

Hamlet-Gertrude

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, 'twas my word.

Lifts up the array and discovers POLONIUS

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

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,

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What have I done, that thou darest wag thy tongue

In noise so rude against me?

HAMLET

Such an act

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, 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.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Ay me, what act,

That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

HAMLET

Look here, upon this picture, and on this,

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See, what a grace was seated on this brow;
Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man:
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 hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment
Would step from this to this? What devil was't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell,
When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,

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 cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

QUEEN GERTRUDE

No more!

HAMLET

A king of shreds and patches,--

Enter Ghost

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

QUEEN GERTRUDE

Alas, he's mad!

HAMLET

Do you not come your tardy son to chide,

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

And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?

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, even now, out at the portal!

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: it is not madness
That I have utter'd: Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that mattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness speaks:
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.
Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
Refrain to-night, and that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: Once more, good night:
And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

Pointing to POLONIUS

I do repent: but heaven hath pleased it so,
To punish me with this and this with me. So, again, good night.
I must be cruel, only to be kind:
Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

QUEEN GERTRUDE

What shall I do?

HAMLET

Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king tempt you again to bed;
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.

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

Alack,

I had forgot: 'tis so concluded on.

HAMLET

There's letters seal'd: and my two schoolfellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery. Let it work;
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.