

HORATIO:

That can I,

T At least the whisper goes so: our last king, 80  
 Whose image even but now appear'd to us,  
 Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
 Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate° pride,  
 Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet  
 (For so this side of our known world esteem'd him) 85  
 Did slay this Fortinbras, who, by a seal'd compact  
 Well ratified by law and heraldy,°  
 Did forfeit (with his life) all [those] his lands  
 Which he stood seiz'd of,° to the conqueror;  
 Against the which a moi'ty° competent° 90  
 Was gaged° by our king, which had° [return'd]  
 To the inheritance° of Fortinbras,  
 Had he been vanquisher; as by the same comart°  
 And carriage° of the article [design'd°],  
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras, 95  
 Of unimproved° mettle hot and full,  
 Hath in the skirts° of Norway here and there  
 Shark'd up° a list of lawless resolute  
 For food and diet to some enterprise  
 That hath a stomach° in't, which is no other, 100  
 As it doth well appear unto our state,  
 But to recover of us, by strong hand  
 And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands  
 So by his father lost; and this, I take it,  
 Is the main motive of our preparations, 105  
 The source of this our watch, and the chief head°  
 Of this post-haste and romage° in the land.  
 BARNARDO: I think it be no other but e'en so.  
 Well may it sort° that this portentous° figure  
 Comes armed through our watch so like the King 110

83. *emulate*: Emulous, proceeding from rivalry. 87. *law and heraldy*: Heraldic law (governing combat). *Heraldry* is a variant of *heraldry*. 89. *seiz'd of*: Possessed of. 90. *moi'ty*: Portion. *competent*: Adequate, i.e. equivalent. 91. *gaged*: Pledged. *had*: Would have. 92. *inheritance*: Possession. 93. *comart*: Bargain. 94. *carriage*: Tenor. *design'd*: Drawn up. 96. *unimproved*: Untried (?) or not directed to any useful end (?). 97. *skirts*: Outlying territories. 98. *Shark'd up*: Gathered up hastily and indiscriminately. 100. *stomach*: Relish of danger (?) or demand for courage (?). 106. *head*: Source. 107. *romage*: Rummage, bustling activity. 109. *sort*: Fit. *portentous*: Ominous.

Unto young Hamlet, for, upon my life,  
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him. 170  
 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 convenient. *Exeunt.* 175

## [Scene 2]°

*Flourish.*° Enter CLAUDIUS, KING OF DENMARK, GERTRUDE THE  
 QUEEN; COUNCIL: as POLONIUS; and his son LAERTES, HAMLET,  
*cum aliis*° [including VOLTEMAND and CORNELIUS].

T KING: Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted°  
 To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom  
 To be contracted in° one brow of woe,°  
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature 5  
 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, 10  
 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 15  
 With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
 Now follows that you know° young Fortinbras,  
 Holding a weak supposal° of our worth,  
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20  
 Co-leagued° with this dream of his advantage,  
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message°

1.2. Location: The castle. o.s.d. Flourish: Trumpet fanfare. *cum aliis*: With others.  
 2. befitted: Would befit. 4. contracted in: (1) Reduced to; (2) knit or wrinkled in.  
 brow of woe: Mournful brow. 9. jointress: Joint holder. 10. defeated: Impaired.  
 11. auspicious . . . dropping: Cheerful . . . weeping. 15. freely: Fully, without reser-  
 vation. 17. know: Be informed, learn. 18. supposal: Conjecture, estimate. 21.  
 Co-leagued: Joined. 22. pester . . . message: Trouble me with persistent messages  
 (the original sense of *pester* is "overcrowd").

Importing° the surrender of those lands  
 Lost by his father, with all bands° of law,  
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him.  
 Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting,  
 Thus much the business is: we have here writ  
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras —  
 Who, impotent and bedred,° scarcely hears  
 Of this his nephew's purpose — to suppress  
 His further gait° herein, in that the levies,  
 The lists, and full proportions are all made  
 Out of his subject;° and we here dispatch  
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltmand,  
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,  
 Giving to you no further personal power  
 To business with the King, more than the scope  
 Of these delated° articles allow. [Giving a paper.]  
 Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

✚ CORNELIUS, VOLTEMAND: In that, and all things, will we show  
 our duty.

KING: We doubt it nothing;° heartily farewell.  
 [Exeunt Voltmand and Cornelius.]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
 You told us of some suit, what is't, Laertes?  
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane  
 And lose° your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,  
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?  
 The head is not more native° to the heart,  
 The hand more instrumental° to the mouth,  
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes?

