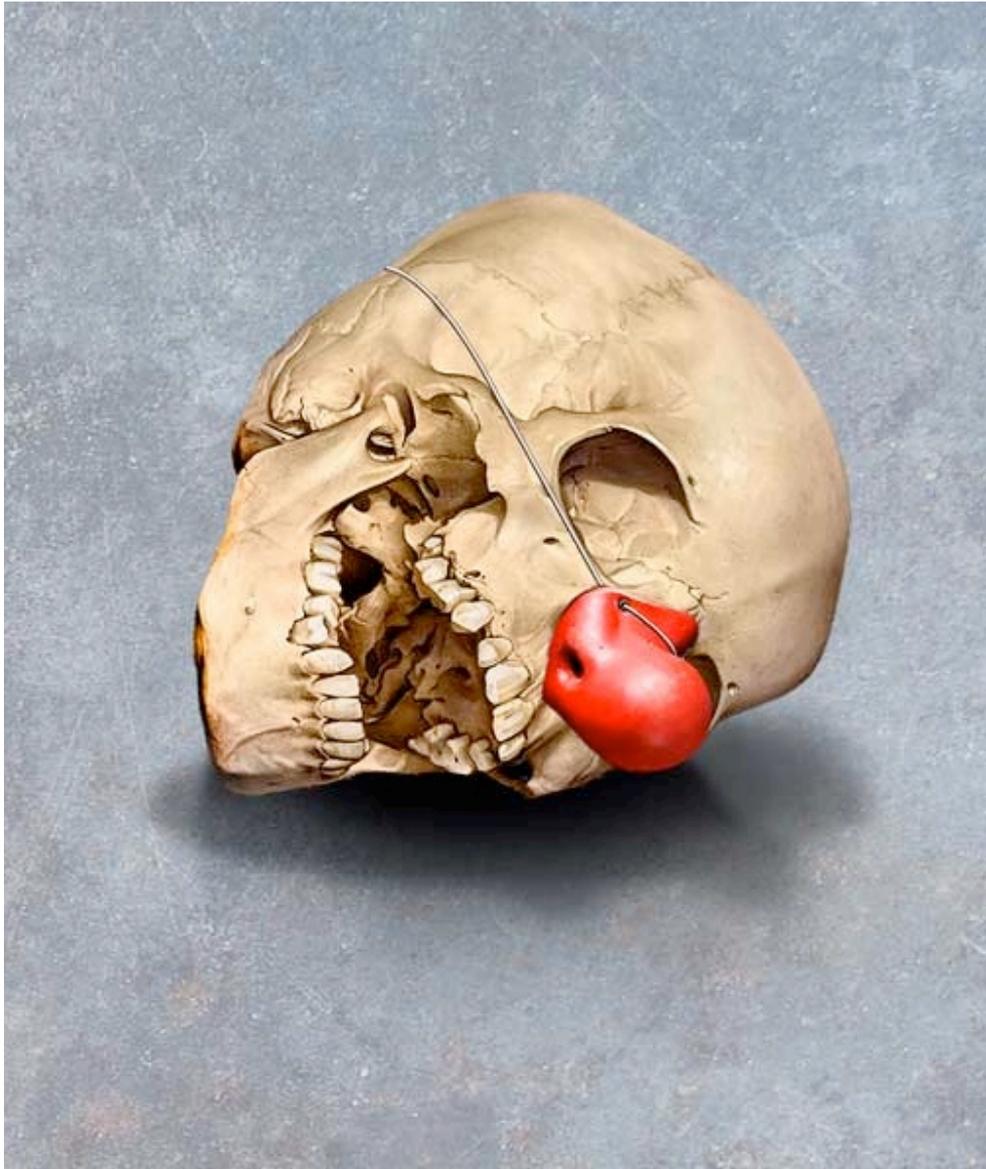


Shakespeare's

# HAMLET



*an edition by Andrew Hilton*

© Andrew Hilton 2016

*Skull image by Alan Coveney*

# HAMLET – the Texts

There are three major versions of *Hamlet* – the ‘1st Quarto’ (Q1), published in 1603, the ‘2nd Quarto’ (Q2) published in 1604/5, and the ‘1st Folio’ (F1), published in 1623. Further quarto editions are based on Q2, and further folios are revisions of F1.

What is generally referred to as the ‘full text’ is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarto, and this forms the basis of most modern editions of the play. It is enormously long, in performance probably about 4 hours, and longer than Shakespeare’s own company could possibly have performed in the 2.00 – 5.00 slot they were allowed in the Globe Theatre. So the commonly held idea that it is the play as Shakespeare would have liked to see it played is questionable.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Folio version, which may be based on the company’s prompt book, cuts it down considerably (the “How all occasions do inform against me!” soliloquy is lost, as well as other admired passages), though most modern productions cut out even more.

## The Mystery of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarto

The text of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarto was lost for centuries, a single printed copy turning up in a library in Suffolk in 1823, followed by another in Dublin over 30 years later. They remain the only two copies known. Its text is a mystery, as it differs greatly from the one you can now buy in a hundred different editions. Was it – as ‘1<sup>st</sup> Quarto’ suggests – the first version of Shakespeare’s famous play, or just a badly recorded and badly remembered version of the text that Shakespeare’s company played in 1600 or 1601, which happened to find its way into print before the authorised ‘2<sup>nd</sup> Quarto’?

When its text was published to a new audience in the 1820s, Q1’s peculiar readings, not least its version of the ‘To be or not to be’ speech, came as a rude shock –

*To be, or not to be, ay, there’s the point,  
To die, to sleep, is that all? Ay, all.  
No, to sleep, to dream, ay, marry, there it goes,  
For in that dream of death, when we awake,  
And borne before an everlasting judge,  
From whence no passenger ever returned,  
The undiscovered country, at whose sight  
The happy smile, and the accursèd damned.  
But for this, the joyful hope of this,  
Who’d bear the scorns and flattery of the world,  
Scorned by the right rich, the rich cursed of the poor,  
The widow being oppressed, the orphan wronged,  
The taste of hunger, or a tyrant’s reign,  
And thousand more calamities besides,  
To grunt and sweat under this weary life,  
When that he may his full quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? Who would this endure,  
But for a hope of something after death?  
Which puzzles the brain, and doth confound the sense,  
Which makes us rather bear those evils we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of.  
Ay, that. Oh, this conscience makes cowards of us all. -  
Lady, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered.*

- and it led to the text as a whole being generally derided. To its fiercest critics it belongs with those lambasted in the preface to the 1st Folio in 1623 as ‘stol’n and surreptitious copies,

maimed and deformed by frauds and stealths of injurious impostors’.

Literary critics and editors have now been arguing about Q1’s status for nearly two centuries. Though there are many variations within these extremes, the three most vigorously championed theories are these:

**‘Bad Quarto’** theory: this argues that Q1, though the first to be printed, in *composition* postdates the text we know as Q2, and is a garbled version of the play which Shakespeare’s company had first performed (we think) in 1600 – a poor ‘memorial reconstruction’ of the ‘official’ text, probably by the actor who had performed Marcellus and doubled as Lucianus, since these characters’ scenes seem to be accurately remembered, while the others are not. This actor, the argument runs, might have worked freelance for Shakespeare’s company, and then sold his inaccurate recollection to the eager publisher.

**‘Evolution’** theory: this involves the notion of an even earlier ‘Hamlet’, the text of which has never been found. This is the so-called ‘*Ur-Hamlet*’, some suggest authored by Thomas Kyd, others that it was Shakespeare’s own first attempt. We know that a play of that name had been performed by Shakespeare’s company, the Chamberlain’s Men (possibly in co-production with Henslowe’s Admiral’s Men), at Newington Butts in 1594, and there are references to it as early as 1589. So this theory has it that Shakespeare evolved his famous play from this earlier one (be it his own, or Kyd’s, or some other writer’s work) rather than starting afresh in perhaps 1599 and working directly from the source in Belleforest’s *Histoires Tragiques*. This would make Q1 just a stage – perhaps the first major stage – in a relatively long evolution. It was hurried into print, perhaps even at the company’s own instigation, but before Shakespeare had completed his transformation. Q2 quickly followed in 1604 in an attempt to erase the memory of that transitional, and unsatisfactory version. F1 followed nearly twenty years later and represents the text substantially cut for performance, though it also offers some lines unknown to Q2 and many different word and line-readings.

**‘Alternative Version’** theory: this argues that Q1 may be a poorly printed but otherwise fairly accurate record of a version of the play that was edited and modified from the form of the first Globe production in order, perhaps, to be toured with a reduced company (interestingly, while it refers to attendant lords and others it gives no speeches at all to servants, messengers, sailors or soldiers).

After nearly two centuries in which the fortunes of these three theories have fluctuated wildly, the ‘bad quarto/memorial reconstruction’ theory probably has the upper hand at the present time. The programme note for the 2010 National Theatre production confidently states: “The First Quarto ... was a pirate edition, heavily truncated and possibly transcribed (badly) by the actor who played Marcellus at the Globe.” And in his fine book, *1599*, James Shapiro goes even further:

*‘one or more of those involved in the touring production, including the hired actor who played Marcellus (we know it was this actor because in putting the text together he remembered his own lines a lot better than he did anyone else’s) cobbled together from memory a 2,200 line version of the road production and sold it to publishers in London.’*

Such certainty is questionable. Q1 certainly is very poorly printed, and it has many lines that sound unworthy of, or simply unlike, the Shakespeare we know, but it is a much better version of the play than it has often been thought. It is certainly completely produceable, and manages some developments in the play (particularly around Laertes’ return from France) in a more economical fashion than the longwinded development of Q2. ‘Piracy’ also leaves some questions unanswered. Why are Polonius and Reynaldo called ‘Corambis’ and ‘Montano’ – was the pirate’s memory really that poor? Why do some of the supposedly garbled passages make sense on their own terms? And why is Gertrude’s behaviour sometimes closer to the Belleforest source than to Q2? Zachary Lesser, a Professor of English at the University of

Pennsylvania and author of 'Hamlet After Q1' has gone so far as to argue that Q1's 'To be or not to be', for all its inelegance, has a rather stronger internal logic than the version so many of us have to heart.

In all these theories speculation is heaped upon speculation. Some proponents of 'bad quarto', for example, explain away 'Corambis' and 'Montano' by noting that the title page refers to a performance in Oxford University, one of whose honoured founders was considered to be Robert Pullen, whose Latin name was 'Polenius'. In Shakespeare's time the President of Corpus Christi College was John Rainolds (or Reynolds), well-known for his fierce enmity to the theatre. Thus the changes of name from 'Polonius' and 'Reynaldo' were conceived specifically for that performance in order to avoid offence. Well, *maybe* ...

Without adding materially to the speculation, it seems clear that there are several elements of difference in the Q1 text that point to some now irrecoverable but distinct validity in its composition, even if it is true that what came to be printed of it is a 'poor, memorial reconstruction'.

One detail of Q1 that has influenced production for nearly two centuries is the stage direction during the 'closet' scene between Hamlet and Gertrude, *Enter the Ghost in his night gowne*, in place of the mere *Enter the Ghost* of the later editions. This detail has fed into notions, not all of them post-Freudian, that the climactic scene between Hamlet and his mother should be played either in, or very obviously adjacent to, the royal bedchamber. It is interesting to note in this context that Q1 does not use the word 'closet' in reference to this scene, though it is used several times in Q2 and the Folios; critics of the theatrical habit of having Hamlet and Gertrude circling a bed, or even tussling on it, have repeatedly insisted that a 'closet' is NOT a bedroom.

Another detail concerns Hamlet's age. From the conversation between Hamlet and the Sexton in Q2's version of the graveyard scene, we can determine that Hamlet must be approaching 30 (or older), given that he vividly remembers Yorick carrying him on his back:

*Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.*

The equivalent conversation in Q1 suggests that Hamlet need not have been more than 18 or 20 (assuming Yorick could have died while still in post as Court Jester):

*Look you, here's a skull hath been here this dozen year.*

My own feeling is that 18 or 20 is a far more credible age for Hamlet than 28 or 30, but why the disparity exists is just one more layer of the Q1 mystery. It may be relevant that Richard Burbage, Shakespeare's first Hamlet, was 33 in 1600. By then he had been a leading actor for a decade; could he also have played Hamlet in the lost play as much as a decade earlier?

Speculation is irresistible!

### **This Text**

For this production, I began my edit with the 1<sup>st</sup> Folio text. In one instance I borrowed from the structure of Q1 – I moved the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy forward to before Hamlet's first meeting with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and the arrival of the Players, and preferred several of Q2's line and word readings to the Folio's, but I restored virtually nothing cut by the Folio editors, and made many more cuts of my own.

Among those commonly made in modern productions, I lost Horatio's description of Elsinore's hectic preparations for war from the first scene, feeling that it is an element simply not followed through in the play (Claudius resolves the Fortinbras threat with one stiffly-worded letter to the King of Norway), and I gave the 'Laertes rebellion' similar treatment, for very similar reasons.

