

HAMLET
by
William Shakespeare
adapted by
Merritt Olsen

Rehearsal Draft B

The play is set in a modern time. Seven actors play all of the roles. Character changes are made by adding or subtracting costume pieces or props located on or near the stage - hats, coats, weapons, etc. - to a costume associated with the character whose name is capitalized. For example, Actor 7's basic costume is that of Laertes. The set is minimal. A musician could be added, with actors assisting, to provide live sound effects and music. *SFX/Music* notations are only suggestions.

Actor 1
HAMLET, Prince of Denmark, son of the late King Hamlet
and Queen Gertrude

Actor 2
King Hamlet's Ghost
KING CLAUDIUS, brother to the late King Hamlet

Actor 3
QUEEN GERTRUDE, widow of King Hamlet, now married to Claudius
3rd Player
Fortinbras 1, Prince of Norway

Actor 4
HORATIO, Hamlet's friend and confidant
Guildenstern
2nd Player (Player Queen/Lucianus)

Actor 5
POLONIUS, father of Ophelia and Laertes, councillor to King Claudius
A Captain in Fortinbras' army
Servant
Gravedigger
Fortinbras 2

Actor 6
Bernardo
OPHELIA
4th Player
Osric

Actor 7
Marcellus
LAERTES, Ophelia's brother
Rosencrantz
First Player (Prologue and Player King)

Preshow - Recorded music with an Elizabethan/modern sensibility

Before curtain, actors converse with audience as they set props and costume pieces.

SFX Drumbeat

ENSEMBLE

So shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts,
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters,
Of deaths put on by cunning, and for no cause,
And in this upshot purposes mistook
Fall'n on th' inventors' heads. All this can I
Truly deliver.

PART OF THE ENSEMBLE (Actors 3 & 5)

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.

Live SFX (1) - cutting wind, then adding rattles, shakers, underscoring Ghost

ACT I Scene I. Elsinore exterior (night)

(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.

BERNARDO

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

HORATIO

Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

BERNARDO

It would be spoke to.

MARCELLUS

Speak to it, Horatio.

HORATIO

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

MARCELLUS

It is offended.

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

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 easily.

(Exeunt)

Live Music (?) - recorders, drums

ACT I Scene 2. A room of state Elsinore (the next morning)

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES)

KING 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 reason fought with emotion

That we with wisest sorrow think on him

Together with remembrance of ourselves.

Therefore our sometime sister, now our Queen,

Th'imperial jointress to this warlike state,

Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,

With an auspicious and a dropping eye,

With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,

In equal scale weighing delight and dole,

Taken to wife. Nor have we herein barr'd

Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone

With this affair. along For all, our thanks.

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?

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 favor to return to France,
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark
To show my duty in your coronation.

Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

KING CLAUDIUS

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

LORD POLONIUS

He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave

By laboursome petition, and at last

Upon his will I sealed my hard consent.

I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

KING CLAUDIUS

Take thy fair hour, Laertes, time be thine

And thy best graces spend it at thy will.

(Exit LAERTES)

But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son —

HAMLET [Aside]

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

KING CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET

Not so, my lord; I am too much i' the 'son.'

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off

And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy veiled lids

Seek for thy noble father in the dust.

Thou know'st 'tis common all that lives must die,

Passing through nature to eternity.

HAMLET

Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

(enter OPHELIA)

HAMLET

'Seems', madam — nay it is, I know not 'seems'.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,

That can denote me truly. These indeed 'seem',

For they are actions that a man might play.

But I have that within which passeth show,

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

KING CLAUDIUS

'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father,

(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.

But what in faith make you from Wittenberg?

HORATIO

A truant disposition, good my lord.

HAMLET

I would not hear your enemy say so.

I know you are not truant;

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you for to drink 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.

My father, methinks I see my father.

HORATIO

Where, my lord?

HAMLET

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HORATIO

I saw him once; he 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

For God's love, let me hear.

HORATIO

Two nights together had these gentlemen,

Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch

In the dead waste and middle of the night
Been thus encounter'd: A figure like your father,
Appears before them.

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

And vanish'd from our sight.

HAMLET

'Tis very strange.

HORATIO

It would have much amazed you.

HAMLET

Very like, very like. 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. I pray you all,
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight
Let it be held in silence still
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night
Give it an understanding, but no tongue,
I will repay your loves. 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 — in arms! All is not well;

I fear 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)

Music (6?) - guitar

ACT I Scene 3. A room in Polonius' house (following upon)

(Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA)

LAERTES

My necessaries are embarked; farewell.
And sister, as the winds give benefit
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep
But let me hear from you.

OPHELIA

Do you doubt that?

LAERTES

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

OPHELIA

No more but so.

LAERTES

Think it no more.

Perhaps he loves you now,
And now no blemish nor deceit besmirch
The virtue of his will; but you must fear,
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own.
For he himself is subject to his birth.
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 shyest maid is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear.

OPHELIA

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

LAERTES

O fear me not.

I stay too long.

(Enter POLONIUS)

But here my father comes.

LORD POLONIUS

Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard for shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail
And you are stayed for. There, my blessing with thee,
And these few precepts in thy memory
Look 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.
Give every man thy ear but few thy voice;
Take each man's opinion 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.
Neither a borrower nor a lender, boy,
OPHELIA

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
LAERTES
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
LORD POLONIUS

This above all, to thine own self 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

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)

LORD POLONIUS
What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

OPHELIA
So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

LORD POLONIUS
What is between you? Give me up the truth.

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

LORD 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.

LORD POLONIUS
Marry, I'll teach you; think yourself a baby
That you have taken these tenders for true pay
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly
Or — not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wronging it thus — you'll tender me a fool.

OPHELIA

My lord, he hath importuned me with love
In honourable fashion.

LORD 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.

LORD POLONIUS

Do not believe his vows, for they are salesmen
The better to beguile. This is for all;
I would not in plain terms from this time forth
Have you so slander any moment leisure
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.

OPHELIA

I shall obey, my lord.

