…

Lard***ed*** with **man**y **sev**(e)ral **sorts** of **rea**sons… Fold***ed*** the **writ** up **in** the **form** of **th’oth**er,…

Arm***èd*** at **point** ex**act**ly, **cap**-à-**pie**,…

Mad***ness*** in **great** ones **must** not **un**watched **go.**… Wit***ness*** this **arm**y **of** such **mass** and **charge**,… Dang(e)***rous*** con**jec**tures **in** ill-**breed**ing **minds**.…

Pur***pose*** is **but** the **slave** to **mem**o**ry**,…

Tak***en*** to **wife**. Nor **have** we **here**in **barred**…

Sea***son*** your **ad**mi**ra**tion **for** a **while**…

Strength***en*** your **pa**tience **in** our **last** night’s **speech**:…

Vir***tue*** it**self** scapes **not** ca**lum**nious **strokes**.…

Vir***tue*** it**self** of **vice** must **par**don **beg**,…

An***gels*** and **min**is**ters** of **grace** de**fend** us!…

Vi***sit*** her **face** too **rough**ly. **Hea(ve)n** and **earth**,…

Wel***come***, Ho**ra**tio. **Wel**come, **good** Mar**cell**us.…

Bes***tial*** o**bliv**ion, **or** some **cra**ven **scru**ple…

Grap***ple\_(the)m*** un**to** thy **soul** with **hoops** of **steel**,…

Pleas***ant*** and **help**ful **to** him.…

Pyr***rhus*** at **Pri**am **drives**, in **rage** strikes **wide**;…

Nig***gard*** of **ques**tion, **but** of **our** de**mands**…

Nep***tune’s*** salt **wash** and **Tell**us’ **orb**èd **ground**,…

Haz***ard*** so **near** us **as** doth **hour**ly **grow**… Sprink***le*** cool **pa**tience. **Where**on **do** you **look**?…

Foll***ow*** her **close**; give **her** good **watch**, I **pray** you.…

Con***science*** and **grace** to **the** pro**found**est **pit**!…

Mill***ions*** of **a**cres **on** us, **till** our **ground**,… —Mismatch in the first word of the *second* half-line:

As **need**ful **in** our **loves**, fitt***ing*** our **du**ty?…

In **e**qual **scale** weigh***ing*** de**light** and **dole**,…

Brief **let** me **be.** Sleep***ing*** with**in** my **or**chard,…

And **much** of**fence** too.// Touch***ing*** this **vis**ion **here**,…

Run **bare**foot **up** and **down**, threat(e)***ning*** the **flames**… Ears **with**out **hands** or **eyes**, smell***ing*** sans **all**,…

His **form** and **cause** con**joined**, preach***ing*** to **stones**,…

To **mine** own **room** a**gain**, mak***ing*** so **bold**,…

As **I** do **thee**. Some***thing*** too **much** of **this**.… To **give** them **seals** ne***ver*** my **soul** con**sent**.…

Here, **as** be**fore**, ne***ver***, so **help** you **mer**cy,…

At**tends** the **boi**st’rous **ru(i)n**. Ne***ver*** a**lone**…

Words **with**out **thoughts** ne***ver*** to **heav**en **go.**…

To **the** un**sat**is**fied**. ——Ne***ver*** be**lieve** it.…

Which **are** not **ster**ling.// Ten***der*** your**self** more **dear**ly… Would **gam**bol **from**. Moth***er***, for **love** of **grace**,…

As **you** are **friends**, schol***ars***, and **sol**diers,…

How **now**? What **news**? ——Let***ters*** my **lord** from **Ham**let.…

It **is** our **trick**; na***ture*** her **cus**tom **holds**,…

Be **thy** in**tents** wick***ed*** or **cha**ri**tab**le,…

To **their** lord’s **mur**der.// Roast***ed*** in **wrath** and **fire**,… With**out**, my **lord**, guard***ed***, to **know** your **pleas**ure.…

Why **thy** ca**non**ized **bones**, hears***èd*** in **death**,…

And **to** the **last** bend***èd*** their **light** on **me.**…

Let **me** not **think** on’t// —Frail***ty***, thy **name** is **wom**an—…

Then **Ham**let **does** it **not**, Ham***let*** de**nies** it.…

Stay, **give** me **drink**. Ham***let*** this **pearl** is **thine**.…

As **of** a **man** faith***ful*** and **hon**o**rab**le…

Her **fath**er **and** my**self**, law***ful*** e**spi**als,…

Now **is** he **to**tal **gules**, hor***rid***ly **tricked**…

O**phe**lia, **walk** you **here**. —Gra***cious***, so **please** you,… The **har**lot’s **cheek**, beau***tied*** with **plast**’ring **art**,…

No **trav**el**ler** re**turns**, puz***zles*** the **will**,…

An**tiq**ui**ty** for**got**, cus***tom*** not **known**—…

Such mismatches rarely occur twice in a full line.

Marr***y***, well **said**, ver***y*** well **said**.// **Look** you, **sir**,

Stress/accent mismatches are rare in other positions within the line; this is the only one in *Hamlet*:

Pale **as** his **shirt**, his **knees** knock***ing*** each **oth**er,…

There are many more stress/accent mismatches that differ from the above in that they involve monosyllabic words like *the* in this example: Is **sick**lied **o’er** with **the** pale **cast** of **thought**,…

Monosyllabic mismatches are not marked with any typographical device in this edition.

All of the above mismatches constitute a regular feature of Shakespearean metrics discussed in more detail in the following section on the Secondary Accent Rule.

Some apparent mismatches are due to short grammatical words that may occur without any stress at all,such as *upon, above, under, before, over, against, without:*

And **with** his **head** o**ver** his **should**er **turned**

O**ver** the **nas**ty **sty**!*…*

Good **Ger**trude, **set** some **watch** o**ver** your **son**.*…* Af**ter** the **Da**nish **sword**, and **thy** free **awe***…* Un**der** the **which** he **shall** not **choose** but **fall**;…

Un**der** the **moon**, can **save** the **thing** from **death**…

That **it** be **proof** and **bul**wark **a**gainst **sense**.…

Words **with**out **thoughts** ne***ver*** to **heav**en **go.**…

Eyes **with**out **feel**ing, **feel**ing **with**out **sight**,…

Ears **with**out **hands** or **eyes**, smell***ing*** sans **all**,…

Other apparent mismatches may be simply the result of a regular shift in stress to the first syllable of a modifying word or phrase when the following word begins with a stressed syllable, as in Long **Is**land *vs.* **Long** Island **Sound**, or six**teen** *vs.* **six**teen **years**. Thus *profound:*

There’s **mat**ter **in** these **sighs**, these **pro**found **heaves**.…

An apparent stress/accent mismatch may be due to the fact that Shakespeare’s English simply differs from modern English with respect to the position of stress. Some stress variants in *Hamlet* reflect the difference between today’s British and American English, such as *cómbat* or *combát* vs. *combát*, or *transláte* vs. *tránslate*, resp.; likewise: *díscóurse* vs. *díscourse*. Other variants are characteristic of Elizabethan English or simply occur in Shakespeare’s works: *cómmendable*, *perséver, canónize,* *cómpléte, cómpáct, cónfíne, chárácter, cómráde, sécúre, révénue, ábsúrd, óbscúre, óutfáce.* These apparent stress/accent mismatches are explained in footnotes.

The interplay of beats and accents and stresses is illustrated in the following passage from *Macbeth* Act I Scene . The boldface accents are mine, but the underlined beats are based on a transcription by Helge Kökeritz in his *Shakespeare’s Pronunciation* (whose interpretation of some lines I mildly disagree with):

If **it** were **done** when **’tis** done, **then** ’twere **well**

It **were** done **quick**ly. **If** th’as**sas**si**na**tion

Could **tram**mel **up** the **con**se**quence**, and **catch**

With **his** sur**cease** suc**cess**, that **but** this **blow**

Might **be** the **be**-all **and** the **end**-all **here**,

But **here** u**pon** this **bank** and **shoal** of **time**,

We’d **jump** the **life** to **come**. But **in** these **ca**ses

We **still** have **judg**ment **here**, that **we** but **teach**

Blood***y*** in**struc**tions, **which**, being **taught**, re**turn**

To **plague** th’in**ven**tor.// This **ev**en-**hand**ed **just**ice Com**mends** th’in**gre**dience **of** our **poi**soned **chal**ice To **our** own **lips**. He’s **here** in **doub**le **trust**:

First, **as** I **am** his **kins**man **and** his **sub**ject,

Strong **both** a**gainst** the **deed**; then, **as** his **host**,

Who **should** a**gainst** his **murd**(e)rer **shut** the **door**,

Not **bear** the **knife** my**self**. Be**sides**, this **Dun**can

Hath **borne** his **fac**ul**ties** so **meek**, hath **been**

So **clear** in **his** great **off**ice, **that** his **vir**tues

Will **plead** like **ang**els, **trump**et-**tongued**, a**gainst**

The **deep** dam**na**tion **of** his **tak**ing-**off**;

And **pit**y, **like** a **na**ked **new**-born **babe**,

Strid***ing*** the **blast**, or **heav**en’s **cher**(u)bins, **horsed**

U**pon** the **sight**less **cour**iers **of** the **air**,

Shall **blow** the **hor**rid **deed** in **ev**ery **eye**,

That **tears** shall **drown** the **wind**. I **have** no **spur**

To **prick** the **sides** of **my** in**tent**, but **on**ly

Vault***ing*** am**bi**tion, **which** o’er**leaps** it**self**

And **falls** on **th’oth**er—

## The Secondary Accent Rule: Half-lines

A *half-line* normally contains either two or three accents (one or four exceptionally). There are two parts to the Secondary Accent Rule:

1. *A full line consists of two half-lines.*

The invocation of this rule accounts for certain apparent violations of the Primary Accent Rule, *e.g.* the number of accents in two half-lines of three accents each yields six accents rather than the five allowed by the Primary Accent Rule.

I **had** not **quot**ed **him**.// I **feared** he **did** but **tri**fle…

1. *The first accent slot in a half-line may be occupied by an unstressed syllable, including an unstressed syllable of a polysyllabic word.*

This rule takes into account the stress/accent mismatches discussed in the preceding section; as stated there, the invocation of this rule in this edition is marked by boldfaced italics only in the case of polysyllabic words.

Mad***ness*** in **great** ones **must** not **un**watched **go.**…

To **give** them **seals** ne***ver*** my **soul** con**sent**.…

Such mismatches are not violations of a rule of metrics, but a regular feature of Shakespeare’s verse.

In the *broad sense*, most full lines can be said to consist of two halflines; the point at which the two half-lines meet, the mid-line break, is traditionally called the *caesura*.

The term *half-line* can also be used in a *narrow sense* to refer to lines of printed verse that do not conform to the Primary Accent Rule. The remainder of this section will use the term in this narrow sense.

Many half-lines come in pairs. There are two kinds of paired halflines: shared half-lines and joined half-lines. Two *shared* half-lines are spoken by two different speakers and appear in two lines of print, *e.g.*

*Marcellus* Who **is’t** that **can** in**form** me?

*Horatio* **That** can **I.**

Two *joined* half-lines are spoken by one speaker and appear in one line of print, *e.g.*

And **by** op**pos**ing **end** them.// To **die,** to **sleep**—

## Shared half-lines

Shared half-lines usually mesh together so as to be in accord with the Primary Accent Rule, as in the above example, but they often total fewer or more than the standard number of accents, or have contiguous accented or unaccented syllables at their juncture. No one considers such cases to be unmetrical, *e.g.* the following interchange with six accents: *Laertes* Fare**well**, O**phe**lia, **and** re**mem**ber **well** What **I** have **said** to **you**.

*Ophelia*  ’Tis **in** my **mem**(o)ry **locked**,

## Joined half-lines

Unlike shared half-lines, joined half-lines often elicit editorial comment, because at least some of them can be viewed as violations of the Primary Accent Rule or whatever set of rules a particular editor espouses. This edition makes no judgement on whether certain types of shared halflines are “unmetrical” or not, but simply marks them all with a double slash and lists them all here in the *Introduction*. The reader may interpret the double slash as marking the solution to a metrical problem (*i.e.* the invocation of the Secondary Accent Rule) or as marking simply the existence of a metrical irregularity.

The most common type of joined half-lines has five accents in accordance with the primary rule, but has contiguous unaccented syllables at the juncture of the two half-lines, contrary to the primary rule, *e.g.* Come **for** the **third**, La**er**tes.// You **do** but **dall**y.… The mid-line metrical break coincides with a major syntactical break, often marked with a period or semi-colon. No one considers such lines to be unmetrical.

Below is a complete listing of all the occurrences of the double slash in *Hamlet* classified by the type of violation of the Primary Accent Rule. The classification is not airtight, because there is often more than one answer to a metrical question, *e.g.* whether this line has five or six accents:

Had **he** been **van**quisher;// as, **by** the **same** co**mart**…

Had **he** been **van**quish**er**;// as, **by** the **same** co**mart**…

*Five accents; contiguous unaccented syllables across the mid-line break:*

How **now**, Ho**ra**tio?// You **trem**ble **and** look **pale**.*…*

Dared **to** the **com**bat;// in **which** our **val**iant **Ham**let*…*

Had **he** been **van**quisher;// as, **by** the **same** co**mart**…

With **a** bare **bod**kin?// Who **would** these **fard**els **bear**,

His **fell** to **Ham**let.// Now, **sir**, young **For**tin**bras**,*…*

Pos**sess** it **mere**ly.// That **it** should **come** to **this**…

Must **I** re**mem**ber?// Why, **she** would **hang** on **him**…

By **what** it **fed** on;// and **yet** with**in** a **month**—…

Let **me** not **think** on’t// —Frail***ty***, thy **name** is **wom**an—…

My **fath**er’s **broth**er// —but **no** more **like** my **fath**er…

Thrift, **thrift**, Ho**ra**tio.// The **fu**ne**ral** baked **meats**…

Been **thus** en**count**ered:// a **fig**ure **like** your **fath**er…

Yet **here**, La**er**tes?// A**board**, a**board** for **shame**.…

Which **are** not **ster**ling.// Ten***der*** your**self** more **dear**ly… And **much** of**fence** too.// Touch***ing*** this **vis**ion **here**,…

As ‘**Well**, we **know**’, or// ‘We **could** and **if** we **would**’,…

That’s **not** my **mean**ing;// but **breathe** his **faults** so **quaint**ly…

To **their** lord’s **mur**der.// Roast***ed*** in **wrath** and **fire**,… Doth **rend** the **re**gion;// so **aft**er **Pyr**rhus’ **pause**…

Of **Ham**let’s **wild**ness;// so **shall** I **hope** your **vir**tues…

The **fair** O**phe**lia.// Nymph, **in** thy **or**is**ons**…

Was **not** like **mad**ness.// There’s **some**thing **in** his **soul**…

To **feed** and **clothe** thee?// Why **should** the **poor** be **flat**tered?…

The **lives** of **man**y.// The **cess** of **maj**es**ty**…

To **hear** the **proc**ess.// I’ll **warr(a)nt** she’ll **tax** him **home**,…

To **make** them **rank**er.// For**give** me **this** my **vir**tue,…

With **fier**y **quick**ness.// There**fore** pre**pare** thy**self**.…

O**ver** his **king**dom.// You **know** the **ren**dez**vou**s.…

O’er**bears** your **off**icers.// The **rab**ble **call** him **lord**,…

And **think** it **pas**time.// You **short**ly **shall** hear **more**.…

For **her** per**fec**tions.// But **my** re**venge** will **come**.…

If **one** could **match** you.// The **scrim**ers **of** their **na**tion…

If **you** op**posed** them.// Sir, **this** re**port** of **his**…

A **sword** un**ba**ted,// and **in** a **pass** of **prac**tice…

With **this** con**ta**gion,// that **if** I **gall** him **slight**ly,…

So **fast** they **foll**ow.// Your **sis**ter’s **drowned**, La**er**tes.… Un**to** that **el**ement.// But **long** it **could** not **be**…

Till **the** last **trump**et:// for **char**i**tab**le **prayers**…

So **much** for **this**, sir.// Now **shall** you **see** the **oth**er.… That **hurts** by **eas**ing.// But **to** the **quick** of **th’ul**cer:…

To **tell** my **sto**ry.// What **war**like **noise** is **this**?… To **do** ob**se**quious **sor**row.// But **to** per**sev**er… I\_(a)m **ver**y **glad** to **see** you.// Good **ev**en, **sir**,…

I **made** to **her** in **mar**riage,// and **to** de**cline**…

And **by** op**pos**ing **end** them.// To **die,** to **sleep**—…

Else **could** you **not** have **mo**tion;// but **sure** that **sense**…

And **makes** as **health**ful **mu**sic.// It **is** not **mad**ness… The **hear**ers **to** col**lec**tion.// They **aim** at **it**,…

Con**vert** his **gyves** to **grac**es;// so **that** my **arr**ows,…

Come **for** the **third**, La**er**tes.// You **do** but **dall**y.…

Un**ba**ted **and** en**ven**omed.// The **fou**~l **prac**tice…

To **our** most **val**iant **broth**er.// So **much** for **him**.…

*Five accents; contiguous unaccented syllables on one side of the mid-line break:* Of **im**pious **stub**bornness,// ’**tis** un**man**ly **grief**,…

Would **make** them **ca**pable.// —**Do** not **look** u**pon** me,…

*Five accents; contiguous accented syllables at the mid-line break:*

Thence **to** a **watch**,// **thence** in**to** a **weak**ness,*…*

Tru***ly*** to **speak**,// **and** with **no** ad**dit**ion,*…*

To **hide** the **slain**?// **O**, from **this** time **forth***…*

*Six accents; three accents in each half-line:*

Why, **what** an **ass** am **I**!// Ay **sure**, this **is** most **brave**,

Did **slay** this **For**tin**bras**,// who **by** a **sealed** com**pact**…

The **mem**o**ry** be **green**,// and **that** it **us** be**fit**ted…

That **fath**er **lost**, lost **his**//—and **the** sur**vi**vor **bound**… He **whips** his **ra**pier **out**,// and **cries** ‘A **rat**, a **rat!**’,

Are **burnt** and **purged** a**way**.// But **that** I **am** for**bid**…

And **shall** I **coup**le **hell**?// O **fie**! Hold, **hold**, my **heart**,…

A **worth**y **pi**o**neer**!// Once **more** re**move**, good **friends**.…

God **will**ing, **shall** not **lack**.// Let **us** go **in** to**geth**er.…

I **had** not **quot**ed **him**.// I **feared** he **did** but **tri**fle…

Of **your** dear **fath**er’s **death**,// is’t **writ** in **your** re**venge**…

Con**ta**gion **to** this **world**.// Now **could** I **drink** hot **blood**,…

For **good** Po**lo**nius’ **death**//—and **we** have **done** but **green**ly…

To **quit** him **with** this **arm**?// And **is’t** not **to** be **damned**…

I **hum**bly **thank** you **sir**.// —Dost **know** this **wat**er**fly**?… The **point** en**ven**omed **too**!// Then, **ven**om, **to** thy **work**! Hy**per**ion **to** a **sat**yr,// so **lov**ing **to** my **moth**er

Or ‘**If** we **list** to **speak**’, or// ‘There **be** and **if** they **might**’,*…*

**O** my **lord**, my **lord**,//I **have** been **so** af**fright**ed.*…*

A **doc**u**ment** in **mad**ness:// thoughts **and** re**mem**brance **fit**ted.*…*

Ah **ha**, boy, **say’st** thou **so?**// **Art** thou **there**, true**pen**ny?*…*

What f**or**ge**ries** you **please**—// **marr**y, **none** so **rank**…

Are **of** a **most** se**lect**// and **gen**(e)rous **chief** in **that**.…

*Six accents; four accents in a half-line:*

Mark **you**, your **par**ty **in** con**verse**,// him **you** would **sound**,…

In **hug**ger-**mug**ger **to** in**ter** him;// **poor** O**phe**lia…

Marr***y***, well **said**, ver***y*** well **said**.// **Look** you, **sir**,…

What’s **near** it **with** it.// **Or** it **is** a **mass**y **wheel**…

Stewed **in** cor**rup**tion,// **hon**ey**ing** and **mak**ing **love**…

Or **then**, or **then**,// with **such** or **such**, ‘and **as** you **say**,…

**Ver**y **like**, **ver**y **like**.// **Stayed** it **long**?…

*Six accents; five accents in a half-line:*

The **ver**y **fac**ul**ties** of **eyes** and **ears**.// Yet **I,**… *Four accents:*

**Stay**, speak, **speak**,// I **charge** thee **speak**.…

**Nay**, I **know** not.// Is **it** the **King**?…

Lends **the** tongue **vows**.// These **bla**zes, **daught**er,…

As **you** are **friends**,// schol***ars***, and **sol**diers,

A**bout**, my **brain**.// Hum—**I** have **heard**…

To **speak** of **horr**ors,// he **comes** be**fore** me.… As **he** would **draw** it.// Long **stayed** he **so.**…

A **broth**er’s **mur**der.// Pray **can** I **not**,…

The **drink**, the **drink**!// **I** am **poi**soned.…

Look **to’t**, I **charge** you.// **Come** your **ways**.…

Hil**lo**, ho, **ho**, boy.// **Come**, bird, **come**.…

My **fath**er//—me**thinks** I **see** my **fath**er—…

In**deed**,// u**pon** my **sword**, in**deed**.… **Drab**bing//—**you** may **go** so **far**.…

A **scull**ion! **fie** u**pon’t**!// **Foh**!…

Your **loves**, as **mine** to **you**.// Fare**well**.…

**Ver**y **like**.// **Stayed** it **long**?… *Aberrant cases:*

Most **wel**come **home**. ——This **busi**ness **is** very// well **end**ed.

## The Resonant Rule: ambiguous syllabicity

In certain circumstances, words containing an unstressed vowel before a resonant consonant (/r l n m y w/) can be read two ways. For example, the word *general* can be pronounced with three syllables (as it is spelled), or with two syllables (sometimes spelt *gen’ral*). When the meter requires three, we will print it as **ge**ne**ral**; when the meter requires two, we will print it as **gen**(e)ral, using parentheses rather than apostrophes to mark the dropped vowel, as all apostrophes in this book are the property of Shakespeare and his editors.

When **I** to **sulph**’rous **and** tor**men**ting **flames**…

Like **to** a **mur**d’ring-**piece**, in **man**y **plac**es… Thus, *warrant* is to be pronounced with one rather than two syllables whether printed with an apostrophe or with parentheses: Per**chance** ’twill **walk** a**gain**. ——I **war’nt** it **will**.… I’ll **warr(a)nt** you, **fear** me **not**.

Dropping an unstressed vowel is often called *syncopation*; sometimes it is called *slurring*, particularly by people who don’t approve.

Syncopation before resonants may cross the word boundary, so that the resonant is pronounced as part of the neighboring word, e.g. In **his** true **nat**(u)re,\_and **we** our**selves** com**pelled**…

His **can**on ’**gainst** self-**slaugh**t(e)r.\_O **God**! O **God**!…

Grap***ple\_(the)m*** un**to** thy **soul** with **hoops** of **steel**,…

In**to** the **chap**(e)l.\_I **pray** you **haste** in **this**.…

**To** have **proved** most **roy**(a)l;\_and **for** his **pass**age,…

’Tis **sweet** and **com**m(en)dab**le\_in** your **na**ture, **Ham**let,…

Let **it** be **ten**a**ble\_in** your **si**lence **still**;…

As **one** in**ca**pab**le\_of** her **own** di**stress**,…

Ob**serve** my **unc**le.\_If **his** oc**cult**ed **guilt**…

U**pon** the **plat**form ’**twixt** e**lev**(e)n\_and **twelve**…

’Faith **no**, as **you** may **seas**(o)n\_it **in** the **charge**,…

Fie **on’t**, O **fie**, fie! ’**tis** (a)n**\_**un**weed**ed **gard**en…

With **most** mi**rac**(u)lous **org(**a)n.\_I’ll **have** these **play**ers…

The **French**man **gave** you; **bring** you,\_(i)n **fine**, to**geth**er,…

Foll(o)**w\_(h)im** at **foot**. Tempt **him** with **speed** a**board**.…

Fell **in**to\_a **sad**ness, **then** in**to** a **fast**,…

What, **have** you **gi(ve)n** him **an**y\_(h)ard **words** of **late**?… How **does** your **hon**or **for** this **man**y\_a **day**?…

And **in** his **grave** rained **man**y\_a **tear**

My **vir**tue **or** my **plague**, be\_(i)t **ei**ther **which**,…

Marr**y,**\_**I** will **teach** you. **Think** your**self** a **ba**by…

Syncopation may occur in disyllabic words. Compare *coward* with two syllables and with one:

Thus **con**science **does** make **cow**ards **of** us **all**,…

And **ev**er **three** parts **cow(a)rd**—I **do** not **know**… The word *power* occurs more often syncopated than not:

No **fair**y **takes**, nor **witch** hath **pow(e)r** to **charm**,…

My **op**(e)rant **pow(e)rs** their **funct**ions **leave** to **do**;… As **my** great **pow(e)r** there**of** may **give** thee **sense**,…

Good **sir**, whose **pow(e)rs** are **these**?…

But syncopation is more usual in a sequence of stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables. Here is the list of syncopated words in *Hamlet*; it is exhaustive, aside from a very few problematic cases that will be found in footnotes:

**Before /r/:**

Compare *generous* with three and two syllables, *resp.*:

Most **gen**er**ous**, and **free** from **all** con**triv**ing,…

Are **of** a **most** se**lect** and **gen**(e)rous **chief** in **that**.…

Free **me** so **far** in **your** most **gen**(e)rous **thoughts**… Other examples of syncopation before /r/:

Shall **in** the **gen**(e)ral **cen**sure **take** cor**rup**tion…

In **gen**(e)ral **syn**od **take** a**way** her **pow**er,…

And **cleave** the **gen**(e)ral **ear** with **hor**rid **speech**,…

Did **the** King **sigh**, but **with** a **gen**(e)ral **groan**.…

Is **the** great **love** the **gen**(e)ral **gen**der **bear** him,**…**

The **heart**-ache **and** the **thou**sand **nat**(u)ral **shocks**…

Thy **nat**(u)ral **mag**ic **and** dire **prop**er**ty**…

And **with** th’in**corp**(o)ral **air** do **hold** dis**course**?…

With **mirth** in **fun**(e)ral **and** with **dirge** in **mar**riage,**…**

That **lib**(e)ral **shep**herds **give** a **gross**er **name**,…

If **by** di**rect** or **by** col**lat**(e)ral **hand**…

Lard***ed*** with **man**y **sev**(e)ral **sorts** of **rea**sons…

He **wax**es **desp**(e)rate **with** i**mag**i**na**tion.…

A **sis**ter **driv**en **in**to **des**p’rate **terms**,…

And **leads** the **will** to **desp**(e)rate **un**der**tak**ings…

The **corse** they **foll**ow **did** with **desp**(e)rate **hand**… De**lib**(e)rate **pause**. Dis**eas**es **desp**(e)rate **grown**… While **one** with **mod**(e)rate **haste** might **tell** a **hun**dred.…

Ay, **that** in**cest**uous, **that** a**dult**(e)rate **beast**,…

My **pulse** as **yours** doth **temp**(e)rate**ly** keep **time**,…

Con**fed**(e)rate **sea**son, **else** no **crea**ture **see**ing,…

The **great** man **down**, you **mark** his **fav**(o)rite **flies**;…

With **tur**bu**lent** and **dang**(e)rous **lu**na**cy**?…

How **dang**(e)rous **is** it **that** this **man** goes **loose**!…

Dang(e)***rous*** con**jec**tures **in** ill-**breed**ing **minds**.… ’Tis **dang**(e)rous **when** the **ba**ser **na**ture **comes**…

It **will** but **skin** and **film** the **ulc**(e)rous **place**,…

With **witch**craft **of** his **wit**, with **trait**(o)rous **gifts**—…

The **treach**(e)rous **in**stru**ment** is **in** thy **hand**,…

Re**morse**less, **treach**(e)rous, **lech**(e)rous, **kind**less **vill**ain!…

Here, **thou** in**cest**uous, **murd**(e)rous, **damn**èd **Dane**,…

At**tends** the **boist**(e)rous **ru(i)n**. Ne***ver*** a**lone**…

Doth **make** the **night** joint-**lab**(o)rer **with** the **day**,**…**

No **more**, sweet **Ham**let. ——A **murd**(e)rer **and** a **vill**ain,…

In **his** true **nat**(u)re,\_and **we** our**selves** com**pelled**…

**Treach**(e)ry! **Seek** it **out**.…

And **mar**shal **me** to **knav**(e)ry. **Let** it **work**:…

O **roy**al **knav**(e)ry!—**an** ex**act** com**mand**,…

But **sure** the **brav**(e)ry **of** his **grief** did **put** me…

The **light** and **care**less **liv**(e)ry **that** it **wears**…

And **terms** com**puls**at(o)**ry** those **fore**said **lands**…

’Tis **in** my **mem**(o)ry **locked**,…

I **have** some **rights** of **mem**(o)ry **in** this **king**dom,…

Why, **this** is **hire** and **sal**(a)ry, **not** re**venge**.…

Keeps **wass**ail, **and** the **swagg**(e)ring **up**spring **reels**;…

As **one**, in **suff**(e)ring **all**, that **suff**ers **noth**ing,…

Lay **not** that **flatt**(e)ring **unc**tion **to** your **soul**,…

And, **like** the **kind** life-**rend**(e)ring **pel**i**can**…

A **min(i)st**(e)ring **an**gel **shall** my **sis**ter **be**…

Con**jures** the **wand**(e)ring **stars** and **makes** them **stand**…

The **har**lot’s **cheek**, beau***tied*** with **plast**’ring **art**,…

Which **might** de**prive** your **sov**(e)reign**ty** of **rea**son… Might, **by** the **sov**(e)reign **pow(e)r** you **have** of **us**,… Now **see** that **no**ble **and** most **sov**(e)reign **rea**son… Our **sov**(e)reign **pro**cess, **which** im**ports** at **full**,…

Of **rev**(e)rend **Pri**am, **seemed** i’**th’air** to **stick**;…

Con**found** the **ig**n(o)rant, **and** a**maze** in**deed**…

I’ll **be** your **foil**, La**er**tes. **In** mine **ig**n(o)rance…

My **op**(e)rant **pow(e)rs** their **funct**ions **leave** to **do**;… Of **all** their **conf**(e)rence. **If** she **find** him **not**,…

To **serve** in **such** a **diff**(e)rence. **What** de(vi)l **was’t**…

For **it** is **as** the **air**, in**vuln**(e)ra**ble**,…

His **can**on ’**gainst** self-**slaugh**t(e)r.\_O **God**! O **God**!…

And **ev**er **three** parts **cow(a)rd**—I **do** not **know**…

The **ra**ti**fi(e)rs** and **props** of **ev**ery **word**—…

Of **crow**-flow(e)rs, **net**tles, **dai**sies, **and** long **pur**ples,…

**Before /l/:**

Compare *particular* with four and three syllables, *resp*.: Why **seems** itso par**tic**u**lar** with **thee**?… Than **your** par**ti**cu**lar** de**mands** will **touch** it.…

In **what** par**tic**(u)lar **thought** to **work** I **know** not,…

As **he** in **his** par**tic**(u)lar **sect** and **force**…

So, **oft** it **chanc**es **in** par**tic**(u)lar **men**… From **that** par**tic**(u)lar **fault**. The **dram** of **e**vil…

And **each** par**tic**(u)lar **hair** to **stand** an **end**… Other examples of syncopation before /l/:

Whose **vi**(o)lent **prop**er**ty** for**does** it**self**…

Of **vi**(o)lent **birth** but **poor** va**lid**i**ty**,…

Next, **your** son **gone**, and **he** most **vi**(o)lent **au**thor…

As **make** your **bouts** more **vi(**o)lent **to** that **end**—…

A **vi**(o)let **in** the **youth** of **pri**my **na**ture,…

May **vi**(o)lets **spring**. I **tell** thee, **chur**lish **priest**,…

With **pest**(i)lent **speech**es **of** his **fath**er’s **death**,…

There**to** pricked **on** by **a** most **em**(u)late **pride**,…

And **thus** o’er**siz**èd **with** co**ag**(u)late **gore**,…

Th’op**press**or’s **wrong**, the **proud** man’s **con**tum(e)**ly**,…

With **most** mi**rac**(u)lous **org**(a)n.\_I’ll **have** these **play**ers…

Un**sift**ed **in** such **per**(i)lous **cir**cum**stance**,…

You **shall** do **marv**(e)llous **wise**ly, **good** Rey**nal**do,…

In**to** the **chap**(e)l.\_I **pray** you **haste** in **this**.…

**To** have **proved** most **roy**(a)l;\_and **for** his **pass**age,…

’Tis **sweet** and **comm**(en)dab**le\_in** your **na**ture, **Ham**let,…

/kám(in)dab(i)lín/

Let **it** be **ten**a**ble\_in** your **si**lence **still**;…

/ténib(i)lin/

Ob**serve** my **unc**l(e).\_If **his** oc**cult**ed **guilt**…

/ûnk(i)lif/

Grap***ple\_(the)m*** un**to** thy **soul** with **hoops** of **steel**,…

/græp(i)lim/

As **one** in**ca**pab**le\_of** her **own** di**stress**,…

/inkéypib(i)lûv/

**Before /n/:**

Syncopation in the ending *-ing* /ing/ is a special case: it presupposes the colloquial substitution of /n/ for /ng/, commonly known as ‘dropping your g’s’ and often spelled with an apostrophe in modern printing (*lyin’* for *lying*). This substitution is necessary because a phonologically aberrant form would result from the simple deletion of the unstressed vowel in *lying* /láying/ (/láyng/!), as diphthongs do not occur before /ng/ in English words. Thus:

/láying/ > /láyin/ > /láyn/ (homophonous with *line*) as in this example from *Cymbeline*:

Thus **in** a **chap**el **lying**. Come **off**, come **off**;

/láyn/ Similarly, in this play:

That **you**, at **such** time **seeing** me, **nev**er **shall**,…

/síyn/

We’ll **so** be**stow** our**selves** that, **seeing** un**seen**,…

/síyn/

That **on** the **view** and **knowing** of **these** con**tents**,…

/nówn/

Compare *being* with two syllables and with one:

Or **par**doned **be**ing **down**? Then **I’ll** look **up.**…

/bíying/

We **do** it **wrong**, being **so** ma**jes**ti**cal**,…

/bíyn/

Instances of syncopation in *being* are numerous in the plays and commonplace in spoken English, and so are not footnoted in the text:

Of **en**trance **to** a **quar**rel, **but** being **in**,…

Being **Na**ture’s **liv**e**ry** or **For**tune’s **star**,…

And **end** his **being**. That **done**, he **lets** me **go**,…

This **must** be **known**, which, **being** kept **close**, might **move**…

That, **being** of **so** young **days** brought **up** with **him**,…

And **wa**ger **o’er** your **heads**. He, **being** re**miss**,…

Being **thus** be**nett**ed **round** with **vill**ai**nies**—… Other examples of syncopation before /n/:

A **count**(e)nance **more** in **sorr**ow **than** in **ang**er.…

And **hath** gi(ve)n **count**(e)nance **to** his **speech**, my **lord**…

Both **count**(e)nance **and** ex**cuse**. Ho, **Guild**en**stern**!…

To **hear** the **proc**ess.// I’ll **warr(a)nt** she’ll **tax** him **home**,…

I’ll **warr(a)nt** you, **fear** me **not**.…

Fall(e)n **on** th’in**ven**tors’ **heads**. All **this** can **I**…

And **be** not **from** his **rea**son **fall(e)n** there**on**,…

The **graves** stood **ten(a)nt**less **and** the **sheet**ed **dead**…

Giv***ing*** to **you** no **fur**ther **pers**(o)nal **pow**er…

So **crim**(i)nal **and** so **cap**i**tal** in **na**ture,…

’Tis **sweet** and **comm**(en)dab**le\_in** your **na**ture, **Ham**let,…

U**pon** the **plat**form ’**twixt** e**lev**(e)n\_and **twelve**…

’Faith **no**, as **you** may **seas**(o)n\_it **in** the **charge**,…

Hav***ing*** e(v)er **seen** in **the** pre**nom**(i)nate **crimes**…

When **he** lay **couch**èd **in** the **om**(i)nous **horse**,…

That **lend** a **tyr**(a)nnous **and** a **dam**nèd **light**…

Takes **pris**(o)ner **Pyr**rhus’ **ear**. For **lo**, his **sword**,…

Run **bare**foot **up** and **down**, threat(e)***ning*** the **flames**…

The **imm**(i)nent **death** of **twen**ty **thou**sand **men**…

And **with** such **coz**(e)nage—**is’t** not **per**fect **con**science…

The **French**man **gave** you; **bring** you,\_(i)n **fine**, to**geth**er,… With **most** mi**rac**(u)lous **org**(a)n.\_I’ll **have** these **play**ers…

Fie **on’t**, O **fie**, fie! ’**tis** (a)n**\_**un**weed**ed **gard**en

**Before /m/:**

No example in *Hamlet*; this is from *Cymbeline*:

With **sands** that **will** not **bear** your **en**(e)mies’ **boats**,…

**Before /w/:**

Nei***ther*** a **borr**(o)wer **nor** a **lend**er **be**,…

And **borr**(o)wing **dulls** the **edge** of **hus**ban**dry**.…

Foll(o)**w\_(h)im** at **foot**. Tempt **him** with **speed** a**board**.…

With **such** dex**ter**i**ty** t(o)\_in**cest**uous **sheets**!… /twinsésty(u)wis/

Ay, **that** in**cest**uous, **that** a**dult**(e)rate **beast**,…

/insésty(u)wis/

Or **in** th’in**ces**tuous **pleas**ure **of** his **bed**,…

/*th*insésty(u)wis/

Here, **thou** in**cest**uous, **murd**(e)rous, **damn**èd **Dane**,…

/insésty(u)wis/

The **will** of **my** most **seem**ing-**vir**tuous **queen**.…

/vûrty(u)wis/

Gives **me** su**per**fluous **death**.…

/supûrfl(u)wis/

Or **such** am**big**uous **giv**ing **out**, to **note**…

/æmbígy(u)wis/

Eats **not** the **flats** with **more** im**pet**uous **haste**…

/impéty(u)wis/

U**pon** whose **in**fluence **Nep**tune’s **em**pire **stands**,…

/ínfl(u)wins/

And **gins** to **pale** his **un**ef**fec**tual **fire**.…

/anafékty(u)wil/

But, **sir**, such **wan**ton, **wild**, and **u**sual **slips**…

/yúzh(u)wil/

Gives **him** three **thou**sand **crowns** in **an**nual **fee**…

/æny(u)wil/ U**nite** com**mu**tual **in** most **sa**cred **bands**.