More controversially, perhaps, from the fifth scene I cut Hamlet's declared intention to adopt an 'antic disposition'. This was not to exclude feigned madness from Hamlet's subsequent behaviour, only to release us from an absolute commitment to it. In the sources the murder of Hamlet's father is public knowledge, so Hamlet's feigned madness – 'idiocy' would be a better description – is his defence against Claudius who must be regarding him as a potential avenger. In Shakespeare's play, Hamlet's *considered* intention to 'play mad' has no such purpose and I question its value.

Determined to cast a young actor as Hamlet, I also adopted Q1's 'here's a skull hath been here this dozen year'.

*If you are interested to read the full text of Q1, you can download it from my website: [www.andrewhilton.online](http://www.andrewhilton.online)*

## Sources

Central elements of the story go back to the twelfth century, to the account (in Latin) by the Danish poet, Saxo Grammaticus, of the legendary Danish revenger, Amleth. Amleth's uncle, Feng, killed Amleth's father (after the father had defeated the King of Norway in single combat) and then married his mother. In contrast to Shakespeare's telling, the murder is not a secret and to protect himself from his uncle, and to disguise his planned vengeance, young Amleth feigns idiocy. While talking to his mother in her chamber, he is spied on by one of Feng's councillors. Amleth discovers him, kills him and dismembers the body. Feng sends him to England in the company of two courtiers, who carry a secret commission instructing the English king to execute him. But he discovers this document and substitutes the courtiers names for his own. They are executed, while he returns to Denmark to avenge his father's death, in gruesomely grand style, by killing his uncle and the whole of his court.

In the sixteenth century Saxo's story was retold in French by François de Belleforest in *Les Histoires Tragiques*. We don't know if Shakespeare read Saxo, but he was certainly familiar with Belleforest, even though that was not published in English until 1608. Belleforest introduced a few changes to the story. In particular, he tells that Hamlet's mother had been having an affair with her brother-in-law before the murder of her husband but that, later, she repented of her actions and conspired with Hamlet to kill his uncle and gain the Danish throne.

Features of Shakespeare's play such as Fortinbras, the Ghost and the play-within-a-play – the last two being popular elements of Renaissance revenge tragedy - are unknown in both Saxo and Belleforest, and so are presumed to have originated either with Shakespeare himself or with the author (if it was A.N.Other) of the lost *Ur-Hamlet*.

*The full texts of the sources are also available to download from my website.*

**Andrew Hilton**

This edition of Shakespeare's play was first performed by *Shakespeare at the Tobacco Factory* on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016, with the following cast:

### CAST

Francisco	Marc Geoffrey
Barnardo	Laurence Varda
Marcellus	John Sandeman
Horatio	Alan Coveney
Ghost	Christopher Bianchi
Claudius	Paul Currier
Gertrude	Julia Hills
Polonius	Ian Barritt
Laertes	Callum McIntyre
Hamlet	Alan Mahon
Ophelia	Isabella Marshall
Reynaldo	Marc Geoffrey
Rosencrantz	Joel Macey
Guildenstern	Craig Fuller
1 <sup>st</sup> Player/Duke	Christopher Bianchi
2 <sup>nd</sup> Player/Duchess	Eleanor Yates
3 <sup>rd</sup> Player/Lucianus	Laurence Varda
4 <sup>th</sup> Player/Prologue	Callum McIntyre
Fortinbras	Laurence Varda
Gentlewoman	Eleanor Yates
Sexton	Nicky Goldie
Priest	John Sandeman
Osric	Marc Geoffrey

*Lords & Ladies, Messengers, Soldiers played by members of the company*

## PRODUCTION

Director	Andrew Hilton
Associate Director	Dominic Power
Assistant Director	Peter Chicken ( <i>UofBristol</i> )
Set & Costume Designer	Max Johns
Assistant Designer	Mae-Li Evans ( <i>UofBristol</i> )
Costume Supervisor	Jane Tooze
Lighting Designer	Matthew Graham
Composer & Sound Designer	Elizabeth Purnell
Fight Director & Captain	John Sandeman
Production Manager	Nic Prior
Construction Manager	Chris Samuels
Company & Stage Manager	Jennifer Hunter
Deputy Stage Manager	Cassie Harrison
Assistant Stage Manager	Charlie Smalley
Wardrobe Mistress	Jessica Hardy
Production Photographer	Mark Douet
Rehearsal Photographer	Craig Fuller

# Part One

## Scene 1

*Enter Barnardo and Francisco*

*Barnardo*           Who's there?  
*Francisco*           Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.  
*Barnardo*           Long live the king.  
*Francisco*           Barnardo?  
*Barnardo*           He.  
*Francisco*           You come most carefully upon your hour.  
*Barnardo*           'Tis now struck twelve, get thee to bed Francisco.  
*Francisco*           For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,  
                           And I am sick at heart.  
*Barnardo*           Have you had quiet guard?  
*Francisco*           Not a mouse stirring.  
*Barnardo*           Well, good night. If you do meet Marcellus,  
                           The rival of my watch, bid him make haste.  
*Francisco*           I think I hear him. Stand: who's there?  
*Marcellus*           [*Off*] Friends to this ground.  
*Horatio*             [*Off*] And liegemen to the Dane.

*Enter Marcellus, followed by Horatio*

*Marcellus*           Holla Barnardo.  
*Barnardo*           Welcome Marcellus. Say, what is Horatio there?  
*Horatio*           A piece of him.  
*Barnardo*           Welcome, good Horatio.  
*Marcellus*           What, has this thing appear'd again tonight?  
*Francisco*           I have seen nothing. Gentlemen, give you good night.  
*Barnardo*           Farewell honest soldier.

*Exit Francisco*

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

*Horatio* Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

*Marcellus* Then let us once again assail your ears  
That are so fortified against our story  
What we two nights have seen.

*Horatio* Well, sit we down  
And let me hear Barnardo speak of this.

*Barnardo* Last night of all,  
When yond same star that's westward from the pole  
Had made his course t'illuminate that part of heaven  
Where now it burns -

*Enter Ghost*

*Marcellus* Peace, break thee off, look, where it comes again.

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

*Marcellus* Thou art a scholar, speak to it Horatio.

*Barnardo* Looks it not like the king? Mark it Horatio.

*Horatio* Most like: it harrows me with fear and wonder.

*Barnardo* It would be spoke to.

*Marcellus* Question it Horatio.

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

*Marcellus* It is offended.

*Barnardo* See, it stalks away.

*Horatio* Stay, speak, speak, I charge thee speak.

*Exit Ghost*

*Marcellus* 'Tis gone and will not answer.

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

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

*Marcellus* Is it not like the king?

*Horatio* As thou art to thyself:  
Such was the very armour he had on  
When we the ambitious Norway combated.  
So frown'd he once, when in an angry parle  
He smote his sledged polaxe on the ice.

'Tis strange.

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

*Horatio* In what particular thought to work I know not,  
But in the gross and scope of my opinion  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.  
But soft, behold! Lo, where it comes again!

*Re-enter Ghost*

I'll cross it though it blast me. Stay, illusion!  
If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,  
Speak to me.  
If there be any good thing to be done  
That may to thee do ease and grace to me,  
Speak to me.

*Cock crows*

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,  
Which happily foreknowing may avoid, oh  
Speak of it: stay, and speak! Stop it, Marcellus.

*Marcellus* Shall I strike at it?

*Horatio* Do if it will not stand.

*Barnardo* 'Tis here!

*Horatio* 'Tis here!

*Marcellus* 'Tis gone!

*Exit Ghost*

We do it wrong, being so majestic,  
To offer it the show of violence,  
For it is as the air, invulnerable,  
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

*Barnardo* It was about to speak when the cock crew.

*Horatio* And then it started like a guilty thing  
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard  
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,  
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat  
Awake the god of day, and at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
The extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine. I do in part believe it.  
But look, the morn in russet mantle clad  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.  
Break you your watch up, and by my advice  
Let us impart what we have seen tonight  
Unto young Hamlet, for upon my life  
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.

*Marcellus*            Let's do't, I pray, and I this morning know  
Where we shall find him most conveniently.

*Exeunt*

## **Scene 2** (Act1 Sc2)

*Enter Claudius, Gertrude, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Reynaldo, Lords and Ladies*

*Claudius*            Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,  
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy -  
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,  
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,  
In equal scale weighing delight and dole -  
Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms which have freely gone  
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
Now follows, that you know young Fortinbras  
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,  
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,  
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,  
Importing the surrender of those lands  
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,  
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.  
Thus much our business is: we have here writ  
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras -  
Who impotent and bed-rid scarcely hears  
Of this his nephew's purpose - to suppress  
His further gait herein, in that the levies,  
The lists and full proportions are all made  
Out of his subject. Bid our ambassadors  
Farewell, and let their haste commend their duty.

*Reynaldo exits with the letter*

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
You told us of some suit, what is't Laertes?  
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane  
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg Laertes,  
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?

The head is not more native to the heart,  
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
 What wouldst thou have Laertes?

- Laertes* My dread Lord,  
 Your leave and favour to return to France,  
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark  
 To show my duty in your coronation,  
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done  
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France  
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.
- Claudius* Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?
- Polonius* He hath, my Lord, wrung from me my slow leave  
 By laboursome petition, and at last  
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.  
 I do beseech you give him leave to go.
- Claudius* Take thy fair hour Laertes, time be thine  
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will.  
 But now my cousin Hamlet, and my son -
- Hamlet* A little more than kin, and less than kind.
- Claudius* How is it that the clouds still hang on you?
- Hamlet* Not so my Lord, I am too much i' the sun.
- Gertrude* Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off  
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
 Do not for ever with thy veiled lids  
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust.  
 Thou know'st 'tis common, all that lives must die,  
 Passing through nature to eternity.
- Hamlet* Ay madam, it is common.
- Gertrude* If it be,  
 Why seems it so particular with thee?
- Hamlet* Seems madam? Nay it is, I know not 'seems'.  
 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
 Nor the dejected 'havior of the visage,  
 Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief  
 That can denote me truly. These indeed 'seem'  
 For they are actions that a man might play:  
 But I have that within which passeth show,  
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.
- Claudius* 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:  
 But you must know, your father lost a father,  
 That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound  
 In filial obligation for some term  
 To do obsequious sorrow: but to persevere  
 In obstinate condolment is a course  
 Of impious stubbornness, 'tis unmanly grief,  
 For what we know must be and is as common  
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
 Why should we in our peevish opposition  
 Take it to heart? Fie, 'tis a fault to heaven,  
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme  
 Is death of fathers and who still hath cried,  
 From the first corse till he that died today,  
 'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth  
 This unprevailing woe and think of us  
 As of a father: for let the world take note,  
 You are the most immediate to our throne,  
 And with no less nobility of love  
 Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire:  
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

*Gertrude* Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:  
 I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

*Hamlet* I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

*Claudius* Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.  
 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam come,  
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart: in grace whereof  
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks today  
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell  
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,  
 Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

*Exeunt all but Hamlet*

*Hamlet* Oh that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew:  
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God, O God!  
 How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable  
 Seem to me all the uses of this world?

Fie on't? Oh fie, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden  
 That grows to seed: things rank and gross in nature  
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this:  
 But two months dead - nay, not so much, not two.  
 So excellent a king, that was to this  
 Hyperion to a satyr. So loving to my mother  
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth  
 Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him  
 As if increase of appetite had grown  
 By what it fed on: and yet within a month?  
 Let me not think on't: frailty, thy name is woman.  
 A little month, or ere those shoes were old  
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,  
 Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she -  
 O, God, a beast that wants discourse of reason  
 Would have mourn'd longer! - married with mine uncle,  
 My father's brother, but no more like my father  
 Than I to Hercules. Within a month,  
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
 She married. O most wicked speed, to post  
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets:  
 It is not, nor it cannot come to good.  
 But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Enter Horatio, Marcellus and Barnardo*

*Horatio* Hail to your Lordship.

*Hamlet* I am glad to see you well.  
 Horatio, or I do forget myself.

*Horatio* The same my Lord, and your poor servant ever.

*Hamlet* Sir, my good friend, I'll change that name with you.  
 What make you from Wittenberg Horatio? Marcellus.

*Marcellus* My good Lord.

*Hamlet* I am very glad to see you. Good even, sir.  
 But what in faith make you from Wittenberg?

*Horatio* A truant disposition, good my Lord.

*Hamlet* I would not have your enemy say so,  
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence  
 Against yourself: I know you are no truant.  
 So what is your affair in Elsinore?  
 We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

*Horatio* My Lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

*Hamlet* I pray thee do not mock me, fellow-student,

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

*Horatio* Indeed my Lord, it follow'd hard upon.

*Hamlet* Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral bak'd meats  
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.  
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven  
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio.  
My father, methinks I see my father.

*Horatio* Where my Lord?

*Hamlet* In my mind's eye, Horatio.

*Horatio* He was a goodly King.

*Hamlet* He was a man, take him for all in all.  
I shall not look upon his like again.

*Horatio* My Lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

*Hamlet* Saw? Who?

*Horatio* My Lord, the King your father.

*Hamlet* The King my father?

*Horatio* Season your admiration for a while with an attent ear  
Till I may deliver upon the witness  
Of these gentlemen, this marvel to you.

*Hamlet* For God's love, let me hear.

