ACT V.

Scene I. A churchyard.

[Enter two Clowns, with spades, etc.]

1 Clown.
Is she to be buried in Christian burial when she willfully
seeks her own salvation?

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

1 Clown.
How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

2 Clown.
Why, 'tis found so.

1 Clown.
It must be se offendendo; it cannot be else. For here lies
the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and an
act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform:
argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

2 Clown.
Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,--

1 Clown.
Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here stands the
man; good: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is,
will he, nill he, he goes,--mark you that: but if the water come
to him and drown him, he drowns not himself; argal, he that is
not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2 Clown.
But is this law?

1 Clown.
Ay, marry, is't--crowner's quest law.

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

1 Clown.
Why, there thou say'st: and the more pity that great folk
should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves
more than their even Christian. --Come, my spade. There is no
ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditches, and grave-makers: they
hold up Adam's profession.

2 Clown.
Was he a gentleman?

1 Clown.
He was the first that ever bore arms.

2 Clown.
Why, he had none.

1 Clown.
What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture?
The Scripture says Adam digg'd: could he dig without arms? I'll
put another question to thee: if thou answerest me not to the
purpose, confess thyself;--

2 Clown.
Go to.

1 Clown.
What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the
shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 Clown.
The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 Clown.
I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well;
but how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now,
though dost ill to say the gallows is built stronger than the
church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again, come.

2 Clown.
Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 Clown.
Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 Clown.
Marry, now I can tell.

1 Clown.
To't.
2 Clown.
Mass, I cannot tell.

[Enter Hamlet and Horatio, at a distance.]

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

[Exit Second Clown.]

[Digs and sings.]

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

Hamlet
Has this fellow no feeling of his business, that he sings at grave-making?

Horatio
Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Hamlet
'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

1 Clown.
[Sings.]
But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipp'd me intil the land,
As if I had never been such.

[Throws up a skull.]

Hamlet
That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

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Horatio
It might, my lord.

Hamlet
Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?' This might be my lord such-a-one, that praised my lord such-a-one's horse when he meant to beg it,--might it not?

Horatio
Ay, my lord.

Hamlet
Why, e'en so: and now my Lady Worm's; chapless, and knocked about the mazard with a sexton's spade: here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at loggets with 'em? mine ache to think on't.

1 Clown.
[Sings.]
A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,
For and a shrouding sheet;
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up another skull].

Hamlet
There's another: why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks? why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will scarcely lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more, ha?

Horatio
Not a jot more, my lord.

Hamlet
Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?
Horatio
Ay, my lord, And of calf-skins too.

Hamlet
They are sheep and calves which seek out assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow.--Whose grave's this, sir?

1 Clown.
Mine, sir.
[Sings.]
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet.

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

1 Clown.
You lie out on't, sir, and therefore 'tis 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.

1 Clown.
'Tis a quick lie, sir; 't will away again from me to you.

Hamlet
What man dost thou dig it for?

1 Clown.
For no man, sir.

Hamlet
What woman then?

1 Clown.
For none neither.

Hamlet
Who is to be buried in't?

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

Hamlet
How absolute the knave is! We must speak by the card, or
equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it, the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier he galls his kibe.--How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

1 Clown.
Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Hamlet
How long is that since?

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

Hamlet
Ay, marry, why was be sent into England?

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

Hamlet
Why?

1 Clown.
'Twill not he seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Hamlet
How came he mad?

1 Clown.
Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet
How strangely?

1 Clown.
Faith, c'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet
Upon what ground?

1 Clown.
Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years.
Hamlet
How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

1 Clown.
Faith, if he be not rotten before he die,—as we have many pocky corses now-a-days that will scarce hold the laying in,—he will last you some eight year or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Hamlet
Why he more than another?

1 Clown.
Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now; this skull hath lain in the earth three-and-twenty years.

Hamlet
Whose was it?

1 Clown.
A whoreson, mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

Hamlet
Nay, I know not.

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

Hamlet
This?

1 Clown.
E'en that.

Hamlet
Let me see. [Takes the skull.] Alas, poor Yorick!--I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now, get you to my lady's
chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this
favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio,
tell me one thing.

Horatio
What's that, my lord?

Hamlet
Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth?

Horatio
E'en so.

Hamlet
And smelt so? Pah!

[Throws down the skull.]

Horatio
E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet
To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not
imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander till he find it
stopping a bung-hole?

Horatio
'Twere to consider too curiously to consider so.

Hamlet
No, faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty
enough, and likelihood to lead it: as thus: Alexander died, 208
Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth into dust; the dust is
earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he
was converted might they not stop a beer-barrel?

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay, 213
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.
O, that that earth which kept the world in awe
Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw!
But soft! but soft! aside!—Here comes the King.

[Enter priests, &c, in procession; the corpse of Ophelia,
Laertes, and Mourners following; King, Queen, their Trains, &c.]

