

Global lights fade in (or anachronistic curtains rise).

Hamlet stands addressing a crowd of players diagonal to him. (Stage setup variable atm - ha - due to asset server and login issues!) Guards stand in the balcony background.

HAMLET

Speak the speech, I pray you, as
I pronounced it to you,
trippingly on the tongue: but if
you mouth it, as many of your
players do, I had as lief the
town-crier spoke my lines. Nor
do not saw the air too much with
your hand, thus, but use all
gently; for in the very torrent,
tempest, and, as I may say, the
whirlwind of passion, you must
acquire and beget a temperance
that may give it smoothness. O,
it offends me to the soul to
hear a robustious periwig-pated
fellow tear a passion to
tatters, to very rags, to split
the ears of the groundlings, who
for the most part are capable of
nothing but inexplicable
dumbshows and noise: I would
have such a fellow whipped for
o'erdoing Termagant; it out-
herods Herod: pray you, avoid it!

Hamlet returns to his director's position in the pits.
FIRST PLAYER steps out from the crowd of player,
approaching CS, but leave a respectful and possibly
fearful distance between Hamlet and FP.

FIRST PLAYER

I warrent your honour.

HAMLET

Be not too tame neither, but let
your own discretion be your
tutor: suit the action to the
word, the word to the action;
with this special o'erstep not
the modesty of nature: for

(MORE)

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HAMLET (cont'd)
anything so overdone is from the
purpose of playing, whose end,
both at the first and now, was
and is, to hold, as 'twere, the
mirror up to nature; to show
virtue her own feature, scorn
her own image, and the very age
and body of the time his form
and pressure.

FIRST PLAYER
I hope we have reformed that
indifferently with us, sir.

HAMLET
O, reform it altogether. And let
those that play your clowns
speak no more than is set down
for them; for there be of them
that will themselves laugh, to
set on some quantity of barren
spectators to laugh too; though,
in the mean time, some necessary
question of the play be then to
be considered: that's villanous,
and shows a most pitiful
ambition in the fool that uses
it. Go, make you ready.

Exeunt Players. Enter Polonius from right balcony.

HAMLET
How now, my lord! I will the
king hear this piece of work?

POLONIUS
And the queen too, and that
presently.

HAMLET
Bid the players make haste.

Exit Polonius right balcony. (After leaving Balcony
view, Polonius clicks to close curtains on balconies.)
Enter Horatio from center door on main stage.

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HAMLET
(walks up to stage
level to greet Horatio)

What ho! Horatio!

HORATIO
Here, sweet lord, at your
service.

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; for
what advancement may I hope from
thee that no revenue hast but
thy good spirits, to feed and
clothe thee? Why should the poor
be flatter'd? No, let the
candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
and crook the pregnant hinges of
the knee where thrift may follow
fawning. Doest thou hear? Since
my dear soul was mistress of her
choice and could of men
distinguish, her election hath
seal'd thee for herself; for
thou hast been as one, in
suffering all, that suffers
nothing, a man that fortune's
buffets and rewards hast ta'en
with equal thanks: and blest are
those whose blood and judgment
are so well commingled, that
they are not a pipe for futne's
finger to sound what stop she
please. 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

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HAMLET (cont'd)

thee.--Something too much of
this.--There is a play to-night
before the king; one scene of it
comes near the circumstance
which I have told thee of my
father's death: I prithee, when
thou seest that act afoot, even
with the very comment of thy
soul observe mine uncle: if his
occulted guilt do not itself
unkennel in one speech, it is a
damned ghost that we have seen,
and my imaginations are as foul
as Vulcan's stithy. Give him
heedful note; for I mine eyes
will rivet to his face, and
after we will both our judgments
join in censure of his seeming.

(Non-speaking courtiers should be sitting behind
curtains in balcony level by now.)

HORATIO

Well, my lord: if he steal aught
the whilst this play is playing,
and 'scape detecting. I will pay
the theft.

Trumpets play (in dumbshow) announcing King's impending
presence. Curtains in balcony rise revealing the waiting
court.

Prologue enters right door, walks across and clicks to
turn the curtains invisible. (And also puts on carrying
curtain attachment). Prologue exits.

HAMLET

They are coming to the play; I
must be idle: get you a place.

Horatio exits center door.

Danish march. A flourish of avatars appear in the
balconies, including Claudius, Gertrude, Polonius. They
sit in the foreground; a bunch of extras in period garb
sit behind.

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Ophelia enters center door. She stands in place far enough from the door for it to automatically close *behind her*, but not that far from the door, partially wishing to go back up to the balconies.

Hamlet ignores Ophelia even though she's right across from him.

