

To try conclusions in the basket creep, 210
 And break your own neck down.
Quee. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
 What thou hast said to me.
Ham. I must to *England*; you know that. 215
Quee. Alack I had forgot.
 'Tis so concluded on.
Ham. 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 220
 And marshal me to knavery: let it work,
 For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar, and 't shall go hard
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,
 And blow them at the Moon: O 'tis most sweet 225
 When in one line two crafts directly meet,
 This man shall set me packing,
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room;
 Mother good night indeed this Counselor
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave, 230
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave.
 Come sir, to draw toward an end with you.
 Good night mother. *Exit [Hamlet tugging in Polonius.]*

[Act 4, Scene 1]

*Enter King, and Queen, with Rosencrantz,
 and Guildenstern.*

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves,
 You must translate, 'tis fit we understand them,
 Where is your son?
Quee. Bestow this place on us a little while. [*Exeunt Ros. & Guil.*]
 Ah mine own Lord, what have I seen tonight? 5
King. What *Gertrude*, how does *Hamlet*?
Quee. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
 Which is the mightier, in his lawless fit,

Behind the Arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his Rapier, cries a Rat, a Rat, 10
And, in this brainish apprehension kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us had we been there,
His liberty is full of threats to all, 15
To you yourself, to us, to every one,
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt
This mad young man; but so much was our love, 20
We would not understand what was most fit,
But like the owner of a foul disease
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life: where is he gone?

Quee. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd, 25
O'er whom, his very madness like some ore
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure, he weeps for what is done.

King. O *Gertrude*, come away,
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch, 30
But we will ship him hence, and this vile deed
We must with all our Majesty and skill, *Enter Ros. & Guil.*
Both countenance and excuse. Ho *Guildenstern*,
Friends both, go join you with some further aid,
Hamlet in madness hath *Polonius* slain, 35
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, [*Exit Gent.*]
Come *Gertrude*, we'll call up our wisest friends,
And let them know both what we mean to do 40
And what's untimely done, so haply slander,
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the Cannon to his blank,
Transports his poisoned shot, may miss our Name,
And hit the woundless air, O come away, 45
My soul is full of discord and dismay. *Exeunt.*

[Act 4, Scene 2]

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, and others.

Ham. Safely stowed, but soft, what noise, who calls on *Hamlet*?
O here they come.

Ros. What have you done my Lord with the dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis that we may take it thence, 5
And bear it to the Chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what.

Ham. That I can keep your counsel & not mine own, besides to be
demanded of a sponge, what replication should be made by the son
of a King. 11

Ros. Take you me for a sponge my Lord?

Ham. Ay sir, that soaks up the King's countenance, his rewards, his
authorities, but such Officers do the King best service in the end, he
keeps them like an ape in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed, to be
last swallowed, when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but
squeezing you, and sponge you shall be dry again. 17

Ros. I understand you not my Lord.

Ham. I am glad of it, a knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My Lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us
to the King. 21

Ham. The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body.
The King is a thing.

Guil. A thing my Lord.

Ham. Of nothing, bring me to him. Hide Fox, and all after.

Exeunt.

[Act 4, Scene 3]

Enter King, and two or three.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body,
How dangerous is it that this man goes loose,
Yet must not we put the strong Law on him,

He's loved of the distracted multitude,
 Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes, 5
 And where' tis so, th'offender's scourge is weigh'd
 But never the offense: to bear all smooth and even,
 This sudden sending him away must seem
 Deliberate pause, diseases desperate grown,
 By desperate appliance are reliev'd, 10
 Or not at all.

Enter Rosencrantz, and all the rest.

King. How now, what hath befall'n?

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

King. But where is he? 15

Ros. Without my Lord, guarded to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, bring in the Lord. *They enter.*

King. Now *Hamlet*, where's *Polonius*?

Ham. At supper. 20

King. At supper, where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten, a certain con-
 vocation 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 our-
 selves for maggots, your fat King and your lean beggar is but variable
 service, two dishes but to one table, that's the end. 26

King. Alas, alas.

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a King, & eat
 of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost you mean by this? 30

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

King. Where is *Polonius*?