*Horatio* Two nights together had these gentlemen,  
Marcellus and Barnardo, on their watch  
In the dead waste and middle of the night  
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,  
Arm'd at all points exactly, cap-a-pe,  
Appears before them and with solemn march  
Goes slow and stately by them. Twice he walk'd  
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,  
Within his truncheon's length, whilst they, distill'd  
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me  
In dreadful secrecy impart they did  
And I with them the third night kept the watch,  
Where as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,  
The apparition comes. I knew your father:  
These hands are not more like.

*Hamlet* But where was this?

*Marcellus* My Lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

*Hamlet* Did you not speak to it?

*Horatio* My Lord, I did,  
 But answer made it none. Yet once methought  
 It lifted up its head and did address  
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak,  
 But even then the morning cock crew loud  
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away  
 And vanish'd from our sight.

*Hamlet* 'Tis very strange.

*Horatio* As I do live my honour'd Lord, 'tis true,  
 And we did think it writ down in our duty  
 To let you know of it.

*Hamlet* Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.  
 Hold you the watch tonight?

*Marc & Bern* We do, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Arm'd, say you?

*Marc & Bern* Arm'd, my Lord.

*Hamlet* From top to toe?

*Marc & Bern* My Lord, from head to foot.

*Hamlet* Then saw you not his face?

*Horatio* O yes, my Lord, he wore his beaver up.

*Hamlet* What look'd he - frowningly?

*Horatio* A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

*Hamlet* Pale, or red?

*Horatio* Nay very pale.

*Hamlet* And fix'd his eyes upon you?

*Horatio* Most constantly.

*Hamlet* I would I had been there.

*Horatio* It would have much amaz'd you.

*Hamlet* Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?

*Horatio* While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

*Marc & Bern* Longer, longer.

*Horatio* Not when I saw't.

*Hamlet* His beard was grizzl'd - no?

*Horatio* It was as I have seen it in his life,  
 A sable silver'd.

*Hamlet* I'll watch tonight: perchance 'twill walk again.

*Horatio* I warrant it will.

*Hamlet* If it assume my noble father's person  
I'll speak to it, though Hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. So, fare ye well:  
Upon the platform 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.

*All* Our duty to your honour.

*Hamlet* Your loves, as mine to you: farewell.

*Exeunt all but Hamlet*

My father's spirit in arms? All is not well:  
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come.  
Till then sit still my soul: foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them to men's eyes.

*Exit*

### **Scene 3** (Act1 Sc3)

*Enter Laertes and Ophelia*

*Laertes* My necessaries are embark'd, farewell.  
And sister, as the winds give benefit  
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep  
But let me hear from you.

*Ophelia* Do you doubt that?

*Laertes* For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,  
A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute, no more.

*Ophelia* No more but so?

*Laertes* Think it no more, for you must fear,  
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own.  
He may not, as unvalu'd persons do  
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends  
The sanctity and health of the whole state.  
Then if he says he loves you  
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it  
As he in his particular act and place  
May give his saying deed, which is no further  
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.  
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain  
If with too credent ear you list his songs,  
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open

To his unmaster'd importunity.  
 Fear it Ophelia, fear it my dear sister,  
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,  
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough  
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon.  
 Virtue itself 'scapes not calumnious strokes,  
 The canker galls the infant of the spring  
 Too oft before her buttons be disclos'd  
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
 Be wary then, best safety lies in fear:  
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

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

*Laertes* O, fear me not. I stay too long.

*Enter Polonius*

*Polonius* Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for shame.  
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail  
 And you are stay'd for there. My blessing with you,  
 And these few precepts in thy memory  
 See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.  
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel,  
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware  
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in  
 Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee.  
 Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice.  
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.  
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
 But not express'd in fancy: rich, not gaudy,  
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man.  
 And they in France of the best rank and station  
 Are of a most select and generous chief in that.  
 Neither a borrower nor a lender be  
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend  
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
 This above all: to thine ownself be true

And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.  
Farewell: my blessing season this in thee.

*Laertes* Most humbly do I take my leave my Lord.

*Polonius* The time invites you. Go, your servants tend.

*Laertes* Farewell Ophelia, and remember well  
What I have said to you.

*Ophelia* 'Tis in my memory lock'd  
And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

*Laertes* Farewell.

*Exit*

*Polonius* What is't Ophelia, he hath said to you?

*Ophelia* So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

*Polonius* Marry, well bethought.  
'Tis told me he hath very oft of late  
Given private time to you: and you yourself  
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.  
If it be so, as so 'tis put on me -  
And that in way of caution - I must tell you  
You do not understand yourself so clearly  
As it behoves my daughter and your honour.  
What is't between you? Give me up the truth.

*Ophelia* He hath my Lord, of late made many tenders  
Of his affection to me.

*Polonius* Affection, puh. You speak like a green girl,  
Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.  
Do you believe his 'tenders', as you call them?

*Ophelia* I do not know my Lord, what I should think.

*Polonius* Marry, I'll teach you. Think yourself a baby  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly  
Or - not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus - you'll tender me a fool.

*Ophelia* My Lord, he hath importun'd me with love  
In honourable fashion.

*Polonius* Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to.

*Ophelia* And hath given countenance to his speech my Lord,  
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

*Polonius* Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know  
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes daughter,

Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,  
 You must not take for fire. From this time  
 Be somewhat scanted of your maiden presence.  
 Set your entreatments at a higher rate  
 Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,  
 Believe so much in him, that he is young  
 And with a larger tether may he walk  
 Than may be given you. In few Ophelia,  
 Do not believe his vows, they are but brokers,  
 Breathing like sanctifi'd and pious bawds  
 The better to beguile. This is for all:  
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth  
 Have you so slander any moment leisure  
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
 Look to't, I charge you. Mend your ways.

*Ophelia* I shall obey, my Lord.

*Exeunt severally*

#### **Scene 4** (Act1 Sc4)

The Platform

*Enter Hamlet, Horatio, Marcellus & Barnardo*

*Hamlet* The air bites shrewdly: is it very cold?

*Horatio* It is a nipping and an eager air.

*Hamlet* What hour now?

*Horatio* I think it lacks of twelve.

*Marcellus* No, it is struck.

*Horatio* Indeed I heard it not. Then it draws near the season  
 Wherein the spirit holds his wont to walk.

*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off*

What does this mean, my Lord?

*Hamlet* The king doth wake tonight and takes his rouse,  
 Keeps wassail and the swaggering up-spring reels,  
 And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down  
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
 The triumph of his pledge.

*Horatio* Is't a custom?

*Hamlet* Ay, marry, is't:  
 But to my mind, though I am a native here  
 And to the manner born, it is a custom  
 More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

*Marcellus* Look, my Lord, it comes!

*Enter Ghost*

*Hamlet* Angels and ministers of grace defend us!  
 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,  
 Bring with thee airs from Heaven or blasts from Hell,  
 Thou comest in such a questionable shape  
 That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
 King, Father, Royal Dane. Oh, answer me.  
 Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell  
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cerements, why the sepulchre  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly interr'd  
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,  
 To cast thee up again? What may this mean  
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel  
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,  
 Making night hideous, and we fools of nature  
 So horridly to shake our disposition  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?

*Ghost beckons Hamlet*

*Horatio* It beckons you to go away with it.

*Marcellus* Look with what courteous action  
 It waves you to a more removed ground:  
 But do not go with it.

*Horatio* No, by no means.

*Hamlet* It will not speak, then I will follow it.

*Horatio* Do not my Lord.

*Hamlet* Why, what should be the fear?  
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee,  
 And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself?  
 It waves me forth again: I'll follow it.

*Horatio* What if it tempt you toward the flood my Lord,  
 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
 And there assume some other horrible form  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
 And draw you into madness? Think of it.

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

*Marcellus* You shall not go, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Hold off your hand.

*Horatio* Be rul'd, you shall not go.

*Hamlet* My fate cries out,  
 And makes each petty artery in this body  
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.  
 Still am I call'd? Unhand me, gentlemen.  
 By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me.  
 I say away! Go on, I'll follow thee.

*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet*

*Horatio* He waxes desperate with imagination.

*Marcellus* Let's follow, 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

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

*Marcellus* Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

*Horatio* Heaven will direct it.

*Marcellus* Nay, let's follow him.

*Exeunt*

## **Scene 5** (Act1 Sc5)

*Enter Ghost and Hamlet*

*Hamlet* Where wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.

*Ghost* Mark me.

*Hamlet* I will.

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

*Hamlet* Alas poor ghost.

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

*Hamlet* Speak, I am bound to hear.

*Ghost* So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

*Hamlet* What?

*Ghost* I am thy father's spirit,  
 Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night  
 And for the day confin'd to fast in fires  
 Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
 Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid  
 To tell the secrets of my prison-house  
 I could a tale unfold whose lightest word  
 Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,  
 Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres  
 And each particular hair to stand on end

Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.  
 But this eternal blazon must not be  
 To ears of flesh and blood. List, Hamlet, oh list,  
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love -

*Hamlet* O God!

*Ghost* Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

*Hamlet* Murder?

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

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

*Ghost* I find thee apt,  
 And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
 That roots itself in ease on Lethe wharf  
 Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now Hamlet, hear:  
 'Tis given out that sleeping in mine orchard,  
 A serpent stung me: so the whole ear of Denmark  
 Is by a forged process of my death  
 Rankly abus'd: for know, thou noble youth,  
 The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
 Now wears his crown.

*Hamlet* O my prophetic soul, mine uncle?

*Ghost* Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
 With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts -  
 Oh wicked wit and gifts, that have the power  
 So to seduce - won to his shameful lust  
 The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.  
 O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there,  
 From me, whose love was of that dignity  
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
 I made to her in marriage, and to decline  
 Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor  
 To those of mine.  
 But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,  
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,  
 So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,  
 Will sate itself in a celestial bed  
 And prey on garbage.  
 But, soft, methinks I scent the morning air,  
 Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,  
 My custom always of the afternoon,  
 Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole  
 With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,

And in the porches of my ears did pour  
 The leperous distilment, whose effect  
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body  
 And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,  
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
 Most lazar-like with vile and loathsome crust,  
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
 Of life, of crown, of Queen, at once dispatch'd:  
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
 Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,  
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head.  
 O horrible, O horrible, most horrible.  
 If thou hast nature in thee bear it not,  
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.  
 But howsoever thou pursuest this act,  
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
 Against thy mother aught: leave her to heaven  
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,  
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once,  
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near  
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.  
 Adieu, adieu, Hamlet. Remember me.

*Exit*

*Hamlet*

O all you host of heaven! O earth, what else?  
 And shall I couple hell? O, fie, hold, my heart,  
 And you my sinews, grow not instant old,  
 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee?  
 Yea, from the table of my memory  
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past  
 That youth and observation copied there,  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, yes, by heaven.  
 O most pernicious woman!  
 O villain, villain, smiling damned villain!  
 My tables - meet it is I set it down,  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain:  
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark.

*Marcellus, Horatio*      *[Within]* My Lord, my Lord -

*Marcellus*      *[Within]* Lord Hamlet -

*Horatio*      *[Within]* Heaven secure him! Hillo, ho, ho, my Lord.

*Hamlet*      Hillo, ho, ho, boy; come, bird, come.

*Enter Horatio, Marcellus & Barnardo*

*Marcellus*      How is't my noble Lord?

*Horatio*      What news my Lord?

*Hamlet*      O, wonderful.

*Horatio*      Good my Lord tell it.

*Hamlet*      No, you'll reveal it.

*Horatio*      Not I my Lord, by heaven.

*Marcellus*      Nor I my Lord.

*Hamlet*      How say you then, would heart of man once think it?  
But you'll be secret?

*Horatio, Marcellus*      Ay, by heaven, my Lord.

*Hamlet*      There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark  
But he's an arrant knave.

*Horatio*      There needs no ghost my Lord, come from the grave  
To tell us this.

*Hamlet*      Why right, you are i' the right,  
And so, without more circumstance at all  
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:  
You as your business and desires shall point you,  
For every man ha's business and desire,  
Such as it is, and for mine own poor part,  
Look you, I'll go pray.

*Horatio*      These are but wild and whirling words my Lord.

*Hamlet*      I'm sorry they offend you, heartily,  
Yes 'faith, heartily.

*Horatio*      There's no offence my Lord.

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

*Horatio*      What is't my Lord? We will.

*Hamlet*            Never make known what you have seen tonight.

*Horatio, Marcellus*    My Lord we will not.

*Hamlet*            Nay, but swear't.

*Barnardo*            In faith my Lord, not I.

*Marcellus*            Nor I my Lord, in faith.

*Horatio*            Nor I.

*Hamlet*            Upon my sword.

*Marcellus*            We have sworn my Lord, already.

*Hamlet*            Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.  
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,  
Swear.

*Ghost*            *[Off]* Swear!

*They swear*

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

*Hamlet*            And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy. But come.  
The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,  
That ever I was born to set it right.  
Nay, come, let's go together.

*Exeunt*

## Scene 6 (Act2 Sc1)

A room in *Polonius'* house  
*Enter Polonius and Reynaldo*

*Polonius*            Give him this money, and these notes, Reynaldo.

*Reynaldo*            I will my Lord.