/kamyúty(u)wil/

Of **ac**ci**dent**al **judg**ments, **cas**ual **slaught**ers,…

/kæzy(u)wil/

Fell **in**to\_a **sad**ness, **then** in**to** a **fast**,…

/ínt(u)wasædnis/

**Before /y/**

The difference between a syncopated and non-syncopated sequence with /y/ is sometimes recognized in modern dictionaries; the *American Heritage* dictionary recognizes both /réypiyir/ and /réypyir/ for *rapier*, which occurs in its disyllabic form in *Hamlet*:

Whips **out** his **ra**pier, **cries** ‘A **rat**, a **rat!**’,

The OED recognizes both the syncopated and non-syncopated forms of *familiar* (/famílyir/ and /famíliyir/), while the *American Heritage Dictionary* recognizes only the syncopated form, as in this example from *Henry V*:

Fa**mil**iar **in** his **mouth** as **house**hold **words**,…

British and American English, as reflected in the OED and AHD,

differ as to the degree of assimilation of /ty/ to /ch/, as in *celestial*; this exampleillustrates syncopation before /y/, but the meter tells us nothing about the pronunciation of the resulting /ty/ (/siléstyil/ *vs.* /siléschil/):

Will **sate** it**self** in **a** ce**lest**ial **bed**

/silést(i)yil/

Further examples from *Hamlet:*

So **lust**, though **to** a **ra**diant **an**gel **linked**,…

/réyd(i)yint/

Who **in** her **du**ty **and** o**be**dience, **mark**,…

/obíyd(i)yins/

This **in** o**be**dience **hath** my **daught**er **shown** me,…

/obíyd(i)yins/

’Tis **meet** that **some** more **au**dience **than** a **moth**er,…

/ód(i)yins/

That **are** but **mutes** or **au**dience **to** this **act**,…

/ód(i)yins/

Have **of** your **au**dience **been** most **free** and **boun**teous.…

/ód(i)yins/

Him**self** the **prim**rose **path** of **dall**iance **treads**,…

/dæl(i)yins/

But **in** bat**tal**ions. **First**, her **fath**er **slain**;…

/batæl(i)yinz/

Hy**per**ion **to** a **sat**yr,// so **lov**ing **to** my **moth**er…

/haypír(i)yin/

Hyp**er**ion’s **curls**, the **front** of **Jove** him**self**,…

/haypír(i)yinz/

Bes***tial*** o**bliv**ion, **or** some **cra**ven **scru**ple…

/ablív(i)yin/

As h**ard**y **as** the **Ne**mean **li**on’s **nerve**.…

/níym(i)yin/

T’o’er**top** old **Pe**lion **or** the **sky**ish **head**…

/píyl(i)yin/

To **sing** sage **req**uiem **and** such **rest** to **her**…

/rékw(i)yim/

Carry***ing***, I **say**, the **stamp** of **one** de**fect**,…

/kær(i)ying/

Mak***ing*** night **hid**eous **and** we **fools** of **na**ture…

/híd(i)yis/

Stoops **to** his **base**, and **with** a **hid**eous **crash**…

/híd(i)yis/ He **raised** a **sigh** so **pit**eous **and** pro**found**…

/pít(i)yis/

Lest **with** this **pit**eous **act**ion **you** con**vert**…

/pít(i)yis/

Clamb’***ring*** to **hand**, an **en**vious **sliv**er **broke**,…

/énv(i)yis/

And **what’s** un**time**ly **done**. So **en**vious **slan**der,…

/énv(i)yis/

Pi***ty*** me **not**, but **lend** thy **ser**ious **hear**ing…

/sír(i)yis/

Vir***tue*** it**self** scapes **not** ca**lum**nious **strokes**.…

/kalûmn(i)yis/

The **te**dious **day** with **sleep**. ——Sleep **rock** thy **brain**,…

/tíyd(i)yis/

Where **is** the **beau**teous **Maj**es**ty** of **Den**mark?…

/byúwt(i)yis/

Pulled **the** poor **wretch** from **her** me**lo**dious **lay**…

/milówd(i)yis/ Im**per**ious **Cae**sar, **dead** and **turned** to **clay**,…

/impíyr(i)yis/

Whose **wick**ed **deed** thy **most** in**ge**nious **sense**…

/injíyn(i)yis/

To **do** ob**se**quious **sor**row.// But **to** per**sev**er…

/absíykw(i)yis/

Of **im**pious **stub**bornness,// ’**tis** un**man**ly **grief**,…

/ímp(i)yis/

Ham***let*** in **mad**ness **hath** Po**lo**nius **slain**,

/palówn(i)yis/

Spurns **en**vious**ly** at **straws**, speaks **things** in **doubt**… /énv(i)yisliy/

And **te**dious**ness** the **limbs** and **out**ward **flour**ishes,…

/tíyd(i)yisnis/

A **lit**tle **ere** the **might**iest **Jul**ius **fell**,…

/máyt(i)yist júwl(i)yis/

Of **the** un**worth**iest **siege**. ——What **part** is **that**, my **lord**?…

/anwûr*th*(i)yist/

The **char**iest **maid** is **prod**i**gal** e**nough**…

/chér(i)yist/

Th’ass**oc**iates **tend**, and **ev**ery**thing** is **bent**…

/asóws(i)yits/

A **slave** that **is** not **twen**tieth **part** the **tithe**…

/twént(i)yith/

You **are** the **most** im**med**iate **to** our **throne**,…

/imíyd(i)yit/ On **whole**some **life** u**surp** im**me**diate**ly**.…

/imíyd(i)yitliy/

Th’im**per**ial **joint**ress **to** this **war**like **state**,…

/impír(i)yil/

In **fil**ial **ob**li**ga**tion **for** some **term**…

/fíl(i)yil/

I’ll **wipe** a**way** all **tri**vial **fond** re**cords**,…

/trív(i)yil/

Our **chief**est **court**ier, **cous**in, **and** our **son**.…

/kórt(i)yir/

The **court**ier’s, **sol**dier’s, **scho**lar’s, **eye**, tongue, **sword**,…

/kórt(i)yirz/

Be **thou** fa**mil**iar, **but** by **no** means **vul**gar;…

/famíl(i)yir/

Sith **nor** th’ex**ter**ior **nor** the **in**ward **man**…

/*th*ekstír(i)yir/

And **do’t** the **speed**ier **that** you **may** di**rect** me…

/spíyd(i)yir/

Which **is** the **might**ier. **In** his **law**less **fit**,… /máyt(i)yir/

Whips **out** his **ra**pier, **cries** ‘A **rat**, a **rat!**’,…

/réyp(i)yir/

What, **have** you **gi(ve)n** him **an**y\_(h)ard **words** of **late**?…

/én(i)yard/

Mar**ry,**\_**I** will **teach** you. **Think** your**self** a **ba**by…

/mær(i)yáy/

And **in** his **grave** rained **man**y\_a **tear**…

/mén(i)ya/

How **does** your **hon**or **for** this **man**y\_a **day**?… /mén(i)ya/

In Shakespeare’s English, as in modern English, suffixes ending -tion were monosyllabic. Therefore the loss of the vowel /i/ before /y/ in the older pronunciation /-t(i)yon/ is not footnoted. However, Shakespeare sometimes resorts to this older pronunciation, mostly at the end of the line, to satisfy the Accent Rule, as indicated by the boldface in these lines:

This **pres**ent **ob**ject **made** pro**ba**ti**on**.…

They **have** pro**claimed** their **mal**e**fac**ti**ons**.…

I **have** in **quick** det**er**mi**na**ti**on**…

Similarly with a few other final syllables no longer syllabic, making a total of  instances in this play:

By **their** o’er**growth** of **some** com**plex**i**on**,… And **yet** ’tis **al**most **’gainst** my **con**sci**ence**.…

And **for** your **ra**pier **most** es**pec**i**al**,…

## Variations on and Violations of the Resonant Rule

The Resonant Rule is a statistical matter rather than a hard-and-fast rule. Most often, syncopations take place *before* resonants ( in *Hamlet*). Less often, syncopations take place *after* resonants when a non-resonant follows; such occurrences we will call *variations* on the Resonant Rule ( in *Hamlet*). Least often, syncopation takes place when there is *no resonant* on either side of the dropped vowel; such cases will be noted as *violations* of the Resonant Rule ( in *Hamlet*).

**After /r/:**

But **mere** im**plor**(a)tors **of** un**ho**ly **suits**,…

And **there** as**sume** some **oth**er **horr**(i)ble **form**…

The **or**(i)gin **and** com**mence**ment **of** his **grief**…

Know **you** the **hand**? ——’Tis **Ham**let’s **char**(a)cter. **Na**ked?…

Now **is** he **to**tal **gu**~les, **horr**(i)dly **tricked…**

/gúwilz/

**After /l/:** None in *Hamlet.* Example from *Cymbeline:*

I **fast**, and **prayed** for **their** in**tell**(i)gence—**thus**:…

**After /n/:**

From **the** fair **fore**head **of** an **inn**(o)cent **love**… A **min(i)st**(e)ring **an**gel **shall** my **sis**ter **be**…

**After /m/:** None in *Hamlet.* Example from *Cymbeline:*

May **take** off **some** ex**trem**(i)ty **which** to **read**…

**After /w/:** None in *Hamlet.* Example from *Cymbeline:*

Groan **so** in **per**pe**tu**(i)ty **than** be **cured**…

/pirpityúw(i)tiy/

**After /y/:**

As **check**ing **at** his **voy**(a)ge, and **that** he **means**…

/vóy(i)j/

A**gainst** the **which** a **moi**(e)ty **com**pe**tent**…

/móy(i)tiy/

Where **late** the **di**(a)dem **stood**, and, **for** a **robe**,…

/dáy(i)dem/

That **from** a **shelf** the **prec**ious **di**(a)dem **stole**…

/dáy(i)dem/

Than **young** La**er**tes **in** a **ri**(o)tous **head**

/ráy(i)tis/

My **vir**tue **or** my **plague**, be\_(i)t **ei**ther **which**,…

/bíy(i)t/

Here is the one example in *Hamlet* of syncopation with no resonants on either side of the dropped vowel:

/v\_t/ There**fore**, since **brev**(i)ty **is** the **soul** of **wit**,…

## Vowel insertion: ~

The converse of syncopation is the *insertion* of a vowel rather than the dropping of a vowel. For example, the word *your*, usually pronounced as the monosyllable /yúwr/, may be pronounced as a disyllable by inserting a vowel between the resonants /w/ and /r/, making it sound like the word *ewer*: /yúwir/. The point of insertion is marked with a tilde. Compare the monosyllabic with the disyllabic pronunciation of *hour*, a variation recognized by some dictionaries as American *vs.* British English, *resp.*:

An **hour** of **qui**et **short**ly **shall** we **see**; /áwr/

What **hou**~r **now**? ——I **think** it **lacks** of **twelve**.

/áwir/

Sometimes editors will mark the disyllabic pronunciation of a word like *tired* with the conventional grave accent: *-èd*. This might imply an extra vowel after the resonant /r/ (/táyrid/). However, invocation of syllabic ambiguity, *i.e.* vowel insertion *before* resonant, is more in conformity with Shakespeare’s practice and with modern pronunciation (/táyird/), particularly in British English, where disyllabic pronunciation is the norm, /r/ before consonant being rendered in the OED transcription with the vowel schwa (taǩd).

In certain phonological contexts an exaggerated version of this inserted vowel is a feature of some substandard dialects in modern English, *e.g.* /fílim/ instead of /fílm/ for *film*, or /æginis/ instead of /ægnis/ for *Agnes*. Therefore, the modern performer has to avoid it, either by ignoring the insertion or by lengthening the preceding syllable somewhat, *e.g.* /æægnis/.

Here are all the occurrences of insertion in *Hamlet,* some of them disputed by one editor or another:

In **thee** there **is** not **half** an **hou**~r’s **life**.…

/áwirz/

His **fath**er’s **death** and **ou**~r **hast**y **mar**riage.

/áwir/

You **must** not **take** for **fi~**re. **From** this **time**…

/fáyir/

**It** is **he**~re, **Ham**let. **Thou** art **slain**.…

/híyir/

**Fo**~r**ward**, not **perm**(a)nent, **sweet**, not **last**ing,…

/fówirwûrd/

O **Ham**~l**et**, what **fall**ing **off** was **there**,

/hæmilit/

From **Ham**~l**et**! Who **brought** them?…

/hæmilit/

Now **is** he **to**tal **gu**~les, **horr**(i)dly **tricked**…

/gúwilz/

Un**ba**ted **and** en**ven**omed.// The **fou**~l **prac**tice

/fáwil/

Trisyllabic *business* occurs occasionally in Shakespeare, with an inserted vowel before the resonant /n/ in sound as well as conventional orthography.

An***swer***, and **think** u**pon** this **bus**i**ness**.…

The word *prayer* /prér/ ‘invocation’ (not *prayer* /préyir/ ‘one who prays’) is normally monosyllabic, but has an inserted vowel in these lines:

Let **not** thy **moth**er **lose** her **pray**~ers, **Ham**let. /préirz/

And **what’s** in **pray**~er **but** this **two**fold **force**,

/préir/

## Spelling/speaking discrepancies

There are a number of instances where printed editions of the plays do not consistently reflect the correct number of syllables to be pronounced. Such cases include the past tense ending -*ed*, standard contractions, and certain words.

The *past tense ending* -*ed* is usually pronounced as in modern English, but sometimes Shakespeare takes advantage of an old-fashioned pronunciation by allowing it to be pronounced as a separate syllable. We will follow the usual editorial device of printing such occurrences (about fifty of them in *Hamlet*) with a grave accent:

By **their** op**pressed** and **fear**-sur**pri**sèd **eyes**…

The **time** is **out** of **joint**. O **curs**èd **spite**,…

*Standard contractions* include the familiar ones such as *I’m* for *I am*, e.g.

At **least** I’m **sure** it **may** be **so** in **Den**mark.

When such contractions are required by the meter but are not so printed in the text, they are marked here with parentheses and an underline connecting the words:

I\_(a)m **just**ly **killed** with **mine** own **treach**e**ry**.

Elizabethan contractions differ from modern ones in certain respects.

For example, *in the* is sometimes printed as one word: *i’th’*, e.g.

Not **so**, my **lord**, I **am** too **much** i’th’ **sun**.…

The parentheses and underline are used when the meter requires such a contraction but is not so printed, *e.g.*

That **shows** his **hoar**y **leaves** i(n)\_th(e) **glass**y **stream**.

The vowel of *the* is frequently dropped when the following word begins with a vowel. When this contraction is not indicated by an apostrophe, we indicate it with parentheses and underline; compare:

I **shall** th’ef**fect** of **this** good **less**on **keep**…

But **ne(v)er** th(e)\_of**fence**. To **bear** all **smooth** and **e**ven,…

The dropping of the vowel of *to* is marked by an apostrophe in the printed version:

May **do** t’ex**press** his **love** and **friend**ing **to** you,

The reader must supply the contraction in some cases, including the *to* in *toward*:

My **thoughts** and **wish**es **bend** a**gain** t(o)ward **France**…

With **such** dex**ter**i**ty** t(o)\_in**cest**uous **sheets**!…

*Certain words* are sometimes printed in their contracted form, such as *e’en* for *even, e’er* for *ever*, *ta’en* for *taken,* etc.

I **think** it **be** no **oth**er **but** e’en **so.**

More often they are printed in full, so the reader is left to pronounce them in their contracted form whenever the meter requires. Many such words have *v* between vowels:, e.g. *de(vi)l, se(ve)n, e(v)en, e(v)er, hea(ve)n, gi(ve)n, ha(vi)ng, o(f ’e)m,* etc.

Compare disyllabic and monosyllabic *devil*:

May **be** a **dev**il, **and** the **de(vi)l** hath **pow**er… Similarly, *heaven*:

Why, **e(v)en** in **that** was **heav**en **or**di**nant**.…

Bring **with** thee **airs** from **hea(ve)n** or **blasts** from **hell**,… The other occurrences from *Hamlet* are:

The **de(vi)l** him**self**.…

To **serve** in **such** a **diff**(e)rence. **What** de(vi)l **was’t**

May **be** a **dev**il, **and** the **de(vi)l** hath **pow**er…

And **ei**ther **lodge** the **de(vi)l** or **throw** him **out**…

Of **hab**its **e(vi)l,** is **an**gel **yet** in **this**,…

Hav***ing*** e(v)er **seen** in **the** pre**nom**(i)nate **crimes**…

If, **once** a **wid**ow, **e(v)er** I **be** a **wife**.…

There’s **ne(v)er** a **vill**ain **dwell**ing **in** all **Den**mark…

Did **some**times **march**? By **hea(ve)n**, I **charge** thee **speak**.…

Have **hea(ve)n** and **earth** to**geth**er **dem**on**stra**ted…

And **the** King’s **rouse** the **hea(ve)n** shall **bruit** a**gain**,…

Vi***sit*** her **face** too **rough**ly. **Hea(ve)n** and **earth**,…

Bring **with** thee **airs** from **hea(ve)n** or **blasts** from **hell**,…

By **hea(ve)n**, I’ll **make** a **ghost** of **him** that **lets** me.…

Hea(ve)n **will** di**rect** it.…

O **all** you **host** of **hea(ve)n**! O **earth**! What **else**?…

There **are** more **things** in **hea(ve)n** and **earth**, Ho**ra**tio,…

By **hea(ve)n**, it **is** as **prop**er **to** our **age**…

Hea(ve)ns **make** our **pres**ence **and** our **prac**ti**ces…**

And **the** King’s **rouse** the **hea(ve)n** shall **bruit** a**gain**,…

By **hea(ve)n**, it **is** as **prop**er **to** our **age**…

A **si**lence **in** the **hea(ve)ns**, the **rack** stand **still**,…

Prompt***ed*** to **my** re**venge** by **hea(ve)n** and **hell**,…

A **rhap**so**dy** of **words**. Hea(ve)n’s **face** does **glow**…

You **hea(ve)n**ly **guards**! What **would** your **gra**cious **fig**ure?…

I **do** re**pent**; but **hea(ve)n** hath **pleased** it **so**,…

By **hea(ve)n**, thy **mad**ness **shall** be **paid** with **weight**…

O **hea(ve)ns**, is’t **poss**i**ble** a **young** maid’s **wits**…

Cry **to** be **heard**, as ’**twere** from **hea(ve)n** to **earth**,…

The **can**nons **to** the **hea(ve)ns**, the **hea(ve)n** to **earth**,…

Hea(ve)n **make** thee **free** of **it.** I **foll**ow **thee**.… Give **me** the **cup**. Let **go**, by **hea(ve)n** I’ll **ha’t**.… Whose **im**age **e(v)en** but **now** ap**peared** to **us**,…

And **e(v)en** the **like** pre**curse** of **feared** e**vents**,…

Like **Ni**o**be**, all **tears**—why **she**, e(v)en **she**—…

That **it** went **hand** in **hand** e(v)en **with** the **vow**…

E(v)en **with** the **ver**y **com**ment **of** thy **soul**…

That **e(v)en** our **loves** should **with** our **for**tunes **change**,… Look **where** he **goes** e(v)en **now** out **at** the **port**al.…

E(v)en **to** the **teeth** and **fore**head **of** our **faults**…

E(v)en **on** the **pith** of **life**. Where **is** he **gone**?…

E(v)en **for** an **egg**shell. **Rightl**y **to** be **great**…

E(v)en **here** be**tween** the **chaste** un**smirch**èd **brow**… But **e(v)en** his **moth**er **shall** un**charge** the **prac**tice…

Why, **e(v)en** in **that** was **heav**en **or**di**nant**.…

E(v)en **while** men’s **minds** are **wild**, lest **more** mis**chance**…

Gi(ve)n **pri**vate **time** to **you**, and **you** your**self**…

And **hath** gi(ve)n **coun**te**nance** to\_(hi)s **speech**, my **lord**…

What, **have** you **gi(ve)n** him **an**y\_(h)ard **words** of **late**?…

Hath **gi(ve)n** me **this**. Now **gath**er **and** sur**mise**.…

They **were** gi(ve)n **me** by **Claud**io. **He** re**ceived** them…

Or **gi(ve)n** my **heart** a **wink**ing **mute** and **dumb**,…

O **heat**, dry **up** my **brains**! Tears **se(ve)n** times **salt**…

The word *spirit* is usually spelt *spirit*, but sometimes pronounced as a monosyllable: *spir(i)t* or, as some editors print it, *sprite, sp’rit.*

For **which** they **say** you **spir(i)ts** oft **walk** in **death**,…

And **then**, they **say**, no **spir(i)t** dare **stir** a**broad**,…

My **fath**er’s **spir(i)t**—in **arms**! All **is** not **well**.…

Be **thou** a **spir(i)t** of **health** or **gob**lin **damned**,… Rest, **rest**, per**tur**bèd **spir(i)t.** So, **gen**tle**men**,…

I **know** my **course**. The **spir(i)**t that **I** have **seen…**

My **spir(i)ts** grow **dull**, and **fain** I **would** be**guile**…

That **spir(i)t** u**pon** whose **weal** de**pends** and **rests**…

That **spir(i)t** u**pon** whose **weal** de**pends** and **rests**…

Contracted words with *th* in the middle are sometimes printed as contractions (e.g. *eith’r*), sometimes not. In the Folio edition of *The Tempest* the word *whether* is spelt *where* in the following line, indicating a monosyllabic pronunciation as required by the meter:

*Prospero* A **heart**y **wel**come.

*Alonso*  Whe(the)r **thou** be(e)st **he** or **no**.

It is also so spelt in *Julius Caesar*, rendered as *whe’er* by some editors:

See **whe’er** their **ba**sest **met**al **be** not **moved**:

Words so affected are *either, neither, whither, thither,* *hither, whether*, *rather*, and, more rarely, *mother, father*, and *brother.* From this play: To **fust** in **us** un**used**. Now **whe(the)r** it **be**…

Of **your** dear **fa(the)r**, is’t **writ** in **your** re**venge**…

Whi(the)r **wilt** thou **lead** me? **Speak**, I’ll **go** no **fur**ther.…

Whe(the)r **aught** to **us** un**known** af**flicts** him **thus**…

Whe(the)r **love** lead **for**tune **or** else **for**tune **love**.…

# Hamlet

## Act I

### Scene 1

*Enter* B *and* F, *two Sentinels.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Barnardo* | Who’s **there**? |  |
| *Francisco* | Nay, **an**swer **me.** Stand **and** un**fold** your**self**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | Long **live** the **King**! |  |
| *Francisco* | Bar**nar**do? |  |
| *Barnardo* | **He.** |  |
| *Francisco* | You **come** most **care**ful**ly** u**pon** your **hour**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | ’Tis **now** struck **twelve**. Get **thee** to **bed**, Fran**cis**co. |  |
| *Francisco* | For **this** re**lief** much **thanks**. ’Tis **bit**ter **cold**, And **I** am **sick** at **heart**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | Have **you** had **qui**et **guard**? |  |
| *Francisco* | Not **a** mouse **stir**ring. |  |
| *Barnardo* | **Well**, good **night**.  If **you** do **meet** Ho**ra**tio **and** Mar**cell**us,  The **ri**vals **of** my **watch**, bid **them** make **haste**. |  |
| *Francisco* | I **think** I **hear** them.  *Enter* H *and* M.  **Stand**, ho! **Who** is **there**? |  |
| *Horatio* | Friends **to** this **ground**. |  |
| *Marcellus* | And **liege**men **to** the **Dane**. |  |
| *Francisco* | Give **you** good **night**. |  |
| *Marcellus* | O, **fare**well, **hon**est **sold**ier, Who **hath** re**lieved** you? |  |
| *Francisco* | Bar**nar**do **hath** my **place**. |  |
|  | Give **you** good **night**. | *Exit.* |
| *Marcellus* | Hol**la**, Bar**nar**do! |  |
| *Barnardo* | **Say**— What, **is** Ho**ra**tio **there**? |  |
| *Horatio* | A **piece** of **him**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | Wel***come***, Ho**ra**tio. **Wel**come, **good** Mar**cell**us. |  |
| *Horatio* | What, **has** this **thing** ap**peared** a**gain** to**night**? |  |
| *Barnardo* | I **have** seen **noth**ing. |  |
| *Marcellus* | Ho**ra**tio **says** ’tis **but** our **fan**ta**sy**,  And **will** not **let** be**lief** take **hold** of **him**, |  |

Touch***ing*** this **dread**ed **sight** twice **seen** of **us.**

There**fore** I **have** en**treat**ed **him** a**long**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | With **us** to **watch** the **min**utes **of** this **night**,  That **if** a**gain** this **ap**pa**ri**tion **come**,  He **may** ap**prove** our **eyes** and **speak** to **it.** |
| *Horatio* | Tush, **tush**, ’twill **not** ap**pear**. |
| *Barnardo* | Sit **down** a**while**,  And **let** us **once** a**gain** as**sail** your **ears**, That **are** so **for**ti**fied** a**gainst** our **sto**ry, What **we** have **two** nights **seen**. |
| *Horatio* | Well, **sit** we **down**. And **let** us **hear** Bar**nar**do **speak** of **this**. |
| *Barnardo* | Last **night** of **all**,  When **yond** same **star** that’s **west**ward **from** the **pole**,  Had **made** his **course** t’il**lume** that **part** of **heav**en  Where **now** it **burns**, Mar**cell**us **and** my**self**,  The **bell** then **beat**ing **one**— *Enter* G. |
| *Marcellus* | Peace, **break** thee **off.** Look **where** it **comes** a**gain**. |
| *Barnardo* | In **the** same **fig**ure **like** the **King** that’s **dead**. |
| *Marcellus* | Thou **art** a **schol**ar, **speak** to **it**, Ho**ra**tio. |
| *Barnardo* | Looks **a** not **like** the **King**? Mark **it**, Ho**ra**tio. |
| *Horatio* | Most **like**. It **har**rows **me** with **fear** and **won**der. |
| *Barnardo* | It **would** be **spoke** to. |
| *Marcellus* | **Quest**ion **it**, Ho**ra**tio. |
| *Horatio* | What **art** thou **that** u**surp’st** this **time** of **night**,  To**geth**er **with** that **fair** and **war**like **form**  In **which** the **maj**es**ty** of **bur**ied **Den**mark  Did **some**times **march**? By **hea(ve)n**, I **charge** thee **speak**. |
| *Marcellus* | It **is** of**fend**ed. |
| *Barnardo* | **See**, it **stalks** a**way**. |
| *Horatio* | **Stay**, speak, **speak**,// I **charge** thee **speak**.  *Exit Ghost.* |
| *Marcellus* | ’Tis **gone** and **will** not **an**swer. |
| *Barnardo* | How **now**, Ho**ra**tio?// You **trem**ble **and** look **pale**.  Is **this** not **some**thing **more** than **fan**ta**sy**?  What **think** you **on’t**? |
| *Horatio* | Be**fore** my **God**, I **might** not **this** be**lieve**  With**out** the **sen**si**ble** and **true** a**vouch** Of **mine** own **eyes**. |

I 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Marcellus* | Is **it** not **like** the **King**? |
| *Horatio* | As **thou** art **to** thy**self**.  Such **was** the **ver**y **arm**or **he** had **on**  When **he** th’am**bi**tious **Nor**way **com**bat**èd**.1  So **frowned** he **once**, when **in** an **ang**ry **parle** He **smote** the **sled**ded **Po**lacks **on** the **ice**.  ’Tis **strange**. |
| *Marcellus* | Thus **twice** be**fore**, and **jump** at **this** dead **hour**, With **mar**tial **stalk** hath **he** gone **by** our **watch**. |
| *Horatio* | In **what** par**tic**(u)lar **thought** to **work** I **know** not,  But **in** the **gross** and **scope** of **my** o**pin**ion,  This **bodes** some **strange** e**rup**tion **to** our **state**. |
| *Marcellus* | Good **now**, sit **down**, and **tell** me, **he** that **knows**, |

Why **this** same **strict** and **most** ob**ser**vant **watch**

So **night**ly **toils** the **sub**ject **of** the **land**,

And **why** such **dai**ly **cast** of **bra**zen **can**non

And **for**eign **mart** for **imp**le**ments** of **war**,

Why **such** im**press** of **ship**wrights, **whose** sore **task** Does **not** di**vide** the **Sun**day **from** the **week**.

What **might** be **tow**ard **that** this **sweat**y **haste** Doth **make** the **night** joint-**lab**(o)rer **with** the **day**, Who **is’t** that **can** in**form** me?

*Horatio* **That** can **I.**

At **least** the **whisp**er **goes** so: **our** last **King**,

Whose **im**age **e(v)en** but **now** ap**peared** to **us**,

Was **as** you **know** by **For**tin**bras** of **Nor**way,

There**to** pricked **on** by **a** most **em**(u)late **pride**,

Dared **to** the **com**bat;// in **which** our **val**iant **Ham**let

(For **so** this **side** of **our** known **world** e**steemed** him)

Did **slay** this **For**tin**bras**,// who **by** a **sealed** com**pact**2

Well **rat**i**fied** by **law** and **her**ald**ry**

Did **for**feit, **with** his **life**, all **those** his **lands**

Which **he** stood **seized** of **to** the **con**quer**or**;

A**gainst** the **which** a **moi**(e)ty **com**pe**tent**

Was **ga**gèd **by** our **King**, which **had** re**turned**

1

The stress on the verb *combat* may fall on either syllable in British English.

2

Shakespeare usually puts the stress on the second syllable of *compact.*

To **the** in**her**i**tance** of **For**tin**bras**,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Had **he** been **van**quish**er**; as, **by\_th(e)** same **cov**’nant[[1]](#footnote-1)  And **car**riage **of** the **ar**ti**cle** de**signed**,  His **fell** to **Ham**let.// Now, **sir**, young **For**tin**bras**,  Of **un**im**prov**èd **met**tle, **hot** and **full**,  Hath **in** the **skirts** of **Nor**way **here** and **there**  Sharked **up** a **list** of **law**less **res**o**lutes**  For **food** and **di**et **to** some **ent**er**prise**  That **hath** a **stom**ach **in’t**, which **is** no **oth**er,  As **it** doth **well** ap**pear** un**to** our **state**,  But **to** re**cov**er **of** us **by** strong **hand**  And **terms** com**puls**at(o)**ry** those **fore**said **lands**[[2]](#footnote-2)  So **by** his **fath**er **lost**. And **this**, I **take** it,  Is **the** main **mo**tive **of** our **prep**a**ra**tions,  The **source** of **this** our **watch**, and **the** chief **head** Of **this** post-**haste** and **rum**mage **in** the **lands**. |
| *Barnardo* | I **think** it **be** no **oth**er **but** e’en **so.**  Well **may** it **sort** that **this** por**tent**ous **fig**ure  Comes **arm**èd **through** our **watch** so **like** the **King** That **was** and **is** the **quest**ion **of** these **wars**. |
| *Horatio* | A **mote** it **is** to **troub**le **the** mind’s **eye**.  In **the** most **high** and **palm**y **state** of **Rome**,  A **lit**tle **ere** the **might**iest **Jul**ius **fell**,[[3]](#footnote-3)[[4]](#footnote-4) |

The **graves** stood **ten(a)nt**less **and** the **sheet**ed **dead**

Did **squeak** and **gib**ber **in** the **Ro**man **streets**;

As **stars** with **trains** of **fire** and **dews** of **blood**,

Di**sas**ters **in** the **sun**; and **the** moist **star**, U**pon** whose **in**fluence **Nep**tune’s **em**pire **stands**,6 Was **sick** al**most** to **dooms**day **with** e**clipse**.

And **e(v)en** the **like** pre**curse** of **feared** e**vents**, As **har**bin**gers** pre**ce**ding **still** the **fates**

I 1

And **pro**logue **to** the **o**men **com**ing **on**,

Have **hea(ve)n** and **earth** to**geth**er **dem**on**stra**ted Un**to** our **cli**ma**tures** and **coun**try**men**.

*Enter* G.

But **soft**, be**hold**. Lo, **where** it **comes** a**gain**.

I’ll **cross** it **though** it **blast** me.  *Ghost spreads its arms.*

**Stay**, il**lu**sion:

If **thou** hast **an**y **sound** or **use** of **voice**, **Speak** to **me.**

If **there** be **an**y **good** thing **to** be **done**

That **may** to **thee** do **ease**, and **grace** to **me**,

**Speak** to **me**;

If **thou** art **priv**y **to** thy **coun**try’s **fate**,

Which, **hap**pi**ly**, fore**know**ing **may** a**void**,

O **speak**;

Or **if** thou **hast** up**hoard**ed **in** thy **life**

Ex**tort**ed **treas**ure **in** the **womb** of **earth**,

For **which** they **say** you **spir(i)ts** oft **walk** in **death**,

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Speak **of** it, **stay** and **speak**.  *The cock crows.*  Stop **it**, Mar**cell**us. | |
| *Marcellus* | Shall **I** strike **at** it **with** my **par**ti**san**?[[5]](#footnote-5) |  |
| *Horatio* | Do **if** it **will** not **stand**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | ’Tis **here**. |  |
| *Horatio* | ’Tis **here**. | *Exit Ghost.* |
| *Marcellus* | ’Tis **gone**.  We **do** it **wrong**, being **so** ma**jes**ti**cal**,  To **off**er **it** the **show** of **vi**o**lence**,  For **it** is **as** the **air**, in**vuln**(e)ra**ble**,  And **our** vain **blows** ma**lic**ious **mock**e**ry**. |  |
| *Barnardo* | It **was** a**bout** to **speak** when **the** cock **crew**. |  |
| *Horatio* | And **then** it **start**ed **like** a **guil**ty **thing** |  |

U**pon** a **fear**ful **sum**mons. **I** have **heard**

The **cock**, that **is** the **trump**et **to** the **morn**,

Doth **with** his **loft**y **and** shrill-**sound**ing **throat** A**wake** the **god** of **day**, and **at** his **warn**ing, Wheth***er*** in **sea** or **fire**, in **earth** or **air**,

Th’ex**trav**a**gant** and **err**ing **spir**it **hies**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | To **his** con**fine**; and **of** the **truth** here**in**[[6]](#footnote-6)This **pres**ent **ob**ject **made** pro**ba**ti**on**. |
| *Marcellus* | It **fa**ded **on** the **crow**ing **of** the **cock**.  Some **say** that **ev**er **’gainst** that **sea**son **comes**  Where**in** our **Sa**vior’s **birth** is **cel**e**bra**ted,  This **bird** of **dawn**ing **sing**eth **all** night **long**;  And **then**, they **say**, no **spir(i)t** dare **stir** a**broad**,  The **nights** are **whole**some, **then** no **plan**ets **strike**, No **fair**y **takes**, nor **witch** hath **pow(e)r** to **charm**, So **hal**lowed **and** so **gra**cious **is** that **time**. |
| *Horatio* | So **have** I **heard** and **do** in **part** be**lieve** it. But **look**, the **morn** in **rus**set **man**tle **clad** Walks **o’er** the **dew** of **yon** high **east**ward **hill**.  Break **we** our **watch** up, **and** by **my** ad**vice**  Let **us** im**part** what **we** have **seen** to**night** Un**to** young **Ham**let; **for** u**pon** my **life** This **spir**it, **dumb** to **us**, will **speak** to **him**. Do **you** con**sent** we **shall** ac**quaint** him **with** it As **need**ful **in** our **loves**, fitt***ing*** our **du**ty? |
| *Marcellus* | Let’s **do’t**, I **pray**, and **I** this **morn**ing **know**  Where **we** shall **find** him **most** con**ven**ient**ly**.  *Exeunt.* |

### Scene 2

*Flourish. Enter* Claudius, K of Denmark, Gertrude the Q,

*Council, including*  V, C, P *and his son* L, H, *with others.*

*King* Though **yet** of **Ham**let **our** dear **broth**er’s **death**

The **mem**o**ry** be **green**,// and **that** it **us** be**fit**ted

To **bear** our **hearts** in **grief**, and **our** whole **king**dom

To **be** con**trac**ted **in** one **brow** of **woe**,

Yet **so** far **hath** dis**cret**ion **fought** with **na**ture That **we** with **wi**sest s**or**row **think** on **him** To**geth**er **with** re**mem**brance **of** our**selves**.