The Queen, the courtiers: who is that they follow?
And with such maimed rites? This doth betoken 219
The corse they follow did with desperate hand
Fordo it own life: 'twas of some estate.
Couch we awhile and mark. 222

[Retiring with Horatio.]

Laertes
What ceremony else?

Hamlet
That is Laertes,
A very noble youth: mark.

Laertes
What ceremony else?

1 Priest.
Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranties: her death was doubtful;
And, but that great command o'ersways the order,
She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her,
Yet here she is allowed her virgin rites,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial. 234

Laertes
Must there no more be done?

1 Priest.
No more be done;
We should profane the service of the dead
To sing a requiem and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls. 237

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

Hamlet
What, the fair Ophelia? 242

Queen.
Sweets to the sweet: farewell.
[Scattering flowers.]
I hop'd 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
Depriv’d 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,
To o’er top old Pelion or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Hamlet
[Advancing.]
What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane.
[Leaps into the grave.]

Laertes
The devil take thy soul!
[Grappling with him.]

Hamlet
Thou pray’st not well.
I pr’ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not splenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear: away thy hand!

King.
Pluck them asunder.

Queen.
Hamlet! Hamlet!

All.
Gentlemen!—

Horatio
Good my lord, be quiet.

[The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.]
Hamlet
Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag. 270

Queen.
O my son, what theme?

Hamlet
I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King.
O, he is mad, Laertes.

Queen.
For love of God, forbear him! 276

Hamlet
'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woul't weep? woul't fight? woul't fast? woul't tear thyself?
Woul't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?
I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave?
Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
I'll rant as well as thou. 279

Queen.
This is mere madness:
And thus a while the fit will work on him;
Anon, as patient as the female dove,
When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
His silence will sit drooping. 286

Hamlet
Hear you, sir;
What is the reason that you use me thus?
I lov'd you ever: but it is no matter;
Let Hercules himself do what he may,
The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. 295

[Exit.]
King.
I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.---

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

[Exeunt.]
Scene II. A hall in the Castle.

[Enter Hamlet and Horatio.]

Hamlet
So much for this, sir: now let me see the other;
You do remember all the circumstance?

Horatio
Remember it, my lord!

Hamlet
Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep: methought I lay
Worse than the mutinies in the bilboes. Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it,—let us know,
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Horatio
That is most certain.

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

Horatio
Is't possible?

Hamlet
Here's the commission: read it at more leisure.
But wilt thou bear me how I did proceed?

Horatio
I beseech you.

Hamlet
Being thus benetted round with villanies,--
Or I could make a prologue to my brains,
They had begun the play,--I sat me down;
Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:
I once did hold it, as our statists do,
A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
The effect of what I wrote?

Horatio
Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet
An earnest conjuration from the King,--
As England was his faithful tributary;
As love between them like the palm might flourish;
As peace should still her wheaten garland wear
And stand a comma 'tween their amities;
And many such-like as's of great charge,--
That, on the view and know of these contents,
Without debatement further, more or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving-time allow'd.

Horatio
How was this seal'd?

Hamlet
Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal:
Folded the writ up in the form of the other;
Subscrib'd it: gave't the impression; plac'd it safely,
The changeling never known. Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Horatio
So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

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

Horatio
Why, what a King is this!

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

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

Hamlet
It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life is no more than to say One.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his: I'll court his favours:
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Horatio
Peace; who comes here?

[Enter Osric.]

Osric
Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

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

Horatio
No, my good lord.

Hamlet
Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him. He
hath much land, and fertile: let a beast be lord of beasts, and
his crib shall stand at the King's mess; 'tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

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

Hamlet
I will receive it with all diligence of spirit. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Osric
I thank your lordship, t'is very hot.

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

Osric
It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Hamlet
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, in good faith; 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: indeed, to speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry; for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Hamlet
Sir, his definition suffers no perdiction in you;--though, I know, to divide him inventorially would dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be a soul of great article, and his infusion of such dearth and rareness as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror, and who else
would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osric
Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Hamlet
The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Osric
Sir?

Horatio
Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Hamlet
What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

Osric
Of Laertes?

Horatio
His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Hamlet
Of him, sir.

Osric
I know, you are not ignorant,—

Hamlet
I would you did, sir; yet, in faith, if you did, it would not much approve me.--Well, sir.

Osric
You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is,—

Hamlet
I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but to know a man well were to know himself.

Osric
I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed.

Hamlet
What's his weapon?
Osric
Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet
That's two of his weapons:--but well.

Osric
The King, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has imponed, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers, and so: three of the carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Hamlet
What call you the carriages?

Horatio
I knew you must be edified by the margent ere you had done.

Osric
The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Hamlet
The phrase would be more german to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides. I would it might be hangers till then. But, on: six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal conceited carriages: that's the French bet against the Danish: why is this all imponed, as you call it?