*Polonius*            You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,  
Before you visit my son, to make inquire  
Of his behaviour.

*Reynaldo*            My Lord I did intend it.

*Polonius*            Marry, well said, very well said. Look you sir,  
Inquire me first what Danes there are in Paris,  
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,  
What company, at what expense: and finding  
By this encompassment and drift of question  
That they do know my son, come you more nearer.  
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him,  
As thus, "I know his father and his friends,

And in part him." Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

*Reynaldo* Ay, very well, my Lord.

*Polonius* " - and in part him. But," you may say, "not well:  
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild,  
Addicted so and so," and there put on him  
What forgeries you please: marry, none so rank  
As may dishonour him, take heed of that,  
But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips  
As are most known to youth and liberty.

*Reynaldo* As gaming my Lord.

*Polonius* Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,  
Drabbing: you may go so far.

*Reynaldo* My Lord that would dishonour him.

*Polonius* 'Faith no, as you may season it in the charge.

*Reynaldo* But my good Lord -

*Polonius* Wherefore should you do this?

*Reynaldo* Ay my Lord, I would know that.

*Polonius* Marry sir, here's my drift,  
And I believe it is a fetch of warrant:  
You laying these slight sullies on my son,  
Your party in converse, him you would sound,  
He closes with you in this consequence,  
"Good sir," or so, or "friend," or "gentleman,"  
According to the phrase or the addition  
Of man and country.

*Reynaldo* Very 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,' at 'friend or so,' and 'gentleman.'

*Polonius* At 'closes in the consequence' - ay, marry,  
He closes thus: "I know the gentleman,  
I saw him yesterday, with such, or such,  
And, as you say, there he was a' gaming,  
There falling out at tennis:' or perchance,  
'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'  
Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth. See you now?  
Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth:  
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,  
With windlasses and with assays of bias,  
By indirections find directions out.  
You have me, have you not?

*Reynaldo* My Lord I have.  
*Polonius* God be wi' you, fare you well.  
*Reynaldo* Good my Lord.  
*Polonius* Observe his inclination in yourself.  
*Reynaldo* I shall my Lord.  
*Polonius* And let him ply his music.  
*Reynaldo* Well my Lord.

*Exit Reynaldo*  
*Enter Ophelia*

*Polonius* How now Ophelia, what's the matter?  
*Ophelia* O my Lord, my Lord, I have been so affrighted.  
*Polonius* With what i' the name of God?  
*Ophelia* My Lord, as I was sewing in my closet,  
 Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,  
 No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd,  
 Ungarter'd and down-gyved to his ankle,  
 Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,  
 And with a look so piteous in purport  
 As if he had been loosed out of Hell  
 To speak of horrors, he comes before me.  
*Polonius* Mad for thy love?  
*Ophelia* My Lord, I do not know, but truly I do fear it.  
*Polonius* What said he?  
*Ophelia* He took me by the wrist and held me hard.  
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm  
 And with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
 He falls to such perusal of my face  
 As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so.  
 At last, a little shaking of mine arm  
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
 He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound  
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
 And end his being. That done, he lets me go,  
 And with his head over his shoulder turn'd,  
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,  
 For out o' doors he went without their help,  
 And to the last, bended their light on me.  
*Polonius* This is the very ecstasy of love,  
 Whose violent property fordoes itself  
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings.  
 I am sorry that with better heed and judgment

I had not quoted him: I fear'd he did but trifle  
 And meant to wreck thee. Come, go we to the king.  
 This must be known, which being kept close might move  
 More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

*Exeunt*

*Between the scenes a Lord gives Polonius a report from the Ambassadors to  
 Norway*

## **Scene 7** (Act2 Sc2)

A room in the castle

*Enter Claudius, Gertrude, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern and Attendants*

*Claudius* Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.  
 Moreover that we much did long to see you,  
 The need we have to use you did provoke  
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard  
 Of Hamlet's transformation: so I call it  
 Since not th'exterior nor the inward man  
 Resembles that it was. What it should be  
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him  
 So much from th'understanding of himself,  
 I cannot dream of. I entreat you both,  
 That being of so young days brought up with him,  
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court  
 Some little time: so by your companies  
 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather  
 So much as from occasions you may glean,  
 Whether aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,  
 That open'd lies within our remedy.

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

*Rosencrantz* Both your majesties  
 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,  
 Put your dread pleasures more into command  
 Than to entreaty.

*Guildenstern* But we both obey,  
 And here give up ourselves, in the full bent  
 To lay our services freely at your feet,  
 To be commanded.

*Claudius* Thanks Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

*Gertrude* Thanks Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz.  
And I beseech you instantly to visit  
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,  
And bring the gentlemen where Hamlet is.

*Guildenstern* Heavens make our presence and our practices  
Pleasant and helpful to him.

*Gertrude* Amen.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants  
Enter Polonius and Ophelia*

*Polonius* [*Giving report*] The ambassadors from Norway, my good Lord,  
Are joyfully return'd. The King makes fair  
Return of greetings and desires.

*Claudius* [*Reads*] *His nephew's levies appear'd to him  
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack:  
But, better look'd into, he truly found  
It was against ourselves: he sends out arrests  
On Fortinbras, which he in brief obeys,  
And vows before his uncle never more  
To give the assay of arms against us.  
The old King, overcome with joy,  
Now lends him his commission to employ  
The soldiers so levied against the Polack:  
With an entreaty that it might please us  
To give quiet pass through our dominions  
For this enterprise.*  
Thou still hast been the father of good news.

*Polonius* Have I, my Lord? Assure you my good liege,  
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,  
Both to my God and to my gracious king:  
And I do think, or else this brain of mine  
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure  
As it hath us'd to do, that I have found  
The very cause of Hamlet's transformation.

*Claudius* Oh speak of that, that do I long to hear.

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

*Polonius* My liege, and madam, to expostulate  
What majesty should be, what duty is,  
Why day is day, night night, and time is time,  
Were nothing but to waste night, day and time.  
Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,  
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,

I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:  
 Mad call I it, for to define true madness,  
 What is't but to be nothing else but mad?  
 But let that go.

*Gertrude* More matter, with less art.

*Polonius* Madam, I swear I use no art at all.  
 That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true 'tis pity,  
 And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure,  
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.  
 Mad let us grant him then: and now remains  
 That we find out the cause of this effect,  
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect,  
 For this effect defective comes by cause:  
 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. Perpend.  
 I have a daughter - have while she is mine -  
 Who in her duty and obedience mark,  
 Hath given me this: now gather, and surmise.  
*[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. Thus: 'In her excellent white bosom,  
 these, &c.'

*Gertrude* Came this from Hamlet to her?

*Polonius* Good madam, stay awhile, I will be faithful.  
*Doubt thou the stars are fire,*  
*Doubt that the sun doth move,*  
*Doubt truth to be a liar,*  
*But never 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, oh most best, believe it.*  
*Adieu. Thine evermore most dear lady, whilst this machine is to*  
*him, Hamlet.*  
 This, in obedience, hath my daughter shown me,  
 And more above hath his solicitings,  
 As they fell out by time, by means and place,  
 All given to mine ear.

*Claudius* But how hath she receiv'd his love?

*Polonius* What do you think of me?

*Claudius* As of a man faithful and honourable.

*Polonius* I would fain prove so. But what might you think,  
 When I had seen this hot love on the wing -  
 As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,  
 Before my daughter told me - what might you,  
 Or my dear Majesty your Queen here, think,  
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book,

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight,  
 What might you think? No, I went round to work,  
 'Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star,  
 This must not be': and then I precepts gave her,  
 That she should lock herself from his resort,  
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.  
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice,  
 And he, repuls'd - a short tale to make -  
 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,  
 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,  
 Thence to a lightness, and by this declension,  
 Into the madness wherein now he raves  
 And all we mourn for.

*Claudius* Do you think 'tis this?

*Gertrude* It may be, very likely.

*Polonius* Hath there been such a time - I'd fain know that -  
 That I have positively said "'Tis so,'  
 When it prov'd otherwise?

*Claudius* Not that I know.

*Polonius* Take this from this, if this be otherwise.

*Claudius* How may we try it further?

*Polonius* You know, sometimes he walks four hours together  
 Here in the lobby.

*Gertrude* So he does indeed.

*Polonius* At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him.  
 Be you and I behind an arras then,  
 Mark the encounter: if he love her not  
 And be not from his reason fall'n thereon,  
 Let me be no assistant for a state,  
 But keep a farm and carters.

*Claudius* We will try it.

*Gertrude* For your part Ophelia, I do wish  
 That your good beauties be the happy cause  
 Of Hamlet's wildness: so shall I hope your virtues  
 Will bring him to his wonted way again,  
 To both your honours.

*Ophelia* Madam, I wish it may.

*Enter Hamlet, reading on a book*

*Gertrude* But look, where now the poor wretch comes reading.

*Polonius* Away, I do beseech you, both away:  
 I'll board him presently. O, give me leave.

*Exit King and Queen, and Ophelia*

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

*Hamlet* Well, God-a-mercy.

*Polonius* Do you know me my Lord?

*Hamlet* Excellent well, you are a fishmonger.

*Polonius* Not I my Lord.

*Hamlet* Then I would you were so honest a man.

*Polonius* Honest, my Lord?

*Hamlet* Ay sir, to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.

*Polonius* That's very true my Lord.

*Hamlet* For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog – have you a daughter?

*Polonius* I have my Lord.

*Hamlet* Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing, but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to 't.

*Polonius* *[Aside]* How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter. Yet he knew me not at first, he said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone: and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love, very near this. - What do you read my Lord?

*Hamlet* Words, words, words.

*Polonius* What is the matter my Lord?

*Hamlet* Between who?

*Polonius* I mean, the matter that you read my Lord.

*Hamlet* Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkl'd, their eyes purging thick amber, or 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 you yourself sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.

*Polonius* *[Aside]* Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. Will you walk out of the air my Lord?

*Hamlet* Into my grave?

*Polonius* Indeed that is out o' the air. *[Aside]* How pregnant sometimes his replies are. A happiness that often madness hits on. - My honourable Lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

*Hamlet* You cannot sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal: except my life, except my life, except my life.

*Polonius* Fare you well, my Lord.

*Exit*

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

*Enter Ophelia*

Soft you now,  
 The fair Ophelia? Nymph, in thy orisons  
 Be all my sins remember'd.

*Ophelia* Good my Lord,  
 How does your honour for this many a day?

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

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

- Hamlet* No, no, I never gave you ought.
- Ophelia* My honour'd Lord, you know right well you did,  
And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd  
As made the things more rich: their perfume lost  
Take these again, for to the noble mind  
Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.  
There, my Lord.
- Hamlet* Ha, ha, are you honest?
- Ophelia* My Lord?
- Hamlet* Are you fair?
- Ophelia* What means your Lordship?
- Hamlet* That if you be honest and fair, your honesty should admit no  
discourse to your beauty.
- Ophelia* Could beauty my Lord, have better commerce than with honesty?
- Hamlet* Ay truly, for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty  
from what it is to a bawd than the force of honesty can translate  
beauty into his likeness. This was sometime a paradox, but now  
the time gives it proof. I did love you once.
- Ophelia* Indeed my Lord, you made me believe so.
- Hamlet* You should not have believ'd me: for virtue cannot so inoculate  
our old stock but we shall relish of it. I lov'd you not.
- Ophelia* I was the more deceiv'd.
- 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 no  
where 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. Go, farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry,  
marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you  
make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell.
- Ophelia* O heavenly powers, restore him!

*Hamlet* I have heard of your paintings too, well enough. God has given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, you nick-name 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 more marriages. Those that are married already, all but one, shall live, the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go.

*Exit*

*Ophelia* O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!  
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down.  
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,  
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,  
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason  
Like sweet bells jangl'd, out of tune and harsh:  
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth  
Blasted with ecstasy. Oh woe is me,  
To have seen what I have seen, see what I see.

*Re-enter Claudius and Polonius*

*Claudius* Love? His affections do not that way tend,  
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,  
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul  
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood  
And I do fear the hatch and the disclose  
Will be some danger. He shall with speed to England,  
For the demand of our neglected tribute.  
Haply the seas and countries different  
With variable objects shall expel  
This something-settl'd matter in his heart.  
What think you on't?

*Polonius* It shall do well: but yet do I believe  
The origin and commencement of this grief  
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia?  
You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said,  
We heard it all. My Lord, do as you please,  
But, if you hold it fit this night,  
Let his queen mother all alone entreat  
Him to show his griefs. Let her be round with him,  
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear  
Of all their conference. If she find him not,  
To England send him, or confine him where  
Your wisdom best shall think.

*Claudius* It shall be so:

'Madness' in great ones must not unwatch'd go.

*Exeunt*

## Scene 8 (Act2 Sc2)

Outside the castle

*Enter Hamlet*

*Then enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

*Rosencrantz*     *[Calling]* My Lord!

*Guildenstern*   *[Calling]* Lord Hamlet!

*Rosencrantz*     God save you, sir.

*Guildenstern*   My honour'd Lord.

*Rosencrantz*     My most dear Lord.

*Hamlet*            My excellent good friends. How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah Rosencrantz. Good lads, how do ye both?