There**fore** our **some**time **sis**ter, **now** our **queen**,

Th’im**per**ial **joint**ress **to** this **war**like **state**,[[7]](#footnote-7)

Have **we**, as **’twere** with **a** de**fea**ted **joy**,

With **one** au**spic**ious **and** one **drop**ping **eye**,

With **mirth** in **fun**(e)ral **and** with **dirge** in **mar**riage,

In **e**qual **scale** weigh***ing*** de**light** and **dole**,

Tak***en*** to **wife**. Nor **have** we **here**in **barred**

Your **bet**ter **wis**doms, **which** have **free**ly **gone** With **this** af**fair** a**long**. For **all**, our **thanks**.

Now **foll**ows **that** you **know** young **For**tin**bras**,

Hold***ing*** a **weak** sup**po**sal **of** our **worth**,

Or **think**ing **by** our **late** dear **broth**er’s **death** Our **state** to **be** dis**joint** and **out** of **frame**,

Col**leagu**èd **with** this **dream** of **his** ad**van**tage,

He **hath** not **failed** to **pes**ter **us** with **mess**age

Im**port**ing **the** sur**rend**er **of** those **lands**

Lost **by** his **fath**er, **with** all **bonds** of **law**, To **our** most **val**iant **broth**er.// So **much** for **him**. Now **for** our**self**, and **for** this **time** of **meet**ing,

Thus **much** the **busi**ness **is**: we **have** here **writ**

To **Nor**way, **unc**le **of** young **For**tin**bras**— Who, **im**po**tent** and **bed**rid, **scarce**ly **hears** Of **this** his **neph**ew’s **pur**pose—**to** sup**press** His **fur**ther **gait** here**in**, in **that** the **lev**ies,

The **lists**, and **full** pro**por**tions **are** all **made**

Out **of** his **sub**ject; **and** we **here** dis**patch**

You, **good** Cor**ne**lius, **and** you, **Vol**te**mand**,

For **bear**ers **of** this **greet**ing **to** old **Nor**way,

Giv***ing*** to **you** no **fur**ther **pers**(o)nal **pow**er To **busi**ness **with** the **King** more **than** the **scope** Of **these** di**la**ted **ar**ti**cles** al**low**.

Fare**well**, and **let** your **haste** com**mend** your **du**ty.

*Cornelius & Voltemand* In **that**, and **all** things, **will** we **show** our **du**ty.

*King* We **doubt** it **noth**ing. **Heart**i**ly** fare**well**.

*Exeunt Voltemand and Cornelius.*

And **now**, La**er**tes, **what’s** the **news** with **you**? You **told** us **of** some **suit**: what **is’t**, La**er**tes?

You **can**not **speak** of **rea**son **to** the **Dane**

And **lose** your **voice**. What **wouldst** thou **beg**, La**er**tes, That **shall** not **be** my **off**er, **not** thy **ask**ing? The **head** is **not** more **na**tive **to** the **heart**,

The **hand** more **in**stru**ment**al **to** the **mouth**, Than **is** the **throne** of **Den**mark **to** thy **fath**er.

What **wouldst** thou **have**, La**er**tes?

*Laertes*  **My** dread **lord**,

Your **leave** and **fa**vor **to** re**turn** to **France**,

From **whence** though **will**ing**ly** I **came** to **Den**mark

To **show** my **du**ty **in** your **cor**o**na**tion,

Yet **now** I **must** con**fess**, that **du**ty **done**, My **thoughts** and **wish**es **bend** a**gain** t(o)ward **France** And **bow** them **to** your **gra**cious **leave** and **par**don.

*King* Have **you** your **fath**er’s **leave**? What **says** Po**lon**ius?

*Polonius* He **hath**, my **lord**, wrung **from** me **my** slow **leave**

By **la**bor**some** pe**tit**ion, **and** at **last** U**pon** his **will** I **sealed** my **hard** con**sent**.

I **do** be**seech** you **give** him **leave** to **go.**

*King* Take **thy** fair **hour**, La**er**tes, **time** be **thine**, And **thy** best **gra**ces **spend** it **at** thy **will**.

But **now**, my **cous**in **Ham**let, **and** my **son**— *Hamlet* A **lit**tle **more** than **kin**, and **less** than **kind**.

*King* How **is** it **that** the **clouds** still **hang** on **you**? *Hamlet* Not **so**, my **lord**, I **am** too **much** i’th’ **sun**.

*Queen* Good **Ham**let, **cast** thy **night**ed **col**or **off**,

And **let** thine **eye** look **like** a **friend** on **Den**mark.

Do **not** for **ev**er **with** thy **vail**èd **lids** Seek **for** thy **no**ble **fath**er **in** the **dust**. Thou **know’st** ’tis **com**mon: **all** that **lives** must **die**, Pass***ing*** through **na**ture **to** e**ter**ni**ty**.

*Hamlet* Ay, **mad**am, **it** is **com**mon.

*Queen*  **If** it **be**,

Why **seems** it **so** par**tic**u**lar** with **thee**?

*Hamlet* Seems, **mad**am? **Nay**, it **is.** I **know** not **‘seems’**.

’Tis **not** a**lone** my **ink**y **cloak**, good **moth**er,

Nor **cus**to**mar**y **suits** of **sol**emn **black**,

Nor **wind**y **sus**pi**ra**tion **of** forced **breath**,

No, **nor** the **fruit**ful **riv**er **in** the **eye**,

Nor **the** de**jec**ted **ha**vior **of** the **vis**age,

To**geth**er **with** all **forms**, moods, **shapes** of **grief**,

That **can** de**note** me **tru**ly. **These** in**deed** seem,

For **they** are **act**ions **that** a **man** might **play**; But **I** have **that** with**in** which **pass**es **show**, These **but** the **trap**pings **and** the **suits** of **woe**.

*King* ’Tis **sweet** and **comm**(en)dab**le\_in** your **na**ture, **Ham**let,[[8]](#footnote-8)

To **give** these **mourn**ing **du**ties **to** your **fath**er,

But **you** must **know** your **fath**er **lost** a **fath**er,

That **fath**er **lost**, lost **his**//—and **the** sur**vi**vor **bound**

In **fil**ial **ob**li**ga**tion **for** some **term**[[9]](#footnote-9)

To **do** ob**se**quious **sor**row.// But **to** per**sev**er[[10]](#footnote-10)

In **ob**sti**nate** con**dole**ment **is** a **course**

Of **im**pious **stub**bornness,// ’**tis** un**man**ly **grief**,[[11]](#footnote-11)

It **shows** a **will** most **in**cor**rect** to **heav**en,

A **heart** un**for**ti**fied**, a **mind** im**pa**tient,

An **un**der**stand**ing **sim**ple **and** un**schooled**;

For **what** we **know** must **be**, and **is** as **com**mon

As **an**y **the** most **vul**gar **thing** to **sense**—

Why **should** we **in** our **pee**vish **op**po**sit**ion

Take **it** to **heart**? Fie, ’**tis** a **fault** to **heav**en,

A **fault** a**gainst** the **dead**, a **fault** to **na**ture,

To **rea**son **most** ab**surd**, whose **com**mon **theme**

Is **death** of **fath**ers, **and** who **still** hath **cried**

From **the** first **corse** till **he** that **died** to**day**,

‘This **must** be **so**’. We **pray** you **throw** to **earth**

This **un**pre**vail**ing **woe**, and **think** of **us**

As **of** a **fa(the)r;** for **let** the **world** take **note**

You **are** the **most** im**med**iate **to** our **throne**,[[12]](#footnote-12)

And **with** no **less** no**bil**i**ty** of **love**

Than **that** which **dear**est **fath**er **bears** his **son**

Do **I** im**part** t(o)ward **you**. For **your** in**tent**

In **go**ing **back** to **school** in **Wit**ten**berg**,

It **is** most **ret**ro**grade** to **our** de**sire**,

And **we** be**seech** you **bend** you **to** re**main**

Here **in** the **cheer** and **com**fort **of** our **eye**,

Our **chief**est **court**ier, **cous**in, **and** our **son**.[[13]](#footnote-13)

*Queen* Let **not** thy **moth**er **lose** her **pray**~ers, **Ham**let.[[14]](#footnote-14)I **pray** thee **stay** with **us**, go **not** to **Wit**tenberg.

*Hamlet* I **shall** in **all** my **best** o**bey** you, **mad**am.

*King* Why, ’**tis** a **lov**ing **and** a **fair** re**ply**.

Be **as** our**self** in **Den**mark. **Mad**am, **come**.

This **gen**tle **and** un**forced** ac**cord** of **Ham**let

Sits **smil**ing **to** my **heart**; in **grace** where**of**

No **joc**und **health** that **Den**mark **drinks** to**day**

But **the** great **can**non **to** the **clouds** shall **tell**,

And **the** King’s **rouse** the **hea(ve)n** shall **bruit** a**gain**, Re-**speak**ing **earth**ly **thun**der. **Come** a**way**.

*Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

*Hamlet* O **that** this **too** too **sol**id **flesh** would **melt**,

Thaw **and** re**solve** it**self** in**to** a **dew**,

Or **that** the **Ev**er**last**ing **had** not **fixed**

His **can**on ’**gainst** self-**slaugh**t(e)r.\_O **God**! O **God**![[15]](#footnote-15)How **wear**y, **stale**, flat, **and** un**prof**it**ab**le Seem **to** me **all** the **u**ses **of** this **world**! Fie **on’t**, ah **fie**, ’tis **an** un**weed**ed **gard**en[[16]](#footnote-16)That **grows** to **seed**; things **rank** and **gross** in **na**ture Pos**sess** it **mere**ly.// That **it** should **come** to **this**!

But **two** months **dead**—nay, **not** so **much**, not **two**—

So **ex**cel**lent** a **king**, that **was** to **this**

Hy**per**ion **to** a **sat**yr,// so **lov**ing **to** my **moth**er[[17]](#footnote-17)

That **he** might **not** be**tween** the **winds** of **heav**en

Vi***sit*** her **face** too **rough**ly. **Hea(ve)n** and **earth**,

Must **I** re**mem**ber?// Why, **she** would **hang** on **him**

As **if** in**crease** of **ap**pe**tite** had **grown**[[18]](#footnote-18)

By **what** it **fed** on;// and **yet** with**in** a **month**— Let **me** not **think** on’t// —Frail***ty***, thy **name** is **wom**an— A **lit**tle **month**, or **ere** those **shoes** were **old**

With **which** she **foll**owed **my** poor **fath**er’s **bod**y,

Like **Ni**o**be**, all **tears**—why **she**, e(v)en **she**— O **God**, a **beast** that **wants** dis**course** of **rea**son

Would **have** mourned **long**er—**mar**ried **with** my **unc**le,

My **fath**er’s **broth**er// —but **no** more **like** my **fath**er

Than **I** to **Her**cu**les**. With**in** a **month**,

Ere **yet** the **salt** of **most** un**right**eous **tears**

Had **left** the **flush**ing **in** her **gall**èd **eyes**,

She **mar**ried—**O** most **wick**ed **speed**! To **post**

With **such** dex**ter**i**ty** t(o)\_in**cest**uous **sheets**![[19]](#footnote-19)It **is** not, **nor** it **can**not **come** to **good**.

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

*Enter* H, M, *and* B.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Horatio* | Hail **to** your **wor**ship. | |
| *Hamlet* | I\_(a)m **glad** to **see** you **well**. Ho**ra**tio, **or** I **do** for**get** my**self**. | |
| *Horatio* | The **same**, my **lord**, and **your** poor **serv**ant **ev**er. | |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, **my** good **friend**, I’ll **change** that **name** with **you**.  And **what** make **you** from **Wit**ten**berg**, Ho**ra**tio?— Marcellus. | |
| *Marcellus* | My good lord. | |
| *Hamlet* | I\_(a)m **ver**y **glad** to **see** you.// (*To Barnardo*) Good **ev**en, **sir**, But **what** in **faith** make **you** from **Wit**ten**berg**? | |
| *Horatio* | A **tru**ant **dis**po**sit**ion, **good** my **lord**. | |
| *Hamlet* | I **would** not **hear** your **en**e**my** say **so**,  Nor **shall** you **do** my **ear** that **vi**o**lence**  To **make** it **trust**er **of** your **own** re**port** A**gainst** your**self**. I **know** you **are** no **tru**ant.  But **what** is **your** af**fair** in **El**si**nore**?  We’ll **teach** you **to** drink **deep** ere **you** de**part**. | |
| *Horatio* | My **lord**, I **came** to **see** your **fath**er’s **fu**neral. | |
| *Hamlet* | I **prith**ee **do** not **mock** me, **fell**ow-**stu**dent.  I **think** it **was** to **see** my **moth**er’s **wed**ding. | |
| *Horatio* | In**deed**, my **lord**, it **foll**owed **hard** u**pon**. | |
| *Hamlet* | Thrift, **thrift**, Ho**ra**tio.// The **fu**ne**ral** baked **meats** Did **cold**ly f**ur**nish **forth** the **mar**riage **ta**bles.  Would **I** had **met** my **dear**est **foe** in **heav**en Or **ev**er **I** had **seen** that **day**, Ho**ra**tio.  My **fath**er//—me**thinks** I **see** my **fath**er— | |
| *Horatio* | **Where**, my **lord**? | |
| *Hamlet* | In **my** mind’s **eye**, Ho**ra**tio. | |
| *Horatio* | I **saw** him **once**; he **was** a **good**ly **king**. | |
| *Hamlet* | He **was** a **man**, take **him** for **all** in **all**; I **shall** not **look** u**pon** his **like** a**gain**. | |
| *Horatio* | My **lord**, I **think** I **saw** him **yes**ter**night**. | |
| *Hamlet* | Saw? **Who**? | |
| *Horatio* | My **lord**, the **king** your **fath**er. | |
| *Hamlet* | The **king** my **fath**er? | |
| *Horatio* | Sea***son*** your **ad**mi**ra**tion **for** a **while**  With **an** at**ten**t ear **till** I **may** de**liv**er  U**pon** the **wit**ness **of** these **gen**tle**men** | |
|  | This **mar**vel **to** you. |
| *Hamlet* | For **God’s** love **let** me **hear**! |
| *Horatio* | Two **nights** to**geth**er **had** these **gen**tle**men**,  Mar**cell**us **and** Bar**nar**do, **on** their **watch**  In **the** dead **waste** and **mid**dle **of** the **night**  Been **thus** en**count**ered:// a **fig**ure **like** your **fath**er  **Armed** at **point** ex**act**ly, **cap**-à-**pie**,22  Ap**pears** be**fore** them, **and** with **sol**emn **march**  Goes **slow** and **state**ly **by** them; **thrice** he **walked**  By **their** op**pressed** and **fear**-sur**pri**sèd **eyes**  With**in** his **trunch**eon’s **length**, whilst **they**, di**stilled**  Al**most** to **jell**y **with** the **act** of **fear**,  Stand **dumb** and **speak** not **to** him. **This** to **me**  In **dread**ful **se**cre**cy** im**part** they **did**,  And **I** with **them** the **third** night **kept** the **watch**,  Where, **as** they **had** de**liv**ered, **both** in **time**,  Form **of** the **thing**, each **word** made **true** and **good**,  The **ap**pa**rit**ion **comes**. I **knew** your **fath**er; These **hands** are **not** more **like**. |
| *Hamlet* | But **where** was **this**? |
| *Marcellus* | My **lord**, u**pon** the **plat**form **where** we **watched**. |
| *Hamlet* | Did **you** not **speak** to **it?** |
| *Horatio* | My **lord**, I **did**,  But **an**swer **made** it **none**. Yet **once** me**thought**  It **lift**ed **up** it **head** and **did** ad**dress** It**self** to **mo**tion **like** as **it** would **speak**.  But **ev**en **then** the **morn**ing **cock** crew **loud**,  And **at** the **sound** it **shrunk** in **haste** a**way** And **van**ished **from** our **sight**. |
| *Hamlet* | ’Tis **ver**y **strange**. |
| *Horatio* | As **I** do **live**, my **hon**ored **lord**, ’tis **true**; And **we** did **think** it **writ** down **in** our **du**ty To **let** you **know** of **it.** |

22

Some editors avoid line-initial accent by reading *armèd* as disyllabic, while F does it by adding *all*:

Arm***èd*** at **point** ex**act**ly, **cap**-à-**pie**,

Armed **at** all **points** ex**act**ly, **cap**-à-**pie**,

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | In**deed**, in**deed**, sirs; **but** this **troub**les **me.**23 Hold **you** the **watch** to**night**? |
| *All* | We **do**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | **Armed**, say **you**? |
| *All* | **Armed**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | From **top** to **toe**? |
| *All* | My **lord**, from **head** to **foot**. |
| *Hamlet* | Then **saw** you **not** his **face**? |
| *Horatio* | O **yes**, my **lord**, he **wore** his **bea**ver **up.** |
| *Hamlet* | What **looked** he, **frown**ing**ly**? |
| *Horatio* | A **count**(e)nance **more** in **sorr**ow **than** in **ang**er. |
| *Hamlet* | **Pale**, or **red**? |
| *Horatio* | Nay, **ver**y **pale**. |
| *Hamlet* | And **fixed** his **eyes** u**pon** you? |
| *Horatio* | Most **con**stant**ly**. |
| *Hamlet* | I **would** I **had** been **there**. |
| *Horatio* | It **would** have **much** a**mazed** you. |
| *Hamlet* | **Ver**y **like**.// **Stayed** it **long**?24 |
| *Horatio* | While **one** with **mod**(e)rate **haste** might **tell** a **hun**dred. |

*Marcellus & Barnardo* Longer, longer.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Horatio* | **Not** when **I** saw’t. |
| *Hamlet* | His **beard** was **griz**zled, **no**? |
| *Horatio* | It **was** as **I** have **seen** it **in** his **life**, A **sa**ble **sil**vered. |
| *Hamlet* | **I** will **watch** to**night**. Per**chance** ’twill **walk** a**gain**. |
| *Horatio* | I **war’nt** it **will**. |
| *Hamlet* | If **it** as**sume** my **no**ble **fath**er’s **per**son, |

23

The line violates the Primary Accent Rule in Q2, with only four accents:

In**deed**, sirs;// **but** this **troub**les **me.**

24

The line violates the Primary Accent Rule in the Q2 version (above) with four accents; the F version violates it with six:

**Ver**y **like**, **ver**y **like**.// **Stayed** it **long**?

One editor (Jenkins) relineates so as to make two half-lines form a normal pentameter on the page, but with no effect on the stage:

*Horatio* It **would** have **much** a**mazed** you.

*Hamlet*  **Ver**y **like**.

**Stayed** it **long**?

I’ll **speak** to **it** though **hell** it**self** should **gape**

And **bid** me **hold** my **peace**. I **pray** you **all**,

If **you** have **hith**er**to** con**cealed** this **sight**, Let **it** be **ten**a**ble\_in** your **si**lence **still**;[[20]](#footnote-20)And **what**som**ev**er **else** shall **hap** to**night**,

Give **it** an **un**der**stand**ing **but** no **tongue**.

I **will** re**quite** your **loves**. So **fare** you **well**. U**pon** the **plat**form ’**twixt** e**lev**(e)n\_and **twelve**

I’ll **vis**it **you**.

*All* Our **du**ty **to** your **hon**or.

*Hamlet* Your **loves**, as **mine** to **you**.// Fare**well**.

*Exeunt Horatio, Marcellus, and Barnardo.*

My **fath**er’s **spir(i)t**—in **arms**! All **is** not **well**.

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

Till **then** set **still**, my **soul**. Foul **deeds** will **rise**,

Though **all** the **earth** o’er**whelm** them, **to** men’s **eyes**. *Exit.*

### Scene 3

*Enter* L, *and* O, *his sister.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Laertes* | My **nec**es**sar**ies **are** em**barked**. Fare**well**. And **sis**ter, **as** the **winds** give **ben**e**fit** And **con**voy **is** as**sis**tant, **do** not **sleep**, But **let** me **hear** from **you**. |
| *Ophelia* | **Do** you **doubt** that? |
| *Laertes* | For **Ham**let, **and** the **tri**fling **of** his **fa**vor,  Hold **it** a **fash**ion **and** a **toy** in **blood**,  A **vi**(o)let **in** the **youth** of **pri**my **na**ture,  **Fo**~r**ward**, not **perm**(a)nent, **sweet**, not **last**ing, The **per**fume **and** supp**li**ance **of** a **min**ute, No **more**. |
| *Ophelia* | No **more** but **so?** |
| *Laertes* | Think **it** no **more**.  For **na**ture **cresc**ent **does** not **grow** a**lone**  In **thews** and **bulk**, but **as** this **tem**ple **waxes**,  The **in**ward **ser**vice **of** the **mind** and **soul**  Grows **wide** with**al**. Per**haps** he **loves** you **now**,  And **now** no **soil** nor **cau**tel **doth** be**smirch**  The **vir**tue **of** his **will**; but **you** must **fear**, His **great**ness **weighed**, his **will** is **not** his **own**. For **he** him**self** is **sub**ject **to** his **birth**:  He **may** not, **as** un**val**ued **per**sons **do**,  Carve **for** him**self**, for **on** his **choice** de**pends**  The **sanc**ti**ty** and **health** of **this** whole **state**; |

And **there**fore **must** his **choice** be **cir**cum**scribed**

Un**to** the **voice** and **yield**ing **of** that **bod**y

Where**of** he **is** the **head**.// Then **if** he **says** he **loves** you,

It **fits** your **wis**dom **so** far **to** be**lieve** it

As **he** in **his** par**tic**(u)lar **sect** and **force** May **give** his **say**ing **deed**; which **is** no **fur**ther Than **the** main **voice** of **Den**mark **goes** with**al**.

Then **weigh** what **loss** your **hon**or **may** su**stain**

If **with** too **cre**dent **ear** you **list** his **songs**, Or **lose** your **heart**, or **your** chaste **treas**ure **o**pen To **his** un**mas**tered **im**por**tu**ni**ty**.

Fear **it**, O**phel**ia, **fear** it, **my** dear **sis**ter,

I 3

And **keep** you **in** the **rear** of **your** af**fec**tion Out **of** the **shot** and **dan**ger **of** de**sire**.

The **char**iest **maid** is **prod**i**gal** e**nough**[[21]](#footnote-21)

If **she** un**mask** her **beau**ty **to** the **moon**.

Vir***tue*** it**self** scapes **not** ca**lum**nious **strokes**.27

The **cank**er **galls** the **in**fants **of** the **spring**

Too **oft** be**fore** their **but**tons **be** dis**closed**,

And **in** the **morn** and **liq**uid **dew** of **youth**

Con**ta**gious **blast**ments **are** most **im**mi**nent**.

Be **war**y **then**: best **safe**ty **lies** in **fear**.

Youth **to** it**self** re**bels**, though **none** else **near**.

*Ophelia* I **shall** th’ef**fect** of **this** good **less**on **keep**

As **watch**man **to** my **heart**. But **good** my **broth**er,

Do **not** as **some** un**gra**cious **pas**tors **do**,

Show **me** the **steep** and **thorn**y **way** to **heav**en,

Whiles **like** a **puffed** and **reck**less **lib**er**tine**

Him**self** the **prim**rose **path** of **dall**iance **treads**,28

And **recks** not **his** own **rede**.

*Laertes* O **fear** me **not**.

I **stay** too **long**.

*Enter* P.

But **here** my **fath**er **comes**.

A **doub**le **bless**ing **is** a **doub**le **grace**:

Oc**ca**sion **smiles** u**pon** a **sec**ond **leave**.

*Polonius* Yet **here**, La**er**tes?// A**board**, a**board** for **shame**.

The **wind** sits **in** the **should**er **of** your **sail**,

And **you** are **stayed** for. **There**, my **bless**ing **with** thee.

And **these** few **pre**cepts **in** thy **mem**o**ry**

Look **thou** cha**rac**ter. **Give** thy **thoughts** no **tongue**,29 Nor **an**y **un**pro**por**tioned **thought** his **act**.

Be **thou** fa**mil**iar, **but** by **no** means **vul**gar;30

Those **friends** thou **hast**, and **their** a**dop**tion **tried**,

Grap***ple\_(the)m*** un**to** thy **soul** with **hoops** of **steel**,31

But **do** not **dull** thy **palm** with **en**ter**tain**ment

Of **each** new-**hatch**ed, un**fledged** com**rade**. Be**ware**32

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Of **en**trance **to** a **quar**rel, **but** being **in**, Bear’t **that** th’op**po**sèd **may** be**ware** of **thee**.  Give **ev**ery **man** thy **ear**, but **few** thy **voice**;  Take **each** man’s **cen**sure, **but** re**serve** thy **judg**ment.  Cost***ly*** thy **hab**it **as** thy **purse** can **buy**,  But **not** ex**pressed** in **fan**cy; **rich**, not **gaud**y;  For **the** ap**par**el **oft** pro**claims** the **man**,  And **they** in **France** of **the** best **rank** and **sta**tion  Are **of** a **most** se**lect**// and **gen**(e)rous **chief** in **that**.33  Nei***ther*** a **borr**(o)wer **nor** a **lend**er **be**,  For **loan** oft **los**es **both** it**self** and **friend**,  And **borr**(o)wing **dulls** the **edge** of **hus**ban**dry**. This **a**bove **all**: to **thine** own **self** be **true**, And **it** must **foll**ow **as** the **night** the **day** Thou **canst** not **then** be **false** to **an**y **man**.  Fare**well**, my **bless**ing **sea**son **this** in **thee**. |
| *Laertes* | Most **hum**bly **do** I **take** my **leave**, my **lord**. |
| *Polonius* | The **time** in**vites** you; **go**, your **serv**ants **tend**. |
| *Laertes* | Fare**well**, O**phe**lia, **and** re**mem**ber **well** What **I** have **said** to **you**. |
| *Ophelia* | ’Tis **in** my **mem**(o)ry **locked**, And **you** your**self** shall **keep** the **key** of **it.** |
| *Laertes* | Farewell. |
| *Polonius* | What **is’t**, O**phe**lia, **he** hath **said** to **you**? |
| *Ophelia* | So **please** you, **some**thing **touch**ing **the** Lord **Ham**let. |
| *Polonius* | **Mar**ry, **well** be**thought**. |

31

Syncopation before /l/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /græp(i)lim/.

The F version has *to* in place of *unto* in Q2:

Grap***ple*** them **to** thy **soul** with **hoops** of **steel**,

32

The stress on *comrade* may fall on either syllable in Shakespeare. There is editorial and textual disagreement over this word: it is sometimes read as *courage*, which, however, violates the Accent Rules.

33

This line violates the Accent Rule by having six accents, and the syntactic break at mid-line is a minor one. Various emendations have been suggested, e.g. Are **most** se**lect** and **gen**(e)rous, **chief** in **that**.

I 3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ’Tis **told** me **he** hath **ver**y **oft** of **late**  Gi(ve)n **pri**vate **time** to **you**, and **you** your**self**  Have **of** your **au**dience **been** most **free** and **boun**teous.[[22]](#footnote-22)  If **it** be **so**—as **so** ’tis **put** on **me**,  And **that** in **way** of **cau**tion—**I** must **tell** you  You **do** not **un**der**stand** your**self** so **clear**ly As **it** be**hooves** my **daught**er **and** your **hon**or.  What **is** be**tween** you? **Give** me **up** the **truth**. |
| *Ophelia* | He **hath**, my **lord**, of **late** made **man**y **ten**ders Of **his** af**fec**tion **to** me. |
| *Polonius* | Af**fec**tion? **Pooh**, you **speak** like **a** green **girl**, Un**sift**ed **in** such **per**(i)lous **cir**cum**stance**,  Do **you** be**lieve** his **ten**ders, **as** you **call** them? |
| *Ophelia* | I **do** not **know**, my **lord**, what **I** should **think**. |
| *Polonius* | Marr**y,**\_**I** will **teach** you. **Think** your**self** a **ba**by[[23]](#footnote-23)  That **you** have **ta’en** these **ten**ders **for** true **pay**  Which **are** not **ster**ling.// Ten***der*** your**self** more **dear**ly Or—**not** to **crack** the **wind** of **the** poor **phrase**, Runn***ing*** it **thus**—you’ll **ten**der **me** a **fool**. |
| *Ophelia* | My **lord**, he **hath** im**por**tuned **me** with **love** In **hon**o**rab**le **fash**ion. |
| *Polonius* | Ay, **fash**ion **you** may **call\_(i)t.** Go **to**, go **to.** |
| *Ophelia* | And **hath** gi(ve)n **coun**t(e)nance **to** his **speech**, my **lord** With **al**most **all** the **ho**ly **vows** of **heav**en. |
| *Polonius* | Ay, **sprin**ges **to** catch **wood**cocks. **I** do **know**,  When **the** blood **burns**, how **prod**i**gal** the **soul**  Lends **the** tongue **vows**.// These **bla**zes, **daugh**ter,  Giv***ing*** more **light** than **heat**, ex**tinct** in **both**  E(v)en **in** their **prom**ise **as** it **is** a-**ma**king,  You **must** not **take** for **fi~**re. **From** this **time**  Be **some**thing **scant**er **of** your **maid**en **pres**ence,  Set **your** en**treat**ments **at** a **high**er **rate**  Than **a** com**mand** to **parl**ey. **For** Lord **Ham**let, |

Be**lieve** so **much** in **him** that **he** is **young**, And **with** a **larg**er **teth**er **may** he **walk**

Than **may** be **giv**en **you**. In **few**, O**phel**ia,

Do **not** be**lieve** his **vows**; for **they** are **bro**kers

Not **of** that **dye** which **their** in**vest**ments **show**,

But **mere** im**plor**(a)tors **of** un**ho**ly **suits**,[[24]](#footnote-24)Breath***ing*** like **sanc**ti**fied** and **pi**ous **bawds** The **bet**ter **to** be**guile**. This **is** for **all**.

I **would** not, **in** plain **terms**, from **this** time **forth** Have **you** so **slan**der **an**y **mom**ent **lei**sure As **to** give **words** or **talk** with **the** Lord **Ham**let.

Look **to’t**, I **charge** you.// **Come** your **ways**.

*Ophelia* I **shall** o**bey**, my **lord**. *Exeunt.*

I 4

Scene 4

*Enter* H, H, *and* M.

*Hamlet* The **air** bites **shrewd**ly, **it** is **ver**y **cold**.

*Horatio* It **is** a **nip**ping **and** an **ea**ger **air**.

*Hamlet* What **hou**~r **now**?

*Horatio*  I **think** it **lacks** of **twelve**.

*Marcellus* No, **it** is **struck**.

*Horatio*  In**deed**? I **heard** it **not**.

It **then** draws **near** the **sea**son

Where**in** the **spir**it **held** his **wont** to **walk**.

*A flourish of trumpets, and two pieces go off.*

What **does** this **mean**, my **lord**?

*Hamlet* The **King** doth **wake** to**night** and **takes** his **rouse**,

Keeps **wass**ail, **and** the **swagg**(e)ring **up**spring **reels**;

And **as** he **drains** his **draughts** of **Rhen**ish **down**,

The **ket**tle-**drum** and **trump**et **thus** bray **out**

The **tri**umph **of** his **pledge**.

*Horatio*  Is **it** a **cus**tom?

*Hamlet* Ay **mar**ry **is’t**,

But **to** my **mind**, though **I** am **na**tive **here**

And **to** the **man**ner **born**, it **is** a **cus**tom

More **hon**ored **in** the **breach** than **the** ob**serv**ance.

This **heav**y-**head**ed **rev**el **east** and **west**

Makes **us** tra**duced** and **taxed** of **oth**er **na**tions— They **clepe** us **drunk**ards, **and** with **swin**ish **phrase**

Soil **our** ad**dit**ion; **and** in**deed** it **takes**

From **our** a**chieve**ments, **though** per**formed** at **height**, The **pith** and **mar**row **of** our **at**tri**bute**.

So, **oft** it **chanc**es **in** par**tic**(u)lar **men**

That **for** some **vic**ious **mole** of **na**ture **in** them, As **in** their **birth**, where**in** they **are** not **guilt**y,

Since **na**ture **can**not **choose** his **or**i**gin**,

By **their** o’er**growth** of **some** com**plex**i**on**,

Oft **break**ing **down** the **pales** and **forts** of **rea**son,

Or **by** some **hab**it, **that** too **much** o’er**leav**ens

The **forms** of **plaus**ive **man**ners—**that** these **men**,

I 4

Carry***ing***, I **say**, the **stamp** of **one** de**fect**,[[25]](#footnote-25)Being **Na**ture’s **liv**e**ry** or **For**tune’s **star**,

His **vir**tues **else**, be **they** as **pure** as **grace**,

As **in**fi**nite** as **man** may **un**der**go**,

Shall **in** the **gen**(e)ral **cen**sure **take** cor**rup**tion

From **that** par**tic**(u)lar **fault**. The **dram** of **e**vil

Doth **all** the **no**ble **sub**stance **oft**en **dout** To **his** own **scan**dal.

*Enter* G.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Horatio* | **Look**, my **lord**, it **comes**. |
| *Hamlet* | An***gels*** and **min**is**ters** of **grace** de**fend** us!  Be **thou** a **spir(i)t** of **health** or **gob**lin **damned**,  Bring **with** thee **airs** from **hea(ve)n** or **blasts** from **hell**,  Be **thy** in**tents** wick***ed*** or **cha**ri**tab**le,  Thou **com’st** in **such** a **quest**io**nab**le **shape** That **I** will **speak** to **thee**. I’ll **call** thee **Ham**let, King, **fath**er, **roy**al **Dane**. O **an**swer **me.**  Let **me** not **burst** in **ig**no**rance**, but **tell**  Why **thy** ca**non**ized **bones**, hears***èd*** in **death**,[[26]](#footnote-26)  Have **burst** their **cere**ments, **why** the **sep**ul**chre**  Where**in** we **saw** thee **qui**et**ly** in**urned** Hath **op’d** his **pon**de**rous** and **mar**ble **jaws**  To **cast** thee **up** a**gain**. What **may** this **mean**,  That **thou**, dead **corse**, a**gain** in **com**plete **steel**[[27]](#footnote-27)Re**vis**its **thus** the **glimps**es **of** the **moon**,  Mak***ing*** night **hid**eous **and** we **fools** of **na**ture[[28]](#footnote-28)  So **hor**rid**ly** to **shake** our **dis**po**sit**ion  With **thoughts** be**yond** the **reach**es **of** our **souls**?  Say **why** is **this**? Where**fore**? What **should** we **do?**  *Ghost beckons.* |
| *Horatio* | It **beck**ons **you** to **go** a**way** with **it**,  As **if** it **some** im**part**ment **did** de**sire** |

To **you** a**lone**.

I 4

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Marcellus* | Look **with** what **court**eous **act**ion[[29]](#footnote-29)It **waves** you **to** a **more** re**mov**èd **ground**.  But **do** not **go** with **it.** |
| *Horatio* | No, **by** no **means**. |
| *Hamlet* | It **will** not **speak**. then **I** will **foll**ow **it.** |
| *Horatio* | Do **not**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **what** should **be** the **fear**? I **do** not **set** my **life** at **a** pin’s **fee**,  And **for** my **soul**, what **can** it **do** to **that**, Be***ing*** a **thing** im**mort**al **as** it**self**?  It **waves** me **forth** a**gain**. I’ll **foll**ow **it.** |
| *Horatio* | What **if** it **tempt** you **t(o)ward** the **flood**, my **lord**,  Or **to** the **dread**ful **sum**mit **of** the **cliff**  That **beet**les **o’er** his **base** in**to** the **sea**,  And **there** as**sume** some **oth**er **horr**(i)ble **form**[[30]](#footnote-30)[[31]](#footnote-31)Which **might** de**prive** your **sov**(e)reign**ty** of **rea**son And **draw** you **in**to **mad**ness? **Think** of **it.** The **ver**y **place** puts **toys** of **des**pe**ra**tion, With**out** more **mo**tive, **in**to **ev**ery **brain** That **looks** so **man**y **fath**oms **to** the **sea** And **hears** it **roar** be**neath**. |
| *Hamlet* | It **waves** me **still**. Go **on**, I’ll **foll**ow **thee**. |
| *Marcellus* | You **shall** not **go**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Hold **off** your **hands**. |
| *Horatio* | Be **ruled**; you **shall** not **go.** |
| *Hamlet* | My **fate** cries **out** |

And **makes** each **pet**ty **ar**tire **in** this **bod**y As h**ard**y **as** the **Ne**mean **li**on’s **nerve**.43

Still **am** I **called**. Un**hand** me, **gen**tle**men**.

By **hea(ve)n**, I’ll **make** a **ghost** of **him** that **lets** me.

I **say** a**way**. —Go **on**, I’ll **foll**ow **thee**.

*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

I 4

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Horatio* | He **wax**es **desp**(e)rate **with** i**mag**i**na**tion. |  |
| *Marcellus* | Let’s **foll**ow. ’**Tis** not **fit** thus **to** o**bey** him. |  |
| *Horatio* | Have **aft**er. **To** what **is**sue **will** this **come**? |  |
| *Marcellus* | Some**thing** is **rot**ten **in** the **state** of **Den**mark. |  |
| *Horatio* | Hea(ve)n **will** di**rect** it. |  |
| *Marcellus* | **Nay**, let’s **foll**ow **him**. | *Exeunt.* |

### Scene 5

*Enter* G *and* H.

*Hamlet* Whi(the)r **wilt** thou **lead** me? **Speak**, I’ll **go** no **fur**ther.

*Ghost* Mark **me.**

*Hamlet*  I **will**.

*Ghost*  My **hour** is **al**most **come**

When **I** to **sulph**’rous **and** tor**men**ting **flames** Must **ren**der **up** my**self**.

*Hamlet*  A**las**, poor **ghost**.

*Ghost* Pi***ty*** me **not**, but **lend** thy **ser**ious **hear**ing[[32]](#footnote-32)To **what** I **shall** un**fold**.

*Hamlet*  Speak, **I** am **bound** to **hear**.