LAERTES: My dread lord,  
 Your leave and 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,

23. Importing: Having as import. 24. bands: bonds, binding terms. 29. impot  
 and bedred: Feeble and bedridden. 31. gait: Proceeding. 31-33. in . . . subj  
 Since the troops are all drawn from his subjects. 38. delated: Extended, detaile  
 variant of *dilated*). 41. nothing: Not at all. 45. lose: Waste. 47. native: Clo  
 related. 48. instrumental: Serviceable. 51. leave and favor: Gracious permissio

And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.<sup>56</sup>  
 KING: Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?  
 POLONIUS: H'ath,<sup>58</sup> my lord, wrung from me my slow leave  
 By laborsome petition, and at last  
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard<sup>60</sup> consent. 60  
 I do beseech you give him leave to go.  
 KING: Take thy fair hour, Laertes, time be thine,  
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will!  
 But now, my cousin<sup>64</sup> Hamlet, and my son —  
 HAMLET: [*Aside.*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.<sup>65</sup> 65  
 KING: How is it that the clouds still hang on you?  
 HAMLET: Not so, my lord, I am too much in the sun.<sup>67</sup>  
 QUEEN: Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted color off,  
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
 Do not for ever with thy vailed<sup>70</sup> lids 70  
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust.  
 Thou know'st 'tis common,<sup>72</sup> all that lives must die,  
 Passing through nature to eternity.  
 HAMLET: Ay, madam, it is common.  
 QUEEN: If it be,  
 Why seems it so particular<sup>75</sup> with thee? 75  
 HAMLET: Seems, madam? nay, it is, I know not "seems."  
 'Tis not alone my inky cloak, [good] mother,  
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
 Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,  
 No, nor the fruitful<sup>80</sup> river in the eye, 80  
 Nor the dejected havior of the visage,  
 Together with all forms, moods, [shapes] of grief,  
 That can [denote] me truly. These indeed seem,  
 For they are actions that a man might play,  
 But I have that within which passes show, 85  
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.  
 KING: 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,  
 To give these mourning duties to your father.  
 But you must know your father lost a father,

56. **pardon**: Permission to depart. 58. **H'ath**: He hath. 60. **hard**: Reluctant. 64. **cousin**: Kinsman (used in familiar address to any collateral relative more distant than a brother or sister; here to a nephew). 65. **A little . . . kind**: Closer than a nephew, since you are my mother's husband; yet more distant than a son, too (and not well disposed to you). 67. **sun**: With obvious quibble on *son*. 70. **vailed**: Downcast. 72. **common**: General, universal. 75. **particular**: Individual, personal. 80. **fruitful**: Copious.

T That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound 90  
 In filial obligation for some term  
 To do obsequious<sup>92</sup> sorrow. But to persever  
 In obstinate condolement<sup>93</sup> is a course  
 Of impious stubbornness, 'tis unmanly grief,  
 It shows a will most incorrect<sup>95</sup> to heaven, 95  
 A heart unfortified, or mind impatient,  
 An understanding simple and unschool'd:  
 For what we know must be, and is as common  
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,<sup>99</sup>  
 Why should we in our peevish opposition 100  
 Take it to heart? Fie, 'tis a fault to<sup>101</sup> heaven,  
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
 To reason most absurd,<sup>103</sup> whose common theme  
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
 From the first corse till he that died to-day, 105  
 "This must be so." We pray you throw to earth  
 This unprevailing<sup>107</sup> woe, and think of us  
 As of a father, for let the world take note  
 You are the most immediate to our throne,  
 And with no less nobility of love 110  
 Than that which dearest<sup>111</sup> father bears his son  
 Do I impart<sup>112</sup> toward you. For your intent  
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
 It is most retrograde to our desire,  
 And we beseech you bend you to remain 115  
 Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.  
 QUEEN: Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet,  
 I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.  
 HAMLET: I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120  
 KING: Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.  
 Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come.  
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet  
 Sits smiling to my heart, in grace whereof,  
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day, 125

92. **obsequious**: Proper to obsequies. 93. **condolement**: Grief. 95. **incorrect**: Unsubmissive. 99. **any . . . sense**: What is perceived to be commonest. 101. **to**: Against. 103. **absurd**: Contrary. 107. **unprevailing**: Unavailing. 111. **dearest**: Most loving. 112. **impart**: I.e. impart love.

But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
And the King's rouse<sup>o</sup> the heaven shall bruit<sup>o</sup> again,  
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

*Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

HAMLET: O that this too too sallied<sup>o</sup> flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew! 130  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon<sup>o</sup> 'gainst [self-]slaughter! O God, God,  
How [weary], stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses<sup>o</sup> of this world!  
Fie on't, ah fie! 'tis an unweeded garden 135  
That grows to seed, things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely.<sup>o</sup> That it should come [to this]!  
But two months dead, nay, not so much, not two.  
So excellent a king, that was to<sup>o</sup> this  
Hyperion<sup>o</sup> to a satyr, so loving to my mother 140  
That he might not beteem<sup>o</sup> the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth,  
Must I remember? Why, she should hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on, and yet, within a month — 145  
Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman! —  
A little month, or ere<sup>o</sup> those shoes were old  
With which she followed my poor father's body,  
Like Niobe,<sup>o</sup> all tears — why, she, [even she] —  
O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason<sup>o</sup> 150  
Would have mourn'd longer — married with my uncle,  
My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,  
Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous<sup>o</sup> tears  
Had left the flushing<sup>o</sup> in her galled<sup>o</sup> eyes, 155  
She married — O most wicked speed: to post

127. rouse: Bumper, drink. bruit: Loudly declare. 129. sallied: Sullied. See the Textual Notes. Many editors prefer the F1 reading, *solid*. 132. canon: Law. 134. uses: Customs. 137. merely: Utterly. 139. to: In comparison with. 140. Hyperion: The sun-god. 141. beteem: Allow. 147. or ere: Before. 149. Niobe: She wept endlessly for her children, whom Apollo and Artemis had killed. 150. wants . . . reason: Lacks the power of reason (which distinguishes men from beasts). 154. unrighteous: I.e. hypocritical. 155. flushing: Redness. galled: Inflamed.

