

HAMLET

By

William Shakespeare.

Scene Denmark.

Act I Scene I

[*FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO*]

BERNARDO: Who's there?

FRANCISCO: Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

BERNARDO: Long live the king!

FRANCISCO: Bernardo?

BERNARDO: He.

FRANCISCO:

You come most carefully upon your hour.

BERNARDO:

'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO:

For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,

BERNARDO:

Have you had quiet guard?

FRANCISCO:

Not a mouse stirring.

BERNARDO:

Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

FRANCISCO:

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

[*Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS*]

HORATIO:

Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS:

And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO:

Give you good night.

MARCELLUS:

O, farewell, honest soldier:

FRANCISCO:

Give you good night. [*Exit*]

MARCELLUS:

Holla! Bernardo!

BERNARDO:

Say,

What, is Horatio there?

HORATIO:

A piece of him.

BERNARDO:

Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

HORATIO:

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

BERNARDO:

I have seen nothing.

MARCELLUS:

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

HORATIO:

Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

BERNARDO:

Sit down awhile;
And 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 us hear Bernardo speak of this.

BERNARDO:

Last night of all, Marcellus and myself,
The bell then beating one ...

UNIT TWO.

[Enter Ghost]

MARCELLUS:

Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

BERNARDO:

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

MARCELLUS:

Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

HORATIO:

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

MARCELLUS:

It is offended.

BERNARDO:

See, it stalks away!

HORATIO:

Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!
[Exit Ghost]

MARCELLUS:

'Tis gone, and will not answer.

BERNARDO:

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

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: 'tis strange.

MARCELLUS:

Thus twice before, and just 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.

MARCELLUS:

Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that knows,
Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land,
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day:
Who is't that can inform me?

HORATIO:

That can I;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet -
For so this side of our known world esteem'd him -
Did slay this Fortinbras; who by a seal'd compact,
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror:
Against the which, a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,
And to recover of us, by strong hand
And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
So by his father lost: and this, I take it,
Is the main motive of our preparations,
The source of this our watch and the chief head
Of this post-haste and rummage in the land.

HORATIO:

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!

[*The cock crows*]

Stop it, Marcellus.

MARCELLUS:

Shall I strike at it with my partisan?

HORATIO:

Do, if it will not stand.

BERNARDO:

'Tis here!

HORATIO:

'Tis here!

MARCELLUS:

'Tis gone!

[*Exit Ghost*]

BERNARDO:

It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

HORATIO:

And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons.
Break we our watch up; and by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to -night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

MARCELLUS:

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

[*Exeunt*]

UNIT THREE.

Scene II.

[*Enter KING CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, Messenger.*]

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,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy, -
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,

hath not failed to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father. So much for him.
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting:
Thus much the business is: we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras, -
To suppress his further gait herein; and
We here dispatch you as bearers of this
Greeting to old Norway;
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

[Exit Messenger]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?
You told us of some suit; what is't, 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 towards France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

CLAUDIUS:

Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?

POLONIUS:

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 vail'd lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust:
Thou know'st 'tis common; all that lives must die,

HAMLET:

O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self -slaughter! God! O God!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable,
Seems to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah 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 my 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 galléd 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.

UNIT FIVE

[Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO]

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:
And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

HORATIO:

A truant disposition, good my lord.

HAMLET:

I would not hear your enemy say so,
But 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 baked 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:

I saw him once; a was a goodly king.

HAMLET:

'A 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!
For God's love, let me hear.

HORATIO:

Two nights together had this gentleman,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Appears before him, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart he did;
And I with him the third night kept the watch;
Where, 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.

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 to -night?

MARCELLUS:

I do my lord.

HAMLET:

I will watch to -night;
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 you 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? 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]

UNIT SIX.

Scene III

[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,
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;

Perhaps he loves you now, but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
For he himself is subject to his birth:
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state;
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:
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: but here my father comes.

UNIT SEVEN

[Enter POLONIUS]

A double blessing is a double grace!

POLONIUS:

Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stay'd for. There; my blessing with thee!
And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
Nor any unproportioned thought his act.
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
Those 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, unfledged comrade. Beware
Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,
Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice;
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
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 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*]

UNIT EIGHT

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 between you? give me up the truth.