CLAUDIUS

How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET

Excellent, i'faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so.

CLAUDIUS

I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Claudius sits down. Gertrude and Ophelia and others also sit. Polonius remains standing, staring at Hamlet.

HAMLET

No, nor mine now.
(To Polonius)
My lord, you played once i'the 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' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

HAMLET

It was a brute part of him to kill so capital a calf there. Be the players ready?

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POLONIUS
(glances balcony right)
Aye, my lord; they stay upon
your patience.

Polonius sits. Gertrude stands.

GERTRUDE
Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit
by me.

HAMLET
(finally looks at
Ophelia directly)
No, good mother, here's metal
more attractive.

Ophelia walks to Hamlet. Hamlet gestures at the chair.
She sits on the only chair where Hamlet is standing.

POLONIUS
(To Claudius:)
O, ho! do you mark that?

HAMLET
(yells with malice)
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
manners?

OPHELIA
I think nothing, my lord.

HAMLET
That's a fair thought to lie
between maids' legs.

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OPHELIA

What is, my lord?

HAMLET

Nothing.

OPHELIA

You are merry, my lord.

HAMLET

Who, I?

OPHELIA

Ay, my lord.

HAMLET

O God, your own jig-maker. What should a man do but be merry? For, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

OPHELIA

Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord!

HAMLET

So long? Nay then, let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. 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: but, by'r lady, he must build churches, then; or else shall he suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is 'For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.'

Hautboys play enter left door. Horatio is one of the musicians, as is Player Messing. Musicians march to their own corner. Meanwhile, the dumb-show enters from right door.

Enter PLAYER KING (bot) and PLAYER QUEEN (bot) very

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lovingly; the Queen embracing him, and he her.

She kneels and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers: she, seeing him asleep, leaves him.

Horatio looks up at the King briefly and moves back to regular head position when suit.

Anon comes in POISONER (bot), takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exits.

The Queen returns; finds the King dead, and makes passionate action.

The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her.

The dead body is carried away.

The Poisoner woos the Queen with gifts: she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love.

Exeunt. The stage is once again empty, except from musicians in their own corner.

OPHELIA

What means this, my lord?

HAMLET

Marry, this is miching mallecho;
it means mischief.

OPHELIA

Belike this show imports the
argument of the play.

Enter PROLOGUE from centerdoor.

HAMLET

We shall know by this fellow:
the players cannot keep counsel;
they'll tell all.

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OPHELIA

Will he tell us what this show
meant?

HAMLET

Ay, or any show that you'll show
him: be not you ashamed to show,
he'll not shame to tell you what
it means.

OPHELIA

You are naught, you are naught:
I'll mark the play.

PROLOGUE

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

HAMLET

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

OPHELIA

'Tis brief, my lord.

HAMLET

As woman's love.

Enter PLAYER KING from right door and PLAYER QUEEN from
left door. Lights fade slightly.

PLAYER KING

Full thirty times hath Phoebus'
cart gone round Neptune's salt
wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons with
borrow'd sheen about the world
have times twelve thirties been,
since love our hearts and Hymen
did our hands unite commutual in
most sacred bands.

PLAYER QUEEN

So many journeys may the sun and
moon make us again count o'er
(MORE)

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PLAYER QUEEN (cont'd)
ere love be done! But, woe is
me, you are so sick of late, so
far from cheer and from your
former state, that I distrust
you. Yet, though I distrust,
discomfort you, my lord, it
nothing must: for women's fear
and love holds quantity; in
neither aught, or in extremity.
Now, what my love is, proof hath
made you know; and as my love is
sized, my fear is so: where love
is great, the littlest doubts
are fear; where little fears
grow great, great love grows
there.

PLAYER KING
Faith, I must leave thee, love,
and shortly too; my operant
powers their functions leave to
do: and thou shalt live in this
fair world behind, Honour'd,
beloved; and haply one as kind
for husband shalt thou--

PLAYER QUEEN
O, confound the rest! Such love
must needs be treason in my
breast: in second husband let me
be accurst! None wed the second
but who kill'd the first.

Lucianus enters right door walks in background to exit
left door.

HAMLET
(aside)
Wormwood, wormwood.

PLAYER QUEEN
The instances that second
marriage move are base respects
of thrift, but none of love: a
second time I kill my husband
(MORE)

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PLAYER QUEEN (cont'd)
dead, when second husband kisses
me in bed.