With such dexterity to incestuous<sup>o</sup> sheets,  
It is not, nor it cannot come to good,  
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue.

*Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BARNARDO.*

HORATIO: Hail to your lordship!  
HAMLET: I am glad to see you well. 160  
Horatio — or I do forget myself.  
HORATIO: The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.  
HAMLET: Sir, my good friend — I'll change<sup>o</sup> that name with  
you.  
And what make you from<sup>o</sup> Wittenberg, Horatio?  
Marcellus. 165  
MARCELLUS: My good lord.  
HAMLET: I am very glad to see you. [*To Barnardo.*] Good even,  
sir. —  
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?  
HORATIO: A truant disposition,<sup>o</sup> good my lord.  
HAMLET: I would not hear your enemy say so, 170  
Nor shall you do my ear that violence  
To make it truster of your own report  
Against yourself. I know you are no truant.  
But what is your affair in Elsinore?  
We'll teach you to drink [deep] ere you depart. 175  
HORATIO: My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.  
HAMLET: I prithee do not mock me, fellow student,<sup>o</sup>  
I think it was to [see] my mother's wedding.  
HORATIO: Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.  
HAMLET: Thrift, thrift, Horatio, the funeral bak'd-meats 180  
Did coldly<sup>o</sup> furnish forth the marriage tables.  
Would I had met my dearest<sup>o</sup> foe in heaven  
Or<sup>o</sup> ever I had seen that day, Horatio!  
My father — methinks I see my father.  
HORATIO: Where, my lord?

157. incestuous: Incestuous. The marriage of a man to his brother's widow was so regarded until long after Shakespeare's day. 163. change: Exchange. 164. what . . . from: What are you doing away from. 169. truant disposition: Inclination to play truant. 177. student: Student. 181. coldly: When cold. 182. dearest: Most intensely hated. 183. Or: Ere, before.



HORATIO: I warr'nt 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, 245  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable° in your silence still,  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding but no tongue.  
I will requite your loves. So fare you well. 250  
Upon the platform 'twixt aleven° and twelf  
I'll visit you.

ALL: Our duty to your honor.

HAMLET: Your loves, as mine to you; farewell.

*Exeunt [all but Hamlet].*

My father's spirit — in arms! All is not well,  
I doubt° some foul play. Would the night were come! 255  
Till then sit still, my soul. [Foul] deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. *Exit.*

[Scene 3]°

*Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA, his sister.*

LAERTES: My necessities are inbark'd°. Farewell.  
And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
And convey [is] assistant°, do not sleep,  
But let me hear from you.

OPHELIA: Do you doubt that?

LAERTES: For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favor, 5  
Hold it a fashion° and a toy in blood°,  
A violet in the youth of primy° nature,  
Forward°, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,  
The perfume and suppliance° of a minute —  
No more.

OPHELIA: No more but so?

LAERTES: Think it no more: 10

247. tenable: Held close. 251. aleven: Eleven. 255. doubt: Suspect. 1.3. Location: Polonius's quarters in the castle. 1. inbark'd: Embarked, abroad. 3. convey is assistant: Means of transport is available. 6. a fashion: I.e. standard behavior for a young man. toy in blood: Idle fancy of youthful passion. 7. primy: Springlike. 8. Forward: Early of growth. 9. suppliance: Pastime.

For nature crescent° does not grow alone  
In thews° and [bulk], but as this temple waxes,  
The inward service of the mind and soul  
Grows wide withal°. Perhaps he loves you now,  
And now no soil° nor cautel° doth besmirch 15  
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:]  
He may not, as unvalued° persons do,  
Carve for himself°, for on his choice depends 20  
The safety and health of this whole state,  
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd  
Unto the voice° and yielding° of that body°  
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,  
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25  
As he in his particular act and place°  
May give his saying deed, which is no further  
Than the main° voice of Denmark goes withal°. <sup>virtue</sup>  
Then weigh what loss your honor may sustain  
If with too credent° ear you list his songs, 30  
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
To his unmast'rd importunity.  
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,  
And keep you in the rear of your affection,  
Out of the shot° and danger of desire.  
The chariest maid is prodigal enough <sup>use reason (-masc. + plaus.)</sup>  
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.  
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes.  
The canker° galls the infants of the spring  
Too oft before their buttons° be disclos'd°, 40  
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
Contagious blastments° are most imminent.

11. crescent: growing, increasing. 12. thews: Muscles, sinews. 12-14. as ... withal: As the body develops, the powers of mind and spirit grow along with it. 15. soil: Stain. cautel: Deceit. 16. will: Desire. 17. His greatness weigh'd: Considering his princely status. 19. unvalued: Of low rank. 20. Carve for himself: Indulge his own wishes. 23. voice: Vote, approval. yielding: Consent. that body: I.e. the state. 26. in ... place: I.e. acting as he must act in the position he occupies. 28. main: General. goes withal: Accord with. 30. credent: Credulous. 35. shot: Range. 39. canker: Canker-worm. 40. buttons: Buds. disclos'd: Opened. 42. blastments: Withering blights.