OPHELIA:

He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
Of his affection to me.

POLONIUS:

Affection! pooh! 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 his 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 importuned 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. From this time, daughter,
Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence;
Do not believe his vows. 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: come your ways.

OPHELIA:

I shall obey, my lord.

[*Exeunt*]

UNIT NINE

Scene IV

[Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS]

HAMLET:

The air bites shrewdly; it is 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 held his wont to walk.

[A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within]

What does this mean, my lord?

HAMLET:

The king doth wake to -night and takes his rouse,
Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up -spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
He thus brays out the triumph of his pledge.

HORATIO:

Is it a custom?

HAMLET:

Ay, marry, is it:

But to my mind, though I am native here
And to the manner born, it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

HORATIO:

[Enter Ghost]

Look, my lord, it comes!

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,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee: I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!
Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

[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:
Why, what should be the fear?
I do not set my life in 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.

MARCELLUS:
You shall not go, my lord.

HAMLET: Hold off your hands.

HORATIO:
Be ruled; you shall not go.

HAMLET: My fate cries out,
And makes each 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 V

[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 confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away. List, Hamlet, O, 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 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;

Now, Hamlet, hear:

'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abused: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life

Now wears his crown.

HAMLET:

O my prophetic soul! My uncle!

GHOST:

Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With trait'rous gifts, won to's 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 moved,
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 my orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursèd hebona 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
baked about, 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,
No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head:
O, horrible!

HAMLET:

O, horrible!

GHOST:

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,
Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me.

[Exit]

HAMLET:

Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter: 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:
[Writing]
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'
I have sworn 't.

[Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS]

UNIT ELEVEN.

HORATIO:

My lord, my lord, -

MARCELLUS:

Lord Hamlet, -

HORATIO:

Heaven secure him!

HAMLET:

So be it!

MARCELLUS:

How is't, my noble lord?

HORATIO:

What news, my lord?

HAMLET:

No; you'll reveal it.

HORATIO:

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

MARCELLUS:

Nor I, 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 desire shall point you;
For every man has 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, my Lord,
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 to -night.

HORATIO & MARCELLUS:

My lord, we will not.

HAMLET:

Nay, but swear't.

GHOST:

[*Beneath*] Swear.

HAMLET:

Ah, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there, truepenny?
Come on - you hear this fellow,
Consent to swear.

HORATIO:

Propose the oath, my lord.

HAMLET:

Never to speak of this that you have seen,

GHOST:

[*Beneath*] 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 your philosophy. But come;
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself,
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on,
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,
To note that you know aught of me: this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,

GHOST:

[*Beneath*] Swear.

HAMLET:

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

[*Exeunt*]

UNIT TWELVE.

[*Enter, severally, Polonius and OPHELIA*]

POLONIUS:

How now, Ophelia! what's the matter?

OPHELIA:

Alas, 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 unbraced;
No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,
Ungarter'd, and down -gyved to his ancle;
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 raised 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 helps,
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
As oft as any passion under heaven
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.
What, have you given him any hard words of late?

OPHELIA:

No, my good lord, but, as you did command,
I did repel his fetters and denied
His access to me.

POLONIUS:

That hath made him mad.
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; but, beshrew my jealousy!
By heaven, it is as proper to our age
To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions
As it is common for the younger sort
To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:
This must be known.

[*Exeunt*]

UNIT THIRTEEN.

Scene II A room in the castle.

[*Enter KING 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. What it should be,
More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
So much from the 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 occasion 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,
For the supply and profit of our hope,
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 service 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 these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

GUILDENSTERN:

Heavens make our presence and our practises
Pleasant and helpful to him!

GERTRUDE: Ay, amen!

[Exeunt Gertrude, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and some Attendants]

UNIT FOURTEEN.

[Enter POLONIUS]

POLONIUS: The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

CLAUDIUS:

Thou still hast been the father of good news.

POLONIUS:

Have I, my lord? I assure 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 used to do, that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

CLAUDIUS:

O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

[Re enter Gertrude.]

POLONIUS:

Give first admittance to the ambassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

CLAUDIUS:

Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[Exit POLONIUS]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

GERTRUDE:

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

CLAUDIUS:

Well, we shall sift him.

