

Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.° 20

not be
list, O, list!
er love—

line 25:
calls Hamlet
to get revenge.
unnatural
because he
killed the
king &
his brother.

natural murder. 25

it is;°
unnatural.

riaste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
of love, 30

d thee apt;
an the fat weed
wharf,°

line 29-31:
Hamlet will
get revenge
quickly but
there are
4 acts left.

ow, Hamlet, hear:
my orchard, 35

le ear of Denmark
eath
u noble youth,
ather's life

Now wears his crown.

Hamlet. O my prophetic soul! 40

My uncle?

erate° beast,

line 42:
his brother
slept
with his
wife

est motives.
e more lethargic than the
the wharf of the Lethe (the

With witchcraft of his wit
O wicked wit and gifts, th
So to seduce!—won to his
The will of my most seem
O Hamlet, what a falling-
From me, whose love was
That it went hand in hand
I made to her in marriage,
Upon a wretch whose nat
To those of mine!

line 46:
"seeming-"
"virtuous"
"queen"
maybe she's
not so
innocent.

But virtue, as it never will be moved,
Though lewdness court it
So lust, though to a radiar
Will sate itself° in a celesti
And prey on garbage.

But, soft! methinks I scent
Brief let me be. Sleeping w
My custom always of the
Upon my secure hour° thy
With juice of cursed heben
And in the porches° of my
The leperous distillment,°

only a
coward
would use
poison.

Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver
The natural gates and all
And with a sudden vigor
And curd, like eager° dro
The thin and wholesome
And a most instant tetter

poison was
put into his
ear to kill
Hamlet's dad.

65

(line 64)

- 48. **dignity:** worthiness.
- 54. **Though ... heaven:** though v
- 56. **sate itself:** gorge.
- 61. **secure hour:** time of relaxati
- 62. **hebenon:** a poisonous plant.
- 63. **porches:** entrance.
- 64. **leperous distillment:** distillation causing leprosy.
- 68. **posset:** curdle.
- 69. **eager:** acidic, sour.

d loathsome crust
 other's hand
 once dispatched;° 75
 of my sin,
 anealed,°
 to my account
 my head.

Hamlet.
 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible! 80

Ghost.
 If thou hast nature° in thee, bear it not.
 Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 A couch for luxury° and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive 85
 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 glowworm shows the matin° to be near
 And gins° to pale his uneffectual fire.° 90
 Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me.

Exit.

Hamlet.
 O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
 And shall I couple hell? O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart!
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee? 95

71-72. **And ... lazar-like:** and instantaneously the skin broke out all over in scabs, like leprosy.
 75. **dispatched:** deprived (by death).
 76-77. **Cut ... unaneled:** killed without having received last rites.
 81. **nature:** natural feelings.
 83. **luxury:** lust.
 89. **matin:** morning.
 90. **gins:** begins. **uneffectual fire:** The glowworm's fire is made ineffectual by daylight.

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe.° Remember thee?
 Yea, from the table° of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond° records,
 All saws° of books, all forms.° all pressures° past 100
 That youth and observatic
 And thy commandment ai
 Within the book and volur
 Unmixed with baser matt
 O most pernicious womar
 O villain, villain, smiling,
 My tables,° my tables! Me
 That one may smile, and s
 At least I'm sure it may be

line 100:
 I'll wipe
 everything
 from my
 brain but
 revenge.

Writes.
 So, uncle, there you are.° Now to my word:° 110
 It is "Adieu, adieu! Remember me."
 I have sworn't.
Horatio. [*Within.*]
 My lord, my lord!

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Marcellus. Lord Hamlet!
Horatio. Heaven secure° him!
Hamlet. So be it!
Horatio.
 Illo, ho, ho, my lord! 115

97. **globe:** head.
 98. **table:** tablet (notebook).
 99. **fond:** foolish.
 100. **saws:** maxims. **forms:** images. **pressures:** impressions.
 107. **tables:** See note for line 98. **Meet it is:** It is fitting (that).
 110. **there you are:** refers to what he has just "set down." **word:** motto. (Hamlet has taken the Ghost's parting words as his motto, or cue to action.)
 113. **secure:** protect.

Hamlet.

Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.^o

Marcellus.

How is't, my noble lord?

Horatio.

What news, my lord?

Hamlet.

O, wonderful!

I reveal it.

I, my lord. 120

rt of man once^o think it?

aven, my lord.

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

Horatio.

There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave 125
To tell us this.

Hamlet. Why, right! You are i' the right!

And so, without more circumstance^o at all,
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;
You, as your business and desire shall point you,
For every man hath business and desire, 130
Such as it is; and for mine own poor part,
Look you, I'll go pray.

Horatio.

These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.

116. **Hillo ... come:** This cry was used by falconers to call back their falcons.

121. **once:** ever.

124. **arrant:** downright. (Hamlet stops short of revealing Claudius' crime and so turns his sentence into a joking truism.)

127. **circumstance:** ado.

Hamlet
 does n't
 want
 people to
 find out the
 about the
 ghost.

Hamlet.

I'm sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes, faith heartily.

Horatio.

There's no offense, my lord. 135

Hamlet.

Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
And much offense too. Touching this vision here,
It is an honest^o ghost, that let me tell you.
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends, 140
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Horatio.

What is't, my lord? We will.

Hamlet.

Never make known what you have seen tonight.

Horatio and Marcellus.

My lord, we will not.

Hamlet.

Nay, I

Horatio.

My lord, not I.^o

Marcellus.

Nor I, my lord.

Hamlet.

Upon my sword.^o

Marcellus.

We have

Hamlet.

Indeed, upon my sword, ir

GHOST *cries from beneath the stage.*

Ghost. Swear.

Hamlet.

Aha boy, say'st thou so? Art thou there, truepenny? ^o 150

line 144
 never tell
 of what
 Horatio &
 marcellus
 know.
 (the ghost)

138. **honest:** genuine. (That is, the Ghost is not a demon in disguise.)

146. **not I:** I will not make it known. (It does not mean "I will not swear it.")

147. **Upon my sword:** The hilt and blade of a sword form a cross, upon which oaths were often taken.

150. **truepenny:** good fellow.

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

Horatio. Propose the oath, my lord.

Hamlet.
Never to speak of this that you have seen.
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear. 155

Hamlet.
Hic et ubique?° Then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen

on my sword.
you have heard: 160

Hamlet believes
the ghost is his
father.
"I needs hope
"honest ghost"
revenge
looks like
him

word. 160

ork i' the earth so fast?
e remove,° good friends.

vondrous strange!

ive it welcome.° 165

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 soe'er I bear myself, 170
As I perchance hereafter shall think meet°

Hamlet lets
Horatio know
he is going
to pretend to
be crazy.

on,
ng me, never shall,

nd everywhere?"
nove.
ous welcome that is a stranger's

's personal beliefs but in philosophy

or.

With arms encumb' red thus, or this headshake,°
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175
As "Well, well, we know," or "We could, an if we
would,"

Or "If we list° to speak," or "There be, an if they
might,"°

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
That you know aught of me—this not to do,
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,° 180
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

They swear.

Hamlet.
Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you;
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is 185

May do t' express his love and friending° to you,
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
And still° your fingers on your lips, I pray.

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite°
That ever I was born to set it right! 190
Nay, come, let's go togeth

- 174. With ... headshake: with arms.
- 177. list: wished. "There ... might ... they were allowed to."
- 180. So ... you: so that grace and mercy at your time of greatest need may help you.
- 186. friending: friendship.
- 188. still: always.
- 189. spite: affliction.

line 190.
back to
how this is
his fate.