Be wary then, best safety lies in fear:

Youth to<sup>o</sup> itself rebels, though none else near.

OPHELIA: I shall the effect of this good lesson keep 45  
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,  
Do not, as some ungracious<sup>o</sup> pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
Whiles, [like] a puff'd<sup>o</sup> and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads, 50  
And reaks<sup>o</sup> not his own rede.<sup>o</sup> *she's not his own advice*

LAERTES: O, fear me not.<sup>o</sup>

Enter POLONIUS.

I stay too long — but here my father comes.

A double blessing is a double grace,

Occasion<sup>o</sup> smiles upon<sup>o</sup> a second leave.

POLONIUS: Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for shame! 55

The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,

And you are stay'd for. There — [*laying his hand on*

*Laertes' head*] my blessing with thee!

And these few precepts in thy memory

Look thou character.<sup>o</sup> Give thy thoughts no tongue,

Nor any unproportion'd<sup>o</sup> thought his act. 60

Be thou familiar,<sup>o</sup> but by no means vulgar:<sup>o</sup>

Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,<sup>o</sup>

Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel,

But do not dull thy palm with entertainment

Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd courage.<sup>o</sup> Beware 65

Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,

Bear't that<sup>o</sup> th' opposed may beware of thee.

Give every man thy ear, but few thy voice,

Take<sup>o</sup> each man's censure,<sup>o</sup> but reserve thy judgment.

Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70

But not express'd in fancy, rich, not gaudy,

For the apparel oft proclaims the man,

44. to: Of. 47. ungracious: Graceless. 49. puff'd: Bloated. 51. reaks: Recks, heeds. rede: Advice. fear me not: Don't worry about me. 54. Occasion: Opportunity (here personified, as often). smiles upon: I.e. graciously bestows. 59. character: Inscribe. 60. unproportion'd: Unfitting. 61. familiar: Affable, sociable. vulgar: Friendly with everybody. 62. their adoption tried: Their association with you tested and proved. 65. courage: Spirited, young blood. 67. Bear't that: Manage it in such a way that. 69. Take: Listen to. censure: Opinion.

And they in France of the best rank and station

[Are] of a most select and generous<sup>o</sup> chief<sup>o</sup> in that.

Neither a borrower nor a lender [be], 75

For [loan] oft loses both itself and friend,

And borrowing dulleth [th'] edge of husbandry.<sup>o</sup>

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. 80

Farewell, my blessing season<sup>o</sup> this in thee!

LAERTES: Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

POLONIUS: The time invests<sup>o</sup> you, go, your servants tend.<sup>o</sup>

LAERTES: Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well

What I have said to you.

OPHELIA: 'Tis in my memory lock'd, 85

And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

LAERTES: Farewell.

*Exit Laertes.*

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

OPHELIA: So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

POLONIUS: Marry,<sup>o</sup> well bethought. 90

'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you, and you yourself

Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.

If it be so — as so 'tis put on<sup>o</sup> me,

And that in way of caution — I must tell you, 95

You do not understand yourself so clearly

As it behooves my daughter and your honor.

What is between you? Give me up the truth.

OPHELIA: He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders<sup>o</sup>

Of his affection to me. 100

POLONIUS: Affection, puh! You speak like a green girl,

Unsifted<sup>o</sup> in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

OPHELIA: I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

POLONIUS: Marry, I will teach you: think yourself a baby 105

That you have ta'en these tenders<sup>o</sup> for true pay,

74. generous: Noble. chief: Eminence (?). But the line is probably corrupt. Perhaps of a is intrusive, in which case chief = chiefly. 77. husbandry: Thrift. 81. season: Preserve (?) or ripen, make fruitful (?). 83. invests: Besieges. tend: Wait. 90. Marry: Indeed (originally the name of the Virgin Mary used as an oath). 94. put on: Told to. 99. tenders: Offers. 102. Unsifted: Untried. 106. tenders: With play on the sense "money offered in payment" (as in legal tender).

*Polonius redefines Ophelia's words.*

*he changes tender*

Which are not sterling. Tender<sup>o</sup> yourself more dearly,  
 Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
 [Wringing<sup>o</sup>] it thus) you'll tender me a fool.<sup>o</sup>  
 OPHELIA: My lord, he hath importun'd me with love 110  
 In honorable fashion.  
 POLONIUS: Ay, fashion<sup>o</sup> you may call it. Go to, go to.  
 OPHELIA: And hath given countenance<sup>o</sup> to his speech, my lord,  
 With almost all the holy vows of heaven.  
 POLONIUS: Ay, springes<sup>o</sup> to catch woodcocks.<sup>o</sup> I do know, 115  
 When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
 Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,  
 Giving more light than heat, extinct in both  
 Even in their promise, as it is a-making,  
 You must not take for fire. From this time 120  
 Be something scanter of your maiden presence,  
 Set your entreatments at a higher rate  
 Than a command to parle.<sup>o</sup> For Lord Hamlet,  
 Believe so much in him,<sup>o</sup> that he is young,  
 And with a larger teder<sup>o</sup> may he walk  
 Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,  
 Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,<sup>o</sup> *Hamlets words are like a pimp after her.*  
 Not of that dye which their investments show,<sup>o</sup>  
 But mere<sup>o</sup> [implorators] of unholy suits,  
 Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,<sup>o</sup> 130  
 The better to [beguile]. This is for all:  
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth  
 Have you so slander<sup>o</sup> any moment<sup>o</sup> leisure  
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
 Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.<sup>o</sup> 135  
 OPHELIA: I shall obey, my lord. *Exeunt.*