[Re -enter POLONIUS]

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,
Perpend.
I have a daughter who hath given me this:
[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:
[Reads]
'In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.'

GERTRUDE:

Came this from Hamlet to her?

POLONIUS:

Good madam, stay awhile; I will be faithful.

[Reads]

*'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, O 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
Received 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 -
If I had given my heart a winking,
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;
What might you think? No, I went round to work,
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
'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, repulsed - -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.

CLAUDIUS:

How may we try it further?

(Enter Hamlet, unseen.)

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: But, look, where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

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

[Exeunt KING CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, and Attendants]

[Enter HAMLET, reading]

UNIT FIFTEEN.

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, being a god kissing carrion, - -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. I'll speak to him again.
What do you read, my lord?
- HAMLET:** Words, words, words.
- POLONIUS:** What is the matter, my lord?
- HAMLET:** Between who?
- POLONIUS:** I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.
- HAMLET:** Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down, for yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if like a crab you could go backward.
- POLONIUS:** [*Aside*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are! a happiness that often madness hits on. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. - 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.
- HAMLET:** These tedious old fools!

UNIT SIXTEEN.

[*Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]

- POLONIUS:** You go to seek the Lord Hamlet; there he is.
- ROSENCRANTZ:** [*To POLONIUS*] God save you, sir! [*Exit POLONIUS*]
- GUILDENSTERN:** My honoured 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? O, 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, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN:

Prison, my lord?

HAMLET:

Denmark's a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ:

Then is the world one.

HAMLET:

A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' 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 nut shell 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: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

GUILDENSTERN:

What should we say, my lord?

HAMLET:

Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

ROSENCRANTZ:

To what end, my lord?

- HAMLET:** That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?
- ROSENCRANTZ:** [*Aside to GUILDENSTERN*] What say you?
- HAMLET:** [*Aside*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you. - -If you love me, hold not off.
- GUILDENSTERN:** My lord, we were sent for.
- HAMLET:** I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late - but wherefore I know not - lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it 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 coming, to offer you service.
- HAMLET:** He that plays the king shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me; You are welcome: but my uncle -father and aunt -mother are deceived.
- GUILDENSTERN:** In what, my dear lord?
- HAMLET:** I am but mad north -north -west: when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

[*Enter POLONIUS*]

UNIT SEVENTEEN.

- POLONIUS:** Well be with you, gentlemen!
- HAMLET:** Hark you, Guildenstern; and you too: at each ear a hearer: 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: Buz, buz!

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:

[Enter four or five Players]

You are welcome, masters; welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends. we'll have a speech straight: come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

1st 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, pleased not the million; One speech in it I chiefly loved: 'twas Aeneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: if it live in your memory, begin at this line: let me see, let me see –“
But who, ah woe! Had seen the ...”

1st PLAYER: 'But who, O, who had seen the mobled queen - -'

POLONIUS: That's good; 'mobled queen' is good.

HAMLET: Say on. Come to Hecuba.

1st PLAYER:
'Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
But if the gods themselves did see her then
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamour that she made,
Unless things mortal move them not at all,
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.'

POLONIUS: Look, whether he has not turned 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 bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract

and brief chronicles of the time: after your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

POLONIUS: My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

HAMLET: God's 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 to -morrow.

[Exit POLONIUS with all the Players but the First]

Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the Murder of Gonzago?

1st PLAYER: Ay, my lord.

HAMLET: We'll ha't to -morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down and insert in't, could you not?

1st PLAYER: Ay, my lord.

HAMLET: Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not.

[Exit First Player]

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

ROSENCRANTZ: Good my lord!

HAMLET: Ay, so, God be wi' ye;

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

UNIT EIGHTEEN.

Now I am alone.

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his whole conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,

Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,
A dull and muddy -mettled 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?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
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
To 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]

UNIT NINETEEN.

Act III Scene I.

[Enter KING CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN]

CLAUDIUS:

And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,

ROSENCRANTZ:

He does confess he feels himself distracted;
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

GERTRUDE:

Did you assay him? To any pastime?

