**Hamlet Crime Quotations**

Ii

**Elsinore**. A platform before the **castle**.

BERNARDO: **Who's there?** – 1st line of play? Suspicion, intrigue. B = Detective / guard. Fear.

'Tis now **struck twelve**; get thee to bed, Francisco.

HORATIO: Stay! speak, speak! I charge thee, speak!

*Exit Ghost*

Now, sir, young Fortinbras,

Of **unimproved mettle hot and full**,

Hath **in the skirts of Norway** here and there

**Shark'd up a list** of lawless resolutes,

… those foresaid lands

So by his father lost:

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,

A little ere **the mightiest Julius fell**

***Cock crows***

BERNARDO 'Tis here!

HORATIO 'Tis here!

MARCELLUS 'Tis gone!

*Exit Ghost*

We do it wrong, being so **majestical**,

To offer it the show of violence;

Iii

King Claudius: **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**.

Therefore our **sometime sister**, now our queen,

The **imperial jointress** to this warlike state,

Have we, as 'twere 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:

You cannot speak of reason to **the Dane**,

And loose your voice: **what wouldst thou beg, Laertes**,

…But now, my cousin Hamlet, and **my son**,--

HAMLET [Aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

KING CLAUDIUS How is it that the clouds still hang on you?

HAMLET Not so, my lord; I am **too much i' the sun**.

QUEEN GERTRUDE … let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever 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 Ay, madam, it is common.

QUEEN 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,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

…

But I have that within which passeth show;

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

KING 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**;

… to persever

… 'tis **unmanly grief;**

…

Take it to heart? **Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,**

A fault against the dead

… think of us

As of a father: for let the world take note,

You are the most immediate to our throne;

… your intent

In going back to school in Wittenberg,

It is most retrograde to our desire:

And we beseech you, bend you to remain

**Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,**

**Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.**

QUEEN GERTRUDE Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet:

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

HAMLET I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

HAMLET **O, that this too too solid flesh would melt**

**Thaw and resolve itself into a dew!**

Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd

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**

**Niobe** was mentioned in Homer's Iliad which relates her proud hubris, for which she was punished by Leto, who sent Apollo and Artemis to slay all of her children

**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 follow'd my poor father's body,

**Like Niobe, all tears**:--why she, **even she**--

O, God! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,

Would have mourn'd longer--**married with my uncle,**

**My father's brother**, but no more like my father

Form - Crime Resonance: Classical reference a Dan Brown-esque clue?

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**!

**It is not nor it cannot come to good**

**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, my lord?

**HAMLET** In my **mind's eye**, Horatio.

**Horatio:** A figure like your father,

Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,

Appears before them

Hamlet …I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding, but no tongue:  
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well:  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.

Commanding and driven – like Holmes

**All**  Our duty to your honour.

Exeunt all but HAMLET

My father's spirit in arms! all is not well;

**I doubt some foul play**: would the night were come!

Till then **sit still, my soul: foul deeds will rise**,

Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

Iiii

Laertes: …**his will is not his own**;

For he himself is subject to his birth:

He may not, as unvalued persons do,

Potential crime of passion: stealing her heart!

Laertes is the policeman.

Carve for himself;

If with too credent ear you list his songs,

Or lose your heart, or **your chaste treasure open**

**To his unmaster'd importunity**.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,

…Be wary then; best safety lies in fear:

**Youth to itself rebels**,

OPHELIA I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,

As **watchman to my heart**. But, good my brother,

Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,

Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven;

Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,

And recks not his own rede.

Fate? Is God a divine criminal!

Polonius: Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for shame!

**The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail**,

And you are stay'd for

…Beware

Established good nature / tragedy / good victim status

Of entrance to a quarrel, but being in,

Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee.

Neither a borrower nor a lender be;

For loan oft loses both itself and friend,

Thou canst not then be false to any man.

Farewell: my blessing season this in thee!

OPHELIA And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,

Paints Hamlet as a criminal

Victim or criminal?

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

LORD POLONIUS Ay, springes to catch woodcocks.

…Ophelia,

Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,

Not of that dye which their investments show,

But mere implorators of unholy suits,

OPHELIA I shall obey, my lord.

Iiv

HAMLET The **air bites shrewdly**; it is very cold.

HORATIO It is a nipping and an **eager** air.

*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within*

…What does this mean, my lord?

HAMLET The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,

**Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels;**

**And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,**

H = Curious & Noble

Claudius characterised as a pagan:

<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/holiday06/wassail.cfm>

The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out

The triumph of his pledge.