107. **Tender:** Hold, value. 109. **Wringing:** Straining, forcing to the limit. **tender** . . . fool: (1) Show me that you are a fool; (2) make me look like a fool; (3) present me with a (bastard) grandchild. 112. **fashion:** See note on line 6. 113. **countenance:** Authority. 115. **springes:** Snares. **woodcocks:** Proverbially gullible birds. 122-23. **Set . . . parle:** Place a higher value on your favors; do not grant interviews simply because he asks for them. Polonius uses a military figure: *entreatments* = negotiations for surrender; *parle* = parley, discuss terms. 124. **so . . . him:** No more than this with respect to him. 125. **larger teder:** Longer tether. 127. **brokers:** Procurers. 128. **Not . . . show:** Not of the color that their garments (*investments*) exhibit, i.e. not what they seem. 129. **mere:** Out-and-out. 130. **bonds:** (Lover's) vows or assurances. Many editors follow Theobald in reading *bawds*. 133. **slander:** Disgrace. **moment:** Momentary. 135. **Come your ways:** Come along.

[Scene 4]<sup>o</sup>

*Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.*

HAMLET: The air bites shrowdly,<sup>o</sup> it is very cold.  
 HORATIO: It is [a] nipping and an eager<sup>o</sup> air.  
 HAMLET: What hour now?  
 HORATIO: I think it lacks of twelf.  
 MARCELLUS: No, it is strook.  
 HORATIO: Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws near the season 5  
 Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.  
*A flourish of trumpets, and two pieces<sup>o</sup> goes off [within].*  
 What does this mean, my lord?  
 HAMLET: The King doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,<sup>o</sup>  
 Keeps wassail,<sup>o</sup> and the swagg'ring up-spring<sup>o</sup> reels;  
 And as he drains his draughts of Rhenish<sup>o</sup> down, 10  
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out  
 The triumph of his pledge.<sup>o</sup>  
 HORATIO: Is it a custom?  
 HAMLET: Ay, marry, is't,  
 But to my mind, though I am native here  
 And to the manner<sup>o</sup> born, it is a custom 15  
 More honor'd in the breach than the observance.<sup>o</sup>  
 This heavy-headed revel east and west  
 Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of<sup>o</sup> other nations.  
 They clip<sup>o</sup> us drunkards, and with swinish phrase  
 Soil our addition,<sup>o</sup> and indeed it takes 20  
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height,<sup>o</sup>  
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.<sup>o</sup>  
 So, oft it chanceth in particular<sup>o</sup> men,  
 That for some vicious mole of nature<sup>o</sup> in them,  
 As in their birth, wherein they are not guilty 25  
 (Since nature cannot choose his<sup>o</sup> origin),

1.4. **Location:** The guard-platform of the castle. 1. **shrowdly:** Shrewdly, wickedly. 2. **eager:** Sharp. 6. **s.d. pieces:** Cannon. 8. **doth . . . rouse:** I.e. holds revels far into the night. 9. **wassail:** Carousal. **up-spring:** Wild dance. 10. **Rhenish:** Rhine wine. 12. **triumph . . . pledge:** Accomplishment of his toast (by draining his cup at a single draught). 15. **manner:** Custom (of carousing). 16. **More . . . observance:** Which it is more honorable to break than to observe. 18. **tax'd of:** Censured by. 19. **clip:** Clepe, call. 20. **addition:** Titles of honor. 21. **at height:** Most excellently. 22. **attribute:** Reputation. 23. **particular:** Individual. 24. **vicious . . . nature:** Small natural blemish. 26. **his:** Its.

+ By their o'ergrowth of some complexion°  
 Oft breaking down the pales° and forts of reason,  
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens°  
 The form of plausible° manners — that these men, 30  
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,°  
 His virtues else, be they as pure as grace,  
 As infinite as man may undergo,°  
 Shall in the general censure° take corruption 35  
 From that particular fault: the dram° of [ev'l°]  
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt°  
 To his own scandal.°

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, 40  
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,  
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,  
 Thou com'st in such a questionable° shape  
 That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
 King, father, royal Dane. O, answer me! 45  
 Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell  
 Why thy canoniz'd° bones, hearsed in death,  
 Have burst their cerements;° why the sepulchre,  
 Wherein we saw thee quietly [inurn'd,]  
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws 50  
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,  
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel°  
 Revisits° thus the glimpses of the moon,

27. By . . . complexion: By the excess of some one of the humors (which were thought to govern the disposition). 28. pales: Fences. 29. o'er-leavens: Makes itself felt throughout (as leaven works in the whole mass of dough). 30. plausible: Pleasing. 32. Being . . . star: I.e. whether they were born with it, or got it by misfortune. *Star* means "blemish." 34. undergo: Carry the weight of, sustain. 35. general censure: Popular opinion. 36. dram: Minute amount. *ev'l*: Evil, with a pun on *eale*, "yeast" (cf. *o'er-leavens* in line 29). 37. of a doubt: A famous crux, for which many emendations have been suggested, the most widely accepted being Steevens's *often dout* (i.e. extinguish). 38. To . . . scandal: I.e. so that it all shares in the disgrace. 40. of health: Wholesome, good. 43. questionable: Inviting talk. 47. canoniz'd: Buried with the prescribed rites. 48. cerements: Grave-clothes. 52. complete steel: Full armor. 53. Revisits: The -s ending in the second person singular is common.