(Exeunt)

SFX (3) - wind

ACT I Scene 4. Elsinore exterior (that night)

(Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS)

HAMLET

What hour now?

HORATIO

I think it lacks of twelve.

MARCELLUS

No, it is struck.

SFX (3,5 & 6)- rattles etc. underscore

(Enter GHOST)

HORATIO

Look, my lord, it comes.

HAMLET

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!
Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a curious shape
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane. O answer me!

(GHOST beckons HAMLET)

HORATIO

It beckons you to go away with it
As if it some impartment did desire
To you alone.

MARCELLUS

It waves you to a more removed ground:
But do not go with it.

(GHOST exits)

HORATIO

No, by no means.

HAMLET

It will not speak: then I will follow it.

HORATIO

Do not, my lord.

HAMLET

Hold off your hands.

HORATIO

Be ruled, you shall not go.

HAMLET

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me!

(HAMLET exits)

HORATIO

He waxes desperate with imagination.

MARCELLUS

Let's follow. 'Tis notify 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)

SFX - rattles etc.

Act I Scene 5. Another part of exterior (continuing)

(Enter GHOST and HAMLET)

HAMLET

Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak! I'll go no further.

GHOST

Mark me.

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.

HAMLET

Alas poor Ghost!

GHOST

 List, list, 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

 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 witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts —
O wicked wit and gifts that have the power
So to seduce — won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard —
My custom always of the afternoon —
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole
With juice of cursed hemlock in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leperous curd that courses through
The natural gates and alleys of my body.
Thus was I sleeping by a brother's hand
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatched.

HAMLET

O horrible, O horrible, most horrible!

GHOST

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:
Adieu, adieu, adieu, remember me.

SFX - rattles etc.

(Exit)

HAMLET

O all you host of heaven! 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,
That youth and observation copied there
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain
Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven,
O most pernicious woman,
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;
It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'

I have sworn't.

(Within)

MARCELLUS / 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

O, wonderful!

HORATIO

Good my lord, tell it.

HAMLET

No; you will reveal it.

HORATIO

Not I, my lord, by heaven.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord.

HAMLET

How say you, then? But you'll be secret?

HORATIO and MARCELLUS

Ay, by heaven.

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
I will go pray.

HORATIO

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

HAMLET

I'm sorry they offend you - heartily;
Yes, 'faith heartily. 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.

HORATIO

In faith, my lord, not I.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord, in faith.

HAMLET

Upon my sword.

MARCELLUS

We have sworn, my lord, already.

HAMLET

Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

GHOST

Swear. (*add SFX 3, 5 & 6*)

HAMLET

Ha, ha, boy, sayst 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,

Swear by my sword.

GHOST

Swear. (*add SFX 3, 5 & 6*)

HAMLET

Hic et ubique? Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen, and lay your hands
Again upon my sword. Swear by my sword
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

GHOST

Swear by his sword. (*add SFX 3, 5 & 6*)

HAMLET

Well said, old mole. Canst work i' th' earth so fast?—
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends.

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 some'er I bear myself
(As I perchance hereafter shall think fit
To put an antic disposition on) —
That you, at such times seeing me never shall,
With arms encumber'd thus, or this headshake,
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase
As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me: This do swear,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you.

GHOST

Swear. (*add SFX 3, 5 & 6*)

(They swear)

HAMLET

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit. So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
May do, t'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)

SFX (2&3)- energetic drumming to guitar

ACT II Scene 1. A room in POLONIUS' house. (a week has passed)

(Enter POLONIUS. Enter OPHELIA)

POLONIUS

How now, Ophelia, what's the matter?

OPHELIA

O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted.

LORD 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,

Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,

With a look so piteous on purport

As if he had been loosed out of hell

To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

LORD POLONIUS

Mad for thy love?

OPHELIA

My lord, I do not know,

But truly I do fear it.

LORD 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 'a 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.

LORD POLONIUS

This is the very ecstasy of love,

Whose violent property fordoes itself

And leads the will to desperate undertakings.

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

OPHELIA

No, my good lord, but, as you did command

I did repel his letters and denied

Him access to me.

LORD POLONIUS

That hath made him mad.

I am sorry that with better heed and judgment

I had not noticed him. Come, go we to the king:

This must be known. (Exeunt)

SFX (1,2 &3)- ping pong balls dropping and marimba

ACT II Scene 2. Interior Elsinore (immediately)

(Enter ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN for a moment then KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE)

KING CLAUDIUS

Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
Moreover that we much did long to see you
The need we have to use you did provoke
our hasty sending. Something have you heard
Of Hamlet's transformation — so call it
Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was. What it should be
I cannot dream of. I entreat you both
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.

QUEEN 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
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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guildenstern.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosencrantz.
And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.

GUILDENSTERN

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

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Ay, amen.

(Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN)

(Enter POLONIUS and OPHELIA)

LORD 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

More matter with less art.

LORD 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! And now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect —
Or rather say the cause of this defect,
For this effect defective comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus. Perpend,
I have a daughter—have while she is mine—
Who in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this. Now gather, and surmise.

OPHELIA

(reads)

*To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most
beautified Ophelia—*

LORD POLONIUS

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; 'beautified' is
a vile phrase, but you shall hear —

OPHELIA

(reads)

thus in her excellent white bosom, these, ect.

QUEEN GERTRUDE)

Came this from Hamlet to her?

LORD 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.*

(OPHELIA exits)

LORD POLONIUS

(reads)

*O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these poems;
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, as long
as I live in this body, 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

But how hath she

Received his love?

LORD POLONIUS

What do you think of me?

KING CLAUDIUS

As of a man faithful and honourable.

LORD POLONIUS

I'd fain prove so. 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, repelled, a short tale to make,
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Do you think 'tis this?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

It may be, very like.

LORD POLONIUS

Take this from this, if this be otherwise.
If circumstances lead me I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

KING CLAUDIUS

How may we try it further?

LORD POLONIUS

You know, sometimes he walks for several hours
Here in the lobby.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

So he does, indeed.

LORD 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.
KING CLAUDIUS

We will try it.