GUILDENSTERN:

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

POLONIUS:

'Tis most true:

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

CLAUDIUS:

With all my heart;

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

ROSENCRANTZ:

We shall, my lord.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

CLAUDIUS:

Sweet Gertrude, leave us too;

For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here
Affront Ophelia:
Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge,
And gather by him, as he is behaved,
If 't be the affliction of his love or no
That thus he suffers for.

GERTRUDE:

I shall obey you.

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

OPHELIA:

Madam, I wish it may.

[Exit GERTRUDE]

POLONIUS:

Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
We will bestow ourselves.

[To OPHELIA]

Read on this book;

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this, -
'Tis too much proved - -that with devotion's visage
And pious action we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

CLAUDIUS:

O, 'tis too true!

[*Aside*] How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burthen!

POLONIUS:

I hear him coming: let's withdraw, my lord.

[*Exeunt CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS*]

UNIT TWENTY.

[*Enter HAMLET*]

HAMLET:

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

UNIT TWENTY ONE.

OPHELIA: Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

HAMLET:
I humbly thank you; well.

(Polonius sneezes) Well, well!

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

HAMLET: No, not I;
I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA:
My honour'd lord, I know right well you did;
And, with them, words of so sweet breath composed
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 believed me; for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it: I loved you not.

OPHELIA:

I was the more deceived.

HAMLET:

Get thee to a nunnery: why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? 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, and 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]

UNIT TWENTY TWO.

OPHELIA:

O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;
The expectation and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers, quite, quite down!
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh;
That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth

Blasted with ecstasy: O, woe is me,
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 doubt the hatch and the disclose
Will be some danger: which for to prevent,
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute
Haply the seas and countries different
With variable objects shall expel
This something -settled matter in his heart,
Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
From fashion of himself. 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, after the play
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To show his grief: let her be round with him;
And I'll be placed, so please you, in the ear
Of all their 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*]

INTERMISSION.

UNIT TWENTY-THREE.

Scene II

[*Enter HAMLET and Players*]

HAMLET:

Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of your players do, I had as lief the town -crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus, but use all gently; for in the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to

the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumbshows and noise: I would have such a fellow whipped for o'erdoing Termagant; it out-herods Herod: pray you, avoid it.

1st PLAYER: I warrant your 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 any thing 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.

1st PLAYER: We will, my Lord.

HAMLET: Go, make you ready.

[Exeunt Players]

[Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN]

How now, my lord! I will the king hear this piece of work?

POLONIUS: And the queen too, and that presently.

HAMLET: Bid the players make haste.

[Exit POLONIUS]

Will you two help to hasten them?

ROSENCRANTZ & GUILDENSTERN:

We will, my lord.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

HAMLET: What ho! Horatio!

[Enter HORATIO]

HORATIO:

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET:

There is a play to -night before the king;
One scene of it comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee of my father's death:
I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
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;
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
And after we will both our judgments join
In censure of his seeming.

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

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

UNIT TWENTY-FOUR.

[Danish march. A flourish. Enter CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and others]

CLAUDIUS: How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET: Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise -crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

CLAUDIUS: I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

HAMLET: No, nor mine now.

[To POLONIUS]

My lord, you played once i' the university, you say?

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

HAMLET: What did you enact?

POLONIUS: I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' 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 dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET: No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

POLONIUS: *[To CLAUDIUS]* O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET: Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[Lying down at OPHELIA's feet]

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 these two hours.

OPHELIA: Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

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

UNIT TWENTY-FIVE.

[Hautboys play. Enter Prologue]

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, King and Queen]

Player King:

Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground,
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

Player Queen:

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

Player King:

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

Player Queen:

O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.
The instances that second marriage move
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:

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

Player King:

I do believe you think what now you speak;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory,
Of violent birth, but poor validity;
So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.

Player Queen:

Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light!
Sport and repose lock from me day and night!
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well and it destroy!
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Player King:

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

Player Queen:

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

[Exit, the Player King sleeps.]

HAMLET: Madam, how like you this play?

GERTRUDE: The lady protests too much, methinks.

HAMLET: O, but she'll keep her word.

CLAUDIUS: What do you call the play?