Making night hideous, and we fools of nature°  
 So horribly to shake our disposition°  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
 Say why is this? wherefore? what should we do? 55

[Ghost] beckons [Hamlet].

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

MARCELLUS: Look with what courteous action 60  
 It waves you to a more removed ground,  
 But do not go with it.

HORATIO: No, by no means.

HAMLET: It will not speak, then I will follow it.

HORATIO: Do not, my lord.

HAMLET: Why, what should be the fear?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee,°  
 And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
 Being a thing immortal as itself?  
 It waves me forth again, I'll follow it. 65

HORATIO: What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,  
 Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
 And there assume some other horrible form  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason,°  
 And draw you into madness? Think of it.  
 The very place puts toys of desperation,°  
 Without more motive, into every brain 70  
 That looks so many fadoms° to the sea  
 And hears it roar beneath.

HAMLET: It waves me still. —

Go on, I'll follow thee.

MARCELLUS: You shall not go, my lord.

HAMLET: Hold off your hands. 80

HORATIO: Be rul'd, you shall not go.

HAMLET: My fate cries out,

54. fools of nature: The children (or the dupes) of a purely natural order, baffled by the supernatural. 55. disposition: Nature. 59. impartment: Communication. 65. fee: Worth. 73. deprive . . . reason: Unseat reason from the rule of your mind. 75. toys of desperation: Fancies of desperate action, i.e. inclinations to jump off. 77. fadoms: Fathoms.



And makes each petty artere<sup>o</sup> in this body  
 As hardy as the Nemean lion's<sup>o</sup> nerve.<sup>o</sup>  
 Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.  
 By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets<sup>o</sup> me! 85  
 I say away! — Go on, I'll follow thee.

*Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet.*

HORATIO: He waxes desperate with [imagination].  
 MARCELLUS: Let's follow. 'Tis not fit thus to obey him.  
 HORATIO: Have after. To what issue will this come?  
 MARCELLUS: Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. 90  
 HORATIO: Heaven will direct it.<sup>o</sup>  
 MARCELLUS: Nay, let's follow him. *Exeunt.*

[Scene 5]<sup>o</sup>

*Enter GHOST and HAMLET.*

HAMLET: Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.  
 GHOST: Mark me.  
 HAMLET: I will.  
 GHOST: My hour is almost come  
 When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames  
 Must render up myself.  
 HAMLET: Alas, poor ghost!  
 GHOST: Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing 5  
 To what I shall unfold.  
 HAMLET: Speak, I am bound to hear.  
 GHOST: So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.  
 HAMLET: What?  
 GHOST: I am thy father's spirit,  
 Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,  
 And for the day confin'd to fast<sup>o</sup> in fires, 10  
 Till the foul crimes<sup>o</sup> done in my days of nature  
 Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid  
 To tell the secrets of my prison-house,  
 I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15  
 Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,

82. *artere*: Variant spelling of *artery*; here, ligament, sinew. 83. *Nemean lion*: Slain by Hercules as one of his twelve labors. *nerve*: Sinew. 85. *lets*: Hinders. 91. *it*: I.e. the issue. 1.5. *Location*: On the battlements of the castle. 11. *fast*: Do penance. 12. *crimes*: Sins.

Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,<sup>o</sup>  
 Thy knotted and combined locks to part,  
 And each particular hair to stand an end,<sup>o</sup> 20  
 Like quills upon the fearful porpentine.<sup>o</sup>  
 But this eternal blazon<sup>o</sup> must not be  
 To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!  
 If thou didst ever thy dear father love —

HAMLET: O God!  
 GHOST: Revenge his foul and most unnatural murther. 25  
 HAMLET: Murther!

GHOST: Murther 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,<sup>o</sup> or the thoughts of love, 30  
 May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST: I find thee apt,  
 And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed  
 That roots itself in ease on Lethe<sup>o</sup> wharf,<sup>o</sup>  
 Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:  
 'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,<sup>o</sup> 35  
 A serpent stung me, so the whole ear of Denmark  
 Is by a forged process<sup>o</sup> of my death  
 Rankly abus'd;<sup>o</sup> 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? 40

† GHOST: Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate<sup>o</sup> beast,  
 With witchcraft of his wits, with traitorous gifts —  
 O wicked wit and gifts that have the power  
 So to seduce! — won to his shameful lust 45  
 The will of my most seeming virtuous queen.  
 O Hamlet, what [a] falling-off was there  
 From me, whose love was of that dignity  
 That it went hand in hand even with the vow

17. *spheres*: Eye-sockets; with allusion to the revolving spheres in which, according to the Ptolemaic astronomy, the stars were fixed. 19. *an end*: On end. 20. *fearful porpentine*: Frightened porcupine. 21. *eternal blazon*: Revelation of eternal things. 30. *meditation*: Thought. 33. *Lethe*: River of Hades, the water of which made the drinker forget the past. *wharf*: Bank. 35. *orchard*: Garden. 37. *forged process*: False account. 38. *abus'd*: Deceived. 42. *adulterate*: Adulterous.

