

A FRANCO ZEFFIRELLI FILM

HAMLET

freely adapted
from
William Shakespeare's tragedy

Screenplay by
Christopher Devore & Franco Zeffirelli

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1. BLACK.

1.

WE HEAR THE WIND, WAILING through crevices of stone. It contends with the CRASH of THE SEA, pounding against a rocky shore. A CANNON ROARS, answered by DISTANT THUNDER.

FADE UP TO:

2. EXT. CLIFF. DAY.

2.

AN IMPOSING CLIFF rises out of the fog, the sea raging unseen at its feet. At the summit stands the CASTLE OF ELSINORE, its blackened, crenelated towers silhouetted against the sky like the masts of a listing, ghostly ship. A CANNON ROARS again, its flaming mouth briefly visible on the high battlements. THE ROLL OF DRUMS is carried on the wind as WE PULL CLOSER to the commanding edifice.

CUT TO:

3. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

A ROW OF GUARDS, huge bear-like men clad in skins and armour, stand silently in the courtyard. Flags tied to their large spears snap in the wind. THE DRUMS ROLL, echoing against the stone walls. WE PULL PAST the ranks of the GUARDS and to a massive doorway. WE MOVE into the darkness of a passageway leading downward.

CUT TO:

4. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE ROYAL VAULTS. DAY.

4.

The MEMBERS OF THE COURT stand among the tombs of the former kings of Denmark. An impressive corpse clad in the full armour of a Danish King is laid in an open stone tomb. It is OLD HAMLET. His silver hair snakes from a gold band encircling his head.

WE OPEN UP TO REVEAL the younger brother of the dead king, CLAUDIUS, standing at the head of the tomb. He holds a double-edged sword before his forceful, handsome face. POLONIUS, the dead king's trusted minister stands discreetly behind CLAUDIUS in a dark area of the vault.

PULLING BACK FURTHER, WE REVEAL two silent figures at the foot of the tomb. QUEEN GERTRUDE, the king's widow, draped in heavy mourning clothes, a

Continued:

4. CONTINUED (1)

4.

rough black veil over her down-turned face. Next to her stands HAMLET, gazing at the body of his father.

GERTRUDE lifts up her veil. Her face is strong and very beautiful. She takes three of the dark flowers from her crown, placing them on the body. Her eyes briefly dart to CLAUDIUS and then lower. HAMLET steps forth. He reaches out a clenched hand and sprinkles some dry earth into the tomb. CLAUDIUS watches this intently, his eyes on either side of the sword-blade. POLONIUS nods to a group of SOLDIERS who lift the heavy lid of the tomb. It comes down with a final, hollow sound. The CANNON'S ROAR comes from above.

CLAUDIUS steps forward, placing the royal sword upon the lid. There is a moment of silence. He looks up at HAMLET, but the young prince's head is lowered. CLAUDIUS speaks, his voice echoing in the room.

CLAUDIUS

Hamlet, think of us as of a father.

HAMLET gazes down at the sword making no sign that he has heard.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

For let the world take note

You are the most immediate to our throne.

HAMLET's eyes come up to look at CLAUDIUS, his grief giving way to startled disbelief. CLAUDIUS eyes him back. HAMLET looks to POLONIUS who averts his eyes. THE COURTIERS shift nervously and lower their heads. And now HAMLET turns to his mother. GERTRUDE trembles slightly and will not look at him. CLAUDIUS watches her, and aware of this scrutiny, she lowers her veil back over her face. HAMLET turns to take in the silent congregation. No-one moves. WE PULL CLOSE to HAMLET's dark face.

DISSOLVE TO:

(TITLES OVER)

5. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. LONG, NARROW PASSAGE. DAY.

5.

WE MOVE along a very dark corridor, so dark that we can scarcely see a thing. Then, ahead, there's a patch of light from a narrow window and we see that HAMLET, his back to us, is walking alone along the corridor. He passes through the light and into darkness again.

6. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

6.

At a table in the centre of a large, gloomy and cavernous hall, TWO SERVANTS are clearing away the remains of a meal. One of them hears a noise and looks up. HAMLET, his back to us, is crossing the hall. The SERVANT drops what he is doing and nudges his COMPANION, however, seeing who it is, merely shrugs and continues with his work. HAMLET vanishes through a door at the far end of the hall.

7. EXT. BEACH. DAY.

7.

It is a grey and stormy day. Gulls cry. A horse gallops into view along the beach, spurred by its rider to throw itself against the air with as much violence as the waves are dashing against the shore. The rider is just a blur of black on the horse's back, but we can see from his outline that it is HAMLET. The horse thunders from view.

8. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

8.

A group of SOLDIERS and GUARDS are crouched round an enormous fire place, warming themselves at the leaping flames. A shadow (the shadow of HAMLET) passes along the wall and stops when it reaches them. No-one looks up or away from the fire, and after a moment, the shadow continues on its way along the wall and merges into the shadows.

9. EXT. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

9.

The wind howls and the sea rages against the rocks at the foot of the battlements. HAMLET, his back to us, stands staring down at the sea. WE PULL BACK to take in the full extent of his isolation, the only figure in sight along the whole length of the grim and desolate castle of Elsinore.

(END TITLES)

10. EXT. CLIFF. DAY.

10.

THE SOUND OF HORSES' HOOVES is heard, plodding through the squishing mud, as two hunched riders approach slowly along the cliff road. One of them shivers in the cold. This is HORATIO, a capable-looking man of thirty. The other rider is a thin blond youth of twenty, MARCELLUS. HORATIO looks up with a sigh. MARCELLUS' round blue eyes widen in awe at the sight before him.

(4)

11. EXT. ELSINORE. DAY.

11.

MARCELLUS' P.O.V. - In the distance the TOWERS OF ELSINORE suddenly appear piercing the ragged grey clouds.

12. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. DAY.

12.

REVERSE ANGLE - HORATIO spurs his horse, but the creature has turned skittish and will only move on when coaxed.

12A. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. DAY.

12A.

WE PULL CLOSER to the imposing castle of ELSINORE.

DISSOLVE TO:

13. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. DAY.

13.

A COLD, DARK DAY - HORATIO and MARCELLUS approach the gates of the castle. Some GUARDS stand on the turrets above gazing down. HORATIO calls up to the GUARDS.

BENARDO

Who's there?

HORATIO

Friends to this ground!

BERNARDO

Horatio?

HORATIO

A piece of him.

BERNARDO roars down an order and the gates are slowly opened. HORATIO and MARCELLUS ride in, and the gates are closed behind them.

CUT TO:

14. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ENTRY COURTYARD. DAY.

14.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS dismount, quickly going to a fire in a stone brazier, warming their hands. BERNARDO comes down a stair, pushing through some other GUARDS.

HORATIO

Give welcome to Marcellus, my young friend.

Continued:

14. CONTINUED (1)

14.

BERNARDO

Good even, sir.

MARCELLUS smiles tiredly, drawing closer to the comfort of the fire.

DISSOLVE TO:

14A. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. DAY.

14A.

ESTABLISHING SHOT.

15. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE GREAT HALL. DAY.

15.

AN ANCIENT THRONE, hacked from grey porous rock. A HAWK is perched on the back of it, its tether sunk into the stone. A shadow creeps up the stairs and into the lap of the throne: CLAUDIUS' handsome profile.

CLAUDIUS (V.O.)

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

That we with wisest sorrow think on him
Together with remembrance of ourselves.

WE PULL BACK revealing the Great Hall. Above the throne is a row of dark round silent windows. CLAUDIUS strides up the stairs and sits. The crown is on his head. GERTRUDE is sitting to his right wearing a striking red robe. But her face is tense, her eyes wander round the crowd to check their reactions.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen
Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state
Have we, as t'were, 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 barred
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.

Continued:

15. CONTINUED (1)

15.

PULLING BACK FURTHER we see the king's COUNCILLORS, POLONIUS among them, as well as other distinguished MEMBERS OF THE COURT. HORATIO is among the crowd at the end of the Hall, staring up at CLAUDIUS with astonishment. Then he studies the smiling crowd, searching for a certain face, but he cannot find it.

16. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

16.

CLAUDIUS walks grandly into view with SEVERAL COURTIERS and pauses to look up at a tower, his eyes narrowing.

CUT TO:

17. INT. STABLE. DAY.

17.

The doors are pushed roughly open and CLAUDIUS stands in the light. He wrinkles his nose and strides in followed by the COURTIERS. The STABLEMEN shocked by his presence bow, exchanging furtive glances as he kicks at the straw and manure on the floor. CLAUDIUS walks to the horses' stalls pulling each of their doors back with a slam, slam, slam.

CUT TO:

18. EXT. COURTYARD. DAY.

18.

The horses gallop out into the courtyard. Bellowing behind them is CLAUDIUS, his powerful arms outstretched. He laughs, then looks up.

18A. EXT. TOWER. DAY.

18A.

GERTRUDE at window waves happily to CLAUDIUS.

18B. EXT. COURTYARD. DAY.

18B.

CLAUDIUS waves back. His laughter fades.

18C. EXT. TOWER. DAY.

18C.

CLAUDIUS' P.O.V. - THE TOWER stands against the sky.

CUT TO:

19. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. LIBRARY. DAY.

19.

CLAUDIUS is examining some papers and documents with POLONIUS and a scribe - LAERTES appears at the doorway - CLAUDIUS looks up at him.

CLAUDIUS

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?

The head is not more native to the heart.
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father,
What wouldst thou have Laertes?

LAERTES

Dread my Lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France.

CLAUDIUS

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

POLONIUS

I do beseech you give him leave to go.

CLAUDIUS

Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,
And thy best graces spend it at thy will.
Farewell.

The KING kisses LAERTES on the cheeks. POLONIUS
bows in gratitude. CLAUDIUS sweeps out.

CUT TO:

20. EXT. BEACH. SUNSET.

20.

SOLDIERS with their horses in the sea.

21. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

21.

CLAUDIUS strides down the hall. GERTRUDE appears and they fall into each other's arms. She whispers in his ear. The king's composure is a little shaken. He beckons to a BOY who hands him a goblet and pours him some wine, then he follows the queen up a winding staircase.

22. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. OUTSIDE HAMLET'S TOWER ROOM. DAY. 22.

GERTRUDE and CLAUDIUS silently approach. She knocks on his door.

No answer. She pushes in and WE FOLLOW THEM.

23. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HAMLET'S ROOM. DAY. 23.

There is a writing desk with a candle melted onto it, maps hang from the walls. In the corner stands a small suit of armour, and everywhere there are books, scrolls, and papers. On the bed, a black satchel is opened for packing.

HAMLET appears at the top of a steep stair leading to the battlements, silhouetted against the grey sky. He doesn't look at CLAUDIUS. CLAUDIUS sniffs nervously, taking in his surroundings, then sits down. GERTRUDE gives him a warning glance. CLAUDIUS reassumes his expansive guise.

CLAUDIUS

And now my cousin Hamlet, and my son -

HAMLET

A little more than kin, and less than kind.

CLAUDIUS

How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET

Not so, my lord, I am too much in the sun.

CLAUDIUS

'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, That father lost, lost his.

He pauses, taking a brief look at the small suit of armour.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

But to persevere

In obstinate condolment is a course

Of impious stubbornness. 'Tis unmanly grief.

He reaches out a finger to touch the helmet.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven.

Continued:

23. CONTINUED (1)

23.

GERTRUDE looks disapprovingly at CLAUDIUS.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

For your intent
In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire.

GERTRUDE shakes her head. CLAUDIUS gratefully
takes the hint, and goes to the door.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Be as ourself in Denmark.
Our chiefest courtier, cousin and our son.

HAMLET finally looks at him, his expression blank.
CLAUDIUS nods to GERTRUDE and leaves. GERTRUDE
sits on a chair. HAMLET stares at the sea.

GERTRUDE

Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on
Denmark.

Do not forever with thy vailed 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 finally comes down to the room, going to the
bed where he begins to put things into his satchel.

HAMLET

Ay, madam it is common.

GERTRUDE

If it be,
Why seems it so particular with thee?

HAMLET

Seems, madam? Nay, it is. I know not
'seems'.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Together with all forms, modes, 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;
These but the trappings and the suits of
woe.

GERTRUDE

Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet

Continued:

23. CONTINUED (2)

23.

GERTRUDE fights back tears and goes to the bed sitting on it. HAMLET stops packing and falls to his knees before her. She holds him, his head upon her breast, a natural, familiar gesture.

C.U. - GERTRUDE looks down at him, and pulls him unwillingly from her bosom with a calm smile. She kisses first one cheek, then the other. He can scarcely breathe. She whispers into his ear.

GERTRUDE (Cont)

I pray thee stay with us, go not to
Wittenberg.

C.U. - HAMLET whispers back, his eyes still closed.

HAMLET

I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

C.U. - GERTRUDE smiles.

GERTRUDE

Why 'tis a loving and a fair reply.
This gentle and unforced accord
Sits smiling to my heart.

GERTRUDE's hands reach to his head, her finger curling a lock of his dark hair.

HAMLET freezes. His mother does too. Then, with a brief pat, she slips lightly from his arms. Drifting quietly to the door, she favours him with one last smile, and is gone.

CUT TO:

24. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. OUTSIDE DOORWAY OF HAMLET'S
ROOM. DAY

24.

He appears looking downward.

CUT TO:

25. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

25.

HAMLET's P.O.V. - Down below GERTRUDE joins CLAUDIUS. The KING pulls GERTRUDE roughly to him and they leave arm-in-arm happily whispering.

CUT TO:

25A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. OUTSIDE DOORWAY OF HAMLET'S ROOM. DAY.

25A.

HAMLET's face is dark.

He closes his door upon the world.

CUT TO:

26. EXT. THE TOP OF HAMLET'S TOWER. DAY.

26.

HAMLET storms out onto the top of the tower and closes his eyes as the high winds whip his hair.

HAMLET

O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter. O God,
God,

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross
in nature

Possess it merely. That it should come to
this:

But two months dead, nay, not so much, not
two,

So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of
heaven

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and
earth,

Must I remember? Why, she would hang on
him

As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet within a month -

Let me not think on't; frailty, thy name is
woman -

A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's
body

Like Niobe, all tears, why she, even she -
O God, a beast that wants discourse of
reason

Would have mourned longer -

He looks down.

CUT TO:

27. EXT. COURTYARD. DAY.

27.

HAMLET's P.O.V. - CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE appear on a terrace below.

HAMLET (V.O.)

- 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 tears
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
She married. O most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

CUT TO:

27A. INT. DOORWAY TO THE TOWER. DAY.

27A.

HAMLET slips inside leaning against the wall.

HAMLET

But break my heart, for I must hold my
tongue.

CUT TO:

28. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. NIGHT.

28.

The moon is pale. WE PULL DOWN to the dark TOWERS
OF CASTLE ELSINORE. A fog is stealing in from the
sea.

CUT TO:

29. INT. BARRACKS. NIGHT.

29.

SOLDIERS sit drinking around a dying fire, HORATIO
and MARCELLUS among them. One guard, FRANCISCO,
throws another log on.

BERNARDO enters coming down from the steep stair-
case leading to the battlements. He puts his spear
up into the rack. HORATIO smiles.

HORATIO

What, has this thing appeared again tonight?

But BERNARDO doesn't laugh as he draws near the
fire.

BERNARDO

I have seen nothing.

Continued:

29. CONTINUED (1)

FRANCISCO

Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight seen twice by
us.

HORATIO

Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

BERNARDO leans against the window ledge and looks up at the towers above.

BERNARDO

Last night of all,
 When yond same star that's westward from the
 pole
 Had made his course t'illumine that part of
 heaven
 Where now it burns, Francisco and myself,
 The bell then beating one -

CUT TO:

30. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. NIGHT.

The fog has claimed it. Only its tower tops are visible.

DISSOLVE TO:

31. EXT. STAIRWAY TO THE BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

HORATIO, MARCELLUS, BERNARDO and FRANCISCO come into view and take the stairway up, disappearing into the fog. WE PULL BACK as their footsteps echo away. There is a moment of silence ... and then a bell peals once. WE CONTINUE BACK FARTHER as everything grows still again. Suddenly HORATIO's terrified voice cries out from above.