Iiv

Hamlet: it is a custom

More honour'd in the breach than the observance.

This heavy-headed revel east and west

Makes us traduced and tax'd of other nations:

Hamlet: So, oft it chances in particular men,

That for some vicious mole of nature in them,

As, in their birth--wherein they are not guilty,

Since nature cannot choose his origin--

By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,

A study of a criminal

Innate criminality?

Predisposition?

Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,

Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens

The form of plausive manners, that these men,

Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,

Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,--

Their virtues else--be they as pure as grace,

As infinite as man may undergo--

Shall in the general censure take corruption

From that particular fault: the dram of eale

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt

To his own scandal.

grace defend us!

What may this mean,

Trusting

Brave

Not motivated by self preservation – similar to many fictional crime detectives: eg: Kurt Wallander

That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel

Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,

Making night hideous; and **we fools of nature**

So horridly to shake our disposition

With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?

**Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?**

Why, what should be the fear?

I do not set my life in a pin's fee;

And for my soul, what can it do to that,

Being a thing immortal as itself?

HORATIO Be ruled; you shall not go.

HAMLET My fate cries out,

MARCELLUS Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

HORATIO Heaven will direct it.

Iv

Ghost My hour is almost come,

When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames

Must render up myself.

HAMLET Alas, poor ghost!

Ghost I am thy father's spirit,

Doom'd 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.

Ghost **Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.**

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Murder_Most_Foul>

HAMLET Murder!

Ghost Murder most foul, as in the best it is;

But this most foul, strange and unnatural.

…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 wit,** 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!

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,

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.**

Hamlet …O, fie! Hold, hold, my heart;

Motive

Revenge or honour killing?

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,

But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee!

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat

In this distracted globe.

thy commandment **all alone** shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!

*Writing*

So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word;

It is 'Adieu, adieu! remember me.'

**I have sworn 't.**

…I hold it fit that we shake hands and part:

You, as your business and desire shall point you;

For every man has business and desire,

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.

Accomplices?

Task: Discuss the significance of Iv?

Hamlet …Give me one poor request.

HORATIO What is't, my lord? we will.

HAMLET Never make known what you have seen to-night.

Ghost [Beneath] Swear.

HAMLET Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!

*They swear*

Belief or fear?

…O cursed spite,

That ever I was born to set it right!

IIii

LORD POLONIUS Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Distrust

suspicion

…Look you, sir,

Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;

And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,

What company, at what expense;

Crime or rite of passage?

put on him

What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank

As may dishonour him; take heed of that;

But, sir, such wanton, wild and usual slips

As are companions noted and most known

To youth and liberty.

LORD POLONIUS Marry, sir, here's my drift;

Underhand, in clandestine, baiting - entrapment

And I believe, it is a fetch of wit:

You laying these slight sullies on my son,

As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working..

OPHELIA My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,

Eye witness

suspicion

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbraced;

No hat upon his head; his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;

Pale as his shirt;

He took me by the wrist and held me hard

LORD POLONIUS Come, go with me: I will go seek the king.

suspects the worst: lust filled youth

Blames her?

This is the very ecstasy of love,

Whose violent property fordoes itself

And leads the will to desperate undertakings

As oft as any passion under heaven

That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

I fear'd he did but trifle,

And meant to wreck thee; but, **beshrew my jealousy!**

IIii

Claudius [to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern)

spying on the Hamlet

…so by your companies

**To draw him on** to pleasures, and to gather,

So much as from occasion you may glean,

Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus,

That, open'd, lies within **our remedy**.

Polonius: …I have found

Red herring

The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

KING CLAUDIUS O, speak of that; that do I long to hear.

News from Norway: ….his commission to employ those soldiers,

Criminal?

So levied as before, against the Polack:

With an entreaty, herein further shown,

*Giving a paper*

That it might please you to give quiet pass

Through your dominions for this enterprise,

Polonius (to Claudius & Gertrude) since brevity is the soul of wit,

And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,

I will be brief: your noble son [Hamlet] is mad:

*Reads* [Hamlet’s letter]

Crime?

Prop

*'Doubt thou the stars are fire;*

*Doubt that the sun doth move;*

*Doubt truth to be a liar;*

*But never doubt I love.*

…I precepts gave her [Ophelia],

That she should lock herself from his resort,

Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.

LORD POLONIUS You know, sometimes he walks four hours together

Here in the lobby.

HAMLET Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be

one man picked out of ten thousand.

LORD POLONIUS [Aside] Though this be madness, yet there is method

in 't. Will you walk out of the **air**, my lord?