*Ghost* So **art** thou **to** re**venge** when **thou** shalt **hear**.

*Hamlet* What?

*Ghost* I **am** thy **fath**er’s **spir**it,

Doomed **for** a **cer**tain **term** to **walk** the **night**, And **for** the **day** con**fined** to **fast** in **fires**,

Till **the** foul **crimes** done **in** my **days** of **na**ture

Are **burnt** and **purged** a**way**.// But **that** I **am** for**bid**

To **tell** the **se**crets **of** my **pris**on-**house**,

I **could** a **tale** un**fold** whose **light**est **word**

Would **har**row **up** thy **soul**, freeze **thy** young **blood**,

Make **thy** two **eyes** like **stars** start **from** their **spheres**,

Thy **knot**ted **and** com**bi**nèd **locks** to **part**,

And **each** par**tic**(u)lar **hair** to **stand** an **end** Like **quills** u**pon** the **fret**ful **por**pen**tine**.

But **this** e**ter**nal **bla**zon **must** not **be**

To **ears** of **flesh** and **blood**. List, **list**, O **list**![[33]](#footnote-33)

If **thou** didst **ev**er **thy** dear **fath**er **love**—

*Hamlet* O God!

*Ghost* Re**venge** his **foul** and **most** un**nat**ural **mur**der.

*Hamlet* Murder!

*Ghost* Mur***der*** most **foul**, as **in** the **best** it **is**,

But **this** most **foul**, strange **and** un**nat**u**ral**.

*Hamlet* Haste **me** to **know’t**, that **I** with **wings** as **swift** As **med**i**ta**tion **or** the **thoughts** of **love** May **sweep** to **my** re**venge**.

*Ghost*  I **find** thee **apt**.

And **dull**er **shouldst** thou **be** than **the** fat **weed** That **roots** it**self** in **ease** on **Le**the **wharf**,

Wouldst **thou** not **stir** in **this**. Now, **Ham**let, **hear**.

’Tis **giv**en **out** that, **sleep**ing **in** my **or**chard,

A **ser**pent **stung** me—**so\_th(e)** whole **ear** of **Den**mark

Is **by** a **for**gèd **proc**ess **of** my **death**

Rank***ly*** a**bused**—but **know**, thou **no**ble **youth**,

The **ser**pent **that** did **sting** thy **fath**er’s **life** Now **wears** his **crown**.

*Hamlet*  O **my** pro**phet**ic **soul**!

My **unc**le!

*Ghost* Ay, **that** in**cest**uous, **that** a**dult**(e)rate **beast**,[[34]](#footnote-34)

With **witch**craft **of** his **wit**, with **trait**(o)rous **gifts**— O **wick**ed **wit**, and **gifts** that **have** the **pow**er

So **to** se**duce**!—won **to** his **shame**ful **lust**

The **will** of **my** most **seem**ing-**vir**tuous **queen**.[[35]](#footnote-35)

O **Ham**let, **what** a **fall**ing **off** was **there**,[[36]](#footnote-36)

From **me**, whose **love** was **of** that **dig**ni**ty**

That **it** went **hand** in **hand** e(v)en **with** the **vow** I **made** to **her** in **mar**riage,// and **to** de**cline** U**pon** a **wretch** whose **nat**(u)ral **gifts** were **poor** To **those** of **mine**.

But **virt**ue, **as** it **nev**er **will** be **moved**,

Though **lewd**ness **court** it **in** a **shape** of **heav**en,

So **lust**, though **to** a **ra**diant **an**gel **linked**,[[37]](#footnote-37)

Will **sate** it**self** in **a** ce**lest**ial **bed** And **prey** on **gar**bage.

But **soft**, me**think**s I **scent** the **morn**ing **air**:

Brief **let** me **be.** Sleep***ing*** with**in** my **or**chard,

My **cus**tom **al**ways **of** the **aft**er**noon**,

U**pon** my **se**cure **hour** thy **unc**le **stole**[[38]](#footnote-38)

With **juice** of **curs**èd **heb**(e)non **in** a **vi**al,

And **in** the **porch**es **of** my **ears** did **pour**

The **lep**er**ous** di**stil**ment, **whose** ef**fect**

Holds **such** an **en**mi**ty** with **blood** of **man**

That **swift** as **quick**silv**er** it **cours**es **through**

The **nat**(u)ral **gates** and **al**leys **of** the **bod**y,

And **with** a **sud**den **vig**or **it** doth **poss**et

And **curd**, like **ea**ger **drop**pings **in**to **milk**,

The **thin** and **whole**some **blood**. So **did** it **mine**,

And **a** most **in**stant **tet**ter **barked** a**bout**, Most **laz**ar-**like**, with **vile** and **loath**some **crust** All **my** smooth **bod**y.

Thus **was** I, **sleep**ing, **by** a **broth**er’s **hand** Of **life**, of **crown**, of **queen** at **once** dis**patched**, Cut **off** e(v)en **in** the **bloss**oms **of** my **sin**,

Un**house**led, **dis**ap**point**ed, **un**a**neled**,

No **reck(o)**ning **made**, but **sent** to **my** ac**count** With **all** my **im**per**fec**tions **on** my **head**.

O **hor**ri**ble**! O **hor**ri**ble**! most **hor**rible!

If **thou** hast **na**ture **in** thee, **bear** it **not**,

Let **not** the **roy**al **bed** of **Den**mark **be** A **couch** for **lux**u**ry** and **damn**èd **in**cest.

But **how**som**ev**er **thou** pur**su(e)st** this **act**,

Taint **not** thy **mind** nor **let** thy **soul** con**trive**

A**gainst** thy **moth**er **aught**. Leave **her** to **heav**en,

And **to** those **thorns** that **in** her **bos**om **lodge** To **prick** and **sting** her. **Fare** thee **well** at **once**:

The **glow**-worm **shows** the **ma**tin **to** be **near**

And **gins** to **pale** his **un**ef**fec**tual **fire**.[[39]](#footnote-39)

A**dieu**, a**dieu**, a**dieu**. Re**mem**ber **me.**52  *Exit.*

*Hamlet* O **all** you **host** of **hea(ve)n**! O **earth**! What **else**?

And **shall** I **coup**le **hell**?// O **fie**! Hold, **hold**, my **heart**,53 And **you**, my **sin**ews, **grow** not **in**stant **old**, But **bear** me **stiff**ly **up.** Re**mem**ber **thee**? Ay, **thou** poor **ghost**, whiles **mem**(o)ry **holds** a **seat** In **this** dis**trac**ted **globe**. Re**mem**ber **thee**? Yea, **from** the **ta**ble **of** my **mem**o**ry**

I’ll **wipe** a**way** all **tri**vial **fond** re**cords**,54

All **saws** of **books**, all **forms**, all **press**ures **past**

That **youth** and **ob**ser**va**tion **cop**ied **there**,

And **thy** com**mand**ment **all** a**lone** shall **live**

With**in** the **book** and **vol**ume **of** my **brain**, Un**mixed** with **ba**ser **mat**ter. **Yes**, by **heav**en!55 O **most** per**nic**ious **wom**an!

O **vill**ain, **vill**ain, **smil**ing **damn**èd **vill**ain!

My **ta**bles. **Meet** it **is** I **set** it **down**

That **one** may **smile**, and **smile**, and **be** a **vill**ain—

At **least** I’m **sure** it **may** be **so** in **Den**mark. *Writes.*

So, **unc**le, **there** you **are**. Now **to** my **word**. It **is** ‘A**dieu**, a**dieu**, re**mem**ber **me.’ I** have **sworn’t**.

*Enter* H *and* M.

*Horatio* My **lord**, my **lord**.

*Marcellus*  Lord **Ham**let.

*Horatio*  **Hea(ve)ns** se**cure** him.

*Hamlet* (*aside*) So **be** it.

52

The F version requires a stress/accent mismatch in an impermissible position, i.e.

not at half-line initial, unless *Hamlet* is followed by a comma:

A**dieu**, a**dieu**, Ham***let***, re**mem**ber **me.**

53

This line has been subjected to various editorial emendations to make it conform to the Primary Accent Rule, *e.g.* the elimination of *O fie*.

54

Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /trív(i)yil/. The older stress on the second syllable of the noun *record* can be found in verse up into the nineteenth century.

55

The extra *yes* in F violates the Accent Rules:

Un**mixed** with **ba**ser **mat**ter.// Yes, **yes**, by **heav**en!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Marcellus* | Hil**lo**, ho, **ho**, my **lord**.[[40]](#footnote-40) |
| *Hamlet* | Hil**lo**, ho, **ho**, boy.// **Come**, bird, **come**. |
| *Marcellus* | How **is’t**, my **no**ble **lord**? |
| *Horatio* | What **news**, my **lord**? |
| *Hamlet* | O **won**der**ful**! |
| *Horatio* | Good **my** lord, **tell** it. |
| *Hamlet* | **No**, you **will** re**veal** it. |
| *Horatio* | Not **I**, my **lord**, by **hea(ve)n**. |
| *Marcellus* | Nor **I**, my **lord**. |

*Hamlet* How **say** you **then**, would **heart** of **man** once **think** it— But **you’ll** be **se**cret?

*Horatio & Marcellus* **Ay**, by **heav**en.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | There’s **ne’er** a **vill**ain **dwell**ing **in** all **Den**mark But **he’s** an **arr**ant **knave**. |
| *Horatio* | There **needs** no **ghost**, my **lord**, come **from** the **grave** To **tell** us **this**. |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **right**, you **are** i’th’ **right**.  And **so** with**out** more **cir**cum**stance** at **all**  I **hold** it **fit** that **we** shake **hands** and **part**,  You **as** your **busi**ness **and** de**sire** shall **point** you—  For **ev**ery **man** hath **busi**ness **and** de**sire**,  Such **as** it **is**—and **for** my **own** poor **part**,  **Look** you, **I’ll** go **pray**.[[41]](#footnote-41) |
| *Horatio* | These **are** but **wild** and **whirl**ing **words**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | I’m **sor**ry **they** of**fend** you, **heart**i**ly**— **Yes** faith, **heart**i**ly**. |
| *Horatio* | There’s **no** of**fence**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Yes **by** Saint **Pat**rick **but** there **is**, Ho**ra**tio,  And **much** of**fence** too.// Touch***ing*** this **vis**ion **here**, It **is** an **hon**est **ghost**, that **let** me **tell** you.  For **your** de**sire** to **know** what **is** be**tween** us,  O’er**mas**ter’t **as** you **may**. And **now**, good **friends**,  As **you** are **friends**,// schol***ars***, and **sol**diers, Give **me** one **poor** re**quest**. |
| *Horatio* | What **is’t**, my **lord**? We **will**. |

*Hamlet* Ne***ver*** make **known** what **you** have **seen** to**nigh**t.

*Horatio & Marcellus* 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* U**pon** my **sword**.

*Marcellus*  We\_(ha)ve **sworn**, my **lord**, al**read**y.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | In**deed**,// u**pon** my **sword**, in**deed**. |
| *Ghost* | **Swear**. |
| *Hamlet* | Ah **ha**, boy, **say’st** thou **so?**// **Art** thou **there**, true**pen**ny?  Come **on**, you **hear** this **fell**ow **in** the **cell**arage.  Con**sent** to **swear**. |
| *Horatio* | Pro**pose** the **oath**, my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Ne***ver*** to **speak** of **this** that **you** have **seen**. Swear **by** my **sword**. |
| *Ghost* | **Swear**.  *They swear.* |
| *Hamlet* | Hic **et** u**bi**que? **Then** we’ll **shift** our **ground**.  Come **hith**er, gentle**men**,  And **lay** your **hands** a**gain** u**pon** my **sword**. Ne***ver*** to **speak** of **this** that **you** have **heard**, Swear **by** my **sword.** |
| *Ghost* | **Swear**.  *They swear.* |
| *Hamlet* | Well **said**, old **mole**. Canst **work** i’th’ **earth** so **fast**?  A **worth**y **pi**o**neer**!// Once **more** re**move**, good **friends**. |
| *Horatio* | O **day** and **night**, but **this** is **won**drous **strange**. |
| *Hamlet* | And **there**fore **as** a **strang**er **give** it **wel**come,  There **are** more **things** in **hea(ve)n** and **earth**, Ho**ra**tio, Than **are** dreamt **of** in **your** phil**os**o**phy**. But **come**,  Here, **as** be**fore**, ne***ver***, so **help** you **mer**cy, |

How **strange** or **odd** some**’er** I **bear** my**self**—

As **I** per**chance** here**aft**er **shall** think **meet**

To **put** an **an**tic **dis**po**sit**ion **on**—

That **you**, at **such** time **seeing** me, **nev**er **shall**,[[42]](#footnote-42)

With **arms** en**cum**bered **thus**, or **this** head-**shake**

Or **by** pro**noun**cing **of** some **doubt**ful **phrase**,

As ‘**Well**, we **know**’, or// ‘We **could** an **if** we **would**’,

Or ‘**If** we **list** to **speak**’, or// ‘There **be** an **if** they **might**’,

Or **such** am**big**uous **giv**ing **out**, to **note**[[43]](#footnote-43)That **you** know **aught** of **me** —this **not** to **do**,

So **grace** and **mer**cy **at** your **most** need **help** you.

*Ghost* **Swear.**  *They swear.*

*Hamlet* Rest, **rest**, per**tur**bèd **spir(i)t.** So, **gen**tle**men**,

With **all** my **love** I **do** com**mend** me **to** you;

And **what** so **poor** a **man** as **Ham**let **is** May **do** t’ex**press** his **love** and **friend**ing **to** you, God **will**ing, **shall** not **lack**.// Let **us** go **in** to**geth**er. And **still** your **fing**ers **on** your **lips**, I **pray**.

The **time** is **out** of **joint**. O **curs**èd **spite**, That **ev**er **I** was **born** to **set** it **right**.

Nay, **come**, let’s **go** to**geth**er. *Exeunt.*

## Act II

### Scene 1

*Enter* P *and* R.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Polonius* | Give **him** this **mon**ey **and** these **notes**, Rey**nal**do. |
| *Reynaldo* | I **will**, my **lord**. |
| *Polonius* | You **shall** do **marv**(e)llous **wise**ly, **good** Rey**nal**do,  Be**fore** you **vis**it **him**, to **make** in**quire** Of **his** be**ha**vior. |
| *Reynaldo* | My **lord**, I **did** in**tend** it. |
| *Polonius* | Marr***y***, well **said**, ver***y*** well **said**.// **Look** you, **sir**,  In**quire** me **first** what **Dansk**ers **are** in **Par**is,  And **how**, and **who**, what **means**, and **where** they **keep**,  What **com**pan**y**, at **what** ex**pense**; and **findi**ng  By **this** en**com**pass**ment** and **drift** of **ques**tion  That **they** do **know** my **son,** come **you** more **near**er Than **your** par**ti**cu**lar** de**mands** will **touch** it.  Take **you** as ’**twere** some **dis**tant **know**ledge **of** him,  And **thus**, ‘I **know** his **fath**er, **and** his **friends**,  And **in** part **him**’—do **you** mark **this**, Rey**nal**do? |
| *Reynaldo* | Ay, **ver**y **well**, my **lord**. |
| *Polonius* | ‘And **in** part **him**. But’, **you** may **say**, ‘not **well**;  But **if’t** be **he** I **mean**, he’s **ver**y **wild**,  Ad**dic**ted **so** and **so**’—and **there** put **on** him  What f**or**ge**ries** you **please**—// **marr**y, **none** so **rank**  As **may** dis**hon**or **him**—take **heed** of **that**—  But, **sir**, such **wan**ton, **wild**, and **u**sual **slips**[[44]](#footnote-44)As **are** com**pan**ions **no**ted **and** most **known** To **youth** and **lib**er**ty**. |
| *Reynaldo* | As **ga**ming, **m(y)\_lord**? |
| *Polonius* | **Ay**, or **drink**ing, **fenc**ing, **swear**ing, **quar**relling,  **Drab**bing//—**you** may **go** so **far**.[[45]](#footnote-45) |
| *Reynaldo* | My **lord**, that **would** dis**hon**or him. |
| II 1 |  | |
| *Polonius* | ’Faith **no**, as **you** may **seas**(o)n\_it **in** the **charge**,  You **must** not **put** a**noth**er **scan**dal **on** him,  That **he** is **o**pen **to** in**con**ti**nen**cy—  That’s **not** my **mean**ing;// but **breathe** his **faults** so **quaint**ly  That **they** may **seem** the **taints** of **lib**er**ty**,  The **flash** and **out**break **of** a **fier**y **mind**,  A **sav**age**ness** in **un**re**claim**èd **blood**, Of **gen**e**ral** as**sault**. | |
| *Reynaldo* | But **my** good **lord**— | |
| *Polonius* | Where**fore** should **you** do **this**? | |
| *Reynaldo* | **Ay**, my **lord**, I **would** know **that**. | |
| *Polonius* | **Ma(rr)y**, sir, **here’s** my **drift**, And **I** be**lieve** it **is** a **fetch** of **war**rant.  You **lay**ing **these** slight **sull**ies **on** my **son**,  As ’**twere** a **thing** a **lit**tle **soiled** i’th’ **work**ing,  Mark **you**, your **par**ty **in** con**verse**,// him **you** would **sound**,  Hav***ing*** e(v)er **seen** in **the** pre**nom**(i)nate **crimes**  The **youth** you **breathe** of **guilt**y, **be** as**sured** He **clo**ses **with** you **in** this **con**se**quence**:  ‘Good **sir**’, or **so**, or ‘**friend**’, or ‘**gen**tle**man**’, Ac**cord**ing **to** the **phrase** and **the** ad**dit**ion Of **man** and **coun**try. | |
| *Reynaldo* | **Ver**y **good**, my **lord**. | |
| *Polonius* | And **then**, sir, **does** he **this**—he does—what was I about to say? By the mass, I was about to say something. Where did I leave? | |
| *Reynaldo* | At ‘closes in the consequence’. | |
| *Polonius* | At ‘**clo**ses **in** the **con**se**quence**’, ay, **mar**ry. | |

He **clo**ses **thus**: ‘I **know** the **gen**tle**man**,

1. **saw** him **yes**ter**day**’, or ‘**th’oth**er **day**’,

Or **then**, or **then**,// with **such** or **such**, ‘and **as** you **say**,

There **was** a **ga**ming’, ‘**there** o’er**took** in’s **rouse**’,

‘There **fall**ing **out** at **ten**nis’, **or** per**chance** ‘I **saw** him **en**ter **such** a **house** of **sale**’— Vi**del**i**cet** a **broth**el, **or** so **forth**.

**See** you **now**,

Your **bait** of **false**hood **takes** this **carp** of **truth**;

And **thus** do **w**e of **wis**dom **and** of **reach**,

1. 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | With **wind**lass**es** and **with** as**says** of **bi**as, By **in**di**rec**tions **find** di**rec**tions **out**.  So **by** my **form**er **lec**ture **and** ad**vice**  Shall **you** my **son**. You **have** me, **have** you **not**? |  |
| *Reynaldo* | My **lord**, I **have**. |  |
| *Polonius* | God **buy** ye, **fare** ye **well**. |  |
| *Reynaldo* | **Good** my **lord**. |  |
| *Polonius* | Ob**serve** his **in**cli**na**tion **in** your**self**. |  |
| *Reynaldo* | I **shall**, my **lord**. |  |
| *Polonius* | And **let** him **ply** his **mu**sic. |  |
| *Reynaldo* | **Well**, my **lord**.  *Enter* O. | *Exit.* |
| *Polonius* | Fare**well**. How **now**, O**phe**lia, **what’s** the **mat**ter? |  |
| *Ophelia* | A**las**, my **lord**, I **have** been **so** af**fright**ed.[[46]](#footnote-46) |  |
| *Polonius* | With **what**, i’th’ **name** of **God**? |  |
| *Ophelia* | My **lord**, as **I** was **sew**ing **in** my **clos**et,  Lord **Ham**let, **with** his **doub**let **all** un**braced**,  No **hat** u**pon** his **head**, his **stock**ings **fouled**,  Un**gar**tered **and** down-**gyv**èd **to** his **ank**le,  Pale **as** his **shirt**, his **knees** knock***ing*** each **oth**er,  And **with** a **look** so **pit**eous **in** pur**port**[[47]](#footnote-47)  As **if** he **had** been **loos**èd **out** of **hell**  To **speak** of **horr**ors,// he **comes** be**fore** me. |  |
| *Polonius* | Mad **for** thy **love**? |  |
| *Ophelia* | My **lord**, I **do** not **know**, But **tru**ly **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 **oth**er **hand** thus **o’er** his **brow**  He **falls** to **such** pe**ru**sal **of** my **face**  As **he** would **draw** it.// Long **stayed** he **so.** At **last**, a **lit**tle **shak**ing **of** mine **arm**, |  |
| II 1 | And **thrice** his **head** thus **wav**ing **up** and **down**,  He **raised** a **sigh** so **pit**eous **and** pro**found**  As **it** did **seem** to **shat**ter **all** his **bulk**  And **end** his **being**. That **done**, he **lets** me **go**,  And **with** his **head** o**ver** his **should**er **turned**  He **seemed** to **find** his **way** with**out** his **eyes**, For **out** o’**doors** he **went** with**out** their **helps**, And **to** the **last** bend***èd*** their **light** on **me.** | | |
| *Polonius* | Come, **go** with **me**, I **will** go **seek** the **King**.  This **is** the **ver**y **ec**sta**sy** of **love**,  Whose **vi**(o)lent **prop**er**ty** for**does** it**self**  And **leads** the **will** to **desp**(e)rate **un**der**tak**ings  As **oft** as **an**y **pass**ion **un**der **heav**en  That **does** af**flict** our **na**tures. **I** am **sor**ry—  What, **have** you **gi(ve)n** him **an**y\_(h)ard **words** of **late**? | | |
| *Ophelia* | No, **my** good **lord**, but **as** you **did** com**mand**, I **did** re**pel** his **let**ters **and** de**nied** His **ac**cess **to** me. | | |
| *Polonius* | **That** hath **made** him **mad**.  I\_(a)m **sor**ry **that** with **bet**ter **heed** and **judg**ment  I **had** not **quot**ed **him**.// I **feared** he **did** but **tri**fle And **meant** to **wrack** thee. **But** be**shrew** my **jeal**ousy!  By **hea(ve)n**, it **is** as **prop**er **to** our **age**  To **cast** be**yond** our**selves** in **our** o**pin**ions  As **it** is **com**mon **for** the **young**er **sort**  To **lack** dis**cret**ion. **Come**, go **we** to\_th(e) **King**.  This **must** be **known**, which, **being** kept **close**, might **move** More **grief** to **hide** than **hate** to **ut**ter **love**. | | |

Come. *Exeunt.*

### Scene 2

*Enter* K *and* Q, R *and* G.

*King* Wel***come***, dear **Ro**sen**crantz** and **Guild**en**stern**. More**o**ver **that** we **much** did **long** to **see** you,

The **need** we **have** to **use** you **did** pro**voke**

Our **hast**y **send**ing. **Some**thing **have** you **heard**

Of **Ham**let’s **trans**for**ma**tion—**so** I **call** it,[[48]](#footnote-48)

Sith **nor** th’ex**ter**ior **nor** the **in**ward **man**[[49]](#footnote-49)

Re**sem**bles **that** it **was**. What **it** should **be**,

More **than** his **fath**er’s **death**, that **thus** hath **put** him

So **much** from **th’un**der**stand**ing **of** him**self**

I **can**not **dream** of. **I** en**treat** you **both**

That, **being** of **so** young **days** brought **up** with **him**,

And **sith** so **neigh**bored **to** his **youth** and **ha**vior,

That **you** vouch**safe** your **rest** here **in** our **court**

Some **lit**tle **time**, so **by** your **com**pa**nies**

To **draw** him **on** to **pleas**ures **and** to **gath**er,

So **much** as **from** oc**ca**sion **you** may **glean**, Whe(the)r **aught** to **us** un**known** af**flicts** him **thus** That, **o**pened, **lies** with**in** our **rem**e**dy**.

*Queen* Good **gen**tle**men**, he **hath** much **talked** of **you**,

And **sure** I **am**, two **men** there **is** not **liv**ing

To **whom** he **more** ad**heres**. If **it** will **please** you

To **show** us **so** much **gen**try **and** good **will**

As **to** ex**pend** your **time** with **us** a**while**

For **the** sup**ply** and **prof**it **of** our **hope**, Your **vis**i**ta**tion **shall** re**ceive** such **thanks** As **fits** a **king’s** re**mem**brance.

*Rosen.*  **Both** your **Maj**esties

Might, **by** the **sov**(e)reign **pow(e)r** you **have** of **us**, Put **your** dread **pleas**ures **more** in**to** com**mand** Than **to** en**trea**ty.

*Guilden.* **But** we **both** o**bey**

And **here** give **up** our**selves** in **the** full **bent**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | To **lay** our **ser**vice **free**ly **at** your **feet**66 To **be** com**mand**ed. |
| *King* | Thanks, **Ro**sen**crantz** and **gen**tle **Guild**en**stern**. |
| *Queen* | Thanks, **Guild**en**stern** and **gen**tle **Ro**sen**crantz**. And **I** be**seech** you **in**stant**ly** to **vis**it  My **too** much **chang**èd **son**. Go, **some** of **you**, And **bring** these **gen**tle**men** where **Ham**let **is.** |
| *Guilden.* | Hea(ve)ns **make** our **pres**ence **and** our **prac**ti**ces** Pleas***ant*** and **help**ful **to** him. |
| *Queen* | **Ay**, a**men**.  *Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*  *Enter* P. |
| *Polonius* | Th’am**bass**a**dor**s from **Nor**way, **my** good **lord**, Are **joy**ful**ly** re**turned**. |
| *King* | Thou **still** hast **been** the **fath**er **of** good **news**. |
| *Polonius* | Have **I**, my **lord**? As**sure** you, **my** good **liege**,67  I **hold** my **du**ty **as** I **hold** my **soul**,  Both **to** my **God** and **to** my **gra**cious **King**;  And **I** do **think**—or **else** this **brain** of **mine**  Hunts **not** the **trail** of **pol**i**cy** so **sure**  As **it** hath **used** to **do**—that **I** have **found** The **ver**y **cause** of **Ham**let’s **lu**na**cy**. |
| *King* | O **speak** of **that**, that **do** I **long** to **hear**. |
| *Polonius* | Give **first** ad**mit**tance **to** th’am**bass**a**dors**.  My **news** shall **be** the **fruit** to **that** great **feast**. |
| *King* | Thy**self** do **grace** to **them** and **bring** them **in.**  *Exit Polonius.*  He **tells** me, **my** dear **Ger**trude, **he** hath **found**  The **head** and **source** of **all** your **son’s** dis**tem**per. |
| *Queen* | I **doubt** it **is** no **oth**er **but** the **main**, |

66

The plural *services* in F could be reduced to two syllables by syncopation, though this would be a violation of the Resonant Rule, as neither /v/ nor /s/ is a resonant: To **lay** our **serv**(i)ces **free**ly **at** your **feet**

67

Q2 has a stress/accent mismatch:

Have **I**, my **lord**? I ***as***sure **my** good **liege**,

His **fath**er’s **death** and **our** o’er-**hast**y **mar**riage.[[50]](#footnote-50)*King* Well, **we** shall **sift** him.

*Enter* P, V, *and* C.

**Wel**come, **my** good **friends**.

Say, **Vol**te**mand**, what **from** our **broth**er **Nor**way? *Voltem.* Most **fair** re**turn** of **greet**ings **and** de**sires**.

U**pon** our **first**, he **sent** out **to** sup**press**

His **neph**ew’s **lev**ies, **which** to **him** ap**peared**

To **be** a **prep**a**ra**tion **’gainst** the **Po**lack;

But **bet**ter **looked** in**to**, he **tru**ly **found**

It **was** a**gainst** your **High**ness; **where**at **grieved**

That **so** his **sick**ness, **age**, and **im**po**tence**

Was **false**ly **borne** in **hand**, sends **out** ar**rests** On **For**tin**bras**; which **he**, in **brief**, o**beys**,

Re**ceives** re**buke** from **Nor**way, **and**, in **fine**,

Makes **vow** be**fore** his **unc**le **nev**er **more**

To **give** th’as**say** of **arms** a**gainst** your **Maj**esty,

Where**on** old **Nor**way, **ov**er**come** with **joy**,

Gives **him** three **thou**sand **crowns** in **an**nual **fee**[[51]](#footnote-51)

And **his** com**mis**sion **to** em**ploy** those **sol**diers

So **lev**ied, **as** be**fore**, a**gainst** the **Po**lack,

With **an** en**treat**y, **here**in **fur**ther **shown**,

That **it** might **please** you **to** give **qui**et **pass**

Through **your** do**min**ions **for** this **en**ter**prise** On **such** re**gards** of **safe**ty **and** al**low**ance As **there**in **are** set **down**.

*King*  It **likes** us **well**;

And **at** our **more** con**sid**ered **time** we’ll **read**,

An***swer***, and **think** u**pon** this **bus**i**ness**.[[52]](#footnote-52)Mean**time**, we **thank** you **for** your **well**-took **la**bor.

Go **to** your **rest**; at **night** we’ll **feast** to**geth**er.

Most **wel**come **home**.  *Exeunt Voltemand and Cornelius.*

*Polonius*  This **busi**ness **is** well **end**ed.71

My **liege** and **ma**dam, **to** ex**pos**tu**late**

What **maj**es**ty** should **be**, what **du**ty **is**,

Why **day** is **day**, night **night**, and **time** is **time**,

Were **noth**ing **but** to **waste** night, **day**, and **time**.

There**fore**, since **brev**(i)ty **is** the **soul** of **wit**,72

And **te**dious**ness** the **limbs** and **out**ward **flour**ishes,73

I **will** be **brief**. Your **no**ble **son** is **mad**.

Mad **call** I **it**, for **to** de**fine** true **mad**ness,

What **is’t** but **to** be **noth**ing **else** but **mad**?

But **let** that **go.**

*Queen*  More **mat**ter **with** less **art**.

*Polonius* Ma**dam**, I **swear** I **use** no **art** at **all**.

That **he** is **mad** ’tis **true**; ’tis **true** ’tis **pi**ty;74

And **pi**ty ’**tis** ’tis **true**; A **fool**ish **fig**ure—

But **fare**well **it**, for **I** will **use** no **art**.

Mad **let** us **grant** him **then**. And **now** re**mains**

That **we** find **out** the **cause** of **this** ef**fect**,

Or **rath**er **say** the **cause** of **this** de**fect**, For **this** ef**fect** de**fect**ive **comes** by **cause**. Thus **it** re**mains**; and **the** re**main**der **thus**.

Per**pend**.

I **have** a **daught**er—**have** while **she** is **mine**— Who **in** her **du**ty **and** o**be**dience, **mark**,75 Hath **gi(ve)n** me **this**. Now **gath**er **and** sur**mise**. (*Reads.*) ‘To the celestial and my soul’s idol, the most beautified Ophelia’—That’s an ill phrase, a vile phrase, ‘beautified’ is a vile phrase. But you shall hear—‘these; in her excellent white bosom, these, et cetera.’

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Queen* | Came **this** from **Ham**let **to** her? |
| *Polonius* | Good **mad**am, **stay** a**while**, I **will** be **faith**ful.  ‘Doubt **thou** the **stars** are **fire**,  Doubt **that** the **sun** doth **move**, Doubt **truth** to **be** a **li**ar, But **nev**er **doubt** I **love**.  O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers. I have not art to reckon my groans. But that I love thee best, O most best, believe it. Adieu.  Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine is to him,  Hamlet.’  This **in** o**be**dience **hath** my **daught**er **shown** me,  And, **more** a**bove**, hath **his** so**lic**it**ings**,  As **they** fell **out** by **time**, by **means**, and **place**, All **giv**en **to** mine **ear**. |
| *King* | But **how** hath **she** Re**ceived** his **love**? |
| *Polonius* | What **do** you **think** of **me?** |
| *King* | As **of** a **man** faith***ful*** and **hon**o**rab**le. |
| *Polonius* | I **would** fain **prove** so. **But** what **might** you **think**,  When **I** had **seen** this **hot** love **on** the **wing**— As **I** per**ceived** it, **I** must **tell** you **that**, |

Be**fore** my **daught**er **told** me—**what** might **you**

Or **my** dear **Maj**es**ty** your **queen** here **think**,

If **I** had **played** the **desk** or **ta**ble-**book**,

Or **gi(ve)n** my **heart** a **wink**ing **mute** and **dumb**,

Or **looked** u**pon** this **love** with **i**dle **sight**— What **might** you **think**? No, **I** went **round** to **work**, And **my** young **mis**tress **thus** I **did** be**speak**:

‘Lord **Ham**let **is** a **prince** out **of** thy **star**.

This **must** not **be**.’ And **then** I **pres**cripts **gave** her,

That **she** should **lock** he**rself** from **his** re**sort**,

Ad**mit** no **mess**en**gers**, re**ceive** no **to**kens;

Which **done**, she **took** the **fruits** of **my** ad**vice**,

And **he**, re**puls**èd—**a** short **tale** to **make**—

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Fell **in**to\_a **sad**ness, **then** in**to** a **fast**,76  Thence **to** a **watch**,// **thence** in**to** a **weak**ness,  Thence **to** a **light**ness, **and**, by **this** de**clen**sion, In**to** the **mad**ness **where**in **now** he **raves** And **all** we **mourn** for. |
| *King* | **Do** you **think** ’tis **this**? |
| *Queen* | It **may** be; **ver**y **like**. |
| *Polonius* | Hath **there** been **such** a **time**—I’d **fain** know **that**—  That **I** have **pos**i**tiv**ely **said** ‘’Tis **so**’, When **it** proved **oth**er**wise**? |
| *King* | Not **that** I **know**. |
| *Polonius* | Take **this** from **this** if **this** be **oth**er**wise**.  If **cir**cum**stanc**es **lead** me, **I** will **find**  Where **truth** is **hid**, though **it** were **hid** in**deed** With**in** the **cen**ter. |
| *King* | How **may** we **try** it **fur**ther? |
| *Polonius* | You **know** some**times** he **walks** four **hours** to**geth**er Here **in** the **lob**by. |
| *Queen* | **So** he **does** in**deed**. |
| *Polonius* | At **such** a **time** I’ll **loose** my **daught**er **to** him.  Be **you** and **I** be**hind** an **arr**as **then**,  Mark **the** en**coun**ter. **If** he **love** her **not**,  And **be** not **from** his **rea**son **fall(e)n** there**on**, Let **me** be **no** as**sis**tant **for** a **state**, But **keep** a **farm** and **cart**ers. |
| *King* | **We** will **try** it. *Enter* H, *reading a book.* |
| *Queen* | But **look** where **sad**ly **the** poor **wretch** comes **read**ing. |
| *Polonius* | A**way**, I **do** be**seech** you **both**, a**way**.  I’ll **board** him **pres**ent**ly**. O **give** me **leave**.  *Exeunt King and Queen.*  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. |

76

Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ínt(u)wasædnis/.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *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 picked out of ten thousand. |
| *Polonius* | That’s very true, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion—Have you a daughter? |
| *Polonius* | I have, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Let her not walk i’th’ sun. Conception is a blessing, but 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; a said I was a fishmonger. A is far gone. And truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love, very near this. I’ll speak to him again. —What do you read, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | Words, words, words. |
| *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 gray beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams—all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down. For yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am—if like a crab you could go backward. |
| *Polonius* | (*aside*) Though this be madness, yet there is method in’t. —Will you walk out of the air, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | Into my grave? |
| *Polonius* | Indeed, that’s out of the air. (*aside*) How pregnant sometimes his replies are—a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. —My lord, I will take my leave of you. |
| *Hamlet* | You cannot, sir, take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal—except my life, except my life, except my life. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Polonius* | Fare you well, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | These tedious old fools.  *Enter* R *and* G. |
| *Polonius* | You go to seek the Lord Hamlet. There he is. |
| *Rosen.* | God save you, sir. *Exit Polonius.* |
| *Guilden.* | My honored lord. |
| *Rosen.* | My most dear lord. |
| *Hamlet* | My excellent good friends. How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz. Good lads, how do you both? |
| *Rosen.* | As the indifferent children of the earth. |
| *Guilden.* | Happy in that we are not over-happy. On Fortune’s cap we are not the very button. |
| *Hamlet* | Nor the soles of her shoe? |
| *Rosen.* | Neither, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favors? |
| *Guilden.* | Faith, her privates we. |
| *Hamlet* | In the secret parts of Fortune? O most true, she is a strumpet. What news? |
| *Rosen.* | None, my lord, but the world’s grown honest*.* |
| *Hamlet* | Then is doomsday near. But your news is not true. Let me question more in particular. What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune that she sends you to prison hither? |
| *Guilden.* | Prison, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | Denmark’s a prison. |
| *Rosen.* | Then is the world one. |
| *Hamlet* | A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o’th’ worst. |
| *Rosen.* | 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. |
| *Rosen.* | Why, then your ambition makes it one: ’tis too narrow for your mind. |
| *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. |
| *Guilden.* | 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. |
| *Rosen.* | Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it |

is but a shadow’s shadow.

*Hamlet* Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars’ shadows. Shall we to th’ court?

For by my fay, I cannot reason. *Rosen. & Guilden.* We’ll wait upon you.

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| *Hamlet* | No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore? |
| *Rosen.* | 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, come, deal justly with me. Come, come. Nay, speak. |
| *Guilden.* | What should we say, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | 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 color. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you. |
| *Rosen.* | To what end, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer can charge you withal, be even and direct with me whether you were sent for or no. |
| *Rosen.* | (*aside to Guildenstern*) What say you? |
| *Hamlet* | Nay, then I have an eye of you. If you love me, hold not off. |
| *Guilden.* | My lord, we were sent for. |
| *Hamlet* | I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame 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 nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors. 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—nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

*Rosen.* My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

*Hamlet* Why did ye laugh then, when I said man delights not me?