HAMLET: The Mouse -trap. This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna: Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, Baptista: you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: but what o' that? your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us not: let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

[Enter LUCIANUS]

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

LUCIANUS:

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

[Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears]

HAMLET: He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. 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]

UNIT TWENTY-SIX.

HAMLET:
Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungallèd play;
For some must watch, while some must sleep:
So runs the world away.
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here
A very, very - peacock.

HORATIO: You might have rhymed.

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

HORATIO: Very well, my lord.

HAMLET: Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO: I did very well note him.

HAMLET: Ah, ha! *[To the Players]* 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!

[Re -enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

GUILDENSTERN: Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

HAMLET: Sir, a whole history.

GUILDENSTERN: The king, sir, -

HAMLET: Ay, sir, what of him?

GUILDENSTERN: Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

- HAMLET:** With drink, sir?
- GULDENSTERN:** No, my lord, rather with choler. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.
- HAMLET:** You are welcome.
- GULDENSTERN:** 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.
- GULDENSTERN:** What, my lord?
- HAMLET:** Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, to the matter: my mother, you say, -
- ROSENCRANTZ:** Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.
- HAMLET:** O wonderful son, that can so 'stonish a mother!
- 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?
- HAMLET:** [*Re -enter Players with recorders*] O, the recorders! let me see one. Will you play upon this pipe?
- GULDENSTERN:** My lord, I cannot.
- HAMLET:** I pray you.
- GULDENSTERN:** Believe me, I cannot.
- HAMLET:** I do beseech you.
- GULDENSTERN:** 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.
- GULDENSTERN:** 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. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.

[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 backed like a weasel.

HAMLET: Or like a whale?

POLONIUS: Very like a whale.

HAMLET: Then I will come to my mother by and by. 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 church-yards 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.
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!

[Exit]

UNIT TWENTY-SEVEN.

Scene III

[Enter KING 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:
Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;

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; and warrant she'll tax him home:
'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
And tell you what I know.

CLAUDIUS: Thanks, dear my lord.
[*Exit POLONIUS*]

UNIT TWENTY-EIGHT.

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? Then I'll look up;
My fault is past. But, O, 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,
And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
There is no shuffling, there the action lies
In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
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 can not repent?
O wretched state! O bosom black as death!
O limèd soul, that, struggling to be free,
Art more engaged! Help, angels! Make assay!
Bow, stubborn knees; and, heart with strings of steel,
Be soft as sinews of the newborn babe!

All may be well.

[Retires and kneels]

[Enter HAMLET]

HAMLET:

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

O, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
He took my father grossly, full of bread;
With all his crimes broad blown: and am I then
revenged,

To take him in the purging of his soul,
When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
No!

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:

[Rising]

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

[Exit]

UNIT TWENTY-NINE.

Scene IV.

[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 sconce me even here.
Pray you, be round with him.

HAMLET:

[Within] Mother, mother!

GERTRUDE:

I'll warrant you. Fear me not: withdraw, I hear him coming.

[POLONIUS hides behind the arras]

[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 you 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:

[Behind]

What, ho! help, help, help!

HAMLET:

[Drawing]

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

[Makes a pass through the arras]

POLONIUS:

[Behind]

O, I am slain! [Falls and dies]

GERTRUDE:

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET:

Nay, I know not: Is it the king?

GERTRUDE:

O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

HAMLET:

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

GERTRUDE:

As kill a king!

HAMLET:

Ay, lady, 'twas my word.

[Lifts up the array and discovers POLONIUS]

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
I took thee for thy better. 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,

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.

GERTRUDE:

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

HAMLET:

Look here, upon this picture, and on this,
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;
A station like the herald Mercury
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
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 stoop from this to this?

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 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, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command? O, 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:
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
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?
To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET: Do you see nothing there?

GERTRUDE: Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

HAMLET:

Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[Exit Ghost]

GERTRUDE:

This 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: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that mattering 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

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 to –night, and that shall lend a kind
Of easiness to the next abstinence;
The next more easy. Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,
[Pointing to POLONIUS]
I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him, and will answer well
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.

GERTRUDE:

Be thou assured, 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:

There's letters seal'd: and my two schoolfellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
Hoist with his own petard.
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.

