RECENT TEXTUAL STUDIES OF HAMLET WITH AN EXAMINATION OF THE
STATES OF THE MAJOR SOLILQUIES IN THE QUARTOS
AND FIRST FOLIO

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by
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[Signature]

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DEDICATION

To My Parents
The state of the Q1, Q2 and Folio texts of Hamlet has long been the subject of much controversy and conjecture. I first became interested in such textual investigation while studying the texts of Romeo and Juliet in a Shakespeare class directed by Dr. Charles E. Walton, Department of English, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas. I chose Hamlet for the topic of my consideration because of the inconclusive state of the criticism concerning it, and because of the particularly interesting problem posed by the First Quarto. In Chapter I, I survey the existing major theories concerning the state of the three Hamlet texts. Chapter II is an examination of the major soliloquies and the scenes surrounding them. I have employed parallel texts to show that the thought content in the soliloquies and pertinent scenes is the same in Q1, Q2 and Folio. I have attempted to show the logical arrangement of the soliloquies and to propose an explanation for the unique order in which they appear in Q1.

The Bibliography approaches what one may call an exhaustive listing of textual criticism of Hamlet, although many of the references cited therein do not appear in the footnote entries in the text of the thesis itself. I have, nevertheless, consulted all of these works in the preparation of my study and have used many in the initial formation of my approach to the problem.
I wish to express my appreciation to Dr. Walton for his very patient assistance and his valuable counsel throughout the research and composition of this study; and to Dr. June J. Morgan, also of the Department of English, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, who was second reader of this work.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. HAMLET: MAJOR THEORIES RELATED TO THE TEXTUAL STATES OF THE FIRST</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND SECOND QUARTOS AND THE FIRST FOLIO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE TEXTUAL STATE OF THE FIVE SOLILOQUIES IN HAMLET AND A CASE FOR</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE TEXT OF THE FIRST QUARTO.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HAMLET: MAJOR THEORIES RELATED TO THE TEXTUAL STATES OF
THE FIRST AND SECOND QUARTOS AND THE FIRST FOLIO

The many differences which exist between the first
and second quartos of Hamlet have caused endless discussion
and raised problems of such complexity that the mystery, at
the present time, may very well never be satisfactorily
solved. Of most basic importance to a sound approach to
this problem is the following question: whether the 1603
Quarto is an early draft of Shakespeare's which he later
revised and improved upon until it substantially resembled
the 1604 Quarto, or, on the other hand, whether the 1603
Quarto simply is a vulgarized and degenerate text of the
original play—again considering the original to be similar
to the 1604 Quarto version.

Before making an examination of the numerous theories
proposed in an effort to reconstruct the actual events
related to the problem, one should be aware of certain
important information. Of primary concern is the fact that
Q₁ (1603) contains just over 2000 lines, while Q₂ (1604) has
slightly under 4000 lines. The problem, then, concerns an
attempt to determine why Q₂ was "added to" or Q₁ detracted
from; that is, the problem of determining the original state
of the text of this play. In this approach, however, there
is a major obstacle to be considered which concerns the business of determining the source or sources for all printed play texts during the Elizabethan period. If it were possible to establish a standard procedure of explicit steps governing a play from the time of the author's holograph copy to the playhouse copy, to the printer, the scholar's task would be greatly simplified. Although many have attempted to construct the actual pattern of such a history of printing for plays in this period, no one theory, as yet, has been generally accepted, and the problem persists. However, it seems likely that in the Elizabethan period very little respect was ever accorded an author's holograph copy of a play, once such a document had come into the hands of an acting company. How this document was treated apparently depended upon several matters: whether the play was to be performed in London or in the provinces on tour; how meticulous the playhouse scrivener was in his work of transcribing an official "prompt-copy;" how many alterations in the original text were made necessary by the natural process of staging the play and how many performances it may have undergone by the time the printed text appears; and a host of many other minor changes apt to have occurred in the usual process of staging. It is after the play had been thus altered by the work of the

acting company that it usually fell into the hands of a printer. Attempting to conceive of the state of the text by this time (in contrast to its probable original form), one needs merely to recall the many variations exhibited in the texts of modern plays once they have left the New York stage and have found their ways to the printer, for it is thought that this process has been altered very little over the ages. Furthermore, there is the problem of successive, new productions of a play and the likelihood of additional alterations of the text which may have been undertaken upon each of these occasions.

Of further pertinence to this study is the problem of time involved in the matter of releasing a play to a printer, of particular importance to the theories of publication surrounding the Hamlet text. Present scholarship gives precedence to three theories related to this subject. First, a printer might indeed obtain the rights to publish from the playing company itself, or from the company's legal representative. Secondly, he might deal directly with a member of the acting company who might have obtained stage rights or copyright either from the acting company or from the author. Thirdly, he might deal entirely with the author, assuming that it would have been possible for the latter
individual to have retained possession of his play for the purpose of eventual publication. Under these circumstances, it seems proper to approach the problem of the state of the Hamlet quartos from the viewpoint of three major critical concepts: (1) the stenographic method; (2) memorial reconstruction; and (3) the traitor-actor method.

The stenographic method is perhaps the oldest theory related to this investigation and one which has been either attacked or supported by critics for a good many years. While it has at times been valiantly defended, generally, it has, over the years, been forsaken by scholars. There is, however, no question about the fact of a known method of stenography in Shakespeare's time. Indeed, there were three systems of shorthand extant and in general use by Elizabethans. The first, Timothy Bright's Characteria, was issued in 1588.


The second, Peter Bale’s *Brachygraphy* (1590), is thought to be a plagiarism of Bright’s system. And a third, John Willis’s *Stenography*, was published in 1602. Bright’s *Characterie* contains 537 symbols representing an equal number of common, useful words:

Other words were expressed as synonyms or antonyms of these common words by prefixing to the shorthand symbol for the common word the initial letter of the synonym, or by suffixing the initial letter of the antonym: thus, “air-breath,” “air = vapour, up = down, great” = brief.

However, there were a great many more complexities to be dealt with by the individual employing Bright’s method. For example, tense of verbs, plurals, degrees of adjectives and adverbs were designated by a peculiar system of dots and symbols. Although this method was certainly used and, no doubt, in many situations, to great satisfaction, it is extremely difficult for one to imagine a copyist’s using this means to transcribe an entire play. Needless to say, an individual, wishing to "pirate" a play, would have had to exercise caution to prevent discovery of his intentions.

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8 ibid. p. 482.

9 Loc. cit.

10 Loc. cit.
Certainly, his entering a playhouse with the necessary writing materials to make a transcription would likely have attracted attention. Assuming, however, that he might somehow have managed to avoid detection, his subsequent actions would have been even more difficult to conceal, since he would have needed to expose his writing materials in order to work. At the same time, one must take into consideration the noise, the general rowdiness of the crowd, and the unexpected outbursts of applause or rapid delivery of dialogue. One thinks that these stenographers would have had a difficult time. It would surely have made necessary numerous visits to the performance of a play to be transcribed. Nevertheless, the subsequent difficulty of transcribing the stenographic notes of the play thus reported would have posed an additional problem. Consequently, the stenographic theory has been assailed by scholars and has generally been superseded by more recent theories concerning the "traitor-actor" and "memorial reconstruction."11

It is necessary, here, to make clear the meanings of the terms, "good" and "bad" texts, which unfortunately have been misused in the area of textual criticism because of their connotations of "superior" and "inferior." The terms have been used with great frequency in reference to the

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11 Ibid. pp. 497-98.
Hamlet quartos and must be employed, regardless, when dis-
cussing present textual criticism surrounding this play. A
so-called "bad" quarto is said to contain

... substitution of words and phrases (restatement);
omission of words, phrases, and lines; transposition
of words, phrases, and lines; corruption of blank verse
due to one or more of the above causes; mislining of
blank verse; so called "misheavings."\textsuperscript{12}

All of these characteristics are readily detected in Q1.
Nevertheless, many scholars believe that the mnemonic phe-
nomenon called "telescoping"--the memory's skipping from
one line to another because of similar phraseology and/or
meaning--is responsible for most of the errors involved in
Q1 and, therefore, they tend to attribute the state of Q1
to the work of an actor, or actors, in what is called a
memorial reconstruction of the text.\textsuperscript{13} At the same time,
most "bad" quartos have been shown to be shorter than what
has been considered to be the official text, and those who
hold with the theory of memorial reconstruction do not
hesitate to point out that "... the faulty memory is a
memory that omits."\textsuperscript{14} The accuracy of some of the reporting
of texts in this period has led critics to believe that the

\textsuperscript{12}L. Kirschbaum, "An Hypothesis Concerning the Origin
of the Bad Quartos," \textit{PMLA}, LX (September, 1945), pp. 698.

\textsuperscript{13}Ibid., p. 702.

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 704.
reporter was often an actor. In the case of Hamlet, this phenomenon seemed to point to the character of Marcellus, whose lines are identical in both Q1 and Q2, thereby suggesting what is called the "Marcellus theory," proposed by H. D. Gray, a theory which has received wide acceptance by many Shakespeare scholars. It gives the actor performing the role of Marcellus credit for piecing together at least a part of the so-called "bad" Q1, and it is indeed possible that this actor may have been responsible for that portion of the text of Q1 in which he appeared:

... it is noteworthy that in these scenes the lines which Marcellus speaks are given with almost perfect accuracy and the other parts are given with approximate accuracy....

Gray further enhances this theory with the belief that M (as he designates Marcellus) supplied X (an unknown hack poet) with an actor's copy of the play and assisted X in reconstructing the play by giving approximate lines necessary to fill in vacant spaces in the copy. Therefore, X in turn, supplied the lines needed to piece out the entire play text. Gray believes that in many cases X was forced

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17 Ibid., p. 722.
(because of lack of knowledge of the play) to sum up situations with closing lines, and cites the "to be or not to be" soliloquy as an example of such work. In resume, Gray's theory states "... that throughout the play X made a presentable text by putting into shape those parts of M's manuscript which could not serve for an acting version." J. D. Wilson, who agrees in part with Gray, believes that Q1 is "in some sense" a pirated text that contains poetry written by someone other than Shakespeare, pointing, again, to the possibility of the work of a hack poet. However, he believes also that the person responsible for the piracy was the actor who had played not only the role of Marcellus but, in addition, the roles of Voltimand, a Player, the Second Gravedigger, Churlish Priest, English Ambassador, and occasionally served as a supernumerary. According to Greg, this actor, working from some kind of a transcript of the text of the play which had been taken from the playhouse and which was quite different from the extant copies of

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18 Ibid., p. 723.
19 Loc. cit.
20 J. D. Wilson, "Hamlet Q and Mr. Henry David Gray," PMLA, XLIII (June, 1928), p. 575.
either Q₁ or Q₂, pieced together the version which has since come to be known as Q₁.²²

Where the transcript was in general agreement with the current text he, of course, left it untouched; where his recollection of the play in which he acted differed from the transcript he did his best to emend the latter—and a very poor best it was, except in one remarkable instance where he was able to incorporate his own written actor's part.²³ Such was the nature of the copy of the first quarto.²³

Wilson thinks that the transcript used by this actor as the basic manuscript for Q₁ was "... a shortened transcript made, early in 1593, from the then playhouse copy, in preparation for the extended provincial tour undertaken by Lord Strange's company during the plague."²⁴ The so-called 1593 copy is the "old" Hamlet, generally thought to have been written by Thomas Kyd, but supposedly reworked by many dramatists including Shakespeare.²⁵

Further evidence in support of memorial reconstruction was established by presenting a modern unpublished play in which each actor had before him only his own part during the rehearsals of the production.²⁶ After performing the

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²²Loc. cit.
²³Ibid., p. 382.
²⁴Wilson, op. cit. p. 580.
play upon several occasions, one of the minor actors was asked to reconstruct the entire play from memory. In the process of reconstruction, this reporting actor

... omitted, transposed, anticipated, recollected, telescoped, rephrased, etc. She plucked bits and pieces from this place and that to produce her bad text. And in the process, she appears to have omitted from one-half to one-third of what she was trying to reproduce.\(^27\)

The results of this experiment seemed to convince scholars of the validity of the memorial reconstruction theory. In the case of the problem in Hamlet Q₁, the Elizabethan reporter, assuming that there was one such individual, was evidently neither very bright nor very meticulous, for Q₁ is plagued by badly confused and garbled passages.

Kirschbaum, nevertheless, is so firmly established in his belief concerning the memorial reconstruction theory that he states:

\[\ldots \text{Q₁ is based wholly on the Q₂-F version and that it [Q₁] is a memorial reconstruction with all differences being definitely assignable on the one hand to mnemonic confusion and on the other to the creative ability of the reporter.}\] \(^28\)

Furthermore, he attempts to establish that the changes in the scene sequence in Q₁ over Q₂ were due to mnemonic

\(^{27}\text{Ibid., p. 15.}\)

\(^{28}\text{L. Kirschbaum, "Sequence of Scenes in Hamlet and the Problem of Interpolation," PQ, XX (October, 1941), p. 383.}\)
confusion. He believes that the similarities between the meanings and events which exist within certain scenes caused the reporter to confuse and, more often than not, to merge two or more scenes into one. Duthie, who, according to W. W. Greg, has said about everything of any relevance to the Q1 problem, closely agrees with the "actor-thief" theory. He makes an interesting contribution to this concept, however, in observing that the stage directions in Q1 are, for the most part, inadequate, but that those which do exist are of a descriptive nature, which, he thinks, a reporter would produce.

Although it has been suggested that perhaps two individuals were involved in the writing of Q1 (a reporter and a hack poet), this theory has lost ground in recent years, because of the necessity for the reporter to have been steeped in the language of the play, eliminating the presence of a second party. An actor, therefore, would seem to have been the best fitted person to fill in any gaps left by the process of faulty memory reconstruction.

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29 Ibid., p. 385.
31 Ibid., p. 302.
32 Ibid., p. 301.
33 Ibid., p. 304.
With the main argument in *Hamlet* in textual criticism centered around the problems of Q1, the other two texts of this play (Q2 and F) are often neglected, save for brief comparisons with Q1. It is true that Q1 represents a more complex and more exciting problem, but Q2 and F certainly present unique textual difficulties of their own. For example, Q2 is the fullest version of the play, containing over 3600 lines, as opposed to the 2500 lines in Q1.\(^1\) The Folio text is some 200 lines shorter than Q2 and contains 85 lines not present in Q2.\(^2\) According to Lee, Q2 was not, as its publisher boasted, printed "... according to the true and perfect Coppie." He suggests, instead, that Q2 was, like Q1, a text printed from an acting version, and that the F text "... probably came nearest to the original manuscript; but it, too, followed an acting copy which had been abbreviated somewhat less drastically than the Second Quarto ..."\(^3\) Lee's views are not widely accepted on this point, however. In fact, most scholars have tended to reverse Lee's proposal. For example, Craig writes:


The folio prints what is regarded as a distinct text from the quartos. Though it resembles the second quarto, it is evidently a play-house copy possibly abridged for acting. At any rate, it contains eighty-five lines not in Q2 and omits 218 lines which are in Q2. 

Scholars almost unanimously agree that, regardless of which of the two texts contains the greater validity, neither shows definite signs of having a common origin. It remains, then, to be decided which of these texts, Q2 or F, is more nearly what Shakespeare wrote. Chambers notes that scholars have too long dwelt on the similarities between the two texts when it is probably more important to observe that the differences are many and varied enough to show that one was not made from the other. He thinks that the manuscript used for the Folio had, at some time, been employed as a prompt copy and was made from a transcript that had been used in the printing of Q2, which transcript he believes to be closest to Shakespeare's original document. In addition, Parrot and Craig state that "... there is a general agreement among scholars today that the copy for Q2 was a manuscript

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38Thomas M. Parrot and Hardin Craig (eds.), The Tragedy of Hamlet, p. 247.
40Loc. cit.
in the handwriting of Shakespeare himself.\footnote{Parrot and Craig (eds.), \textit{op. cit.} p. 41.} They also believe that this manuscript was not used for a "prompt-copy" at the Globe, since the length of Q\textsubscript{2} suggests to them that it was not acted in full. Depending on the edition used, the number of lines in Q\textsubscript{2} varies, but in all cases it exceeds 3600 lines, and it is thought that no play exceeding 3000 lines could be acted in the "two hours traffic" of Shakespeare's stage.\footnote{Tbid., p. 42.} Although it is possible that certain performances at this time undoubtedly lasted longer than two hours, a performance of Q\textsubscript{2} of \textit{Hamlet} would certainly exceed this time allotment.

Furthermore, Parrot and Craig believe that Q\textsubscript{2} was not derived from a playhouse document because of the absence of many necessary stage directions in the text. They think, therefore, that Shakespeare, hard pressed to complete the play for the acting company, may have left out important stage directions because he knew that they would be later added to suit the company when a prompt-copy was finally made.\footnote{Tbid., p. 43.} They introduce, consequently, the theory that the "copy" for Q\textsubscript{2} was almost certainly Shakespeare's autograph

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\footnote{Parrot and Craig (eds.), \textit{op. cit.} p. 41.}
\footnote{Tbid., p. 42.}
\footnote{Tbid., p. 43.}
This author's copy may have had many forms in the Elizabethan period. For example, a first draft was termed an author's "foul-papers." Usually, he was expected to make a second, or "clear-copy" which, in turn, would be given to the Master of the Revels for licensing and then turned over to the prompter for stage markings, at which time it would be known as the "book of the play" and would serve thereafter as the official "prompt-copy." For various reasons, an author might not have been responsible for a "clean-copy" of his text, having assigned this task to a professional copyist, a method which immediately brings up the possibilities of alteration of text or error. Furthermore, Greg has evidence to show that often an author's "foul-papers" were preserved in the playhouse archives along with the official prompt-book. Thus, there is the possibility of two copies of a play, each dissimilar transcripts, which might have been created out of one original document, and suggests that in 1604 there may have been an original manuscript of Hamlet in existence. If this were the case


45 Parrot and Craig (eds.), op. cit. p. 44.

for Q2 and had such a "copy" been set by a skilled compositor
and proof-read by the author himself, an accurate edition of
Hamlet would exist; however, the compositor responsible for
Q2 was not a careful worker.47 Wilson, in discussing the
printing of Q2, describes the text as "... disgraceful
as a piece of printing ... a pretty mess of the autograph
copy."48 The condition of the Q2 text may not be entirely
the fault of its compositor, however, since manuscripts for
other printed plays in this period do exist, many of which
still befuddle present editors. Therefore, if the compositor
of Q2 were actually working from the "foul-papers" instead
of from a "clean-copy," many of his errors may be forgiven,
particularly if his work were not later subjected to a care­
ful proof-reading by the responsible author himself.49
Parrot and Craig claim that they have detected evidences of
"difficult" copy in the work of Q2.50

On the other hand, punctuation has also been a matter
for argument with those who claim that Q2 was set from the
author's original manuscript:

48 J. Dover Wilson, The Manuscript of Shakespeare's
Hamlet, p. 94.
49 Parrot and Craig, op. cit., p. 45.
50 Ibíd., p. 47.
Pollard's study of Richard II gives reason to believe that Shakespeare, except in long and carefully written pages, was by no means particular about punctuation. Commas served him where we should use colons and full stops; and an occasional semicolon would denote a longer pause. That compositors were indeed likely to take liberties with an author's punctuation is certainly an accepted theory. Unquestionably, the punctuation in the manuscript used for Q₂ was not reproduced with what might be described as complete fidelity to the author's intentions. Wilson declares, however, that it is representative of the "... best of its kind in the whole Shakespearean canon." Parrot and Craig, who agree with Wilson, make the following generalization:

When all is said the errors and corruptions of Q₂ are such as might be expected of an ignorant printer and a somewhat rash corrector dealing with peculiarly difficult "copy." There is little of the arbitrary correction, modernization, and general editing which we shall find characteristic of the F text. Where we can get back of the compositor and corrector to the copy we are in close touch with Shakespeare himself.

In the case of the Folio text, one should bear in mind that it contains 94 lines not found in Q₂ and shows instances of an attempt at modernization of spelling throughout. Because it, furthermore, does not show signs of having been set from a prompt-copy (such as anticipatory warnings

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51 Ibid., p. 46.
52 Wilson, op. cit., p. 207.
53 Parrot and Craig (eds.), op. cit., p. 49.
of actors and notations of properties to be employed),\textsuperscript{54} it is believed that F was printed from a transcript of a manuscript copy associated with the actual performance, but not from the "prompt-book" itself. Parrot and Craig suggest that it was set from the manuscript which later was used for the final form of the prompt copy, the document originally prepared for the licenser from which actors' parts could be transcribed at a later time.\textsuperscript{55} Wilson and Craig also note that the F text, when compared with that of Q\textsubscript{2}, seems to have been abridged with an eye to theatrical presentation, especially in the case of many of the more difficult passages in the play. No major parts are actually deleted, but many of the "supers" have been abandoned in the F text. At the same time, Wilson, Craig, Greg, and McKerrow believe that such changes as those alluded to above preclude the belief that the "copy" for the F Hamlet was a duplicate of the original prompt-book (or rather, the manuscript from which the "book" had been made). Wilson also suggests that, because of traditional methods employed in the editing of Shakespeare


(that of using the F as a basis and making corrections where necessary by collation with Q2), the faulty nature of F has since been cancelled, and he maintains that F is "... one of the most corrupt of the whole Shakespearean corpus."56 On the other hand, Parrot and Craig think that the errors or corruptions in F are not those of a compositor, as are the majority of those in Q2:

They exhibit ... various categories of alterations of the original text, some unconscious or accidental, others deliberate changes for the sake of clarification, modernization, reproduction of an actors' delivery, and so on. Sometimes an evident misunderstanding of the original has led to an alteration of the text. Such changes are not to be attributed to the compositor in Jaggard's office ... they are rather to be attributed to the scribe, who made the transcript that went to the printer.57

One notes a number of small additions, repetitions of words and phrases, which may be attributed to the actor and which passed into the F text from the scribe's memory of the play as it had been acted. Wilson lists some twenty-four of these cases.58 One-half of these occur in Hamlet's part, so that Wilson has concluded that they are due to Burbage's desire to intensify his rendition of the play. Parrot and Craig


57Wilson, op. cit., p. 190.

58Parrot and Craig, op. cit., p. 54.
also point to what they call a "perfunctory purging" of the
original text for the purpose of avoiding the penalty
incurred by the Act of 1606 which forbade the use of pro-
fanity upon the stage:

It seems not unlikely that while the prompt-book was
carefully purged, the scribe of the final copy repeatedly
preferred his memory of what he had heard, since the
actors were probably not so careful as the maker of the
prompt-book to avoid profanity. 59

Finally, the punctuation of F differs from that of Q2 at
almost every possible point. Greg, Wilson, Parrot, and
Craig are in agreement on this matter of punctuation of the
Folio, and think that the "light" punctuation of Q2 is in-
sufficient according to modern standards, but admit that it
indicates a swift and rhythmical delivery of the lines.
Wilson believes the punctuation in F is the worst he has
ever encountered in any Shakespearean text, 61 and Parrot
and Craig state:

It is far heavier than that of Q2 and probably
represents a change from a more or less conver-
sational to a declamatory delivery, a change
which has been intensified and corrupted in the
process of twofold transcription, plus the pos-
sible alterations introduced by Jaggard's printer.

59Wilson, op. cit., p. 349.
60Parrot and Craig, op. cit., p. 56.
61Loc. cit.
Again and again, the punctuation of the F is so plainly wrong that it can only be due to a misunderstanding of the text. 62

In summary, the F problem may be described as follows: a transcript was made from Shakespeare's "foul-papers" to serve as the basis for the company's prompt-book. This transcript was an abbreviated copy with clear stage directions. Before the prompt-book could be made, however, this transcript was checked once more; and more cuts were undertaken and further stage directions were indicated along with new alterations suggested at this time by the actors themselves. Then, the transcript in question was marked up so badly that only a superior theatrical scribe who had been in constant contact with the history of this document could have prepared a decent prompt-book from the resultant chaos. Certainly, no printer could have made a good use of this document in what must have been its condition at this time. Consequently, when a copy was needed for the F text a "clean-copy" was prepared, at which time many errors came into the text because of the careless work of the designated

These are the errors which have been noticed by scholars as those characteristic of the F Hamlet.

CHAPTER II

THE TEXTUAL STATE OF THE FIVE SOLILOQUIES
IN HAMLET AND A CASE FOR THE TEXT OF
THE FIRST QUARTO

Since there are several very carefully executed textual studies available, it would be vain to include another full examination within the limits of this study. Rather, the author has chosen to discuss the five major soliloquies as they are found in Q₁, Q₂, and the Folio, and their relationship to the three major tests of Hamlet's sanity (which, for the sake of clarity, have been designated as the Ophelia Test, the Fishmonger Test, and the Schoolfellow Test.) Particular attention has been given to these parts of the play in the interest of determining the natural and logical sequence in which they should be presented. No comment has been made on the many minor variants which occur. The soliloquies in question are presented below in parallel form and are, in content, exactly as they are given in their respective tests. They are shown in the sequence accepted by most modern editors. Stage directions have been included only in those instances where the reader might possibly have difficulty in following the action in their absence. Generally, the material from Q₁ is greatly compressed, which fact naturally admits the absence not only of words, but also
of whole sentences. These omissions will not be discussed unless they seriously affect the content of the speech or speeches, thereby constituting a change in the content of the material.

The sequence of Hamlet's soliloquies is a problem deserving close attention. In modern editions the major soliloquies, if lifted from the play, clearly show a definite development in Hamlet's character. To have any one of these speeches improperly placed would seem to indicate that the text of the play had been tampered with. On examination, one finds that Q₂ is the only version containing all five speeches in the same order as they are usually given today. Considered to be the normal pattern of the soliloquies is (1) "O that this too too sullied flesh . . ."; (2) "O what a rogue and peasant slave am I"; (3) "To be or not to be"; (4) "Tis now the very witching time of night"; (5) "How all occasions do inform against me". Neither the Folio nor Q₁ contains the fifth soliloquy, and in Q₁ the order of the second and third soliloquies is reversed. For the moment, the absence of the fifth soliloquy, however, will be ignored in the following discussion in order to examine the inverted order of the second and third soliloquies in Q₁ in comparison with these passages in Q₂ and Folio.

The first soliloquy ("O that this too too sullied flesh . . .") is, in thought content, alike in all three versions.
It is, of course, greatly compressed in Q1 and, therefore, much shorter than its counterparts in Q2 and Folio. In this speech, Hamlet grieves over his mother's early and incestuous marriage to his uncle. This event, coupled with the shock of the death of his father, has made the world, in his thinking, a gross and evil place. He believes that no good can come from this marriage, but since he has not yet seen the ghost of his father, such a thought is intuitive on his part. The first soliloquy in Q1, Q2, and Folio is presented hereafter in parallel texts:

Hamlet's First Soliloquy

Q1

Ham. O that this too much grieu'd and sallied flesh / Would melt to nothing, or that the vnuersall / Globe of heaven would turne al to a Chaos! / O God within two moneths; no not two; married, / Mine vnkle: / 0 let me not thinke of it, / My fathers brother: / but no more like / by father, then I to Hercules, / Within two moneths, are yet the salt of most /Vn-righteous teares had left their flushing / In her galled eyes:/ She married, O God, a beast / Deny'd of reason would not have made / Such speede: Frailtie, thy name is Woman, /

Q2

Ham. O that this too sallied flesh would melt, / Thaw and resolve it selfe into a dewe, / On that the everlasting had not fixe / His cannon against seale slaughter, / O God, God, / How wary, stale, flat, and vnprofitable / Seeme to me all the vses of this world: / Fie on't, ah fie, tis an vnweeded garden / That grows to seede, things rancke and grose in nature, / Possesse it meerely that it should come thus / But two months dead, nay not so much, not two, / So excellent a King, that was to this / Hyperion to a satire, so loving to my mother, /

F

Ham. Oh that this too too solid Flesh, would melt, / Thaw, and resolve it selfe into a Dew: / Or that the Everlasting had not fixt / His Cannon against Selfe-slaughter. / O God, O God! / How weary, stale, flat, and vnprofitable / Seemes to me all the vses of this world? / Fie on't? Oh fie, fie, 'tis an vnweeded Garden / That grows to Seed: Things rank, and grosse in Nature / Possesse it meereely. That is should come thus: / But two months dead: Nay, not so much; not two, / So excellent a King, that was to this / Hyperion
Why she would hang on
him, as if increase / Of appetite had growne
by what it looked on, / 0 wicked wicked speede,
to make such / Dexteritie
to incestuous sheeets, / Ere yet the sheeos were
olde, / The which she
followed my dead fa-
thers corse / Like Niobe
all teares: married,
well it is not, / Nor
it cannot come to good:/
But breake my heart,
for I must hold my
tongue.

That he might not
beateene the winds of
heauen / Visite her face
too roughly, heauen and
earth / Must I remember,
why she should hang on
him / As if increase of
appetite had growne / By what it fed on, and
yet within a month, / Let me not thinke on't;
frailty thy name is
woman / A little month
or ere those sheeos
were old / With which she
followed my poore
fathers bodie / Like
Niobe all teares, why
she / 0 God, a beast
that wants discourse of
reason / Would have
mourned longer, married
with my Vnkle, / My
fathers brother, but no
more like my father /
Then I to Hercules, with-
in a month, / Ere yet
the salt of most vn-
righteous teares, / Had
left the flushing in
her gauled eyes / She
married, 0 most wicked
speede; to post / With
such dexterity to in-
cestuous sheeets, / It
is not, nor it cannot
come to good, / But
breake my hart, for I
must hold my tongue.

to a Satyre: so loving
to my Mother, / That
he might not beateene
the winds of heauen /
Visit her face too
roughly, Heauen and
Earth / Must I remember:
why she would hang on
him, / As if encrease
of Appetite had growne / By what it fed on: and
yet within a month? / Let me not thinke on't:
Frailty, thy name is
woman. / A little Month,
or ere those sheeos were
old, / With which she
followed my poore
Fathers body / Like
Niobe, all teares. Why
she, even she. / (0
Heaven! A beast that
wants discourse of
Reason / would have
mourn'd longer) married
with mine Vnkle, / My
Fathers Brother: but no
more like my Father, /
Then I to Hercules.
Within a Moneth? / Ere
yet the salt of most
vnrighthead Teares / Had
left the flushing of her
gauled eyes, / She mar-
rried. 0 most wicked
speede, to post / with
such dexterity to Incest-
uos sheeets; / It is not
nor it cannot come to
good. / But breake my
heart, for I must hold
my tongue.

Although this speech in Q₁ is obviously shorter than its
parallel passages in Q₂ and Folio, it contains, in essence,
the same thought. The only difference of significance is
the omission in Q₁ of any reference to the subject of suicide
which, in turn, might lead to additional considerations later in the play, but it does not negligibly effect the purpose of the first soliloquy at this point. The other omissions in Q1 serve as embellishments to the main thought of the same passage in Q2 and Folio.

In the second soliloquy ("O what a rogue and peasant slave am I"), Hamlet shows himself to be a rational, intelligent person. He has seen the ghost and has just witnessed an actor burst into tears while reciting a speech from a play. When he sees how easily the actor works himself into an artificial grief, Hamlet berates himself for not immediately avenging his father's death, yet he is not, at this point in the action of the play, a man of action: he must have further proof. Consequently, he decides to rely upon the result of the play-within-the-play. One can see the similarity of meaning of the second soliloquy in all three texts when these passages are paralleled. One should, however, keep in mind that, although these three versions of the second soliloquy are given here in parallel form, in Q1 this speech does not occur in the same order as it does in Q2 and Folio.

Hamlet's Second Soliloquy

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<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ham.</td>
<td>Why what a dung-hill idiot slave am I?/</td>
<td>Ham. I so God buy to you, Now I am alone,/</td>
<td>Ham. I so, God buy'ye: Now I am alone. / Oh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Why these Players here</td>
<td>0 what a rogue and</td>
<td>what a Rogue and Peasant</td>
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draw water from eyes: / For Hecuba, why is Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba? / What would he do and if he had my losse? / His father murdered, and a Crowne bereft him, / He would turn all his tears to droppes of blood, / Amaze the standers by with his lament, / Strike more then wonder in the judicall eares, / Confound the ignorant, and make mute the wise, / Indeede his passion would be generall. / Yet I like to an asse and Iohn a Dreames, / Haueing my father murdred by a villaine, / Stand still, and let it passe, / Why sure I an a Courajd: / Who pluckes me by the beard, or twites my nose, / Gue's me the lie i' th' throat downe to the lungs, / Sure I should take it, or else I have no gall, / Or by this I should have a fatted all the region kites / With the staure offell, this damned villaine, / Treacherous, baudy, murderous villaine:/ Why this is braue, that I the sonne of my deare father, / Should like a scallion, like a very drabbe / Thus raile in wordes, About my braine, / I haue heard that tuility creatures sitting at a play, / Hath, by the very cunning of the scene, confess a murder / Committed long present slaye am I. / Is it not monstrous that this player here/ But in a fixion, in a dreame of passion / Could force his soule distraction in his aspect, / A broken voyce, an his whole function suting / With forms to his conceit;/ and all for nothing, / For Hecuba. / What's Hecuba to him, or he to her, / That he should weep for her? / What would he doe / Had he the motive, and that for passion / That I have? he would drowne the stage with teares, / And cleave the general ear with horrid speech, / Make mad the guilty, and appale the free, / Confound the ignorant, and amaze instead / The very faculties of eyes and eares; yet I, / A dull and muddy mettled Rascal, peake, / Like Iohn a dreames, vnpregnant of my cause, / And can say nothing; not for a King, / Vpon whose property, and most deare life, / A damn'd defeate was made: Am I a cowarde? / Who calls me villaine, breaks my pate a crosse, / Pluckes off my beard, and blows it in my face, / Pluckes me by the nose, gives me the lie i' th' throate / As depe as to the lungs, who does me this, / Hah, s'wounds I should take it: for it cannot be / slaye am I? / Is it not monstrous that this Player here, / But in a Fixion, in a dreame of Passion, / Could force his soule so to his whole conceit, / That from her working, all his visage warm'd; / Teares in his eyes, distraction in's Aspect, / A broken voyce, and his whole Function suting / With Formes, to his Conceit? / And all for nothing? / For Hecuba? / What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba, / That he should weep for her? What would he doe / Had he the Motiue and the Cue for passion / That I have? He would drowne the Stage with teares, / And cleave the general ear with horrid speech: / Make mad the guilty, and aMaze indeed / The very faculties of Eyes and Eares. Yet I, / A dull and muddy-metted Rascal, peake / Like Iohn a-dreames, vnpregnant of my cause, / And can say nothing: No, not for a King, / Vpon whose property, and most deere life, / A damn'd defeate was made. Am I a Coward? / Who calles me Villaine? breaks my pate a-crosse? / Pluckes off my Beard, and blows it in my face? / Tweakes me by' th' Nose? gives me the Lye i' th' Throate, / As depe as to the Lungs?
before. This spirit that I have seen may be the Diuell, And out of my weakeinesse and my melancholy, As he is very potent with such men, Doth seeke to damne me, I will have sounder proofes, The play's the thing, Wherein I'lle catch the conscience of the King.

But I am pigdion liuerd, and lacke gall, To make oppression bitter, or ere this I should a fatted all the region kytes, With this slaes offall, bloody, baudy villaines, Remorslesse, treacherous, lecherous, kindlesse villaines. Why what an Asse am I, this is most braue, That I the sonne of a deere murthered, Prompted to my reuenge by heauen and hell, Must like a whore vnpacke my hart with words, And fall a cursing like a very drabbe; a stallyon, fie vpont, foh. About my braines; hum, I have heard, That guilty creatures sitting at a play, Have by the very cunning of the seene, Been strooke so to the soule, that presently They have proclaim'd their malefactions; For murther though it have no tongue will speake With most miraculous organ, Ile have these Players Play something like the murther of my father Before mine vnkle, Ile observe his lookes, Ile tent him to the quicke, if a doe blench I know my course. The spirit that I have seen May be a deale, and the deale hath power T' assume a pleasing shape, yea, and perhaps Out of my weakes, and my melancholy, As he is

Who does me this? Ha? Why I should take it, for it cannot be, But I am Pigeon-Liuer'd, and lacke Gall, To make oppression bitter, or ere this, I should have fatted all the Region Kites; With this Slues Offall, bloody; a Bawdy villain, Remorselesse, Treacherous, kindles villain; Oh Vengeance! Who? What an Asse am I? I sure, this is most braue, That I, the Sonne of the Deere murthered, Prompted to my Revenge by Reauen, and Hell, Must (like a Whore) vnpacke my heart with words, And fall a Cursing like a very Drab, A Scullion? Fye vpont, Foh. About my Braine. I have heard, that guilty Creatures sitting at a Play, Have by the very cunning of the Scoene, Bene strooke so to the soule, that presently They have proclaim'd their Malefactions, For murther, though it have no tongue, will speake With most myraculous Organ. Ile have these Players, Play something like the murder of my Father, Before mine Vnkle. Ile observe his lookes, he rent him to the quicke; If hw but blench I know my course. The Spirit that I have seen May be the Diuell, and the Diuell hath power T' assume a
pleasing shape, yea and perhaps / Out of my weaknesse, and my Melancholly, / As he is very potent with such Spirits, / Abuses me to damne me. Ile haue grounds / More Relatiue then this: The Play's the thing / Wherein Ile catch the conscience of the King.

As in the first instance, one sees that the second soliloquy in Q₁ is just about one-half the length of its parallel counterparts in Q₂ and Folio. The speech in Q₁ is also not nearly as polished as are the other two, and it omits much that, in the others, extends the thought in a more refined manner; yet in content, it is the same. In other words, the basic thought is the same in all three versions.

The third soliloquy ("To be or not to be") is the center of indifference in Hamlet's philosophic development. He realizes that a situation can be meditated upon only for a given amount of time before action becomes mandatory; otherwise, "resolution" is apt to be covered by "the pale cast of thought." This soliloquy marks the turning point in the development of Hamlet, who from this point on is capable of becoming a man of action instead of remaining a man of thought. Again, in parallel texts, one notes the variations in the three versions of this soliloquy:
Hamlet's Third Soliloquy

Ham. To be, or not to be,
To die, to sleep, is that all,
I all: No,
to sleep, is that all?
I all: No, to sleep, to dream, I may there it goes,
For in that dream of death, When wee awake, And borne before an everlasting Judge, From whence no passenger ever return'd, The vndiscovere country, at whose sight The happy smile, and the accur'd damn'd.
But for this, the joyful hope of this, Whol'd beare the scorns and flattery of the world, Scornd by the right rich, the rich curse'd of the poor.
The widow being oppressed, the orphan wrong'd, The taste of hunger, or a tirants raigne, And thousand more calamities besides, To grunt and sweate vnder this weary life, When that he may his full Quietus make, With a bare bodkin, who would this endure, But for a hope of something after death? Which pulses the braine, and doth confound the sence, Which makes vs rather bear those cuilles we haue, Than flie to others that we know not of. I that, 0 this conscience makes cowards of vs all, Lady in thy orizons, be all my sinnes remembered.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,
Whether 'tis nobler in the minde to suffer
The slings and arrowes of outrageous fortune,
Or to take Armes 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 hart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks
That flesh is heir to; tis a consumption
Devoutly to be wisht to die to sleepe,
To sleepe, perchance to dreame
I there's the rub,
For in that sleepe of death what dreames may come
When we have shuffled off this mortall coyle
Must give vs pause. There's the respect
That makes calamity of so long life: For who would beare the whips and scorns of time, The oppressors wrong, the proud mans contumely, The pangs of despiz'd love, the lawes delay, The insolence of office, and the spurnes That patient merit of the vnworthy takes, Then he himselfe might his quietas make With a bare Bodkin? Who would these Fardles beare To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life, But that the dread of something after death, The undiscoverd Countrey, from
something after death; 
The vndiscover'd country, 
from whose borne / No 
traueller returns, 
puzzels the will, / And 
make vs rather beare 
those ills we haue, / 
Then flye to others 
that we know not of, / 
Thus conscience does 
make cowards, / And 
thus the native hiew 
of resolution / Is 
fickled ore with the 
pale cast of thought, / 
And enterprises of 
great pitch and moment, / 
With this regard theyr 
currents turne awry, / 
And loose the name of 
action. Soft you now, / 
The faire Ophelia, 
Nimph in thy Orizons / 
Be all my sinnes 
remembred.

This soliloquy and its presentation in the three versions of the play illustrate clearly the kind of treatment which the text has been accorded throughout Q₁ when compared with Q₂ and Folio. The conclusion of this soliloquy in Q₂ states: "Thus conscience does make cowards of us all." In the other two versions, this utterance is not worded in exactly the same manner as Q₂, although in each, the meaning is the same. However, in Q₂ and Folio, as constantly happens, this thought is extended and refined in the addition of five more lines; whereas in Q₁ it is not developed beyond this point. Variation in Q₁ with the other two texts is generally the result of such compression of thought.
In the fourth soliloquy ("Tis now the very witching time of night"), Hamlet is on the verge of becoming a man of action. He is now prepared to "speake Daggers" to his mother. This soliloquy affords one further proof of the compressed nature of Q1. In parallel, one sees the economy of expression characteristic of Q1 which affects even the shortest of speeches:

Hamlet's Fourth Soliloquy

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<th>Q1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hath sent to speake with me: / O God, let me're the heart of Nero enter / This soft bosome. / Let me be cruell, not vn-naturall, / I will speake daggers, those sharpe wordes being spent, / To doe her wrong my soule shall ne're consent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Then I will come to my mother by and by, / They foule me to the top of my bent, I will come by &amp; by, / Leave me friends, / I will, say so. By and by is easily said, / Tis now the very witching time of night, / When Church-yards yawne, and Hell it selfe breaks out / Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood. / And do such bitter businesse as the day / Would quake to looke on. Soft now, to my Mother: / Oh Heart, loose not thy Nature; let not euer / The Soule of Nero, enter this firme bosome: / Let me be cruell, not vn-naturall, / I will speake Daggers to her, but vse none: / My Tongue and Soule in this be Hypocrites. / How in my words someuer she be shent, / To give them Seales, neuer my Soule consent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>By and by is easily said. Leave me Friends: / 'Tis now the verie witching time of night, / When Church-yards yawne, and Hell it selfe breaks out / Contagion to this world. Now could I drink hot blood. / And do such bitter businesse as the day / Would quake to looke on. Soft now, to my Mother: / Oh Heart, loose not thy Nature; let not euer / The Soule of Nero, enter this firme bosome: / Let me be cruell, not vn-naturall, / I will speake Daggers to her, but vse none: / My Tongue and Soule in this be Hypocrites. / How in my words someuer she be shent, / To give them Seales, neuer my Soule consent.</td>
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Although Q\textsubscript{1} does not allow Hamlet the few lines given by Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio which preface his plea to God, Q\textsubscript{1} does serve, as do the other two texts, to show a changed Hamlet, one who is now approaching the status of a man of action. In general, then, the parallel texts of this soliloquy clearly show that there is a consistent handling of the variant readings of these speeches. In all cases the essential meaning is preserved, but in Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio the soliloquy is extended and embellished in such a way as to emphasize, somewhat officiously, the basic ideas within each passage.

One next asks two questions: is there any justification for the structural position of the soliloquies in Q\textsubscript{1}? If not, how may one account for the obvious rearrangement of these same passages in Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio? The order of the soliloquies in Q\textsubscript{1} is 1-3-2-4; in Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio, the order is 1-2-3-4. Neither Q\textsubscript{1} nor the Folio contains the fifth soliloquy, found only in Q\textsubscript{2}. As mentioned earlier, the first soliloquy is alike in all three versions, yet because of this similarity in content, Q\textsubscript{1} presents a very interesting problem. Unlike the action in Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio, in Q\textsubscript{1} Hamlet has already seen his father's ghost and has decided upon his course of insanity before he utters the first soliloquy. On the other hand, the first soliloquy precedes this action in both Q\textsubscript{2} and Folio. Consequently, one thinks it unlikely that Hamlet, knowing of his father's murder, or at least having had the suggestion
of the murder presented to him by the ghost, would have failed to mention it in his first soliloquy. Instead, as in Q2 and Folio, he grieves over his mother's incestuous marriage. Certainly, the marriage is not to be overlooked, but in the light of the knowledge of his father's murder, one thinks it would have been of secondary importance to him at this time in Q1.

The next soliloquy in Q1 is the "To be or not to be" speech which is, in the order of Q2 and Folio, the third instead of the second. To put the third or "center of indifference" speech before the second, in which Hamlet is still questioning the validity of the ghost and requiring another test of his uncle's guilt, seems structurally wrong. In the "To be or not to be" soliloquy, Hamlet, at the conclusion of the passage, has reached a turning point. Up until the time of this speech he has been incapable of any kind of concerted action because of his rational mind that demands exacting proof of his uncle's guilt. The second soliloquy ("0 what a rogue . . . .") seems to belong in the first part of this philosophic development. The fourth soliloquy ("'Tis now the very witching time of night") is also quite important to this same consideration, because in this speech Hamlet comes much closer to being a man of action; i.e., he is ready to "speake Daggers" to his mother. Therefore, the "To be or not to be" soliloquy becomes the intermediate step in the
development of Hamlet as a man of action. Thus, it seems that these three soliloquies in Q1 are not in a logical arrangement; however, there is yet a further problem to be considered.

The most interesting aspect of this study concerns more than the problem of the reversing of the two soliloquies in Q1. It is quite apparent that the scenes in which the soliloquies appear are also responsible for the position in which these speeches occur in the various texts. The three tests of Hamlet's insanity are hereafter given in parallel exactly as they occur in Q1, Q2, and Folio. Although there is evidently little, if any, change in the content of the thought in the scenes themselves, the fact that they occur in different sequences in Q1, thereby forcing two soliloquies out of the place assigned to them in Q2 and Folio, makes "order" a matter of much importance to the investigation.

For some time, Shakespearean scholars have commented upon the logic of the arrangement of the Ophelia Test in Q1 as opposed to that of the other two versions.64 For example, the Ophelia Test is planned, executed, and reported without interruption in Q1, whereas omissions have occurred in the texts of Q2 and Folio which do not present this "test" in

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64 A. W. Pollard, Shakespeare's Folios and Quartos: a Study in the Bibliography of Shakespeare's Plays, 1594-1684. p. 43.
the uninterrupted order of Q1. However, in observing the parallel texts of this scene, one should remember that the meaning is the same in all three versions, although these scenes do not follow the same order of Q1 in Q2 and Folio.

The Ophelia Test

Q1

Cor. This business is very well dispatched. / Now my Lord, touching the yong Prince Hamlet, / Certaine it is that hee is madde; mad let vs grant him then: / Now to know the cause of this effect, / Or else to say the cause of this defect, / For this effect defectivie comes by cause.

Queene. Good my Lord be briefe.

Cor. Hadam I vll: my Lord, I haue a daughter. / Haue while she's mine: for that we thinke / Is surest, we often loose: now to the Prince. / My Lord, but note this letter, / The which my daughter in obedience / Deliuer'd to my handes.

King. Reade it my Lord.

Cor. Marke my Lord. / Doubt that in earth is fire, / Doubt that the starres doe move, / Doubt trueh to be a liar; / But doe not doubt I loue. / To the beautifull Ofelia;

Q2

Pol. This business is well ended. / My Liege and Madam, to expostulate / What maiestie should be, what dutie is, / Why day is day, night, and time is time, / Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time, / Therefore breuitie is the soule of wit, / And tediousness the lymmes and outward flourishes, / I will be briefe, your noble sonne is mad: / Mad call I it; for to define true madnes, / What ist but to be nothing els but mad, / But let that goe.

Que. More matter with lesse art.

Pol. Madam, I sweare I vse no art at all, / That hee's mad tis true, tis true, tis pitty, / And pitty tis tis true, a foolish figure, / But farewell it, for I will vse no art. / Mad let vs graunt him then, and now remains / That we find out the cause of this effect, / Or rather say, the cause of this defect, / For this effect

F

Pol. This business is well ended. / My Liege, and Madam, to expostulate / What Maiestie should be what Dutie is, / Why day is day; night, night; and time is time, / Were nothing but to waste Night, Day and Time. / Therefore, since Breuitie is the Soule of Wit, / And tediousnesse, the limbes and outward flourishes, / I will be breefe. Your Noble Sonne is mad: / Mad call I it; for to define true Madnesse, / What is't, but to be nothing else but mad. / But let that go.

Qu. More matter, with lesse Art.

Pol. Madam, I sweare I vse no Art at all: / That he is mad, 'tis true: 'Tis true 'tis pittie, / And pitty it is true: A foolish figure, / But farewell it: for I will vse no Art. / Mad let vs graunt him then; and now remains / That we finde out the cause of this effect, / Or rather say, the cause of this defect; / For this
Thine ever the most unhappy Prince Hamlet, My Lord, what do you thinke of me? / I, or what might you thinke when I saw this? King. As of a true friend and a most loving subject.

Cor. I would be glad to prooue so. / Now when I saw this letter, thus I bespake my maiden: I, or what might you thinke when I saw this? King. As of a true friend and a most loving subject. Cor. I would be glad to prooue so. / Now when I saw this letter, thus I bespake my maiden: I, or what might you thinke when I saw this? King. As of a true friend and a most loving subject. Cor. I would be glad to prooue so. / Now when I saw this letter, thus I bespake my maiden: I. I have a daughter, haue while she is mine, / Who in her Dutie and Obedience, markes, / Hath gien me this, now gather and surmise, / To the Celestiall and my soules Idoll, the most beautified Ophelia, that's an ill phrase, a vile phrase, / beautified is a vile phrase, but you shall bear: thus in her excellent white bosome, these, Quee. Came this from Hamlet to her? Pol. Good Madam stay awhile, I will be faithful. Doubt thou the Starres are fire, / Doubt that the Sunne doth moue, / Doubt Truth to be a Lier, / But never doubt I love. O deere Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers, I have not art to recken / my grones; but that I love thee best, o most best believe it, adew. / Thine euermore most deere Lady, whilst this machine is to him. (Hamlet. Pol. This in obe­ dience hath my daughter showne me, / And more about hath his solicitings / As they fell out by time, by meanes, and place, / All gien to mine eare.

King. But how hath she receiued his loue?

Pol. What do you thinke of me? King. As of a man, faithful and Honourable.
if it were hid / As deepe as the centre of the earth.

King. how should wee trie this same?

Cor. Mary my good lord thus, / The Princes walke is here in the gallery, / There let Ofelia walke untill hee comes: / Your selfe and I will stand close in the study, / There shall you heare the effect of all his hart, / And if it proue any otherwise then loue, / Then let my censure faile an other time.

King. see where hee comes poring vppon a booke.

Enter Hamlet

Cor. Madame, will it please your grace To leaue vs here?

Que. With all my hart.

Cor. And here Ofelia, reade you on this booke, / And walke aloofe, the King shal be vnseeene.

[Soliloquy omitted]

Ofel. My Lord, I have sought opportunitie, which now I haue, to re-deliver to your worthy handes, a small remem-brance, such tokens which I haue reciu'd of you.

Ham. Are you faire?

Ofel. My Lord.

Ham. Are you honest?

Ofel. What meanes my Lord?

Ham. That if you be faire and honest, / Your beauty should admit no discourse to your

Pol. What doe you thinke of me?

King As of a man Faithfull and honorable.

Pol. I woulde proue so, but what might you thinke / When I had seene this hote loue on the wing, / As I perceiued it (I must tell you that) / Before my daughter told me, what might you, / Or my deere Maiestie, you Queene heere thinke, / If I had playd the Deske, or Tablebooke, / Or giuen my hart a working mute and dumbe, / Or lookt vppon this loue with idle sight, / What might you thinke? no, I went round to worke, / And (my yong Mistris) thus I did bespeake, / Lord Hamlet is a Prince out of thy Starre, / This must not be: and then, I precepts gaue her, / That she should locke her selfe from his Resort, / Admit no Messengers, receiue no Tokens: / Which done, she tooke the Fruites thereof done, / And he fell into a sadnesse, then into a Fast, / Thence to a Watch, thence into a Weaknesse, / Thence to a Lightnesse, and by this declension, / Into the Madnesse whereon now he raues, / And all we waile for.

King. Do you thinke tis this?

Que. It may be very like.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, I would faine know that, / That I haue positively said,

Pol. I wold faine proue so. But what might you thinke? / When I had seene this hot loue on the wing, / As I perceiued it, I must tell you that / Before my Daughter told me, what might you, / Or my deere Maiestie your Queene heere, think, / If I had playd the Deske or Tablebooke, / Or giuen my heart a winking, mute and dumbe, / Or look'd vpon this Loue, with idle sight, / What might you thinke? No, / I went round to worke, / And (my yong Mistris) thus I did bespeake, / Lord Hamlet is a Prince out of thy Starre, / This must not be: and then, I precepts gaue her, / That she should locke her selfe from his Resort, / Admit no Messengers, receiue no Tokens: / Which done, she tooke the Fruites thereof done, / And he fell into a sadnesse, then into a Fast, / Thence to a Watch, thence into a Weaknesse, / Thence to a Lightnesse, and by this declension, / Into the Madnesse whereon now he raues, / And all we waile for.

King. Do you thinke tis this?

Qu. It may be very likely.

Pol. Hath there bene such a time, I'de fain
honesty.

Oph. My Lord, can beauty have better privi-

lege than / with honesty?

Ham. Yea mary it; for Beauty may transforme / Honesty, from what she was into a bawd: / Then Honesty can transforme Beauty: / This was sometimes a Paradox, / But now the time gives it scope. / I never gave you nothing. Oph. My Lord, you know right well you did, / And with them such earnest vows of love, / As would have mou'd the stoniest breast alioe, / But now too true I finde, / Rich giftes waxe poore, when givers grow vnkinde.

Ham. I never loued you.

Oph. You made me beleue you did.

Ham. O thou shouldst not a beleued me! / Go to a Nunnery goe, why shouldst thou / Be a breeder of sinners? I am my selfe indifferent honest, / But I could accuse my selfe of such crimes / It had beene better my mother had ne're borne me, / O I am very proude, ambitious, disdainefull, / With more sinnes at my backe, then I haue thoughts / To put them in, what should such fellows as I / Do, crawling between heaven and earth? / To a Nunnery goe, we arrant knaues all, / Belieue none of vs, to tis so, / When it prou'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know. Pol. Take this, from this; if this be otherwise; / If circumstances lead me, I will finde / where truth, is hid, though it were hid indeed / Within the Center. Truth is hid, though it were hid indeed; within the Center.

Pol. How may we try it further?

King. At such a time, Ile loose my daughter to him, / Be you and I behind an Arras then, / Marke the encounter, if he love her not, / And be not from his reason falne thereon / Let me be no assistant for a state / But keepe a farme and carters. 

King. We will try it.

-----------------------------

King. Sweet Gertrud, leave vs two, / For we haue closely sent for Hamlet hither, / That he as t'were by accedent, may heere / Affront Ophelia; her father and my selfe, / Wee'le so bestow our selues, that seeing vnseene, / We may of their encounter franckly judge, / And gather by him as he is behau'd, / If t'be th' affliction of his loue or no / That thus he suffers for, 

know that, / That I haue possitively said, 'tis so, / When it prou'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know. Pol. Take this from this; if this be otherwise, / If Circumstances lead me, I will finde / Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed; within the Center.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. At such a time Ile loose my Daughter to him, / Be you and I behinde an Arras then, / Marke the encounter: If he love her not, / And be not from his reason falne thereon; / Let me be no Assistant for a State, / And keepe a Farme and Carters.

King. We will try it.
a Nunnery goe.

Ofel. O heauens secure him!

Ham. Wher's thy father?

Ofel. At home my lord.

Ham. For Gods sake let the doores be shut on him, I He may play the foole no where but in his house: to a Nunnery goe.

Ofel. Help him good Goer:-

Ham. If thou doest marry, I Ie giue thee! This plague to thy dovry, Be thou as chaste as yce, as pure as snowe, Thou shalt not scape calumny, to a Nunnery goe.

Ofel. Alas, what a change is this?

Ham. But if thou wilt needs marry, I marry a foole, / For wisemen know well enough, / That monsters you make of them, to a Nunnery goe.

Ofel. Pray God restore him.

Ham. Nay, I haue heard of your paintings too, / God hath given you one face, / And you make your selues another, / You fig, and you amble, and you nickname Gods creatures, / Making your wantonnesse, your ignorance, / A pox, tis scuruy, Ile no more of it, / It hath made me madde: Ile no more marriages /All that are married

Quee. I shall obey you. / And for your part Ophelia, I doe wish That your good beauties be the happy cause / Of Hamlets wildnes, so shall I hope your vertues, / Will bring him to his wonted way againe, / To both your honours.

Oph. Maddam, I wish it may.

Pol. Ophelia walke you heere, gracious so please you, / We will bestow our selues; reade on this booke, / That shew of such an exercise may cullout/ Your lowliness; we are oft too blame in this, / Tis too much proud'd, that with deuotions visage / And pious action, we doe sugar o're/ The deuill himselfe.

King. Oh 'tis true: / How smart a lash that speech doth giue my conscience? / The Harlots Cheeke beautied'with plaist'ring Art, / Is not more vugly to the thing that helps it, / Then is my deede, to my most painted word: / Oh heauie burthen.

Pol. I heere him coming, let's withdraw my Lord.

[Exeunt]

Soliloquy omitted

Ophe. Good my Lord, / How does your honor for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thanke you: well, well, well.
but one, shall live; / The rest shall keep as they are, to a Nunnery go. / To a Nunnery go. exit

Oph. Great God of heaven, what a quicke change is this? / The Courtier, Scholler, Souldier, all in him, / All dashd and splintered thence, O woe is me, / To a scene what I have seen, see what I see.

King. Love? No, no, that's not the cause, / Some deeper thing it is that troubles him.

Ham. I humbly thank you well.

Oph. My Lord, I have remembrances of yours / That I have longed long to re-deliver, / I pray you now receive them.

Ham. No, not I, I never gave you ought.

Oph. My honor'd Lord, You know right well you did, / And with them words of so sweet breath composed / As made these things more rich, their perfume lost, / Take these again, for to the noble minde / Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind, / There my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha: are you honest?

Oph. Ny Lord. Are you faire?

Ham. What means you Lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and faire, your Honesty / Should admit no discourse to your Beautie.

Oph. Could Beauty my Lord have better comerce / Then with honestie?

Ham. I truly, for the power of beautie will sooner transforme honestie from what it is to a bawde, than the force of honestie can translate beautie into his likenesse. / This was sometime a Paradox, but now the time gues it profe, I did loue you once.

Oph. Indeed my Lord you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have beleued me, for

Ophe. My Lord, I have Remembrances of yours, / That I have longed long to re-deliver. / I pray you now, receive them.

Ham. No, no, I never gave you ought.

Ophe. My honor'd Lord, I know right well you did, / And with them words of so sweet breath compos'd, / As made the things more rich, then perfume left: / Take these again, for to the Noble minde / Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkinde. / There my Lord.

Ham. Ha, ha: are you honest?

Ophe. My Lord.

Ham. Are you faire?

Ophe. What means you Lordship?

Ham. That if you be honest and faire, your Honesty / Should admit no discourse to your Beautie.

Ophe. Could Beautie My Lord, have better Comerce / then your Honestie?

Ham. I trulie: for the power of Beautie, will sooner / transforme Honestie from what it is, to a Bawd, then the / force of Honestie can translate Beautie into his likenesse: / This was sometime a Paradox, but now the time gues it / profe. I did loue you once.

Ophe. Indeed my Lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have beleued me. For
Oph. I loved you not.

Ham. I was the more deceived.

Ham. Get thee to a Nunnerie. Why would'st thou be a breeder of Sinners? I am my selfe indifferent honest, but yet I could accuse mee of such things, that it were better my Mother had not borne me. I am very proude, revengefull, Ambitious, with more offences at my beck, then I haue thoughts to put them in imagination, to give them shape, or time to acte them in. What should such Fellowes as I do, crawling between Heauen and Earth. We are arrant Knaues all, beleue none of vs. Goe thy wayes to a Nunnery. Where's your Father?

Oph. At home, my Lord.

Ham. Let the doores be shut vpon him, that he may play the Foole no may, but in's owne house. Farewell. Go, Farewell. O helpe him, you sweet Heauens.

Ham. If thou doest marry, Ile give thee this Plague / for thy Dowrie. Be thou as chast as Ice, as pure as Snow, thou shalt not escape Calumny. Get thee to a Nunnery. Go, Farewell. Or if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool: / for Wise men know well enough, what monsters you / make of them. To a Nunnery go, and quickly too. Fare - well.

Oph. O heauenly Powers, restore him.
ca-ly: get thee to a Nunry, farewell. Or if thou wilt needes marry, marry a fool, for wise men knowe well enough what monsters you make of them: to a Nunry goe, and quickly to, farewell.


Ham. I haue heard of your paintings well enough: God hath giuen you one face, and you make your selfes another, you gigle, and you amble, and you lispe, and nickname Gods creatures, and make your Wantonnesse, your Ignorance. Go too, Ile no more onlt, it hath made me mad.

I say, we will haue no more Marriages. Those that are married already, all but one shall liue, the rest shall keep as they are. To a Nunnery, go. Exit Hamlet.

Ophe. O what a Noble minde is heere o'rethrowne? / The Courtiers, soldiers, Schollers: Eye, tongue, sword, / Th' expectation and Rose of the faire state, / The glasse of fashion, and the mould of forme, / Th' obseru'd of all observers, quite quite done. / Haue I of Ladies most deicet and wretched, / That suckt the honny of his musicke Vowes: / Now see that Noble, and most Soueraigne Reason / Like sweet Bels iangled out of tune, and harsh, / That vnmatcht forme and Feature of blowne youth, / Blasted with extasie. Oh woe is me, / T'haue seene what I haue seene: see what I see.

[Enter King, and Polonious]

King. Loue? His affections do not that way tend, / Not what he spake, though it lack'd Forme a little, / Was not like Madness. There's something in his soule? / O're which his Melancholly sits on brood, / And I do doubt the hatch, and the disclose / Will be some
stature of blowne youth /
Blasted with extacie, o woe
is mee / T'haue seene what
I haue seene, see what I see.
[Exit.]

[Enter King and Pol.]

King. Looke, his affec-
tions do not that way tend,/
Not what he spake, though
it lackt forme a little, /
Was not like madnes, there's
something in his soule /
Or which his melancholy sits
on brood, / And I doe doubt,
the hatch and the disclose /
Will be some danger: which
for to preuent, / I haue in
quick determination / Thus
set it downe: He shall with
speede to England, / For
the demand of our neg-
lected tribute, / Haply
the seas, and countries
different, / With variable
objects, shall expell /
This something settled matter
in his hart, / Whereon his
brains still beating / Puts
him thus from fashion of
himselfe. What thinke you
on't?

Pol. It shall doe well./
But yet doe I believe the
origin and commencement of
this greefe / Sprung from
neglected loue. How now
Ophelia? / You neede not
tell us what Lord Hamlet
saide, / We heard it all.
Lord, doe as you please, / But if you
hold it fit after the Play,/
Let his Queene mother all
alone intreat him / To
shew his Greefes: let her
be round with him, / And
Ile be placed so, please
you in the eare / Of all their
Conference. If she finde
him not, / To England send
him: Or confine him where /
Your wisedome best shall
thinke.

King. It shall be so: /
Madnesse in great Ones, must
not vnwatch'd go.
if she find him not, / To
England send him; or con-
fine him where / Your wise-
dome best shall thinke.
King. It shall be so, / 
Maches in great ones must
not vnmatcht goe.

A careful investigation of this scene in parallel reveals much of importance. First, in all three texts there are three stages of development in the scene: (1) a planning stage, in which Polonius (Corambus) tells of, and reads, Hamlet's letter to Ophelia and explains his admonitions to Ophelia about ignoring Hamlet, outlining his plan before the king; (2) the stage of execution, involving the direct confrontation of Ophelia by Hamlet, including the nunnery scene; and (3) the final stage, in which the King thinks Hamlet's state of mind to be the result of something far more serious than the problems relative to a love affair. Again, as in the case of the soliloquies, the Q1 text is not as long as Q2 and Folio, but its compression derives from a lack of embellishment of the basic ideas rather than from any distortion or omission of the basic ideas themselves.

Thus, in Q1 the "To be or not to be" soliloquy is pushed forward in the sequence of action. In Q2 and Folio it is the third soliloquy preceded by the speech that closes the Schoolfellow Test. In Q1 the scene sequence, as shown by the chart accompanying this discussion, is summarized as follows: (1) the Ophelia Test, in its entirety, including
the third soliloquy; (2) the Fishmonger Test; (3) the Schoolfellow Test; (4) the second soliloquy; (5) the report of the Schoolfellow Test; (6) the fourth soliloquy. In Q2 and Folio the sequence is (1) the planning of the Ophelia Test by Polonius; (2) the Fishmonger Test; (3) the Schoolfellow Test; (4) the second soliloquy; (5) the Ophelia Test, including the third soliloquy; and later (6) the fourth soliloquy. It should be noted that, in all cases, the third soliloquy follows the Schoolfellow Test and that the third soliloquy also occurs at the same place within the Ophelia Test.

The entire Schoolfellow Test should be studied in parallel form, as follows, and one should keep in mind two concepts when examining it: first, the fact that the second soliloquy is found in a similar place in all three versions; and secondly, the fact that, although in Q2 and Folio, the Schoolfellow Test is interrupted immediately by the planning stages of the Ophelia Test and the Fishmonger Test, it is, in meaning, nevertheless, exactly the same as that contained in Q1. On the other hand, in Q1, the Schoolfellow Test is planned even before the first soliloquy has been uttered. Reference to the accompanying chart listing the sequence of these scenes will help clarify this point.
Scene Sequence

\[ Q_1 \rightarrow Q_2 \rightarrow F \]

1. King plans Schoolfellow
   - Test
2. First Soliloquy
3. Ophelia Test (Complete without interruption)
4. Third Soliloquy (in Ophelia Test)
5. Fishmonger Test (immediately after Ophelia Test)
6. Schoolfellow Test (immediately after Fishmonger Test)
7. Second Soliloquy
8. Report of Schoolfellow Test
9. Fourth Soliloquy
10. Fifth Soliloquy (Missing)
11. Act IV Sc. vi (different than Q2 - F)
12. Act IV Sc vi
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q₁</th>
<th>Q₂</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>King. Right noble friends, that our deere cousin Hamlet / Hath lost the very heart of all his sense; / It is most right, and we most sorry for him: / Therefore we doe desire, even as you tender / Our care to him, and our greatlove to you, That you will labour but to wring from him / The cause and ground of his distemperancie, / Doe this, the king of Denmarke shall be thankfull.</td>
<td>Rosencrance and Guildensterne. / Moreover, that we much did long to see you, / The neede we haue to vse you did prouoke / Our hastie sending, something haue you heard / of Hamlets transformation, so call it, / Sith nor th'exterior, nor the inward man / Resembles that it was, / what it should be, / More than his fathers death, that thus hath put him / So much from th'vnderstanding of himselfe / I cannot deeme of. I intreat you both, / That being of so young dayes brought vp with him: / And since so Neighbour'd to his youth, and humor, / That you vouchsafe your rest heere in our Court / Some little time: so by your Companies / To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather / So much as from Occasions you may gleane, / That open'd lies within our remedie.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ros. My Lord, whatsoever lies within our power / Your maiestie may more command in words / Then vse perswasions to your liege men, bound / By love, by duetie, and obedience.</td>
<td>Qu. Good Gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you, / And sure I am, two men there are not liuing, / To whom he more adheres. If it will please you / To shew vs so much Centrie, and good will, / As to expend your time with vs a-while, / For the supply and profit of our Hope, / Your Visitation shall receiue such thankes / As fits a Kings remembrance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gull. What we may doe for both your Maiesties / To know the griefe troubles the Prince your sonne, / We will indeuour all the best we may, / So in all duetie doe we take our leaue.</td>
<td>King. Thankes Guilderstone and gentle Rossencrast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que. Thankes Rossencrast, and gentle Gilderstone.</td>
<td>King. Welcome deere Rosencrance and Guildensterne. / Moreover, that we much did long to see you, / The neede we haue to vse you did proucke / Our hastie sending. Some-thing haue heard / Of Hamlets transformation: so I call it, / Since not th' exterior, nor the inward man / Resembles that it was, / What it should bee / More then his Fathers death, that thus hath put him / So much from th' vnderstanding of himselfe, / I cannot deeme of. I intreat you both, / That being of so young dayes brought vp with him: / And since so Neighbour'd to his youth, and humor, / That you vouchsafe your rest heere in our Court / Some little time: so by your Companies / To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather / So much as from Occasions you may gleane, / That open'd lies within our remedie.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

King plans "Schoolfellow" test
Ros. Both our Majesties / Might by the soueraigne power you have of us, / Put your dread pleasures more into command / Then to entreatie.

Guyl. But we both obey. / And here give vp our selves in the full bent, / To lay our service freely at your feete / To be commanded.

King. Thanks Rosencraus, and gentle Guildensterne.

Quee. Thanks Guyldensterne, and gentle Rosencraus, / And I beseech you instantly to visit / My too much changed Sonne. / Go some of ye, / And bring the Gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Rosin. Both your Majesties / Might by the Soueraigne power you have of us, / Put your dread pleasures, more into Command / Then to Entreatie.

Guyl. We both obey, / And here give vp our selves in the full bent, / To lay our Servises freely at your feete, / To be commanded.

King. Thanks Rosincrance and gentle Guildensterne./

Guyl. Heauens make our presence and our practices / Pleasant and helpfull to him.

The "Schoolfellow" test.

Q1

Gil. Health to your Lordship.

Ham. What, Gilderstone, and Rosencraast, / Welcome kinde Schoole-fellowes to Elsanoure.

Gil. We thanke your Grace, and would be very glad / You were as when we were at Wittenberg.

Ham. I thanke you, but is this visitation free of / Your selues, or were you not sent for? / Tell me true, come, I know the good

Q2


Ros. My most deere Lord.

Ham. My extent good friends, how doost thou Guylsterne? / A Rosencraus, good lads how doe you both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guyl. Happy, in that we are not ever happy on Fortunes lap, / We are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoee.


Gil. Mine honour'd Lord?

Rosin. My most deere Lord?

Ham. My excellent good friends? How do's thou / Guildensterne? Oh, Rosincrauste; good Lads; How doe ye / both?

Rosin. As the indifferent Children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not other-happy: on Fortunes Cap, we are not the very Button.
King and Queene / Sent
for you, there is a kinde
of confession in your
eye: / Come, I know you
were sent for.

Gil. What say you?
Ham. Nay then I see
how the winde sits /
Come, you were sent for.

Ros. My lord, we
were, and willingly if
we might, / Know the
cause and ground of
your discontent.

Ham. Why I want
preferment.

Ross. I thinkne not
so my lord.

Ham. Yes faith, this
great world you see
contents me not, / No
nor the spangled
heavens; nor earth nor
sea, / No nor Man that
is so glorious a crea-
ture, / Contents not
me, no nor woman too,
though you laugh.

Gil. My lord, we
laugh not at that.

Ham. Why did you
laugh then, / When
I said, Man did not
content mee?

Gil. My Lord, we
laughed, when you said
Man did not / content
you, / What entertainment
the Players shall haue, / We boorded them
a the way: they are
coming to you.

Ham. Players, what
Players be they?
Ross. My Lord, the
Tragedians of the City
/ Those that you took
delight to see so often.

Ros. Neither my Lord. Ham. The you liue
about her wast, or in
the middle of her fa-/ours.

Guil. Faith her
privates we.

Ham. In the secret
parts of Fortune, oh most
true, she is a strumpet,
/ What newes?

Ros. None my Lord,
but that the worlds
growne honest.

Ham. Then is Doomes
day neere, but your
newes is not true; / But in the beaten way
of friendship, what
make you at Elsonoure?

Ros. To visit you
my Lord, no other oc-
casion.

Ham. Begger that I
am, I am ever poore in
thankes, but I thanke/
you, and sure deare
friends, my thankes are
too deare a halfpeny:/ were you not sent for?
is it your owne inclin-
ing? is it a free
visitati-/on? come, come,
deale justly with me,

GUIL. What should
we say Lord?

Ham. Ant thing but
to'th purpose: you
were sent for, and
there is / a kind of
confession in your
lookes, which your
modesties have not /
craft enough to culour;
I know the good King
and Queene haue / sent
for you.

Ros. Neither my Lord.
Ham. Nor the Soales of
her Shoo?

Rosin. Neither my Lord.

Ham. Then you liue about
her waste, or in the mid-/
dle of her favour?

Guil. Faith, her privates,
we.

Ham. Then is Doomesday
neere: But your newes is/
not true. Let me question
more in particular: what
haue / you my good friends,
deserved at the hands of
Fortune, / that she sends
you to Prison hither?

GUIL. Prison, my Lord?

Ham. Denmark's a Prison.

Rosin. Then is the world
one.

Ham. A goddy one, in
which there are many Con-/fines, Wards, and Dungeons:
Denmarke being one o'th' /
worst.

Rosin. We thynke not so
my Lord.

Ham. Why then 'tis none
to you; for there is nothing/
either good or bad, but
thinking makes it so: to me
it is / a prison.

Rosin. Why then your
Ambition makes it one: 'tis/
too narro for your minde.

Ham. O God, I could be
bounded in a nutshell, and/
count my seife a King of
infinite space; were it not
that / I have bad dreams.

GUIL. Which dreames indeed
Ham. How comes it that they trauell? Do they grow re-/(stie?

Gil. No my Lord, their reputation holds as it wont.

Ham. How then?

Gil. Yfaith my Lord, nouleltie carries it away, / For the princi- pel publike audience that /came to them, are turned to private plays, / And to the humour of children.

Ham. I doe not great-ly wonder of it, / For those that would make mops and moes / at my uncle, when my father liued, / Now give a hundred, two hundred pounds / For his picture: but they shall be wel-come, / He that plays the King shall haue tribute of me, / The ventrous Knight shall use his foyle and target, / The lower shall sigh gratis, / The clowne shall make them laugh / That are tickled in the lungs, or the blanke verse shall halt (for't, / And the Lady shall haue leave to speake her minde freely

[Enter Corambis]

Do you see yonder great baby? / He is not yet out of his swadling clowts.

Gil. That may be for they say an olde man / Is twice a childe.

Ham. Ile prophecie Ros. To what end my Lord?

Ham. That you must teach me: but let me coniure you, by the / rights of our fellow- ship, by the consonancie of our youth, by the / obligation of our euer preserved loue; and by what more deare a / better proposer can charge you withall; bee even and direct with / me whether you were sent for or no.

Ros. What say you. Ham. Nay then I have an eye of you? if you love me hold not of. Guy. My Lord we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why, so shall my anti- cipation prevent your / discovery, and your secrecie to the King & Queene moult no feath- er, I haue of late, but wherefore I knowe not, lost all my mirth, / forgon all custome of exercises: and indede it goes so heavily with / my di- position, that this goodly frame the earth, seems to mee a sterrill promontorie, this most excellent Canopie the ayre, looke / you, this braue orehanging firment, this maises- tical roofe fret-ted with golden fire, why it appeareth nothing to me but a foule / and pestilent congregation of are Ambition: for the / very substance of the Ambitious, is meerely the shadow / of a Dreame.

Ham. A dreame it selfe is but a shadow.

Rosin. Truely, and I hold Ambition of so ayry and / light a quality, that it is but a shadows shadow.

Ham. Then are our Beg- gers bodies; and our Mo- narchs and out-stretcht Heroes the Beggars Shadowes:/ shall wee to th' Court: for, by my sey I cannot rea-/son?

Both. Wee'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter. I will not sort you with the / rest of my seruants: for to speake to you like an honest / man: I am most dreadfully attended; but in the beaten / way of friend- ship,What make you at Elsonower?

Rosin. To vixit you my Lord, no other occasion.

Ham. Begger that I am , I am even poore in thanks/ but I thank you: and sure deare friends my thanks / are too deare a halfepeny; were you not sent for? Is it a free visitation? come,/ deale justly with me: come, come, nay speake.

Guil. What should we say my Lord?

Ham. Why any thing. But to the purpose; you were / sent for; and there is a kinde confession in your lookes; / which your modesties haue not craft enough to co-/ lor, I know the good King & Queene haue sent for you.
to you, he comes to tell me a the (Players / You say true, a monday last, t'was so indeede.

Cor. My lord, I haue news to tell you.

Ham. My Lord, I haue news to tell you. When Rossios was an Actor in Rome.

Cor. The Actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. Buz, buzz.

Cor. The best Actors in Christendome, / Either for Comedy, Tragedy, Historie, Pastorall, Pastoral, Historical, Historical, Comicall, / Comicall, historical, Pastorall, Tragedy historical: / Seneca cannot be too heauy, nor Plato too light: / For the law hath writ those are the only men.

Ha. O Iephah Judge of Israel! what a treasure hadst thou?

Cor. Why what a treasure had he my lord?

Ham. Why one faire daughter, and no more, / The which he loued passing well.

Cor. A, stil harping a my daughter well my Lord, / If you call me Iephah, I have a daughter that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay that follows not.

Cor. What follows then my Lord?

Ham. Why by lot, or God wot, or as it came to passe, / And so it vapoures. What pece of worke is a / man, how noble in reason, how infinit in faculties, in forme and / mooving, how expresse and admirable in action, how like an An- / gell in apprehension, how like a God: the beau- tie of the world; the/ paragon of Animales; and yet to me, what is this Quintessence of / dust; man delights not me, nor women neither, though by your / smiling, you seeme to say so.

Ros. My Lord, there was no such stuffe in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did yee laugh then, when I sayd man delights not me.

Ros. To thinke my Lord if you delight not in man, what Lenten/ entertainment the players shall receive from you, we coted them / on the way, and hether are they coming to offer you service.

Ham. He that playes the King shal be wel­ come, his Maiestie shall / have tribute on me, the aduenturous Knight shall use his foyle and target, the Louer shall not sigh gratis, the humorous Man shall end / his part in peace, and the Lady shall say her minde freely: of the / black verse
was, the first verse of
the godly Ballet: Will
tel you all: for look
you where my abridge-
ment comes: Welcome
maisters, welcome all,

[Enter players]
What my old friend,
thy face is vallanced /
Since I saw thee last,
com'st thou to beard me
in Denmarke? / My yong
lady and mistris, burlady
but your (you were: /
Ladiship is growne by
the altitude of a chopine
higher than / Pray God
sir your voyce, like a
peece of vncurrant /
Golde, be not crack't
in the ring: come on
maisters, / Wele even
too't, like French Fal-
coners, / Flie at any
thing we see, come, a
taste of your / Qualitie,
a speech, a passionate
speech.
Players What speech my
good Lord?
Ham. I heard thee
speake a speech once, /
But it was neuer acted:
or if it were, / Neuer
aboute twice, for as I
remember, / It pleased
not the vulgar, it was
caulary / To the million:
but to me / And others,
that received it in the
like kinde, / Cried in
the toppe of their judge-
ments, an excellent play,
Set downe with as great
modestie as cunning!/
One said there was no
sallets in the lines to
make the sauory, / But
called it an honest
methode, as wholesome as
shall hault fort'.
What players are they?
Ros. Euen those you
were wont to take such
delight in, the Trage-
dians of the City.
Ham. How chances it
they travaile? their
residence both in repu-
tation, and profit
was better both wayes.
Ros. I thinke their
inhibition, comes by
the means of the late/
innovation.
Ham. Doe they hold
the same estimation
they did when I was
in / the Citty; are
they so followed.
Ros. No indeede are
they not.
Ham. It is not very
strange, for my Vnclе
is King of Denmarke,
and / those that would
make mouths at him
while my father liued,
glue / twenty, fortie,
fifty, a hundred du-
ckets a pece, for
his Picture / in little,
s'bloud there is some-
thing in this more than
naturall, if / Philos-
ophie could find it
out.
Guyl. There are the
players.
Ham. Gentlement you
are welcome to Elson-
oure, your hands come /
then, th' appurtenance
of welcome is fashion
and ceremonie; let /
me comply with you in
this garb: let me ex-
tent to the players, /
which I tell you must
showe fairely outwards,
how like an An- / gel? in
apprehension, how like a
God? the beauty of the / 
world, the Parragon of
Animals; and yet to me,
what is this Quintessence
of Dust? Man delights
not me; no, / nor Woman
neither; though by your
smiling you seeme to say
so.
Rosin. My Lord, there
was no such stuffe in my
thoughts.
Ham. Why did you laugh,
when I said, Man delights /
not me?
Rosin. To thinke, my
lord, if you delight not
in Man, / what Lenten
entertainment the Players
shall receiue / from you:
wee coated them on the
way, and hither are / they
coming to offer you Service.
Ham. He that playes the
King shall be welcome; his / 
Maiesty shall haue Tribute
of mee; the adventurous /
Knight shall vse his Foyle
and Target: the Louer shall
make his Picture /
conteined there, and fre-
ely; or the blanke Verse shall
halt for't: what Players /
are they?
Rosin. Euen those you
were wont to take delight
in / the Tragedians of
the City.
Ham. How chances it they
travaile? their resi-
dence both in reputation
and profit was better both/
wayes.
sweete. / Come, a speech in it I chiefly remember / Was Aeneas tale to Dido, / And then especially where he talks of Princes slaughter, / If it live in thy memory beginne at this line, / Let me see. / The rugged Pyrrus, like th'argan-
nian beast: / No tis not so, it begins with Pirrus: O I have it. / Therugged Pyrrus, he whose sable armes, / Blanke as his purpose did the night resemble, When he lay couched in the ominous horse, / Hath now his blanke and grimme complexion smeered / With Heraldry swadling Clouts. more dismall, head to foote, / Now is he totall guise, horridely tricked / with blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sonses, / Back't and imparched in a clagulate gore, / Risted in earth and fire, olde grandsire Pryam seekes: / So goe on.

Cor. Afore God, my Lord, well spoke, and with good (accent. / Play, Anone he finds him striking to short at Greeks, / His antike sword rebellious to his Arme, / Lies where it falles, vnable to resist. / Pyrrus at Pryam drivies, but all in rage, / Strikes wide but with the whiffe and winde / Of his fell sword, th' unnerued should more sp- /peare like entertainment then yours; you are welcome: but my / Vncle-father, and Aunt-mother, are deceaued.

Guyl. In what my deare Lord.

Ham. I am but mad North Northwest; when the wind is Sou- /therly I know a Hanke, from a hand saw.

Enter Polonius

Pol. Well be with you Gentlemen.

Ham. Harke you Guildersterne, and you to, at each ear a hearer, / that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swading clouts.

Ros. Happily he is the second time come to them, for they say an / old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophecy, he comes to tell me of the players, mark it, / You say right sir, a Monday morning, t'was then indeede.

Pol. My Lord I have newes to tell you.

Ham. My Lord I have newes to tel you: when Rossius was an Actor / In Rome.

Pol. The Actors are come hether my Lord.

Ham. Buz, buz.

Pol. Vpon my honor. / Ham. Then came each Actor on his Asse.

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for Tragedie, Comedy, / History, Pastorall, Rosin. I thinke their Inhibition comes by the meanes / of the late Innovation?

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did / when I was in the City? Are they so follow'd?

Rosin. No indeed, they are not.

Ham. How comes it? do they grow rusty?

Rosin. Nay, their in-deauour keeps in the wonted / pace; But there is Sir an ayrie of Child- ren, little Yafes, that crye out on the top of question; and/are most tyrannically clap't for't: these are now the fashi-/ fashion; and so be-rated the common Stages (so they / call them) that many wearing Rapiers, are a-fraide of / Goose-quils, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What are they Children? Who maintains /em? / How are they escoted? Will they pursue the Quality no / longer then they can sing? Will they not say afterwards / if they should grow themselves to common Players (as / it is like most if their meanes are not better) their Wri-/ters do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their / own Su-cession.

Rosin. Faith there ha's bene much to do on both sides: / and the Nation holds it no sinne, to tarre them to Con- trouersie. There was for a while, no money bid for argu-/ment, unlesse the Poet
father falls.
Cor. Enough my friend it's too long.
Ham. It shall to the Barbers with your beard;
/ A pox, hee's for a ligge, or a tale of bawdry / Or else he sleeps, come on to Hecuba, come.
Play. But who, 0 who had scene the mobled Queene?
Cor. Mobled Queene is good, faith very good.
Play. All in the alarum and feere of death rose vp, / And o're her weake and all ore-teeming loynes, a blanket / And a kercher on that head, where late the diademe stooed, / Who this had scene with tongue inuenom'd speech, / Would treason haue pronounced, For if the gods themselves had scene her then, / When she saw Pirrus with malicious strokes, / Mincing her husbandes limbs, / It would haue made milch the burning eyes of heauen, / And passion in the gods.
Cor. Looke my Lord if he hath not changde his colour, / And hath teares in his eyes: no more good heart, no more.
Ham. Tis well, Tis very well, I pray my lord, / Will you see the Players well bestowed, / I tell you they are the Chronicles/ And briefe abstracts of Pastorall Comicall, Historicall Pastorall, seene/ indeudible, or Poem vnlimited, Sceneca cannot be too heavy, n nor / Plautus too light for the lawe of writ, and the liberty; these are the / only men.
Ham. O Ieptha Judge of Israel, what a treasure had'st thou?
Pol. What a treasure had he my Lord?
Ham. Why one faire daughter and no more, the which he loued / passing well.
Pol. Still on my daughter.
Ham. Am I not i'th right old Ieptha?
Pol. If you call me Ieptha my Lord, I have a daughter that I love/ passing well.
Ham. Nay that followswelcom to Elsonower: your/ hands, come: The appurtenance of Welcome, is Fashion / and Ceremony. Let me comply with you in the Garbe, / lest my extent to the Players (which I tell you must shew / fairely outward) should more appeare like entertainment / then yours. You are welcome: but my Vnckle Father, / and Aunt Mother are deceiul'd.
Guil. In what my deere Lord?
Ham. You are welcome maisters, welcome all, I am glad to see thee / well, welcome good friends, oh old friend, why thy face is va/ vacnt since I saw thee last, com'st thou to beard me in Denmark: / what my youg Lady and and the Player went to Cuffes in / in Question. Ham. Is't possible?
Guil. Oh there ha's beene much throwing about of Braines.
Ham. Do the Boyes carry it away?
Rosin. I that they do my Lord. Hercules & his load too.
Ham. It is not strange: for mine Vnckle is King of / Denmarke, and those that would make mowes at him / while my Father lived; glue twenty, forty, an hundred / Ducates a pece for his picture in Little. There is some- / thing in this more than Naturall, if Philosophie could / finde it out.
Guil. There are the Players.
Ham. Gentlemen, you are Pirrus with malitious strokes, / Mincing her God wot, and then you the Garbe, / lest my husbandes limbs, / It knowne it came to ; passage, as most like it was; the first rowe of the pious chanson will / showe you more, for looke where my abridgement comes.
Enter the Players
Ham. You are welcome / maisters, welcome all, I am glad to see thee / well, welcome good friends, oh old friend, why thy face is va/ vacnt since I saw thee last, com'st thou to beard me in Denmark: / what my youg Lady and
the time, / After your death I can tell you, / You were better have a bad Epitaph, / Then their ill report while you live.

Cor. My lord, I will use them according to their deserts.

Ham. O farre better man, use every man after his deserts, / Then who should scape whipping? / Use them after your own honor and dignities, / The lesse they deserve, the greater credit's yours.

Cor. Welcome my good fellows. exit.

Ham. Come hither meisters, can you not play the murder of Gonzago?

Players. Yes my Lord.

Ham. And couldst not thou for a neede study me / Some dozen or sixteene lines, / Which I would set down and insert?

Players. Yes very easily my good Lord.

Ham. 'Tis well, I thank you: follow that lord. / And doe you heare sirs? take heede you mocke him not. / Gentlemen, for your kindness I thank you, / And for a time I would desire you leave me.

Gill. Our loue and duetie is at your command.

[Soliloquy omitted.]

King. Lordes, can you by no meanes finde mistris, by lady your Ladishippe is nerer to heaven, then when I saw you last by the altitude of a / chopine, pray God your voyce like a pece of vncurvant gold; / bee not cracht within the ring: meisters you are all welcome, / weele ento't like friendly Fankners fly at any thing we see, / weel have a speech straite, come guie vs a tast of your quality, / come a passionate speech.

Player. What speech my good Lord?

Ham. I heard thee speake me a speech once, / but it was never acted; / or if it was, not about once,---for the play I remember pleased not/ the million, t'was cautiali to the general, but it was as I receaue / it & others, whose judgements in such matters cried in the top / of mine, an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set downe / with as much modestie as cunning. I remember one say'd there / were no sallete in the lines, to make the matter sauory, nor no / matter in the phrase that might indite the author had'st / thou?

Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus / too light, for the law of writ, and the Liberty. These are / the onely men.

Ham. O leptha Judge of Israel. what a Treasure had'st thou?

Pol. What a Treasure had he, my Lord?

Ham. Why one faire Daughter, and no more, / The which he loued passing well.
The cause of our sonne Hamlets lunacie? You being so neere in loue, even from his youth, / Me thinkes should gaine more than a stranger should.

Gil. My lord, we haue done all the best we could, / To wring from him the cause of all his griefe, / But still he puts us off, and by no meanes/ Would make an answere to that we exposde.

Ross. Yet wa, he so, nething more inclin1d to mirth / Before we left him, and I take it, / He hath giuen order for a play to night, / At which he craues your highnesse company.

King. With all our heart, it likes YS very well: / Gentlemen, seeke still to increase his mirth, / Spare for no cost, our coffers shall be open, / And we vnto your selues will still be thankefull.

Both. In all wee can, be sure you shall command.

Queene. Thankes gentlemen, and what the Queene of (Denmarke/ May pleasure you, be sure you shall not want.

Gil. Weele once againe vnto the noble Prince.

Pol. Still on my Daughter.

Ham. Am I not i'the right old Ieptha?

Polon. If you call me Ieptha my Lord, I have a daugh-/ter that I loue passing well.

Ham. Nay that followes not.

Polon. What followes then, my Lord?

Ha. Why, As by lot, God wot: and then you know, It / came to passe, as most like it was: The first rowe of the / Pons Chanson will shew you more.

[Enter Players]

Y're welcome Masters, welcome all. I am glad to see / thee well: Wel­come good Friends. 0 my alde Friend? / Thy face is valiant since I saw the last: Com'st thou to / beard me in Denmarke?

Pol. Foregod my lord wellspoken, with good accent and good discretion.

Play. Anon he finds him, Striking too short at Greekes, his anticke sword / Rebellious to Pol. What speech, my Lord?
his arme, lies where it fals, / Repugnant to command; Vnequall matcht, / Pirrbus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide, / But with the whistle and winde of his fell sword, / Th'vnnerued father fals: Seeming to feele this blowe, with flam-ing top / Stoopes to cried in the top of his base; and with a hiddious crash / Takes prisoner Pirrbus eare, for loe his sword / Which was declining on the milkie head / O reuerent Priam, seem'd i' th ayre to stick, / So as a painted tirant Pirrbus stood / like a newtrall to his will and matter, / Did nothing: / But as we often see against some storme, / A silence in the hequens, the racke stand still, / The bold winds speechlesse, and the orbe belowe / As hush as death, anon it liue in your memory, The rugged Pyrrbus pause,/ A roused Vengeance sets him new a worke, / And neuer did the Cyclops hammers fall, / On Marses Armor forg'd for profite eterne, / With lesse remorse then Pirrbus bleeding sword / Now falls on Priam. Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune, all you gods,/ In generall sinod take away her power, / Breake all the spokes, and Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never Acted: or if it was, not aboue once, for the Play I / remember pleas'd, not the Million, 'twas Cauiarie to the / Generall: but it was (as I receiu'd it, and others, whose / judgement in such matters, cried in the top of mine) an excellent Play; well digested in the Scoenes, set downe / with as much modestie, as cunning. I remember one said, / There was no Sallets in the lines, to make the matter sa-voury; nor no matter in the phrase, that might indite the Author of affectation, but cal'd it an honest method. One / cheefe Speech in it, I cheefely lou'd, 'twas Aeneas Tale to Dido, and thereabout of it, especially, where he speaks / of Priams slaughter. If it liue in your memory, begin at / this Line, let me see, let me see: The rugged Pyrrbus like / th' Hyrcanian beast. It is not so: it begins with Pyrrbus / The rugged Pyrrbus, he whose Sable Armes / Blache as his purpose, did the night resemble / When he lay couched in the Ominous Horse, / Hath now this dread and blache Complexion smear'd / With Heraldry more dismall: Head to foote / Now is he to take Geulles,
follies from her wheele, / and boule the round naue downe the hill of heauen / As lowe as to the friends.

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barbers with your beard; prethee say on, he's / for a ligge, or a tale of bawdry, or he sleepe, say on, come to Hecuba.

Pol. This is too damned light. To their friends. lend a tyrannous, and

Ham. It shall to in wrath and fire, / And thus o're-sized with coagulate gore, / With eyes like Carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrbus / Old Grandisre Priam seekes.

Play. But who, a woe, had seene the mobled Queene,

Ham. The mobled Queene.

Pol. That's good. Play. Runne bare-foote vp and downe, threatening the flames/ With Bison rehume, a clout vppon that head/ Where late the Diadem stood, and for a robe, / About her lanck and all ore teamed lomyes, / A blandket in the alarme of feare caught vp, / Who this had seene, with tongue in venom sleept, / Gainst fortunes state would treason haue pronounst; / But if the gods themselves did see her then, / When she saw Pirrbus make malicious sport/ In mincing with his sword her husband limes, / The instant burst of clamor that aw made, / Vnlesse things mortall mooue them not at all, / Would haue made milch the burning eyes of heauen / and passion horribly Trick'd / with blood of Fathers, Mothers, Daughters, Sonnes, / Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets, / That lend a tyrannous, and damned light / To their wilde Murthers, roasted in wrath and fire, / And thus o're-sized with coagulate gore, /With eyes like Carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrbus / Old Grandisre Priam seekes.

Pol. