

LAERTES

How now? What noise is that?

Enter Ophelia.

O heat, dry up my brains; tears seven times salt
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May,
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!
O heavens, is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
[Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine,
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.]

(IV v: 153-163)

QUEEN

There is a willow grows askant the brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream.
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowflowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them.
There on the pendent boughs her crownet weeds
Clamb'ring to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,
Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indued
Unto that element. But long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

LAERTES Alas, then she is drowned?

QUEEN Drowned, drowned.

LAERTES

Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet
It is our trick; nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will. When these are gone,
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord.
I have a speech o' fire, that fain would blaze
But that this folly drowns it.

(IV vii: 165-190)

KING

Not that I think you did not love your father,
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,
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing.

(IV vii: 109-122)

CLOWN What is he that builds stronger than either the
mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

OTHER The gallows-maker, for that frame outlives a
thousand tenants.

CLOWN I like thy wit well, in good faith. The gallows
does well. But how does it well? It does well to those
that do ill. Now thou dost ill to say the gallows is built
stronger than the church. Argal, the gallows may do
well to thee. To't again, come.

OTHER Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright,
or a carpenter?

CLOWN Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

OTHER Marry, now I can tell.

CLOWN To't.

OTHER Mass, I cannot tell.

CLOWN Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull
ass will not mend his pace with beating. And when you
are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker.' The
houses he makes last till doomsday. Go, get thee in, and
fetch me a stoup of liquor. *[Exit Other Clown.]*

(V i: 38-57)

[Throws up a skull.]

HAMLET That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing
once. How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if 'twere
Cain's jawbone, that did the first murder! This might be
the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'erreaches;
one that would circumvent God, might it not?

HORATIO It might, my lord.

HAMLET Or of a courtier, which could say 'Good mor-
row, sweet lord! How dost thou, sweet lord? This
might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my Lord
Such-a-one's horse when 'a meant to beg it, might it
not?

HORATIO Ay, my lord.

HAMLET Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's, chap-
less, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's
spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to
see't. Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to
play at loggets with 'em? Mine ache to think on't.

(V i: 71-86)