PLAYER KING
I do believe you think what now
you speak; but what we do
determine oft we break. Purpose
is but the slave to memory, of
violent birth, but poor
validity; which now, like fruit
unripe, sticks on the tree; but
fall, unshaken, when they mellow
be. Most necessary 'tis that we
forget to pay ourselves what to
ourselves is debt: what to
ourselves in passion we propose,
the passion ending, doth the
purpose lose. The violence of
either grief or joy their own
enactures with themselves
destroy: where joy most revels,
grief doth most lament; grief
joys, joy grieves, on slender
accident. This world is not for
aye, nor 'tis not strange that
even our loves should with our
fortunes change; for 'tis a
question left us yet to prove,
whether love lead ofrtune, or
else fortune love. The great man
down, you mark his favorite
flies; the poor advanced makes
friends of enemies. And hitherto
doth love on fortune tend; for
who not needs shall never lack a
friend, and who in want a hollow
friend doth try, directly
seasons him his enemy. But
orderly to end where I begun,
our wills and fates do so
contrary run that our devices
still are overthrown; our
thoughts are ours, their ends
none of our own: so think thou
wilt no second husband wed; but

(MORE)

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PLAYER KING (cont'd)
die thy thoughts when thy first
lord is dead.

PLAYER QUEEN
Nor earth to give me food, nor
heaven light! Sport and repose
lock from me day and night! To
desperation turn my trust and
hope! An anchor's cheer in
prison be my scope! Each
opposite that blanks the face of
joy meet what I would have well
and it destroy! Both here and
hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

HAMLET
If she should break it now!

PLAYER KING
Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave
me here awhile; my spirits grow
dull, and fain I would beguile
the tedious day with sleep.
(He sleeps.)

PLAYER QUEEN
Sleep rock thy brain, and never
come mischance between us twain!

Player Queen exits right door.

HAMLET
Madam, how like you this play?

GERTRUDE
The lady protests too much,
methinks!

HAMLET
O, but she'll keep her word.

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

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HAMLET

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

CLAUDIUS

What do you call this play?

Dramatic moment. Hamlet climbs back onstage.

HAMLET

(facing the audience)

The Mouse-trap.

(pivots back to face
King, et al.)

Marry, how? Tropically. This
play is the image of a murder
done in Vienna: Gonzago is the
duke's name; his wife, Baptista:
you shall see anon; 'tis a
knave's piece of work: but what
o' that? Your majesty and we
that have free souls, it touches
us not: let the galled jade
wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter LUCIANUS from leftdoor. Hamlet stalks him (while
announcing his presence), half in mockery, half as if an
assistant third director trying to puppeteer an actor
without strings.

HAMLET

This is one Lucianus, nephew to
the king.

OPHELIA

You are as good as a chorus, my
lord.

HAMLET

I could interpret between you
and your love, if I could see
the puppets dallying.

OPHELIA

You are keen, my lord, you are
keen.

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HAMLET

It would cost you a groaning to
take off my edge.

OPHELIA

Still better, and worse.

HAMLET

So you must take your husbands.
Begin, murderer; pox, leave thy
damnable faces, and begin. Come:
'the croaking raven doth bellow
for revenge.'

Horatio looks up at Claudius.

LUCIANUS AND HAMLET CHORUS!

Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs
fit, and time agreeing;
confederate season, else no
creature seeing; Thou mixture
rank, of midnight weeds
collected, with hectate's ban
thrice blasted, thrice infected,
thy natural magic and dire
property, on wholesome life
usurp immediately.

Lucianus pours the poison into the sleeper's ears.
Hamlet is right besides him as if his conscience.

HAMLET

He poisons him i'the garden
for's estate. His name's
Gonzago: the story is extant,
and writ in choice Italian: you
shall see anon how the murderer
gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Claudius rises.

OPHELIA

The king rises.

All rise.

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HAMLET

(spins to face balcony)
What, frightened with false fire!

GERTRUDE

How fares my lord?

POLONIUS

Give o'er the play.

CLAUDIUS

Give me some lights: away!

ALL

Lights, lights, lights!
(incantation)

Lights fade back. Claudius exits in a rush left balcony and all follow. Balcony curtains fall.

Horatio rises from among the musicians. He approaches Hamlet.

Hamlet is still on the stage. He stands hauntingly still as if in tableau, facing the audience.

HAMLET

Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
the hart ungalled play;
for some must watch, while some
must sleep: so runs the world
away. Would not this, sir, and a
forest of feathers--if the rest
of my fortunes turn Turk with me--
with two Provincial roses on my
razed shoes, 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.

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HORATIO

You might have rhymed.

HAMLET

O good Horatio,

(turns to face 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.

HAMLET

Ah, ha! Come, some music! come,
the recorders! For if the king
like not the comedy, why then,
belike, he likes it not, perdy.
Come, some music!

Musicians play. Hamlet and Horatio exit. A while later,
players and all enter for curtain call.