*Rosen.* 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 on me, the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target, the lover shall not sigh gratis, the humorous man shall end his part in peace, the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle a th’ sear, and the lady shall say her mind freely—or the blank verse shall halt for’t. What players are they?

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

*Hamlet* How chances it they travel? Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

*Rosen.* I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

*Hamlet* Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so followed?

*Rosen.* No, indeed are they not.

*Hamlet* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

*Rosen.* Nay, their endeavor keeps in the wonted pace; but there is, sir, and eyrie of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for’t. These are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages—so they call them—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills and dare scarce come thither.

*Hamlet* What, are they children? Who maintains ’em? How are they escotted? Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? Will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players—as is most like, if their means are no

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | better—their writers do them wrong to make them exclaim against their own succession? |
| *Rosen.* | Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin to tar them to controversy. There was for a while no money bid for argument unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question. |
| *Hamlet* | Is’t possible? |
| *Guilden.* | O, there has been much throwing about of brains. |
| *Hamlet* | Do the boys carry it away? |
| *Rosen.* | Ay, that they do, my lord, Hercules and his load too. |
| *Hamlet* | It is not very strange; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mouths at him while my father lived give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little. ’Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. *A flourish of trumpets.* |
| *Guilden.* | There are the players. |
| *Hamlet* | Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then. 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 deceived. |
| *Guilden.* | 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* P. |
| *Polonius* | Well be with you, gentlemen. |
| *Hamlet* | Hark you, Guildenstern, and you too—at each ear a hearer. That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddlingclouts. |
| *Rosen.* | Happily he is 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 then 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 honor— |
| *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, tragicalhistorical, 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 a treasure had he, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | Why,  **One** fair **daught**er **and** no **more**,  The **which** he **lov**èd **pass**ing **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* | Why,  **As** by **lot** God **wot**, and then, you know,  It **came** to **pass**, as most **like** it **was**.  The first row of the pious chanson will show you more, for look where my abridgement comes.  *Enter the* P.  You are welcome, masters. Welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. O, old friend, why, thy face is valanced 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 by the altitude of a chopine. Pray God your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome. We’ll e’en to’t like French falconers, fly at anything we see. We’ll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of your quality. Come, a passionate speech. |
| *1st Player* | What speech, my good lord? |
| *Hamlet* | I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted, or if it was, not above once—for the play, I remember, pleased |

not the million, ’twas caviare to the general. But it was, as I received it—and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savory, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affection, but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in’t I chiefly loved—’twas Aeneas’ tale to Dido —and thereabout of it especially when he speaks of Priam’s slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line—let me

see, let me see—

The **rug**ged **Pyr**rhus, **like** th’Hyr**ca**nian **beast**—

’Tis not so. It begins with Pyrrhus—

The **rug**ged **Pyr**rhus, **he** whose **sa**ble **arms**,

Black **as** his **pur**pose, **did** the **night** re**sem**ble

When **he** lay **couch**èd **in** the **om**(i)nous **horse**,

Hath **now** this **dread** and **black** com**plex**ion **smeared**

With **her**ald**ry** more **dis**mal. **Head** to **foot**

Now **is** he **to**tal **gules**, hor***rid***ly **tricked**[[53]](#footnote-53)

With **blood** of **fath**ers, **moth**ers, **daught**ers, **sons**,

Baked **and** im**past**ed **with** the **parch**ing **streets**,

That **lend** a **tyr**(a)nnous **and** a **dam**nèd **light**[[54]](#footnote-54)

To **their** lord’s **mur**der.// Roast***ed*** in **wrath** and **fire**,

And **thus** o’er**siz**èd **with** co**ag**(u)late **gore**, With **eyes** like **car**bun**cles**, the **hell**ish **Pyr**rhus Old **grand**sire **Pri**am **seeks**.

So proceed you.

*Polonius* ’Fore God, my lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

*1st Player*  A**non** he **finds** him,

Strik***ing*** too **short** at **Greeks**. His **an**tique **sword**,[[55]](#footnote-55)

Re**bell**ious **to** his **arm**, lies **where** it **falls**,

Re**pug**nant **to** com**mand**. Un**e**qual **matched**, Pyr***rhus*** at **Pri**am **drives**, in **rage** strikes **wide**;

But **with** the **whiff** and **wind** of **his** fell **sword**

Th’un**nerv**èd **fath**er **falls**. Then **sense**less **Il**ium,

Seem***ing*** to **feel** this **blow**, with **fla**ming **top**

Stoops **to** his **base**, and **with** a **hid**eous **crash**[[56]](#footnote-56)

Takes **pris**(o)ner **Pyr**rhus’ **ear**. For **lo**, his **sword**,

Which **was** de**cli**ning **on** the **milk**y **head**

Of **rev**(e)rend **Pri**am, **seemed** i’**th’air** to **stick**;

So, **as** a **paint**ed **ty**rant, **Pyr**rhus **stood**, And **like** a **neu**tral **to** his **will** and **mat**ter, Did **noth**ing.

But **as** we **oft**en **see** a**gainst** some **storm**

A **si**lence **in** the **hea(ve)ns**, the **rack** stand **still**,

The **bold** winds **speech**less, **and** the **orb** be**low**

As **hush** as **death**, a**non** the **dread**ful **thun**der

Doth **rend** the **re**gion;// so **aft**er **Pyr**rhus’ **pause**

A**rous**èd **ven**geance **sets** him **new** a**work**, And **nev**er **did** the **Cy**clops’ **ham**mers **fall**

On **Mar**s’s **arm**or, **forged** for **proof** e**terne**, With **less** re**morse** than **Pyr**rhus’ **bleed**ing **sword** Now **falls** on **Pri**am.

Out, **out**, thou **strump**et **For**tune! **All** you **gods** In **gen**(e)ral **syn**od **take** a**way** her **pow**er,

Break **all** the **spokes** and **fell**ies **from** her **wheel**, And **bowl** the **round** nave **down** the **hill** of **heav**en As **low** as **to** the **fiends**.

*Polonius* This is too long.

*Hamlet* It shall to the barber’s with your beard. —Prithee say on. He’s for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps. Say on, come to Hecuba.

*1st Player* But **who**—ah, **woe**!—had **seen** the **mob**bled **queen**— *Hamlet* ‘The mobbled queen’.

*Polonius* That’s good.

*1st Player* Run **bare**foot **up** and **down**, threat(e)***ning*** the **flames** With **bis**son **rheum**, a **clout** u**pon** that **head**

Where **late** the **di**(a)dem **stood**, and, **for** a **robe**,

A**bout** her **lank** and **all** o’er**teem**èd **loins**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | A **blank**et, **in** th’a**larm** of **fear** caught **up**—  Who **this** had **seen**, with **tongue** in **ven**om **steeped**, ’Gainst **For**tune’s **state** would **trea**son **have** pron**ounced**.  But **if** the **gods** them**selves** did **see** her **then**,  When **she** saw **Pyr**rhus **make** ma**lic**ious **sport**  In **minc**ing **with** his **sword** her **hus**band’s **limbs**,  The **in**stant **burst** of **cla**mor **that** she **made**,  Un**less** things **mor**tal **move** them **not** at **all**,  Would **have** made **milch** the **burn**ing **eyes** of **heav**en And **pass**ion **in** the **gods**. |
| *Polonius* | Look whe’er he has not turned his color 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 bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live. |
| *Polonius* | My lord, I will use them according to their desert. |
| *Hamlet* | God’s bodkin, man, much better. Use every man after his desert, and who shall scape whipping? Use them after your own honor and dignity: the less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in. |
| *Polonius* | Come, sirs. |
| *Hamlet* | Follow him, friends. We’ll hear a play tomorrow. Dost thou hear me, old friend? Can you play The Murder of Gonzago? |
| *1st Player* | Ay, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | We’ll ha’t tomorrow 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? |
| *1st Player* | Ay, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Very well. Follow that lord, and look you mock him not.  *Exeunt Polonius and Players.* My good friends, I’ll leave you till night. You are welcome to Elsinore. |
| *Rosen.* | Good my lord. *Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.* |

*Hamlet* Ay, **so**, God **bye** you. **Now** I **am** a**lone**.[[57]](#footnote-57)O **what** a **rogue** and **peas**ant **slave** am **I**!

Is **it** not **mon**strous **that** this **play**er **here**,

But **in** a **fic**tion, **in** a **dream** of **pass**ion,

Could **force** his **soul** so **to** his **own** con**ceit**

That **from** her **work**ing **all** his **vis**age **wanned**,

Tears **in** his **eyes**, di**strac**tion **in’s** as**pect**,[[58]](#footnote-58)A **brok**en **voice**, and **his** whole **func**tion **suit**ing With **forms** to **his** con**ceit**? and **all** for **noth**ing!

For **Hec**uba!

What’s **Hec**u**ba** to **him**, or **he** to **Hec**uba,[[59]](#footnote-59)

That **he** should **weep** for **her**? What **would** he **do**

Had **he** the **mo**tive **and** the **cue** for **pass**ion That **I** have? **He** would **drown** the **stage** with **tears**,

And **cleave** the **gen**(e)ral **ear** with **hor**rid **speech**,

Make **mad** the **guilt**y **and** ap**pal** the **free**,

Con**found** the **ig**n(o)rant, **and** a**maze** in**deed**

The **ver**y **fac**ul**ties** of **eyes** and **ears**.// Yet **I,**

A **dull** and **mud**dy-**mett**led **ras**cal, **peak**

Like **John**-a-**dreams**, un**preg**nant **of** my **cause**,

And **can** say **noth**ing—**no**, not **for** a **king**, U**pon** whose **prop**er**ty** and **most** dear **life** A **damned** de**feat** was **made**. Am **I** a **cow**ard? Who **calls** me **vill**ain, **breaks** my **pate** a**cross**,

Plucks **off** my **beard** and **blows** it **in** my **face**,

Tweaks **me** by\_th(e) **nose**, gives **me** the **lie** i’th’ **throat** As **deep** as **to** the **lungs**—who **does** me **this**?

**Ha**, ’swounds, **I** should **take\_(i)t**: for\_(i)t **can**not **be**

But **I** am **pig**eon-**liv**ered **and** lack **gall**

To **make** op**press**ion **bit**ter, **or** ere **this** I **should** ha’ **fat**ted **all** the **re**gion **kites**

With **this** slave’s **off**al. **Blood**y, **bawd**y **vill**ain!

Re**morse**less, **treach**(e)rous, **lech**(e)rous, **kind**less **vill**ain!

O **ven**geance!

Why, **what** an **ass** am **I**! This **is** most **brave**,[[60]](#footnote-60)

That **I,** the **son** of **a** dear **fath**er **mur**dered,[[61]](#footnote-61)

Prompt***ed*** to **my** re**venge** by **hea(ve)n** and **hell**,

Must **like** a **whore** un**pack** my **heart** with **words** And **fall** a-**curs**ing **like** a **ver**y **drab**, A **scull**ion! **fie** u**pon’t**!// **Foh**!

A**bout**, my **brain**.// Hum—**I** have **heard**

That **guilt**y **crea**tures **sitt**ing **at** a **play**

Have, **by** the **ver**y **cunn**ing **of** the **scene**, Been **struck** so **to** the **soul** that **pres**ent**ly** They **have** pro**claimed** their **mal**e**fac**ti**ons**.

For **mur**der, **though** it **have** no **tongue**, will **speak**

With **most** mi**rac**(u)lous **org**(a)n.\_I’ll **have** these **play**ers

Play **some**thing **like** the **mur**der **of** my **fath**er

Be**fore** mine **unc**le. **I’ll** ob**serve** his **looks**;

I’ll **tent** him **to** the **quick**. If **he** do **blench**,

I **know** my **course**. The **spir(i)**t that **I** have **seen**

May **be** a **dev**il, **and** the **de(vi)l** hath **pow**er

T’as**sume** a **pleas**ing **shape**, yea, **and** per**haps**,

Out **of** my **weak**ness **and** my **mel**an**chol**y,

As **he** is **ver**y **po**tent **with** such **spir**its,

A**bu**ses **me** to **damn** me. **I’ll** have **grounds**

More **rel**a**tive** than **this**. The **play’s** the **thing** Where**in** I’ll **catch** the **con**science **of** the **King**.  *Exit.*

## Act III

### Scene 1

*Enter* K, Q, P, O, R, *and* G.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *King* | And **can** you **by** no **drift** of **con**fe**rence** Get **from** him **why** he **puts** on **this** con**fu**sion,  Grat***ing*** so **harsh**ly **all** his **days** of **qui**et  With **tur**bu**lent** and **dang**(e)rous **lu**na**cy**? |
| *Rosen.* | He **does** con**fess** he **feels** him**self** di**strac**ted,  But **from** what **cause** he **will** by **no** means **speak**. |
| *Guilden.* | Nor **do** we **find** him **for**ward **to** be **sound**ed,  But **with** a **craft**y **mad**ness **keeps** a**loof**  When **we** would **bring** him **on** to **some** con**fess**ion Of **his** true **state**. |
| *Queen* | Did **he** re**ceive** you **well**? |
| *Rosen.* | Most **like** a **gen**tle**man**. |
| *Guilden.* | But **with** much **forc**ing **of** his **dis**po**sit**ion. |
| *Rosen.* | Nig***gard*** of **ques**tion, **but** of **our** de**mands** Most **free** in **his** re**ply**. |
| *Queen* | Did **you** as**say** him[[62]](#footnote-62)To **an**y **pas**time? |
| *Rosen.* | Ma**dam**, it **so** fell **out** that **cer**tain **play**ers  We **o’e**rraught **on** the **way**. Of **these** we **told** him,  And **there** did **seem** in **him** a **kind** of **joy**  To **hear** of **it**. They **are** a**bout** the **court**,[[63]](#footnote-63)  And, **as** I **think**, they **have** al**read**y **or**der This **night** to **play** be**fore** him. |
| *Polonius* | ’**Tis** most **true**, And **he** be**seeched** me **to** en**treat** your **Maj**esties To **hear** and **see** the **mat**ter. |

III 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *King* | With **all** my **heart**; and **it** doth **much** con**tent** me To **hear** him **so** in**clined**.  Good **gen**tle**men**, give **him** a **fur**ther **edge**,  And **drive** his **pur**pose **on** to **these** de**lights**. |
| *Rosen.* | We **shall**, my **lord**. *Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.* |
| *King* | Sweet **Ger**trude, **leave** us **too**,  For **we** have **close**ly **sent** for **Ham**let **hith**er  That **he**, as ’**twere** by **ac**ci**dent**, may **here** Af**front** O**phe**lia.  Her **fath**er **and** my**self**, law***ful*** e**spi**als,  We’ll **so** be**stow** our**selves** that, **seeing** un**seen**,[[64]](#footnote-64)  We **may** of **their** en**coun**ter **frank**ly **judge**, And **gath**er **by** him, **as** he **is** be**haved**, If’t **be** th’af**flic**tion **of** his **love** or **no** That **thus** he **suff**ers **for**. |
| *Queen*. | I **shall** o**bey** you.  And **for** your **part**, O**phe**lia, **I** do **wish**  That **your** good **beau**ties **be** the **hap**py **cause**  Of **Ham**let’s **wild**ness;// so **shall** I **hope** your **vir**tues  Will **bring** him **to** his **wont**ed **way** a**gain**, To **both** your **hon**ors. |
| *Ophelia* | Ma**dam**, I **wish** it **may**. *Exit Queen.* |
| *Polonius* | O**phe**lia, **walk** you **here**. —Gra***cious***, so **please** you,  We **will** be**stow** our**selves**. —Read **on** this **book**,  That **show** of **such** an **ex**er**cise** may **col**or  Your **lone**li**ness**. —We\_(a)re **oft** to **blame** in **this**,  ’Tis **too** much **proved**, that **with** de**vo**tion’s **vis**age And **pi**ous **ac**tion **we** do **sug**ar **o’er** The **de(vi)l** him**self**. |
| *King* | O ’**tis** too **true**.  How **smart** a **lash** that **speech** doth **give** my **con**science. The **har**lot’s **cheek**, beau***tied*** with **plast**’ring **art**, Is **not** more **ug**ly **to** the **thing** that **helps** it  Than **is** my **deed** to **my** most **paint**ed **word**. |

III 1

O **heav**y **bur**den!

*Polonius* I **hear** him **com**ing. **Let’s** with**draw**, my **lord**.

*Exeunt King and Polonius.*

*Enter* H.

*Hamlet* To **be**, or **not** to **be**, that **is** the **ques**tion:

Whe***ther*** ’tis **no**bler **in** the **mind** to **suf**fer

The **slings** and **arr**ows **of** out**ra**geous **for**tune,

Or **to** take **arms** a**gainst** a **sea** of **troub**les

And **by** op**pos**ing **end** them.// To **die,** to **sleep**—

No **more**; and **by** a **sleep** to **say** we **end**

The **heart**-ache **and** the **thou**sand **nat**(u)ral **shocks**

That **flesh** is **heir** to—’**tis** a **con**sum**ma**tion

De**vout**ly **to** be **wished**. To **die**, to **sleep**— To **sleep**, per**chance** to **dream**. Ay, **there’s** the **rub**:

For **in** that **sleep** of **death** what **dreams** may **come**,

When **we** have **shuff**led **off** this **mor**tal **coil**, Must **give** us **pause**. There’s **the** re**spect** That **makes** ca**lam**i**ty** of **so** long **life**.

For **who** would **bear** the **whips** and **scorns** of **time**,

Th’op**press**or’s **wrong**, the **proud** man’s **con**tum(e)**ly**, The **pangs** of **dis**prized **love**, the **law’s** de**lay**,

The **in**so**lence** of **off**ice, **and** the **spurns**

That **pa**tient **mer**it **of** th’un**worth**y **takes**, When **he** him**self** might **his** qui**e**tus **make**

With **a** bare **bod**kin? **Who** would **fard**els **bear**,89

To **grunt** and **sweat** un**der** a **wear**y **life**,

But **that** the **dread** of **some**thing **aft**er **death**,

The **un**dis**cov**ered **coun**try, **from** whose **bourn**

No **trav**el**ler** re**turns**, puz***zles*** the **will**, And **makes** us **rath**er **bear** those **ills** we **have** Than **fly** to **oth**ers **that** we **know** not **of?** Thus **con**science **does** make **cow**ards **of** us **all**,

And **thus** the **na**tive **hue** of **res**o**lu**tion

Is **sick**lied **o’er** with **the** pale **cast** of **thought**,

89

The F version contains *these*, violating the Primary Accent Rule if *who would* is not contracted:

With **a** bare **bod**kin?// Who **would** these **fard**els **bear**,

With **a** bare **bod**kin? **Who\_(woul)d** these **fard**els **bear**,

III 1

And **en**ter**pri**ses **of** great **pitch** and **mom**ent

With **this** re**gard** their **cur**rents **turn** a**wry**

And **lose** the **name** of **ac**tion. **Soft** you **now**, The **fair** O**phe**lia.// Nymph, **in** thy **or**is**ons** Be **all** my **sins** re**mem**bered.

*Ophelia*  **Good** my **lord**,

How **does** your **hon**or **for** this **man**y\_a **day**?[[65]](#footnote-65)

*Hamlet* I **hum**bly **thank** you, **well**.[[66]](#footnote-66)

*Ophelia* My **lord**, I **have** re**mem**bran**ces** of **yours** That **I** have **long**èd **long** to **re**de**liv**er.

I **pray** you **now** re**ceive** them.

*Hamlet* **No**, not **I**. I **nev**er **gave** you **aught**.

*Ophelia* My **hon**ored **lord**, you **know** right **well** you **did**, And **with** them **words** of **so** sweet **breath** com**posed**

As **made** the **things** more **rich**. Their **per**fume **lost**,

Take **these** a**gain**, for **to** the **no**ble **mind** Rich **gifts** wax **poor** when **giv**ers **prove** un**kind.**

There, my lord.

*Hamlet* Ha, ha! Are you honest?

*Ophelia* My lord?

*Hamlet* Are you fair?

*Ophelia* What means your lordship?

*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 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| III 1 |  |
| *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. |
| *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, 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* | Heavenly powers, restore him. |
| *Hamlet* | I have heard of your paintings well enough. God hath given you one face and you make yourselves another. You jig and amble, and you lisp, you nickname God’s creatures, and make your wantonness your 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.* |
| *Ophelia* | O, **what** a **no**ble **mind** is **here** o’er**thrown**!  The **court**ier’s, **sol**dier’s, **scho**lar’s, **eye**, tongue, **sword**,92  Th’ex**pec**tan**cy** and **rose** of **the** fair **state**, The **glass** of **fash**ion **and** the **mould** of **form**, Th’ob**served** of **all** ob**serv**ers, **quite**, quite **down**!  And **I**, of **la**dies **most** de**ject** and **wretch**ed, That **sucked** the **hon**ey **of** his **mu**sic **vows**,  Now **see** that **no**ble **and** most **sov**(e)reign **rea**son  Like **sweet** bells **jang**led **out** of **tune** and **harsh**, |

92

Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /kórt(i)yirz/.

That **un**matched **form** and **fea**ture **of** blown **youth**

Blast***ed*** with **ec**sta**sy**. O **woe** is **me**

T’have **seen** what **I** have **seen,** see **what** I **see**.

*Enter* K *and* P.

*King* Love? **His** af**fec**tions **do** not **that** way **tend**,

Nor **what** he **spake**, though **it** lacked **form** a **lit**tle,

Was **not** like **mad**ness.// There’s **some**thing **in** his **soul**

O’er **which** his **mel**an**chol**y **sits** on **brood**,

And **I** do **doubt** the **hatch** and **the** dis**close**

Will **be** some **dan**ger, **which** for **to** pre**vent**,

I **have** in **quick** det**er**mi**na**ti**on**

Thus **set** it **down**: he **shall** with **speed** to **Eng**land For **the** de**mand** of **our** ne**glec**ted **trib**ute. Hap***ly*** the **seas** and **coun**tries **dif**fe**rent**,

With **var**i**ab**le **ob**jects, **shall** ex**pel**

This **some**thing **sett**led **mat**ter **in** his **heart**,

Where**on** his **brains** still **beat**ing **puts** him **thus** From **fash**ion **of** him**self**. What **think** you **on’t**?

*Polonius* It **shall** do **well**. But **yet** do **I** be**lieve** The **or**(i)gin **and** com**mence**ment **of** his **grief**[[67]](#footnote-67)Sprung **from** ne**glec**ted **love**. How **now**, O**phe**lia?

You **need** not **tell** us **what** Lord **Ham**let **said**,

We **heard** it **all**. My **lord**, do **as** you **please**, But **if** you **hold** it **fit**, af**ter** the **play**

Let **his** queen-**moth**er **all** a**lone** en**treat** him

To **show** his **grief**, let **her** be **round** with **him**,

And **I’ll** be **placed**, so **please** you, **in** the **ear**

Of **all** their **conf**(e)rence. **If** she **find** him **not**, To **Eng**land **send** him, **or** con**fine** him **where** Your **wis**dom **best** shall **think**.

*King*  It **shall** be **so.**

Mad***ness*** in **great** ones **must** not **un**watched **go.**

*Exeunt.*

### Scene 2

*Enter* H *and three of the* P.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue; but if you mouth it as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, 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 dumbshows and noise. I would have such a fellow whipped for o’erdoing Termagant. It out-Herods Herod. Pray you avoid it. |
| *1st Player* | I warrant your honor. |
| *Hamlet* | Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o’erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything so o’erdone 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 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 makes the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve, the censure of the which one must in your allowance o’erweigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players that I have seen play—and heard others praise, and that highly—not to speak it profanely, that neither having th’accent of Christians, nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of Nature’s journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. |
| *1st Player* | I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us. |
| *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 meantime some necessary question of the play be then to be considered. That’s  villainous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go make you ready.  *Exeunt Players.* |

*Enter* P, R, *and* G.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | 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? |
| *Rosen.* | Ay, my lord. *Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.* |
| *Hamlet* | What ho, Horatio!  *Enter* H. |
| *Horatio* | Here, sweet lord, at your service. |
| *Hamlet* | Ho**ra**tio, **thou** art **e’en** as **just** a **man**  As **e’er** my **con**ver**sa**tion **coped** with**al**. |
| *Horatio* | O **my** dear **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Nay, **do** not **think** I **flat**ter,  For **what** ad**vance**ment **may** I **hope** from **thee**  That **no** re**ven**ue **hast** but **thy** good **spir**its94  To **feed** and **clothe** thee?// Why **should** the **poor** be **flat**tered?  No, **let** the **can**died **tongue** lick **ab**surd **pomp**,95  And **crook** the **preg**nant **hing**es **of** the **knee**  Where **thrift** may **foll**ow **fawn**ing. **Dost** thou **hear**? Since **my** dear **soul** was **mis**tress **of** her **choice**,  And **could** of **men** di**sting**uish **her** e**lec**tion,  Sh’ath **sealed** thee **for** her**self**; for **thou** hast **been** As **one**, in **suff**(e)ring **all**, that **suff**ers **noth**ing,  A **man** that **For**tune’s **buff**ets **and** re**wards**  Hast **ta’en** with **e**qual **thanks**; and **blest** are **those**  Whose **blood** and **judg**ment **are** so **well** com**medd**led  That **they** are **not** a **pipe** for **For**tune’s **fing**er  To **sound** what **stop** she **please**. Give **me** that **man** That **is** not **pass**ion’s **slave**, and **I** will **wear** him  In **my** heart’s **core**, ay, **in** my **heart** of **heart**, As **I** do **thee**. Some***thing*** too **much** of **this**.  There **is** a **play** to**night** be**fore** the **King**: One **scene** of **it** comes **near** the **cir**cum**stance** Which **I** have **told** thee **of** my **fath**er’s **death**.  I **prith**ee, **when** thou **seest** that **act** a**foot**, |

94 st nd

The stress on *revenue* may fall on either the 1 or 2 syllable in Shakespeare.

95

The stress on *absurd* may fall on either syllable in Shakespeare.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | E(v)en **with** the **ver**y **com**ment **of** thy **soul**  Ob**serve** my **unc**l(e).\_If **his** oc**cult**ed **guilt**96  Do **not** it**self** un**ken**nel **in** one **speech**,  It **is** a **dam**nèd **ghost** that **we** have **seen**,  And **my** i**mag**i**na**tions **are** as **foul**  As **Vul**can’s **stith**y. **Give** him **heed**ful **note**: For **I** mine **eyes** will **riv**et **to** his **face**, And **aft**er **we** will **both** our **judg**ments **join** In **cen**sure **of** his **seem**ing. |
| *Horatio* | **Well**, my **lord**. If **he** steal **aught** the **whilst** this **play** is **play**ing And **scape** de**tec**ting, **I** will **pay** the **theft**. |
| *Hamlet* | They\_(a)re **com**ing **to** the **play**. I **must** be **i**dle. Get **you** a **place**.  *Enter* K, Q, P, O,  R, G, *and others*. |
| *King* | How fares our cousin Hamlet? |
| *Hamlet* | Excellent, i’faith, of the chameleon’s dish. I eat the air, promise-crammed. You cannot feed capons so. |
| *King* | I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet. These words are not mine. |
| *Hamlet* | No, nor mine now. My lord, you played 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 killed i’th’ Capitol. Brutus killed me. |
| *Hamlet* | It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready? |
| *Rosen.* | Ay, my lord, they stay upon your patience. |
| *Queen* | Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me. |
| *Hamlet* | No, good mother, here’s metal more attractive. |
| *Polonius* | O ho! do you mark that? |
| *Hamlet* | Lady, shall I lie in your lap? |
| *Ophelia* | No, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | I mean, my head upon your lap. |

96

Syncopation before /l/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ûnk(i)lif/.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Ophelia* | Ay, my lord. | | |
| *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. But by’r lady a must build churches then, or else shall a suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is ‘For O, for O, the hobby-horse is forgot’.  *The trumpets sound. A dumb-show follows.*  *Enter a* K *and a* Q*, the Queen embracing him and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. 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* M*, takes off his crown, kisses it, pours poison in the sleeper’s ears, and leaves him. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, makes passionate action. The poisoner with some three or four comes in again. They seem to condole with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts. She seems harsh awhile, but in the end accepts his love. Exeunt.* | | |
| *Ophelia* | What means this, my lord? | | |
| *Hamlet* | Marry, this is miching malicho. It means mischief. | | |
| *Ophelia* | Belike this show imports the argument of the play.  *Enter* P. | | |
| *Hamlet* | We shall know by this fellow. The players cannot keep counsel; they’ll tell all. | | |
| *Ophelia* | Will a tell us what this show meant? | | |
| *Hamlet* | Ay, or any show that you will show him. Be not you ashamed to show, he’ll not shame to tell you what it means. | | |
| *Ophelia* You are naught, you are naught. I’ll mark the play.  *Prologue* For **us** and **for** our **trag**e**dy**,  Here **stoop**ing **to** your **clem**en**cy**, | |  |
| We **beg** your **hear**ing **pa**tient**ly**.  *Hamlet* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?  *Ophelia* ’Tis brief, my lord.  *Hamlet* As woman’s love.  *Enter the Player* K *and* Q.  *P. King* Full **thir**ty **times** hath **Phoe**bus’ **cart** gone **round**  Nep***tune’s*** salt **wash** and **Tell**us’ **orb**èd **ground**,  And **thir**ty **doz**en **moons** with **borr**owed **sheen**  A**bout** the **world** have **times** twelve **thir**ties **been**  Since **love** our **hearts** and **Hy**men **did** our **hands**  U**nite** com**mu**tual **in** most **sa**cred **bands**.[[68]](#footnote-68)  *P. Queen* So **man**y **jour**neys **may** the **sun** and **moon** | | *Exit.* |
|  | Make **us** a**gain** count **o’er** ere **love** be **done**. But **woe** is **me**, you **are** so **sick** of **late**,  So **far** from **cheer** and **from** your **for**mer **state**,  That **I** dis**trust** you. **Yet** though **I** dis**trust**,  Dis**com**fort **you**, my **lord**, it **noth**ing **must**, For **wom**en’s **fear** and **love** hold **quan**ti**ty**, In **nei**ther **aught**, or **in** ex**trem**i**ty**. |
| 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 **litt**lest **doubts** are **fear**;  Where **litt**le **fears** grow **great**, great **love** grows **there**. | |
| *P. King* | Faith, **I** must **leave** thee, **love**, and **short**ly **too**;  My **op**(e)rant **pow(e)rs** their **funct**ions **leave** to **do**;  And **thou** shalt **live** in **this** fair **world** be**hind**,  Hon***ored***, be**loved**; and **hap**ly **one** as **kind** For **hus**band **shalt** thou— | |

*P. Queen*  **O** con**found** the **rest**.

Such **love** must **needs** be **trea**son **in** my **breast**. In **sec**ond **hus**band **let** me **be** ac**curst**; None **wed** the **sec**ond **but** who **killed** the **first**.

*Hamlet* (*aside*) That’s wormwood.

*P. Queen* The **in**stan**ces** that **sec**ond **marr**iage **move** Are **base** re**spects** of **thrift**, but **none** of **love**. A **sec**ond **time** I **kill** my **hus**band **dead**, When **sec**ond **hus**band **kiss**es **me** in **bed**.

*P. King* I **do** be**lieve** you **think** what **now** you **speak**, But **what** we **do** de**term**ine, **oft** we **break**. Pur***pose*** is **but** the **slave** to **mem**o**ry**, Of **vi**(o)lent **birth** but **poor** va**lid**i**ty**, Which **now**, like **fruit** un**ripe**, sticks **on** the **tree**, But **fall** un**shak**en **when** they **mell**ow **be.** Most **nec**es**sar**y ’**tis** that **we** for**get**

To **pay** our**selves** what **to** our**selves** is **debt**. What **to** our**selves** in **pass**ion **we** pro**pose**, The **pass**ion **end**ing, **doth** the **pur**pose **lose**.

The **vi**o**lence** of **ei**ther **grief** or **joy**

Their **own** en**act**ures **with** them**selves** de**stroy**.

Where **joy** most **rev**els, **grief** doth **most** la**ment**;

This **world** is **not** for **aye**, nor ’**tis** not **strange**

That **e(v)en** our **loves** should **with** our **for**tunes **change**,

For ’**tis** a **ques**tion **left** us **yet** to **prove**,

Whe(the)r **love** lead **for**tune **or** else **for**tune **love**.

The **great** man **down**, you **mark** his **fav**(o)rite **flies**;

The **poor** ad**vanced** makes **friends** of **en**e**mies**;

And **hith**er**to** doth **love** on **for**tune **tend**,

For **who** not **needs** shall **nev**er **lack** a **friend**, And **who** in **want** a **holl**ow **friend** doth **try** Di**rect**ly **sea**sons **him** his **en**e**my**.

But **or**der**ly** to **end** where **I** be**gun**,

Our **wills** and **fates** do **so** con**trar**y **run**[[69]](#footnote-69)

That **our** de**vi**ces **still** are **o**ver**thrown**;

Our **thoughts** are **ours**, their **ends** none **of** our **own**. So **think** thou **wilt** no **sec**ond **hus**band **wed**, But **die** thy **thoughts** when **thy** first **lord** is **dead**.

*P. Queen* Nor **earth** to **give** me **food**, nor **heav**en **light**, Sport **and** re**pose** lock **from** me **day** and **night**,

To **des**pe**ra**tion **turn** my **trust** and **hope**,

An **an**chor’s **cheer** in **pris**on **be** my **scope**,

Each **op**po**site**, that **blanks** the **face** of **joy**,

Meet **what** I **would** have **well** and **it** de**stroy**, Both **here** and **hence** pur**sue** me **last**ing **strife**, If, **once** a **wid**ow, **e(v)er** I **be** a **wife**.

*Hamlet* If she should break it now.

*P. King* ’Tis **deep**ly **sworn**. Sweet, **leave** me **here** a**while**.

My **spir(i)ts** grow **dull**, and **fain** I **would** be**guile** The **te**dious **day** with **sleep**.

*P. Queen*  Sleep **rock** thy **brain**,[[70]](#footnote-70)

And **nev**er **come** mis**chance** be**tween** us **twain**.  *Exit.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | Madam, how like you this play? | |
| *Queen* | The **la**dy **doth** pro**test** too **much**, me**thinks**. | |
| *Hamlet* | O, but she’ll keep her word. | |
| *King* | 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. | |
| *King* | 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. Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.  *Enter* L.  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 mis-take your husbands. Begin, murderer. Leave thy | |
|  | damnable faces and begin. Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge. |
| *Lucianus* | Thoughts **black**, hands **apt**, drugs **fit**, and **time** a**gree**ing,  Con**fed**(e)rate **sea**son, **else** no **crea**ture **see**ing,  Thou **mix**ture **rank**, of **mid**night **weeds** col**lec**ted,  With **Hec**ate’s **ban** thrice **blast**ed, **thrice** in**fec**ted,  Thy **nat**(u)ral **mag**ic **and** dire **prop**er**ty**  On **whole**some **life** u**surp** im**me**diate**ly**.100 *Pours the poison.* |
| *Hamlet* | A 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. |
| *Ophelia* | The King rises. |
| *Hamlet* | What, frighted with false fire? |
| *Queen* | How fares my lord? |
| *Polonius* | Give o’er the play. |
| *King* | Give me some light. Away! |
| *Polonius* | Lights, lights, lights!  *Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio.* |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **let** the **struck**en **deer** go **weep**,  The **hart** un**gall**èd **play**;  For **some** must **watch** while **some** must **sleep**, Thus **runs** the **world** a**way**.  Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players? |
| *Horatio* | Half a share. |
| *Hamlet* | A whole one I.  For **thou** dost **know**, O **Da**mon **dear**, This **realm** dis**mant**led **was**  Of **Jove** him**self**, and **now** reigns **here** A **ver**y, **ver**y—**pa**jock. |
| *Horatio* | You might have rhymed. |
| *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? |

100

Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /imíyd(i)yitliy/.

*Horatio* I did very well note him.

*Hamlet* Ah ha! Come, some music; come, the recorders.

For **if** the **King** like **not** the **com**e**dy**,

Why **then**, be**like** he **likes** it **not**, per**die**. Come, some music.

*Enter* R *and* G.