[Exeunt severally; HAMLET dragging in POLONIUS]

UNIT THIRTY.

Act IV Scene I.

[Enter KING CLAUDIUS, and GERTRUDE]

GERTRUDE:

Ah, my good lord, what have I seen to -night!

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,
He whips his rapier out, 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;
Where is he gone?

GERTRUDE:

To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:

CLAUDIUS:

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
But we will ship him hence: Ho, Guildenstern!

[enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

Friends both, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him:
Go seek him out; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,

And what's untimely done

[*Exeunt*]

UNIT THIRTY-ONE.

[*Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*]

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. 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: Where is Polonius?

HAMLET: In heaven; send hither 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: Go seek him there.

[*To some Attendants*]

HAMLET: 'A will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants*]

CLAUDIUS:
Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety, -
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, - -must send thee hence
With fiery quickness: therefore prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing 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]

CLAUDIUS:

Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;
Delay it not; I'll have him hence to -night:

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN]

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose!
Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
He's loved of the distracted multitude,
This sudden sending him away must seem
Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown
By desperate appliance are relieved,
Or not at all.

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught -
thou mayst not coldly set our sovereign process;
which imports By letters 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]

UNIT THIRTY-TWO.

Scene V

[Enter GERTRUDE, HORATIO]

GERTRUDE:

I will not speak with her.

HORATIO:

She is importunate, indeed distract:
Her mood will needs be pitied.

GERTRUDE:

What would she have?

HORATIO:

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: her speech is nothing,
'Twere good she were spoken with; for she may strew
Dangerous conjectures in ill -breeding minds.

GERTRUDE:

Let her come in.

[Exit HORATIO]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss:
So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

[*Re -enter HORATIO, with OPHELIA*]

OPHELIA:

Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

GERTRUDE:

How now, Ophelia!

OPHELIA:

Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

[*Sings*]

*He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass -green turf,
At his heels a stone.
O, ho!*

[*Enter CLAUDIUS*]

GERTRUDE:

Alas, look here, my lord.

CLAUDIUS:

How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA:

Well, God 'ild you! 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:

[*Sings*]

*To -morrow 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, la, without an oath, I'll make an end on't:

[*Sings*]

*By Gis and by Saint Charity,
Alack, and fie for shame!
Young men will do't, if they come to't;
By cock, they are to blame.*

*Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promised me to wed.*

He answers:

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 HORATIO]

O, this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies
But in battalions .
Her brother is in secret come from France;
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear.
[A noise within]

UNIT THIRTY-THREE.

[Enter LAERTES, armed; Danes following]

LAERTES: O thou vile king,
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 juggled with:
I dare damnation. To this point I stand,
Let come what comes; only I'll be revenged
Most thoroughly for my father.

CLAUDIUS: Who shall stay you?
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye.

LAERTES: How now! what noise is that?

[Re -enter OPHELIA]

OPHELIA: 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 -grace o' Sundays: O you must wear your rue
with a difference. There's a daisy: I would give you some violets, but they withered all
when my father died: they say he made a good end, -

[Sings]

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 ha' mercy on his soul!
And of all Christian souls, I pray God. God be wi' ye.

[Exit followed by Gertrude.]

LAERTES:

Do you see this, O God?

CLAUDIUS:

Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
If you find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
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 -
Cry to be heard, -

CLAUDIUS:

So you shall;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you, go with me.

[Exeunt]

UNIT THIRTY-FOUR.

Scene VI.

[Enter HORATIO and a Lady]

HORATIO:

What are they that would speak with me?

Servant:

Sailors, sir: they say they have letters for you.

HORATIO:

Let them come in.

[Exit Servant]

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet.

[Enter Sailor]

First Sailor:

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

HORATIO:

[Reads the letter] 'Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give this fellow some
means to the king: he has letters for him. 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; This
good fellow will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their
course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell. 'He that thou knowest
thine, HAMLET.'

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
To him from whom you brought them.

[Exeunt]

UNIT THIRTY-FIVE.

Scene VII.

[Enter *CLAUDIUS* and *LAERTES*]

CLAUDIUS:

Now must your conscience my acquaintance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

LAERTES:

It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature?

