

ACT V, SCENE 1

A GRAVEYARD. Enter Two
GRAVEDIGGERS, digging.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

I say no! Is she to be buried in Christian burial when she wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 GRAVEDIGGER

But she did not drown herself.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

No, that's certain: the water drown'd her.

2 GRAVEDIGGER

Yea, but it was against her will: Here lies the water, good? Here stands the man, good? --

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Give me leave: if the man go to this water and drown himself, it is (will he nill he), he goes -- Mark you that -- but if the water come to him and drown him, he drowns not himself. Argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life.

2 GRAVEDIGGER

Will you ha' the truth on't: if this had not been a gentlewoman she should have been buried out a' Christian burial.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

...And the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian.

(topic shift)

If thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself - what is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 GRAVEDIGGER

Why, a mason, for he builds all of stone, And will endure long.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

That's pretty! To't again, to't again.

2 GRAVEDIGGER

Why then, a carpenter: for he builds the gallows, and that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

I like thy wit well, in good faith: 'the gallows' does well. But how does it well? It does well to those that do ill. And

if any one ask thee hereafter, say a 'grave-maker.' The houses that he makes lasts till doomsday. Fetch me a stoup of liquor.

Exit 2 GRAVEDIGGER. Enter HAMLET
and HORATIO.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

(sings)

A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,

For and a shrouding-sheet,

Most fit it is, for t'will be made,

(*He throws up a shovel.*)

For such a guest is meet --

HAMLET

Has this fellow no feeling of his business that he sings at grave-making? See how the slave jowls their heads against the earth!

HORATIO

Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

1 GRAVEDIGGER

(sings) *A pickaxe and a spade, a spade,*

For and a shrouding-sheet,

O, a pit of clay for to be made,

For such a guest is meet...

HAMLET

Why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the sconce with a dirty shovel and will not tell him of his action of battery? Where be his quiddities now? Will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box: and must the inheritor himself have no more? O pitiful transformance! I prithee tell me Horatio, is not parchment made of sheepskins?

HORATIO

They are sheep and calves that seek out assurance in that.

HAMLET

There's another: why, may not that be such-a-one's skull, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse when he meant to beg it, might it not? -- I will speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sir?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Mine, sir.

HAMLET

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

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Tis a quick lie, sir: 'twill away again from me to you.

HAMLET

What man dost thou dig it for?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

For no man, sir.

HAMLET

What woman then?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

No woman neither sir, but indeed one that was a woman.

HAMLET

How absolute the knave is! Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it: the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heels of our courtier he galls his kibe. I prithee tell me one thing. How long will a man lie i'th' earth ere he rot?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

I'faith, if he be not rotten before he die - as we have many pocky corsers, he will last you some eight year or nine year. A tanner will last you nine year.

HAMLET

Why he more than another?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Why sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade that he will keep out water a great while -- and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a skull now. This skull has lain in the earth three-and-twenty years. Let me see: ay, ever since our last king Hamlet o'ercame Fortenbrasse -- young Hamlet's father, he that's mad.

HAMLET

How came he mad?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Very strangely, e'en with losing his wits.

HAMLET

Upon what ground?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Why, here in Denmark.

HAMLET

Where is he now?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Why now they sent him to England.

HAMLET

Why was he sent into England?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

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

HAMLET

Why?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

Why, there they say the men are as mad as he.

HAMLET

Whose skull was this?

1 GRAVEDIGGER

A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! 'A poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull sir, was Yorick's skull: the king's jester.

HAMLET

This? Let me see. Alas, poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite mirth. He hath borne me on his back a thousand times. Here hung those lips that I have kiss'd a hundred times, and -- how abhorred my imagination is! Where's your jests now, Yorick? Your flashes of merriment? Now get you to my lady's chamber and tell her: let her paint an inch thick -- to this she must come, Yorick. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing: dost thou think Alexander look'd o' this fashion i'th' earth?

HORATIO

E'en so.

HAMLET

And smelt so? Puh!

HORATIO

E'en so, my lord.

HAMLET

No? Why might not imagination work as thus of Alexander: Alexander died; Alexander was buried; Alexander returneth into dust. The dust is earth; of earth we make loam; and why of that loam whereto he was converted might they not stop a beer barrel?

Imperial Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,

Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

Enter CLAUDIUS, GERTRED, LEARTES,
and other lords, with a PRIEST
after the coffin.

HAMLET
The queen, the courtiers. Who is that they follow?
'Twas some estate. Couch we awhile and mark.

LEARTES
What ceremony else? Say, what ceremony else?

PRIEST
Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
As we have warranties: her death was doubtful.
She hath had a dirge sung for her maiden soul:
And but for favour of the king and you,
Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her;
Yet here she is allowed her virgin rites.

LEARTES
I tell thee, churlish priest:
A minist'ring angel shall my sister be
When thou liest howling. /

HAMLET
/ What, the fair Ofelia?

GERTRED
Sweets to the sweet. Farewell.
I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
And not t'have strew'd thy grave.

LEARTES
Hold off the earth awhile! Sister, farewell.

LEARTES leaps into the grave.
Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
And make a hill to o'er top old Pelion!

HAMLET
What's he that conjures so?
This is I, Hamlet the Dane.

HAMLET leaps in after LEARTES

LEARTES

The devil take thy soul! /

HAMLET

/ Thou pray'st not well.

I prithee take thy fingers from my throat,

For there is something in me dangerous,

Which let thy wiseness fear. Away thy hand!

I lov'd Ofelia as dear as twenty brothers could.

Come, show me what thou'lt do:

Woo't weep, woo't fight, woo't tear thyself,

Woo't drink up eisel, eat a crocodile?

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine,

And where thou talk'st of burying thee alive,

And if thou prate of mountains, let them throw

Millions of acres on us, till our ground

Make Ossa like a wart.

CLAUDIUS

Forbear Leartes, now is he mad, as is the sea,

Anon as mild and gentle as a dove:

Therefore a while give his wild humour scope.

HAMLET

What is the reason that you use me thus?

I lov'd you ever, but it is no matter:

The cat will mew, and dog will have his day.

Exit HAMLET and HORATIO.

GERTRED

Alas, it is his madness makes him thus,

And not his heart, Leartes.

CLAUDIUS

(aside to LEARTES)

My lord, 'tis so, but we'll no longer trifle.
This very day shall Hamlet drink his last,
For presently we mean to send to him:
Therefore, Leartes, be in readiness.

LEARTES

My lord, till then my soul will not be quiet.

CLAUDIUS

(public)

Come Gertred: we'll have Leartes and our son
Made friends and lovers as befits them both
Even as they tender us and love their country.

GERTRED

God grant they may.

Exeunt Omnes.

ACT V, SCENE 2

THE GREAT HALL AT ELSINORE. Enter
HAMLET and HORATIO.

HAMLET

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Leartes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his.

Enter Young OSRIC.

Dost know this waterfly?

HORATIO

The court knows him, but he knows not the court.

OSRIC

Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark!

HAMLET

And you sir: -- foh, how the musk-cod smells!

OSRIC

I should impart a thing to you from His Majesty --

HAMLET

I will receive it with all diligence of spirit. --
Believe me, 'tis very cold...

OSRIC

It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

HAMLET

Methinks it is very sultry.

OSRIC

Exceedingly, my lord, it is very sultry.

But, my lord: his majesty has laid a great wager on your
head;

Six Barbary horse against six French rapiers
With all their accoutrements too, 'a the carriages:
In good faith, they are very curiously wrought.

HAMLET

What call you the carriages?

OSRIC

The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

HAMLET

The phrase would be more germane to the matter if we could carry cannon by our sides. And how's the wager? I understand you now.

OSRIC

The king, sir, hath laid that in a dozen passes between you and him he shall not exceed you three hits; and on your side the king hath laid and desires you to be in readiness.

HAMLET

Very well: if the king dare venture his wager, I dare venture my skull. When must this be?

OSRIC

The king and queen (and all) are coming down.

HAMLET

In happy time.

OSRIC

I shall deliver your most sweet answer.

HAMLET

You may sir, none better, for y'are spiced; Else he had a bad nose could not smell a fool.

Exit OSRIC.

HORATIO

He will disclose himself without inquiry.

HAMLET

Believe me Horatio, my heart is on the sudden very sore all here about.

HORATIO

You will lose this wager, my lord.

HAMLET

Not a whit, we defy augury. If it be now, 'tis not to come: there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. --

Here comes the king.

Enter CLAUDIUS, GERTRED, LEARTES, LORDS.

CLAUDIUS

Now, son Hamlet: we have laid upon your head, And make no question but to have the best.

HAMLET

Your grace hath laid the odds o'th'weaker side!

CLAUDIUS

I do not fear it. Give them the foils.

HAMLET

Give me your pardon, sir.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Leartes? Never Hamlet.

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,

Then Hamlet does it not -- Hamlet denies it --

And when he's not himself does wrong Leartes,

Who does it then? His madness.

Think I have shot mine arrow o'er the house

And hurt my brother. /

LEARTES

/ I am satisfied in nature,

But in my terms of honour

I stand aloof, and will no reconcilment

Till by some elder masters of known honour

I may be satisfied. /

CLAUDIUS

/ Give them the foils.

HAMLET

I'll be your foil, Leartes.

HAMLET and LEARTES select their foils.

These foils have all a length? Come on, sir.

Here they play.

One. /

LEARTES

/ No. /

HAMLET
/ Judgement.

OSRIC
A hit, a very palpable hit.

LEARTES
Well, again.

They play again.

HAMLET
Another hit. What say you?

LEARTES
A touch, a touch, I do confess't.

CLAUDIUS
Here Hamlet, here's to thy health!

GERTRED
Here Hamlet, here's a napkin: rub thy brows.

CLAUDIUS
Give him the cup.

An ATTENDANT brings the cup to
HAMLET.

HAMLET
I'll play this bout first. Set by awhile,
I'll drink anon.

GERTRED
The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

GERTRED takes the cup from the
attendant. She drinks.

CLAUDIUS
Gertred, do not drink. --
(aside)
It is the poison'd cup. /

HAMLET
/ Come, for the third.
Learthes, you but dally.
I pray you, pass with your best violence.

LEARTES
Say you so? Come on!
My lord, I'll hit him now --

And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

HAMLET

Come on, sir.

They play for the third time.
LEARTES wounds HAMLET, who disarms
LEARTES and wounds him. LEARTES
falls. GERTRED falls.

CLAUDIUS

Look to the queen there, ho!

GERTRED

No, no, the drink, the drink!

Hamlet, the drink!

GERTRED dies.

HAMLET

Treachery! Let the door be lock'd!

OSRIC

How is't, Leartes?

LEARTES

Even as a coxcomb should:

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Hamlet --

In thee there is not half an hour of life:

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd.

Thy mother's poison'd --

That drink was made for thee.

HAMLET

The point envenom'd too?

Then venom to thy venom! Die, damn'd villain:

Drink off this potion.

HAMLET forces CLAUDIUS to drink,
then kills him with the foil.

LEARTES

He is justly serv'd.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet,
And withal, my love. I do forgive thee.

LEARTES dies.

HAMLET
Heaven make thee free of it. I am dead,
Horatio: fare thee well.

HORATIO
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane.
Here's yet some liquor left.

HAMLET
O fie, Horatio: and if thou shouldst die,
What a scandal wouldst thou leave behind?
What tongue should tell the story of our deaths
If not from thee? O, my heart sinks, Horatio.
Mine eyes have lost their sight, my tongue his use.
Farewell, Horatio, Heaven receive my soul. --
The rest is silence. O, O, O, O.

HAMLET dies.

HORATIO
Good night, sweet prince --

Enter the AMBASSADOR from England.
Enter FORTENBRASSE with his train.

FORTENBRASSE
Where is this sight?

HORATIO
If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

FORTENBRASSE
O proud death, how many princes
Hast thou at one draft so bloodily struck?

AMBASSADOR
Our embassy that we have brought from England:
The ears are senseless that should give us hearing.
O, most, most unlooked for time! Unhappy country.

HORATIO

Content yourselves: I'll show to all the ground,
The first beginning of this tragedy.
Give order that these bodies
High on a stage be placed to the view,
And let me speak to th' yet unknowing world
How these things came about.

FORTENBRASSE

I have some rites of memory in this kingdom
Which are to claim: my vantage doth invite me.
Let four captains
Bear Hamlet like a soldier to the stage,
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally.
Take up the body. Such a sight as this
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

Finis.