Osric
The King, sir, hath laid that, in a dozen passes between your 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, I will walk here in the hall: if it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me: let the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the King hold his purpose, I will win for him if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my
shame and the odd hits.

Osric
Shall I re-deliver you e'en so?

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

Osric
I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet
Yours, yours.

[Exit Osric.]

He does well to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Horatio
This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Hamlet
He did comply with his dug before he suck'd it. Thus has he,—and many more of the same bevy that I know the drossy age dotes on,—only got the tune of the time and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fanned and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out,

[Enter a Lord.]

Lord.
My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him that you attend him in the hall: he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Hamlet
I am constant to my purposes; they follow the King's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now or whenssoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord.
The King and Queen and all are coming down.

Hamlet
In happy time.
The Queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to
Laertes before you fall to play.

Hamlet
She well instructs me.

[Exit Lord.]

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
Nay, good my lord,--

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

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

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

[Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osric, and Attendants with
foils &c.]

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

[The King puts Laertes' hand into Hamlet's.]

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

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

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

Laertes
Come, one for me.

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

Laertes
You mock me, sir.

Hamlet
No, by this hand.

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

Hamlet
Very well, my lord;
Your grace has laid the odds o' the weaker side. 259

King.
I do not fear it; I have seen you both;
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laertes
This is too heavy, let me see another.

Hamlet
This likes me well. These foils have all a length? 263

[They prepare to play.]

Osric
Ay, my good lord.

King.
Set me the stoups of wine upon that table,--
If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ordnance fire;
The King shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
And in the cup an union shall he throw,
Richer than that which four successive Kings
In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups;
And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
The cannons to the heavens, the heavens 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.
Stay, give me drink.--Hamlet, this pearl is thine;
Here's to thy health.--

[Trumpets sound, and cannon shot off within.]

Give him the cup.

Hamlet
I'll play this bout first; set it by awhile.--
Come.--Another hit; what say you?

[They play.]

Laertes
A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King.
Our son shall win.

Queen.
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.
Queen, do not drink.

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

King.
[Aside.] It is the poison'd cup; it is too late.
I dare not drink yet, madam; by-and-by.

Come, let me wipe thy face.

My lord, I'll hit him now.

I do not think't.

[Aside.] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Come, for the third, Laertes: you but dally;
I pray you pass with your best violence:
I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Say you so? come on.

[They play.]

Nothing, neither way.

Have at you now!

[Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.]

Part them; they are incens'd.

Nay, come again!

[The Queen falls.]

Look to the Queen there, ho!

They bleed on both sides.--How is it, my lord?
Osric
How is't, Laertes?

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

Hamlet
How does the Queen?

King.
She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen.
No, no! the drink, the drink!--O my dear Hamlet!--The drink, the drink!—I am poison'd.

[Dies.]

Hamlet
O villany!—Ho! let the door be lock'd: Treachery! seek it out.

[Laertes falls.]

Laertes
It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain; No medicine in the world can do thee good; In thee there is not half an hour of life; The treacherous instrument is in thy hand, Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practice Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie, Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd: I can no more:—the King, the King's to blame.

Hamlet
The point envenom'd too!—
Then, venom, to thy work.

[Stabs the King.]

Osric and Lords.
Treason! treason!

King.
O, yet defend me, friends! I am but hurt.
Hamlet

Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion.--Is thy union here?

Follow my mother.

[King dies.]

Laertes

He is justly serv'd;

It is a poison temper'd by himself.--

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me!

[Dies.]

Hamlet

Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.--

I am dead, Horatio.--Wretched Queen, adieu!--

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,

That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time,--as this fell sergeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest,--O, I could tell you,--

But let it be.--Horatio, I am dead;

Thou liv'st; report me and my cause aright

To the unsatisfied.

Horatio

Never believe it:

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.--

Here's yet some liquor left.

Hamlet

As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup; let go; by heaven, I'll have't.--

O good Horatio, what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me!

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity awhile,

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,

To tell my story.--

[March afar off, and shot within.]

What warlike noise is this?

Osric

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

Hamlet
O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:
I cannot live to hear the news from England;
But I do prophesy the election lights
On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
Which have solicited.--the rest is silence.

[Dies.]

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

[March within.]

[Enter Fortinbras, the English Ambassadors, and others.]

Fortinbras
Where is this sight?

Horatio
What is it you will see?
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

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

1 Ambassador.
The sight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

Horatio
Not from his mouth,
Had it the ability of life to thank you:
He never gave commandment for their death.
But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
You from the Polack wars, and you from England,
Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view;
And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about: so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning and fore'd cause;
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fortinbras
Let us haste to hear it,
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune:
I have some rights of memory in this Kingdom,
Which now, to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Horatio
Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild: lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen.

Fortinbras
Let four captains
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally: 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.

[A dead march.]

[Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after the which a peal of ordnance is shot off.]