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I made to her in marriage, and to decline  
 Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor  
 To those of mine!  
 But virtue, as it never will be moved,  
 Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,<sup>54</sup>  
 So [lust], though to a radiant angel link'd,  
 Will [sate] itself in a celestial bed  
 And prey on garbage.  
 But soft, methinks I scent the morning air,  
 Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,  
 My custom always of the afternoon,  
 Upon my secure<sup>61</sup> hour thy uncle stole,  
 With juice of cursed hebona<sup>62</sup> in a vial,  
 And in the porches of my ears did pour  
 The leprous distillment, whose effect  
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
 That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
 The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
 And with a sudden vigor it doth [posset]<sup>63</sup>  
 And curd, like eager<sup>64</sup> droppings into milk,  
 The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine,  
 And a most instant tetter<sup>65</sup> bark'd<sup>66</sup> about,  
 Most lazar-like,<sup>67</sup> with vile and loathsome crust  
 All my smooth body.  
 Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
 Of life, of crown, of queen, at once<sup>68</sup> dispatch'd,<sup>69</sup>  
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
 Unhous'led,<sup>70</sup> disappointed,<sup>71</sup> unanel'd,<sup>72</sup>  
 No reck'ning made, but sent to my account  
 With all my imperfections on my head.  
 O, horrible, O, horrible, most horrible!  
 If thou hast nature<sup>81</sup> in thee, bear it not,  
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be

54. shape of heaven: Angelic form. 61. secure: Carefree. 62. hebona: Ebony (which Shakespeare, following a literary tradition, and perhaps also associating the word with *henbane*, thought the name of a poison). 63. posset: Curdle. 64. eager: Sour. 65. tetter: Scabby eruption. bark'd: Formed a hard covering, like bark on a tree. 66. lazar-like: Leper-like. 67. at once: All at the same time. 68. dispatch'd: Deprived. 69. Unhous'led: Without the Eucharist. disappointed: Without (spiritual) preparation. unanel'd: Unanointed, without extreme unction. 81. nature: Natural feeling.

A couch for luxury<sup>83</sup> and damned incest.  
 But howsomever thou pursues this act,  
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
 Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven,  
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge  
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!  
 The glow-worm shows the matin<sup>89</sup> to be near,  
 And gins<sup>90</sup> to pale his uneffectual fire.  
 Adieu, adieu, adieu! remember me. [Exit.]  
 HAMLET: O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?  
 And shall I couple hell? O fie, hold, hold, my heart,  
 And you, my sinows,<sup>94</sup> grow not instant old,  
 But bear me [stiffly] up. Remember thee!  
 Ay, thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a seat  
 In this distracted globe.<sup>97</sup> Remember thee!  
 Yea, from the table<sup>98</sup> of my memory  
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond<sup>99</sup> records,  
 All saws<sup>100</sup> of books, all forms,<sup>101</sup> all pressures<sup>102</sup> past  
 That youth and observation copied there,  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain,  
 Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!  
 O most pernicious woman!  
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!  
 My tables — meet it is I set it down  
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain!  
 At least I am sure it may be so in Denmark. [He writes.]  
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word:  
 It is "Adieu, adieu! remember me."  
 I have sworn't.  
 HORATIO: [Within.] My lord, my lord!  
 MARCELLUS: [Within.] Lord Hamlet!

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

HORATIO: Heavens secure him!

83. luxury: Lust. 89. matin: Morning. 90. gins: Begins. 94. sinows: Sinews. 97. globe: Head. 98. table: Writing tablet. 99. fond: Foolish. 100. saws: Wise sayings. forms: Shapes, images. pressures: Impressions. 110. word: I.e. word of command from the Ghost.

HAMLET: So be it!  
 MARCELLUS: Illo, ho, ho, my lord! 115  
 HAMLET: Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, [bird,] come.<sup>o</sup>  
 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. 120  
 HAMLET: How say you then, would heart of man once think it? —  
 But you'll be secret?  
 BOTH [HORATIO, MARCELLUS]: Ay, by heaven, [my lord].  
 HAMLET: There's never a villain dwelling in all Denmark  
 But he's an arrant knave.  
 HORATIO: There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave 125  
 To tell us this.  
 HAMLET: Why, right, you are in the right,  
 And so, without more circumstance<sup>o</sup> at all,  
 I hold it fit that we shake hands and part,  
 You, as your business and desire shall point you,  
 For every man hath business and desire, 130  
 Such as it is, and for my own poor part,  
 I will go pray.  
 HORATIO: These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.  
 HAMLET: I am sorry they offend you, heartily,  
 Yes, faith, heartily.  
 HORATIO: There's no offense, my lord. 135  
 HAMLET: Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
 And much offense too. Touching this vision here,  
 It is an honest<sup>o</sup> ghost, that let me tell you.  
 For your desire to know what is between us,  
 O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends, 140  
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
 Give me one poor request.