*Guilden*. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, a whole history. |
| *Guilden.* | The King, sir— |
| *Hamlet* | Ay, sir, what of him? |
| *Guilden.* | Is in his retirement marvellous distempered. |
| *Hamlet* | With drink, sir? |
| *Guilden.* | No, my lord, with choler. |
| *Hamlet* | 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 more choler. |
| *Guilden.* | Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair. |
| *Hamlet* | I am tame sir. Pronounce. |
| *Guilden.* | The Queen your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you. |
| *Hamlet* | You are welcome. |
| *Guilden.* | 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. |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, I cannot. |
| *Rosen.* | What, my lord? |
| *Hamlet* | Make you a wholesome answer. My wit’s diseased. But sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command—or rather, as you say, my mother. Therefore no more, but to the matter. My mother, you say— |
| *Rosen.* | Then thus she says: your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration. |
| *Hamlet* | O wonderful son, that can so stonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother’s admiration? Impart. |
| *Rosen.* | She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you go to bed. |
| *Hamlet* | We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us.? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Rosen.* | My lord, you once did love me. |
| *Hamlet* | And do still, by these pickers and stealers. |
| *Rosen.* | Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You do surely bar the door upon your own liberty if you deny your griefs to your friend. |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, I lack advancement. |
| *Rosen.* | How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark? |
| *Hamlet* | Ay, sir, but while the grass grows—the proverb is something musty.  *Enter the* P *with recorders.*  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? |
| *Guilden.* | O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly. |
| *Hamlet* | I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe? |
| *Guilden.* | My lord, I cannot. |
| *Hamlet* | I pray you. |
| *Guilden.* | Believe me, I cannot. |
| *Hamlet* | I do beseech you. |
| *Guilden.* | I know no touch of it, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | It is as easy as lying. Govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops. |
| *Guilden.* | But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill. |
| *Hamlet* | Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me, you would seem to know my stops, 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, you cannot play upon me.  *Enter* P.  God bless you, sir. |
| *Polonius* | My lord, the Queen would speak with you, and presently. |
| *Hamlet* | Do you see yonder cloud that’s almost in shape of a camel? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Polonius* | By th’ mass and ’tis—like a camel indeed. |
| *Hamlet* | Methinks it is like a weasel. |
| *Polonius* | It is backed like a weasel. |
| *Hamlet* | Or like a whale. |
| *Polonius* | Very like a whale. |
| *Hamlet* | Then I will come to my mother by and by. —(*aside*) They fool me to the top of my bent.— I will come by and by. |
| *Polonius* | I will say so. |
| *Hamlet* | ‘By and by’ is easily said. —Leave me, friends.  *Exeunt all but Hamlet.*  ’Tis **now** the **ver**y **witch**ing **time** of **night**,  When **church**yards **yawn,** and **hell** it**self** breathes **out**  Con**ta**gion **to** this **world**.// Now **could** I **drink** hot **blood**,  And **do** such **bit**ter **busi**ness **as** the **day**  Would **quake** to **look** on. **Soft**, now **to** my **moth**er.  O **heart**, lose **not** thy **na**ture. **Let** not **ev**er The **soul** of **Ne**ro **en**ter **this** firm **bos**om; Let **me** be **cru**el, **not** un**nat**ur**al**.  I **will** speak **dag**gers **to** her, **but** use **none**.  My **tongue** and **soul** in **this** be **hyp**o**crites**:  How **in** my **words** som**ev**er **she** be **shent**,  To **give** them **seals** ne***ver*** my **soul** con**sent**.  *Exit.* |

III 3

### Scene 3

*Enter* K, R, *and* G.

*King* I **like** him **not**, nor **stands** it **safe** with **us** To **let** his **mad**ness **range**. There**fore** pre**pare** you.

I **your** com**miss**ion **will** forth**with** dis**patch**, And **he** to **Eng**land **shall** a**long** with **you**.

The **terms** of **our** e**state** may **not** en**dure** Haz***ard*** so **near** us **as** doth **hour**ly **grow**[[71]](#footnote-71)Out **of** his **brows**.

*Guilden.*  We **will** our**selves** pro**vide**.

Most **ho**ly **and** re**lig**ious **fear** it **is** To **keep** those **man**y **man**y **bod**ies **safe** That **live** and **feed** u**pon** your **maj**es**ty**.

*Rosen.* The **sing**le **and** pe**cu**liar **life** is **bound**

With **all** the **strength** and **arm**or **of** the **mind**

To **keep** it**self** from **noy**ance; **but** much **more**

That **spir(i)t** u**pon** whose **weal** de**pends** and **rests**

The **lives** of **man**y.// The **cess** of **maj**es**ty**

Dies **not** a**lone**, but **like** a **gulf** doth **draw**

What’s **near** it **with** it.// **Or** it **is** a **mass**y **wheel**[[72]](#footnote-72)

Fixed **on** the **sum**mit **of** the **high**est **mount**, To **whose** huge **spokes** ten **thou**sand **less**er **things** Are **mor**tised **and** ad**joined**, which **when** it **falls**,

Each **small** an**nex**ment, **pet**ty **con**se**quence**, At**tends** the **boist**(e)rous **ru(i)n**. Ne***ver*** a**lone**[[73]](#footnote-73)

Did **the** King **sigh**, but **with** a **gen**(e)ral **groan**.

*King* Arm **you**, I **pray** you, **to** this **speed**y **voy**age, For **we** will **fet**ters **put** a**bout** this **fear** Which **now** goes **too** free-**foot**ed.

*Rosen.*  **We** will **haste** us.

*Exit Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

III 3

*Enter* P.

*Polonius* My **lord**, he’s **go**ing **to** his **moth**er’s **clos**et.

Be**hind** the **arr**as **I’ll** con**vey** my**self**

To **hear** the **proc**ess.// I’ll **warr(a)nt** she’ll **tax** him **home**,

And **as** you **said**—and **wise**ly **was** it **said**— ’Tis **meet** that **some** more **au**dience **than** a **moth**er,[[74]](#footnote-74)Since **na**ture **makes** them **par**tial, **should** o’er**hear** The **speech** of **van**tage. **Fare** you **well**, my **liege**. I’ll **call** u**pon** you **ere** you **go** to **bed**, And **tell** you **what** I **know**.

*King*  Thanks, **my** dear **lord**.

*Exit Polonius.*

O, **my** of**fence** is **rank**, it **smells** to **heav**en;

It **hath** the **pri**mal **eld**est **curse** u**pon’t**,

A **broth**er’s **mur**der.// Pray **can** I **not**,

Though **in**cli**na**tion **be** as **sharp** as **will**,

My **strong**er **guilt** de**feats** my **strong** in**tent**,

And, **like** a **man** to **doub**le **busi**ness **bound**, I **stand** in **pause** where **I** shall **first** be**gin**,

And **both** ne**glect**. What **if** this **curs**èd **hand**

Were **thick**er **than** it**self** with **broth**er’s **blood**,

Is **there** not **rain** e**nough** in **the** sweet **heav**ens To **wash** it **white** as **snow**? Where**to** serves **mer**cy But **to** con**front** the **vis**age **of** of**fence**? And **what’s** in **pray**~er **but** this **two**fold **force**,[[75]](#footnote-75)To **be** fore**stall**èd **ere** we **come** to **fall**, Or **par**doned **be**ing **down**? Then **I’ll** look **up.** My **fault** is **past**—but **O**, what **form** of **prayer**

Can **serve** my **turn**? ‘For**give** me **my** foul **mur**der?’

That **can**not **be**, since **I** am **still** pos**sessed**

Of **those** ef**fects** for **which** I **did** the **mur**der— My **crown**, mine **own** am**bit**ion, **and** my **queen**.

May **one** be **par**doned **and** re**tain** th’of**fence**? In **the** cor**rup**ted **cur**rents **of** this **world**

III 3

Of**fen**ce’s **gild**ed **hand** may **shove** by **just**ice, And **oft** ’tis **seen** the **wick**ed **prize** it**self**

Buys **out** the **law**. But ’**tis** not **so** a**bove**:

There **is** no **shuff**ling, **there** the **ac**tion **lies**

In **his** true **nat**(u)re,\_and **we** our**selves** com**pelled** E(v)en **to** the **teeth** and **fore**head **of** our **faults** To **give** in **ev**i**dence**. What **then**? What **rests**?

Try **what** re**pen**tance **can**. What **can** it **not**?

Yet **what** can **it**, when **one** can**not** re**pent**?

O **wretch**ed **state**! O **bos**om **black** as **death**!

O **li**mèd **soul**, that **strugg**ling **to** be **free** Art **more** en**gaged**! Help, **an**gels! **Make** as**say**. Bow, **stub**born **knees**; and **heart** with **strings** of **steel** Be **soft** as **sin**ews **of** the **new**-born **babe**.

All **may** be **well**. *Kneels.*

*Enter* H.

*Hamlet* Now **might** I **do** it **pat**, now **he** is **pray**ing.[[76]](#footnote-76)

And **now** I’ll **do’t**. And **so** he **goes** to **heav**en; And **so** am **I** re**venged**? That **would** be **scanned**:

I, **his** sole **son**, do **this** same **vill**ain **send** To **heav**en.

Why, **this** is **hire** and **sal**(a)ry, **not** re**venge**.

He **took** my **fath**er **gross**ly, **full** of **bread**,

With **all** his **crimes** broad **blown**, as **flush** as **May**; And **how** his **au**dit **stands** who **knows** save **heav**en? But **in** our **cir**cum**stance** and **course** of **thought**

’Tis **heav**y **wi(th\_hi)m**. And **am** I **then** re**venged**, To **take** him **in** the **purg**ing **of** his **soul**, When **he** is **fit** and **sea**soned **for** his **pass**age?

**No.**

Up, **sword**, and **know** thou **a** more **horr**id **hent**: When **he** is **drunk** a**sleep**, or **in** his **rage**,

Or **in** th’in**ces**tuous **pleas**ure **of** his **bed**,[[77]](#footnote-77)

At **game** a-**swear**ing, **or** a**bout** some **act**

III 3

That **has** no **rel**ish **of** sal**va**tion **in’t**,

Then **trip** him, **that** his **heels** may **kick** at **heav**en And **that** his **soul** may **be** as **damned** and **black** As **hell**, where**to** it **goes**. My **moth**er **stays**.

This **phys**ic **but** pro**longs** thy **sick**ly **days**.  *Exit. King* My **words** fly **up**, my **thoughts** re**main** be**low**.

Words **with**out **thoughts** ne***ver*** to **heav**en **go.**  *Exit.*

### Scene 4

*Enter* Q *and* P.

*Polonius* He **will** come **straight**. Look **you** lay **home** to **him**.

Tell **him** his **pranks** have **been** too **broad** to **bear** with And **that** your **Grace** hath **screened** and **stood** be**tween** Much **heat** and **him**. I’ll **si**lence **me** e’en **here**.

Pray **you** be **round**.

*Queen* I’ll **warr(a)nt** you, **fear** me **not**.

With**draw**, I **hear** him **com**ing.  *He hides behind the arras.*

*Enter* H.

*Hamlet* Now, **Moth**er, **what’s** the **mat**ter?

*Queen* Ham***let***, thou **hast** thy **fath**er **much** of**fend**ed.

*Hamlet* Mo***ther***, you **have** my **fath**er **much** of**fend**ed.

*Queen* Come, **come**, you **an**swer **with** an **i**dle **tongue**.

*Hamlet* Go, **go**, you **ques**tion **with** a **wick**ed **tongue**.

*Queen* Why, **how** now, **Ham**let?

*Hamlet*  **What’s** the **mat**ter **now**?

*Queen* Have **you** for**got** me?

*Hamlet* No, **by** the **rood**, not **so.**

You **are** the **queen**, your **hus**band’s **broth**er’s **wife**, And, **would** it **were** not **so**, you **are** my **moth**er.

*Queen* 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 **in**most **part** of **you**.

*Queen* What **wilt** thou **do?** Thou **wilt** not **mur**der **me?**

Help, ho!

*Polonius* (*behind the arras*) What **ho!** Help! **Help**!

*Hamlet* How **now**? A **rat**! Dead **for** a **duc**at, **dead**. *Kills Polonius.*

*Polonius* (*behind the arras*) O, **I** am **slain**!

*Queen* O **me**, what **hast** thou **done**?

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

*Queen* O **what** a **rash** and **blood**y **deed** is **this**!

*Hamlet* A **blood**y **deed**? Al**most** as **bad**, good **moth**er, As **kill** a **king** and **mar**ry **with** his **broth**er. *Queen* As **kill** a **king**?

*Hamlet*  Ay, **la**dy, ’**twas** my **word**.— Thou **wretch**ed, **rash**, in**tru**ding **fool**, fare**well**.

I **took** thee **for** thy **bet**ter. **Take** thy **for**tune:

Thou **find’st** to **be** too **bus**y **is** some **dan**ger.— Leave **wring**ing **of** your **hands**. Peace, **sit** you **down**,

And **let** me **wring** your **heart**, for **so** I **shall**

If **it** be **made** of **pen**e**trab**le **stuff**, If **damn**èd **cus**tom **have** not **brazed** it **so**, That **it** be **proof** and **bul**wark **a**gainst **sense**.

*Queen* What **have** I **done**, that **thou** dar’st **wag** thy **tongue** In **noise** so **rude** a**gainst** me?

*Hamlet* **Such** an **act**

That **blurs** the **grace** and **blush** of **mod**es**ty**,

Calls **vir**tue **hyp**o**crite**, takes **off** the **rose**

From **the** fair **fore**head **of** an **inn**(o)cent **love**[[78]](#footnote-78)

And **sets** a **blis**ter **there**, makes **mar**riage **vows**

As **false** as **di**cers’ **oaths**—O, **such** a **deed**

As **from** the b**od**y **of** con**trac**tion **plucks**

The **ver**y **soul**, and **sweet** re**lig**ion **makes**

A **rhap**so**dy** of **words**. Hea(ve)n’s **face** does **glow**

O’er **this** so**lid**i**ty** and **com**pound **mass** With **trist**ful **vis**age, **as** a**gainst** the **doom**, Is **thought**-sick **at** the **act**.

*Queen*  Ay **me**, what **act**

That **roars** so **loud** and **thun**ders **in** the **in**dex?

*Hamlet* Look **here** u**pon** this **pic**ture, **and** on **this**, The **count**er**feit** pre**sent**ment **of** two **broth**ers.

See **what** a **grace** was **seat**ed **on** this **brow**,

Hyp**er**ion’s **curls**, the **front** of **Jove** him**self**,[[79]](#footnote-79)An **eye** like **Mars** to **threat**en **and** com**mand**,

A **sta**tion **like** the **her**ald **Mer**cu**ry**

New-**light**ed **on** a **heav**en-**kiss**ing **hill**,

A **com**bi**na**tion **and** a **form** in**deed** Where **ev**ery **god** did **seem** to **set** his **seal** To **give** the **world** as**sur**ance **of** a **man**.

This **was** your **hus**band. **Look** you **now** what **foll**ows.

Here **is** your **hus**band, **like** a **mil**dewed **ear**.

Blast***ing*** his **whole**some **broth**er. **Have** you **eyes**? Could **you** on **this** fair **moun**tain **leave** to **feed** And **bat**ten **on** this **moor**? Ha, **have** you **eyes**? You **can**not **call** it **love**; for **at** your **age**

The **hey**day **in** the **blood** is **tame**, it’s **hum**ble,

And **waits** u**pon** the **judg**ment; **and** what **judg**ment

Would **step** from **this** to **this**? Sense **sure** you **have**,

Else **could** you **not** have **mo**tion;// but **sure** that **sense**

Is **ap**o**plexed**, for **mad**ness **would** not **err**

Nor **sense** to **ec**sta**sy** was **ne’er** so **thralled**

But **it** re**served** some **quan**ti**ty** of **choice** To **serve** in **such** a **diff**(e)rence. **What** de(vi)l **was’t** That **thus** hath **coz**ened **you** at **hood**man-**blind**?

Eyes **with**out **feel**ing, **feel**ing **with**out **sight**,

Ears **with**out **hands** or **eyes**, smell***ing*** sans **all**, Or **but** a **sick**ly **part** of **one** true **sense** Could **not** so **mope**.

O **shame**, where **is** thy **blush**? Re**bell**ious **hell**,

If **thou** canst **mu**tine **in** a **ma**tron’s **bones**,

To **flam**ing **youth** let **vir**tue **be** as **wax**

And **melt** in **her** own **fire**. Pro**claim** no **shame** When **the** com**pul**sive **ar**dor **gives** the **charge**, Since **frost** it**self** as **ac**tive**ly** doth **burn**, And **rea**son **pan**ders **will**.

*Queen*  O **Ham**let, **speak** no **more**.

Thou **turn’st** my **eyes** in**to** my **ver**y **soul**, And **there** I **see** such **black** and **grain**èd **spots** As **will** not **leave** their **tinct**.

*Hamlet*  Nay, **but** to **live**

In **the** rank **sweat** of **an** en**seam**èd **bed**, Stewed **in** cor**rup**tion,// **hon**ey**ing** and **mak**ing **love** O**ver** the **nas**ty **sty**!

*Queen*  O **speak** to **me** no **more**.

These **words** like **dag**gers **en**ter **in** my **ears**.

No **more**, sweet **Ham**let.

*Hamlet*  A **murd**(e)rer **and** a **vill**ain,

A **slave** that **is** not **twen**tieth **part** the **tithe**[[80]](#footnote-80)

Of **your** pre**ce**dent **lord**, a **vice** of **kings**,

A **cut**purse **of** the **em**pire **and** the **rule**,

That **from** a **shelf** the **prec**ious **di**(a)dem **stole**

And **put** it **in** his **pock**et—

*Queen* No **more**.

*Hamlet* A **king** of **shreds** and **patch**es—

*Enter* G.

Save **me** and **hov**er **o’er** me **with** your **wings**,

You **hea(ve)n**ly **guards**! What **would** your **gra**cious **fig**ure?

*Queen* A**las**, he’s **mad**.

*Hamlet* Do **you** not **come** your **tar**dy **son** to **chide**,

That, **lapsed** in **time** and **pass**ion, **lets** go **by** Th’im**por**tant **act**ing **of** your **dread** com**mand**?

O **say**.

*Ghost*  Do **not** for**ge**t. This **vis**i**ta**tion Is **but** to **whet** thy **al**most **blunt**ed **pur**pose. But **look**, a**maze**ment **on** thy **moth**er **sits**.

O **step** be**tween** her **and** her **fight**ing **soul**.

Con**ceit** in **weak**est **bod**ies **strong**est **works**.

Speak **to** her, **Ham**let.

*Hamlet* How **is** it **with** you, **la**dy?

*Queen*  A**las**, how **is’t** with **you**,

That **you** do **bend** your **eye** on **va**can**cy**, And **with** th’in**corp**(o)ral **air** do **hold** dis**course**?

Forth **at** your **eyes** your **spir**its **wild**ly **peep**,

And, **as** the **sleep**ing **sol**diers **in** th’a**larm**,

Your **bed**ded **hair**, like **life** in **ex**cre**ments**, Start **up** and **stand** an **end.** O **gen**tle **son**, U**pon** the **heat** and **flame** of **thy** dis**temp**er

Sprink***le*** cool **pa**tience. **Where**on **do** you **look**?

*Hamlet* On **him**, on **him**! Look **you** how **pale** he **glares**.

His **form** and **cause** con**joined**, preach***ing*** to **stones**,

Would **make** them **ca**pable.// —**Do** not **look** u**pon** me,

Lest **with** this **pit**eous **act**ion **you** con**vert**[[81]](#footnote-81)

My **stern** ef**fects**. Then **what** I **have** to **do**

Will **want** true **col**or—**tears** per**chance** for **blood**.

*Queen* To **whom** do **you** speak **this**?

*Hamlet* Do **you** see **noth**ing **there**?

*Queen* Noth***ing*** at **all**; yet **all** that **is** I **see**.

*Hamlet* Nor **did** you **noth**ing **hear**?

*Queen* No, **noth**ing **but** our**selves**.

*Hamlet* Why, **look** you **there**, look **how** it **steals** a**way**, My **fath**er, **in** his **hab**it **as** he **lived**!

Look **where** he **goes** e(v)en **now** out **at** the **port**al.

*Exit Ghost.*

*Queen* This **is** the **ver**y **coin**age **of** your **brain**. This **bod**i**less** cre**a**tion **ec**sta**sy** Is **ver**y **cun**ning **in.**

*Hamlet* My **pulse** as **yours** doth **temp**(e)rate**ly** keep **time**,

And **makes** as **health**ful **mu**sic. **It’s** not **mad**ness[[82]](#footnote-82)

That **I** have **ut**tered. **Bring** me **to** the **test**,

And **I** the **mat**ter **will** re-**word**, which **mad**ness

Would **gam**bol **from**. Moth***er***, for **love** of **grace**,

Lay **not** that **flatt**(e)ring **unc**tion **to** your **soul**, That **not** your **tres**pass **but** my **mad**ness **speaks**.

It **will** but **skin** and **film** the **ulc**(e)rous **place**,

Whiles **rank** cor**rup**tion, **min**ing **all** with**in**,

Inf**ects** un**seen**. Con**fess** your**self** to **heav**en,

Re**pent** what’s **past**, a**void** what **is** to **come**,

And **do** not **spread** the **com**post **on** the **weeds**

To **make** them **rank**er.// For**give** me **this** my **vir**tue,

For **in** the **fat**ness **of** these **pur**sy **times** Vir***tue*** it**self** of **vice** must **par**don **beg**,

Yea, **curb** and **woo** for **leave** to **do** him **good**. *Queen* O **Ham**let, **thou** hast **cleft** my **heart** in **twain**.

*Hamlet* O **throw** a**way** the **wors**er **part** of **it** And **live** the **pur**er **with** the **oth**er **half**.

Good **night**. But **go** not **to** my **unc**le’s **bed**. As**sume** a **vir**tue **if** you **have** it **not**.

That **mon**ster, **cus**tom, **who** all **sense** doth **eat**

Of **hab**its **e(vi)l,** is **an**gel **yet** in **this**,[[83]](#footnote-83)

That **to** the **use** of **ac**tions **fair** and **good**

He **like**wise **gives** a **frock** or **liv**e**ry**

That **apt**ly **is** put **on.** Re**frain** to**night**,

And **that** shall **lend** a **kind** of **ea**si**ness**

To **the** next **ab**sti**nence,** the **next** more **ea**sy;

For **use** al**most** can **change** the **stamp** of **na**ture,

And **ei**ther **lodge** the **de(vi)l** or **throw** him **out**

With **won**drous **po**ten**cy**. Once **more**, good **night**,

And **when** you **are** de**si**rous **to** be **blest**,

I’ll **bless**ing **beg** of **you**. For **this** same **lord**

I **do** re**pent**; but **hea(ve)n** hath **pleased** it **so**, To **pun**ish **me** with **this** and **this** with **me**, That **I** must **be** their **scourge** and **min**is**ter**. I **will** be**stow** him, **and** will **an**swer **well** The **death** I **gave** him. **So**, a**gain**, good **night**.

I **must** be **cru**el **on**ly **to** be **kind**.

This **bad** be**gins**, and **worse** re**mains** be**hind.**

**One** word **more**, good **la**dy.[[84]](#footnote-84)

*Queen* What **shall** I **do?**

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

Let **the** bloat **King** tempt **you** a**gain** to **bed**,

Pinch **wan**ton **on** your **cheek**, call **you** his **mouse**,

And **let** him, **for** a **pair** of **reech**y **kiss**es,

Or **padd**ling **in** your **neck** with **his** damned **fing**ers,

Make **you** to **rav**el **all** this **mat**ter **out**,

That **I** es**sen**tial**ly** am **not** in **mad**ness,

But **mad** in **craft**. ’Twere **good** you **let** him **know**,

For **who** that’s **but** a **queen**, fair, **so**ber, **wise**, Would **from** a **pad**dock, **from** a **bat**, a **gib**, Such **dear** con**cern**ings **hide**? Who **would** do **so?**

No, **in** de**spite** of **sense** and **se**cre**cy,**

Un**peg** the **bas**ket **on** the **hous**e’s **top**,

Let **the** birds **fly**, and **like** the **fa**mous **ape**,

To **try** con**clu**sions, **in** the **bas**ket **creep**, And **break** your **own** neck **down**.

*Queen* Be **thou** as**sured**, if **words** be **made** of **breath**, And **breath** of **life**, I **have** no **life** to **breathe** What **thou** hast **said** to **me.**

*Hamlet* I **must** to **Eng**land, **you** know **that**?

*Queen*  A**lack,**

I **had** for**got**. ’Tis **so** con**clud**ed **on.**

*Hamlet* There’s **let**ters **sealed**, and **my** two **school**fell**ows**,

Whom **I** will **trust** as **I** will **add**ers **fanged**,

They **bear** the **man**date. **They** must **sweep** my **way** And **mar**shal **me** to **knav**(e)ry. **Let** it **work**: For ’**tis** the **sport** to **have** the **en**gin**eer**[[85]](#footnote-85)

Hoist **with** his **own** pe**tard**, and’t **shall** go **hard**

But **I** will **delve** one **yard** be**low** their **mines**

And **blow** them **at** the **moon**. O, ’**tis** most **sweet** When **in** one **line** two **crafts** di**rect**ly **meet**.

This **man** shall **set** me **pack**ing.

I’ll **lug** the **guts** in**to** the **neigh**bor **room**.

Moth***er***, good **night** in**deed**. This **coun**sel**lor** Is **now** most **still**, most **se**cret, **and** most **grave**, Who **was** in **life** a **fool**ish **prat**ing **knave**.

Come, **sir**, to **draw** to**ward** an **end** with **you**.

Good night, mother.

*Exit Hamlet lugging in Polonius. The Queen remains.*

## Act IV

### Scene 1

*Enter* K, *with* R *and* G. Q.

*King* There’s **mat**ter **in** these **sighs**, these **pro**found **heaves**.[[86]](#footnote-86)You **must** tran**slate**. ’Tis **fit** we **un**der**stand** them.[[87]](#footnote-87)Where **is** your **son**?

*Queen* Be**stow** this **place** on **us** a **lit**tle **while**.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Ah, **mine** own **lord**, what **have** I **seen** to**night**!

*King* What, **Ger**trude, **how** does **Ham**let?

*Queen* Mad **as** the **sea** and **wind** when **both** con**tend** Which **is** the **might**ier. **In** his **law**less **fit**,[[88]](#footnote-88)

Be**hind** the **arr**as **hear**ing **some**thing **stir**,

Whips **out** his **ra**pier, **cries** ‘A **rat**, a **rat!**’,[[89]](#footnote-89)

And **in** this **brain**ish **ap**pre**hen**sion **kills** The **un**seen **good** old **man**.

*King*  O **heav**y **deed**!

It **had** been **so** with **us** had **we** been **there**.

His **lib**er**ty** is **full** of **threats** to **all**,

To **you** your**self**, to **us**, to **ev**ery**one**.

A**las**, how **shall** this **blood**y **deed** be **an**swered?

It **will** be **laid** to **us**, whose **prov**i**dence**

Should **have** kept **short**, re**strained**, and **out** of **haunt** This **mad** young **man**. But **so** much **was** our **love**,

We **would** not **un**der**stand** what **was** most **fit**,

But **like** the **own**er **of** a **foul** dis**ease**,

To **keep** it **from** di**vulg**ing, **let** it **feed**

IV 1

E(v)en **on** the **pith** of **life**. Where **is** he **gone**?

*Queen* To **draw** a**part** the **bod**y **he** hath **killed**,

O’er **whom**—his **ver**y **mad**ness, **like** some **ore**

A**mong** a **min**e**ral** of **met**als **base**,

Shows **it**self **pure**—he **weeps** for **what** is **done**.

*King* O **Ger**trude, **come** a**way**.

The **sun** no **soon**er **shall** the **moun**tains **touch**

But **we** will **ship** him **hence**; and **this** vile **deed**

We **must** with **all** our **maj**es**ty** and **skill**

Both **count**(e)nance **and** ex**cuse**. Ho, **Guild**en**stern**!

*Enter* R *and* G.

Friends **both**, go **join** you **with** some **fur**ther **aid**. Ham***let*** in **mad**ness **hath** Po**lo**nius **slain**,[[90]](#footnote-90)

And **from** his **moth**er’s **clos**et **hath** he **dragged** him. Go **seek** him **out**, speak **fair**, and **bring** the **bod**y In**to** the **chap**(e)l.\_I **pray** you **haste** in **this**.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.*

Come, **Ger**trude, **we’ll** call **up** our **wis**est **friends**

And **let** them **know** both **what** we **mean** to **do**

And **what’s** un**time**ly **done**. So **en**vious **slan**der,[[91]](#footnote-91)

Whose **whis**per **o’er** the **world’s** di**am**e**ter**,

As **lev**el **as** the **can**non **to** his **blank**,

Trans**ports** his **poi**soned **shot**, may **miss** our **name**

And **hit** the **wound**less **air**. O **come** a**way**,

My **soul** is **full** of **dis**cord **and** dis**may**. *Exeunt.*

IV 2

### Scene 2

*Enter* H.

*Hamlet* Safely stowed. But soft, what noise? Who calls on Hamlet? O here they come.

*Enter* R, G, *and others*.

*Rosen.* What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

*Hamlet* Compounded it with dust, whereto ’tis kin.

*Rosen.* Tell us where ’tis, that we may take it thence and bear it to the chapel.

*Hamlet* Do not believe it.

*Rosen.* 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?

*Rosen.* Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

*Hamlet* Ay, sir, that soaks up the King’s countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end: he keeps them like an ape in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

*Rosen.* I understand you not, my lord.

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

*Rosen.* 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— *Guilden.* A thing, my lord?

*Hamlet* Of nothing. Bring me to him. *Exeunt.*

IV 3

### Scene 3

*Enter* K *and two or three lords.*

*King* I\_(ha)ve **sent** to **seek** him, **and** to **find** the **bod**y. How **dang**(e)rous **is** it **that** this **man** goes **loose**! Yet **must** not **we** put **the** strong **law** on **him**;

He’s **loved** of **the** dis**trac**ted **mul**ti**tude**,

Who **like** not **in** their **judg**ment **but** their **eyes**,

And **where** ’tis **so**, th’of**fend**er’s **scourge** is **weighed**,

But **ne(v)er** th(e)\_of**fence**. To **bear** all **smooth** and **e**ven,

This **sud**den **send**ing **him** a**way** must **seem**

De**lib**(e)rate **pause**. Dis**eas**es **desp**(e)rate **grown** By **des**pe**rate** ap**pli**ance **are** re**lieved,** Or **not** at **all**.

*Enter* R, G, *and others.*

How **now**, what **hath** be**fall**en?

*Rosen.* Where **the** dead **bod**y is be**stowed**, my **lord**, We **can**not **get** from **him**.

*King*  But **where** is **he?**

*Rosen.* With**out**, my **lord**, guard***ed***, to **know** your **pleas**ure.

*King* Bring **him** be**fore** us.

*Rosen*. **Ho!** Bring **in** the **lord**.

*Enter* H *with* G.

*King* Now, Hamlet, where’s Polonius?

*Hamlet* At supper.

*King* At supper? Where?

*Hamlet* Not where he eats, but where a is eaten. A certain convocation of politic worms are e’en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots. Your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service—two dishes, but to one table. That’s the end.

*King* Alas, alas.

*Hamlet* A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

*King* 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.

*King* Where is Polonius?

*Hamlet* In heaven. Send thither to see. If your messenger find him not IV 3

there, seek him i’th’other place yourself. But if indeed you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

*King* (*to attendants*) Go seek him there.

*Hamlet* A will stay till you come. *Exeunt attendants.*

*King* Ham***let***, this **deed**, for **thine** e**spec**ial **sa**fety— Which **we** do **ten**der, **as** we **dear**ly **grieve** For **that** which **thou** hast **done**—must **send** thee **hence** With **fier**y **quick**ness.// There**fore** pre**pare** thy**self**.

The **bark** is **read**y, **and** the **wind** at **help**, Th’ass**oc**iates **tend**, and **ev**ery**thing** is **bent**[[92]](#footnote-92)For **Eng**land.

*Hamlet* For **Eng**land?

*King* Ay, **Ham**let.

*Hamlet* Good.

*King* So **is** it, **if** thou **knew’st** our **pur**pos**es**.

*Hamlet* I see a cherub that sees them. But come, for England. Farewell, dear mother.

*King* Thy **lov**ing **fath**er, **Ham**let.

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

*King* Foll(o)**w\_(h)im** at **foot**. Tempt **him** with **speed** a**board**. De**lay** it **not**. I’ll **have** him **hence** to**night**.

A**way**, for **ev**ery**thing** is **sealed** and **done**

That **else** leans **on** th’af**fair**. Pray **you** make **haste**. *Exeunt.*

And **Eng**land, **if** my **love** thou **hold’st** at **aught**— As **my** great **pow(e)r** there**of** may **give** thee **sense**,

Since **yet** thy **cic**a**trice** looks **raw** and **red**

Af**ter** the **Da**nish **sword**, and **thy** free **awe**

Pays **hom**age **t(o)\_us**—thou **mayst** not **cold**ly **set**

Our **sov**(e)reign **pro**cess, **which** im**ports** at **full**,

By **let**ters **con**gru**ing** to **that** ef**fect**,

The **pres**ent **death** of **Ham**let. **Do** it, **Eng**land,

For **like** the **hec**tic **in** my **blood** he **ra**ges,

And **thou** must **cure** me. **Till** I **know** ’tis **done**, How**e’er** my **haps**, my **joys** were **ne’er** be**gun**. *Exit.*

IV 4

### Scene 4

*Enter* F *with his Army.*

*Fortinbras* Go, **cap**tain, **from** me **greet** the **Da**nish **king**. Tell **him** that **by** his **li**cence **For**tin**bras** Craves **the** con**vey**ance **of** a **prom**ised **march** O**ver** his **king**dom.// You **know** the **ren**dez**vou**s.

If **that** his **Maj**es**ty** would **aught** with **us**,

We **shall** ex**press** our **du**ty **in** his **eye**; And **let** him **know** so.

*Captain*  **I** will **do’t**, my **lord**.

*Fortinbras* Go **soft**ly **on.**  *Exeunt all but the Captain.*

*Enter* H, R, G, *and others.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | Good **sir**, whose **pow(e)rs** are **these**? |  |
| *Captain* | They **are** of **Nor**way, **sir**. |  |
| *Hamlet* | How **pur**posed, **sir**, I **pray** you? |  |
| *Captain* | A**gainst** some **part** of **Po**land. |  |
| *Hamlet* | **Who** com**mands** them, **sir**? |  |
| *Captain* | The **neph**ew **to** old **Nor**way, **For**tin**bras**. |  |
| *Hamlet* | Goes **it** a**gainst** the **main** of **Po**land, **sir**, Or **for** some **front**ier?[[93]](#footnote-93) |  |
| *Captain* | Tru***ly*** to **speak**,// **and** with **no** ad**dit**ion, We **go** to **gain** a **lit**tle **patch** of **ground** That **hath** in **it** no **prof**it **but** the **name**.  To **pay** five **duc**ats—**five**—I **would** not **farm** it; Nor **will** it **yield** to **Nor**way **or** the **Pole** A **rank**er **rate** should **it** be **sold** in **fee**. |  |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **then** the **Po**lack **nev**er **will** de**fend** it. |  |
| *Captain* | **Yes**, it **is** al**read**y **gar**ri**soned**. |  |
| *Hamlet* | Two **thou**sand **souls** and **twen**ty **thou**sand **duc**ats Will **not** de**bate** the **ques**tion **of** this **straw**!  This **is** th’im**pos**tume **of** much **wealth** and **peace**, That **in**ward **breaks**, and **shows** no **cause** with**out** Why **the** man **dies**. I **hum**bly **thank** you, **sir**. |  |
| *Captain* | God **buy** you, **sir**. |  |
| *Rosen.* | Will’t **please** you **go**, my **lord**? |  |
| *Hamlet* | I’ll be with you straight. Go a little before. | *Exeunt.* |

IV 4

How **all** oc**ca**sions **do** in**form** a**gainst** me,

And **spur** my **dull** re**venge**. What **is** a **man**

If **his** chief **good** and **mar**ket **of** his **time** Be **but** to **sleep** and **feed**? A **beast**, no **more**.

Sure **he** that **made** us **with** such **large** dis**course**,

Look***ing*** be**fore** and **aft**er, **gave** us **not**

That **ca**pa**bil**i**ty** and **god**like **rea**son

To **fust** in **us** un**used**. Now **whe(the)r** it **be**

Bes***tial*** o**bliv**ion, **or** some **cra**ven **scru**ple[[94]](#footnote-94)

Of **think**ing **too** pre**ci**sely **on** th’e**vent**—

A **thought** which, **quar**tered, **hath** but **one** part **wis**dom

And **ev**er **three** parts **cow(a)rd**—I **do** not **know**

Why **yet** I **live** to **say** this **thing’s** to **do**,

Sith **I** have **cause**, and **will**, and **strength**, and **means**

To **do’t**. Ex**amp**les **gross** as **earth** ex**hort** me,

Wit***ness*** this **arm**y **of** such **mass** and **charge**,

Led **by** a **del**i**cate** and **ten**der **prince**,

Whose **spir**it, **with** di**vine** am**bit**ion **puffed**,

Makes **mouths** at **the** in**vis**i**ble** e**vent**,

Ex**pos**ing **what** is **mor**tal **and** un**sure**

To **all** that **for**tune, **death**, and **dan**ger **dare**,

E(v)en **for** an **egg**shell. **Rightl**y **to** be **great**

Is **not** to **stir** with**out** great **ar**gu**ment**,

But **great**ly **to** find **quar**rel **in** a **straw**

When **hon**or’s **at** the **stake**. How **stand** I **then**,

That **have** a **fath**er **killed**, a **moth**er **stained**,

Ex**cite**ments **of** my **rea**son **and** my **blood**,

And **let** all **sleep**, while **to** my **shame** I **see**

The **imm**(i)nent **death** of **twen**ty **thou**sand **men**

That **for** a **fan**ta**sy** and **trick** of **fame**

Go **to** their **graves** like **beds**, fight **for** a **plot**

Where**on** the **num**bers **can**not **try** the **cause**,

Which **is** not **tomb** e**nough** and **con**ti**nent**

To **hide** the **slain**?// **O**, from **this** time **forth**

My **thoughts** be **blood**y **or** be **noth**ing **worth**.  *Exit.*

### Scene 5

*Enter* Q, H, *and a* G.

*Queen* I **will** not **speak** with **her**.

*Gent.* She **is** im**port**u**nate**, in**deed**, dis**tract**.

Her **mood** will **needs** be **pit**ied.

*Queen*  What **would** she **have**?