HAMLET Into my grave.

LORD POLONIUS Indeed, that is out o' the air.

Tempting fate!

HAMLET Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

GUILDENSTERN 'Faith, her privates we.

HAMLET In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she

is a strumpet. What's the news?

…for **there is nothing**

**either good or bad, but thinking makes it so**: to me

it is a prison.

detects

HAMLET[Aside] Nay, then, I have an eye of you.--If you

love me, hold not off.

GUILDENSTERN My lord, we were sent for.

Hamlet What a piece of work is a man!

…What players are they?

ROSENCRANTZ Even those you were wont to take delight in, the

tragedians of the city.

…my

uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

GUILDENSTERN In what, my dear lord?

HAMLET **I am but mad north-north-west**: when the wind is

southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw.

Polonius: The best actors in the world, either for tragedy,

Crimes against the form!

comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical,

historical-pastoral, **tragical-historical**, tragical-

comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or

poem unlimited:

In 317 BC, when Pyrrhus was only two, his father was dethroned.

A **Pyrrhic victory** is a victory that inflicts such a devastating toll on the victor that it is tantamount to defeat.

Hamlet: it begins with Pyrrhus…

…horridly trick'd

With blood of fathers

First Player Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage strikes wide;

But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword

The unnerved father falls.

…Out, out, thou strumpet, Fortune!

*Exit POLONIUS with all the Players but the First*

Hamlet Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the

a Luigi Gonzaga murdered the Duke of Urbino in 1538

Murder of Gonzago?

Hamlet (soliloquy): O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

That he should weep for her? What would he do,

**Had he the motive and the cue for passion**

That I have?

Pleads defence to audience

Who calls me villain?

But I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall

To make oppression bitter

[Instead I] Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,

…I'll have these players

Play something like the murder of my father

Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;

…the play 's the thing

Wherein **I'll catch the conscience of the king**.

**IIIi**

**A room in the castle.**

*Enter KING CLAUDIUS, QUEEN GERTRUDE, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN*

**KING CLAUDIUS** And can you, by no drift of circumstance,  
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,

in medias res – form is fast paced…

**QUEEN GERTRUDE** I shall obey you.  
And for your part, 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.

Threatening?

**OPHELIA** Madam, I wish it may.

**Polonius:**      'Tis too much proved--that with devotion's visage  
And pious action we do sugar o'er  
The devil himself.

**KING CLAUDIUS**

Guilty feelings

Natural justice

[Aside] O, 'tis too true!  
How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience!  
The harlot's cheek, beautied with plastering art,  
Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it  
Than is my deed to my most painted word:  
O heavy burthen!

**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?

 what dreams may come

 .--Soft you now!  
The fair Ophelia! Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.

**OPHELIA G**ood my lord,  
How does your honour for this many a day?

**HAMLET** I humbly thank you; well, well, well.  
...

**HAMLET** Ha, ha! are you honest?

**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: I am very  
proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offences at  
my beck than I have thoughts to put them in,  
imagination to give them shape, or time to act them  
in. What should such fellows as I do crawling  
between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves,  
all; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nunnery.  
Where's your father?

  I have heard of your paintings too, well enough; God

accuses

has given you one face, and you make yourselves

another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and

nick-name God's creatures, and make your wantonness

your ignorance.

I say, we will have no more marriages:  
those that are married already, all but one, shall  
live;

victim

**Ophelia:** O, woe is me,

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

**KING CLAUDIUS** Love! his affections do not that way tend;

suspects

Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,

Was not like madness.

…I have in quick determination

Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England

For the Puritans, theatre was a crime = blasphemy

Hamlet …O, there be

players … neither having the accent of Christians nor

the gait of Christian

[to Horatio] Observe mine uncle: if his occulted guilt

Do not itself unkennel in one speech,

It is a damned ghost

…after we will both our judgments join

In censure of his seeming.

LORD POLONIUS I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the

Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Pretence? Exploitation?

HAMLET: Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

…Do you think I meant country matters?

*The dumb-show enters*

Player Queen A second time I kill my husband dead,

When second husband kisses me in bed.

Player King The violence of either grief or joy

Their own enactures with themselves destroy

Ironic red herring

QUEEN GERTRUDE The lady protests too much, methinks.

KING CLAUDIUS What do you call the play?

HAMLET The Mouse-trap.

KING CLAUDIUS Give me some light: away!

…

HAMLET Why, let the stricken deer go weep,

punishment

his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far

more choler.

…'Sblood, do you think I am

easier to be played on than a pipe?