*Rosencrantz*     As the indifferent children of the earth.

*Guildenstern*     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?

*Rosencrantz*     Neither my Lord.

*Hamlet*            Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

*Guildenstern*     'Faith, her privates we.

*Hamlet*            In the secret parts of Fortune? Oh most true, she is a strumpet.  
What's the news?

*Rosencrantz*     None my Lord, but that 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, deserv'd at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

*Guildenstern*     Prison, my Lord?

*Hamlet*            Denmark's a prison.

*Rosencrantz*     Then is the world one.

*Hamlet*            A goodly one, in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the worst.

*Rosencrantz*     We think not so, my Lord.

*Hamlet*            Why then, 'tis none to you, for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

- Rosencrantz* Why then, your ambition makes it one: 'tis too narrow for your mind.
- 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. But in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?
- Rosencrantz* To visit you my Lord, no other occasion.
- Hamlet* Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks, but I thank you. But sure dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come, nay, speak.
- Guildestern* What should we say, my Lord?
- Hamlet* Why anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for. There is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour. I know the good King and Queen have sent for you.
- Rosencrantz* To what end, my Lord?
- Hamlet* That you must teach me. Nay then, I have an eye of you. If you love me, hold not off.
- Guildestern* 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 exercise: 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 majestic roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man? How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty, in form and moving how express and admirable? In action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god? The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me: no, nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.
- Rosencrantz* My Lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.
- Hamlet* Why did you laugh then, when I said 'man delights not me'?
- Rosencrantz* To think, my Lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way, and hither are they come to offer you service.
- Hamlet* He that plays the king shall be welcome, his majesty shall have tribute of me. What players are they?

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

*Hamlet* How chances it they travel? Do they not hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they not so follow'd?

*Rosencrantz* No, indeed, are they not.

*Hamlet* It is not very strange, for mine uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father liv'd, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

*Flourish of trumpets off*

*Guildestern* There are the players.

*Hamlet* Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then: but, I tell you, my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceiv'd.

*Guildestern* In what, my dear Lord?

*Hamlet* I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

*Enter Polonius*

*Polonius* Well be with you, gentlemen!

*Hamlet* Hark you, Guildestern, that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts.

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

*Hamlet* I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players, mark it. You say right, sir: o' Monday morning, 'twas so indeed.

*Polonius* My Lord I have news to tell you.

*Hamlet* My Lord I have news to tell you.  
When Roscius was an actor in Rome -

*Polonius* The actors are come hither, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Buzz, buzz.

*Polonius* Upon mine honour.

*Hamlet* Then came each actor on his ass -

*Polonius* The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. 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 daughter and no more,  
The which he loved passing well.'

*Polonius* [*Aside*] Still on my daughter.

*Hamlet* Am I not i' the 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. But look, where my abridgement comes.

*Enter the Players*

You are welcome masters, welcome all. I am glad to see thee well. O, my old friend? Thy face is valanc'd since I saw thee last: com'st thou to beard me in Denmark? What, my young lady and mistress? Masters, you are all welcome. Come, give us a taste of your quality, come, a passionate speech.

*First Player* What speech, my 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 pleas'd not the million, 'twas caviare to the general: but it was - as I receiv'd it - an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory begin at this line ...

*The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast - it is not so: it begins with Pyrrhus -*

*The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,  
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble  
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,  
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd  
With heraldry more dismal: head to foot  
Now is he total gules, horridly trick'd  
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,  
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,  
That lend a tyrannous and damned light  
To their Lord's murder: roasted in wrath and fire,  
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,  
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus  
Old grandsire Priam seeks.  
So, proceed you.*

*Polonius* 'Fore God, my Lord, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion.

*First Player* *Anon he finds him  
Striking too short at Greeks, his antique sword,  
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,  
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,*

*Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,  
 But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword  
 The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,  
 Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top  
 Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash  
 Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for lo, his sword  
 Which was declining on the milky head  
 Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:  
 So, as a painted tyrant Pyrrhus stood,  
 And like a neutral to his will and matter, did nothing.  
 But, as we often see against some storm,  
 A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,  
 The bold winds speechless, and the orb below  
 As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder  
 Doth rend the region. So after Pyrrhus' pause,  
 A roused vengeance sets him new a-work,  
 And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall  
 On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,  
 With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword  
 Now falls on Priam.  
 Out, out, thou strumpet-Fortune, all you gods,  
 In general synod take away her power,  
 Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel  
 And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,  
 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.

*First Player* *But who, O who, had seen the mobl'd queen -*

*Hamlet* 'The mobl'd queen'?

*Polonius* That's good, 'mobl'd queen' is good.

*First Player* *Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flame  
 With bisson rheum, a clout upon that head  
 Where late the diadem stood, and for a robe  
 About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,  
 A blanket in the alarm of fear caught up,  
 Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,  
 'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:  
 But if the gods themselves did see her then  
 When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport  
 In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,  
 The instant burst of clamour that she made  
 Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven  
 And passion in the gods.*

*Polonius* Look, where he has not turn'd his colour and has tears in's eyes.  
Pray you, no more.

*Hamlet* 'Tis well: I'll have thee speak out the rest soon. Good my Lord  
will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear, let them be  
well us'd, for they are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the  
time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than  
their ill report while you live.

*Polonius* My Lord I will use them according to their desert.

*Hamlet* God's bodykins man, much better. Use every man after his desert,  
and who should 'scape whipping? Use them after your own  
honour and dignity. The less they deserve, the more merit is in  
your bounty. Take them in.

*Polonius* Come, sirs.

*Hamlet* Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play this night.

*Exit Polonius with all the Players*

My good friends, I'll leave you till night: you are welcome to  
Elsinore.

*Rosencrantz* Good my Lord.

*Hamlet* Ay, so God be wi' ye.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

O what a rogue and peasant slave am I.  
Is it not monstrous that this player here,  
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,  
Could force his soul so to his own conceit  
That from her working all his visage warm'd,  
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,  
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting  
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing,  
For Hecuba.  
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,  
That he should weep for her? What would he do,  
Had he the motive and the cue for passion  
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears  
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,  
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,  
Confound the ignorant and amaze indeed  
The very faculty of eyes and ears. Yet I,  
A dull and muddy-mettl'd rascal, peak  
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause  
And can say nothing: no, not for a king,  
Upon whose property and most dear life  
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?  
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across,

Tweaks me by the nose, gives me the lie i' the throat  
 As deep as to the lungs, who does me this?  
 Ha? 'Swounds, I should take it: for it cannot be  
 But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall  
 To make oppression bitter, or ere this  
 I should have fatted all the region kites  
 With this slave's offal. Bloody, bawdy villain,  
 Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain.  
 O, vengeance!  
 Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave,  
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,  
 Prompted to my revenge by Heaven and Hell,  
 Must like a whore, unpack my heart with words,  
 And fall a-cursing like a very drab,  
 A scullion. Fie upon't, foh! About, my brains.  
 I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play  
 Have by the very cunning of the scene  
 Been struck so to the soul that presently  
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions.  
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak  
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players  
 Play something like the murder of my father  
 Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks,  
 I'll tent him to the quick. If he but blench,  
 I know my course. The spirit that I have seen  
 May be the Devil: and the Devil hath power  
 T'assume a pleasing shape, yea and perhaps  
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,  
 As he is very potent with such spirits,  
 Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds  
 More relative than this: the play's the thing  
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King.

*Exit*

## **Scene 9** (Act3 Sc2)

A Hall in the Castle. Night

*The Players set their space. Enter Hamlet with 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Players*

*Hamlet* Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly  
 on the tongue. 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.

*First Player* I warrant your honour.

*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 overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature, to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Oh there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, that neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor no man, have so strutted and bellow'd that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

*First Player* I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us, sir.

*Hamlet* O reform it altogether. Go, make you ready. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them.

*Exeunt Players*

*Enter severally Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

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

*Polonius* And the queen too, and that presently.

*Hamlet* Bid the players make haste.

*Exit Polonius*

Will you two help to hasten them?

*Ros & Guild* We will my Lord.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Enter Horatio*

*Hamlet* What, Horatio?

*Horatio* Here sweet Lord, at your service.

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

*Horatio* O my dear Lord.

*Hamlet* Nay, do not think I flatter,  
For what advancement may I hope from thee  
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,  
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?  
Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice  
And could of men distinguish, her election  
Hath seal'd thee for herself, for thou hast been  
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,  
A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards  
Hast ta'en with equal thanks. And blest are those  
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingl'd,  
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger

To sound what stop she please. Give me that man  
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him  
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,  
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.  
 There is a play tonight before the king.  
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
 Which I have told thee of my father's death.  
 I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,  
 Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt  
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,  
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen,  
 And my imaginations are as foul  
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note,  
 And after we will both our judgments join  
 In censure of his seeming.

*Horatio* Well, my Lord:  
 If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,  
 And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

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

*A flourish. Enter Claudius, Gertrude, Polonius, Ophelia and others*

*Claudius* How fares our cousin Hamlet?

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

*Claudius* I have nothing with this answer Hamlet, these words are not mine.

*Hamlet* No, nor mine now. *[To Polonius]* My Lord, you play'd once i' the university, you say?

*Enter Rosencrantz & Guildenstern*

*Polonius* That I did my Lord, and was accounted a good actor.

*Hamlet* What did you enact?

*Polonius* I did enact Julius Caesar. I was kill'd i' the Capitol. Brutus killed me.

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

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

*Gertrude* Come hither my good Hamlet, sit by me.

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

*Polonius* *[To Claudius]* Oh 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?  
*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 two months my Lord.  
*Hamlet* So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of  
 sables. Oh 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.  

*The Prologue enters*

*Ophelia* What means this play, my Lord?  
*Hamlet* Marry, it is miching mallecho, it means mischief.  
*Prologue* For us, and for our tragedy,  
 Here stooping to your clemency,  
 We beg your hearing patiently.  

*Exit*

*Hamlet* Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring?  
*Ophelia* 'Tis brief my Lord.  
*Hamlet* As woman's love.  

*Enter two Players, Duke & Duchess*

*Gonzago* Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round  
 Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,  
 And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen  
 About the world have times twelve thirties been,  
 Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands  
 Unite commutual in most sacred bands.  
*Duchess* So many journeys may the sun and moon  
 Make us again count o'er ere love be done.  
 But woe is me, you are so sick of late,  
 So far from cheer and from your former state,

That I distrust you. Yet though I distrust,  
Discomfort you my Lord, it nothing must.

*Gonzago* 'Faith, I must leave thee love, and shortly too,  
My operant powers their functions leave to do:  
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,  
Honour'd, belov'd: and haply one as kind  
For husband shalt thou –

*Duchess* Oh confound the rest!  
Such love must needs be treason in my breast.  
In second husband let me be accurst.  
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.

*Hamlet* [*Aside to Ophelia*] That's wormwood.

*Duchess* The instances that second marriage move  
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love.  
A second time I kill my husband dead,  
When second husband kisses me in bed.

*Gonzago* I do believe you think what now you speak,  
But what we do determine oft we break.  
What to ourselves in passion we propose,  
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.  
This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange  
That even our loves should with our fortunes change:  
But, orderly to end where I begun,  
Our wills and fates do so contrary run  
That our devices still are overthrown,  
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own.  
So think thou wilt no second husband wed,  
But die thy thoughts when thy first Lord is dead.

*Duchess* Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light,  
Sport and repose lock from me day and night.  
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,  
If once a widow, ever I be wife.

*Hamlet* If she should break it now!

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

*Duchess* Sleep rock thy brain,  
And never come mischance between us twain.

*Exit*

*Hamlet* Madam how like you this play?

*Gertrude* The Lady doth protest too much, methinks.

*Hamlet* O, but she'll keep her word.

- Claudius*           What do you call the play?
- Hamlet*             The Mousetrap. The 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 gall'd jade wince, our withers are unwrung.
- Enter Lucianus*
- This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.
- Ophelia*            You are as good as a chorus my Lord.
- Hamlet*             I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.
- Ophelia*            You are keen my Lord, you are keen.
- Hamlet*             It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.
- Ophelia*            Still better, and worse.
- Hamlet*             So you mis-take your husbands. Begin, murderer, pox, leave thy damnable faces and begin. Come, the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.
- Lucianus*           Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing,  
Confederate season, else no creature seeing,  
Thou mixture rank of midnight weeds collected,  
With Hecate's ban, thrice blasted, thrice infected,  
Thy natural magic and dire property  
On wholesome life usurp immediately.
- Pours the poison into the sleeper's ear*
- Hamlet*             He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and writ 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?
- Gertrude*           How fares my Lord?
- Polonius*           Give o'er the play.
- Claudius*           Give me some light. Away.
- All*                 Lights, lights, lights!
- Exeunt all but Hamlet and Horatio*
- Hamlet*             Why, let the stricken deer go weep,  
The hart ungalled play,  
For some must watch, while some must sleep:  
So runs the world away.  
Would not this, sir – if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me –  
get me a fellowship in a cry of players?

*Horatio* Half a share.

*Hamlet* A whole one, I. Oh good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

*Horatio* Very well, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Upon the talk of the poisoning?