(Enter Hamlet)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

But look where sadly the poor wretch comes reading.

LORD POLONIUS

Away, I do beseech you both, away.

I'll board him presently. O give me leave.

(Exeunt KING CLAUDIUS and QUEEN GERTRUDE)

LORD POLONIUS

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET

Well, God-a-mercy.

LORD POLONIUS

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET

Excellent well, you are a fishmonger.

LORD POLONIUS

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET

Then I would you were so honest a man.

LORD POLONIUS

Honest, my lord?

HAMLET

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

LORD POLONIUS

That's very true, my lord.

HAMLET

For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
being a good kissing carrion—have you a daughter?

LORD 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.

LORD POLONIUS [Aside]

How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter.

He is far gone, far gone. I'll speak to him again.

What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET

Words, words, words.

LORD POLONIUS

What is the matter, my lord?

HAMLET

Between who?

LORD 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, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit together with most weak hams — all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down. For yourself, sir, shall grow old as I am— if, like a crab, you could go backward.

LORD POLONIUS [Aside]

Though this be madness yet there is method in 't. — Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

HAMLET

Into my grave.

LORD POLONIUS [Aside]

Indeed, that is out o' the air. How pregnant sometimes his replies are. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. — My lord, I will take my leave of you.

HAMLET

You cannot take from me anything that I will more willingly part withal — except my life, except my life, except my life.

LORD POLONIUS

Fare you well, my lord.

HAMLET

These tedious old fools!

(Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN)

LORD 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 you 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 news?

ROSENCRANTZ

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

HAMLET

Then is doomsday near — but your news is not true.

But, in the beaten way of friendship,

what make you at Elsinore?

ROSENCRANTZ

To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

HAMLET

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, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

ROSENCRANTZ [Aside to GUILDENSTERN]

What say you?

HAMLET

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 sustain no loss. I have of late, but
wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all
custom of exercises and, indeed, it goes so heavily
with my disposition that this goodly frame the
earth seems to me a sterile promontory, this most
excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave
o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted
with golden fire, why it appeareth nothing to
me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.
What a piece of work is a man —how noble in reason;
how infinite in faculties, in form and moving; how
express and admirable in action; how like an angel
in apprehension; how like a god; the beauty of the
world; the paragon of animals. And yet to me
what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not
me — nor woman neither, though by your smiling
you seem to say so.

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
meager reception the players shall receive from
you; we passed them on the way and hither are they
coming to offer you service.

Music (offstage players) - recorders and tambourine

GUILDENSTERN

There are the players.

HAMLET

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands,
come, then! 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)

POLONIUS

Well be with you, gentlemen.

HAMLET

Hark you, Guildenstern, and you too — at each ear a hearer. That great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling clouts.

ROSENCRANTZ

Happily is the second time come to them, for they say an old man is twice a child.

HAMLET

I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players. Mark it. — you say right, sir, o'Monday morning. 'twas then indeed.

LORD 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

Upon my honor

HAMLET

— Then came each actor on his ass.

(Exit Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

LORD POLONIUS

The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited. Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Music - recorders and tambourine

(Enter Players - actors 7, 4, 3 & 6)

HAMLET

You are welcome, masters, welcome, all. I am glad to see thee well. Welcome, good friends.

Come, give us a taste of your quality.

Come, a passionate speech.

FIRST PLAYER

What speech, my good lord?

HAMLET

I heard thee speak me a speech once.

'twas Aeneas' talk to Dido — let me see —

The hellish Pyrrhus

Old grandsire Priam seeks.

So, proceed you.

FIRST PLAYER

*So as a painted tyrant Pyrrhus stood
And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing. So, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work,
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forged for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.*

*Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune! All you gods
In general synod take away her power,
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel
And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven
As low as to the fiends.*

LORD POLONIUS

This is too long.

HAMLET

It shall to the barber's, with your beard. Prithee
say on—he's for a jig or a tale of bawdry, or he sleeps.
Say on, come to Hecuba.

FIRST PLAYER

But who—ah woe — had seen the mobled queen—

LORD POLONIUS

That's good 'The Mobled Queen'!

FIRST PLAYER

*— Run barefoot up and down, threatening the flames
With blind tears, a cloth upon that head
Where late the diadem stood and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up.
Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounced.
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 milk the burning eyes of heaven
and passion in the gods.*

LORD POLONIUS

Look, whether he has not turned his colour and has
tears in's eyes. — Prithee no more!

HAMLET

'Tis well: I'll have thee speak out the rest soon.
{to Polonius} Good my lord, will you see the players well
bestowed? Do you hear, let them be well used.

LORD POLONIUS

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

HAMLET

God's bodykin, 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.

LORD POLONIUS

Come, sirs.

HAMLET

Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.

(Exit the Players. POLONIUS and FIRST PLAYER remain)

SFX music

(aside to FIRST PLAYER) Dost thou hear me, old friend?

Can you play *The Murder of Gonzago*?

FIRST 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?

FIRST PLAYER

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

Very well. Follow that lord - and look you mock him not.

(Exit FIRST PLAYER and LORD POLONIUS)

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 own conceit
That from his working all his visage paled,
Tears in his eyes, frenzy in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole body suiting
With forms to his own mind — 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 do nothing. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain, breaks my pate across?
Who does me this?

'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 birds of prey
With this slave's guts — bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain.
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 stallion! Fie upon't, foh! About my brains!
Hum, 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 very soon
They have proclaim'd their evil doing.
I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks,
I'll probe him to the quick. If he but flinch,
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)
SFX Drumming (?)

ACT III Scene 1. Interior Elsinore (next day)

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN)

KING 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 disturbed
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

GUILDENSTERN

Nor do we find him disposed to be questioned
But with a crafty madness keeps aloof
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

QUEEN

Did you encourage him to any pastime?

ROSENCRANTZ

Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We overtook 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.

LORD POLONIUS

'Tis most true,

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

KING CLAUDIUS

With all my heart, and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclined.

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

ROSENCRANTZ

We shall my lord.

(Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN)

KING CLAUDIUS

Sweet Gertrude, leave us two.

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

QUEEN 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 QUEEN GERTRUDE)

LORD POLONIUS

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

I hear him coming — withdraw, my lord.

(KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS hide)

(Enter HAMLET)

HAMLET

--Soft you now!

The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy prayers

Be all my sins remember'd.

OPHELIA

Good my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day?

HAMLET

I humbly thank you, well.

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, you 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 (*throwing letters on the floor*)

Ha! Ha! Are you honest?

OPHELIA

My lord?

HAMLET

Are you fair?

OPHELIA

What means your lordship?

HAMLET

I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

HAMLET

You should not have believed me; 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.

We are arrant knaves — believe none of us.

Go thy ways to a nunnery.

(Noise within)

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 {Aside}

O help him, you sweet heavens!

HAMLET

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry: be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery. Farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery go, and quickly too. Farewell.

OPHELIA (Aside)

Heavenly powers restore him

HAMLET

Go to, I'll no more on't. It hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriage. Those that are married already, — all but one — shall live. The rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go!

(Exit HAMLET)

OPHELIA

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

O woe is me

T'have seen what I have seen, see what I see.

(Exit OPHELIA)

(Re-enter KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS)

KING CLAUDIUS

Love! His affections do not that way tend.
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood
And I do fear the unheated consequence
Will be some danger — which for to prevent
I have in quick determination
Thus set it down. He shall with speed to England.
To collect the debt the English owe us.
Perhaps the seas and countries different

With variable objects shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart.
What think you on't?
LORD POLONIUS
It shall do well. But yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia?
(OPHELIA enters)
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. If she find him not,
To England send him or confine him where
Your wisdom best shall think.
KING CLAUDIUS

It shall be so.

Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.
(Exeunt)

SFX (3/4/7)- drum heartbeat

(Enter Hamlet)

HAMLET (*picking up the scattered letters*)
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 —
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.

SFX - drum heartbeat

Live music - recorder and tambourine

ACT III Scene 2. Interior Elsinore (next day afternoon)

(Players 2,3 & 4 music / warming up /dressing)

(Enter HAMLET and FIRST PLAYER)

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 your passion, you must acquire and
beget a temperance that may give it smoothness.

FIRST PLAYER

I warrant your honour.

HAMLET

Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion
be your tutor. Suit the action to the word, the
word to the action; with this special observance — that
you o'erstep not the modesty of nature. For anything
so o'erdone is from the purpose of playing whose end,
both at the first and now, was and is to hold as 'twere,
the mirror up to Nature. Go, make you ready.

(Exit PLAYER)

HAMLET

What ho! Horatio!

(Enter HORATIO)

HORATIO

Here, sweet lord, at your service.

HAMLET

Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation coped withal.

HORATIO

O, my dear lord --

HAMLET

Nay, do not think I flatter,
For what advancement may I hope from thee
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
To feed and clothe thee? Give me that man

That is not passion's slave and I will wear him
In my heart's core—ay, in my heart of heart—
As I do thee. All together too much of this:
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,
Even with the very comment of thy soul
Observe mine uncle.
HORATIO

Well, my lord:

HAMLET

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

Music (7) - fanfare drum and pipe

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, and OPHELIA)

KING CLAUDIUS

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET

Excellent, i' faith. Be the players ready?

LORD POLONIUS

Ay, my lord; they stay upon your patience.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET

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

LORD POLONIUS[To KING 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

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?

Music (4) - guitar underscore

(Enter PROLOGUE)

PROLOGUE

For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

(Exit PROLOGUE)

HAMLET

Is this a prologue, or the posy on a ring?

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

SFX (1) Tamborine

(Enter two PLAYERS, KING and QUEEN)

PLAYER KING

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

PLAYER QUEEN

*So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!
But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I fear for you.*

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

Oh, confound the rest!

Such love must needs be treason in my breast.

In second husband let me be accurst:

No women should marry a second man

Unless t'was she killed off the first!

HAMLET

[Aside] Wormwood, wormwood.

PLAYER KING

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

PLAYER QUEEN

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

HAMLET

If she should break her promise now!

PLAYER KING

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

(Sleeps)

PLAYER QUEEN

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

(Exit)

(Applause)

HAMLET

Madam, how like you this play?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

HAMLET

O, but she'll keep her word.

KING CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

*The Mouse-trap. Marry, how? 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.*

SFX (1) - tamborine

(Enter LUCIANUS)

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

OPHELIA

You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

HAMLET

I could interpret between you and your love if I
could see the puppets dallying.

OPHELIA

You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

HAMLET

It would cost you a groaning to take off my edge.

OPHELIA

Still better, and worse.

HAMLET

Begin, murderer;

Come: 'the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.'

LUCIANUS

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing;

A darkened night, no creature seeing,

Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,

With witches curses, thrice infected,

Use your quick-moving property

To steal this wholesome life immediately.

(Pours the poison into the sleeper's ears)

HAMLET

He poisons him i' th' garden for his estate. His name's Gonzago. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

OPHELIA

The King rises.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How fares my lord?

LORD POLONIUS

Give up the play.

KING CLAUDIUS

Give me some light, away!

LORD POLONIUS

Lights! Lights! Lights!

(Exeunt all but HAMLET and HORATIO)

HAMLET

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

HORATIO

Very well, my lord.

HAMLET

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

HORATIO

I did very well note him.

(Exit HORATIO)

HAMLET

Ah, ha! Come, some music! Come, the recorders!

For if the king like not the comedy,

Why then, belike, he likes it not, in deed.

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?

GUILDENSTERN

No, my lord, with choler. The queen, your mother,
in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

HAMLET

You are welcome.

GUILDENSTERN

Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed.
If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer,
I will do your mother's commandment. If not, your pardon
and my return shall be the end of business.

HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

ROSENCRANTZ

What, my lord?

HAMLET

Make you a wholesome answer. But to the matter —
my mother, you say?

ROSENCRANTZ

Your behavior hath struck her into amazement and
admiration.

