

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 wanted* way again, to both your honors.

OPHELIA

Madam, I wish it may.

(Exit QUEEN GERTRUDE.)

LORD POLONIUS

Ophelia, walk you here.

I hear him coming. Let's withdraw, my lord.

(KING CLAUDIUS and POLONIUS hide so they may watch the encounter.)

(Enter HAMLET.)

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.

To die, to sleep—no more—

and by a sleep to say we end the heart ache and the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to.

'Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished.

To die, to sleep—to sleep—perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,*

for in that sleep of death what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil,*
must give us pause.

There's the respect* that makes calamity of so long life.*

For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, the oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,*
the pangs of despised love, the law's delay, the insolence of office,
and the spurns that patient merit of the unworthy takes,

when he himself might his quietus make* with a bare bodkin?*

Who would fardels* bear, to grunt and sweat under a weary life,

but that the dread of something after death, the undiscovered country, from whose bourn* no traveller returns,
puzzles the will and makes us rather bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of?

Thus conscience* does make cowards of us all,

and thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied over with the pale cast of thought,

and enterprises of great pith and moment* with this regard their currents turn awry,

and lose the name of action.

Soft you now, the fair Ophelia.

Nymph, in thy orisons* be all my sins remembered.

wanted - customary, *rub* - obstacle, *mortal coil* - turmoil of living, *respect* - consideration,
makes calamity of so long life - makes severe distress last so long, *contumely* - haughty rudeness,
quietus make - release from life, *bodkin* - dagger, *fardels* - burdens,
ourn - frontier, *conscience* - the idea of suicide, *pith and moment* - gravity and importance, *orisons* - prayers

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. To die—to sleep,
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to: 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep, perchance to dream—ay, there's the rub:
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause—there's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life.
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
Th'oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the spurns
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,
When he himself might his quietus make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
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The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,
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Than fly to others that we know not of?
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of resolution
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
And enterprises of great pitch and moment
With this regard their currents turn awry
And lose the name of action.