*Horatio* I did very well note him.

*Re-enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

*Hamlet* Ah, ha! Come, some music. Come, the recorders,  
For if the king like not the comedy,  
Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy.  
Come, some music.

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

*Hamlet* Sir, a whole history.

*Guildenstern* The king sir –

*Hamlet* Ay sir, what of him?

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

*Hamlet* With drink sir?

*Guildenstern* No my Lord, with choler.

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

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

*Hamlet* I am tame sir: pronounce.

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

*Hamlet* You are welcome.

*Guildenstern* 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.

*Guildenstern* What my Lord?

*Hamlet* Make you a wholesome answer: my wit's diseas'd. But sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command: or rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more but to the matter. My mother, you say?

*Rosencrantz* Then thus she says: your behaviour hath struck her into

amazement and admiration.

- Hamlet* Oh wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother. But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration?
- Rosencrantz* 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?
- Rosencrantz* My Lord you once did love me.
- Hamlet* So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.
- Rosencrantz* 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.
- Rosencrantz* How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?
- Hamlet* Ay, but 'while the grass grows' – the proverb is something musty.  
*Enter two Players with recorders*
- O, the recorders. Let me see one. *[To Guildenstern]* To withdraw with you – why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?
- Guildenstern* 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?
- Guildenstern* My Lord I cannot.
- Hamlet* I pray you.
- Guildenstern* Believe me, I cannot.
- Hamlet* I do beseech you.
- Guildenstern* I know no touch of it my Lord.
- Hamlet* 'Tis 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.
- Guildenstern* 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 play'd on than a pipe?

*Enter Polonius*

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 the mass, and 'tis like a camel indeed.

*Hamlet* Methinks it is like a weasel.

*Polonius* It is back'd like a weasel.

*Hamlet* Or like a whale?

*Polonius* Very like a whale.

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

*Polonius* I will say so.

*Hamlet* By and by is easily said.

*Exit Polonius*

Leave me friends.

*Exeunt all but Hamlet*

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

## Part Two

### Scene 10 (Act3 Sc3)

A Room in the Castle

*Enter severally Claudius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern*

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

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

*Rosencrantz* The single and peculiar life is bound,  
With all the strength and armour of the mind,  
To keep itself from noyance: but much more,  
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest  
The lives of many. The cease of majesty  
Dies not alone, but like a gulf doth draw  
What's near it with it. Never alone  
Did the King sigh, but with a general groan.

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

*Rosencrantz* We will haste us.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

*Enter Polonius*

*Polonius* My Lord he's going to his mother's closet.  
Behind the arras I'll convey myself  
To hear the process. I'll warrant she'll tax him home.  
Fare you well my liege: I'll call upon you  
Ere you go to bed, and tell you what I know.

*Claudius* Thanks dear my Lord.

*Exit Polonius*

O my offence is rank, it smells to heaven,  
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,  
A brother's murder. Pray can I not,  
Though inclination be as sharp as will:  
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,  
And like a man to double business bound

I stand in pause where I shall first begin  
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand  
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,  
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens  
 To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy  
 But to confront the visage of offence?  
 And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,  
 To be forestalled ere we come to fall,  
 Or pardon'd being down? Then I'll look up:  
 My fault is past. But oh, what form of prayer  
 Can serve my turn? 'Forgive me my foul murder'?  
 That cannot be, since I am still possess'd  
 Of those effects for which I did the murder:  
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my Queen.  
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence?  
 In the corrupted currents of this world  
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,  
 But 'tis not so above,  
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies  
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd,  
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,  
 To give in evidence. What then? What rests?  
 Try what repentance can. What can it not?  
 Yet what can it when one cannot repent?  
 O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!  
 O limed soul, that struggling to be free,  
 Art more engag'd. Help Angels, make assay.  
 Bow stubborn knees, and heart with strings of steel  
 Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe.  
 All may be well.

*He kneels  
 Enter Hamlet*

*Hamlet*

Now might I do it, pat, now he is a-praying,  
 And now I'll do't, and so he goes to Heaven,  
 And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd:  
 A villain kills my father, and for that,  
 I his sole son do this same villain send  
 To Heaven? Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.  
 He took my father grossly, full of bread,  
 With all his crimes broad blown, as fresh as May.  
 Am I then reveng'd,  
 To take my uncle in the purging of his soul,  
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage? No.  
 Up sword, and know thou a more horrid hent,  
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
 Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed,  
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act

That has no relish of salvation in't.  
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at Heaven,  
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black  
 As Hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:  
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

*Exit*

*Claudius* My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:  
 Words without thoughts never to Heaven go.

*Exit*

## Scene 11 (Act3 Sc4/Act4 Sc1)

The Queen's Closet  
*Enter Gertrude and Polonius*

*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 screen'd and stood between  
 Much heat and him. I'll silence me even here.  
 Pray you, be round with him.

*Hamlet* [*Within*] Mother, mother, mother!

*Gertrude* I'll warrant you, fear me not.  
 Withdraw, I hear him coming.

*Enter Hamlet*

*Hamlet* Now, mother, what's the matter?

*Gertrude* Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

*Hamlet* Mother, you have my father much offended.

*Gertrude* Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

*Hamlet* Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

*Gertrude* Why, how now Hamlet!

*Hamlet* What's the matter now?

*Gertrude* Have you forgot me?

*Hamlet* No, by the rood, not so:  
 You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife,  
 And - would it were not so - you are my mother.

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

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

*Gertrude* What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?  
 Help, help, ho!

*Polonius*           What hoa, help, help!

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

*Polonius*           O I am slain.

*Gertrude*           O me, what hast thou done?

*Hamlet*             Nay I know not: is it the King?

*Lifts up the arras and discovers Polonius*

*Gertrude*           O what a rash and bloody deed is this?

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

*Gertrude*           As kill a king?

*Hamlet*             Ay lady, 'twas my word.

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool! Farewell,  
I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune,  
Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.  
Leave wringing of your hands: peace, sit you down  
And let me wring your heart, for so I shall  
If it be made of penetrable stuff,  
If damned custom have not braz'd it so  
That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

*Gertrude*           What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue  
In noise so rude against me?

*Hamlet*             Such an act  
That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,  
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose  
From the fair forehead of an innocent love  
And sets a blister there. Makes marriage-vows  
As false as dicers' oaths. Oh, such an act  
As from the body of contraction plucks  
The very soul, and sweet religion makes  
A rhapsody of words.

*Gertrude*           Ay me, what act,  
That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

*Hamlet*             Look here upon this picture - my father.  
See what a grace was seated on his brow,  
Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,  
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,  
A combination and a form indeed,  
Where every god did seem to set his seal  
To give the world assurance of a man.  
This was your husband. Look you now, what follows:  
Here is your husband, like a mildew'd ear

Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?  
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,  
 And batten on this moor? Ha? Have you eyes?  
 You cannot call it love, for at your age  
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,  
 And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment  
 Would step from this to this?  
 O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,  
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,  
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,  
 And melt in her own fire.

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

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

*Gertrude* O speak to me no more,  
 These words like daggers enter in mine ears.  
 No more sweet Hamlet.

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

*Gertrude* No more.

*Hamlet* A king of shreds and patches -

*Enter the Ghost*

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,  
 You heavenly guards. What would your gracious figure?

*Gertrude* Alas, he's mad.

*Hamlet* Do you not come your tardy son to chide,  
 That laps'd in time and passion lets go by  
 The important acting of your dread command? Oh, say.

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

*Hamlet* How is it with you Lady?

*Gertrude* Alas, how is't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy  
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?  
O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

*Hamlet* On him, on him: look you, how pale he glares.  
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones  
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me,  
Lest with this piteous action you convert  
My stern effects: then what I have to do  
Will want true colour, tears perchance for blood.

*Gertrude* To whom do you speak this?

*Hamlet* Do you see nothing there?

*Gertrude* Nothing at all, yet all that is I see.

*Hamlet* Nor did you nothing hear?

*Gertrude* No, nothing but ourselves.

*Hamlet* Why, look you there, look, how it steals away,  
My father, in his habit as he liv'd.  
Look where he goes even now out at the portal.

*Exit Ghost*

*Gertrude* This is the very coinage of your brain:  
This bodiless creation ecstasy is very cunning in.

*Hamlet* Ecstasy?  
My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time  
And makes as healthful music: for love of grace,  
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul  
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,  
Whilst rank corruption mining all within  
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to Heaven,  
Repent what's past, avoid what is to come,  
And do not spread the compost on the weeds  
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue,  
For in the fatness of these pursy times  
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,  
Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good.

*Gertrude* O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

*Hamlet* O throw away the worser part of it  
And live the purer with the other half.  
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed.  
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.  
Refrain tonight,

And that shall lend a kind of easiness  
 To the next abstinence. Once more, good night:  
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd,  
 I'll blessing beg of you. For this same Lord  
 I do repent: but heaven hath pleas'd it so,  
 To punish me with this, and this with me,  
 That I must be their scourge and minister.  
 I will bestow him, and will answer well  
 The death I gave him. So again, good night.  
 I must be cruel, only to be kind:  
 Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.  
 One word more, good lady.

*Gertrude*

What shall I do?

*Hamlet*

Not this by no means that I bid you do:  
 Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed,  
 Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse,  
 And let him for a pair of reechy kisses,  
 Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,  
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,  
 That I essentially am not in madness,  
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know,  
 For who, that's but a Queen, fair, sober, wise,  
 Would from a toad, a tomcat or a bat,  
 Such dear concernings hide? Who would do so?

*Gertrude*

Be thou assur'd, 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 England, you know that?

*Gertrude*

Alack I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

*Hamlet*

This man shall set me packing.  
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.  
 Mother, good night. Indeed this counsellor  
 Is now most still, most secret and most grave,  
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.  
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.  
 Good night, mother.

*Exit Hamlet, dragging off Polonius*

*Enter Claudius, with Rosencrantz & Guildenstern*

*Claudius*

There's matter in these sighs. What says our son?

*Gertrude*

Ah, my good Lord, what have I seen tonight?

*Claudius*

What Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

*Gertrude*

Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend  
 Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,

Behind the arras, hearing something stir,  
Whips out his dagger, cries 'a rat, a rat'  
And in this brainish apprehension kills  
The unseen good old man.

*Claudius* O heavy deed.  
It had been so with us, had we been there.  
His liberty is full of threats to all,  
To you yourself, to us, to every one.  
Where is he gone?

*Gertrude* To draw apart the body he hath kill'd,  
O'er whom his very madness like some ore  
Among a mineral of metals base  
Shows itself pure. He weeps for what is done.

*Claudius* The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,  
But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed  
We must with all our majesty and skill  
Both countenance and excuse. Friends both,  
Go seek him out, speak fair, and bear the body  
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

O Gertrude, Gertrude,  
My soul is full of discord and dismay.

## Scene 12 (Act 4 Sc2)

Elsewhere in the castle  
*Enter Hamlet*

*Hamlet* Safely stow'd.

*Ros & Guild* [Within] Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

*Hamlet* Oh here they come.

*Enter Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

*Rosencrantz* What have you done, my Lord, with the dead body?

*Hamlet* Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

*Rosencrantz* Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it thence  
And bear it to the chapel.

*Hamlet* Do not believe it.

*Rosencrantz* Believe what?

*Hamlet* That I can keep your counsel, and not mine own. Besides, to be  
demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the  
son of a king?

*Rosencrantz* Take you me for a sponge, my Lord?

*Hamlet* Ay, sir, that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king best service in the end: when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you, and sponge you shall be dry again.

*Rosencrantz* I understand you not my Lord.

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

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

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

*Guildestern* A thing, my Lord?

*Hamlet* Of nothing. Bring me to him: hide fox, and all after.

*Exeunt*

### **Scene 13** (Act4 Sc3)

*Claudius and Gertude, as before. Enter Lord*

*Claudius* I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.  
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!  
Yet must not we put the strong law on him.  
He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,  
Who like not in their judgement but their eyes.

*Enter Rosencrantz*

How now? What hath befall'n?

*Rosencrantz* Where the dead body is bestow'd my Lord,  
We cannot get from him.

*Claudius* But where is he?

*Rosencrantz* Without my Lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

*Claudius* Bring him before us.

*Rosencrantz* Hoa, Guildestern? Bring in my Lord.

*Enter Hamlet and Guildestern*

*Claudius* Now Hamlet, where's Polonius?

*Hamlet* At supper.

*Claudius* At supper? Where?

*Hamlet* Not where he eats, but where he 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.

*Claudius*

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.

*Claudius*

What dost you mean by this?

*Hamlet*

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

*Claudius*

Where is Polonius?

*Hamlet*

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

*Claudius*

*[To some Attendants]* Go seek him there.

*Hamlet*

He will stay till you come.

*Exit Lord*

*Claudius*

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

*Hamlet*

For England?

*Claudius*

Ay, Hamlet.

*Hamlet*

Good.

*Claudius*

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

*Hamlet*

I see a cherub that sees them. But, come, for England. Farewell, dear mother.

*Claudius*

Thy loving father Hamlet.

*Hamlet*

My mother: father and mother is man and wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so my mother. Come, for England.