CLAUDIUS:

O, for two special reasons;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd,
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks; and for myself -
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him;

[Enter a Messenger]

How now! what news?

MESSENGER:

Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:

CLAUDIUS:

Laertes, you shall hear them. Leave us.

[Exit Messenger]

[Reads]

'High and mighty, You shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To -morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return. 'HAMLET.'

What should this mean?

LAERTES:

But let him come;

It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
'Thus didest thou.'

CLAUDIUS:

If it be so, Laertes -

Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES:

Ay, my lord;

So you will not o'errule me to a peace.

CLAUDIUS:

To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
As checking at his voyage, I will work him
To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the practise
And call it accident.

LAERTES:

My lord, I will be ruled;

The rather, if you could devise it so
That I might be the organ.

CLAUDIUS:

It falls right.

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
In art and exercise of your rapier.
Then shall I bring you together in a duel
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 practise
Requite him for your father.

LAERTES:

I will do't:

And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no remedy so rare,
Can save the thing from death that is but scratch'd:

I'll touch my point with this contagion,
That, if I gall him slightly, it may be
Death.

CLAUDIUS: Let's further think of this; this project
Should have a back or second. Soft! let me see:
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunning: I ha't.
When in your motion you are hot and dry -
As make your bouts more violent to that end -
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there.

[Enter GERTRUDE]

How now, sweet queen!

UNIT THIRTY-SIX.

GERTRUDE: One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow; your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

LAERTES: Drown'd! O, where?

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
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,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element: 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: Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
So I forbid my tears: 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*]

UNIT THIRTY-SEVEN.

Act V

Scene I

[*Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c*]

1st CLOWN: Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2nd CLOWN: I tell thee she is: and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

1st CLOWN: How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2nd CLOWN: Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

1st CLOWN: Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. I'll put a question to thee: what is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2nd CLOWN: The gallows -maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1st CLOWN: I like thy wit well, in good faith. To't again, come.

2nd CLOWN: 'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?'

1st CLOWN: Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2nd CLOWN: Marry, now I can tell.

1st CLOWN: To't.

2nd CLOWN: Mass, I cannot tell.

[*Enter HAMLET: and HORATIO, at a distance*]

1st CLOWN: Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave -maker: 'the houses that he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee in fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit Second Clown*]

UNIT THIRTY-EIGHT.

[*Enter HAMLET and HORATIO*]

HAMLET:

So much for this, sir: now shall you see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance? The letter
Borne by Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

HORATIO:

Remember it, my lord?

HAMLET:

Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting,
That would not let me sleep. Rashly,
And praised 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, in the dark
Groped 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,
My head should be struck off.

HORATIO:

Is't possible?

HAMLET:

Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play - I sat me down,
Devised a new commission, wrote it fair:
An earnest conjuration from the king,
As England was his faithful tributary,
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving -time allow'd.

HORATIO:

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

HAMLET:

Why, man, they did make love to this employment;
They are not near my conscience.

UNIT THIRTY-NINE.

[1st Gravedigger digs and sings]

First Clown:

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

HORATIO:

Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

HAMLET: I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

1st CLOWN: Mine, sir.

[Sings]

O, a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

HAMLET: I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

1st CLOWN: You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET: What man dost thou dig it for?

1st CLOWN: For no man, sir.

HAMLET: What woman, then?

1st CLOWN: For none, neither.

HAMLET: Who is to be buried in't?

1st CLOWN: One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

HAMLET: How absolute the knave is. How long hast thou been a grave -maker?

1st CLOWN: Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

HAMLET: How long is that since?

1st CLOWN: Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET: Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

1st CLOWN: Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

HAMLET: Why?

1st CLOWN: 'Twill, a not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

HAMLET: How came he mad?

1st CLOWN: Very strangely, they say.

HAMLET: How strangely?

1st CLOWN: Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

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

1st CLOWN: I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die - -as we have many pocky corses now -a - days, that will scarce hold the laying in - -he will last you some eight year or nine year. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

HAMLET: Whose was it?

1st CLOWN: A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

HAMLET: Nay, I know not.

1st CLOWN: A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

HAMLET: This?

1st CLOWN: E'en that.

HAMLET: Let me see.