*Gent.* She **speaks** much **of** her **fath**er, **says** she **hears**

There’s **tricks** i’th’ **world**, and **hems**, and **beats** her **heart**,

Spurns **en**vious**ly** at **straws**, speaks **things** in **doubt**[[95]](#footnote-95)

That **car**ry **but** half **sense**. Her **speech** is **noth**ing,

Yet **the** un**shap**èd **use** of **it** doth **move**

The **hear**ers **to** col**lec**tion.// They **aim** at **it**,

And **botch** the **words** up **fit** to **their** own **thoughts**,

Which, **as** her **winks** and **nods** and **ges**tures **yield** them, In**deed** would **make** one **think** there **might** be **thought**, Though **noth**ing **sure**, yet **much** un**hap**pi**ly**.

*Horatio* ’Twere **good** she\_(we)re **spok**en **with**, for **she** may **strew** Dang(e)***rous*** con**jec**tures **in** ill-**breed**ing **minds**.

*Queen* Let **her** come **in.** *Exit Gentleman.*

(*aside*) To **my** sick **soul**, as **sin’s** true **na**ture **is**, Each **toy** seems **pro**logue **to** some **great** a**miss**.

So **full** of **art**less **jeal**ou**sy** is **guilt**,

It **spills** it**self** in **fear**ing **to** be **spilt**.

*Enter* O. *Ophelia* Where **is** the **beau**teous **Maj**es**ty** of **Den**mark?[[96]](#footnote-96)*Queen* How **now**, O**phe**lia?

*Ophelia* *sings* **How** should **I** your **true** love **know From** a**noth**er **one**?

**By** his **cock**le **hat** and **staff And** his **san**dal **shoon**.

*Queen* A**las**, sweet **la**dy, **what** im**ports** this **song**? *Ophelia* Say you? Nay, pray you mark.

**He** is **dead** and **gone**, **la**dy,

**He** is **dead** and **gone**,

**At** his **head** a **grass**-green **turf**, **At** his **heels** a **stone**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | O ho! |
| *Queen* | Nay, **but** O**phe**lia— |
| *Ophelia* | Pray you mark.  **White** his **shroud** as the **moun**tain **snow**— *Enter* K. |
| *Queen* | A**las**, look **here**, my **lord**. |
| *Ophelia* | **Lard**ed **with** sweet **flow**ers  **Which** be**wept** to\_th(e) **grave** did not **go**[[97]](#footnote-97)With **true**-love **show**ers. |
| *King* | How do you, pretty lady? |
| *Ophelia* | Well, good 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. |
| *King* | Conceit upon her father. |
| *Ophelia* | Pray let’s have no words of this, but when they ask you what it means, say you this:  To**morr**ow **is** Saint **Val**entine’s **day**,  **All** in the **morn**ing be**time**,  And **I** a **maid** at your **win**dow, To **be** your **Val**en**tine**.  Then **up** he **rose**, and **donned** his **close**,  And **dupped** the **cham**ber **door**,  Let **in** the **maid** that **out** a **maid Nev**er de**part**ed **more**. |
| *King* | Pretty Ophelia— |
| *Ophelia* | Indeed, without an oath, I’ll make an end on’t.  By **Gis** and **by** Saint **Char**i**ty**,  A**lack** and **fie** for **shame**,  Young **men** will **do’t** if **they** come **to’t**— By **Cock**, they **are** to **blame**.  Quoth **she**, ‘Be**fore** you **tum**bled **me**,  You **prom**ised **me** to **wed**.’ He answers, |

‘So **would** I a **done**, by **yon**der **sun**,

And **thou** hadst not **come** to my **bed**.’ *King* How **long** hath **she** been **thus**?

*Ophelia* I hope all will be well. We must be patient, but I cannot choose but weep to think they would lay him i’th’ cold ground. My brother shall know of it. And so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach. Good night, ladies, good night. Sweet ladies, good night, good night.  *Exit.*

*King* Foll***ow*** her **close**; give **her** good **watch**, I **pray** you.

*Exit Horatio.*

O **this\_(i)s** the **poi**son **of** deep **grief**. It **springs**[[98]](#footnote-98)

All **from** her **fath**er’s **death**. And **now** be**hold**—

O **Ger**trude, **Ger**trude,

When **sorr**ows **come**, they **come** not **sing**le **spies**,

But **in** bat**tal**ions. **First**, her **fath**er **slain**;129

Next, **your** son **gone**, and **he** most **vi**(o)lent **au**thor

Of **his** own **just** re**move**; the **peo**ple **mud**died,

Thick **and** un**whole**some **in** their **thoughts** and **whis**pers

For **good** Po**lo**nius’ **death**//—and **we** have **done** but **green**ly

In **hug**ger-**mug**ger **to** in**ter** him;// **poor** O**phe**lia

Di**vi**ded **from** **herself** and **her** fair **judg**ment,

With**out** the **which** we\_(a)re **pic**tures, **or** mere **beasts**;

Last, **and** as **much** con**tain**ing **as** all **these**,

Her **broth**er **is** in **se**cret **come** from **France**,

Feeds **on** his **won**der, **keeps** him**self** in **clouds**, And **wants** not **buzz**ers **to** in**fect** his **ear**

With **pest**(i)lent **speech**es **of** his **fath**er’s **death**,

Where**in** ne**cess**i**ty**, of **mat**ter **beg**gared,

Will **noth**ing **stick** our **per**son **to** ar**raign**

In **ear** and **ear**. O **my** dear **Ger**trude, **this**,

Like **to** a **mur**d’ring-**piece**, in **man**y **plac**es Gives **me** su**per**fluous **death**.[[99]](#footnote-99) *A noise within.*

At**tend**!

Where **are** my **Switz**ers? **Let** them **guard** the **door**.

*Enter a* M.

What **is** the **mat**ter?

*Messenger*  **Save** your**self**, my **lord***.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The **o**cean, **o**ver**peer**ing **of** his **list**,  Eats **not** the **flats** with **more** im**pet**uous **haste**[[100]](#footnote-100)  Than **young** La**er**tes **in** a **ri**(o)tous **head**[[101]](#footnote-101)  O’er**bears** your **off**icers.// The **rab**ble **call** him **lord**,  And, **as** the **world** were **now** but **to** be**gin**,  An**tiq**ui**ty** for**got**, cus***tom*** not **known**— The **ra**ti**fi(e)rs** and **props** of **ev**ery **word**— They **cry**, ‘Choose **we!** La**er**tes **shall** be **king**!’  Caps, **hands**, and **tongues** ap**plaud** it **to** the **clouds**,  ‘La**er**tes **shall** be **king**, La**er**tes **king**!’ |
| *Queen* | How **cheer**ful**ly** on **the** false **trail** they **cry**!  O, **this** is **coun**ter, **you** false **Dan**ish **dogs**! *A noise within.* |
| *King* | The **doors** are **broke**.  *Enter* L *with* F. |
| *Laertes* | Where **is** this **king**?—Sirs, **stand** you **all** with**out**. |
| *Followers* | No, **let’s** come **in.** |
| *Laertes* | I **pray** you **give** me **leave**. |
| *Followers* | We **will**, we **will**. |
| *Laertes* | I **thank** you. **Keep** the **door**. *Exeunt Followers.*  O **thou** vile **king**, Give **me** my **fath**er. |
| *Queen* | **Calm**ly, **good** La**er**tes. |
| *Laertes* | That **drop** of **blood** that’s **calm** pro**claims** me **bas**tard,  Cries **cuck**old **to** my **fath**er, **brands** the **har**lot E(v)en **here** be**tween** the **chaste** un**smirch**èd **brow** Of **my** true **moth**er. |
| *King* | What **is** the **cause**, La**er**tes,  That **thy** re**bell**ion **looks** so **gi**ant-**like**?— Let **him** go, **Ger**trude. **Do** not **fear** our **per**son. |

There’s **such** di**vin**i**ty** doth **hedge** a **king**

That **trea**son **can** but **peep** to **what** it **would**,

Acts **lit**tle **of** his **will**.—Tell **me**, La**er**tes,

Why **thou** art **thus** in**censed**. —Let **him** go, **Ger**trude.— Speak, man.

*Laertes* Where **is** my **fath**er?

*King* **Dead**.

*Queen* But **not** by **him**.

*King* Let **him** de**mand** his **fill**.

*Laertes* How **came** he **dead**? I’ll **not** be **jugg**led **with**. To **hell** al**leg**iance, **vows** to\_th(e) **black**est **dev**il, Con***science*** and **grace** to **the** pro**found**est **pit**!

I **dare** dam**na**tion. **To** this **point** I **stand**,

That **both** the **worlds** I **give** to **neg**li**gence**, Let **come** what **comes**, on**ly** I’ll **be** re**venged** Most **through**ly **for** my **fath**er.

*King*  **Who** shall **stay** you?

*Laertes* My **will**, not **all** the **world**.

And **for** my **means**, I’ll **hus**band **them** so **well**, They **shall** go **far** with **lit**tle.

*King* **Good** La**er**tes,

If **you** de**sire** to **know** the **cer**tain**ty**

Of **your** dear **fa(the)r**, is’t **writ** in **your** re**venge**[[102]](#footnote-102)That, **swoop**stake, **you** will **draw** both **friend** and **foe**, Win***ner*** and **los**er?

*Laertes* None **but** his **en**e**mies**.

*King*  **Will** you **know** them **then**?

*Laertes* To **his** good **friends** thus **wide** I’ll **ope** my **arms**,

And, **like** the **kind** life-**rend**(e)ring **pel**i**can** Re**past** them **with** my **blood**.

*King* Why, **now** you **speak**

Like **a** good **child** and **a** true **gen**tle**man**.

That **I** am **guilt**less **of** your **fath**er’s **death**

And **am** most **sen**sib**ly** in **grief** for **it**,

It **shall** as **lev**el **to** your **judg**ment ’**pear**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | As **day** does **to** your **eye**. *A noise within.*  Let **her** come **in.** |
| *Laertes* | How **now**, what **noise** is **that**?  *Enter* O.  O **heat**, dry **up** my **brains**! Tears **se(ve)n** times **salt** Burn **out** the **sense** and **vir**tue **of** mine **eye**!  By **hea(ve)n**, thy **mad**ness **shall** be **paid** with **weight** Till **our** scale **turn** the **beam**. O **rose** of **May**!  Dear **maid**, kind **sis**ter, **sweet** O**phe**li**a**— O **hea(ve)ns**, is’t **poss**i**ble** a **young** maid’s **wits** Should **be** as **mor**tal **as** an **old** man’s **life**?  Na***ture*** is **fine** in **love**, and **where** ’tis **fine** It **sends** some **prec**ious **in**stance **of** it**self** Af**ter** the **thing** it **loves**. |
| *Ophelia* | They **bore** him **bare**-faced **on** the **bier**,  And **in** his **grave** rained **man**y\_a **tear**134 Fare you well, my dove. |
| *Laertes* | Hadst **thou** thy **wits** and **didst** per**suade** re**venge**, 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. |
| *Laertes* | This **noth**ing’s **more** than **mat**ter. |
| *Ophelia* | There’s rosemary, that’s for remembrance—pray you, love, remember. And there is pansies, that’s for thoughts. |
| *Laertes* | A **doc**u**ment** in **mad**ness:// thoughts **and** re**mem**brance **fit**ted. |
| *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 a Sundays. You must wear your rue with a difference. There’s a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they withered all when my father died. They say a made a good end.  For **bon**ny sweet **Rob**in is **all** my **joy**. |
| *Laertes* | Thought **and** af**flic**tion, **pass**ion, **hell** it**self** She **turns** to **fa**vor **and** to **pret**ti**ness**. |
| *Ophelia* | And **will** a not **come** a**gain**? |

134

Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /mén(i)ya/.

And **will** a not **come** a**gain**? No, **no**, he is **dead**, Go **to** thy death-**bed**, He **nev**er will **come** a**gain**.

His **beard** was as **white** as **snow**, All **flax**en **was** his **poll**.

He is **gone**, he is **gone**,

And we **cast** away **moan**. God-a-**mer**cy **on** his **soul**.

And of all Christian souls. God buy you.

*Laertes* Do **you** see **this**, O **God**?

*King* La**er**tes, **I** must **com**mune **with** your **grief**,[[103]](#footnote-103)

Or **you** de**ny** me **right**. Go **but** a**part**, Make **choice** of **whom** your **wis**est **friends** you **will**, And **they** shall **hear** and **judge** ’twixt **you** and **me.** If **by** di**rect** or **by** col**lat**(e)ral **hand**

They **find** us **touched**, we **will** our **king**dom **give**,

Our **crown**, our **life**, and **all** that **we** call **ours**

To **you** in **sat**is**fac**tion; **but** if **not**,

Be **you** con**tent** to **lend** your **pa**tience **to** us, And **we** shall **joint**ly **la**bor **with** your **soul** To **give** it **due** con**tent**. *Laertes*  Let **this** be **so.** His **means** of **death**, his **ob**scure **fu**ne**ral**—[[104]](#footnote-104)

No **tro**phy, **sword**, nor **hatch**ment **o’er** his **bones**,

No **no**ble **rite**, nor **for**mal **os**ten**ta**tion— Cry **to** be **heard**, as ’**twere** from **hea(ve)n** to **earth**, That **I** must **call’t** in **ques**tion.

*King*  **So** you **shall**.

And **where** th’of**fence** is, **let** the **great** axe **fall**.

I **pray** you **go** with **me.** *Exeunt.*

IV 6

Scene 6

*Enter* H *and a* S.

*Horatio* What are they that would speak with me?

*Servant* Seafaring men, sir. They say they have letters for you.

*Horatio* Let them come in.  *Exit Servant.*

I **do** not **know** from **what** part **of** the **world**

I **should** be **greet**ed, **if** not **from** Lord **Ham**let.

*Enter* S.

*1st Sailor* God bless you, sir.

*Horatio* Let him bless thee too.

*1st Sailor* A shall, sir, and please him. There’s a letter for you, sir. It came

from th’ambassador that was bound for England—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

*Horatio* (*reads*) Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the King. They have letters for him. 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 valor, 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 turn for them. Let the King have the letters I have sent, and repair thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldest fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England; of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

Come, **I** will **give** you **way** for **these** your **lett**ers, And **do’t** the **speed**ier **that** you **may** di**rect** me[[105]](#footnote-105)

To **him** from **whom** you **brought** them. *Exeunt.*

### Scene 7

*Enter* K *and* L.

*King* Now **must** your **con**science **my** ac**quit**tance **seal**,

And **you** must **put** me **in** your **heart** for **friend**,

Sith **you** have **heard**, and **with** a **know**ing **ear**, That **he** which **hath** your **no**ble **fath**er **slain** Pur**sued** my **life**.

*Laertes*  It **well** ap**pears**. But **tell** me

Why **you** pro**ceed**ed **not** a**gainst** these **feats**,

So **crime**ful **and** so **cap**i**tal** in **na**ture,[[106]](#footnote-106)As **by** your **safe**ty, **wis**dom, **all** things **else**,[[107]](#footnote-107)You **main**ly **were** stirred **up.**

*King*  O, **for** two **spec**ial **rea**sons,

Which **may** to **you** per**haps** seem **much** un**sin**ewed,

But **yet** to **me** they’re **strong**. The **Queen** his **moth**er

Lives **al**most **by** his **looks**, and **for** my**self**,

My **vir**tue **or** my **plague**, be\_(i)t **ei**ther **which**,

She’s **so** con**junc**tive **to** my **life** and **soul**,

That, **as** the **star** moves **not** but **in** his **sphere**,

I **could** not **but** by **her**. The **oth**er **mo**tive

Why **to** a **pub**lic **count** I **might** not **go**

Is **the** great **love** the **gen**(e)ral **gen**der **bear** him,

Who, **dipp**ing **all** his **faults** in **their** af**fec**tion,

Work **like** the **spring** that **turn**eth **wood** to **stone**,

Con**vert** his **gyves** to **grac**es;// so **that** my **arr**ows,

Too **slight**ly **tim**bered **for** so **loud** a **wind**,

Would **have** re**vert**ed **to** my **bow** a**gain**, But **not** where **I** had **aimed** them.

*Laertes* And **so** have **I** a **no**ble **fath**er **lost**,

A **sis**ter **driv**en **in**to **des**p’rate **terms**,

Whose **worth**, if **prais**es **may** go **back** a**gain**, Stood **chal**len**ger** on **mount** of **all** the **age** For **her** per**fec**tions.// But **my** re**venge** will **come**.

*King* Break **not** your **sleeps** for **that**. You **must** not **think**

That **we** are **made** of **stuff** so **flat** and **dull** That **we** can **let** our **beard** be **shook** with **dan**ger And **think** it **pas**time.// You **short**ly **shall** hear **more**.

I **loved** your **fath**er, **and** we **love** our**self**,

And **that**, I **hope**, will **teach** you **to** i**mag**ine— *Enter a* M *with letters.*

How **now**? What **news**?

*Messenger*  Let***ters*** my **lord** from **Ham**let.

This **to** your **Maj**es**ty**, this **to** the **Queen**.[[108]](#footnote-108)

*King* From **Ham**~l**et**! Who **brought** them?

*Messenger* Sail***ors***, my **lord**, they **say**. I **saw** them **not**. They **were** gi(ve)n **me** by **Claud**io. **He** re**ceived** them Of **him** that **brought** them.

*King*  La**er**tes, **you** shall **hear** them.

Leave us. *Exit Messenger.*

(*reads*)

High and mighty, you shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. Tomorrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return.

Hamlet What **should** this **mean**? Are **all** the **rest** come **back**?

Or **is** it **some** a**buse**, and **no** such **thing**?

*Laertes* Know **you** the **hand**?

*King* ’Tis **Ham**let’s **char**(a)cter. **Na**ked?[[109]](#footnote-109)

And **in** a **post**script **here** he **says** ‘A**lone**’.

Can **you** de**vise** me?

*Laertes* I’m **lost** in **it**, my **lord**. But **let** him **come**.

It **warms** the **ver**y **sick**ness **in** my **heart** That **I** shall **live** and **tell** him **to** his **teeth**, ‘Thus **did**est **thou**’.

*King*  If **it** be **so**, La**er**tes—

As **how** should **it** be **so**, how **oth**er**wise**?— Will **you** be **ruled** by **me?**

*Laertes*  **Ay**, my **lord**.

So **you** will **not** o’er**rule** me **to** a **peace**.

*King* To **thine** own **peace**. If **he** be **now** re**turned**,

As **check**ing **at** his **voy**(a)ge, and **that** he **means**[[110]](#footnote-110)

No **more** to **un**der**take** it, **I** will **work** him

To **an** ex**ploit**, now **ripe** in **my** de**vice**,

Un**der** the **which** he **shall** not **choose** but **fall**,

And **for** his **death** no **wind** of **blame** shall **breathe**, But **e(v)en** his **moth**er **shall** un**charge** the **prac**tice And **call** it **ac**ci**dent**.

*Laertes* My **lord**, I **will** be **ruled**,

The **rath**er **if** you **could** de**vise** it **so** That **I** might **be** the **or**gan.

*King*  **It** falls **right**.

You **have** been **talked** of **since** your **trav**el **much**,

And **that** in **Ham**let’s **hear**ing, **for** a **qual**ity

Where**in** they **say** you **shine**. Your **sum** of **parts**

Did **not** to**geth**er **pluck** such **en**vy **from** him As **did** that **one**, and **that**, in **my** re**gard**, Of **the** un**worth**iest **siege**.

*Laertes*  What **part** is **that**, my **lord**?[[111]](#footnote-111)

*King* A **ver**y **rib**bon **in** the **cap** of **youth**,

Yet **need**ful **too**, for **youth** no **less** be**comes** The **light** and **care**less **liv**(e)ry **that** it **wears**

Than **set**tled **age** his **sa**bles **and** his **weeds** Im**port**ing **health** and **grave**ness. **Two** months **since** Here **was** a **gen**tle**man** of **Nor**man**dy**.

I\_(ha)ve **seen** my**self**, and **served** a**gainst**, the **French**,

And **they** can **well** on **horse**back, **but** this **gal**lant Had **witch**craft **in’t**. He **grew** un**to** his **seat**,

And **to** such **won**drous **do**ing **brought** his **horse**

As **had** he **been** in**corpsed** and **dem**i-**na**tured

With **the** brave **beast**. So **far** he **topped** my **thought**, That **I** in **for**ge**ry** of **shapes** and **tricks** Come **short** of **what** he **did**.

*Laertes* A **Nor**man **was’t**?

*King* A **Nor**man.

*Laertes*  U**pon** my **life**, La**mord**.

*King*  The **ver**y **same**.

*Laertes* I **know** him **well**. He **is** the **brooch** in**deed** And **gem** of **all** the **na**tion.

*King*  He **made** con**fess**ion **of** you,

And **gave** you **such** a **mas**ter**ly** re**port**

For **art** and **ex**er**cise** in **your** de**fense**,

And **for** your **ra**pier **most** es**pec**i**al**,[[112]](#footnote-112)

That **he** cried **out** ’twould **be** a **sight** in**deed**

If **one** could **match** you.// The **scrim**ers **of** their **na**tion

He **swore** had **nei**ther **mo**tion, **guard**, nor **eye**,

If **you** op**posed** them.// Sir, **this** re**port** of **his**

Did **Ham**let **so** en**ven**om **with** his **en**vy That **he** could **noth**ing **do** but **wish** and **beg** Your **sud**den **com**ing **o’er** to **play** with **you**.

Now **out** of **this**—

*Laertes*  What **out** of **this**, my **lord**? *King* La**er**tes, **was** your **fath**er **dear** to **you**? Or **are** you **like** the **paint**ing **of** a **sorr**ow, A **face** with**out** a **heart**?

*Laertes*  Why **ask** you **this**?

*King* Not **that** I **think** you **did** not **love** your **fath**er,

But **that** I **know** love **is** be**gun** by **time**,

And **that** I **see**, in **pass**ag**es** of **proof**, Time **qual**i**fies** the **spark** and **fire** of **it.**

There **lives** with**in** the **ver**y **flame** of **love**

A **kind** of **wick** or **snuff** that **will** a**bate** it; And **noth**ing **is** at **a** like **good**ness **still**,

For **good**ness, **grow**ing **to** a **pleu**ri**sy**,

Dies **in** his **own** too **much**. That **we** would **do**,

We **should** do **when** we **would**, for **this** ‘would’ **chang**es

And **hath** a**bate**ments **and** de**lays** as **man**y

As **there** are **tongues**, are **hands**, are **ac**ci**dents**; And **then** this ‘**should**’ is **like** a **spend**thrift **sigh** That **hurts** by **eas**ing.// But **to** the **quick** of **th’ul**cer:

Ham***let*** comes **back**; what **would** you **un**der**take** To **show** your**self** in **deed** your **fath**er’s **son** More **than** in **words**?

*Laertes* To **cut** his **throat** i’th’ **church**.

*King* No **place** in**deed** should **mur**der **sanc**tua**rize**;

Re**venge** should **have** no **bounds**. But **good** La**er**tes,

Will **you** do **this**, keep **close** with**in** your **cham**ber; Ham***let***, re**turned**, shall **know** you **are** come **home**;

We’ll **put** on **those** shall **praise** your **ex**cel**lence**,

And **set** a **doub**le **var**nish **on** the **fame**

The **French**man **gave** you; **bring** you,\_(i)n **fine**, to**geth**er,

And **wa**ger **o’er** your **heads**. He, **being** re**miss**,

Most **gen**er**ous**, and **free** from **all** con**triv**ing, Will **not** pe**ruse** the **foils**, so **that** with **ease**— Or **with** a **lit**tle **shuff**ling—**you** may **choose** A **sword** un**ba**ted,// and **in** a **pass** of **prac**tice Re**quite** him **for** your **fath**er.

*Laertes* **I** will **do’t**.

And **for** that **pur**pose **I’ll** a**noint** my **sword**.

I **bought** an **unc**tion **of** a **moun**te**bank**

So **mor**tal **that** but **dip** a **knife** in **it**,

Where **it** draws **blood**, no **cat**a**plasm** so **rare**,

Col**lec**ted **from** all **sim**ples **that** have **vir**tue

Un**der** the **moon**, can **save** the **thing** from **death**

That **is** but **scratched** with**al**. I’ll **touch** my **point** With **this** con**ta**gion,// that **if** I **gall** him **slight**ly, It **may** be **death**.

*King*  Let’s **fur**ther **think** of **this**,

Weigh **what** con**ven**ience **both** of **time** and **means**

May **fit** us **to** our **shape**. If **this** should **fail**,

And **that** our **drift** look **through** our **bad** per**form**ance,

’Twere **bet**ter **not** es**sayed**. There**fore** this **pro**ject

Should **have** a **back** or **sec**ond, **that** might **hold** If **this** did **blast** in **proof**. Soft, **let** me **see**. We’ll **make** a **sol**emn **wa**ger **on** your **cun**nings—

I ha’t!

When **in** your **mo**tion **you** are **hot** and **dry**— As **make** your **bouts** more **vi(**o)lent **to** that **end**— And **that** he **calls** for **drink**, I’ll **have** pre**pared** him

A **chal**ice **for** the **nonce**, where**on** but **sip**ping, If **he** by **chance** e**scape** your **ven**omed **stuck**,

Our **pur**pose **may** hold **there**. But **stay**, what **noise**?

*Enter* Q.

*Queen* One **woe** doth **tread** u**pon** a**noth**er’s **heel**,

So **fast** they **foll**ow.// Your **sis**ter’s **drowned**, La**er**tes.

*Laertes* Drowned? O, where?

*Queen* There **is** a **will**ow **grows** a**skant** the **brook**

That **shows** his **hoar**y **leaves** i(n)\_th(e) **glass**y **stream**.[[113]](#footnote-113)

There**with** fan**tas**tic **gar**lands **did** she **make**

Of **crow**-flow(e)rs, **net**tles, **dai**sies, **and** long **pur**ples, That **lib**(e)ral **shep**herds **give** a **gross**er **name**, But **our** cold **maids** do **dead** men’s **fing**ers **call** them.

There **on** the **pen**dent **boughs** her **crown**et **weeds**

Clamb’***ring*** to **hand**, an **en**vious **sliv**er **broke**,[[114]](#footnote-114)

When **down** her **weed**y **tro**phies **and** her**self**

Fell **in** the **weep**ing **brook**. Her **clothes** spread **wide**,

And **mer**maid-**like** a**while** they **bore** her **up**,

Which **time** she **chant**ed **snatch**es **of** old **lauds**,

As **one** in**ca**pab**le\_of** her **own** di**stress**,[[115]](#footnote-115)

Or **like** a **crea**ture **na**tive **and** in**dued**

Un**to** that **el**ement.// But **long** it **could** not **be**

Till **that** her **gar**ments, **heav**y **with** their **drink**,

Pulled **the** poor **wretch** from **her** me**lo**dious **lay**[[116]](#footnote-116)

To **mud**dy **death**.

*Laertes*  A**las**, then **she** is **drowned**?

*Queen* Drowned, drowned.

*Laertes* Too **much** of **wat**er **hast** thou, **poor** O**phe**lia,

And **there**fore **I** for**bid** my **tears**. But **yet**

It **is** our **trick**; na***ture*** her **cus**tom **holds**,

Let **shame** say **what** it **will**. When **these** are **gone**,

The **wom**an **will** be **out**. A**dieu**, my **lord**,

I **have** a **speech** o’ **fire** that **fain** would **blaze**

But **that** this **foll**y **douts** it. *Exit.*

*King*  Let’s **foll**ow, **Ger**trude.

How **much** I **had** to **do** to **calm** his **rage**!

Now **fear** I **this** will **give** it **start** a**gain**.

There**fore** let’s **foll**ow. *Exeunt.*

## Act V

### Scene 1

*Enter two Clowns, the* G *and the* O.

*Gravedig.* Is she to be buried in Christian burial, when she wilfully seeks her own salvation?

*Other* I tell thee she is, therefore make her grave straight. The crowner hath sat on her and finds it Christian burial.

*Gravedig.* How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defense.

*Other* Why, ’tis found so.

*Gravedig.* It must be *se offendendo*, it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act, and an act hath three branches—it is to act, to do, to perform. Argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

*Other* Nay, but hear you, Goodman Delver—

*Gravedig.* Give me leave. Here lies the water—good. Here stands the man—good. If the man go to this water and drown himself, it is, will he nill he, he goes, mark you that. But if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

*Other* But is this law?

*Gravedig.* Ay, marry is’t, crowner’s quest law.

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

*Gravedig.* Why, there thou say’st—and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even-Christen. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and gravemakers—they hold up Adam’s profession.

*Other* Was he a gentleman?

*Gravedig.* A was the first that ever bore arms.

*Other* Why, he had none.

*Gravedig.* What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says Adam digged. Could he dig without arms? I’ll put another question to thee. If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Other* Go to.  *Gravedig.* What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?  *Other* The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.  *Gravedig.* I like thy wit well in good faith, the gallows does well. But how does it well? It does well to those that do ill. Now, thou dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To’t again, come.  *Other* Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?  *Gravedig.* Ay, tell me that and unyoke.  *Other* Marry, now I can tell.  *Gravedig.* To’t.  *Other* Mass, I cannot tell.  *Enter* H *and* H*, afar off.*  *Gravedig.* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not | |
|  | mend his pace with beating. And when you are asked this question next, say ‘A gravemaker’. The houses he makes lasts  till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan; fetch me a stoup of liquor. (*sings*)  *Exit Other.*  In **youth** when **I** did **love**, did **love**, Me**thought** it was **ver**y **sweet**:  To con**tract**—O—the **time** for—a—**my** be**hove**, Me**thought** there—a—was **noth**ing—a—**meet**. |
| *Hamlet* | Has this fellow no feeling of his business that he sings in gravemaking? |
| *Horatio* | Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness. |
| *Hamlet* | ’Tis e’en so, the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense. |
| *Gravedig.* | But **age** with his **steal**ing **steps**  Hath **clawed** me **in** his **clutch**,  And hath **shipped** me in**til** the **land**, As **if** I had **nev**er been **such**.  *He throws up a skull.* |
| *Hamlet* | That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once. How the knave jowls it to th’ ground, as if ’twere Cain’s jawbone, that did the first murder. This might be the pate of a politician which this ass now o’er-offices, one that would circumvent God, might it not? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Horatio* | It might, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Or a courtier, which could say, ‘Good morrow, sweet lord. How dost thou, sweet lord?’ This might be my Lord Such-aone, that praised my Lord Such-a-one’s horse when a meant to beg it, might it not? |
| *Horatio* | Ay, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Why, e’en so, and now my Lady Worm’s, chopless, and knocked about the mazard with a sexton’s spade. Here’s fine revolution and we had the trick to see’t. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggets with ’em? Mine ache to think on’t. |
| *Gravedig.* | A **pick**axe **and** a **spade**, a **spade**,  For **and** a **shroud**ing-**sheet**,  O a **pit** of **clay** for **to** be **made** For **such** a **guest** is **meet**.  *He throws up another skull.* |
| *Hamlet* | There’s another. Why, may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillities, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this mad knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum, this fellow might be in’s time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries. Is this the fine of his fines and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will scarcely lie in this box, and must th’inheritor himself have no more, ha? |
| *Horatio* | Not a jot more, my lord. |
| *Hamlet* | Is not parchment made of sheepskins? |
| *Horatio* | Ay, my lord, and of calves’ skins too. |
| *Hamlet* | They are sheep and calves which seek our assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. —Whose grave’s this, sirrah? |
| *Gravedig.* Mine, sir.  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.  *Gravedig.* 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 ’tis thine. ’Tis for the dead, not for the quick: therefore thou liest.

*Gravedig.* ’Tis a quick lie, sir, ’twill away again from me to you.

*Hamlet* What man dost thou dig it for?

*Gravedig.* For no man, sir.

*Hamlet* What woman then?

*Gravedig.* For none neither.

*Hamlet* Who is to be buried in’t?

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

*Hamlet* How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, this three years I have took note of it: the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant come so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been grave-maker?

*Gravedig.* Of all the days i’th’ year, I came to’t that day that our last King Hamlet o’ercame Fortinbras.

*Hamlet* How long is that since?

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

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

*Gravedig.* Why, because a was mad. A shall recover his wits there, or if a do not, ’tis no great matter there.

*Hamlet* Why?

*Gravedig.* ’Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.

*Hamlet* How came he mad?

*Gravedig.* Very strangely, they say.

*Hamlet* How ‘strangely’?

*Gravedig.* Faith, e’en with losing his wits.

*Hamlet* Upon what ground?

*Gravedig.* 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?

*Gravedig.* Faith, if a be not rotten before a die, as we have many pocky corses nowadays that will scarce hold the laying in, a will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* Why he more than another?  *Gravedig.* Why, sir, his hide is so tanned 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 skill now hath lien you i’th’ earth three and twenty years.  *Hamlet* Whose was it?  *Gravedig.* A whoreson mad fellow’s it was. Whose do you think it was?  *Hamlet* Nay, I know not.  *Gravedig.* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! A poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick’s skull, the King’s jester.  *Hamlet* This?  *Gravedig.* E’en that. | |
| *Hamlet* | Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath bore 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 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 chop-fallen? Now get you to my lady’s chamber and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor 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 looked o’ this fashion i’th’ earth? |
| *Horatio* | E’en so. |
| *Hamlet* | And smelt so? Pah! |
| *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 a 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 to 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? |

Im**per**ious **Cae**sar, **dead** and **turned** to **clay**,[[117]](#footnote-117)Might **stop** a **hole** to **keep** the **wind** a**way**. O **that** that **earth** which **kept** the **world** in **awe** Should **patch** a **wall** t’ex**pel** the **win**ter’s **flaw**.

But **soft**, but **soft** a**while**. Here **comes** the **King**, The **Queen**, the **court**iers

*Enter* B *with a coffin, a* P, K, Q, L, *and* L *Attendant.*

**Who** is **this** they **foll**ow?

And **with** such **maim**èd **rites**? This **doth** be**tok**en The **corse** they **foll**ow **did** with **desp**(e)rate **hand** For**do** it **own** life. ’**Twas** of **some** e**state**.

Couch **we** a**while** and **mark**.

*Laertes* What **cer**e**mo**ny **else**?

*Hamlet* That is Laertes, a very noble youth. Mark.

*Laertes* What **cer**e**mo**ny **else**?

*Priest* Her **ob**se**quies** have **been** as **far** en**larged**

As **we** have **war**ran**ty**. Her **death** was **doubt**ful;

And **but** that **great** com**mand** o’er**sways** the **or**der,

She **should** in **ground** un**sanc**ti**fied** been **lodged**

Till **the** last **trump**et:// for **char**i**tab**le **prayers** Shards, **flints**, and **peb**bles **should** be **thrown** on **her**.

Yet **here** she **is** al**lowed** her **vir**gin **crants**, Her **maid**en **strew**ments, **and** the **bring**ing **home** Of **bell** and **bur**ial.

*Laertes* Must **there** no **more** be **done**?

*Priest*  No **more** be **done**.

We **should** pro**fane** the **ser**vice **of** the **dead** To **sing** sage **req**uiem **and** such **rest** to **her**[[118]](#footnote-118)As **to** peace-**part**ed **souls**.

*Laertes*  Lay **her** i’th’ **earth**,

And **from** her **fair** and **un**pol**lu**ted **flesh**

May **vi**(o)lets **spring**. I **tell** thee, **chur**lish **priest**, A **min(i)st**(e)ring **an**gel **shall** my **sis**ter **be** When **thou** li(e)st **howl**ing.

*Hamlet*  **What**, the **fair** O**phe**lia!

*Queen* Sweets **to** the **sweet**. Fare**well**.

I **hoped** thou **shouldst** have **been** my **Ham**let’s **wife**: I **thought** thy **bride**-bed **to** have **decked**, sweet **maid**, And **not** t’have **strewed** thy **grave**.

*Laertes*  O, **treb**le **woe**

Fall **ten** times **treb**le **on** that **curs**èd **head**

Whose **wick**ed **deed** thy **most** in**ge**nious **sense**[[119]](#footnote-119)De**prived** thee **of.** Hold **off** the **earth** a**while**, Till **I** have **caught** her **once** more **in** mine **arms**.

Now **pile** your **dust** u**pon** the **quick** and **dead**,

Till **of** this **flat** a **moun**tain **you** have **made**

T’o’er**top** old **Pe**lion **or** the **sky**ish **head**[[120]](#footnote-120)Of **blue** O**lym**pus.

*Hamlet*  **What** is **he** whose **grief**

Bears **such** an **em**pha**sis**, whose **phrase** of **sorr**ow

Con**jures** the **wand**(e)ring **stars** and **makes** them **stand** Like **won**der-**wound**ed **hear**ers? **This** is **I**, Ham***let*** the **Dane**.

*Laertes* The **dev**il **take** thy **soul**!

*Hamlet*  Thou **pray’st** not **well**.

I **prith**ee **take** thy **fing**ers **from** my **throat**,

For **though** I **am** not **splen**a**tive** and **rash**, Yet **have** I **in** me **some**thing **dang**e**rous**,

Which **let** thy **wise**ness **fear**. Hold **off** thy **hand**.

*King* Pluck **them** a**sun**der.

*Queen* Hamlet! Hamlet!

*All* Gentlemen!

*Horatio* **Good** my **lord**, be **qui**et.

*Hamlet* Why, **I** will **fight** with **him** u**pon** this **theme** Un**til** my **eye**lids **will** no **long**er **wag**.

*Queen* **O** my **son**, what **theme**?

*Hamlet* I **loved** O**phe**lia. **For**ty **thou**sand **broth**ers Could **not** with **all** their q**uan**ti**ty** of **love**

Make **up** my **sum**. What **wilt** thou **do** for **her**?

*King* O, **he** is **mad**, La**er**tes.

*Queen* For **love** of **God** for**bear** him.