*Exit Hamlet & Gertrude, severally*

*Claudius*

Follow him at foot, tempt him with speed aboard:  
Delay it not, I'll have him hence tonight.  
Away, for every thing is seal'd and done  
That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.

*Exeunt Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*

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

Thou mayst not coldly set at odds  
 Our sovereign process, which imports at full,  
 By letters congruing to that effect,  
 The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England,  
 For like the hectic in my blood he rages,  
 And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,  
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

*Exit*

## Scene 14 (Act4 Sc4)

A plain in Denmark

*Enter Fortinbras and a Captain*

*Fortinbras* Go Captain, from me greet the Danish King,  
 Tell him that by his licence, Fortinbras  
 Craves the conveyance of a promis'd march  
 Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.  
 If that his majesty would aught with us,  
 We shall express our duty in his eye  
 And let him know so.

*Captain* I will do't, my lord.

*Fortinbras* Go softly on.

*Exeunt*

## Scene 15 (Act4 Sc5)

Elsinore. A room in the castle

*Enter Gertrude and a Gentlewoman*

*Gertrude* I will not speak with her.

*G'woman* She is importunate, indeed distract:  
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

*Gertrude* What would she have?

*G'woman* She speaks much of her father, says she hears  
 There's tricks i' the world, and hems, and beats her heart,  
 Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt,  
 That carry but half sense.  
 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew  
 dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

*Gertrude* Let her come in.

*Exit Gentlewoman*

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,  
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss.

*Re-enter Gentlewoman, with Ophelia*

*Ophelia*           Where is the beautiful majesty of Denmark?

*Gertrude*           How now, Ophelia?

*Ophelia*           *[Sings]* How should I your true love know  
From another one?  
By his cockle hat and staff,  
And his sandal shoon.

*Gertrude*           Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

*Ophelia*           Say you? Nay, pray you, mark.  
He is dead and gone, lady,  
He is dead and gone,  
At his head a grass-green turf,  
At his heels a stone.

*Enter Claudius*

*Gertrude*           Nay but Ophelia -

*Ophelia*           Pray you, mark.  
White his shroud as the mountain snow -

*Gertrude*           Alas, look here my Lord.

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

*Claudius*           How do you, pretty lady?

*Ophelia*           Well, God 'ild you. They say the owl was a baker's daughter.  
Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God  
be at your table.

*Claudius*           Conceit upon her father.

*Ophelia*           Pray you, let's have no words of this, but when they ask you what  
it means, say you this:  
*Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day,  
All in the morning betime,  
And I a maid at your window,  
To be your Valentine.  
Then up he rose, and donn'd his clothes,  
And dupp'd the chamber-door,  
Let in the maid, that out a maid  
Never departed more.*

*Claudius*           Pretty Ophelia!

*Ophelia*           Indeed I? without an oath I'll make an end on't:  
By Gis and by Saint Charity,  
Alack, and fie for shame:  
Young men will do't, if they come to't,

*By cock, they are to blame.  
 Quoth she, before you tumbld me,  
 You promis'd me to wed:  
 So would I ha' done by yonder sun,  
 An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

*Claudius* 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 should lay him i' the 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*

*Claudius* Follow her close, give her good watch, I pray you.

*Exit Gentlewoman*

O this is the poison of deep grief, it springs  
 All from her father's death. Oh Gertrude, Gertrude,  
 When sorrows come they come not single spies  
 But in battalions. First her father slain,  
 Next your son gone, and he most violent author  
 Of his own just remove: the people muddied,  
 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers  
 For good Polonius' death: and we have done but greenly  
 In hugger-mugger to inter him. Poor Ophelia  
 Divided from herself and her fair judgment,  
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts:  
 Last, and as much containing as all these -

*Laertes* *[Off]* Where is this king?

*Gertrude* Alack, what noise is this?

*Enter Reynaldo*

*Reynaldo* Save yourself, my Lord.

*Claudius* What is the matter? Where are my Switzers?

*Enter Laertes*

*Laertes* O thou vile king, give me my father!

*Gertrude* Calmly, good Laertes.

*Laertes* That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me bastard,  
 Cries cuckold to my father, brands the harlot  
 Even here, between the chaste unsmirched brow  
 Of my true mother.

*Claudius* Let him go, Gertrude. Do not fear our person.  
 There's such divinity doth wall a king  
 That treason dares not look on. Tell me Laertes,  
 Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude!

Speak man.

*Laertes* Where is my father?

*Claudius* Dead.

*Gertrude* But not by him.

*Claudius* Let him demand his fill.

*Laertes* How came he dead? I'll not be juggl'd with.  
To hell, allegiance: conscience and grace  
To the profoundest pit: I dare damnation.  
To this point I stand, that both the worlds  
I give to negligence, let come what comes,  
Only I'll be reveng'd most throughly for my father.

*Claudius* Good Laertes,  
If you desire to know the certainty  
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,  
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,  
Winner and loser?

*Laertes* None but his enemies.

*Claudius* Will you know them then?

*Laertes* To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,  
And like the kind life-rendering pelican  
Repast them with my blood.

*Claudius* Why, now you speak  
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.  
That I am guiltless of your father's death,  
And am most sensibly in grief for it,  
It shall as level to your judgment 'pear  
As day does to your eye.

*Ophelia* [*Within*] Let her come in!

*Laertes* How now?

*Re-enter Ophelia*

O heat, dry up my brains, tears seven times salt,  
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye.  
By Heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight  
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May,  
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia.  
Oh Heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits  
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

*Ophelia* *They bore him barefac'd on the bier,  
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny,  
And on his grave rain'd many a tear:  
Fare you well, my dove, my boy.*

- Laertes* Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge, it could not move thus.
- Ophelia* You must sing a-down a-down, and you call him a-down-a. Oh, how the wheel becomes it? It is the false steward that stole his master's daughter. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance. Pray, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's for thoughts. There's fennel for you, and columbines: there's rue for you, and here's some for me. We may call it herb-a-grace a Sundays. Oh you must wear your rue with a difference. There's a daisy. I would give you some violets, but they wither'd all when my father died. They say a made a good end.  
*For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.*
- Laertes* Thought and affliction, passion, Hell itself  
She turns to favour and to prettiness.
- Ophelia* *And will he not come again?*  
*And will he not come again?*  
*No, no, he is dead, go to thy death-bed,*  
*He never will come again.*  
*His beard was as white as snow,*  
*All flaxen was his poll:*  
*He is gone, he is gone, and we cast away moan:*  
*God a' mercy on his soul.*  
And on all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye.
- Exit, followed by Gertrude*
- Laertes* Do you see this, oh God?
- Claudius* Laertes, I must commune with your grief,  
Or you deny me right. If by direct  
Or by collat'ral hand you find us touch'd  
In this, we will our kingdom give,  
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,  
To you in satisfaction. But if not,  
Be you content to lend your patience to us,  
And we shall jointly labour with your soul  
To give it due content.
- Laertes* Let this be so.  
His means of death, his obscure funeral -  
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,  
No noble rite nor formal ostentation -  
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from Heaven to earth,  
That I must call't in question.
- Claudius* So you shall. Attend, I pray you.

*They sit*  
*Exit Reynaldo*

**Scene 16** (Act4 Sc6)*Horatio with a letter*

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

*Exit***Scene 17** (Act4 Sc7)*Claudius and Laertes*

*Claudius* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,  
Since you have heard, and with a knowing ear,  
That he which hath your noble father slain  
Pursu'd my life. For the which is he sent  
Into England, never to return.

*Laertes* It well appears. But why could you not proceed  
Against these feats, so crimeful and so capital  
In nature and condemn him here?

*Claudius* O for two special reasons,  
Which may to you seem much unsinew'd,  
But yet to me they're strong. The Queen his mother  
Lives almost by his looks, and for myself -  
My virtue or my plague, be it either which -  
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,  
I could not but by her. The other motive,  
Why to a public count I might not go,  
Is the great love the general gender bear him.  
Who dipping all his faults in their affection -

*Enter Lord*

How now! what news?

*Lord* Letters, my Lord, from Hamlet:  
This to your majesty, this to the Queen.

*Claudius* From Hamlet? Who brought them?

*Lord* Sailors my Lord, they say, I saw them not.

*Claudius*      *[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. [To Reynaldo]* What should this mean? Are all the rest come back? Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

*Lord*            I am lost in it, my Lord.

*Exit Lord*

*Laertes*    Let him come,  
                  It warms the very sickness in my heart,  
                  That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,  
                  ‘Thus did’st thou.’

*Claudius*    If it be so Laertes, as how should it be so,  
                  How otherwise, will you be rul’d by me?

*Laertes*      Ay, my Lord,  
                  So you will not o’errule me to a peace.

*Claudius*    To thine own peace. If he be now return’d,  
                  As this letter gives us proof, I will work him  
                  To an exploit, ripening in my device,  
                  Under the which he cannot choose but fall.  
                  And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,  
                  But even his mother shall uncharge the practice  
                  And call it accident. Some months since,  
                  Here was a gentleman of Normandy  
                  That gave you such a masterly report  
                  For art and exercise in your defence,  
                  And for your rapier most especial,  
                  That he cried out ‘twould be a sight indeed  
                  If one could match you. Now, out of this -

*Laertes*      What out of this, my Lord?

*Claudius*    Laertes, was your father dear to you?  
                  Or are you like the painting of a sorrow.  
                  A face without a heart?

*Laertes*      Why ask you this?

*Claudius*    Hamlet comes back. What would you undertake  
                  To show yourself your father’s son in deed  
                  More than in words?

*Laertes*      To cut his throat I’th’church.

*Claudius*    No place indeed should murder sanctuarize:  
                  Revenge should have no bounds. But good Laertes,  
                  Will you do this? Keep close within your chamber.  
                  Hamlet return’d, shall know you are come home:  
                  We’ll put on those shall praise your excellence

And set a double varnish on the fame  
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together  
 And wager on your heads. He being remiss,  
 Most generous and free from all contriving,  
 Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease,  
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose  
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice  
 Requite him for your father.

*Laertes* I will do't. And lest this should fail, my lord,  
 I'll touch my point with some contagion  
 That if I gall him slightly it may be death.

*Claudius* We'll further think on't. If our drift shine through  
 Our bad performance, 'twere better not assay'd.

*Enter Gertrude*

How now, sweet Queen?

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

*Laertes* Drown'd?

*Gertrude* There is a willow grows aslant a brook,  
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.  
 There with fantastic garlands did she come  
 Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples  
 That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,  
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.  
 There on the pendent boughs, her coronet weeds  
 Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,  
 When down her weedy trophies and herself  
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,  
 And mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up,  
 Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,  
 As one incapable of her own distress:  
 But long it could not be  
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,  
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay  
 To muddy death.

*Laertes* Alas then, is she drown'd?

*Gertrude* Drown'd, drown'd.

*Laertes* Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,  
 And therefore I forbid my tears: but yet  
 It is our trick, nature her custom holds,  
 Let shame say what it will. When these are gone  
 The woman will be out. Adieu, my Lord,  
 I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,  
 But that this folly drowns it.

*Exit*

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

*Exeunt*

## Scene 18 (Act5 Sc1)

Night. A Sexton digging a grave  
*Enter Hamlet & Horatio*

*Sexton* *[Singing]* In youth, when I did love, did love,  
Methought it was very sweet,  
To contract, O the time for, ah, my behove,  
O methought there was nothing meet.

*Hamlet* Has this creature no feeling of her business, that he sings at grave-making?

*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.

*Sexton* *But age, with his stealing steps,  
Hath caught me in his clutch,  
And hath shipped me into the land,  
As if I had never been such.*

*Throws up a skull*

*Hamlet* That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the jade jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder. It might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-reaches, one that would circumvent God, might it not?

*Horatio* It might, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morrow, sweet Lord, how dost thou, good Lord?' This might be my Lord such-a-one, that prais'd my Lord such-a-one's horse when he meant to beg it, might it not?

*Horatio* Ay, my Lord.

*Hamlet* Why, e'en so. And now he's my Lady Worm's, chopless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't.

*Sexton* *A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,  
For and a shrouding sheet:  
O a pit of clay for to be made  
For such a guest is meet.*

*Throws up another skull*

- Hamlet*           Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? Why does he suffer this rude wanton to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum. Whose grave's this, Sexton?
- Sexton*            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.
- Sexton*            You lie out on't, sir, and therefore 'tis not yours. For my part, I do not lie in't, and 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.
- Sexton*            'Tis a quick lie sir, 'twill away again from me to you.
- Hamlet*            What man dost thou dig it for?
- Sexton*            For no man sir.
- Hamlet*            What woman, then?
- Sexton*            For none neither.
- Hamlet*            Who is to be buried in't?
- Sexton*            One that was a woman, sir: but rest her soul, she's dead.
- Hamlet*            How absolute the jade is. We must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. How long hast thou been a grave-maker?
- Sexton*            Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet o'ercame Old Fortinbras.
- Hamlet*            How long is that since?
- Sexton*            Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born, he that is mad and sent into England.
- Hamlet*            Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?
- Sexton*            Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there: or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.
- Hamlet*            Why?
- Sexton*            'Twill not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.
- Hamlet*            How came he mad?
- Sexton*            Very strangely, they say.
- Hamlet*            How strangely?

