

**HAMLET**

Would not this, sir get me a  
fellowship in a cry of players, sir?

**HORATIO**

Half a share.

**HAMLET**

A whole one, I.  
For thou dost know, O Damon dear,  
This realm dismantled was  
Of Jove himself; and now reigns here  
A very, very--pajock.

**HORATIO**

You might have rhymed.

**HAMLET**

O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a  
thousand pound. Didst perceive?

**HORATIO**

Very well, my lord.

**HAMLET**

Upon the talk of the poisoning?

**HORATIO**

I did very well note him.

*Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN*

**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?

**GULDENSTERN**

No, my lord, rather with choler.

**HAMLET**

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

**GULDENSTERN**

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

**HAMLET**

I am tame, sir: pronounce.

**GULDENSTERN**

The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

**HAMLET**

You are welcome.

**GULDENSTERN**

Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

**HAMLET**

Sir, I cannot.

**GULDENSTERN**

What, my lord?

**HAMLET**

Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseased: but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say,--

**ROSENCRANTZ**

Then thus she says; your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

**HAMLET**

O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? Impart.

**ROSENCRANTZ**

She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

**HAMLET**

We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us?

**ROSENCRANTZ**

My lord, you once did love me.

**HAMLET**

So I do still, by these pickers and stealers.

**ROSENCRANTZ**

Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

**HAMLET**

Sir, I lack advancement.

**ROSENCRANTZ**

How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

**HAMLET**

Ay, but sir, 'While the grass grows,'--the proverb is something musty.

*Re-enter Players with recorders*

O, the recorders! let me see one. To withdraw with you:--why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

**GULDENSTERN**

O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

**HAMLET**

I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

**GULDENSTERN**

My lord, I cannot.

**HAMLET**

I pray you.

**GULDENSTERN**

Believe me, I cannot.

**HAMLET**

I do beseech you.

**GULDENSTERN**

I know no touch of it, my lord.

**HAMLET**

'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music.

Look you, these are the stops.

**GULDENSTERN**

But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

**HAMLET**

Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, yet you cannot play upon me.