Ham. In heaven, send hither to see, if your messenger find him not
 there, seek him i' th'other place yourself, but if indeed you find him
 not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into
 the Lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay till you come. [*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. *Hamlet* this deed for thine especial safety 40
 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,
 Th'associates tend, and everything is bent 45
 For *England*.
Ham. For *England*.
King. Ay *Hamlet*.
Ham. Good.
King. So is it if thou knew'st our purposes. 50
Ham. I see a Cherub that sees them, but come for *England*,
 Farewell dear Mother.
King. Thy loving father *Hamlet*.
Ham. My mother, Father and Mother is man and wife,
 Man and wife is one flesh, and so my mother: 55
 Come for *England*. *Exit.*
King. Follow him at foot,
 Tempt him with speed aboard,
 Delay it not, I'll have him hence tonight.
 Away, for everything is seal'd and done 60
 That else leans on th'affair, pray you make haste,
 [*Exeunt Ros. & Guil.*]
 And *England*, if my love thou hold'st at aught,
 As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
 Since yet thy Cicatrice looks raw and red,
 After the Danish sword, and thy free awe 65
 Pays homage to us, thou mayst not coldly set
 Our sovereign process, which imports at full
 By Letters conjuring to that effect
 The present death of *Hamlet*, do it *England*,
 For like the Hectic in my blood he rages, 70
 And thou must cure me; till I know 'tis done,
 Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. *Exit.*

[Act 4, Scene 4]

Enter Fortinbras with his Army over the stage.

Fortin. Go Captain, from me greet the Danish King,
 Tell him, that by his licence *Fortinbras*
 Craves the conveyance of a promised march

Over his kingdom, you know the rendezvous,
 If that his Majesty would aught with us, 5
 We shall express our duty in his eye,
 And let him know so.

Cap. I will do't my Lord.

Fortin. Go softly on. [Exit.]

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, &c.

Ham. Good sir whose powers are these? 10

Cap. They are of *Norway*, sir.

Ham. How purpos'd sir I pray you?

Cap. Against some part of *Poland*.

Ham. Who commands them sir?

Cap. The Nephew to old *Norway Fortinbras*. 15

Ham. Goes it against the main of *Poland* sir,
 Or for some frontier?

Cap. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
 We go to gain a little patch of ground
 That hath in it no profit but the name 20
 To pay five ducats, five I would not farm it;
 Nor will it yield to *Norway* or the *Pole*
 A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why then the *Polack* never will defend it.

Cap. Yes, it is already garrison'd. 25

Ham. Two thousand souls, & twenty thousand ducats
 Will not debate the question of this straw,
 This is th'Imposthume of much wealth and peace,
 That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
 Why the man dies. I humbly thank you sir. 30

Cap. God be wi' you sir. [Exit.]

Ros. Wil't please you go my Lord?

Ham. I'll be with you straight, go a little before.

[Exeunt all but Hamlet.]

How all occasions do inform against me,
 And spur my dull revenge. What is a man 35
 If his chief good and market of his time
 Be but to sleep and feed, a beast, no more:
 Sure he that made us with such large discourse
 Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and godlike reason 40
 To fust in us unused, now, whether it be

Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
 Of thinking too precisely on th'event,
 A thought which quarter'd hath but one part wisdom,
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know 45
 Why yet I live to say this thing's to do,
 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
 To do't; examples gross as earth exhort me,
 Witness this Army of such mass and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender Prince, 50
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd,
 Makes mouths at the invisible event,
 Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
 To all that fortune, death, and danger dare,
 Even for an Egg-shell. Rightly to be great, 55
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
 When honour's at the stake, how stand I then
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason, and my blood, 60
 And let all sleep, while to my shame I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That for a fantasy and trick of fame
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause, 65
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain, O from this time forth,
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth. *Exit.*

[Act 4, Scene 5]

Enter Horatio, Gertrude, and a Gentleman.

Quee. I will not speak with her.

Gent. She is importunate,

Indeed distract, her mood will needs be pitied.

Quee. What would she have?

Gentle. She speaks much of her father, says she hears 5

There's tricks i' th' world, and hems, and beats her heart,

Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt

That carry but half sense, her speech is nothing,

Yet the unshapèd use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection, they yawn at it, 10
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts,
 Which as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
 Indeed would make one think there might be thought
 Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Hora. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may strew
 Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds,

Quee. Let her come in. [Exit Gentlemen.]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss, 20
 So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
 It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

*Enter Ophelia [playing on a Lute, and her hair
 down singing.]*

Ophe. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmarke?