- Sexton* Faith, e'en with losing his wits.
- Hamlet* Upon what ground?
- Sexton* Why, here in Denmark. I have bin sexton here, man and boy, twenty years.
- Hamlet* How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?
- Sexton* I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die - as we have many pocky corses nowadays that will scarce hold the laying in - he will last you some eight year, or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.
- Hamlet* Why he more than another?
- Sexton* Why sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade that he will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now hath lain you in the earth a dozen year.
- Hamlet* Whose was it?
- Sexton* A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?
- Hamlet* Nay, I know not.
- Sexton* A pestilence on him for a mad rogue, a' pour'd a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.
- Hamlet* This?
- Sexton* E'en that.
- Hamlet* Let me see. Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio, a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times: and now how abhorred in my imagination it is, my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your jibes 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 favour she must come. Make her laugh at that. [*To Horatio*] Dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' the 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 he find it stopping a bunghole?
- Horatio* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

*Hamlet* No faith, not a jot. Alexander died, Alexander was buried,  
Alexander returneth into dust, the dust is earth, of earth we make  
loam, and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might  
they not stop a beer-barrel?  
*Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,*  
*Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.*  
But soft, but soft, aside: here comes the King,

*Enter Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes with Priest and Monks and others in procession  
with the body of Ophelia*

The Queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow,  
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken  
The corse they follow did with desperate hand  
Fordo its own life. 'Twas of some estate.  
Couch we awhile, and mark.

*Laertes* What ceremony else?

*Hamlet* That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark.

*Laertes* What ceremony else?

*Priest* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd  
As we have warranty. Her death was doubtful,  
And but that great command o'ersways the order,  
She should in ground unsanctified been lodg'd  
Till the last trumpet. For charitable prayer,  
Shards, flints and pebbles should be thrown on her:  
Yet here she is allow'd her virgin rights,  
Her maiden strewment, and the bringing home  
Of bell and burial.

*Laertes* Must there no more be done?

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

*Laertes* Lay her i' the earth:  
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh  
May violets spring. I tell thee, churlish priest,  
A ministering angel shall my sister be  
When thou liest howling.

*Hamlet* What, the fair Ophelia?

*Gertrude* [*Scattering flowers*] Sweets to the sweet, farewell.  
I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife.  
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,  
And not have strew'd thy grave.

*Laertes* O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head  
 Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense  
 Depriv'd thee of. Hold off awhile,  
 Till I have caught her once more in mine arms.  
 Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,  
 Till of this flat a mountain you have made,  
 To o'ertop old Pelion, or the skyish head  
 Of blue Olympus.

- Hamlet*      What is he, whose grief  
 Bears such an emphasis, whose phrase of sorrow  
 Conjures the wandering stars and makes them stand  
 Like wonder-wounded hearers? This is I,  
 Hamlet the Dane.
- Laertes*      The devil take thy soul.
- Hamlet*      Thou pray'st not well.  
 I prithee take thy fingers from my throat –
- Claudius*      Pluck them asunder.
- Hamlet*      For though I am not splenitive and rash,  
 Yet have I something in me dangerous,  
 Which let thy wisdom fear.
- Gertrude*      Hamlet, Hamlet.
- G'tlewoman*    Good my Lord, be quiet.
- Hamlet*      Why, I will fight with him upon this theme  
 Until my eyelids will no longer wag.
- Gertrude*      O my son, what theme?
- Hamlet*      I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers  
 Could not, with all their quantity of love,  
 Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?
- Claudius*      Oh he is mad, Laertes.
- Gertrude*      For love of God, forbear him.
- Hamlet*      'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do.  
 Woo't weep? Woo't fight? Woo't fast? Woo't tear thyself?  
 Woo't drink up eisel, eat a crocodile?  
 I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine,  
 To outface me with leaping in her grave?  
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I.  
 And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw  
 Millions of acres on us, till our ground,  
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,  
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,  
 I'll rant as well as thou.

*Gertrude* This is mere madness:  
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him.  
 Anon, as patient as the female dove  
 When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,  
 His silence will sit drooping.

*Hamlet* Hear you sir,  
 What is the reason that you use me thus?  
 I lov'd you ever. But it is no matter,  
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,  
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

*Exit*

*Claudius* *[To Laertes]*  
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech,  
 We'll put the matter to the present push.  
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.  
*[To the bearers]* Come, sirs.

*Exeunt*

## Scene 19 (Act5 Sc2)

A Hall in the Castle  
*Enter Hamlet and Horatio*

*Hamlet* Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,  
 That would not let me sleep. Rashly,  
 And prais'd be rashness for it - let us know  
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,  
 When our deep plots do pall, and that should teach us  
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends,  
 Rough-hew them how we will -

*Horatio* That is most certain.

*Hamlet* Up from my cabin,  
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark  
 Grop'd I to find out them, had my desire,  
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew  
 To mine own room again, making so bold,  
 My fears forgetting manners, to unseal  
 Their grand commission, where I found, Horatio -  
 O royal knavery - an exact command,  
 Importing Denmark's health and England's too,  
 That on the supervise, no leisure bated,  
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,  
 My head should be struck off.

*Horatio* Is't possible?

*Hamlet* Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed?

*Horatio* I beseech you.

*Hamlet* I sat me down, devis'd a new commission.  
Wilt thou know the effect of what I wrote?

*Horatio* Ay, good my Lord.

*Hamlet* An earnest conjuration from the king,  
As England was his faithful tributary,  
As love between them like the palm might flourish,  
And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,  
That on the view and knowing of these contents,  
He should the bearers put to sudden death,  
Not shriving-time allow'd. Now, the next day  
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent  
Thou know'st already.

*Horatio* So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

*Hamlet* Why, man, they did make love to this employment.  
They are not near my conscience. Their defeat  
Doth by their own insinuation grow.  
'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes  
Between the pass and fell incensed points  
Of mighty opposites.

*Horatio* Why, what a king is this?

*Hamlet* Does it not, think'st thee, stand me now upon -  
He that hath kill'd my king and whor'd my mother,  
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes,  
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,  
And with such cozenage - is't not perfect conscience  
To quit him with this arm? And is't not to be damn'd  
To let this canker of our nature come  
In further evil?

*Horatio* It must be shortly known to him from England  
What is the issue of the business there.

*Hamlet* It will be short: the interim's mine,  
And a man's life's no more than to say 'One.'  
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,  
That to Laertes I forgot myself,  
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me  
Into a towering passion.

*Horatio* Peace, who comes here?

*Enter Osric*

*Osric* Your Lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

- Hamlet* I humbly thank you sir. Dost know this water-fly?
- Horatio* No, my good Lord.
- Hamlet* Thy state is the more gracious, 'tis a vice to know him.
- 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. Put 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 how. But, my Lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head -
- Hamlet* I beseech you, remember -
- Osric* Nay good my Lord, for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.
- Hamlet* What's his weapon?
- Osric* Rapier and dagger.
- Hamlet* That's two of his weapons: but, well.
- Osric* The King sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses, against the which he has impon'd, 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?
- Osric* The carriages sir, are the hangers.
- Hamlet* The phrase would be more germane 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 'impon'd,' 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: 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, 'tis 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 an I can. If not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

*Osric* Shall I redeliver you e'en so?

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

*Osric* I commend my duty to your Lordship.

*Hamlet* Yours, yours.

*Exit Osric*

*Horatio* You will lose this wager, my Lord.

*Hamlet* I do not think so. I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

*Horatio* Nay, good my Lord -

*Hamlet* It is but foolery: it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

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

*Hamlet* Not a whit, we defy augury. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come: if it be not to come, it will be now: if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

*Enter Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes, Reynaldo, and others with foils etc*

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

*Claudius puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's*

*Hamlet* Give me your pardon, sir: I have done you wrong.  
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.  
This presence knows,  
And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd  
With a sore distraction. What I have done,  
That might your nature, honour and exception  
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.  
Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never Hamlet.  
If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,  
And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,  
Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.  
Who does it, then? His madness. If't be so,  
Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd,  
His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.  
Sir, in this audience,  
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil

Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,  
That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house  
And hurt my brother.

*Laertes* I am satisfied in nature,  
Whose motive in this case should stir me most  
To my revenge. But in my terms of honour  
I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation  
Till by some elder masters of known honour,  
I have a voice and precedent of peace  
To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,  
I do receive your offer'd love like love,  
And will not wrong it.

*Hamlet* I do embrace it freely,  
And will this brother's wager frankly play.  
Give us the foils. Come on.

*Laertes* Come, one for me.

*Hamlet* I'll be your foil, Laertes. In mine ignorance  
Your skill shall like a star i' the darkest night,  
Stick fiery off indeed.

*Laertes* You mock me sir.

*Hamlet* No, by this hand.

*Claudius* Cousin Hamlet, you know the wager?

*Hamlet* Very well, my Lord.  
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

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

*Hamlet* This likes me well. These foils have all a length?

*Reynaldo* Ay, my good Lord.

*Claudius* If Hamlet give the first or second hit,  
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,  
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath,  
And in the cup an union shall he throw  
Richer than that which four successive kings  
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cup:  
Now the king drinks to Hamlet. Come, begin:  
And you the judges bear a wary eye.

*Hamlet* Come on, sir.

*Laertes* Come, my Lord.

*Hamlet* One.

*Laertes* No.

*They play*

*Hamlet* Judgment.  
*Osrice* A hit.  
*Lord* A very palpable hit.  
*Laertes* Well, again.

*They play*

*Hamlet* Another hit, what say you?  
*Laertes* A touch, a touch, I do confess.  
*Claudius* Our son shall win.

*They play, then Claudius halts it*

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

*Hamlet* I'll play this bout first, set it by awhile.  
*Gertrude* Here Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows.  
 The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

*Hamlet* Good madam.  
*Claudius* Gertrude, do not drink.  
*Gertrude* I will, my Lord, I pray you, pardon me.  
*Claudius* *[Aside]* The cup is poison'd: it is too late.  
*Hamlet* I dare not drink yet madam, by and by.  
*Gertrude* Come, let me wipe thy face.  
*Laertes* My lord, I'll hit him now.  
*Claudius* I do not think it.  
*Laertes* *[Aside]* And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.  
*Hamlet* Come, for the third. Laertes you but dally.  
 I pray you, pass with your best violence.  
 I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

*Laertes takes an unbated foil*

*Laertes* Say you so? Come on.

*Laertes wounds Hamlet, then in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes*

*Claudius* Part them, they are incens'd.  
*Hamlet* Nay, come, again.

*Gertrude falls*

*Osrice* Look to the queen there, ho! How is't, Laertes?  
*Laertes* As a woodcock to mine own springe, Osrice.  
 I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.  
*Hamlet* How does the queen?

- Claudius* She swoonds to see them bleed.
- Gertrude* No, no, the drink, the drink - Oh my dear Hamlet -  
The drink, the drink. I am poison'd.
- Dies*
- Hamlet* O villainy! How? Let the doors be lock'd:  
Treachery, seek it out.
- Laertes* It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain.  
No medicine in the world can do thee good.  
In thee there is not half an hour of life.  
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,  
Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice  
Hath turn'd itself on me. Lo, here I lie,  
I can no more. The King, the King's to blame.
- Hamlet* The point envenom'd too?  
Then, venom, to thy work.
- Stabs Claudius*
- Claudius* O yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.
- Hamlet* Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,  
Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?  
Follow my mother.
- Claudius dies*
- Laertes* He is justly serv'd.  
It is a poison temper'd by himself.  
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:  
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,  
Nor thine on me.
- Dies*
- Hamlet* Heaven make thee free of it, I follow thee.  
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu.  
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,  
That are but mutes or audience to this act,  
Had I but time - as this fell sergeant, death,  
Is strict in his arrest - Oh I could tell you -  
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead,  
Thou livest, report me and my cause aright  
To the unsatisfied.
- Horatio* Never believe it.  
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:  
Here's yet some liquor left.
- Hamlet* As thou'rt a man,  
Give me the cup. Let go - by heaven, I'll have't.  
O good Horatio, what a wounded name,  
Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.  
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart

Absent thee from felicity awhile  
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,  
 To tell my story.

*March afar off. Enter Osric*

What warlike noise is this?

*Osric* Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland  
 To the ambassadors of England gives  
 This warlike volley.

*Hamlet* O I die Horatio:  
 The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit.  
 I cannot live to hear the news from England,  
 So tell them, with the occurrents, more and less,  
 Which have solicited - the rest is silence.

*Dies*

*Horatio* Now cracks a noble heart. Good night sweet prince:  
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.  
 Why does the drum come hither?

*March within  
 Enter Fortinbras*

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

*Horatio* Since you, so jump upon this bloody question,  
 Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies  
 High on a stage be placed to the view,  
 And let me speak to the yet unknowing world  
 How these things came about. So shall you hear  
 Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,  
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,  
 Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,  
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook  
 Fall'n on the inventors' reads. All this can I  
 Truly deliver.

*Fortinbras* Let us haste to hear it,  
 And call the noblest to the audience.  
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:  
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,  
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.  
 Take up the bodies: such a sight as this  
 Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.  
 Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

FIN