*Hamlet* ’Swounds, **show** me **what** thou’t **do.**

Woo’t **weep**, woo’t **fight**, woo’t **fast**, woo’t **tear** thy**self**, Woo’t **drink** up **ei**sel, **eat** a **croc**o**dile**? **I** will **do’t**. Dost **thou** come **here** to **whine**,[[121]](#footnote-121)To **out**face **me** with **leap**ing **in** her **grave**?

Be **bur**ied **quick** with **her**, and **so** will **I**.

And **if** thou **prate** of **moun**tains, **let** them **throw**

Mill***ions*** of **a**cres **on** us, **till** our **ground**,

Singe***ing*** his **pate** a**gainst** the **burn**ing **zone**, Make **Oss**a **like** a **wart**. Nay, **and** thou’lt **mouth**, I’ll **rant** as **well** as **thou**.

*Queen*  This **is** mere **mad**ness,

And **thus** a**while** the **fit** will **work** on **him**. A**non**, as **pa**tient **as** the **fe**male **dove** When **that** her **gold**en **coup**lets **are** dis**closed**, His **si**lence **will** sit **droop**ing.

*Hamlet* **Hear** you, **sir**,

What **is** the **rea**son **that** you **use** me **thus**? I **loved** you **ev**er. **But** it **is** no **mat**ter.

Let **Her**cu**les** him**self** do **what** he **may**,

The **cat** will **mew**, and **dog** will **have** his **day**.  *Exit. King* I **pray** thee, **good** Ho**ra**tio, **wait** u**pon** him.  *Exit Horatio.*

Strength***en*** your **pa**tience **in** our **last** night’s **speech**:

We’ll **put** the **mat**ter **to** the **pres**ent **push**.

Good **Ger**trude, **set** some **watch** o**ver** your **son**.

This **grave** shall **have** a **liv**ing **mon**u**ment**.

An **hour** of **qui**et **short**ly **shall** we **see**;

Till **then** in **pa**tience **our** pro**ceed**ing **be.** *Exeunt*.

### Scene 2

*Enter* H *and* H.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Hamlet* | So **much** for **this**, sir.// Now **shall** you **see** the **oth**er. You **do** re**mem**ber **all** the **cir**cum**stance**? |
| *Horatio* | Re**mem**ber **it**, my **lord**! |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, **in** my **heart** there **was** a **kind** of **fight**ing  That **would** not **let** me **sleep**. Me**thought** I **lay** Worse **than** the **mu**tines **in** the **bil**boes. **Rash**ly—  And **praised** be **rash**ness **for** it—**let** us **know**  Our **in**dis**cret**ion **some**time **serves** us **well**  When **our** deep **plots** do **pall**; and **that** should **learn** us  There’s **a** di**vin**i**ty** that **shapes** our **ends**, Rough-**hew** them **how** we **will**— |
| *Horatio* | That **is** most **cer**tain. |
| *Hamlet* | Up **from** my **cab**in,  My **sea**-gown **scarfed** a**bout** me, **in** the **dark**  Groped **I** to **find** out **them**, had **my** de**sire**,  Fing***ered*** their **pack**et, **and** in **fine** with**drew**  To **mine** own **room** a**gain**, mak***ing*** so **bold**,  My **fears** for**get**ting **man**ners, **to** un**seal**  Their **grand** com**miss**ion; **where** I **found**, Ho**ra**tio—  O **roy**al **knav**(e)ry!—**an** ex**act** com**mand**,  Lard***ed*** with **man**y **sev**(e)ral **sorts** of **rea**sons  Im**port**ing **Den**mark’s **health**, and **Eng**land’s **too**,  With **ho!** such **bugs** and **gob**lins **in** my **life**,  That **on** the **su**per**vise**, no **lei**sure **ba**ted, No, **not** to **stay** the **grind**ing **of** the **axe**, My **head** should **be** struck **off.** |
| *Horatio* | Is’t **pos**si**ble**? |
| *Hamlet* | Here’s **the** com**miss**ion, **read** it **at** more **lei**sure. But **wilt** thou **hear** now **how** I **did** pro**ceed**? |
| *Horatio* | **I** be**seech** you. |
| *Hamlet* | Being **thus** be**nett**ed **round** with **vill**ai**nies**—  Or **I** could **make** a **pro**logue **to** my **brains**,  They **had** be**gun** the **play**—I **sat** me **down**, |

De**vised** a **new** com**miss**ion, **wrote** it **fair**. I **once** did **hold** it, **as** our **sta**tists **do**,

A **base**ness **to** write **fair**, and **la**bored **much**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | How **to** for**get** that **learn**ing, **but**, sir, **now** It **did** me **yeo**man’s **ser**vice. **Wilt** thou **know** Th’ef**fect** of **what** I **wrote**? |
| *Horatio* | Ay, **good** my **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | An **ear**nest **con**ju**ra**tion **from** the **King**,  As **Eng**land **was** his **faith**ful **trib**u**ta**ry,  As **love** be**tween** them **like** the **palm** might **flour**ish, As **peace** should **still** her **wheat**en **gar**land **wear**,  And **stand** a **com**ma ’**tween** their **am**i**ties**,  And **man**y **such**-like **as**-es **of** great **charge**,  That **on** the **view** and **knowing** of **these** con**tents**,154  With**out** de**bate**ment **fur**ther **more** or **less**, He **should** those **bear**ers **put** to **sud**den **death**, Not **shriv**ing-**time** al**lowed**. |
| *Horatio* | How **was** this **sealed**? |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **e(v)en** in **that** was **heav**en **or**di**nant**.  I **had** my **fath**er’s **sig**net **in** my **purse**,  Which **was** the **mod**el **of** that **Dan**ish **seal**,  Fold***ed*** the **writ** up **in** the **form** of **th’oth**er,  Sub**scribed** it, **gave’t** th’im**press**ion, **placed** it **safe**ly,  The **change**ling **nev**er **known**. Now **the** next **day** Was **our** sea-**fight**, and **what** to **this** was **se**quent Thou **know’st** al**read**y. |
| *Horatio* | So **Guild**en**stern** and **Ro**sen**crantz** go **to’t.** |
| *Hamlet* | Why, **man**, they **did** make **love** to **this** em**ploy**ment. They **are** not **near** my **con**science **Their** de**feat** Does **by** their **own** in**sin**u**a**tion **grow**.  ’Tis **dang**(e)rous **when** the **ba**ser **na**ture **comes** Be**tween** the **pass** and **fell** in**cen**sèd **points** Of **might**y **op**po**sites**. |
| *Horatio* | Why, **what** a **king** is **this**! |
| *Hamlet* | Does **it** not, **think** thee, **stand** me **now** u**pon**—  He **that** hath **killed** my **king** and **whored** my **moth**er, |

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Syncopation before /n/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule, assuming the colloquial replacement of /ng/ with /n/, as in modern colloquial English (‘dropping your g’s’): /nówing/ > /nówin/ > /nówn/, resulting in a form homophonous with *known*.

F has monosyllabic *know*.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Popped **in** be**tween** th’e**lec**tion **and** my **hopes**,  Thrown **out** his **ang**le **for** my **prop**er **life**,  And **with** such **coz**(e)nage—**is’t** not **per**fect **con**science  To **quit** him **with** this **arm**?// And **is’t** not **to** be **damned**  To **let** this **cank**er **of** our **na**ture **come** In **fur**ther **e**vil? |
| *Horatio* | It **must** be **short**ly **known** to **him** from **Eng**land What **is** the **iss**ue **of** the **busi**ness **there**. |
| *Hamlet* | It **will** be **short**. The **in**te**rim** is **mine**.155 And **a** man’s **life’s** no **more** than **to** say ‘**one**’.  But **I** am **ver**y **sorr**y, **good** Ho**ra**tio,  That **to** La**er**tes **I** for**got** my**self**;  For **by** the **im**age **of** my **cause** I **see**  The **por**trai**ture** of **his**. I’ll **court** his **fa**vors. But **sure** the **brav**(e)ry **of** his **grief** did **put** me In**to** a **tow’**ring **pass**ion. |
| *Horatio* | Peace, **who** comes **here**? *Enter* O*, a courtier.* |
| *Osric* | Your **lord**ship **is** right **wel**come **back** to **Den**mark. |
| *Hamlet* | I **hum**bly **thank** you **sir**.// —Dost **know** this **wat**er**fly**? |
| *Horatio* | No, **my** good **lord**. |
| *Hamlet* | Thy state is the more gracious, for ’tis a vice to know him. He hath much land and fertile. Let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king’s mess. ’Tis a chuff, but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt. |
| *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. Your bonnet to his right use: ’tis for the head. |
| *Osric* | I thank your lordship, it is very hot. |
| *Hamlet* | No, believe me, ’tis very cold, the wind is northerly. |
| *Osric* | It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed. |
| *Hamlet* | But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion. |
| *Osric* | Exceedingly, my lord, it is very sultry, as ’twere—I cannot tell |

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Some editors leave the contraction in the Folio edition ( *interim’s*) unexpanded, presumably with syncopation, in violation of the Primary Accent Rule (4 accents), but in accordance with the Secondary Accent Rule (2 half-lines): It **will** be **short**.// The **int**(e)rim’s **mine**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | how. My lord, his Majesty bade me signify to you that a has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter— |
| *Hamlet* | I beseech you remember— |
| *Osric* | Nay, good my lord, for my ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes—believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing. Indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see. |
| *Hamlet* | Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you, though I know to divide him inventorially would dozy th’arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror and who else would trace him his umbrage, nothing more. |
| *Osric* | Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him. |
| *Hamlet* | The concernancy, sir? Why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath? |
| *Osric* | Sir? |
| *Horatio* | Is’t not possible to understand in another tongue? You will to’t, sir, really. |
| *Hamlet* | What imports the nomination of this gentleman? |
| *Osric* | Of Laertes? |
| *Horatio* | His purse is empty already, all’s golden words are spent. |
| *Hamlet* | Of him, sir. |
| *Osric* | I know you are not ignorant— |
| *Hamlet* | I would you did, sir. Yet in faith if you did, it would not much approve me. Well, sir? |
| *Osric* | You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is— |
| *Hamlet* | I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself. |
| *Osric* | I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him, by them in his meed, he’s unfellowed. |
| *Hamlet* | What’s his weapon? |
| *Osric* | Rapier and dagger. |
| *Hamlet* | That’s two of his weapons. But well. |
| *Osric* | The King, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has impawned, as I take it, six French |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so. Three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit. |
| *Hamlet* | What call you the carriages? |
| *Horatio* | I knew you must be edified by the margin ere you had done. |
| *Osric* | The carriages, sir, are the hangers. |
| *Hamlet* | The phrase would be more german to the matter if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would it might be hangers till then. But on. Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages—that’s the French bet against the Danish. Why is this impawned, as you call it? |
| *Osric* | The King, sir, hath laid, sir, 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* | 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 and I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. |
| *Osric* | Shall I deliver you so? |
| *Hamlet* | To this effect, sir, after what flourish your nature will. |
| *Osric* | I commend my duty to your lordship. |
| *Hamlet* | Yours.  *Exit Osric.*  A does well to commend it himself, there are no tongues else for’s turn. |
| *Horatio* | This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head. |
| *Hamlet* | A did comply with his dug before a sucked it. Thus has he, and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on, only got the tune of the time and, out of an habit of encounter, a kind of yeasty collection, which carries them through and through the most fanned and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.  *Enter a* L. |
| *Lord* | My lord, his Majesty commended him to you by young Osric, |
|  | who brings back to him that you attend him in the hall. He sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time. |
| *Hamlet* | I am constant to my purposes, they follow the King’s pleasure. If his fitness speaks, mine is ready. Now or whensoever, provided I be so able as now. |
| *Lord* | The King and Queen and all are coming down. |
| *Hamlet* | In happy time. |
| *Lord* | The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. |
| *Hamlet* | She well instructs me. *Exit Lord.* |
| *Horatio* | You will lose, 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. Thou wouldst not think how ill all’s here about my heart; but it is no matter. |
| *Horatio* | Nay, my good lord. |
| *Hamlet* | It is but foolery, but it is such a kind of gaingiving as would perhaps trouble a woman. |
| *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 is 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, of aught he leaves, knows aught, what is’t to leave betimes? Let be.  *Enter* K, Q, L, O, *and others.* |
| *King* | Come, **Ham**let, **come** and **take** this **hand** from **me.**  *Hamlet takes Laertes’ hand.* |
| *Hamlet* | Give **me** your **par**don, **sir**. I\_(ha)ve **done** you **wrong**:  But **par**don’t **as** you **are** a **gen**tle**man**.  This **pres**ence **knows**, and **you** must **needs** have **heard**,  How **I** am **pun**ished **with** a **sore** di**strac**tion.156  What **I** have **done**  That **might** your **na**ture, **hon**or, **and** ex**cep**tion  Rough***ly*** a**wake**, I **here** pro**claim** was **mad**ness. |

156

The F version, lacking the article *a*, requires syllabic *-ed*: How **I** am **pun**ish**èd** with **sore** di**strac**tion.

Was’t **Ham**let **wronged** La**er**tes? **Nev**er **Ham**let.

If **Ham**let **from** him**self** be **ta’en** a**way**, And **when** he’s **not** him**self** does **wrong** La**er**tes, Then **Ham**let **does** it **not**, Ham***let*** de**nies** it.

Who **does** it **then**? His **mad**ness. **If’t** be **so**, Ham***let*** is **of** the **fac**tion **that** is **wronged**; His **mad**ness **is** poor **Ham**let’s **en**e**my**.

Sir, **in** this **au**di**ence**,

Let **my** dis**claim**ing **from** a **pur**posed **e**vil

Free **me** so **far** in **your** most **gen**(e)rous **thoughts** That **I** have **shot** my **ar**row **o’er** the **house** And **hurt** my **broth**er.

*Laertes* I**\_**(a)m **sat**is**fied** in **na**ture,

Whose **mo**tive **in** this **case** should **stir** me **most**

To **my** re**venge**; but **in** my **terms** of **hon**or I **stand** a**loof**, and **will** no **rec**on**cile**ment

Till **by** some **eld**er **mas**ters **of** known **hon**or

I **have** a **voice** and **prec**e**dent** of **peace**

To **keep** my **name** un**gored**. But **till** that **time** I **do** re**ceive** your **off**ered **love** like **love** And **will** not **wrong** it.

*Hamlet*  **I** em**brace** it **free**ly,

And **will** this **broth**ers’ **wa**ger **frank**ly **play**.

Give **us** the **foils**, come **on**.

*Laertes*  Come, **one** for **me**.[[122]](#footnote-122)

*Hamlet* I’ll **be** your **foil**, La**er**tes. **In** mine **ig**norance Your **skill** shall **like** a **star** i’th’ **dark**est **night** Stick **fier**y **off** in**deed**.

*Laertes* You **mock** me, **sir**.

*Hamlet* No, **by** this **hand**.

*King* Give **them** the **foils**, young **Os**ric. **Cous**in **Ham**let, You **know** the **wa**ger?

*Hamlet*  **Ver**y **well**, my **lord**.

Your **Grace** has **laid** the **odds** o’th’ **weak**er **side**.

*King* I **do** not **fear** it. **I** have **seen** you **both**,

But **since** he\_(i)s **bet**tered, **we** have **there**fore **odds**.

*Laertes* This **is** too **heav**y. **Let** me **see** a**noth**er.

*Hamlet* This **likes** me **well**. These **foils** have **all** a **length**?

*Osric* Ay, **my** good **lord**.

*King* Set **me** the **stoups** of **wine** u**pon** that **ta**ble. If **Ham**let **give** the **first** or **sec**ond **hit**,

Or **quit** in **an**swer **of** the **third** ex**change**, Let **all** the **bat**tle**ments** their **ord**nance **fire**:

The **King** shall **drink** to **Ham**let’s **bet**ter **breath**,

And **in** the **cup** an **un**ion **shall** he **throw**

Rich***er*** than **that** which **four** suc**cess**ive **kings**

In **Den**mark’s **crown** have **worn**—give **me** the **cups**—

And **let** the **ket**tle **to** the **trump**et **speak**,

The **trump**et **to** the **can**no**neer** with**out**, The **can**nons **to** the **hea(ve)ns**, the **hea(ve)n** to **earth**, ‘Now **the** King **drinks** to **Ham**let.’ **Come**, be**gin**.

And **you**, the **judg**es, **bear** a **war**y **eye**.

*Hamlet* Come on, sir.

*Laertes* Come, my lord.

*Hamlet* One.

*Laertes* No.

*Hamlet* Judgment.

*Osric* A hit, a very palpable hit.

*Laertes* Well, again.

*King* Stay, **give** me **drink**. Ham***let*** this **pearl** is **thine**.

Here’s **to** thy **health**. *Drums, trumpets; and shot goes off.*

Give **him** the **cup**.

*Hamlet* I’ll **play** this **bout** first. **Set** it **by** a**while**.

**Come**.

A**noth**er **hit**. What **say** you?

*Laertes*  I **do** con**fess’t**.

*King* Our **son** shall **win**.

*Queen*  He’s **fat** and **scant** of **breath**.

Here, **Ham**let, **take** my **nap**kin, **rub** thy **brows**.

The **Queen** ca**rous**es **to** thy **for**tune, **Ham**let.

*Hamlet* Good **mad**am.

*King* **Gert**rude, **do** not **drink**!

*Queen* I **will**, my **lord**, I **pray** you **par**don **me.**   *She drinks. King* (*aside*) It **is** the **poi**soned **cup**. It **is** too **late**.

*Hamlet* I **dare** not **drink** yet, **mad**am—**by** and **by.**

*Queen* Come, **let** me **wipe** thy **face**.

*Laertes* My **lord**, I’ll **hit** him **now**.

*King*  I **do** not **think’t**.

*Laertes* And **yet** it **is** al**most** a**gainst** my **con**science.[[123]](#footnote-123)

*Hamlet* Come **for** the **third**, La**er**tes. **You** but **dall**y.[[124]](#footnote-124)I **pray** you **pass** with **your** best **vi**o**lence**.

I **am** a**feard** you **make** a **wan**ton **of** me.[[125]](#footnote-125)

*Laertes* **Say** you **so?** Come **on.**

*Osric* **Noth**ing **nei**ther **way**.

*Laertes*  Have **at** you **now**!

*Laertes wounds Hamlet; in scuffling, they change rapiers.*

*King* **Part** them; **they\_(a)re** in**censed**.

*Hamlet*  Nay, **come** a**gain**.

*He wounds Laertes. The Queen falls.*

*Osric* Look **to** the **Queen** there, **ho**!

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

*Osric* How **is’t,** La**er**tes?

*Laertes* Why, **as** a **wood**cock **to** mine **own** springe, **Os**ric, I\_(a)m **just**ly **killed** with **mine** own **treach**e**ry**.

*Hamlet* How **does** the **Queen**?

*King*  She **swoons** to **see** them **bleed**.

*Queen* No, **no**, the **drink**, the **drink**! O **my** dear **Ham**let!

The **drink**, the **drink**!// **I** am **poi**soned.

*Hamlet* O **vill**ai**ny**! Ho! **Let** the **door** be **locked**.

**Treach**(e)ry! **Seek** it **out**.

*Laertes* It **is** here, **Ham**let. **Ham**let, **thou** art **slain**.[[126]](#footnote-126)

No **med**(i)cine **in** the **world** can **do** thee **good**;[[127]](#footnote-127)

In **thee** there **is** not **half** an **hou**~r’s **life**.163

The **treach**(e)rous **in**stru**ment** is **in** thy **hand**,

Un**ba**ted **and** en**ven**omed.// The **fou**~l **prac**tice

Hath **turned** it**self** on **me.** Lo, **here** I **lie**,

Ne***ver*** to **rise** a**gain**. Thy **moth**er’s **poi**soned.

I **can** no **more**. The **King**—the **King’s** to **blame**.

*Hamlet* The **point** en**ven**omed **too**!// Then, **ven**om, **to** thy **work**!

*Wounds the King.*

*All* Treason! Treason!

*King* O **yet** de**fend** me **friends**, I **am** but **hurt**.

*Hamlet* Here, **thou** in**cest**uous, **murd**(e)rous, **damn**èd **Dane**,[[128]](#footnote-128)Drink **off** this **po**tion. **Is** thy **u**nion **here**?

Foll**ow** my **moth**er.  *King dies.*

*Laertes* **He** is **just**ly **served**.

It **is** a **poi**son **tem**pered **by** him**self**.

Ex**change** for**give**ness **with** me, **no**ble **Ham**let.

Mine **and** my **fath**er’s **death** come **not** u**pon** thee,

Nor **thine** on **me.**  *Dies.*

*Hamlet* Hea(ve)n **make** thee **free** of **it.** I **foll**ow **thee**.

I\_(a)m **dead**, Ho**rat**io. **Wretch**ed **Queen**, a**dieu**.

You **that** look **pale** and **trem**ble **at** this **chance**,

That **are** but **mutes** or **au**dience **to** this **act**,[[129]](#footnote-129)

Had **I** but **time**, as **this** fell **ser**geant, **death**,

Is **strict** in **his** ar**rest**, O **I** could **tell** you—

But **let** it **be.** Ho**ra**tio, **I** am **dead**, Thou **liv’st**. Re**port** me **and** my **cause** a**right** To **the** un**sat**is**fied**.

*Horatio*  Ne***ver*** be**lieve** it.

I\_(a)m **more** an **an**tique **Ro**man **than** a **Dane**.[[130]](#footnote-130)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Here’s **yet** some **liq**uor **left**. |
| *Hamlet* | As **th’art** a **man** Give **me** the **cup**. Let **go**, by **hea(ve)n** I’ll **ha’t**.  O **God**, Ho**ra**tio, **what** a **wound**ed **name**,  Things **stand**ing **thus** un**known**, shall **live** be**hind** me!167  If **thou** didst **ev**er **hold** me **in** thy **heart**,  Ab**sent** thee **from** fe**lic**i**ty** a**while**,  And **in** this **harsh** world **draw** thy **breath** in **pain** To **tell** my **sto**ry.// What **war**like **noise** is **this**?  *Enter* O. |
| *Osric* | Young **For**tin**bras**, with **con**quest **come** from **Po**land,  To **the** am**bass**a**dors** of **Eng**land **gives** This **war**like **voll**ey. |
| *Hamlet* | **O**, I **die**, Ho**ra**tio.  The **po**tent **poi**son **quite** o’er**crows** my **spir**it.  I **can**not **live** to **hear** the **news** from **Eng**land,  But **I** do **proph**e**sy** th’e**lec**tion **lights** On **For**tin**bras**. He **has** my **dy**ing **voice**.  So **tell** him, **with** th’oc**curr**ents **more** and **less**  Which **have** so**lic**i**ted**—the **rest** is **si**lence.  *Dies.* |
| *Horatio* | Now **cracks** a **no**ble **heart**. Good **night**, sweet **prince**, And **flights** of **ang**els **sing** thee **to** thy **rest**. Why **does** the **drum** come **hith**er?  *Enter* F, *and the English* A, *and* S *with drum and colors.* |
| *Fortinbras* Where **is** this **sight**?  *Horatio*  What **is** it **you** would **see**?  If **aught** of **woe** or **won**der, **cease** your **search**.  *Fortinbras* This **quar**ry **cries** on **hav**oc. **O** proud **Death**,  What **feast** is **t(o)ward** in **thine** e**ter**nal **cell**, That **thou** so **man**y **prin**ces **at** a **shot** So **blood**i**ly** hast **struck**?  *1st Amb.*  The **sight** is **dis**mal,  And **our** af**fairs** from **Eng**land **come** too **late**. | |

167

Q2: Things **stand**ing **thus** un**known**,// **shall** I **leave** be**hind** me!

Various editors have made various emendations, e.g.

Things **stand**ing **thus** un**known**, I **leave** be**hind** me!

The **ears** are **sense**less **that** should **give** us **hear**ing To **tell** him **his** com**mand**ment **is** ful**filled**, That **Ro**sen**crantz** and **Guild**en**stern** are **dead**.

Where **should** we **have** our **thanks**?

*Horatio*  Not **from** his **mouth**,

Had **it** th’a**bil**i**ty** of **life** to **thank** you.

He **nev**er **gave** com**mand**ment **for** their **death**.

But **since**, so **jump** u**pon** this **blood**y **ques**tion,

You **from** the **Po**lack **wars** and **you** from **Eng**land Are **here** ar**rived**, give **or**der **that** these **bod**ies

High **on** a **stage** be **plac**èd **to** the **view**,

And **let** me **speak** to\_th’ **yet** un**know**ing **world**

How **these** things **came** a**bout**. So **shall** you **hear**

Of **car**nal, **blood**y, **and** un**nat**ural **acts**,

Of **ac**ci**dent**al **judg**ments, **cas**ual **slaught**ers,[[131]](#footnote-131)

Of **deaths** put **on** by **cun**ning **and** forced **cause**,

And, **in** this **up**shot, **pur**po**ses** mis**took** Fall(e)n **on** th’in**ven**tors’ **heads**. All **this** can **I** Tru***ly*** de**liv**er.

*Fortinbras* **Let** us **haste** to **hear** it,

And **call** the **no**blest **to** the **au**di**ence**.

For **me**, with **sorr**ow **I** em**brace** my **for**tune.

I **have** some **rights** of **mem**(o)ry **in** this **king**dom, Which **now** to **claim** my **van**tage **doth** in**vite** me.

*Horatio* Of **that** I **shall** have **al**so **cause** to **speak**, And **from** his **mouth** whose **voice** will **draw** on **more**. But **let** this **same** be **pres**ent**ly** per**formed**

E(v)en **while** men’s **minds** are **wild**, lest **more** mis**chance** On **plots** and **err**ors **hap**pen.

*Fortinbras*  **Let** four **cap**tains

Bear **Ham**let **like** a **sol**dier **to** the **stage**, For **he** was **like**ly, **had** he **been** put **on**, **To** have **proved** most **roy**(a)l;\_and **for** his **pass**age, The **sol**dier’s **mu**sic **and** the **rite** of **war** Speak **loud**ly **for** him.

Take **up** the **bod**ies. **Such** a **sight** as **this**

Be**comes** the **field**, but **here** shows **much** a**miss**.

Go, **bid** the **sol**diers **shoot**.

*Exeunt.*

Set in 11 pt Bembo

1. The Quarto editions have *comart* instead of *covenant*:

   Had **he** been **van**quish**er**;// as, **by** the **same** co**mart** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The F version requires no syncopation:

   And **terms** com**puls**a**tive** those **fore**said **lands** [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /máyt(i)yist/. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ínfl(u)wins/. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Q2 lacks *at*, so that line-initial accent is required: **Shall** I **strike** it **with** my **par**ti**san**? [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The singular noun *confine* is stressed on the second syllable in Shakespeare. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /impír(i)yil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Stress on the first syllable of *commendable* was normal in Early Modern English. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /fíl(i)yil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Stress was on the second syllable of *persever* in Shakespeare. Also, syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /absíykw(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ímp(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /imíyd(i)yit/. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /kórt(i)yir/. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. The word *prayer* /prér/ ‘invocation’ (not *prayer* /préyir/ ‘one who prays’) is normally monosyllabic, but has an inserted vowel in this line (/préirz/). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Q2 lacks the second *O*, obviating the need for syncopation:

    His **can**on ’**gainst** self-**slaugh**ter. **O** God! **God**! [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The Q2 version has an additional *fie*; syncopation before /n/ allows the line to conform to the Accent Rules:

    Fie **on’t**, O **fie**, fie! ’**tis** (a)n**\_**un**weed**ed **gard**en [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /haypír(i)yin/. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Stress on the noun *increase* was formerly on the second syllable. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /twinsésty(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Syncopation before /l/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ténib(i)lin/. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /chér(i)yist/. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ód(i)yins/. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /mær(i)yáy/.

    The F version has the contraction, spelt *Ile*, making syncopation unnecessary: Mar***ry***, I’ll **teach** you. **Think** your**self** a **ba**by [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. The dropped vowel in *implor(a)tors* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /kær(i)ying/. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. The participle *canonized* may have stress on the second syllable in Shakespeare. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The stress on *complete* could fall on either syllable in Early Modern English. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /híd(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. In British English *courteous* is a disyllable, not a trisyllable as in American. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The dropped vowel in *horr(i)ble* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /níym(i)yin/. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /sír(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. The F version has several metrical abnormalities, such as this stress/accent mismatch in an impermissible position (not at the beginning of the half-line): To **ears** of **flesh** and **blood**.// **List**, Ham***let***, O **list**! [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /insésty(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /vûrty(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Q2 lacks the article *a*:

    O **Ham**~l**et**, what **fall**ing **off** was **there**, [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /réyd(i)yint/. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The stress on *secure* may fall on either syllable in Shakespeare. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /anafékty(u)wil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Editors vary in their lineation of these short speeches. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Q2 lacks *Look you*, but with two accents still satisfies the Secondary Accent Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Syncopation before /n/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule, assuming the colloquial replacement of /ng/ with /n/, as in modern colloquial English (‘dropping your g’s’): /síying/ > /síyin/ > /síyn/, resulting in a form homophonous with *seen.* [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /æmbígy(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /yúwzh(u)wil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Editors disagree on the lineation of these few lines. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. The Q2 version violates the Primary Accent Rule with six accents:

    **O** my **lord**, my **lord**,//I **have** been **so** af**fright**ed. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. The noun *purport* was formerly stressed on the second syllable; also, syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /pít(i)yis/, here and below. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. Q2 lacks *I*:

    Of **Ham**let’s **trans**for**ma**ti**on**—so **call** it, [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ekstír(i)yir/. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Q2 lacks *o’er*:

    His **fath**er’s **death** and **ou**~r **hast**y **mar**riage. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /æny(u)wil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Trisyllabic *business* occurs occasionally in Shakespeare, with an inserted vowel before the resonant /n/ in sound as well as conventional orthography. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Or: Now **is** he **to**tal **gu**~les, **horr**(i)dly **tricked**

    /gúwilz/ [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. F lacks the article *a*, but no violation of the Accent rules results: That **lend** a **tyr**an**nous** and **dam**nèd **light** [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Stress was on the first syllable of *antique* in Early Modern English. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /híd(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Q2: Ay, **so**, God **bye** to **you**. Now **I\_(a)m** a**lone**. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Stress fell on the second syllable of *aspect* in Early Modern English. Q2: Tears **in** his **eyes**, di**strac**tion **in** his **as**pect [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Q2: What’s **Hec**u**ba** to **him**, or **he** to **her**, [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Q2 has an hexameter here:

    Why, **what** an **ass** am **I**!// Ay **sure**, this **is** most **brave**, [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. In some editions:

    That **I,** the **son** of **the** dear **mur**der**èd**, [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. If the verb *assay* may be stressed on the first syllable as in American English (for which there is no evidence in Shakespeare, however), this speech could be read as one line of normal pentameter as printed in both Q2 and F:

    **Did** you **ass**ay **him** to **an**y **pas**time? [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Q2: To **hear** of **it**. They\_(a)re **here** a**bout** the **court**, [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. Syncopation before /n/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule, assuming the colloquial replacement of /ng/ with /n/, as in modern colloquial English (‘dropping your g’s’): /síying/ > /síyin/ > /síyn/, resulting in a form homophonous with *seen.* [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /mén(i)ya/. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. The repetition of *well* in F creates a violation of the Accent Rules: I **hum**bly **thank** you,// **well**, well, **well**. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. The dropped vowel in *or(i)gin* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /kamyúwty(u)wil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. In Modern English, unlike Early Modern, stress on the second syllable of *contrary* is mostly confined to the meaning ‘perverse’ (as in *Mary, Mary, quite contrary*). Here it means ‘opposite, opposing’. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /tíyd(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. The F version requires syncopation:

    Haz***ard*** so **dang**(e)rous **as** doth **hour**ly **grow** [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. F lacks *Or*. If the *It is* of the F version is contracted to *’tis*, as some editors have done, the line conforms to the Accent Rules:

    What’s **near** it **with** it. ’**Tis** a **mass**y **wheel** [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Or: At**tends** the **boi**st’rous **ru**in. **Ne(v)er** a**lone** [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ód(i)yins/. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. The word *prayer* /prér/ ‘invocation’ (not *prayer* /préyir/ ‘one who prays’) is normally monosyllabic, but has an inserted vowel in this line (/préir/). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. Q has *a-praying*:

    Now **might** I **do** it **pat**, now **he’s** a-**pray**ing. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /insésty(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. The dropped vowel in *inn(o)cent* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /haypír(i)yinz/. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /twént(i)yith/. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /pít(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Or, with the more usual Shakespearean contraction of *it is*:

    And **makes** as **health**ful **mu**sic. **’Tis** not **mad**ness [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Many editions have *devil* for *evil* in this line, but the syncopation is the same: Of **hab**its **de(vi)l,** is **an**gel **yet** in **this**, [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. Some editions, including the Folio edition, omit this line. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. Some editors spell this *enginer*, as in the Quarto edition, to indicate that the primary stress may be on the first syllable (/énjinìr/) rather than the last (/ènjiníyr/), but the accentual pattern is the same in either case. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. The initial stress on *profound* is the result of a normal stress shift to the first syllable of a modifier when the following word begins with a stressed syllable, as in Long **Is**land *vs.* **Long** Island **Sound**, or six**teen** *vs.* **six**teen **years**. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. The stress on *translate* falls on the second syllable in British English. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /máyt(i)yir/. [↑](#footnote-ref-88)
89. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /réyp(i)yir/. In F the line is an hexameter:

    He **whips** his **ra**pier **out**,// and **cries** ‘A **rat**, a **rat!**’, [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /palówn(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /énv(i)yis/. The last half of this line is not Shakespeare’s, but supplied by editors to fill a gap. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /asóws(i)yits/. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. st

    Stress is on the 1 syllable of *frontier* in Shakespeare. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ablív(i)yin/. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /énv(i)yisliy/. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /byúwt(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. The original version of the ballad does not contain *not*, inserted here by Ophelia to fit the occasion and upsetting the meter. [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. The contraction of *this is* to a single syllable (/*th*íz/) is not unusual in Shakespeare. 129

    Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /batæl(i)yinz/. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /supûrfl(u)wis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /impéty(u)wis/.

     Some editions have *impitious*, likewise syncopated: /impít(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Syncopation after /y/, a variation of the Resonant Rule: /ráy(i)tis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. In F this line is an hexameter

     Of **your** dear **fath**er’s **death**,// is’t **writ** in **your** re**venge** [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. The stress on the verb *commune* may fall on either syllable in British English. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. The stress on *obscure* may fall on either syllable in Shakespeare. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /spíyd(i)yir/. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Q2 has *criminal* rather than *crimeful*, which requires syncopation: So **crim**(i)nal **and** so **cap**i**tal** in **na**ture, [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. The line in Q2 is an hexameter, taken by most editors to be a false start: As **by** your **safe**ty, **wis**dom, **great**ness, **all** things **else**, [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. In the Q2 version the King’s speech ends with *imagine*, and the Messenger’s speech consists of the one line beginning *This*. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. The dropped vowel in *char(a)cter* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-109)
110. The dropped vowel in *voy(a)ge* comes after rather than before the resonant, a variation of the Resonant Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
111. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /anwûr*th*(i)yist/. [↑](#footnote-ref-111)
112. The F version does not require accent on the suffix *-al*: And **for** your **ra**pier **most** es**pec**ial**ly**, [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. The Folio edition has the monosyllable *hoar* instead of *hoary*:

     That **shows** his **hoar** leaves **in** the **glass**y **stream**. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /énv(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Syncopation before /l/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule:

     /inkéypib(i)lûv/. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)
116. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /milówd(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-116)
117. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /impíyr(i)yis/. [↑](#footnote-ref-117)
118. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /rékw(i)yim/. [↑](#footnote-ref-118)
119. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /injíyn(i)yis/, which in any case is the normal American pronunciation of this word. [↑](#footnote-ref-119)
120. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /píyl(i)yin/. [↑](#footnote-ref-120)
121. The original contraction *I’ll* is expanded here to *I will.* Q2 lacks *thou*, so that the line violates the Accent Rules:

     I’ll **do’t**.// **Dost** come **here** to **whine**, [↑](#footnote-ref-121)
122. The first half-line in the Q2 version lacks *come on*, so that the two half-lines do not mesh as a normal pentameter. [↑](#footnote-ref-122)
123. F has the contractions *’tis* and *’gainst*, requiring accent on the suffix of *conscience* to satisfy the Accent Rules:

     And **yet** ’tis **al**most **’gainst** my **con**sci**ence**. [↑](#footnote-ref-123)
124. Q2 contains *do*, violating the Primary Accent Rule:

     Come **for** the **third**, La**er**tes.// You **do** but **dall**y. [↑](#footnote-ref-124)
125. Q2: **I** am **sure** you **make** a **wan**ton **of** me. [↑](#footnote-ref-125)
126. Q2 lacks the second occurrence of *Hamlet*: **It** is **he**~re, **Ham**let. **Thou** art **slain**. [↑](#footnote-ref-126)
127. The disyllabic pronunciation of *medicine* is more common in British English than in American. 163

     F: In **thee** there **is** not **half** an **hour** of **life**. [↑](#footnote-ref-127)
128. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /insésty(u)wis/.

     Q2 lacks *murd’rous*, thereby violating the Primary Accent Rule. [↑](#footnote-ref-128)
129. Syncopation before /y/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /ód(i)yins/. [↑](#footnote-ref-129)
130. Stress was on the first syllable of *antique* in Early Modern English. [↑](#footnote-ref-130)
131. Syncopation before /w/, in accordance with the Resonant Rule: /kæzy(u)wil/. [↑](#footnote-ref-131)