Quee. How now *Ophelia*? *She sings.*

Ophe. "How should I your true love know from another one,
 By his cockle hat and staff, and his Sandal shoon." 25

Quee. Alas sweet Lady, what imports this song?

Ophe. Say you, nay pray you mark,
 "He is dead & gone Lady, he is dead and gone, *Song.*
 At his head a grass-green turf, at his heels a stone."

O ho. 30

Quee. Nay but *Ophelia*.

Ophe. Pray you, mark. "White his shroud as the mountain snow."

Enter King.

Quee. Alas look here my Lord.

Ophe. "Larded all with sweet flowers,
 Which bewept to the grave did not go *Song.* 35
 With true love showers."

King. How do you pretty Lady?

Ophe. Well good dild you, they say the Owl was a Baker's daugh-
 ter, Lord we know what we are, but know not what we may be.
 God be at your table! 40

King. Conceit upon her Father.

Ophe. Pray let's have no words of this, but when they ask you
 what it means, say you this:

"Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day, *Song.*
 All in the morning betime, 45

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." 50
King. Pretty *Ophelia*.
Ophe. Indeed la without an oath I'll make an end on't,
 "By Gis and by Saint Charity,
 alack, and fie for shame,
 Young men will do't if they come to't, 55
 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
 And thou hadst not come to my bed."
King. How long hath she been thus? 60
Ophe. I hope all will be well, we must be patient, but I cannot
 choose but weep to think they should lay him i' th' cold ground, my
 brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel.
 "Come my Coach, Good night Ladies, good night.
 Sweet Ladies good night, good night." [Exit.] 65
King. Follow her close, give her good watch, I pray you. O this is
 the poison of deep grief, it springs all from her Father's death, and
 now behold, O *Gertrude*, *Gertrude*,
 When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
 But in battalions: first, her Father slain, 70
 Next, your son gone, and he most violent Author
 Of his own just remove, the people muddied
 Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts, and whispers
 For good *Polonius'* death: and we have done but greenly
 In hugger-mugger to inter him: poor *Ophelia* 75
 Divided from herself, and her fair judgment,
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts,
 Last, and as much containing as all these,
 Her brother is in secret come from *France*,
 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds, 80
 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: O my dear *Gertrude*, this 85

Like to a murd'ring-piece in many places
Gives me superfluous death. *A noise within.*

Enter a Messenger.

Quee. Alack, what noise is this?

King. Attend, where are my Switzers, let them guard the door,
What is the matter? 90

Messen. Save yourself my Lord.
The Ocean overpeering of his list
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste
Than young *Laertes* in a riotous head
O'erbears your Officers: the rabble call him Lord, 95
And as the world were now but to begin,
Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
The ratifiers and props of every word,
They cry choose we, *Laertes* shall be King,
Caps, hands, and tongues applaud it to the clouds, 100
Laertes shall be King, *Laertes* King.

Quee. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry. *Noise within.*
O this is counter you false Danish dogs.

Enter Laertes with others.

King. The doors are broke.

Laer. Where is this King? sirs stand you all without. 105

All. No let's come in.

Laer. I pray you give me leave.

All. We will, we will.

Laer. I thank you, keep the door, [*Exeunt followers*] O thou
vile King,
Give me my father. 110

Quee. Calmly good *Laertes*.

Laer. That drop of blood that's calm proclaims me Bastard,
Cries cuckold to my father, brands the Harlot
Even here between the chaste unsmirch'd brow
Of my true mother. 115

King. What is the cause *Laertes*
That thy rebellion looks so giant like?
Let him go *Gertrude*, do not fear our person
There's such divinity doth hedge a King,
That treason can but peep to what it would, 120
Acts little of his will, tell me *Laertes*

Why thou art thus incens'd, let him go *Gertrude*.
Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead. 125

Quee. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead, I'll not be juggled with,
To hell allegiance, vows to the blackest devil,
Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit 130
I dare damnation, to this point I stand,
That both the worlds I give to negligence,
Let come what comes, only I'll be reveng'd
Most thoroughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you? 135

Laer. My will, not all the world:

And for my means I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good *Laertes*, if you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear Father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe 140
Winner and loser.

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then?

Laer. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms,
And like the kind life-rend'ring Pelican, 145
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why now you speak
Like a good child, and a true Gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it, 150
It shall as level to your judgment pierce
As day does to your eye. *A noise within.*
Let her come in.

Laer. How now, what noise is that?

Enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains, tears seven times salt 155
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye,
By heaven thy madness shall be paid with weight
Till our scale turn the beam, O rose of May,
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet *Ophelia*,

O heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life? 160
Nature is fine in Love, and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Ophe. "They bore him barefaced on the Bier, *Song.* 165
Hey non nony, nony, hey nony:
And in his grave rain'd many a tear,
Fare you well my Dove."

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge
It could not move thus. 170

Ophe. "You must sing a-down a-down,
And you call him a-down-a. O how the wheel becomes it,
It is the false Steward that stole his Master's daughter."

Laer. This nothing's more then matter.

Ophe. There's Rosemary, that's for remembrance, pray you love
remember, and there is Pansies, that's for thoughts. 176

Laer. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Ophe. There's Fennel for you, and Columbines, there's Rue for you,
& here's some for me, we may call it herb of Grace o' Sundays, Oh
you must wear your Rue with a difference, there's a Daisy, I would
give you some Violets, but they wither'd all when my Father died,
they say he made a good end. [*Sings.*] 182

"For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy."

Laer. Thought and afflictions, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness. 185

Ophe. "And will he not come again, *Song.*
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, 190
All Flaxen was his pole.

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 buy you." [*Exit Ophelia.*]

Laer. Do you see this O God. 195

King. *Laertes*, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right, go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me,

If by direct, or by collateral hand 200
 They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
 Our crown, our life, and all that we can ours
 To you in satisfaction; but if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul 205
 To give it due content.
Laer. Let this be so.
 His means of death, his obscure funeral,
 No trophy sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
 No noble rite, nor formal ostentation, 210
 Cry to be heard as 'twere from heaven to earth,
 That I must call't in question.
King. So you shall,
 And where th'offence is, let the great axe fall.
 I pray you go with me. *Exeunt.* 215

[Act 4, Scene 6]

Enter Horatio and others [with an Attendant.]

Hora. What are they that would speak with me?

Gent. Seafaring men sir, they say they have Letters for you.

Hora. Let them come in. *[Exit Attendant.]*

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted. If not from Lord *Hamlet.* *Enter Sailors.* 5

Sailor. God bless you sir.

Hora. Let him bless thee too.

Sailor. He shall sir and please him, there's a Letter for you sir, it comes from th'Ambassador that was bound for *England*, if your name be *Horatio*, as I am let to know it is. 10

[Reads the Letter.]

Hora. *Horatio*, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the King, they have Letters for him: Ere we were two days old at Sea, a Pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase, finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour, and in the grapple I boarded them, on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner, they have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did, I am to do a good turn for them, let the King have the Letters I have sent, and repair

thou to me with as much speed as thou wouldst fly death, I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb, yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter, these good fellows will bring thee where I am, *Rosencrantz* and *Guildestern* hold their course for *England*, of them I have much to tell thee, farewell.

He that thou knowest thine Hamlet.

Hora. Come, I will give you way for these your letters,
And do't the speedier that you may direct me 25
To him from whom you brought them. *Exeunt.*

[Act 4, Scene 7]

Enter King and Laertes.

King. 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. 5

Laer. It well appears: but tell me
Why you proceeded not against these feats
So criminal and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else
You mainly were stirr'd up. 10

King. O for two special reasons
Which may to you perhaps seem much unsew'd, 10
But yet to me they're strong, the Queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks, and for myself,
My virtue or my plague, be it either which, 15
She is 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, 20
Who dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would like the spring that turneth wood to stone,
Convert his Gyves to graces, so that my arrows
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a Wind,

Would have reverted to my bow again, 25
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost,
A sister driven into desp'rate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again
Stood challenger on mount of all the age 30
For her perfections, but my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that, you must not think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger,
And think it pastime, you shortly shall hear more, 35
I loved your father, and we love ourself,
And that I hope will teach you to imagine.

Enter a Messenger with Letters.

How now? What News?

Messen. Letters my Lord from Hamlet. This to your Majesty, this to
the Queen: 40

King. From *Hamlet*, who brought them?

Messen. Sailors my Lord they say, I saw them not,
They were given me by *Claudio*, he received them
Of him that brought them.