HAMLET

O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother. But
is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's
admiration? Impart.

ROSENCRANTZ

She desires to speak with you in her closet ere you
go to bed.

HAMLET

We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have
you any further trade with us?

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, you once did love me.

HAMLET

So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

ROSENCRANTZ

Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? You
do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if
you deny your griefs to your friend.

HAMLET

Sir, I lack advancement.

ROSENCRANTZ

How can that be, when you have the voice of the King himself for your succession in Denmark?

HAMLET

Ay sir, but while the grass grows —
(Re-enter PLAYERS {3 & 6} with recorders)

— O, the recorders! Let me see one.

To withdraw with you, why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

GUILDENSTERN

O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

HAMLET

I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET

I pray you.

GUILDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you.

GUILDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET

'Tis as easy as lying. Govern these holes with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music.

Look you, these are the stops.

GUILDENSTERN

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony. I have not the skill.

HAMLET

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me: you would play upon me! You would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass. And there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ. Yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe?

(Enter POLONIUS)

God bless you, sir.

LORD 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?

LORD POLONIUS

By the mass and 'tis like a camel indeed.

HAMLET

Methinks it is like a weasel.

LORD POLONIUS

It is backed like a weasel.

HAMLET

Or like a whale?

LORD POLONIUS

Very like a whale.

HAMLET

Then I will come to my mother by and by.

{aside} They fool me to the top of my bent. — I will come by and by. — Leave me, friends.

LORD POLONIUS

I will say so.

HAMLET

By and by is easily said.

(Exeunt all but HAMLET)

'Tis now the very witching time of night
When Churchyards yawn and hell itself breaths out
Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood
And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on. Soft! Now to my mother.
(Exit)

INTERMISSION - Recorded Music

Music (3/4/5/6/7)- choral ancient chant underscore

ACT III Scene 3. Interior Elsinore (following)

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS)

KING CLAUDIUS

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.
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 benefits for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
May one be pardoned and retain the offense?
What then? what remains? when one cannot repent?
O wretched state, O bosom black as death,
O limed soul 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. But now 'a is a-praying.

And now I'll do it. (draws weapon) And so 'a goes to
heaven,

And so am I revenged! That would be scanned:

A villain kills my father, and for that

I, his sole son, do this same villain send

To heaven.

Why, this is base and silly, not revenge.

To take him in the purging of his soul

When he is fit and season'd for his passage?

No. (sheathes weapon)

Up blade, and know thou a more horrid hint

When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage,

Or in th'incestuous pleasure of his bed,

At gaming, swearing, or about some act

That has no flavor 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)

KING CLAUDIUS

[Rising] My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.

Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

(Exit)

SFX (4/6/7)- drumming

ACT III Scene 4. The Queen's chambers (immediately following)

(Enter QUEEN GERTRUDE and POLONIUS)

LORD 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, mother!

QUEEN 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?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET

Mother, you have my father much offended.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come, come, you answer with a foolish tongue.

HAMLET

Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Why, how now, Hamlet!

HAMLET

What's the matter now?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Have you forgot me?

HAMLET

No, by the Cross, not so.

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife

And, would it were not so, you are my mother.

QUEEN 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me —

Help, ho!

LORD POLONIUS

[Behind] What, ho! Help!

HAMLET

[Drawing] How now! A rat! Dead, for a ducat, dead!

(Kills POLONIUS)

LORD POLONIUS

[Behind] O, I am slain!

(Falls and dies)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not. Is it the king?

QUEEN 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

As kill a king?

HAMLET

Ay, lady, it was my word.

(Discovers POLONIUS)

—Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell:

I took thee for thy better. Take thy fortune.

—Leave wringing of your hands. Peace, sit you down

And let me wring your heart. For so I shall

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brazed it so

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

HAMLET

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows

As false as dicers' oaths.

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 and command,

A stature 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?

You cannot call it love, for at your age

The heyday in the blood is tame, it's humble

And waits upon the judgment, and what judgment

Would step from this to this?

O shame, where is thy blush?

QUEEN 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—

QUEEN 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 kin
Of your precedent lord, a vice of kings,
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That stole the previous royal crown,
And put it in his pocket,
QUEEN GERTRUDE

No more!

HAMLET

—A king of shreds and patches—
SFX (4/6/7) - rattles etc. underscore
(Enter GHOST)

Save me and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What can I do my gracious lord?

QUEEN 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 urgent 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.
Speak to her, Hamlet.

HAMLET

How is it with you, lady?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy?

O gentle son,

Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

HAMLET

On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET

Do you see nothing there?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

HAMLET

Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No, nothing but ourselves.

HAMLET

Why, look you there! look, how it steals away—
My father, in his habit as he lived!
Look, where he goes!

(Exit GHOST)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

This the very coinage of your brain.
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

HAMLET

My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time
And makes as healthful music.
Mother, for love of grace 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.

QUEEN 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.
Goodnight, but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue if you have it not.
And when you are desirous to be bless'd
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord
(Pointing to POLONIUS)
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.
One word more, good lady!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What shall I do?

HAMLET

By no means

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.

QUEEN 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?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

'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.
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 out POLONIUS)
SFX (6) - drum

ACT IV Scene 3. Interior Elsinore (Short time passage)

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS and ROSENCRANTZ)

KING CLAUDIUS

How now! what hath befallen?

ROSENCRANTZ

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

KING CLAUDIUS

But where is he?

ROSENCRANTZ

Without, my lord, guarded, to know your pleasure.

KING CLAUDIUS

Bring him before us.

ROSENCRANTZ

Ho, Guildenstern! Bring in the lord!

(Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN)

KING CLAUDIUS

Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

HAMLET

At supper.

KING CLAUDIUS

At supper! where?

HAMLET

Not where he eats, but where 'a is eaten. A certain
convocation of politic worms are e'en at him.

KING CLAUDIUS

Alas! 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Go seek him there!

HAMLET

'A will stay till you come.

(Exeunt GUILDENSTERN)

KING CLAUDIUS

Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety —
Which we do care for, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done — must send thee
hence.