[*Takes the skull*]

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

[*Puts down the skull*]

But soft! but soft! (*aside*) here comes the king.

[*Enter Priest, &c. in procession; the Corpse of OPHELIA, LAERTES and Mourners following; CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, their trains, &c*]

The queen, the courtiers: who is this they follow?
And with such maimèd 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.

[*Retiring with HORATIO*]

UNIT FORTY.

LAERTES:

What ceremony else?

HAMLET:

That is Laertes, a very noble youth: mark.

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:
Sweets to the sweet: farewell!
[Scattering flowers]
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought thy bride -bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not have strew'd thy grave.

LAERTES: O, treble woe
Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Deprived thee of! Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:
[Leaps into the grave]

HAMLET: *[Advancing]*
What is he whose grief bears such an emphasis?
[Leaps into the grave]

LAERTES: The devil take thy soul!
[Grappling with him]

HAMLET: Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenitive and rash,
Yet have I something in me dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear: hold off thy hand.

CLAUDIUS:
Pluck them asunder.

GERTRUDE: Hamlet, Hamlet!

HORATIO:
Good my lord, be quiet.
[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave]

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?
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
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:
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;

HAMLET:

Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I loved you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

[Exit]

CLAUDIUS:

I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.

[Exit HORATIO]

[To LAERTES]

Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech;
We'll put the matter to the present push.
Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
This grave shall have a living monument:
An hour of quiet shortly shall we see;
Till then, in patience our proceeding be.

[Exeunt]

UNIT FORTY-ONE.

Scene II

[Enter Hamlet and Horatio.]

HORATIO:

Why, what a king is this!

HAMLET:

He that hath kill'd my king and whored 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?
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours.
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

HORATIO:

Peace! who comes here?

UNIT FORTY-TWO.

[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; for '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.
- OSRIC:** But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes. The king, sir, hath wagered 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:** 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 re-deliver 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: since he went into France, I have been in continual practise: 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; but 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.

UNIT FORTY-THREE.

[Enter KING CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, &c]

CLAUDIUS:

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

[CLAUDIUS puts LAERTES' hand into HAMLET's]

HAMLET:

Give me your pardon, sir: I've done you wrong;
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
What I have done,
That might your nature, honour and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.
Sir, in this audience,
Let my disclaiming from a purposed 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,
I do receive your offer'd love like love,
And will not wrong it.

HAMLET:

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

LAERTES:

Come, one for me.

[They prepare to play]

CLAUDIUS:

Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet. Come, begin:
And you, the judge, bear a wary eye.

HAMLET:

Come on, sir.

LAERTES:

Come, my lord.

[They play]

HAMLET:

One.

LAERTES:

No.

HAMLET:

Judgment?

OSRIC:

A hit, a very palpable hit.

LAERTES:

Well; again.

CLAUDIUS:

Stay; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.

[Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within]

Give him the cup.

HAMLET:

I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.
Come.

[They play]

Another hit; what say you?

LAERTES:

A touch, a touch, I do confess.

CLAUDIUS:

Our son shall win.

GERTRUDE:

He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows;
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

HAMLET:

Good madam!

CLAUDIUS:

Gertrude, do not drink.

GERTRUDE:

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

CLAUDIUS:

[*Aside*]

It is the poison'd cup: 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't.

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:

Say you so? come on. [*They play*]

OSRIC:

Nothing, neither way.

LAERTES:

Have at you now!

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET; then in scuffling, they change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES*]

CLAUDIUS:

Part them; they are incensed.

HAMLET:

Nay, come, again. [*GERTRUDE falls*]

OSRIC:

Look to the queen there, ho!

HORATIO:

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

OSRIC:

How is't, Laertes?

LAERTES:

Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osric;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAMLET:

How does the queen?

CLAUDIUS:

She swoonds to see them bleed.

GERTRUDE:

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

HAMLET:

O villany! 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 practise
Hath turn'd itself on me lo, here I lie,
Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:
I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

HAMLET:

The point! - envenom'd too?
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs CLAUDIUS*]

CLAUDIUS:

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

HAMLET:

Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion. Follow my mother. [*CLAUDIUS dies*]
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
The rest is silence. [*Dies*]

HORATIO:

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