

Hamlet-R&G

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, rather with choler.

HAMLET

Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

GUILDENSTERN

Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame and start not so wildly from my affair.

HAMLET

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

GUILDENSTERN

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,

HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

GUILDENSTERN

What, my lord?

HAMLET

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased:

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?

HAMLET

Sir, I lack advancement.

Re-enter Players with recorders

O, the recorders! let me see one.

Will you play upon
this pipe?

GULDENSTERN

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET

I pray you.

GULDENSTERN

Believe me, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you.

GULDENSTERN

I know no touch of it, my lord.

HAMLET

'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages 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? Call me what
instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you
cannot play upon me.