QUICK CUT TO:

32. INT. PASSAGES TO BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

ESTABLISHING SHOT.

33. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. WEAVING ROOM. DAY.

SOME WOMEN OF ELSINORE sit busily sewing. **OPHELIA** is with them. **LAERTES** arrives and goes to a table

Continued:

33. CONTINUED (1)

33.

where three shirts are laid. LAERTES takes the shirts from his sister, putting them into a travelling-satchel that he carries.

LAERTES

My necessities are embarked. Farewell.
And, sister,
For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Think on't no more.

He pulls her toward the door.

CUT TO:

34. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. OUTSIDE THE WEAVING ROOM.
DAY.

34.

OPHELIA is troubled and LAERTES gently takes her hand.

LAERTES

Perhaps he loves you now,
But he himself is subject to his birth.
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
The safety and the health of this whole
state.

Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs,
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure
open
To his unmastered importunity.
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister.

OPHELIA

I shall the effect of this good lesson keep
As watchman to my heart.

LAERTES and OPHELIA laugh and they hurry down a staircase.

CUT TO:

35. EXT. AN INNER COURTYARD LEADING TO THE GATE. DAY.

35.

POLONIUS hurries up.

POLONIUS

Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for
shame!
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,
And you are stayed for.

Continued:

35. CONTINUED (1)

35.

OPHELIA and LAERTES rush along with him. WE PULL UP TO A HIGHER WALL.

35A. EXT. HIGHER WALL. DAY.

35A.

HAMLET quietly keeps pace with those below.

CUT TO:

35B. EXT. AN INTER COURTYARD LEADING TO THE GATE. DAY.

35B.

HAMLET's P.O.V. of POLONIUS, OPHELIA and LAERTES below.

36. EXT. THE GATE OF ELSINORE. DAY.

36.

POLONIUS

There - my blessing with thee,

LAERTES starts to go. POLONIUS stops him.

POLONIUS

And these few precepts in thy memory
Look thou character.

LAERTES steps back making a face at his sister.

POLONIUS

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.
Beware of quarrels but, once being in,
Bear't that th'opposed may beware of thee.
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice.
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not expressed in fancy; rich, not gaudy,
For the apparel oft proclaims the man.
Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend.

36A. EXT. GATES OF ELSINORE. DAY.

36A.

Again LAERTES makes to go.

Two saddled horses wait at the bottom of the stairs, POLONIUS grabs LAERTES' arm. HAMLET watches from up above.

Continued:

36A. CONTINUED (1)

36A.

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 waits for more, but POLONIUS shoos him
away.

POLONIUS (Cont)

The time invites you. Go, your servants
tend.

LAERTES

Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well
What I have said to you.

He rushes down the stairs and OPHELIA calls after
him.

OPHELIA

'Tis in my memory locked,
And you yourself shall keep the key of it!

LAERTES hops on his horse taking the reins from a
SERVANT.

LAERTES

Reynaldo?

REYNALDO hurries up, but POLONIUS collars him.

POLONIUS

You shall do marvellous wisely, Reynaldo,
To make enquire of his behaviour.

REYNALDO

At gaming, my lord?

POLONIUS

Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,
Drabbing. You may go so far.

REYNALDO

Ay, my lord.

POLONIUS

God bye ye, fare ye well.

He hands him a purse and REYNALDO runs down to
join LAERTES.

36B. EXT. HIGHER WALL. DAY.

36B.

HAMLET stands above, watching LAERTES' departure.

37. EXT. THE GATE OF ELSINORE. DAY.

37.

OPHELIA and POLONIUS wave to LAERTES.

POLONIUS

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

OPHELIA

So please you, something touching the Lord
Hamlet.

37A. EXT. HIGHER WALL. DAY.

37A.

They turn walking back. UP ABOVE, HAMLET silently
follows.

37B. EXT. GATE OF ELSINORE. DAY.

37B.

POLONIUS

Marry, well bethought.

'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.

What is between you? Give me up the truth.

OPHELIA

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

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.

POLONIUS

I will teach you. Tender yourself more
dearly.

OPHELIA

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

POLONIUS

Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to.

Continued:

37B. CONTINUED (1)

37B.

OPHELIA

And hath given countenance to his speech, my
lord,
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

POLONIUS

Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul
Lends the tongue vows.

He stops and sighs, letting his sage advice sink
in.

POLONIUS (Cont)

I would not, in plain terms, from this time
forth
Have you give words or talk with the Lord
Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.

He walks on, not seeing the pain on OPHELIA's face.

OPHELIA

I shall obey, my lord.

She continues after him.

37C. EXT. HIGHER WALL. DAY.

37C.

WE PULL UP to see HAMLET watching her walk away.

CUT TO:

37D. EXT. ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

37D.

HAMLET'S P.O.V. OF POLONIUS and OPHELIA.

37E. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. STAIRS. DAY.

37E.

HAMLET walks down stairs.

38. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALLWAY. DAY.

38.

HORATIO, MARCELLUS and BERNARDO walk purposefully
along. HORATIO seems unnerved and tired.
MARCELLUS glances at him from time to time.

CUT TO:

39. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ANOTHER HALLWAY. DAY.

39.

HAMLET moves down the hall.

HORATIO'S VOICE

Hail to your lordship!

HAMLET turns.

HAMLET

I am glad to see you well.

Horatio! - or I do forget myself!

They clasp hands.

HAMLET (Cont)

(to MARCELLUS)

Good even, sir. I am very glad to see you.

But what, in faith, make you from

Wittenberg?

HORATIO

I came to see your father's funeral.

HAMLET

I prithee do not mock me fellow-student.

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

HORATIO

Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

HAMLET

Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral baked
meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage
tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father, methinks I see my father.

HORATIO

Where?

HAMLET

In my mind's eye, Horatio.

HORATIO

I saw him once. He was a goodly king.

HAMLET looks at HORATIO.

HAMLET

He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

He pushes into his room and the OTHERS exchange nervous glances, following him in.

40. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HAMLET'S TOWER ROOM. DAY.

40.

HORATIO

I think I saw him yesternight.

A silence.

HAMLET

Saw? Who?

HORATIO

The king your father.

HAMLET

The king my father?

HORATIO

Two nights together had this gentleman
Beheld a figure very like your father.
Now we with him the third night kept the
watch,
Where, as he had delivered,
The apparition comes. I knew your father.
These hands are not more like.

HAMLET

But where was this?

MARCELLUS

My lord, upon the platform where we watched.

HAMLET

Did you not speak to it?

HORATIO

My lord, I did;
But answer made it none. Yet once methought
It lifted up its head and did address
Itself to motion like as it would speak:
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanished from our sight.

HAMLET

'Tis very strange.

HORATIO

As I do live, my honoured lord, 'tis true.
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

HAMLET

Indeed, indeed, sirs. But this troubles me.
Hold you the watch tonight?

Continued:

HORATIO/MARCELLUS/BERNARDO

We do, my lord.

HAMLET

What, looked he frowningly?

HORATIO

A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

HAMLET

And fixed his eyes upon you?

HORATIO

Most constantly.

HAMLET

I would I had been there.

HORATIO

It would have much amazed you.

HAMLET

Very like, very like. Stayed it long?

HORATIO

While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

MARCELLUS/BERNARDO

Longer, longer.

HORATIO

Not when I saw't.

HAMLET

His beard was grizzled, no?

HORATIO

It was as I have seen it in his life
A sable silvered.

HAMLET

I will watch tonight.
Perchance 'twill walk again.

HORATIO

I warr'nt it will.

HAMLET

Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

ALL EXIT except HAMLET.

Continued:

45. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

45.

POLONIUS is seen near a window with OSRIC. CLAUDIUS joins them, a BOY filling a goblet for him.

CLAUDIUS

No jocund health that Denmark drinks today,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall
tell,
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit
again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

46. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HIGH WALL OVERLOOKING THE
COURTYARD. NIGHT.

46.

The smoke from the cooking-pits below wreathes up
a few feet away. HAMLET comes into view, looking
down once more disgusted.

CUT TO:

47. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. NIGHT.

47.

HAMLET'S P.O.V. - The arched windows are evident.
GERTRUDE joins POLONIUS and CLAUDIUS. She whispers
something in CLAUDIUS' ear. OPHELIA can be seen
through another window, waving timidly to her
father. POLONIUS raises a toast to the KING. The
shadows of HAMLET and his FRIENDS move on, wavering
eerily as they pass behind the wall of smoke.

A PACK OF HUNTING DOGS, tethered to a huge stone
fireplace. They begin to bark rabidly at the
undulating shadows on the stone walls.

48. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE FROM THE HEIGHTS. NIGHT.

48.

THE SOUNDS OF REVELRY drift upward. Far out to sea
a mass of clouds is speared by flashes of
lightning.

CUT TO:

49. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

49.

HAMLET, HORATIO, MARCELLUS and BERNARDO sit on a
low wall. WE HEAR THE RUMBLE OF APPROACHING
THUNDER.

HAMLET

The air bites shrewdly, it is very cold.
What hour now?

Continued:

49. CONTINUED (1)

49.

HORATIO

It should draw near the season
Wherein the spirit holds his wont to walk.

A FLOURISH OF TRUMPETS and THE ROLL OF DRUMS sounds
down below. Cheers are heard.

MARCELLUS

What does this mean, my lord? Is it a
custom?

HAMLET walks to the wall gazing down.

HAMLET

Ay, marry is't. But to my mind a custom
More honour'd in the breach than the
observance.

CUT TO:

50. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE COURTYARD BELOW. NIGHT.

50.

The shadows of the MERRY-MAKERS dance against the
stones of the square. A WOMAN calls inside and a
goblet comes hurtling out the window, clattering
into the courtyard.

CUT TO:

51. SCENE DELETED.

51.

52. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

52.

A LAUGHING MAN spills wine on his chin. ANOTHER
MAN, sweating profusely, pulls a DRUNKEN WOMAN
beneath a table.

CUT TO:

53. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

53.

HAMLET, his face is beaded with sweat.

CUT TO:

54. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

54.

A plate is thrown to roll and clatter amidst
dancing feet.

Continued:

54. CONTINUED (1)

54.

OPHELIA smiles, but grows frightened, as the hysteria mounts.

55. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE COURTYARD BELOW. NIGHT.

55.

The COOK can be seen outside slapping butter on the boar's cracking flesh. It hisses and sends more smoke into the sky.

56. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

56.

The DOGS BARK, nipping at passing feet.

GERTRUDE laughs as CLAUDIUS kisses her cheek. The hawk on the throne hops and cries, striving to leave its perch.

CUT TO:

57. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

57.

HAMLET's eyes search the surrounding fog.

CUT TO:

57A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. NIGHT.

57A.

CLAUDIUS laughs as the drums beat faster and DANCERS whirl past.

CUT TO:

57B. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

57B.

HAMLET, disgusted, extends a hand.

HAMLET

This heavy-headed revel east and west
Makes us traduced and taxed of other
nations.

They clepe us drunkards, and indeed it soils
The pith and marrow of our attribute.
So oft it chances in particular men
That for some vicious mole of nature in
them,

Their virtues else, be they as pure as
grace,

Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault.

CUT TO:

58. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

58.

HAMLET suddenly looks up. The bell tolls one.
HAMLET's eyes grow wide.

HAMLET

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

HORATIO forces himself to turn. WE PULL BACK
BEHIND HIM as he does, catching a glimpse of the
UPPER TIER. Something is moving toward them in the
fog. HAMLET steps forward.

THE UPPER TIER - Within the fog drifts a shape. A
cloak thrown around its shoulders waves eerily in
the wind. The shape seems to change, bending low
in supplication, stretching up commandingly to
brush the sky. And now, as it nears the terrified
companions, it raises a sword as if to hack the
world in two. A frightening vision.

BERNARDO fumbles with his spear, and points it
toward the GHOST. MARCELLUS pulls out his sword.
HORATIO rubs his eyes, trying to focus them.
HAMLET walks slowly toward the upper tier.

HAMLET

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
That I will speak to thee.

The lightning flashes, throwing the hideous vision
into sharp relief. Its transparent, grizzled beard
wavers in the wind.

HAMLET

I'll call thee Hamlet,
King, father, royal Dane.

CUT TO:

59. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE COURTYARD BELOW. NIGHT.

59.

CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE arrive at a window to take
some air. They embrace and he kisses her hungrily.

A VOICE FROM UP ABOVE

O, answer me!

They stop, looking up towards the mist.

CUT TO:

59A. EXT. GREAT HALL WINDOW. NIGHT.

59A.

LOW ANGLE GERTRUDE and CLAUDIUS at window.

60. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

60.

HAMLET forces himself to take another step. The GHOST lowers the sword. A mournful moaning fills the air. The GHOST begins to recede with the mist, beckoning to HAMLET with a crepuscular hand. HAMLET starts to follow. HORATIO struggles forward with his sword, but HAMLET holds him away.

HORATIO

Do not my lord.

(holds him)

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?

The GHOST disappears, but the glimmering hand still beckons. HORATIO grips HAMLET's arm.

HAMLET (Cont)

It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

BERNARDO steps forward to help restrain the prince.

BERNARDO

You shall not go, my lord!

HAMLET breaks away from them, drawing his sword.

HAMLET

Hold off your hands.

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

I say, away! Go on, I'll follow thee.

HAMLET plunges into the mist.

CUT TO:

61. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. A LONG, NARROW PASSAGE.
NIGHT.

61.

The GHOST drifts to the dark mouth of the passage and disappears. HAMLET rushes after it, hesitating on the threshold.

HORATIO'S VOICE

My lord! My lord!

Continued:

61. CONTINUED (1)

61.

The GHOST glides to the end of the passage. It turns back to look at HAMLET.

HAMLET

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

But the GHOST drifts on.

HAMLET sheathes his sword and plunges into the darkness.

BERNARDO'S VOICE

Lord Hamlet!

MARCELLUS' VOICE

Heavens secure him!

There is the sound of footsteps and the THREE FRIENDS arrive at the mouth of the passage. They listen, searching the darkness. Suddenly HAMLET's voice calls from a good distance ahead.

The FRIENDS rush to the end of the corridor.

HAMLET comes out of a low doorway and sees the GHOST stepping up a winding stair. He follows.

62. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ANOTHER PASSAGE. NIGHT.

62.

The FRIENDS listen. The passage branches out in three directions. They take one calling out to HAMLET.

HAMLET is reaching the top of the winding stair, his FRIENDS' voices growing more and more faint.

CUT TO:

63. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. NIGHT.

63.

HAMLET steps up into view from the winding stairs. He cautiously moves onto the top of a tower. He stops.

The GHOST is sitting on a small crumbling wall. His helmet rests at his side. His features are visible; not those of a terrifying death's-head, but of a dry, human, almost pitiful old man. He gazes at his son with saddened eyes.

HAMLET falls to his knees.

Continued:

GHOST

Mark me.

HAMLET

I will. _

GHOST

My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost.

GHOST

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
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,
Doomed 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. But that I am
forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young
blood,
Make they two eyes like star start from
their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O
list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love -

HAMLET

O God!

Continued:

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

I find thee apt.
Now, Hamlet, hear.
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me. 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 wits, 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,
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
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,
So lust, though to a radiant angel linked,
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 hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour

(MORE)

Continued:

GHOST (Cont)

The leperous distilment, 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 a most instant tetter barked about,
 Most lazarlike, 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 dispatch'd,
 Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
 Unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled,
 No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head.

The GHOST wavers again.

GHOST (Cont)

O, horrible! O, horrible! Most horrible!
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury and damned incest.

HAMLET rises, but the GHOST raises a hand to stay him.

GHOST (Cont)

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 to be near
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire.

The GHOST begins to fade away.

GHOST (Cont)

Adieu, adieu, adieu. Remember me.

HAMLET reaches out to the vanished spectre, but there is nothing but fog.

HAMLET

Remember thee?
 Ay, thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a
 seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee?

He thrusts his sword up toward the sky.

Continued:

63. CONTINUED (4)

63.

HAMLET (Cont)

Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmixed with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!

64. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENT. DAWN.

64.

HAMLET rises and walks to the edge of the tower
 gazing down to where the lighted windows of the
 great hall can be seen.

64A. EXT. CASTLE COURTYARD. DAWN.

64A.

CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE appear, and the KING pulls
 her to him.

64B. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENT. DAWN.

64B.

HAMLET

O most pernicious woman!
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!

SERVANTS close the shutters against the night.

HAMLET (Cont)

That one may smile,

Another shutter is closed now.

HAMLET (Cont)
 and smile,

The last shutter is closed.

HAMLET (Cont)
 and be a villain.

65. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAWN.

65.

HAMLET brings the sword up and points it toward the
 darkened hall.

HAMLET

So, uncle, there you are. Now, to my word:
 It is 'Adieu, adieu, remember me.'
 I have sworn't!

HORATIO'S VOICE

Hamlet!

Continued:

65. CONTINUED (1)

65.

MARCELLUS' VOICE
My Lord Hamlet!

HORATIO'S VOICE
Heavens secure him.

HAMLET
So be it!

MARCELLUS
Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

HAMLET
(calling out to them)
Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.

66. EXT. BATTLEMENTS. DAWN.

66.

HAMLET rushes to a lower terrace. HORATIO,
MARCELLUS and BERNARDO scramble into view.

HORATIO
How is't with you?

HAMLET
O, wonderful!

HORATIO
What news?

HAMLET
No, you will reveal it.

HORATIO
Not I, my lord, by heaven.

BERNARDO
Nor I.

HAMLET smiles and warily circles them.

HAMLET
There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all
Denmark
But he's an arrant knave.

HORATIO
There needs no ghost come from the grave
To tell us this.

HAMLET
Right, you are in the right.
So I hold it fit that we shake hands and
part.

Continued:

66. CONTINUED (1)

66.

He extends his hand.

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 offence, my lord.

HAMLET

There is, Horatio, and much offence too.
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.
And now, good friends, grant me one poor
request:
Never make known what you have seen
to-night.

HORATIO

We will not.

HAMLET

Nay, but swear't.

BERNARDO

In faith, my lord, not I.

MARCELLUS

Nor I, my lord, in faith.

HAMLET draws his sword presenting the hilt to them.

HAMLET

Swear by this sword.

The friends gaze uneasily at the sword.

HAMLET (Cont).

Swear!

The friends hesitantly place their hands on the hilt.

HAMLET (Cont)

Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

A sudden gust of wind blows up, startling the friends.

GHOST'S VOICE

Swear.

Continued:

66. CONTINUED (2)

66.

HAMLET

Come on. You this fellow in the cellarage
Consent to swear.

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 meet
To put an antic disposition on),
Never to note that you now aught of me.
This do swear.

THE FRIENDS

We do swear't.

HAMLET sighs wearily. He walks away from his
friends, stretching out his arms. A glimpse of
warm light filters through the cloudy horizon.
Dawn is here.

HAMLET

Rest, rest, perturbed spirit.

HAMLET looks back at his friends.

HAMLET (Cont)

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right!

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

67/ SCENES DELETED.

74.

67/

74.

75. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. WEAVING ROOM. DAY.

75.

OPHELIA sews by herself in the small room. She's
singing:

OPHELIA

"To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window
To be your Valentine."

Continued:

75. CONTINUED (1)

75.

There is a sound behind her and she turns.

OPHELIA's P.O.V. - THE WEAVING ROOM DOOR - DAY - HAMLET stands there watching her. His shirt is half undone, half buttoned in the wrong holes, billowing and crooked. His hair is wild with muddy weeds thrust among the dark curls. His face is smudged and dirty. The knees of his pants are ripped and a little bloody. He wears no shoes.

OPHELIA is very surprised at this odd, and savage vision. He comes in shutting the door.

ARCHWAY UP ABOVE - DAY - POLONIUS arrives and catches sight of the strange scene down below.

HAMLET, in his fantastic state, is walking slowly toward OPHELIA, staring at her sorrowfully. He takes a small pair of scissors from a table with one hand, with the other he grabs her by the wrist pulling her up. She gasps.

C.U. - POLONIUS watches from the side of the archway above.

HAMLET holds OPHELIA at ~~his~~ length, intently studying her face with large sad eyes: He holds her hand up, turning it to look first at the palm, then the back, then the palm again. He nods gravely three times. He lets it go and raises the scissors to his head. With a sigh, his eyes never leaving her face, he cuts a lock of his hair. He gently reaches for her hand again. She hesitantly offers it to him and he grabs it roughly, furiously wrapping the lock of hair around her finger, making stifled sounds as if this were very painful to him.

POLONIUS' brow wrinkles.

HAMLET lets her hand go and keeping his eyes on her face, he backs slowly toward the door and is gone. OPHELIA, confused and frightened, is almost in tears. She looks after HAMLET, and then down at the dark hair wrapped around her finger. She brings it to her lips.

POLONIUS nods and silently withdraws. WE FOLLOW HIM as he starts down a corridor and scuttles toward the great hall.

DISSOLVE TO:

76. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

76.

POLONIUS hurriedly enters to CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE.

POLONIUS

My lord, I think it sure that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

GERTRUDE

O, speak of that. That do I long to hear.

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,
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.

GERTRUDE

More matter, with less art.

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 - a foolish figure.
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then; 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.

He takes a letter from his robes.

POLONIUS (Cont)

I have a daughter: have, while she is mine,
Who in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this. Now gather and surmise.
'To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the
most beautified Ophelia,' -
That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase:
'beautified' is a vile phrase. But you
shall hear.

GERTRUDE

Came this from Hamlet to her?

Continued:

POLONIUS

Good madam, stay awhile. I will be faithful.
'Doubt thou the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar,
But never doubt I love.'
This in obedience hath my daughter shown me.

CLAUDIUS

But how hath she received his love?

POLONIUS

What do you think of me?

I went round to work
And my young mistress thus I did bespeak:
That she should lock herself from his
resort.
Thus he, repelled, a short tale to make,
Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
Thence to a lightness, and, by this
declension,
Into the madness wherein now he raves,
And all we mourn for.

CLAUDIUS

Do you think 'tis this?

GERTRUDE

I doubt it is no other but the main,
His father's death and our o'erhasty
marriage.

POLONIUS

Hath there been such a time, I would fain
know that,
That I have positively said "'Tis so,"
When it proved otherwise?

CLAUDIUS

Not that I know.

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.

CLAUDIUS

Well, we shall sift him. How may we try it
further?

HAMLET suddenly appears in the outer hall, carrying
a pile of books, reading one as he goes toward the
castle library.

Continued:

76. CONTINUED (2)

76.

GERTRUDE

But look where sadly the poor wretch comes
reading.

POLONIUS

Away, I do beseech you both, away.
I'll board him presently. O, give me leave.

GERTRUDE and CLAUDIUS go out another door and
POLONIUS goes into the hall.

77. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. LIBRARY. DAY.

77.

It is a vaulted room filled to overflowing with
with scrolls, books and other documents in shelves,
in niches, all covered with dust. A long table is
in the centre of the room HAMLET lets his books
fall onto the table causing a cloud of dust to
billow up, but he keeps reading his book. POLONIUS
comes in and draws near him.

POLONIUS

How does my good Lord Hamlet?

HAMLET

Well, God-a-mercy.

Suddenly HAMLET looks up and going to a ladder, he
climbs it, searching for a book somewhere on a
shelf.

POLONIUS

Do you know me, my lord?

HAMLET

Excellent well. You are a fish monger.

POLONIUS

Not I, my lord.

HAMLET

Then I would you were so honest a man.

POLONIUS

Honest, my lord?

HAMLET

Sir, to be honest, as this world goes,
is to be one man picked out of ten thousand.
For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
being a good kissing carrion - Have you a
daughter?

Continued:

77. CONTINUED (1)

77.

He finds his book and comes down, going to a corner to read it.

POLONIUS

I have, my lord.

HAMLET

Let her not walk i'th'sun. Conception is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive,

He puts the open book over his head pretending to shield out the sun.

HAMLET (Cont)

friend, look to't.

POLONIUS looks at the book turned into a sun-bonnet. Then HAMLET climbs onto the table, lying on his back and looking up at the book in his outstretched hands.

POLONIUS

What do you read, my lord?

HAMLET

Words, words, words.

POLONIUS

What is the matter, my lord?

HAMLET

Between who?

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 plumtree 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 you yourself, sir, should be old as I am if, like a crab, you could go backward.

HAMLET takes the books and climbs up the ladder to replace it. POLONIUS turns from him.

Continued:

77. CONTINUED (2)

77.

POLONIUS

Though this be madness, yet there is method
in't. How pregnant sometimes his replies
are! My honourable lord, I will most humbly
take my leave of you.

HAMLET is stretched out in a perilous position,
reaching to replace the book. He almost falls.

HAMLET

You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that
I will more willingly part withal - except my
life, except my life, except my life.

DISSOLVE TO:

77A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE ROYAL VAULT. DAY.

77A.

TOTAL DARKNESS - Footsteps echo slowly downward. A
dim light is seen ahead. WE MOVE toward it and
into the ROYAL VAULT OF ELSINORE, approaching the
tomb of HAMLET's FATHER. It is now covered by a
monument chiselled into the likeness of the former
king. The royal sword lies on his chest, clutched
in carved hands of stone, blanketed over with a
fine layer of dust.

HAMLET stands in a dark corner gazing at his
father's tomb.

HAMLET

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 -

HAMLET's eyes are riveted on the point of his
father's sword gleaming beneath the dust.

HAMLET (Cont)

No more - and by a sleep to say we end
The heartache, and the thousand natural
shocks
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation

HAMLET contemplates the other monuments that encase
generation upon generation of the deceased Kings of
Denmark.

HAMLET (Cont)

Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep -

Continued:

77A. CONTINUED (1)

77A.

He reaches out a hand, tracing the profile on the lid of a nearby tomb.

HAMLET (Cont)

To sleep - perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,

He looks down at the face of stone.

HAMLET (Cont)

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.

He walks past tombs of kings, queens, trusted courtiers, couples united forever in death, even small tombs chiselled to represent children. He smooths down his disordered hair and speaks as if he were talking to them all:

HAMLET (Cont)

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of disprized love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,

He finds himself back at his father's tomb, gazing down at the sword.

HAMLET (Cont)

When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,

He shudders and turns away, toward a dark archway through which is seen a measureless collection of statues and bodies clad in decaying robes. Here and there a turned out face catches the light; tight dry skin pulled over a disintegrating skull.

HAMLET (Cont)

To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of something after death,

The words echo. HAMLET looks ahead to another archway. WE PULL SLOWLY toward it, but what is beyond is hidden in oppressive darkness.

HAMLET (Cont)

The undiscovered country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,

Continued:

77A. CONTINUED (2)

77A.

HAMLET peers into the darkness.

HAMLET (Cont)

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of?

HAMLET'S P.O.V. - Gradually the shapes of large
piles of bone are discerned, a treasure house of
decaying humanity woven over by canopies of dusty
spiders' webs.

HAMLET moves back toward his father's tomb.

HAMLET (Cont)

Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of
thought,

He stands beside the tomb gazing down at the sword,
placing a tentative hand on it.

HAMLET (Cont)

And enterprises of great pitch and moment,
With this regard their currents turn awry,

He pulls his hand away from the sword.

HAMLET (Cont)

And lose the name of action.

He moves his hand back to the sword, hesitating
just above it.

HAMLET's hand comes down, resting firmly on the
hilt of the sword.

78. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

78.

POLONIUS enters with OPHELIA. GERTRUDE smiles,
going to the young woman and smoothing her hair.
CLAUDIUS is also present.

GERTRUDE

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.

Continued:

78. CONTINUED (1)

GERTRUDE leaves.

POLONIUS

Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please
you,
We will bestow ourselves. Read on this book.

He takes a prayer-book from a small prayer-stool
beneath a crucifix. Then goes to the door.

POLONIUS

He is coming. Let us withdraw, my lord.

CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS go to a small door, hastening
up a stairwell. WE PULL UP to a row of dark holes
in the stone. OPHELIA goes to the prayer-stool and
kneels on it, opening the book. HAMLET enters,
surprised to see OPHELIA.

HAMLET

The fair Ophelia! - Nymph, in thy orisons
Be all my sins remembered.

OPHELIA

Good my lord,
How does your honour for this many a day?

HAMLET

I humbly thank you; well, well, well.
Are you honest?

OPHELIA

My lord?

HAMLET

Are you fair?

OPHELIA

What means your lordship?

HAMLET

That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
should admit no discourse to your beauty.

MISSING: REACTION OF OPHELIA

HAMLET turns back into the room. He looks to the
holes, and then quickly whispers to OPHELIA.

HAMLET (Cont)

I did love you once.

OPHELIA

Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Continued:

78. CONTINUED (2)

78.

HAMLET

You should not have believed me. I loved
you not.

OPHELIA gazes at him.

OPHELIA

I was the more deceived.

He quickly turns away from this scrutiny. OPHELIA
reaches to her bodice, pulling out a thin chain
with a simple golden band.

OPHELIA

My lord, I have remembrances of yours
That I have longed long to redeliver.
I pray you now, receive them.

She holds the chain out to him.

HAMLET

No, not I,

I never gave you aught.

OPHELIA

My honoured lord, you know right well you
did,
And with them words of so sweet breath
composed
As made the things more rich.

She fingers the gold ring, then hands it to HAMLET
again. But he won't take it. She places it on the
prayer-book. HAMLET looks intently around the
room. OPHELIA watches him anxiously.

HAMLET

Where's your father?

79. INT. A SECRET STAIRCASE. DAY.

79.

POLONIUS and the KING glare nervously at each
other.

80. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

80.

OPHELIA quickly lowers her eyes.

OPHELIA

At home, my lord.

HAMLET explodes into a rage.

Continued:

80. CONTINUED (1)

80.

HAMLET

Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may
play the fool nowhere but in's own house.
Farewell.

He starts out and OPHELIA looks up at the crucifix.

OPHELIA

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.

He pulls her up from the stool, grabbing the ring
and chain, holding it before her face.

HAMLET (Cont)

Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool,
for wise men know well enough what monsters
you make of them!

OPHELIA's in tears, and this almost softens HAMLET,
but a shadow moves in a dark hole above, and he
looks up, pulling away.

HAMLET (Cont)

I say we will have no more marriage.

CUT TO:

81. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. STAIRCASE. DAY.

81.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS' eyes are dark and still. He and
POLONIUS start silently down the stairs.

HAMLET

Those that are married already - all but one
- shall live!

82. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALL. DAY.

82.

HAMLET rushes across the room and throws the chain
and ring up toward the window-holes, but they fall
back down to the floor.

HAMLET

The rest shall keep as they are!

OPHELIA falls to her knees and HAMLET backs away and
storms out.

Continued:

82. CONTINUED (1)

82.

OPHELIA

O what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
 The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye,
 tongue, sword,
 Th'expectancy and rose of the fair state,
 The observed of all observers, quite, quite
 down!

She takes up the chain from the floor.

OPHELIA (Cont)

And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
 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!

POLONIUS and CLAUDIUS appear at the door of the
 secret staircase.

CLAUDIUS

Love? His affections do not that way tend.
 There's something in his soul
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood,
 And I do fear the hatch will be some danger.

POLONIUS pulls his daughter from the floor.

POLONIUS

I like it not, nor stands it safe with us
 To let this madman range. We must watch him
 And that most carefully.

CLAUDIUS

It shall be so.

Madness in great ones must not unwatched go.

The KING leaves. POLONIUS goes to OPHELIA, placing
 a comforting hand upon her head.

DISSOLVE TO:

83. EXT. THE BEACH. DAY.

83.

HAMLET lays on the sand holding his horse's reins
 behind his reclining head as he whispers
 affectionately to the beast. The horse looks down
 at him. HAMLET closes his eyes, relaxed and happy.

Suddenly he hears voices above him.

GUILDENSTERN (O.S.)

My honoured lord!

Continued:

83. CONTINUED (1)

83.

ROSENCRANTZ (O.S.)

My most dear lord!

HAMLET'S P.O.V. - ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN are looking down at him, smiling but curious. - HORATIO and MARCELLUS stand near Hamlet's old friends, holding the reins of their horses. HAMLET jumps up from the sand. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN pale a little at his dishevelled appearance, but keep their smiles intact.

HAMLET

My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do you both? What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN

Prison, my lord!

HAMLET

Denmark's a prison.

GUILDENSTERN

We think not so, my lord.

HAMLET

Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so. To me it is a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ

Why, then your ambition makes it one. 'Tis too narrow for your mind.

HAMLET looks at him curiously.

HAMLET

O God. I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.

GUILDENSTERN

Which dreams, indeed are ambition, for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

HAMLET laughs.

HAMLET smiles at ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, and plays with his sword.

Continued:

83. CONTINUED (2)

83.

HAMLET

What make you at Elsinore?

ROSENCRANTZ

To visit you, my lord, no other occasion.

HAMLET

Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks.
But, my dear friends, were you not sent for?

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN fall silent. HAMLET
throws a sword to GUILDENSTERN and suddenly crosses
blades with him, playfully driving him along the
beach.

HAMLET (Cont)

Come, come, deal justly with me.

HORATIO studies the nervous ROSENCRANTZ, then
follows.

HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN thrust and parry.

HAMLET

Come, come; nay speak.

GUILDENSTERN

What should I say?

HAMLET

Why, anything but to th'purpose. There is
a kind of confession in your looks.
I know the good king and queen have sent for
you.

ROSENCRANTZ

To what end?

HAMLET

That you must teach me.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN look at one another,
embarrassed. HAMLET watches them closely.

HAMLET (Cont)

Be even and direct with me whether
you were sent for or no?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord, we were sent for.

HAMLET nods, and drops the sword.

Continued:

83. CONTINUED (3)

83.

HAMLET

I will tell you why, so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the King and Queen moult no feather. I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, foregone 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;

HAMLET moves to a low wall. Beyond it is the rolling sea under a vast, cloud-filled sky.

HAMLET

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 quitessence of dust? Man delights not me; nor woman neither, though by your smiling you seem to say so.

ROSENCRANTZ

There was no such stuff in my thoughts.

HAMLET

Why did ye laugh then, when I said "Man delights not me"?

ROSENCRANTZ

To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive.

ROSENCRANTZ points to where a donkey pulls a cart-load of PLAYERS.

84. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. DAY.

84.

The PLAYERS' CART rumbles to a stop, and they all stiffly disembark, brushing off the dust of the road. There are OLD TROUPERS, a dog or two, a YOUNG WOMAN breast-feeding a BABY, a few dirty-faced CHILDREN, and a HUNCH-BACK. A lean OLD CLOWN is sitting on the back sewing a colourful cape.

85. EXT. BEACH. DAY.

85.

HAMLET smiles, his face brightening.

CUT TO:

86/ SCENES DELETED.
88.

86/
88.

89. EXT. THE TOWERS OF ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

89.

BERNARDO is keeping watch. Suddenly he hears a horn tooting frantically below, followed by the beating of a drum. He looks down, as the sound of happy cheers, and the barking of dogs fill the air. FRANCISCO comes over to see with some other GUARDS.

90. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. DAY.

90.

The players' cart is trundling up the road. HORATIO and ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN and MARCELLUS riding behind. HORATIO leads Hamlet's horse. HAMLET is seated on the donkey that pulls the cart, wrapped in the colourful cape. He blows loudly on a dented horn. His legs almost scrape the ground and he waggles them with clumsy high spirits.

91. EXT. WALLS OF ELSINORE. DAY.

91.

BERNARDO grins at FRANCISCO, who shakes his head in bewilderment. BERNARDO slaps his shoulder and laughs.

91A. EXT. OUTSIDE GATES. DAY.

91A.

HAMLET toots like mad on the horn.

91B. EXT. WALLS OF ELSINORE. DAY.

91B.

More of the SUBJECTS of Elsinore are appearing at the walls, attracted by this odd, noisy procession.

91C. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. DAY.

91C.

HAMLET waves to the assembling CROWD, and blows on the horn. The PLAYERS wave from the cart, some dance around it on the road, the dogs yapping excitedly.

92. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GATES. DAY.

92.

The gate opens wide and the GUARDS happily welcome the odd procession in. HAMLET turns to the PLAYERS with a joyous cry:

HAMLET

Masters, you are welcome to Elsinore!

92A. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. UPPER WINDOW. DAY.

92A.

CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE appear at an upper window exchanging glances: hers smiling; his, a frown.

93. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

93.

The PLAYERS jump down from the cart calling to their prospective audience.

ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, HORATIO and MARCELLUS watch the pandemonium that fills the square.

93A. EXT. A TERRACE. DAY.

93A.

OPHELIA appears and looks down. POLONIUS joins her and his eyes shine like a child's. OPHELIA looks to him and smiles. Feeling her gaze, POLONIUS resumes his look of habitual dignity.

93B. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

93B.

HAMLET moves through the PLAYERS calling up to those who have come to watch:

HAMLET

The adventurous Knight shall use his foil
and target!

The Lover shall not sigh gratis!

The Humorous Man shall end his part in
peace!

The Lady shall say her mind freely,
And the Clown ...

Shall make those laugh whose lungs are
tickle o'th'sere

93C. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. UPPER WINDOW. DAY.

93C.

GERTRUDE and CLAUDIUS - GERTRUDE waves to her son.

93D. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

93D.

HAMLET waves back. Then he switches his eyes toward the king. He bows his head in mock reverence to him ...

CLAUDIUS answers with an exaggerated bow of his own. POLONIUS comes excitedly into the courtyard.

HAMLET (Cont)

Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? For they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time. After your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their ill report while you live.

POLONIUS

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

HAMLET

God's bodkin, man, much better! Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Take them in. Follow him, friends. We'll hear a play tomorrow.

EVERYONE cheers and the PLAYERS follow POLONIUS away.

HAMLET (Cont)

Very well.. Follow that lord, and look you Mock him not.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS step up beside HAMLET, and then so do ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN watching him carefully.

HAMLET (Cont)

Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

GUILDENSTERN

In what, my dear lord?

HAMLET looks at them with a conspiratorial smile, motioning them closer.

HAMLET

I am but mad north-northwest. When the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN nod sagely, but it's clear they are in the dark. HAMLET pulls HORATIO away. The CROWD quits the yard. ROSENCRANTZ and

Continued:

93D. CONTINUED (1)

93D.

GUILDENSTERN look up to the walls and see CLAUDIUS watching them. They look after HAMLET and shrug, helplessly shaking their heads.

HAMLET glares up at CLAUDIUS.

HAMLET

And they are it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered and lackgall
To make apprehension bitter, or ere this
I should ha' fatted all the region kites
With this slave's offal. O bloody
Bloody, bawdy villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous,
Kindless villain!

O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,
That I, the son of a dear father murdered,
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with
words.

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 presently
They have proclaimed their malefactions.

I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle. I'll observe his looks.
I'll tent him to the quick. If 'a do
blench,
I know my course.

The spirit that I have seen
May be a devil, and the devil hath power
T'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.

CUT TO:

94. SCENE DELETED.

94.

95. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. STAGE. NIGHT.

95.

A wooden platform stage has been erected, complete

Continued:

95. CONTINUED (1)

95.

with curtain. HAMLET is in the backstage area. He whispers feverishly to the OLD TROUPER, giving last minute instructions. He peeks through the curtain. He moves to the BOY who is making himself up in an old cracked mirror which distorts his reflection. On his head is a golden wig. HAMLET puts a tin crown on the BOY's head, then touches his cheek, approvingly.

HAMLET

'Tis almost the time, my friends. Haste you.

HAMLET goes to the curtain, and slips through it.

96. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. NIGHT.

96.

(REVERSE ANGLE) HORATIO and MARCELLUS enter and HAMLET rushes up to them.

HAMLET

So, the king will hear this piece of work?

HAMLET grabs HORATIO's arm.

HAMLET (Cont)

Observe my uncle. If his occulted guilt
Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
And my imaginations all are foul.

SOUND OF FAN-FARE AND DRUMS and the COURTIERS begin their procession in.

HAMLET (Cont)

I must be idle. Get you a place.

HORATIO

Well, my lord.

HORATIO moves in amongst the crowd. There is the ROLL OF DRUMS and CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE enter dressed in their finery. POLONIUS follows with a very pale OPHELIA, the COUNCILLORS bringing up the rear. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN are among the royal party. CLAUDIUS seats himself and the DRUMS CEASE. POLONIUS walks to the stage and turns to make an announcement. The AUDIENCE grow silent.

POLONIUS

O, these are the best actors in the
world, either for tragedy, comedy,
history, pastoral, pastoral-comical,

(MORE)

Continued:

POLONIUS (Cont)

historical-pastoral, tragical-historical,
tragical-comical-historical-pastoral;
scene individable, or poem unlimited.
For the law of writ and the liberty,
these are the only men.

HAMLET

My lord, you played once in'th'university,
you say?

POLONIUS

That did I, my lord, and was accounted a
good actor.

HAMLET

What did you enact?

POLONIUS

I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed
i' th' Capitol. Brutus killed me.

HAMLET

It was a brute part of him to kill so
capital a calf there.

The AUDIENCE applauds, amused, filled with pleasant
expectation.

CLAUDIUS

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET

Excellent i'faith! Of the chameleon's dish;
I eat the air, promise-crammed.

CLAUDIUS pauses, but he smiles.

CLAUDIUS

Be the players ready?

HAMLET

Ay, my lord. They stay upon your patience.

GERTRUDE smiles and extends a loving hand.

GERTRUDE

Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

HAMLET

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

Continued:

96. CONTINUED (2)

96.

There is a discreet general murmur in the room as HAMLET goes to OPHELIA. GERTRUDE smiles thinly. CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS exchange wondering looks.

HAMLET (Cont)

Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

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

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

O God, what should a man do but be merry? For look you how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

OPHELIA

Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

HAMLET

So long? O heavens! Die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year.

CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE's smiles fade. There is the sound of DRUMS and TRUMPETS.

97. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL AND STAGE. NIGHT. 97.

From behind the curtain come the CLOWNS and ACROBATS cavorting to the delight of the CROWD. The OLD CLOWN steps up to OPHELIA bowing low and giving her a cloth flower. OPHELIA hesitantly takes it and the OLD CLOWN nods at HAMLET, then whirls away.

TWO MEN with large lanterns take their place at either side of the stage.

The CLOWNS make sad faces and scramble away. The curtain opens on a stage set to look like a garden. A bench with pillows is in the centre. A PLAYER enters addressing the CROWD.

PLAYER

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

He bows low and the AUDIENCE applauds.

HAMLET

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

GERTRUDE

Indeed 'tis brief, my son.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

Both GERTRUDE and OPHELIA look at him, but his eyes are focused on the stage. The OLD TROUPER dressed as a king, and the BOY clad in his gown and wig, enter. The AUDIENCE applauds. The OLD TROUPER and the BOY begin a stately dance.

OLD TROUPER (KING)

'Tis thirty years since Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

BOY (QUEEN)

So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done!

OLD TROUPER (KING)

But should I die before a new sun shine
You might another husband soon entwine.

BOY (QUEEN)

Nay, should you die, I should confound the
rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my
breast!

(MORE)

Continued:

97. CONTINUED (1)

97.

BOY (QUEEN - Cont)
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who killed the
first.

C.U. - HAMLET darts a glance back at the throne.

HAMLET
(a whisper)
That's wormwood, wormwood.

THE STAGE - The OLD TROUPER sighs and quits the dance, sitting heavily on the bench. The BOY goes anxiously to him.

OLD TROUPER (KING)
I do believe you think what now you speak,
But what we do determine, oft we break.
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
This world is not for aye, nor is it strange

C.U. OPHELIA listens intently.

OLD TROUPER (KING - O.S.)
That even our loves should with our fortunes
change.

OPHELIA lowers her head.

C.U. - GERTRUDE's face is still and cold.

HAMLET
If she should break it now!

BOY (QUEEN - O.S.)
Both here and hence pursue me lasting
strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

GERTRUDE blinks, but keeps her expression impassive. WE MOVE OVER to CLAUDIUS who glances at her uncomfortably.

THE STAGE - The OLD TROUPER smiles and embraces his 'wife'. Then he yawns and stretches and the BOY helps him to lie down. The BOY kisses his forehead and silently tip-toes away as he falls asleep.

GERTRUDE smiles thinly. HAMLET's VOICE startles her.

HAMLET
Madam, how like you this play?

Continued:

GERTRUDE

The lady doth protest too much methinks.

The surrounding AUDIENCE laughs. GERTRUDE smiles.

HAMLET

O, but she'll keep her word.

GERTRUDE eyes him and nods. CLAUDIUS leans forward.

CLAUDIUS

Have you heard the argument? Is there no offence in't?

HAMLET turns to the KING.

HAMLET

No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest, no offence i'th'world.

CLAUDIUS

What do you call the play?

HAMLET

The Mouse-trap. 'Tis a knavish piece of work, but what of that? Your majesty and I have free souls, it touches us not.

HORATIO moves forward in the crowd to get a better view of the king.

THE STAGE - A PLAYER IN BLACK creeps in toward the sleeping 'king'. He holds a vial in his hand.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS' opaque eyes.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS are watching him carefully.

HAMLET turns and whispers to CLAUDIUS.

HAMLET

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

CLAUDIUS

You are as good as a chorus, cousin.

THE STAGE - THE PLAYER IN BLACK creeps closer and closer, the vial extended.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS watches.

THE STAGE - THE PLAYER IN BLACK reaches the sleeping 'king'. His hand comes out.

Continued:

97. CONTINUED (3)

97.

C.U. - HAMLET's eyes are 'locked on his uncle.

THE HAND OF THE PLAYER IN BLACK inches forward.

C.U. - HORATIO's eyes are fixed on the KING.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS leans forward briefly, rubbing his hands.

THE HAND OF THE PLAYER IN BLACK pours the poison from the vial into the sleeping 'king's' ear. The AUDIENCE gasps.

C.U. - POLONIUS looks to the KING, then to HAMLET.

CLAUDIUS takes a short breath. He slowly rises to his feet. GERTRUDE looks up at him.

HAMLET stands smiling expectantly at the king. CLAUDIUS glares at him.

HAMLET

His name's Gonzago. Wait, you shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

C.U. - GERTRUDE's eyes blaze at HAMLET.

CLAUDIUS trembles, hardly able to control his confusion and panic.

CLAUDIUS

Give me some light!

POLONIUS steps up to him, but CLAUDIUS pushes him away.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Some light, I say!

POLONIUS

Lights, lights, lights! Give o'er the play.

98. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL AND STAGE. NIGHT.

98.

The TORCHBEARERS rush from the stage leaving the surprised OLD TROUPER and his murderer in darkness. Confusion is breaking out in the room. HAMLET grabs a torch, shouting at CLAUDIUS.

HAMLET

What, frightened with false fire?

Continued:

98. CONTINUED (1)

98.

CLAUDIUS sees the unrest around him, and forces himself down the stairs and through the bewildered CROWD, the TORCHBEARERS dutifully lighting his way. GERTRUDE stalks up to HAMLET.

C.U. - HAMLET and GERTRUDE - The Queen confronts her son with a look of silent fury.

GUILDENSTERN and ROSENCRANTZ escort GERTRUDE after the king. The AUDIENCE comments noisily. They begin to press to the door. Voices are raised.

POLONIUS pulls the frightened OPHELIA to a side door.

THE STAGE - The PLAYERS are all out watching their retreating AUDIENCE. PEOPLE are shouting now, rushing to leave the room. HAMLET leaps on the stage, calling for instruments. The OLD CLOWN brings a drum. HAMLET slips the strap around his neck, and furiously begins to batter away on it.

The OLD TROUPER watches him, amused, and he claps his hands.

HAMLET laughs triumphantly at him and begins to loudly sing, pounding on his drum.

HAMLET
(sings)

Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play
For some must watch while some must sleep,

The OLD TROUPER approves, and sings with him. HORATIO and MARCELLUS reach them, holding torches.

HAMLET & OLD TROUPER
Thus runs the world away.
Thus runs the world away.

99. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. THE HALL. NIGHT.

99.

The CROWD have almost all left the Great Hall. HAMLET turns and climbs the stair and appears on a balcony above, his voice ringing triumphantly over the confusion.

HAMLET
I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand
pound.

For a moment the last of the CROWD is silent.

Continued:

99. CONTINUED (1)

99.

HAMLET (Cont)

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you!

Pandemonium breaks out again.

C.U. - POLONIUS looks up, puzzled.

HORATIO, MARCELLUS and BERNARDO applaud the prince as he pounds on the drum.

HAMLET breaks a drumstick in his furious pounding and the OLD CLOWN throws him a recorder to replace it.

100. INT. CASTLE EL SINORE. THE DOORWAY OF THE GREAT HALL. NIGHT.

100.

POLONIUS appears with OPHELIA. He watches the noisy antics for a second, then orders his daughter to go home. OPHELIA turns and goes.

POLONIUS watches HAMLET a moment more, then goes out in the opposite direction. HAMLET runs for the door, going after OPHELIA, still beating wildly on the drum.

CUT TO:

101. INT. CASTLE EL SINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. WINDING HALL. NIGHT.

101.

The sound of HAMLET's drum swiftly pursues OPHELIA. She begins to run. HAMLET rushes into view swooping down upon her. He finally reaches her and grabs her arm. She pulls away falling at the foot of a winding stair.

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:

HAMLET raises the drumstick and the recorder and begins a more stately rhythm, like a march of the dead. OPHELIA backs up the stair and he follows ominously, speaking in time to the drum.

HAMLET (Cont)

I am very proud, (boom!) revengeful, (boom!) ambitious, (boom!)

102. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. UPPER GALLERY. NIGHT. 102.

POLONIUS and CLAUDIUS appear on an upper gallery, staring down.

102A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. EMPTY CIRCULAR ROOM. NIGHT. 102A.

HAMLET pounds faster and faster, chasing OPHELIA along a seemingly endless corridor.

HAMLET
with more offences at my beck than I
have thoughts to put them in, imagination
to give them shape, (boom! boom!) or time to
act them in. (boom! boom!). What should
such fellows as I do, crawling
between heaven and earth? Believe none of
us.

OPHELIA falls and HAMLET hisses in her ear.

HAMLET (Cont)
Believe none of us.

OPHELIA
O help him, you sweet heavens!

He is so close to her now, he could almost kiss her.

HAMLET (Cont)
Go to! I'll no more on't; it hath made
me mad.
(a whispered begging)
'To a nunnery, go.

HAMLET stands panting, then moves away like a fury.

CUT TO:

103. INT. ROYAL COMPLEX. NIGHT. 103.

HAMLET moves down the hall and up a stairway.

103A. INT. EMPTY CIRCULAR ROOM. NIGHT. 103A.

OPHELIA is in POLONIUS' arms. CLAUDIUS stands in the shadows behind them.

OPHELIA
My lord, my lord -

POLONIUS
There, there, you need not tell us what he
said, we heard it all.

103B. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. UPPER LEVEL. NIGHT.

103B.

C.U. HAMLET listens from above.

103C. INT. ROYAL COMPLEX. NIGHT.

103C.

The KING emerges from the shadows, his face reflecting great devastation.

CLAUDIUS

How dangerous is it that this man goes loose.
I have set it down. What think you on't?

POLONIUS

To England send him; or confine the madman
Where your wisdom best shall think.

104. INT. GREAT HALL. NIGHT.

104.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS, POLONIUS and OPHELIA start down the stairs, then look up fearfully, hearing the funeral cadence of a drum.

CUT TO:

105. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GALLERY OVER GREAT HALL. NIGHT.

105.

HAMLET comes drumming into view. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN step warily from the shadows and follow him.

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?

ROSENCRANTZ

No, rather with choler.

Continued:

105. CONTINUED (1)

105.

HAMLET

Your wisdom should show itself more richer
to signify this to the doctor.

ROSENCRANTZ

Good my lord, put your discourse into some
frame and make me a wholesome answer!

HAMLET turns on ROSENCRANTZ, pressing him savagely
to the wall and digging the recorder at his throat.

HAMLET

Sir, I cannot.

ROSENCRANTZ

What, my lord?

HAMLET

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

HORATIO and MARCELLUS rush in.

HORATIO

My noble lord!

At HORATIO's voice, HAMLET pulls the recorder from
ROSENCRANTZ's throat, but doesn't let him go.
Instead he puts the mouthpiece of the instrument
to the frightened man's lips.

HAMLET

Will you play upon this pipe?

ROSENCRANTZ

My lord, I cannot.

HAMLET

I do beseech you. Come, it is
as easy as lying.

ROSENCRANTZ

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 pluck out the heart of my mystery;
sound me from my lowest note to the top of
my compass. 'Sblood, do you think
I am easier to be played on than a pipe?

HAMLET lets him go. GUILDENSTERN goes to
ROSENCRANTZ, who rubs his throat.

Continued:

105. CONTINUED (2)

105.

GUILDENSTERN

The queen, your mother, hath sent us to you.

HAMLET

You are welcome.

GUILDENSTERN

Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement.

HAMLET

O wonderful son that can so stonish a mother.

GUILDENSTERN

She desires to speak with you in her closet.

HAMLET

Then I will come to my mother by and by.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN nod.

GUILDENSTERN

We will say so.

They quickly leave.

HAMLET

'By and by' is easily said
 (to HORATIO and MARCELLUS)
 Leave me, friends.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS hesitate. HAMLET throws the drum to the ground, and then the recorder and the drumstick. He runs into the shadows.

CUT TO:

106. EXT. AN OLD PART OF CASTLE ELSINORE. NIGHT.

106.

It is disused and neglected. Moss grows up the crumbling walls, making its weather-worn gargoyles even more fantastic. The moon is full, throwing the ruins into sharp relief. WE PULL DOWN to see the Prince's white face.

HAMLET

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
 When churchyards yawn, and hell itself
 breathes out
 Contagion to this world. Now could I drink
 hot blood
 And do such bitter business as the day
 Would quake to look on.

CUT TO:

107. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. CHAPEL. NIGHT.

107.

CLAUDIUS paces before the steps of the altar. Only one candle burns in the chapel.

CLAUDIUS

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
A brother's murder.

He looks at the prayer-stool near the altar, behind which hangs a huge primitive tapestry of Jesus.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Pray can I not,
Though inclination be as sharp as will.
My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent,
And like a man to double business bound,
I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
Were thicker than itself with brother's
blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet
heavens
To wash it white as snow?

108. INT. CHAPEL. UPPER WINDOW. NIGHT.

108.

HAMLET passes, then pulls back into the shadows.

109. INT. CASTLE ELISNORE. CHAPEL. NIGHT.

109.

CLAUDIUS turns to the prayer-stool again.

CLAUDIUS

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 possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder,
My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
May one be pardoned and retain th'offence?
What then? What rests? Try what repentance
can.

HAMLET goes silently.

HAMLET

Now might I do it pat, now 'a is a praying,
And now I'll do't. And so 'a goes to heaven.
And so am I revenged. That would be
scanned.

He slowly draws his sword, raising it, then stops.

Continued:

109. CONTINUED (1)

109.

HAMLET (Cont)

A villain kills my father, and for that
I, his sole son, do this same villain send
To heaven,
When he is fit and seasoned for his passage.
Why this is hire and salary, not revenge.

HAMLET lowers the sword.

CLAUDIUS rises from the stool and stumbles to the altar, falling to his knees before the tapestry. His shadow is clearly seen on it. HAMLET wrestles with himself and his sword slowly rises ... He trembles, ready to do the deed ...

CLAUDIUS' VOICE

O wretched state! O bosom black as death!

HAMLET freezes, thinks a second more, and then the blade lowers. He shakes his head and soundlessly backs away from CLAUDIUS' kneeling shadow.

110. INT. CHAPEL. WINDING STAIR. NIGHT.

110.

HAMLET silently walks up the stair, the sword held before him.

HAMLET

No.
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,
Or in th'incestuous pleasure of his bed,
At game, a-swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't -
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at
heaven,
And that his soul may be damned and black
As hell, whereto it goes.

He moves slowly back into the darkness.

HAMLET (Cont)

Now to my mother.
O heart, lose not thy nature; my soul,
consent!
Let me be cruel not unnatural;
I will speak daggers to her, but use none.

CUT TO:

110A. INT. CHAPEL. NIGHT.

110A.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS whispers to himself.

Continued:

110A. CONTINUED (1)

110A.

CLAUDIUS

My words fly up, my thoughts remain below.
Words without thoughts never to heaven go.

- CUT TO:

111. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GERTRUDE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

111.

POLONIUS stands with GERTRUDE in the dim room. She paces nervously across the room.

POLONIUS

'Tis meet that some more audience than a
mother
Should overhear. Pray you be round with
him.

HAMLET'S VOICE

Mother?

The QUEEN hurries to POLONIUS urging him behind the curtain.

GERTRUDE

Fear me not. Withdraw; I hear him coming.

POLONIUS hides himself and GERTRUDE continues to pace. HAMLET enters with his sword.

HAMLET

Now, mother, what's the matter?

GERTRUDE

Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

HAMLET

Mother, you have my father much offended.

GERTRUDE

Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

HAMLET

Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

GERTRUDE slaps HAMLET soundly across the face.

GERTRUDE

Have you forgot me?

HAMLET

No, by the rood, not so!
You are the queen, your husband's brother's
wife,

(MORE)

Continued:

111. CONTINUED (1)

111.

HAMLET (Cont)

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

He walks quietly to her. She starts toward the
door.

GERTRUDE

Nay, then I'll set those to you that can
speak.

HAMLET grabs her by the arm.

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.

She pulls away, but he brings the sword around.

GERTRUDE

What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?
Help! Help!

A VOICE

(from the arras)

Help, help!

HAMLET

How now? A rat?

He leaps to the arras, thrusting his sword through
it with surprising violence.

HAMLET (Cont)

Dead for a ducat, dead?

HAMLET pulls the sword out. It is drenched in
blood. GERTRUDE chokes at the sight. A body is
heard slumping to the floor. GERTRUDE watches her
son horrified.

GERTRUDE

O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not. Is it the king?

He pulls the arras aside. POLONIUS lies there,
his face twisted into a terrified grimace.

GERTRUDE

O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Continued:

111. CONTINUED (2)

111.

HAMLET

A bloody deed - almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king and marry with his brother.

GERTRUDE

As kill a king!

HAMLET

Ay, lady, 't was my word.

(to 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.

He drops the arras back and looks to his mother.

HAMLET (Cont)

Leave wringing of your hands. Peace, sit
you down

And let me wring your heart, for so I shall.

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, makes marriage vows
As false as dicer's oaths.

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:

A combination and a form indeed

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 mildewed ear
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you
eyes?

Could you on this fair mountain leave to
feed,

And batten on this moor? Ha! Have you
eyes?

(MORE)

Continued:

111. CONTINUED (3)

111.

HAMLET (Cont)

You cannot call it love, for at your age
The heyday in the blood is tame, it's
humble.

What devil was't
That thus hath cozened you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
O shame, where is thy blush?

GERTRUDE tries to make it to the door again, but he
bars the way. He grabs her brutally and throws her
onto the bed.

GERTRUDE

O, speak no more.
Thou turns't my eyes into my very soul,
And there I see such black and grained
spots
As will not leave their tinct.

HAMLET throws his bloody sword next to her on the
bed and shakes her violently.

HAMLET

Nay, but to live
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,
Stewed in corruption, honeying, and making
love
Over the nasty sty -

GERTRUDE

O, speak to me no more.
These words like daggers enter in mine ears.

Her arms come up around his neck.

GERTRUDE (Cont)

No more, sweet Hamlet.

He draws her even closer, they are eye to eye.

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 -

GERTRUDE

No more.

HAMLET

A king of shreds and patches -

Continued:

111. CONTINUED (4)

111.

She stops his mouth with hers, her hands grabbing wildly at his hair. HAMLET's hand reaches to the sword, squeezing the hilt, but then lets go.

C.U. - HAMLET's eyes suddenly grow wide.

112. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GERTRUDE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

112.

The GHOST of his father stands in the doorway.

HAMLET

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

GERTRUDE pulls herself up looking at HAMLET.

GERTRUDE

Alas he's mad.

HAMLET wipes his sweating face.

HAMLET

Do you not come your tardy son to
O, say!

C.U. - GERTRUDE pulls herself up on the bed.

HAMLET kneels to the floor.

GHOST

Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.

The GHOST raises a hand.

GHOST (Cont)

But look, amazement on thy mother sits.
O, step between her and her fighting soul!
Conceit in weakest bodies, strongest works.
Speak to her Hamlet.

GERTRUDE cries out and buries her face in HAMLET's chest. The GHOST drifts to the door.

HAMLET

How is it with you, lady?

GERTRUDE

Alas, how is't with you,
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold
discourse?
O gentle son, say whereon do you look?

Continued:

112. CONTINUED (1)

112.

HAMLET

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

GERTRUDE

To whom do you speak this?

HAMLET

Do you see nothing there?

GERTRUDE

Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

HAMLET

Nor did you nothing hear?

GERTRUDE goes to him, clasping his shoulders.

GERTRUDE

No, nothing but ourselves.

She puts a hand to his forehead, but HAMLET grabs
her face and forces her to look at the spectre.

HAMLET

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

But GERTRUDE desperately refuses to look.

GERTRUDE

This is the very coinage of your brain.

HAMLET

My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time
And makes as healthful music. It is not
madness
That I have uttered. Mother, for love of
grace,
Lay not that flattering 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.

HAMLET retrieves the sword from the bed, turning it
upside down so the hilt forms a cross. Kneeling,
he presses it gently into her hands.

Continued:

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 my uncle's bed.
Assume a virtue if you have it not.

Refrain tonight,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence.

Once more, good night,
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you. For this same
lord,

I do repent: but Heaven hath pleas'd it so,
To punish me with this, and this with me,
That I must be their scourge and minister.
I will bestow him. So again, good night.
I must be cruel only to be kind.
Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One word more, good lady.

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.

GERTRUDE

Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
And breath of life, I have no life to
breathe
What thou hast said to me.

He leans down and grabbing POLONIUS by the heels
drags him from the room, stopping at the door to
take one last look at GERTRUDE.

HAMLET

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.

Continued:

112. CONTINUED (3)

112.

And he's gone.

CUT TO:

113. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALLWAY AND STAIRS. NIGHT.

113.

HAMLET drags POLONIUS' body to the top of the stairs. He stops, panting, and wipes the blood from his hands on his shirt. Then he grabs POLONIUS' heels again, dragging him up another stairway.

CUT TO:

114. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GERTRUDE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT.

114.

GERTRUDE sits silently. There is a sound nearby and she looks up.

CLAUDIUS (O.S.)

Gertrude?

CLAUDIUS enters.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Where is your son?

GERTRUDE

Ah, mine own lord, what have I seen tonight!

CLAUDIUS

What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

GERTRUDE

Mad as the sea and wind when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
He hath killed this good old man.

She points to the bloody sword-hole in the arras.

CLAUDIUS

O heavy deed!
It had been so with us, had we been there.
Alas, how shall this bloody deed be
answered?
It will be laid to us. Where is he gone?

GERTRUDE

To draw apart the body he hath killed.
'A weeps for what is done.

Continued:

114. CONTINUED (1)

114.

CLAUDIUS rushes to the door and bellows into the hall.

CLAUDIUS
Come Gertrude - Come away.
Guildenstern! Rosencrantz! Come, my
guards! Guards!

CUT TO:

115. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. A TOWER. NIGHT.

115.

HAMLET strains to pull POLONIUS to the top of the tower. He rests a minute then drags the body to the edge, looking down.

116. EXT. THE DARK SEA. NIGHT.

116.

HAMLET'S P.O.V. - Down below rolls the dark sea.

117. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. A TOWER. NIGHT.

117.

HAMLET lugs POLONIUS up, throwing him over the side.

EXT. TOWER (OUTSIDE). NIGHT - POLONIUS' body plummets through the darkness and tumbles like a rag-doll into the sea.

EXT. TOWER. NIGHT - HAMLET gazes down at the crashing waves. The shouts of the king echo up to him and he turns from the edge of the tower, rushing back down the stairs.

CUT TO:

118. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. A HALL WITH MANY CORRIDORS. NIGHT.

118.

CLAUDIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN and some GUARDS run in from all directions. They form into an anxious huddle. They are all armed.

CLAUDIUS
Friends, go join you with some further aid:
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain.

They go, calling for more GUARDS and arms. CLAUDIUS is troubled and silent. He brings a sword up into view, examining the blade, then goes quickly out.

Continued:

118. CONTINUED (1)

118.

WE PULL OVER TO A SUIT OF ARMOUR. HAMLET peers from behind it, a delighted smile playing over his lips.

HAMLET

Hide fox, and all after.

He runs out in the other direction.

CUT TO:

119. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. NIGHT.

119.

GUARDS rush by below. HURRIED FEET are heard on stairways. Excited voices call to each other. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN appear in the foreground, their swords at the ready.

ROSENCRANTZ

Hamlet?

GUILDENSTERN

My lord Hamlet?

A voice sounds from a room ahead.

VOICE

Who calls on Hamlet?

They go to the door. HAMLET has his back to them. He turns. His shirt-front is drenched in blood.

ROSENCRANTZ

What have you done, my lord, with the dead body?

He turns to a door behind him, but two more guards appear there, BERNARDO and FRANCISCO.

HAMLET

The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing -

GUILDENSTERN

A thing, my lord?

HAMLET

Of nothing. Bring me to him.

He starts toward ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN then doubles back, pushing past BERNARDO and FRANCISCO, who can't bring themselves to stop him, and out the other door.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN curse at them, pushing past. The OTHER GUARDS follow.

119A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. AN UPPER HALL. NIGHT.

119A.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS are in an upper hall. They see HAMLET running into view down below.

HORATIO

My lord!

120. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY. NIGHT.

120.

HAMLET disappears down another passageway. In a moment ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN approach, GUARDS on their heels.

CUT TO:

120A. INT. A SERIES OF PASSAGES. NIGHT.

120A.

They search for Hamlet.

121. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL APARTMENTS. NIGHT.

121.

CLAUDIUS paces nervously, his COUNCILLORS stand before him.

CLAUDIUS

I have sent to seek him and to find the body.
Yet sirs we must not put the strong law on
him:

He's loved of the distracted multitude.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN and the GUARDS enter.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

How now? What hath befall'n?

ROSENCRANTZ

Where the dead body is bestowed, my lord,
We could not get from him.

CLAUDIUS

But where is he?

HAMLET walks blithely into the middle of the room.
Swords and spears are immediately lowered to
encircle him.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

HAMLET

At supper.

Continued:

CLAUDIUS

At supper? Where?

HAMLET

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

CLAUDIUS

Alas!

HAMLET

A man may fish with the worm that hath eat
of a king, and eat of the fish that fed of
that worm.

CLAUDIUS

What dost thou mean by this?

HAMLET

Nothing, but to show you how a king may go
a progress through the guts of a beggar.

CLAUDIUS

Where is Polonius!

HAMLET

In heaven. Send thither to see. If your
messenger find him not there, seek him i'
th'other place yourself. But if indeed you
find him not within this mouth, you shall
nose him as you go up the stairs into the
lobby.

CLAUDIUS

(to the GUARDS)

Go seek him there.

HAMLET

He will stay till you come.

CLAUDIUS

Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety
Must send thee hence. Therefore prepare
thyself
For England.

HAMLET

(nodding)

For England?

CLAUDIUS

Ay, Hamlet.

Continued:

121. CONTINUED (2)

121.

HAMLET

Good.

CLAUDIUS

So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

HAMLET

I see a cherub that sees them. But come,
for England!121A. INT. ROYAL COMPLEX. NIGHT.

121A.

He bows low to CLAUDIUS. In looking back up, he
sees GERTRUDE in one of the window-holes above. He
speaks to CLAUDIUS loudly enough for her to hear.

HAMLET (Cont)

Farewell, dear mother.

CLAUDIUS

Thy loving father, Hamlet.

HAMLET

Thy mother -

C.U. - GERTRUDE listens to her son below, trying
not to cry.

HAMLET'S VOICE (Cont)

father and mother is man and wife, man and
wife is one flesh, and so,

HAMLET bows to CLAUDIUS again.

HAMLET (Cont)

my mother. Come, for England!

He turns, looks at the ring of GUARDS and waves
their swords away. They escort him from the room.

C.U. - GERTRUDE watches her son go, then turns and
rushes away.

122. INT. ROYAL APARTMENTS. NIGHT.

122.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN go to the king.

CLAUDIUS

I'll have him hence to-night. Therefore
prepare you.I your commission will forthwith dispatch
And he to England shall along with you.

Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage.

Continued:

122. CONTINUED (1)

122.

CLAUDIUS waves his COUNCILLORS away and goes to a table with a quill and paper. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN silently look on.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught-
Thou mayst not stop our process, which imports,
By letters that these worthy men must bear,
The present death of Hamlet.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN nod approvingly.
CLAUDIUS pounds the table, startling them.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Do it, England,
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done,
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

CLAUDIUS dips the quill and begins to write. WE DRAW CLOSE to his hand and see a ring with the royal seal of Denmark on it.

C.U. - A LETTER with the impression of the seal in red wax. A HAND gives the letter to another hand, and it is put into a leather pouch and fastened.

DISSOLVE TO:

123. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. CHAPEL. DAWN.

123.

GERTRUDE is kneeling on the prayer-stool, her hands clasped before her in anguished concentration. Through a narrow window come the sounds of hurried activity and anxious voices. GERTRUDE rises, going to the window.

123A. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAWN.

123A.

GERTRUDE's P.O.V. - HAMLET is being marched out into the courtyard.

CUT TO:

124. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE GATES. COURTYARD. DAWN.

124.

HAMLET is escorted past GUARDS to the gates.

Continued:

124. CONTINUED (1)

124.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN stride importantly behind him. ROSENCRANTZ wears the leather pouch containing the letter to the English king. Horses are called for. HAMLET takes a quick glimpse at ROSENCRANTZ's pouch. GERTRUDE rushes up. The GUARDS back away.

HAMLET

I must to England; you know that?

HAMLET pulls his mother close to him.

HAMLET (Cont)

There's letters sealed, and my two school-fellows,
Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged,
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way
And marshal me to knavery.

GERTRUDE starts towards ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, but HAMLET holds her back.

HAMLET (Cont)

Let it work.

He kisses her cheek, then looks up to see HORATIO leading his horse toward him.

DISSOLVE TO:

125. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. DAWN.

125.

HAMLET, HORATIO, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN and their escort plod down the road on horseback. HAMLET turns to look back at the castle, and catches sight of ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN riding behind him, watching. HAMLET looks to HORATIO.

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.
Since my dear soul was mistress of her
choice
Sh'hath sealed thee for herself, for thou
hast been

(MORE)

Continued:

125. CONTINUED (1)

125.

HAMLET (Cont)

As one, in suffering all, that suffers
 nothing,
 A man that Fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks. 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.

They reach a promontory. A steep stairway leads down from it to a dock below. A ship is moored there. The GUARDS' dismount, as do HAMLET and HORATIO. HAMLET pats his horse between the ears. Then hands HORATIO the reins. The friends embrace. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN step forward.

HORATIO

God keep you to him, my noble prince.

126. EXT. PROMONTORY. DAY.

126.

HAMLET is escorted down the steep stairway by the GUARDS. HAMLET turns to look back up.

HAMLET's P.O.V. - HORATIO stands at the top of the cliff, holding the reins of the two horses. He raises a helpless hand in farewell.

DISSOLVE TO:

127. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. DAY.

127.

The sea sprays its foam onto the rocks at the foot of the walls of CASTLE ELSINORE. WE MOVE UP the walls, which glisten from a recent rain. Up and up we go till we reach the crenelated top of a low battlement lodged incongruously in one of the crenelations.

127A. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

127A.

A small white face peers down at the sea. It is OPHELIA, her hair whipped wildly by the wind. Suddenly she spits over the side, watching her spit fly downward with intense glee. She laughs, an out-of-kiltre, jangled sound. WE PULL CLOSE to her. Her eyes are bright and crazy.

Continued:

127A. CONTINUED (1)

127A.

OPHELIA

Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's day
All in the morning betime,

She spits again and laughs as it falls.

OPHELIA (Cont)

And I a maid at your window
To be your -

127B. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. TOWER. DAY.

127B.

WE PULL UP to a HIGH TOWER. GERTRUDE watches her
from a window.

127C. INT. GERTRUDES ROOM. DAY.

127C.

GERTRUDE and HORATIO watch OPHELIA.

128. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

128.

GERTRUDE'S P.O.V. - OPHELIA pushes back from the
wall and wanders over the desolate, puddle-dotted
stones of the battlements. Her gown is soiled and
torn, her bare feet manage to step in every puddle.
She stops, and looking up, sees a lone GUARD at an
upper battlement, leaning on the wall, his spear
resting against his shoulder. OPHELIA rushes up
the stairs, her white skirts rippling behind her as
if she were a demented ghost.

129. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. UPPER BATTLEMENT. DAY.

129.

OPHELIA reaches the battlement and stands before
the YOUNG GUARD. She runs her tongue over her lips
and, humming snatches of her song, she steps
closer. She looks at the spear and smiles
seductively.

OPHELIA

How should I your true love know
From another one?

She reaches out a finger to stroke the spear.

OPHELIA (Cont)

(singing)

By his cockle hat and staff
And his sandal shoon.

Continued:

129. CONTINUED (1)

129.

The GUARD gently pulls the spear away. OPHELIA pouts and starts away, but then her eyes flash with anger and she steps back to him, spewing out a flurry of enraged whisperings.

130. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GERTRUDE'S TOWER. DAY.

130.

C.U. GERTRUDE at window.

130A. INT. GERTRUDE'S TOWER. DAY.

130A.

GERTRUDE stands with HORATIO watching the small form of OPHELIA below gesticulating wildly at the confused YOUNG GUARD.

GERTRUDE

To my sick soul (as sin's true nature is)
Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss;
So full of artless jealousy is guilt
It spills itself in fearing to be spilt.

130B. EXT. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

130B.

Down below OPHELIA turns from the YOUNG GUARD and looks up at the castle, calling; her hands on either side of her mouth.

OPHELIA

Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

130C. INT. GERTRUDE'S ROOM. DAY.

130C.

GERTRUDE shudders and moves from the window.

GERTRUDE

I will not speak to her.

HORATIO

'Twere good she were spoken with, my lady.
She may strew dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

OPHELIA (O.S.)

Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark!

GERTRUDE

I will not speak to her.

GERTRUDE moves quickly away, almost hysterical.
HORATIO follows with some concern.

131. INT. CASTLE EL SINORE. ENTRANCE TO THE ROYAL
COMPLEX. DAY.

131.

OPHELIA glides in. She sees a startled YOUNG PAGE nearby. She goes to him, grabs his hand, and with a confidential whisper, pulls him to a low bench and makes him sit. She sits on the floor before him.

OPHELIA
(whispering)
Shall I lie in your lap?

The PAGE is desperately embarrassed. OPHELIA pulls his knees apart and lodges her head between his thighs, looking up at him.

OPHELIA (Cont)
That's a fair thought to lie between a
maid's legs.

Some SERVANTS, COURTIERS and OTHERS begin to assemble. OPHELIA begins to rub the back of her head against the PAGE's crotch.

OPHELIA (Cont)
Did you think I meant country matters ...
country matters ... country matters ...

GERTRUDE enters at the top of the stairway leading down to the Great Hall. She sees OPHELIA and, taking a horrified breath, starts down the stair.

GERTRUDE
How now, Ophelia?

OPHELIA looks up and stands. GERTRUDE stops.

OPHELIA walks slowly toward the stairway. HORATIO moves down to her, but she waves him aside.

OPHELIA
He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone.

She reaches the foot of the stairway.

OPHELIA (Cont)
At his head a grass-green turf,

She touches the large post at the base of the
bannister.

OPHELIA (Cont)
(singing)
At his heels a stone.

Continued:

131. CONTINUED (1)

131.

She sits against the bannister and closes her eyes.

CLAUDIUS enters and what he sees clearly disturbs him.

CLAUDIUS
How long has she been thus?

GERTRUDE shakes her head in silent despair.
CLAUDIUS moves down to OPHELIA.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)
How do you, pretty lady?

OPHELIA opens her eyes, looking up at CLAUDIUS.
She seems very happy to see him.

OPHELIA
Well, God dild you! They say the owl was a
baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we
are, but not what we may be.

She rises, and pats CLAUDIUS' hand in sympathy.

OPHELIA (Cont)
I hope all will be well.
(to GERTRUDE)
We must be patient,

She grows suddenly serious.

OPHELIA (Cont)
but I cannot choose but weep to think
they would lay him i'th' cold ground.

She sees HORATIO watching her nearby and gives him
a loving look, then turns to CLAUDIUS and whispers
to both of them.

OPHELIA (Cont)
My brother shall know of it.
(suddenly cheerful)
And so I thank you for your good counsel.
Come, my coach! God be at your table.

She waves to GERTRUDE as if she herself were the
queen.

OPHELIA (Cont)
Good night, ladies, good night.

GERTRUDE turns her eyes away from her. OPHELIA
walks grandly to CLAUDIUS offering her hand to
kiss.

Continued:

131. CONTINUED (2)

131.

OPHELIA (Cont)

Sweet ladies, good night, good night.

She starts from the room, but sees the YOUNG PAGE and converges on him whispering vociferously.

OPHELIA (Cont)

Country matters ... country matters ...
Young men will do't if they come to't,
By Cock, they are to blame.

(singing)

Quoth she, "Before you tumbled me,
(a shrill cry)
You promised me to wed."

Her excitement grows.

OPHELIA (Cont)

(singing)

"So would I ha'done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed."

She glides away, singing her St. Valentines song.

CLAUDIUS

(to HORATIO)

Follow her close; give her good watch, I
pray you.

HORATIO follows her. The St. Valentine's day song slowly fades away. CLAUDIUS turns to see the ashen face of the stunned ON-LOOKERS.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Poor Ophelia

Divided from herself and her fair judgement.

He goes to GERTRUDE, taking her in his arms to comfort her. But the Queen is stiff, her eyes dull and unblinking.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

O Gertrude, Gertrude,
When sorrows come, they come not single
spies,
But in battalions.

There is silence, then GERTRUDE pulls away from him and goes wearily up the stairs. CLAUDIUS feels the chill and yet can't bring himself to follow. GERTRUDE stops at the top of the stairs, looking out a window.

CUT TO:

132. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY.

132.

OPHELIA is leaning against the stones of the wall crying like a frightened child. HORATIO tries to comfort her. The poor girl lets him gently escort her home.

132A. EXT. WINDOW OF GERTRUDE'S ROOM. DAY.

132A.

C.U. GERTRUDE watching OPHELIA.

133. EXT. A SHIP. SUNSET.

133.

The silent craft cuts through grey mist.

134/ SCENES DELETED.
135.

134/
135.

136. INT. SHIP. BELOW DECK. NIGHT.

136.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN are sound asleep. HAMLET appears silently, goes to ROSENCRANTZ, unfastens the pouch and then disappears from it.

137. INT. SHIP. HAMLET'S CABIN. NIGHT.

137.

HAMLET pulls a candle to him and opens the pouch. He takes the letter out and reads it. He smiles.

He quickly reaches under his bed and withdraws a small leather bag. He opens it, revealing paper and quills.

CUT TO:

138. EXT. TOWERS OF ELSINORE. GATE. EARLY MORNING.

138.

The GUARDS look worriedly down outside the gates.

CUT TO:

139. EXT. CLIFF ROAD. MORNING.

139.

LAERTES gallops up the road, spurring his horse on like one possessed.

CUT TO:

140. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE GATES. COURTYARD. MORNING. 140.

The GUARDS eye each other nervously as the gates are opened and LAERTES bursts in, galloping furiously around the square, shouting up at the walls.

LAERTES

Where is this king! Let him stand before me!

CUT TO:

141. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. MORNING. 141.

ESTABLISHING SHOT.

141A. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. MORNING. 141A.

CLAUDIUS is in bed, still asleep. The threatening voices of the crowd wake him.

LAERTES (O.S.)

Where is this king?

CLAUDIUS gets out of bed and goes to the window. He looks down.

142. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY. 142.

CLAUDIUS' P.O.V. - LAERTES waves his arms shouting at the PEOPLE OF ELSINORE. The GUARDS are coming over with their spears.

CUT TO:

143. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. DAY. 143.

CLAUDIUS thinks for a quick moment, then pulls himself erect and walks out.

CUT TO:

144. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. COURTYARD. DAY. 144.

LAERTES dismounts pushing through the silent CROWD. The GUARDS stay close but he keeps them back with his sword.

CUT TO:

145. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ENTRY HALL. DAY.

145.

CLAUDIUS walks steadily down the stairs. The door of the hall bursts open, and LAERTES enters with the GUARDS at his heels.

LAERTES

O thou vile king,
Give me my father.

CLAUDIUS

Calmly, good Laertes.

LAERTES approaches the KING, his face pale and drawn, but the GUARDS step into his path. They look to CLAUDIUS who waves them back, GERTRUDE appears at an upper gallery.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

Let him go. Do not fear our person.

LAERTES

Where is my father?

CLAUDIUS

Dead.

LAERTES

How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with!
To hell allegiance, vows to the blackest
devil,
I dare damnation. I will be revenged!

He raises his sword above CLAUDIUS' head. GERTRUDE closes her eyes in fear. CLAUDIUS boldly turns his back on LAERTES' sword.

CLAUDIUS

Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father, is't writ in your
revenge,
That you will draw against both friend and
foe?

LAERTES

None but his enemies.

CLAUDIUS goes to LAERTES, gently pushing his sword aside with a finger.

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 sensibly in grief for it,
(MORE)

Continued:

145. CONTINUED (1)

145.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

It shall as level to your judgement 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Suddenly there is the sound of derisive laughter.

146. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. MORNING.

146.

THEIR P.O.V. - OPHELIA is peering through a stone grill. She's been spying on them. She laughs and comes around into the room, her apron held up in her hands as if it contained a treasure. GERTRUDE comes slowly down the stairs.

LAERTES is horrified at the sight of his sister. She moves to him pulling a seashell from the apron.

OPHELIA

There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.
Pray you, love, remember.

(she pulls a straw of
hay into view)

And there is pansies, that's for thoughts.

(she pulls out a small dark
stone and a bone for

CLAUDIUS)

There's fennel for you, and columbines.

(to GERTRUDE she presents a
bird's nest, tearing
it in two)

There's rue for you, and here's some for me.
O, you must wear your rue with a difference.

GERTRUDE shudders and turns away. OPHELIA pulls one last object out, a rusty nail, looking at it as if it were the most pitiable thing in the world.

OPHELIA (Cont)

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.

LAERTES

O heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?

He goes to his sister taking her in his arms, but she makes a fearsome animal-sound, and pulls away. Suddenly she's all sweetness again, moving toward the door with a lilting measured step.

Continued:

146. CONTINUED (1)

146.

OPHELIA

(singing)

And will he not come again?

And will he not come again?

She looks around anxiously as if searching for someone ... but in vain. Then she remembers something and smiles brightly.

OPHELIA (Cont)

(singing)

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death-bed,

He never will come again.

She reaches the door and turns waving happily. TWO WOMEN who have been watching OPHELIA take her away at GERTRUDE's bidding. The dishevelled girl sees the young PAGE and blows him a kiss.

OPHELIA (Cont)

Fare you well, my dove!

She skips out past the WOMEN singing happily "To morrow is Saint Valentine's day, etc ..."

LAERTES' looks to the heavens.

LAERTES

Do you see this, O God?

GERTRUDE is unable to hold her emotions in check. She rushes up the stairs and leaves.

CUT TO:

147. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. DAY.

147.

CLAUDIUS picks up a poker and revives the fire.

CLAUDIUS

I loved your father as I love myself,

And when you have heard who't was who slew
himThen you must put me in your heart for
friend.

He looks to the silent LAERTES.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

And he which hath your noble father slain
Pursued my life.

Continued:

147. CONTINUED (1)

147.

LAERTES finally speaks.

LAERTES

And my revenge will come.

CLAUDIUS leans closer to LAERTES.

CLAUDIUS

Break not your sleeps for that.

Where th'offence is, let the great axe fall.

CUT TO:

148. INT. GREAT HALL OF ENGLAND. DAY.

148.

THE KING OF ENGLAND, a wizened old man, lounges on an ornate wooden throne. To his left stands a DARK MAN, obviously this king's POLONIUS. The throne room with its elegant blues and greys, is more refined than Elsinore; less stone, more wood. The SUBJECTS stare at the three newcomers, HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN with open curiosity. The DARK MAN leans toward the KING and whispers a few words in his ear. The KING nods, but he doesn't smile.

C.U. - HAMLET nods, respectful, yet proud.

ROSENCRANTZ steps forward, pulling the letter from the pouch and hands it to the DARK MAN who hands it to the KING. As the KING fumbles it open, ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN dart a quick glance at HAMLET. He does not acknowledge it.

The KING peers at the letter and after a moment he looks up at HAMLET.

ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN smile. The moment has come.

The KING passes the letter to the DARK MAN, staring at them coldly. ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN's smiles begin to fade. They look to the DARK MAN who glares at them. The GUARDS step up behind them, clapping their huge hands upon their shoulders. Now the realisation hits. Their terrified eyes go to the KING, who offers no help, and then to HAMLET.

WE PULL CLOSE TO HAMLET who stands unblinking.

149. SCENE DELETED.

149.

150. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. DARK CORRIDOR. DAY.

150.

BLACK - There is complete silence ... and then WE HEAR the soft humming of OPHELIA coming toward us. When she's very close she stumbles against a wall. But it's not a wall. It's a small door which creaks open, letting light stream into this secret dark passage. OPHELIA squints and then smiles happily.

CUT TO:

151. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. OUTER WALL. DAY.

151.

OPHELIA steps into the light under the walls and towers of Elsinore. She takes a grassy slope down, stooping to pick flowers as she goes.

DISSOLVE TO:

152. EXT. THE WATERS OF A BROOK. DAY.

152.

WE FOLLOW the clear waters that ripple over a bed of pebbles till WE PULL UP TO A WILLOW TREE, it's strands of leaves undulating in the soft wind. OPHELIA appears working the last of her flowers into a garland with her muddy hands. She listens a moment, then rushes to the brook, looking down.

OPHELIA's distorted reflection appears in the water and she imitates the gurgle of it. Then she sees the reflection of the willow leaves above her head.

OPHELIA looks up at the willow tree, picks a few of its leaves, then entwines herself in them, turning and turning as if wrapped in the ribbons of a may-pole. Then she walks to the trunk of the tree and lovingly embraces it, looking up happily into the leaves.

C.U. - OPHELIA - An idea occurs, bringing peace and joy.

DISSOLVE TO:

153. EXT. BROOK. DAY.

153.

OPHELIA's GARLAND floats on the brook and catches in the reeds.

Continued:

153. CONTINUED (1)

153.

We hear the voice of GERTRUDE, calm almost impersonal:

GERTRUDE (V.O.)

There is a willow grows askant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy
stream:

154. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

154.

GERTRUDE leans up against the door. LAERTES and CLAUDIUS are looking at her with alarm.

GERTRUDE

Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies and long
purples.
There on the pendant boughs her crownet
weeds
Clamb'ring 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
lauds,
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,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious
lay
To muddy death.

LAERTES

Alas, then she is drowned?

GERTRUDE

Drowned, drowned.

DISSOLVE TO:

155. CEMETERY OF ELSINORE. DAY.

155.

A WIND-SWEPT POINT on the cliffs above the sea.
There are no trees, in fact nothing can grow here.
The crumbling grave stones and decaying monuments
slant from hundreds of years of attack by the
elements. The towers of CASTLE ELSINORE rise in
the near distance.

Continued:

155. CONTINUED (1)

155.

A GRAVE-DIGGER is digging a grave throwing shovel-fuls of dirt into a dark pile. He sings as he works.

GRAVE-DIGGER

In youth when I did love, did love,
Methought it was very sweet
To contract-o-the time for-a-my behove,
O methought there-a-was nothing-a-meet.
But age with his stealing steps
Hath clawed me in his clutch.

Some HORSES clop into view. The ROUGH MAN squints up at the RIDERS. One of them speaks.

HAMLET'S VOICE

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

GRAVE-DIGGER

Mine, sir.

HAMLET and HORATIO are on horseback. HAMLET is clad in a strange grey hooded cloak. He looks rested, calmer than we've ever seen him. His eyes are bright and full of life. He smiles down at the ROUGH MAN.

HAMLET

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

The GRAVE-DIGGER grins and continues digging.

HAMLET (Cont)

What man dost thou dig it for?

GRAVE-DIGGER

For no man, sir.

HAMLET

What woman then?

GRAVE-DIGGER

For none neither.

HAMLET

Who is to be buried in't?

GRAVE-DIGGER

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

HAMLET

(to HORATIO)

How absolute the knave is!

Continued:

155. CONTINUED (2)

155.

HAMLET dismounts and motions HORATIO to follow. As he approaches the grave, a shovel-full of dirt is thrown on him. HAMLET laughs, brushing the dirt away.

HAMLET

How long hast thou been grave-maker?

GRAVE-DIGGER

Since that very day that young Hamlet was born - he that is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET

Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

GRAVE-DIGGER

Why, because a' was mad. 'A shall recover his wits there; or, if 'a do not, 'tis no great matter there.

HAMLET

Why?

GRAVE-DIGGER

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

HAMLET

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

GRAVE-DIGGER

Faith, if a' be not rotten before a' die, some eight year, nine year. Here's a skull now.

(he pulls out a skull)

This skull hath lien you i'th' earth three-and-twenty years.

HAMLET

Whose was it?

GRAVE-DIGGER

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

HAMLET

Nay, I know not.

GRAVE-DIGGER

This same skull, sir, was, sir, Yorick's skull, the King's jester.

Continued:

155. CONTINUED (3)

155.

C.U. - HAMLET looks at the skull.

HAMLET

This?

GRAVE-DIGGER

E'en that.

HAMLET

Let me see. 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 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 chop-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.

There is a sound behind them and the GRAVE-DIGGER starts, crawling out of the grave. HAMLET gets to his feet and HORATIO joins him.

156. EXT. CEMETERY OF ELSINORE. DAY.

156.

A PRIEST is marching through the grave stones, and behind him the beginning of a funeral procession.

HAMLET

But soft, but soft awhile!

A litter with a veiled BODY smothered in flowers appears borne by FOUR GUARDS. And then, CLAUDIUS and GERTRUDE walk into view on either side of LAERTES, all dressed in black.

HAMLET (Cont)

The Courtiers?

The King?

He pulls HORATIO quickly away and they hide behind a nearby stone monument.

HAMLET (Cont)

The Queen?

He strains to see as they bring the litter to the grave.

Continued:

156. CONTINUED (1)

156.

HAMLET (Cont)

Who is this they follow?

HORATIO sadly lowers his head. LAERTES steps to the litter.

C.U. - HAMLET recognises POLONIUS' son and blinks.

HAMLET (Cont)

Laertes, back from France? Mark you.

C.U. - THE VEIL is lifted from the litter revealing the still, white OPHELIA.

C.U. - HAMLET leans against the monument, his eyes shut in pain.

LAERTES' VOICE

Lay her i'th'earth,
And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!

Yorick's skull drops from HAMLET's hand into the dirt.

HAMLET

The fair Ophelia.

HORATIO looks fearfully at the Prince.

GERTRUDE moves forward and scatters a few fresh flowers on the dead girl.

GERTRUDE

Sweets to the sweet! Farewell!
I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's
wife.
I thought thy bride-bed to have decked,
sweet maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.

The GRAVE-DIGGER picks up his shovel. LAERTES cries out, and pushes him away.

LAERTES

Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine
arms.

He kneels before the litter and pulls his sister into his arms.

LAERTES (Cont)

O rose of May, dear maid, kind sister

Continued:

156. CONTINUED (2)

156.

The FUNERAL PARTY lower their eyes in pain.

LAERTES (Cont)

A plague on that cursed head whose wicked
deed
Thy most ingenious sense deprived thee of.

HAMLET (O.S.)

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?

The FUNERAL PARTY turns to the voice and HAMLET
steps forward.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS is awe-struck.

C.U. - GERTRUDE's face brightens at the sight of
her son. But she is also aware of the danger all
around him.

LAERTES points an accusing finger.

HAMLET (Cont)

This is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

LAERTES leaps forward gripping HAMLET's throat.

LAERTES

The devil take thy soul!

HAMLET

I prithee take thy fingers from my throat,
For I have in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wiseness fear. Hold off thy
hand.

CLAUDIUS

(to the GUARDS)

Pluck them asunder.

GERTRUDE

Hamlet, Hamlet!

GERTRUDE starts to go to her son but CLAUDIUS holds
her back. The GUARDS pull LAERTES away from
HAMLET.

HORATIO

Good my lord, be quiet.

Continued:

156. CONTINUED (3)

156.

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?

GERTRUDE rushes to the GUARDS, and turns on the
 entire CONGREGATION.

GERTRUDE

For love of God, forbear him!

HAMLET

'Swounds, show me what thou't do.
 Woo't weep? Woo't fight? Woo't fast?
 Woo't tear thyself?
 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.
 Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

GERTRUDE

This is mere madness;
 And thus awhile the fit will work on him.
 Anon as patient as the female dove
 When that her golden couplets are disclosed,
 His silence will sit drooping.

HAMLET

Hear you, sir.
 What is the reason that you use me thus?
 I loved you ever. But it is no matter.

He turns to CLAUDIUS.

HAMLET (Cont)

Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew,

He pulls out Claudius' letter commanding his death
 and waves it in his face.

HAMLET (Cont)

and dog will have his day.

CLAUDIUS

Take him away!

The GUARDS pull HAMLET back through the
 gravestones.

GERTRUDE

I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.

Continued:

156. CONTINUED (4)

156.

HORATIO hurries after HAMLET. GERTRUDE turns severe questioning eyes on CLAUDIUS, but the unsettled King has no explanation to give.

-- CUT TO:

157. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HAMLET'S TOWER ROOM. DAY.

157.

HORATIO has just finished reading Claudius' letter to the English King. He puts it down, appalled.

HORATIO
Why, what a king is this!

HAMLET stands at the terrace door gazing down at the sea.

HAMLET
He that hath killed my king, and whored my mother.

HORATIO nods and sighs.

HORATIO
So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to 't.

HAMLET
Why, man, they are not near my conscience.
They did make love to this employment.

HAMLET's eyes rove across the restless sea.

HAMLET (Cont)
In my heart there was a kind of fighting
That would not let me sleep.
There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

CUT TO:

HAMLET'S P.O.V. - A SEAGULL plummets from the sky pure and white.

CUT TO:

HAMLET sighs.

HAMLET (Cont)
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.

158. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

158.

LAERTES gazes up at HAMLET'S TOWER.

158A. EXT. HAMLET'S TOWER. DAY.

158A.

LAERTES' P.O.V. of the tower.

158B. EXT. CASTLE ELSINORE. BATTLEMENTS. DAY.

158B.

A shadow falls across him from behind.

CLAUDIUS (O.S.)

Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES

Ay, my lord

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

CUT TO:

CLAUDIUS

To thine own peace.

159. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. ROYAL COMPLEX. DAY.

159.

LAERTES

But tell me, sir, why you proceeded not
Against these crimes so capital in nature?

CLAUDIUS

For two special reasons. The queen his
mother
Lives almost by his looks, and for myself -
My virtue or my plague, be it either which -
She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That as the star moves not but in his
sphere,
I could not but by her. The other motive
Is the great love the general gender bear
him.
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?

CLAUDIUS

Not that I think you did not love your
father,
But, Laertes, what would you undertake
To show yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words?

Continued:

159. CONTINUED (1)

159.

LAERTES
To cut his throat i'th'church!

CLAUDIUS
Revenge should have no bounds. That we
would do
We should do when we would.

He draws near to LAERTES lowering his voice.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)
I'll work the prince
To an exploit now ripe in my device,
Under the which he cannot choose but fall;
And for his death no wind of blame shall
breathe,
But even his mother shall uncharge the
practice
And call it accident.

LAERTES
I will be ruled

CLAUDIUS
It falls right.
You have been talked of since your travel
much
For a quality wherein they say you shine:
For art and exercise in your defence,
And for your sword-blade most especial.
'Twould be a sight indeed if one could match
you.

He smiles at LAERTES who is clearly intrigued.

LAERTES
I will do't.
And for that purpose I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, if I but scratch him,
It will mean death.

CLAUDIUS goes to LAERTES and pats him lovingly on
the shoulder.

CLAUDIUS
I have it!
When in your motion you are hot and dry,
I'll have a chalice which if he but sip
Our purpose may hold there.

LAERTES
It warms the very sickness in my heart
That I shall live to tell him to his teeth:
'Thus diest thou.'

160/ SCENES DELETED.
161.

160/
161.

162. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE.. HAMLET'S ROOM. DAY.

162.

OSRIC enters. He locates HAMLET who gazes up at him calmly.

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.

OSRIC nods.

HAMLET
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
My lord, his majesty bade me tell you
that he has laid a great wager on your head.
Laertes, believe me, is an absolute
gentleman. I well know you are
not ignorant of his skills.

HAMLET
To know a man well were to know himself.

OSRIC
The king hath wagered six Barbary horses,
that in a dozen passes between you he
shall not exceed you three hits. It
would come to immediate trial tomorrow
if you would vouchsafe your timely answer.

HORATIO watches HAMLET.

HAMLET
I will win for him an I can; if not, I gain
nothing but my shame and the odd hits.

HORATIO seems uneasy.

Continued:

162. CONTINUED (1)

162.

OSRIC

Shall I deliver you e'en so?

HAMLET

If his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now
or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

HORATIO

(a whisper)

You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET

I do not think so. I have been in continual
practice. I shall win at the odds.

He goes nearer to the fire.

163. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. A DARK PASSAGEWAY. DAY.

163.

HAMLET and MARCELLUS move toward us, silhouettes
coming toward the light. HAMLET pauses at the
sound of excited voices just ahead.

HAMLET

But thou wouldst not think how ill all's
here about my heart. But it is no matter.

HORATIO gazes at him and pulls him aside.

HORATIO

If your mind dislike any thing, obey it.

HAMLET thinks and then smiles calmly.

HAMLET

Not a whit, we defy augury. There is
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.There is the sound of TRUMPETS and DRUMS. HAMLET
straightens himself, gripping his sword at his
side. He looks at the worried HORATIO and pats his
shoulder.

HAMLET (Cont)

Let be.

He takes a breath and strides forward.

CUT TO:

164. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

164.

A large number of the COURT OF ELSINORE are here, lining the walls. They talk excitedly, ready for the duel.

CUT TO:

165. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. HALLWAY BEFORE THE GREAT HALL. DAY.

165.

LAERTES and TWO OF HIS FRIENDS march to the doorway, taking in the packed room beyond. The PEOPLE murmur at the sight of him and they enter. OSRIC comes into view and stops, hearing someone's approach. It is HAMLET, HORATIO and MARCELLUS. Horns and drums are heard, and OSRIC waves a welcoming hand to the door.

OSRIC

The king and queen are coming down.

HAMLET

In happy time.

HAMLET nods and walks into the castle. HORATIO and MARCELLUS close behind him. OSRIC follows.

CUT TO:

166. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

166.

GERTRUDE and CLAUDIUS enter to a glorious fanfare. OSRIC steps forward extending his hands to LAERTES and HAMLET who join him. CLAUDIUS studies the two champions.

CLAUDIUS

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

DRUMS and TRUMPETS sound as LAERTES and HAMLET hold their swords up.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS gazes at LAERTES sword. He nods and then looks at HAMLET.

C.U. - HAMLET's face is impassive, betraying no emotion.

C.U. - GERTRUDE watches HAMLET anxiously and looks to CLAUDIUS.

Continued:

HAMLET and LAERTES go to a sword rack where they put their personal weapons up. HAMLET turns to LAERTES and speaks for all to hear, but his voice is gentle, the words of a comrade:

HAMLET

Give me your pardon, sir. I have done you
wrong,
But pardon't, as you are a gentleman.
Sir, in this audience,
Free me so far in your most generous
thoughts
That I have shot my arrow o'er the house
And hurt my brother.

GERTRUDE nods approvingly. LAERTES lowers his head.

LAERTES

I am satisfied in nature, but in terms of
honour
I stand aloof, and will no reconcilment,
Yet I 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 swords, come on.

LAERTES

Come, one for me.

They choose new swords, their SECONDS carefully examining the blades to be sure they are blunted. OSRIC walks to the centre of the room, extending his hands to the combatants.

CLAUDIUS

Cousin Hamlet,
You know the wager?

HAMLET

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

The ASSEMBLY laughs.

CLAUDIUS

I do not fear it, I have seen you both.

HAMLET and LAERTES move to the centre of the room.

Continued:

166. CONTINUED (2)

166.

CLAUDIUS

(to the SERVANTS and GUARDS)

Set me the stoups of wine upon this table.

If Hamlet give the first or second hit,

The king shall drink to Hamlet's better
breath.

And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,

The trumpet to the cannoneer without,

The cannon to the heavens, the heaven to
earth,

'Now the king drinks to Hamlet!'

The cups and wine are set at his side.

CLAUDIUS (Cont)

And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

HAMLET

Come on, sir.

LAERTES

Come, my lord.

There is the ROLL OF DRUMS followed by absolute silence. HAMLET and LAERTES come forward and their blades clang as they meet. They whirl and thrust, dodging nimbly. LAERTES thrusts, nearly slashing HAMLET's side, but the Prince swipes the blade away and brings the point of his sword to LAERTES' throat.

HAMLET

One.

LAERTES

No.

OSRIC

A hit, a very palpable hit.

LAERTES curses as the audience nods excitedly and a FANFARE SOUNDS in the room. A CANNON booms outside. LAERTES' SECONDS bring him a cup of wine and he drinks deeply, then brings his weapon up again.

LAERTES

Well, again.

CLAUDIUS

Stay, give me drink.

(he holds up a pearl)

Hamlet, this pearl is thine.

Here's to thy health!

Continued:

166. CONTINUED (3)

166.

He takes a drink, then makes a show of dropping the pearl into the cup. The AUDIENCE murmur their approval. CLAUDIUS hands the cup to a BOY who takes it to HAMLET. He waves it away.

HAMLET

I'll play this bout first, set it by awhile.

CLAUDIUS frowns. HAMLET moves towards LAERTES.

HAMLET (Cont)

Come.

The DRUMS ROLL and they go at it again. GERTRUDE watches the combat. HORATIO grimaces at every thrust of the swords. CLAUDIUS leans forward.

HAMLET beats back LAERTES' sword and slashes at his sleeve with his.

HAMLET

Another hit. What say you?

OSRIC steps forward to pronounce, but LAERTES displays his frayed sleeve.

LAERTES

A touch, a touch; I do confess't.

167. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

167.

TRUMPETS SOUND and they circle away from each other. LAERTES grips his weapon. HAMLET wipes the sweat from his face and smiles at HORATIO and MARCELLUS. CLAUDIUS rises and speaks loud enough for all to hear.

CLAUDIUS

Our son shall win.

GERTRUDE

He's scant of breath.

GERTRUDE notices the BOY with the cup and takes it raising it toward HAMLET.

GERTRUDE (Cont)

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS' eyes widen and he rises, reaching out a helpless hand.

CLAUDIUS

Gertrude, do not drink!

Continued:

167. CONTINUED (1)

167.

GERTRUDE looks at him curiously.

GERTRUDE

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

She drinks.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS sinks back onto the throne.

LAERTES watches the king, a frightening realisation dawning. He looks to GERTRUDE who offers the cup to HAMLET. WE PULL VERY CLOSE to the cup.

C.U. - LAERTES gulps and turns away.

HAMLET once again waves the cup away.

HAMLET

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

GERTRUDE

Come, let me wipe thy face.

HAMLET goes to her.

LAERTES takes this interim to go to the sword rack. He nods to his SECOND, speaking loudly.

LAERTES

This is too heavy; let me see another.

The SECOND offers him another, but LAERTES shakes his head, indicating his own sword. The SECOND hesitates but then complies.

GERTRUDE lovingly dabs at HAMLET's face with his handkerchief.

The SECOND gives LAERTES his sword, LAERTES passes near the King.

LAERTES

My lord, I'll hit him now.

CLAUDIUS' eyes are fixed on GERTRUDE.

CLAUDIUS

I do not think't.

LAERTES turns away from him. WE DRAW CLOSE to his pale face.

HAMLET pulls GERTRUDE's face close to his.

Continued:

167. CONTINUED (2)

167.

HAMLET

Women fear too much, even as they love.

HAMLET pulls gently away, going back to the floor. GERTRUDE sighs, wiping her own forehead with the 'kerchief.

HAMLET turns to LAERTES, smiling confidently.

HAMLET

Come, for the third, Laertes. You do but dally.

LAERTES

Say you so? Come on.

168. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

168.

The DRUMS ROLL again and LAERTES lunges at HAMLET, the steel ringing again and again. HAMLET feels the change in LAERTES, a desperation driving him. LAERTES thrusts his point at HAMLET's chest, but HAMLET just manages to push it away.

LAERTES whirls and thrusts his point at HAMLET's face. HAMLET quickly locks hilts with him.

C.U. - CLAUDIUS leans forward.

C.U. - HAMLET eyes the point as it slowly strains toward his cheek. It's a hair's breadth away.

C.U. - GERTRUDE blinks, trying to focus her frightened eyes.

C.U. - HAMLET finally forces the blade away.

OSRIC steps forward.

OSRIC

Nothing neither way.

The TRUMPETS SOUND and HAMLET shrugs, moving away.

CLAUDIUS leans back with undisguised frustration. Then he feels someone's gaze, and turns to see GERTRUDE's white face watching him with accusing eyes.

HAMLET turns to the BOY with the wine. LAERTES' eyes grow wide and then he lunges forth cutting HAMLET's outstretched hand with his poisoned blade.

Continued:

168. CONTINUED (1)

168.

LAERTES

Have at you now!

The ASSEMBLY gasps at this serious breach of etiquette.

C.U. - GERTRUDE's eyes flash with anger, but her head sways and her skin is white and sweaty.

HAMLET touches the wound, rubbing the blood between his fingers, looking at LAERTES who cringes back, his own sword drooping. Exploding into a rage HAMLET leaps forward and they're at it again. HAMLET hacks at LAERTES who is on the defensive now, vainly trying to keep the Prince back, but he's there at every turn. LAERTES manages to parry one of HAMLET's thrusts but in beating back the blade both swords are wrenched from their hands. HAMLET starts for his, but LAERTES' sword is closer. He grabs it and points it at his foe. LAERTES looks at the blade in abject terror. CLAUDIUS rises.

CLAUDIUS

Part them. They are incensed..

HAMLET

Nay, come - again!

HAMLET drives forward and in his rage he gashes LAERTES with the poisoned sword. The AUDIENCE gasps. LAERTES screams.

HORATIO

They bleed on both sides!

GERTRUDE wipes her face and looks to the cup in the BOY's hand. She slumps heavily on her throne.

OSRIC

Look to the queen.

OSRIC steps to the queen trying to pull her up. HAMLET tears his eyes from LAERTES and goes to his mother, pushing OSRIC aside.

HAMLET

How does the queen?

CUT TO:

CLAUDIUS rises, his heart torn between the sight of GERTRUDE's agony and his own survival.

Continued:

168. CONTINUED (2)

168.

CLAUDIUS

She swoons to see them bleed.

GERTRUDE gazes at the King and then looks to her kneeling son. She smiles, a sudden light of peace dawning on her beautiful features.

GERTRUDE

No, no, the drink, the drink! O my dear Hamlet.
I am poisoned!

She puts a hand to his face ... tries to say something more, but can only reach him with a kiss -- and she dies.

HORATIO stares at HAMLET in disbelief.

HAMLET

O villainy! Ho! Let the door be locked.
Treachery! Seek it out!

LAERTES (O.S.)

It is here, Hamlet.

HAMLET turns and sees LAERTES, his chest heaving, blood oozing from his wound.

LAERTES (Cont)

Hamlet, thou are slain;
No medicine in the world can do thee good.
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,
Unbated and envenomed. The foul practice
Hath turned itself on me.

HAMLET looks in horror at LAERTES' sword.

LAERTES (Cont)

I am justly killed with own treachery.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet.
Mine and my father's death come not upon
thee.
I can no more. The King, the King's to
blame.

LAERTES dies.

HAMLET

Then, venom, to thy work.

169. INT. CASTLE ELSINORE. GREAT HALL. DAY.

169.

ASSEMBLY gasps and looks to CLAUDIUS, who shakes

Continued:

169. CONTINUED (1)

169.

his head to deny it. HAMLET turns to the King, his face trembling with rage. He then looks to the sword in LAERTES' hand. CLAUDIUS follows his gaze.

CLAUDIUS

(to the GUARDS)

Defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

TWO GUARDS leap to bar the stairway, but HAMLET takes up the sword and rushes upon them. In two thrusts he cuts them down, and starts up the steps. But CLAUDIUS has grasped LAERTES' poisoned sword and holds it before him. HAMLET mounts the steps with ominous resolution.

HAMLET

Thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane!

CLAUDIUS lunges at him, but HAMLET comes down with his blade, nearly hacking the King's arm off. Blood spurts from his thick robes, and CLAUDIUS collapses screaming on to the throne, and bellows at the three guards nearby, BERNARDO, FRANCISCO and ANOTHER.

The OTHER GUARD starts forward but BERNARDO bars his way with his spear, staring grimly at the King. FRANCISCO makes no move.

CLAUDIUS' eyes grow wide with fear and disbelief. He reaches for the poisoned sword with his good hand, but again HAMLET strikes. CLAUDIUS screams again, both arms now crooked and bleeding, hanging helplessly over the sides of the throne.

HAMLET whispers a prayer to the sword, lifting it with both hands above his head, and brings it violently down into CLAUDIUS' chest, thrusting with all his might.

CLAUDIUS shrieks and bellows as HAMLET leans onto his sword, blood gushing over the hilt. The HAWK leaps and strains to leave the perch, and with a flash of his dagger, HAMLET cuts its tether. The bird flies up, flapping in circles, its cries echoing in the stone room. CLAUDIUS' tortured, twisted face falls back, his clouding eyes seem to watch the flight of his liberated pet. HAMLET takes up the goblet and forces the poisoned wine on CLAUDIUS.

HAMLET (Cont)

Follow my mother!

Continued:

169. CONTINUED (2)

169.

The King chokes and gurgles then dies. Blood and wine trickle from his mouth and the pearl drops out, catching in his beard. He sags and slides from the throne.

The HAWK flaps out an upper window into the light.

HAMLET pushes CLAUDIUS out of his way and sways, gazing down at the throne. He takes a step toward it, then sighs and steps away, moving unsteadily down the stairs.

His shadow creeps off the throne.

BERNARDO and FRANCISCO come to his side and escort him carefully down. HAMLET stumbles away from them. HORATIO takes him in his arms.

HAMLET (Cont)

I am dead, Horatio.

HAMLET looks to his MOTHER slumped on her throne.

HAMLET (Cont)

Wretched queen, adieu!

HAMLET turns to the terrified CROWD. Some of the WOMEN weep, but the MEN are grim and silent.

HAMLET (Cont)

You that look pale and tremble at this
chance,
Had I but time (as this fell sergeant,
Death,
Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell
you -
But let it be. O, I die, Horatio.

He looks up at the throne, then turns away from it and staggers on as if trying to leave it all behind
...

HAMLET (Cont)

O God, Horatio, what a wounded name,
Things standing thus unknown, shall live
behind me!
Thou livest; report me and my cause aright:
If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,
In this harsh world, draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story.

He's almost to the door, but he crumples and falls into HORATIO's arms.

Continued:

169. CONTINUED (3)

169.

HAMLET tries to rise, but falls back.

HAMLET

O, I die, Horatio!
The potent poison quite o'er-crows my
spirit.

He looks toward the door and smiles at the light streaming through it. A soft breeze blows in, lightly tousling his hair. He sighs, almost happily.

HAMLET (Cont)

- the rest is silence.

And he is dead.

HORATIO strives to hold back his tears. WE PULL BACK to see this throne room turned charnel-house. MARCELLUS goes to HORATIO, who looks up at him, as if there was something to say. But nothing more can be said.

T H E E N D