HAMLET Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in shape of a camel?

LORD POLONIUS By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Herring?!

HAMLET Methinks it is like a weasel.

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

Aligned with Macbeth / villain

Would quake to look on.

I will speak daggers to her

IIIiii

Claudius: O, my offence is rank it smells to heaven;  
…My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;  
…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?

Hamlet: Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:  
When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage,  
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;  
At gaming, 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 as damn'd and black  
As hell, whereto it goes.

IIIiv

Polonius …I'll sconce me even here.  
Pray you, be round with him.

**Arras** (noun)

a wall hanging made of a rich tapestry fabric, typically used to conceal an alcove.

"he pulled back the arras on the far wall and went into his secret chamber"

HAMLET [Drawing] How now! a rat? Dead, for a ducat, dead!

*Makes a pass through the arras*

LORD POLONIUS [Behind] O, I am slain!

*Falls and dies*

Gertrude: O, speak to me no more;

These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears;

No more, sweet Hamlet!

HAMLET Why, look you there! look, how it steals away!

My father, in his habit as he lived!

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

*Exit Ghost*

QUEEN GERTRUDE This the very coinage of your brain:

This bodiless creation ecstasy

Is very cunning in.

…the weeds…

Hamlet: go not to mine uncle's bed

Hamlet (on killing Polonius):

but heaven hath pleased it so,

To punish me with this and this with me,

That I must be their scourge and minister.

I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him.

Hamlet: I must be cruel, only to be kind:

Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.

Let it work;

For 'tis the sport to have the engineer

Hoist with his own petard

a foolish prating knave

IVi

Claudius: O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends;

And let them know, both what we mean to do,

And what's untimely done. O, come away!

My soul is full of discord and dismay.

IViii

Claudius: Yet must not we put the strong law on him:

He's loved of the distracted multitude,

Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes

KING CLAUDIUS:

Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed aboard;

Delay it not; I'll have him hence to-night:

Away! for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: pray you, make haste.

The present death of Hamlet. 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.

IViv

Captain Truly to speak, and with no addition,

We go to gain a little patch of ground

That hath in it no profit but the name.

Hamlet: Rightly to be great

Is not to stir without great argument,

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw

When honour's at the stake.



…I see

The imminent death of twenty thousand men,

That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,

Go to their graves like beds

O, from this time forth,

My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!

IVv

HORATIO: 'Twere good she were spoken with; for she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds.

[mad?]Ophelia: By Gis and by Saint Charity,

Alack, and fie for shame!

Young men will do't, if they come to't;

By cock, they are to blame.

Gentleman: …young Laertes, in a riotous head,

O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord;

And, as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

The ratifiers and props of every word,

They cry 'Choose we: Laertes shall be king:'

Laertes: ..I'll be revenged

Most thoroughly for my father.

Claudius: And where the offence is let the great axe fall.

IVvii

KING CLAUDIUS Will you be ruled by me?

LAERTES Ay, my lord;

KING CLAUDIUS …I will work him

To an exploit, now ripe in my device,

Under the which he shall not choose but fall:

Sir, this report of his

Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy

That he could nothing do but wish and beg

Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.

Now, out of this,--

LAERTES What out of this, my lord?

KING CLAUDIUS 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?

But that I know love is begun by time;

And that I see, in passages of proof,

Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.

There lives within the very flame of love

A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it;

And nothing is at a like goodness still;

For goodness, growing to a plurisy,

Dies in his own too much: that we would do

We should do when we would; for this 'would' changes

And hath abatements and delays as many

As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;

Laretes: I'll anoint my sword.

I bought an unction of a mountebank,

So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,

…this contagion… that, if I gall him slightly,

It may be death.

Claudius: Soft! let me see:

We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings: I ha't.

When in your motion you are hot and dry--

As make your bouts more violent to that end--

And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepared him

A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping,

If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,

Our purpose may hold there.

Gertrude: One woe doth tread upon another's heel,

So fast they follow; your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

LAERTES Drown'd! O, where?

QUEEN GERTRUDE There is a willow grows aslant a brook,

…But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:

There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds

Clambering to hang

Laertes: …Adieu, my lord:

I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,

But that this folly douts it.

*Exit*

KING CLAUDIUS Let's follow, Gertrude:

How much I had to do to calm his rage!

Vi

First Clown Give me leave. Here lies the water; good: here

stands the man; good; 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.

HAMLET That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once:

how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were

Life’s

sentence

Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! It

might be the pate of a politician, which this ass

now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God,

might it not?

…

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.