116. Hillo . . . come: Hamlet answers Marcellus's halloo with a falconer's cry. 127. circumstance: Ceremony. 138. honest: True, genuine.

HORATIO: What is't,<sup>o</sup> my lord, we will.  
 HAMLET: Never make known what you have seen to-night.  
 BOTH [HORATIO, MARCELLUS]: My lord, we will not.  
 HAMLET: Nay, but swear't.  
 HORATIO: In faith, 145  
 My lord, not I.  
 MARCELLUS: Nor I, my lord, in faith.  
 HAMLET: Upon my sword.<sup>o</sup>  
 MARCELLUS: We have sworn, my lord, already.  
 HAMLET: Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.  
*Ghost cries under the stage.*  
 GHOST: Swear.  
 HAMLET: Ha, ha, boy, say'st thou so? Art thou there, true-  
 penny?<sup>o</sup> 150  
 Come on, you hear this fellow in the cellarage,  
 Consent to swear.  
 HORATIO: Propose the oath, my lord.  
 HAMLET: Never to speak of this that you have seen,  
 Swear by my sword.  
 GHOST: [*Beneath.*] Swear. 155  
 HAMLET: *Hic et ubique?*<sup>o</sup> 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. 160  
 GHOST: [*Beneath.*] Swear by his sword.  
 HAMLET: Well said, old mole, canst work i' th' earth so fast?  
 A worthy pioner!<sup>o</sup> Once more remove, good friends.  
 HORATIO: O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!  
 HAMLET: And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.<sup>o</sup> 165  
 There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
 Than are dreamt of in your<sup>o</sup> philosophy.<sup>o</sup>  
 But come —  
 Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

143. What is't: Whatever it is. 147. Upon my sword: I.e. on the cross formed by the hilt. 150. truepenny: Trusty fellow. 156. *Hic et ubique*: Here and everywhere. 163. pioner: Digger, miner (variant of *pioneer*). 165. as . . . welcome: Give it the welcome due in courtesy to strangers. 167. your: See note on 1.1.138. philosophy: I.e. natural philosophy, science.

How strange or odd some'er I bear myself — 170  
 As I perchance hereafter shall think meet  
 To put an antic disposition on° —  
 That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,  
 With arms encumb'ed° thus, or this headshake,  
 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175  
 As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, and if° we  
 would,"  
 Or "If we list° to speak," or "There be, and 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. 180

GHOST: [*Beneath.*] Swear. [*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, 185  
 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.* 190

[ACT 2, Scene 1]°

*Enter old POLONIUS with his man [REYNALDO].*

POLONIUS: Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

REYNALDO: I will, my lord.

POLONIUS: You shall do marvell's° wisely, good Reynaldo,  
 Before you visit him, to make inquire  
 Of his behavior.

REYNALDO: My lord, I did intend it. 5

POLONIUS: Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,

172. put ... on: Behave in some fantastic manner, act like a madman. 174. encumb'ed: Folded. 176. and if: If. 177. list: Cared, had a mind. 178. note: Indicate. 187. still: Always. 190. Nay ... together: They are holding back to let him go first. 2.1. Location: Polonius's quarters in the castle. 3. marvell's: Marvelous(ly).

Inquire me first what Danskers° are in Paris,  
 And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,°  
 What company, at what expense; and finding 10  
 By this encompassment° and drift of question°  
 That they do know my son, come you more nearer  
 Than your particular demands° will touch it.  
 Take you as 'twere some distant knowledge of him,  
 As thus, "I know his father and his friends,  
 And in part him." Do you mark this, Reynaldo? 15

REYNALDO: Ay, very well, my lord.  
 POLONIUS: "And in part him — but," you may say, "not well.  
 But if't be he I mean, he's very wild,  
 Addicted so and so," and there put on him  
 What forgeries° you please: marry, none so rank 20  
 As may dishonor him, take heed of that,  
 But, sir, such wanton,° wild, and usual slips  
 As are companions noted and most known  
 To youth and liberty.  
 REYNALDO: As gaming, my lord.  
 POLONIUS: Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling, 25  
 Drabbing° — you may go so far.  
 REYNALDO: My lord, that would dishonor him.  
 POLONIUS: Faith,° as you may season° it in the charge:  
 You must not put another scandal on him,  
 That he is open to incontinency° — 30  
 That's not my meaning. But breathe his faults so quaintly°  
 That they may seem the taints of liberty,  
 The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,  
 A savageness in unreclaimed° blood,  
 Of general assault.°  
 REYNALDO: But, my good lord — 35  
 POLONIUS: Wherefore should you do this?  
 REYNALDO: Ay, my lord,  
 I would know that.

7. Danskers: Danes. 8. keep: Lodge. 10. encompassment: Circuitousness. drift of question: Directing of the conversation. 12. particular demands: Direct questions. 20. forgeries: Invented charges. 22. wanton: Sportive. 26. Drabbing: Whoring. 28. Faith: Most editors read *Faith*, no, following F1; this makes easier sense. season: Qualify, temper. 30. open to incontinency: Habitually profligate. 31. quaintly: Artfully. 34. unreclaimed: Untamed. 35. Of general assault: I.e. to which young men are generally subject.