Therefore prepare thyself:

Th'associates tend, and every thing is bent

For England.

HAMLET

For England?

KING CLAUDIUS

Ay, Hamlet.

HAMLET

Good.

KING CLAUDIUS

So is it, if thou knewst our purposes.

HAMLET

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

Farewell, dear mother.

KING CLAUDIUS

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

HAMLET

My mother. Father and mother is man and wife.

Man and wife is one flesh. So, my mother.

Come, for England!

(Exit)

KING CLAUDIUS

Follow him close.

Tempt him with speed aboard.

(Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ)

And England, if my love thou do value,

Pay homage to us; which imports at full

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England!

For like the fever in my blood he rages

And thou must cure me.

(Exit)

SFX (3/6) - military cadence underscore

ACT IV Scene 4. A plain in Denmark (that night)

(Enter FORTINBRAS 1)

(Enter A CAPTAIN then HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN)

HAMLET

Good sir, whose powers are these?

CAPTAIN

They are of Norway, sir.

HAMLET

How purposed, sir, I pray you?

CAPTAIN

Against some part of Poland.

HAMLET

Who commands them, sir?

CAPTAIN

The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

HAMLET

Goes it against the main of Poland, sir,

Or for some frontier?

CAPTAIN

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.

To pay five ducats—five—I would not farm it.

HAMLET

Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

CAPTAIN

Yes, it is already garrison'd.

Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats

Will not debate the question of this straw.

HAMLET

The disease of too much wealth and peace,

That inward breaks, and shows no outward signs

Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

CAPTAIN

God buy you, sir.

(Exit)

ROSENCRANTZ

Will't please you go, my lord?

HAMLET

I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

(Exeunt all except HAMLET)

How all occasions do inform against me

And spur my dull revenge. I do not know

Why yet I live to say this thing's to do,

Since I have cause and will and strength and means

To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me—

Witness this army 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.

O, from this time forth,

My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth.

(Exeunt)

SFX - cadence out

ACT IV Scene 5. Elsinore interior (weeks later)

(Enter QUEEN GERTRUDE and HORATIO)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

I will not speak with her.

HORATIO

She pleads with you.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What does she want?

HORATIO

She speaks much of her father, says she hears
There's plots i' the world, and coughs and beats her heart,
Reacts suspiciously at straws, speaks things in doubt
That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move the hearers to attention.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

Let her come in.

(Exit HORATIO)

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

(Enter OPHELIA)

OPHELIA

Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

How now, Ophelia?

OPHELIA

(Sings)

How should I your true love know
From another one?
By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

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!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Nay, but, Ophelia—

OPHELIA

Pray you, mark.

(Sings)

White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, look here, my lord.

OPHELIA

[Sings]

Larded with sweet flowers

Which bewept to the grave did go

With true-love showers.

KING CLAUDIUS

How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA

Well, God 'ild you! Lord, we know what we are,
but know not what we may be. God be at your table!

KING CLAUDIUS

Distraction for 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Pretty Ophelia! —

OPHELIA

Indeed, I, 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,

If thou hadst not come to my bed.

KING 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'th' cold ground. My brother shall know of it. And so
I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my
coach! Goodnight, ladies, goodnight. Sweet ladies,
goodnight, goodnight.

(Exit OPHELIA)

KING 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, and now behold —
O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single spies
But in battalions.

(A noise within)

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alack, what noise is this?

KING CLAUDIUS

Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door.

(Enter SERVANT)

What is the matter?

SERVANT

Save yourself, my lord:

Young Laertes in a riotous head o'erbears your officers.

The rabble call him lord; they cry 'Laertes

Shall be king, Laertes king!'

KING CLAUDIUS

The doors are broke.

(Noise within)

(Enter LAERTES)

LAERTES

Where is this king? Sirs, stand you all without.

NOISES WITHIN

No, let's come in.

LAERTES

I pray you, give me leave.

Where is my father?

KING CLAUDIUS

Dead.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

But not by him.

KING CLAUDIUS

Let him demand his fill.

LAERTES

How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with.

To hell, allegiance, vows to the blackest devil,

I dare damnation. I'll be revenged

Most thoroughly for my father.

KING CLAUDIUS

Good Laertes,

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

LAERTES

None but his enemies.

KING CLAUDIUS

Will you know them then?

LAERTES

To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms.

KING CLAUDIUS

Why, now you speak

Like a good child and a true gentleman.

That I am guiltless of your father's death

And am most sensible in grief for it

It shall as level to your judgment 'pear

As day does to your eye.

VOICES WITHIN

Let her come in.

LAERTES

How now! what noise is that?

(Re-enter OPHELIA)

O rose of May!

Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!

OPHELIA

[Sings]

They bore him barefaced on the bier;

And in his grave rain'd many a tear:--

Fare you well, my dove!

LAERTES

Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,

It could not move thus.

OPHELIA

You must sing a-down a-down, and you call him
'a-down-a'. O, how the wheel becomes it. It is the
false steward, that stole his master's daughter.

LAERTES

This nothing's more than matter.

OPHELIA

There's rosemary: that's for remembrance. Pray, you
love, remember. And there is pansies: that's for thoughts

LAERTES

A document in madness— thoughts and remembrance fitted.

OPHELIA

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)

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

LAERTES

Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

OPHELIA

[Sings]

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.

God be wi' ye.

(Exeunt OPHELIA and QUEEN)

LAERTES

Do you see this, O God?

KING CLAUDIUS

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 they find us touched, we will our kingdom give -
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours -
To you in satisfaction. But, if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

LAERTES

Let this be so.

His means of death, his obscure burial, 175
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation,
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call 't in question.

(Exit Laertes)

KING CLAUDIUS

And where the offense is, let the great axe fall.

SFX (1/3) - marimba/drum underscore

(THE MURDER OF OPHELIA - mimed CLAUDIUS, 2 MURDERERS AND OPHELIA)

ACT IV Scene 6. Another interior Elsinore (Short time later)

(Enter HORATIO)

HORATIO

[Reads]

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. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England. Of them I have much to tell thee.