…To what base uses we may return, Horatio!

First Priest …her death was doubtful;

And, but that great command o'ersways the order,

She should in ground unsanctified have lodged

Till the last trumpet:

LAERTES Hold off the earth awhile,

Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

*Leaps into the grave*

HAMLET[Advancing] …What is he whose grief

Bears such an emphasis?

*Leaps into the grave*

'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?

…

I'll rant as well as thou.

…

[*towards Claudius & Gertrude*] Let Hercules himself do what he may,

The cat will mew and dog will have his day.

Vii

[Sleuth] Hamlet recalls uncovering the plot: finding the evidence…

And then [criminally?] writing a new vengeful piece.

Hamlet I found, Horatio,--

O royal knavery!--an exact command…

…My head should be struck off.

…I sat me down,

Devised a new commission,

He [England] should the bearers put to sudden death

They [Rosencrantz and Guildenstern] are not near my conscience; their defeat

Does by their own insinuation grow:

'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes

Between the pass and fell incensed points

Of mighty opposites.

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,

That to Laertes I forgot myself;

OSRIC The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes

between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you

three hits:

Hamlet …there's a special

providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now,

During the 17th and 18th centuries (and earlier), duels were mostly fought with swords (the rapier, and later the smallsword).

The duel was based on a code of honour. Duels were fought not so much to kill the opponent as to gain "satisfaction", that is, to restore one's honour by demonstrating a willingness to risk one's life for it, and as such the tradition of duelling was originally reserved for the male members of nobility

'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: since no man has aught of what he

leaves, what is't to leave betimes?

Hamlet [to Laertes] …Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,

That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,

And hurt my brother.

LAERTES I am satisfied in nature,

Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most

To my revenge:

Claudius: Set me the stoops of wine upon that table.

…

The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;

And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Gertrude: The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

HAMLET Good madam!

KING CLAUDIUS Gertrude, do not drink.

QUEEN GERTRUDE I will, my lord; I pray you, pardon me.

KING CLAUDIUS [Aside] It is the poison'd cup: it is too late.

HAMLET How does the queen?

KING CLAUDIUS She swounds to see them bleed.

QUEEN GERTRUDE No, no, the drink, the drink,--O my dear Hamlet,--

The drink, the drink! I am poison'd.

***Dies***

HAMLET O villany! Ho! let the door be lock'd:

Treachery! Seek it out.

LAERTES It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain;

No medicine in the world can do thee good;

In thee there is not half an hour of life;

The treacherous instrument is in thy hand,

Unbated and envenom'd: the foul practise

Hath turn'd itself on me lo, here I lie,

Never to rise again: thy mother's poison'd:

I can no more: the king, the king's to blame.

HAMLET The point!--envenom'd too!

Then, venom, to thy work.

*Stabs KING CLAUDIUS*

All Treason! treason!

HAMLET Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion. Is thy union here?

Follow my mother.

*KING CLAUDIUS* ***dies***

LAERTES He is justly served;

It is a poison temper'd by himself.

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet:

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,

Nor thine on me.

***Dies***

HAMLET Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee.

I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu!

HAMLETO, I die, Horatio;

The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit:

I cannot live to hear the news from England;

But I do prophesy the election lights

On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;

So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,

Which have solicited. The rest is silence.

***Dies***

PRINCE FORTINBRAS Let four captains

**Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;**

**For he was likely, had he been put on,**

**To have proved most royally:**

*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the dead bodies; after which a peal of ordnance is shot off*

**Explore the significance of Act 1 Scene 5 - by Will Phillips**

Act 1 Scene 5 is an incredibly significant scene in the play, for a number of reasons. Most obviously, this is the scene where the Ghost of Hamlet’s father first meets Hamlet, and where Hamlet discovers the truth of his death. As such, this makes Act 1 Scene 5 the scene in which Hamlet first dedicates himself to a path of revenge and justice, beginning the chain of events that will inevitably lead to the death of Claudius, Laertes, Gertrude, and Hamlet himself, to make no mention of the innocents that die along the way.

This scene, therefore, marks the first time Hamlet takes on the role of investigator and pseudo-detective, accusing Claudius of being a, “villain, villain, smiling damned villain!” He finishes this soliloquy with the promise of avenging his father, stating, “Now, to my word, it is ‘adieu, adieu. Remember me.’ I have sworn’t.” This makes the situation a clearly personal one, as with many modern crime novels - the detectives in post-modern crime stories have a personal attachment to the crime committed, rather than merely being employed to solve it.

The scene also begins with a short, stichomythic exchange of dialogue between Hamlet and the Ghost. Hamlet orders the Ghost to speak, “Speak; I’ll go no further.” The Ghost complies by issuing an order, “Mark me.” Finally, Hamlet capitulates with, “I will.” This tense, short conversation is an indicator of much of the tension that drives the play forward - with such issues as fate coming into play, is Hamlet merely following his destiny, by listening to his otherworldly father? If the King is now symbolic of a heavenly presence, then Hamlet may be just another pawn in the game of the gods, obeying a messenger from them without question.

We are also given more information about the nature of the ghost himself, who professes that he is, “thy father’s spirit.” Whilst that does not necessarily mean he is so, it convinces Hamlet to put on the play later on before Claudius and Gertrude, to ascertain the truth of the Ghost’s claims. This portrays Hamlet as an investigator talking to an eyewitness. The Ghost also states that he is, “Doom’d… To walk the night,” until, “the foul crimes done in my days of nature are burnt and purged away.” The implication here is that the King has gone to purgatory, having died before confessing his sins. He admits to having committed ‘foul crimes,’ giving us an indication that the King was perhaps not as pure and holy as Hamlet has painted him to be. Nonetheless, the King has gone to Purgatory rather than hell - perhaps he is exaggerating the extent of his crimes? Or perhaps he has had some lenience given to him, given his status as King, appointed by God? Whatever the case, his statements in this scene are clearly significant, revealing as they do the nature of Hamlet’s driving force in the conflict, and giving hints to the audience about the events to come.

This scene is also an indicator of many aspects of Hamlet’s personality, factors that will become relevant later on in the play. Most significantly, Hamlet is extremely mistrusting. After the Ghost’s exit, and the entrance of Horatio and Marcellus, Hamlet asks them to swear that they will never reveal what just happened, and despite them doing so multiple times, he continues to force them, to make them swear upon his sword multiple times. This mistrusting nature is a traditional feature of the crime detectives, practically a requirement in order to avoid the countless red herrings they would doubtlessly encounter. In more modern detective fiction, this mistrusting nature becomes a facet of the psychological exploration of the characters, when social commentary becomes a primary element of the novel. By giving the main character these traits and quirks, they make the detective unique and interesting to read about. Nonetheless, Hamlet’s mistrusting nature is merely another *tragic* flaw of his personality, one that, perhaps incidentally, serves to enhance the potential to read the play as part of the crime genre. Additionally, the scene, and that section in particular, displays Hamlet’s relentlessness in getting Horatio and Marcellus to do as he wishes - another almost-requirement of a detective who wishes to see justice doled out, even if by his own hands. This is not to mention the way he swears to only think of getting revenge on Claudius, “And thy commandment alone shall live within the book and volume of my brain, unmixed with baser matter.” The single-mindedness with which he vows to pursue this matter speaks volumes about the solemnity of his promise, and of the nature of Hamlet himself. This insight into Hamlet’s character, particularly in relation to crime, makes the scene especially significant.

This scene is also the final scene before the beginning of Act 2. The first Act of the play typically sets up the characters and conflict of the rest of the play - we have already seen the protagonist, antagonist, most of the supporting characters, and many of the major ones. By ending the first Act with this scene, therefore, ensures that the audience understands the importance of the conversation between the Ghost and Hamlet. After the scene’s conclusion, the actors would break shortly in order to change the stage, costumes, refresh themselves, and so forth. Ending so suddenly on this scene gives it more impact, emphasising the importance of the scene and causing the audience to allocate more weight to it. This undoubtedly makes it more significant.

Analysis of Hamlet’s soliloquy at the end of Act 2 Scene 2

Hamlet’s soliloquy at the end of Act 2 Scene 2 is a particularly significant speech to the play with a lot of hidden meanings and foreshadowing. Taking place at the end of the Second Act, it places significant meaning on the contents to the audience, as this would be the last speech heard before an intermission. It ends in a similar, though not identical way, to the first Act - Hamlet is giving a speech in both, though the speech in Act 2 Scene 2 is a much longer soliloquy. It is also one of the longest speeches in the play, at 57 lines, making it especially important - the length speaks of the complexities of Hamlet’s thoughts at this period of the play, and how this will affect his actions later on.

The soliloquy starts off with Hamlet bidding goodbye to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, before immediately stating, “Now I am alone.” The manner in which he says this could be displayed in many different ways onstage - relieved, upset, solemn, and so forth, but the way it is written seems to imply relief. Hamlet is glad he finally has some solitude, to be away from company. Perhaps this is because he was previously in the presence of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two old friends who he has discovered are actually taking orders from his mother and uncle. He knows that the two of them were sent to report back on him to the King and Queen, so he can only let his guard drop when he is away from the two of them. This speaks of some foresight from Hamlet - he realises that his only opportunity to speak about his plan is when he is assured of his solitude. The other explanation is that Hamlet prefers isolation, perhaps due to psychological reasons. Foibles in the protagonist of a crime novel - i.e. the detective - or not uncommon; in fact, most every detective in crime novels has some kind of eccentricity or another - most famously Sherlock. Many modern detective novels, too, explore the psychology of both protagonist and antagonist in some way, so Shakespeare’s decisions here may be paving the way for future crime novel themes.

Additionally, having Hamlet prefer solitude to company may be a way to imply the question of his sanity without explicitly stating so. After the series of events Hamlet has been through recently, along with the questions from Polonius about his obsession with Ophelia, Hamlet’s sanity is being called into question, and him wishing to be away from his supposed childhood friends does support the theory that he is going somewhat mad.

The immediately following line is, “Oh, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!” Self-beration over his lack of action is the clearest explanation for this line, though it could perhaps be delivered sarcastically to present Hamlet as more of a prideful character. Nonetheless, it seems most clearly to be Hamlet agonising over the fact that he has been unable to carry out his father’s command for vengeance. This may be why many critics say that Hamlet’s hamartia, or fatal flaw, is indecision - he himself believes it to be. Indecision is one of the worse potential flaws for a detective character, too - decision-making is vital in the detection of criminals and the unraveling of their crimes. Hamlet’s plan to ensure Claudius’ guilt is proof of this - until the actors arrive, he has no idea how to expose his uncle’s guilt. He only finally makes a decision once he sees an opportunity, rather than being proactive about it. His specific wording, too, is interesting in the context of the play. He calls himself a ‘rogue,’ a word now linked to criminal terminology, someone who performs criminal acts but who is nonetheless likeable. This certainly applies to Hamlet - throughout the play he commits murder, causes suicide, and lies to the king, yet as the protagonist with a sympathetic goal, one delivered by the true king, he remains likeable- to the audience in the context of production, at least. However, the term ‘rogue’ had a somewhat different meaning in the 16th century period - it referred to a vagrant or beggar, i.e. someone trapped in poverty and unable to change their situation. This links to his second descriptor - ‘peasant slave.’ All three of Hamlet’s self-descriptions paint the picture of someone trapped in their situation, downtrodden and beaten by those around them, unable to change the circumstances. This harkens back to when Hamlet stated that he felt ‘trapped in Denmark’ - now he feels trapped by his situation, without any chance to fulfill the duty bestowed upon him by his father. This almost appears to be depression of some kind, Hamlet’s self-abuse so severe that it edges into self-hatred and depression. Again, this may be a kind of psychological issue or foible that affects Hamlet and makes him more of a modern detective figure - whether intentionally or not. It may also affect Hamlet’s actions later in the play - his self-hatred here certainly affects his actions later on, motivating him to fulfill the tragic fate without his knowledge.

Later, Hamlet mentions the classical Greek figure Hecuba, stating, “What’s Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, that he should weep for her?” The context of the line is Hamlet asking how the actors visiting Denmark can imitate sorrow so easily, and stating that had they experienced Hamlet’s own tragedy, they would “drown the stage in tears.” Mentioning a Greek figure in tragic literature is fairly common, as it provides a historical link to strengthen the tragedy. In terms of the crime genre, however, Hecuba was a queen married to King Priam of Troy during the Trojan War. The most well-known event from that period was of course the Trojan horse - a trick used by the Greeks to sneak into Troy and attack in secret. Shakespeare may be subtly linking this secretive trick to Hamlet’s own deceptions here - gaining the trust of those around him so that he can more effectively take his revenge on Claudius. This also potentially foreshadows the later deaths that Hamlet will cause as a result of his subterfuge.

Hamlet goes on to say that, had these actors experienced his own tragedy, their performance would, “Cleave the general ear with horrid speech, make mad the guilty and appal the free.” The statement itself is already significant, making skilful reference to the King’s method of death - Claudius ‘cleaved’ the King’s ear with his poison. It is also a subtle reference to another of Shakespeare’s plays, Othello - Iago also referenced ‘pouring his pestilence into Othello’s ear.’ It is interesting, therefore, that these words were said by the ‘villain’ of Othello, but by the hero of this play, Hamlet - perhaps Shakespeare is pointing out that there may not be so much difference between these two. This is further supported by the following line- “make mad the guilty.” One of the main debates of the play is whether Hamlet is putting on his madness purposefully, to deflect suspicion, or whether he has actually, truly, gone mad. Either way, Hamlet is the only character displaying qualities consistent with insanity - and so, as the only character ‘made mad,’ he must be guilty, by his own admission. Perhaps this admission of guilt is a foreshadowing again of his later actions - the murder of Polonius, for example, occurs only after Hamlet has descended deeper into his madness. Hamlet seems to admitting that he himself is a criminal, this early on in the play. It could also, however, be an admission of guilt in a different way - Hamlet already feels guilty about his failure to carry out the wishes of his father, so maybe his admission of insanity is a way of ‘pleading insanity.’ Hamlet could be acknowledging his guilt in failing to carry out the ghost’s commands, but pleading that the only reason for this is that he has been driven mad - a defense that would resonate with modern audiences, as madness has become a credible defense.

This soliloquy is an excellent source of analysis about Hamlet’s mental state during this period. He goes through periods of self-hatred, doubt, jealousy, and hypocrisy. We are given insight into how he is dealing with the constant psychological pressure from all around him, and how this affects the play in interpreting as a crime novel is vital. Dealing with the psychology of the protagonist is often key to detective novels. We also see how Hamlet’s lack of action is affecting him currently, and how his self-hatred will become a core issue is foreshadowed heavily. Finally, Hamlet himself is linked to other tragic plays in accordance with his status as ambiguously villainous - a role we will see explored later in the play.

Analysis of ‘To be or not to be.’

‘To be or not to be,’ is one of the most iconic lines, not only in theatrical history, but in literary history as a whole - endlessly quoted, referenced, and parodied in popular culture for fiction dating back decades. In terms of literary analysis, of course, this is one of the most heavily analysed lines of one of the most heavily analysed soliloquies from one of the most heavily analysed plays in history. As such, there are many commonly-held opinions about the meaning of this line, ranging from well-thought out and considered, to ridiculous and over-the-top. Nonetheless, many of these are meritable, and I believe that my own analysis will add to them.

One of the most well-known, and possibly most accurate, opinions of the line is that it refers to suicide, and Hamlet is deliberating over whether or not he should kill himself. ‘To be or not to be’ - literally, to exist or not to exist, to live or to die. We already know that Hamlet has been considering suicide - in his very first soliloquy, he bemoans the fact that God has, ‘fixed his canon ‘gainst self-slaughter.’ As such, is not impossible that Hamlet is doing so here. In fact, he goes on to elaborate on and further support this notion, saying, ‘to die, to sleep… By a sleep to say we end the heartache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to.’ He considers death merely a slumber, a way to escape the constant pain of his life, in a place he feels trapped in: ‘To me, Denmark is a prison.’ Hamlet essentially admits in this soliloquy that death is a, ‘consummation, devoutly to be wished.’ This line expresses clearly that Hamlet sincerely ‘wishes’ to die - however, the fact that he uses devout here, a descriptive term meaning ‘deep religious commitment,’ is fairly odd, given his previous belief that God had opposed ‘self-slaughter.’ This contradiction of his own words links to the essential line, ‘To be or not to be.’ Hamlet is conflicted with himself on whether or not he should go on living, certainly, but he is also unsure of whether he himself means his words. After all, throughout the play, Hamlet presents a contradictory image, outwardly going along with his mother’s marriage to Claudius and not causing trouble, whilst inwardly he plots Claudius’ murder in revenge. It is possible that Hamlet is experiencing something of a ‘crisis of identity,’ no longer sure whether he is truly himself anymore. Indeed, shortly after this soliloquy, after meeting Ophelia, he denies having given her any sort of gift, despite the clear proof to the contrary. So perhaps on a subconscious level, the line of, ‘To be or not to be,’ is Hamlet asking himself if he has gone mad, or if he is still sane.

Hamlet’s own contradictory nature is prevalent throughout the play. He constantly makes remarks and does things that seem to outright negate past actions and beliefs - for example, immediately after rationalizing away the need to kill Claudius whilst he is praying, he is impulsive enough to run his blade through a mysterious figure hiding in his room.This unwitting duplicity may be pointing to his status as a criminal, deceiving not only those around them, but themselves. Indeed, it is a common aspect of crime fiction for the criminal in question to believe their actions righteous - and Hamlet believes that his were ordained by God: “I do repent, but heaven hath pleas'd it so.”