King. *Laertes* you shall hear them: leave us. [*Exit Messenger.*]
“High and mighty, you shall know I am set naked on your kingdom,
Tomorrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes, when I shall first
asking your pardon, thereunto recount the occasion of my sudden,
and more strange return.” Hamlet.

What should this mean, are all the rest come back, 50
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis *Hamlet's* character. Naked,
And in a postscript here he says alone,
Can you advise me? 55

Laer. I'm lost in it my Lord, but let him come,
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth
Thus *diest* thou.

King. If it be so *Laertes*, 60
As how should it be so, how otherwise,
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay my Lord, so you will not o'errule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace, if he be now returned
 As checking at his voyage, and that he means 65
 No more to undertake it, I will work him
 To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
 Under the which he shall not choose but fall:
 And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
 But even his Mother shall uncharge the practice, 70
 And call it accident.

Laer. My Lord I will be rul'd,
 The rather if you could devise it so
 That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right, 75
 You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
 And that in *Hamlet's* hearing, for a quality
 Wherein they say you shine, your sum of parts
 Did not together pluck such envy from him
 As did that one, and that in my regard 80
 Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that my Lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
 Yet needful too, for youth no less becomes 85
 The light and careless livery that it wears
 Then settled age, his sables, and his weeds
 Importing health and graveness; two months since,
 Here was a gentleman of *Normandy*,
 I have seen myself, and serv'd against the French,
 And they can well on horseback, but this gallant 90
 Had witchcraft in't, he grew unto his seat,
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorps'd, and demi-natur'd
 With the brave beast, so far he topp'd my thought,
 That I in forgery of shapes and tricks, 95
 Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life *Lamord*.

King. The very same. 100

Laer. I know him well, he is the brooch indeed
 And Gem of all the Nation.

King. He made confession of you,
 And gave you such a masterly report
 For art and exercise in your defence, 105
 And for your Rapier most especiall,
 That he cried out 'twould be a sight indeed
 If one could match you; the Scrimers of their nation
 He swore had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
 If you opposed them; sir this report of his 110
 Did *Hamlet* so envenom with his envy,
 That he could nothing do but wish and beg
 Your sudden coming o'er to play with him.
 Now, out of this.

Laer. What out of this my Lord? 115

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

Laer. Why ask you this?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father, 120
 But that I know, love is begun by time,
 And that I see in passages of proof,
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it,
 There lives within the very flame of love
 A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it, 125
 And nothing is at a like goodness still,
 For goodness growing to a plurisy,
 Dies in his own too much, that we would do
 We should do when we would: for this would changes
 And hath abatements and delays as many, 130
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents,
 And then this should is like a spendthrift sigh,
 That hurts by easing; but to the quick o' th'ulcer,
Hamlet comes back, what would you undertake
 To show yourself in deed your father's son 135
 More than in words?

Laer. To cut his throat i' th' Church.

King. No place indeed should murder sanctuarize,
 Revenge should have no bounds: but good *Laertes*
 Will you do this, keep close within your chamber,
Hamlet return'd, shall know you are come home, 140
 We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,

And set a double varnish on the fame
 The Frenchman gave you, bring you in fine together
 And wager on your heads; he being remiss,
 Most generous, and free from all contriving, 145
 Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease,
 Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
 A sword unbated, and in a pass of practice
 Requite him for your Father.

Laer. I will do't, 150
 And for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
 I bought an unction of a Mountebank,
 So mortal, that but dip a knife in it,
 Where it draws blood, no Cataplasm so rare,
 Collected from all simples that have virtue 155
 Under the Moon, can save the thing from death
 That is but scratch'd withal, I'll touch my point
 With this contagion, that if I gall him slightly, it may be death.

King. Let's further think of this.
 Weigh what convenience both of time and means 160
 May fit us to our shape if this should fail,
 And that our drift look through our bad performance,
 'Twere better not assay'd, therefore this project,
 Should have a back or second that might hold
 If this did blast in proof; soft let me see, 165
 We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,
 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 prepar'd him
 A Chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping, 170
 If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
 Our purpose may hold there; but stay, what noise?

Enter Queen.

How sweet Queen!

Quee. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
 So fast they follow; your Sister's drown'd *Laertes.* 175

Laer. Drown'd, O where?

Quee. There is a Willow grows ascant the Brook,
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream,
 There with fantastic garlands did she make
 Of Crowflowers, Nettles, Daisies, and long Purples 180