HAMLET.

(Exit)

ACT IV Scene 7. Another interior Elsinore (soon following)

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS and LAERTES)

KING CLAUDIUS

Now must your conscience my acquaintance seal
And you must put me in your heart for friend
Since 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 proceed not against these feats.

KING CLAUDIUS

O, for two special reasons. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks and for myself,
My virtue or my plague, be it either way,
She's so coupled to my life and soul
That as the star moves not but in his sphere
I could not live without her. The other motive
Is the great love the population bear him.

LAERTES

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

KING CLAUDIUS

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.

(Enter SERVANT)

How now! what news?

SERVANT

Letters, my lord, from Hamlet:
This to your majesty, this to the queen.

KING CLAUDIUS

From Hamlet!

KING CLAUDIUS

Laertes, you shall hear them. Leave us.

(Exit SERVANT)

(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 you pardon) there unto recount the occasion of my
sudden return.*

What should this mean?

LAERTES

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 didest thou.'

KING CLAUDIUS

If it be so, Laertes—

As how should it be so, how otherwise?—

Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES

Ay, my lord,

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

KING CLAUDIUS

If he be now return'd, 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 plot
And call it accident.,— But stay what noise?

(Enter QUEEN GERTRUDE)

How now, sweet queen!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

LAERTES

Drown'd! O, where?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

There is a willow grows askant a brook
That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream.
There with fantastic garlands did she come
Of crowflowers, 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

Alas, then, she is drown'd?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Drown'd, drown'd.

LAERTES

Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears.

Adieu, my lord. (Weeping)

I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze
But that this weeping drowns it.

(Exit)

KING 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.

(Exit CLAUDIUS, GERTRUDE does not follow)

SFX (6 / 7) - bells

ACT V Scene 1. A churchyard. (Next day)

(GRAVEDIGGER digs and sings)

GRAVEDIGGER

In youth, when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet
To contract-a the time, for-ah- my behove,
O, methought, there-a was nothing-a meet.

(Enter HAMLET and HORATIO, at a distance)

HAMLET

Has this fellow no feeling of his business? 'A
sings in grave-making.

HORATIO

Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

GRAVEDIGGER

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

(Throws up a skull)

HAMLET

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

GRAVEDIGGER

Mine, sir.

HAMLET

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

GRAVEDIGGER

You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours, For my part I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

HAMLET

'Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine.

'Tis for the dead, not for the quick. Therefore thou liest.

GRAVEDIGGER

'Tis a quick lie, sir, 'twill away gain from me to you.

HAMLET

What man dost thou dig it for?

GRAVEDIGGER

For no man, sir.

HAMLET

What woman, then?

GRAVEDIGGER

For none, neither.

HAMLET

Who is to be buried in't?

GRAVEDIGGER

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?

GRAVEDIGGER

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?

GRAVEDIGGER

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?

GRAVEDIGGER

Why, because he was mad. He shall recover his wits there. Or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

HAMLET

Why?

GRAVEDIGGER

'Twill a not be seen in him there. There the men are as mad as he.

HAMLET

How came he mad?

GRAVEDIGGER

Very strangely, they say.

HAMLET

How strangely?

GRAVEDIGGER

Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

HAMLET

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

GRAVEDIGGER

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

HAMLET

Whose was it?

GRAVEDIGGER A whoreson mad fellow's it was. Whose do you think it was?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not.

GRAVEDIGGER

A pestilence on him for a mad rogue. A' poured a
flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull,
sir, was, sir, Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

HAMLET

This?

GRAVEDIGGER

E'en that.

(GRAVEDIGGER Exits)

HAMLET

(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 rises at
it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know
not how oft. Where be your taunts now — your
tricks, your songs, your flashes of merriment,
that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one
now to mock your own grinning, quite chap-fallen.

(Puts down the skull)

But soft, but soft awhile, here comes the King
and Queen.

(Enter BERNARDO, the Corpse of OPHELIA, SERVANT, LAERTES; CLAUDIUS and
GERTRUDE)

Who is this they follow? And with such meager
rites? Couch we awhile and mark.

(Retiring with HORATIO)

LAERTES

Lay her i' the earth:

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh

May violets spring.

(Ophelia's corpse is placed in the ground)

HAMLET

What, the fair Ophelia?

QUEEN 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)

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead
Till of this flat a mountain you have made.

HAMLET

[Advancing] What is he whose grief

Bears such an emphasis? This is I,

Hamlet the Dane.

(Leaps into the grave)

LAERTES

The devil take thy soul!

(Grappling with him)

HAMLET

Hold off thy hand.

KING CLAUDIUS

Pluck them asunder.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Hamlet, Hamlet!

ALL

Gentlemen!

HORATIO

Good my lord, be quiet.

(They part)

HAMLET

Why I will fight with him upon this theme

Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

O my son, what theme?

HAMLET

I loved Ophelia—forty thousand brothers

Could not, with all their quantity of love,

Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

KING CLAUDIUS

O, he is mad, Laertes.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

For love of God, forbear him.

HAMLET

Dost thou come here to whine?

To outface me with leaping in her grave?

I'll rant as well as thou.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, it is
his madness: not his heart.

HAMLET

So 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 HAMLET)

KING CLAUDIUS

I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him.
(Exit HORATIO)

Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
(Exit GERTRUDE)

KING CLAUDIUS

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

LAERTES

Why ask you this?

KING CLAUDIUS

What would you undertake
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

LAERTES

To cut his throat i' th' church.

KING CLAUDIUS

No place indeed should murder sanctuarize.
Revenge should have no bounds.
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 this one quality did.

We'll put on those shall praise your excellence
For your fencing most especially,
Bring you and Hamlet in fine together
And wager on your heads. Hamlet,
Most generous and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils, so that with ease
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated and in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

LAERTES

I will do it:

And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an ointment of a mountebank
So deadly that, but dip a knife in it,

Where it draws blood no remedy
Can save the thing from death
That is but scratch'd withal. I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that if I cut him slightly
It may be death.

KING CLAUDIUS

Let's further think of this. If this should fail,
This project should have a back or
second that might hold. Soft! 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 match, whereon but sipping
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. Strengthen your patience;
We'll put the matter to the present push.

(Exeunt)

SFX (3&5) - drum

ACT V Scene 2. A hall Elsinore (Next afternoon)

(Enter HAMLET and HORATIO)

HAMLET

Up from my cabin, in the dark
Groped I to find them out, had my desire,
Pilfered their papers, where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery—an exact command
Larded with many several sorts of reasons
That on the reading, no time wasted—
No, not to stay the sharp'ning of the axe—
My head should be struck off.

HORATIO

Is't possible?

HAMLET

Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
I sat me down, devised a new commission,
Wrote it fair—An earnest asking from the King,
As England was his faithful tributary,
He should those bearers put to sudden death.

HORATIO

So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

HAMLET

Why, man, they did make love to this employment.
They are not near my conscience.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself.
For by the image of my course I see his.

HORATIO

Peace! who comes here?

(Enter OSRIC)

OSRIC

Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

HAMLET

I humbly thank you sir. Dost know this water-fly?

HORATIO

No my good lord.

OSRIC

Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

HAMLET

I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit.

Put your bonnet to his right use: 'tis for the head.

OSRIC

I thank your lordship, it is very hot.

HAMLET

No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

OSRIC

It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

HAMLET

But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

OSRIC

Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry,--as 'twere,--I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head. Sir, this is the matter,--

HAMLET

I beseech you, remember--

(HAMLET moves him to put on his hat)

OSRIC

Nay, good my lord; for mine ease, in good faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes—believe me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society and great showing.

HAMLET

What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

OSRIC

Of Laertes?

HAMLET

Of him, sir.

OSRIC

I know you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon. The king, sir, hath laid that in a dozen passes between yourself and him he shall not exceed you three hits. He hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come to immediate trial if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

HAMLET

How if I answer no?

OSRIC

I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

HAMLET

Sir, if it please his majesty, let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose. I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

OSRIC

Shall I deliver you so?

HAMLET

In whatever elaborate style you wish.

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 practice. 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

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

HAMLET

Not a whit. We defy prophesy. There's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be, '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.

Music fanfare

(Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, LAERTES, Lords and OSRIC with foils)

KING CLAUDIUS)

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

(KING 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, I here proclaim was madness. Let my disclaiming from a purposed evil Free me so far in your most generous thoughts As if I had shot an arrow o'er my house And hit my brother.

LAERTES

I am satisfied in nature,

Whose motive in this case should stir me most
To my revenge. But in my terms of honour
I stand aloof and will no reconciliation
Till by some elder masters of known honour
I have a voice and precedent of peace
To keep my name unstained. Until such time
I do receive your offered 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

HAMLET

Very well, my lord
Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.
KING CLAUDIUS

I do not fear it. I have seen you both
But since he is better we have therefore odds.

LAERTES

This is too heavy, let me see another.

HAMLET

This likes me well. These foils have all a length?
(They prepare to play)

OSRIC

Ay, my good lord.

KING CLAUDIUS

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath
And in the cup a jewel shall he throw
Richer than that which four successive kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heaven to earth,
'Now the king drinks to Hamlet. Come, begin.
And you, the judges, 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine:

Here's to thy health.

(KING drinks)

Give him the cup.

HAMLET

I'll play this bout first. Set it by awhile.

(They play)

Come another hit! — What say you?

LAERTES

A touch, a touch, I do confess.

KING CLAUDIUS

Our son shall win.

QUEEN 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.

KING CLAUDIUS

Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

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

(QUEEN GERTRUDE drinks)

KING CLAUDIUS {Aside}

It is the poisoned cup! It is too late.

HAMLET

I dare not drink yet, madam. By and by.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Come, let me wipe thy face.

LAERTES {aside to King}

My lord, I'll hit him now.

KING CLAUDIUS {aside to Laertes}

I do not think't.

HAMLET

Come for the third, Laertes, you but dally.

I pray you pass with your best violence.

I am sure 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 weapons, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES)

KING CLAUDIUS

Part them — they are incensed.

HAMLET

Nay, come again.

(QUEEN 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

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

HAMLET

How does the queen?

KING CLAUDIUS

She swoons to see them bleed.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No, no, the drink, the drink, O my dear Hamlet,

The drink, the drink. I am poison'd.

(Dies)

HAMLET

O villainy! Ho! Let the door be lock'd.

Treachery! Seek it out.

LAERTES

Hamlet, thou art slain.

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand

Unbated and evenom'd. The king's to blame.

HAMLET

The point evenom'd too? Then venom to thy work!

(Hurts KING CLAUDIUS)

ALL

Treason, treason!

KING CLAUDIUS

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

HAMLET

Here, thou incestuous, damned Dane!

Drink of this potion. Is the

union here?

Follow my mother.

(KING CLAUDIUS dies)

LAERTES

He is justly served.

It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet,
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me. (Dies)

HAMLET

Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.
I am dead, Horatio.
Thou livest: report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

HORATIO

Never believe it.

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane:
Here's yet some liquor left.

HAMLET

As thou'rt a man

Give me the cup. Let go! by heaven, I'll have't!
O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall I leave behind
me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart
Delay the sweet relief of death awhile
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.

SFX (5)- military drum

What warlike noise is this?

OSRIC

Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland
To give this warlike volley.

HAMLET

O, I die, Horatio.

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit,
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice.
So tell him all the events more and less
Which have solicited —
The rest is silence. (Dies)

HORATIO

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

SFX- (6) military drum

(Enter FORTINBRAS 3)

Let four captains

Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have proved most royal. And for his passage
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.

Take up the bodies. Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

SFX (6) - drumbeat changes

OSRIC

So oft it chances in particular men

That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,

By their o'ergrowth of some complexion

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,

Or by some habit grown too much — that these men,

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect

Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,

Shall in the general censure take corruption

From that particular fault.

FINIS

{Recorded music for curtain call}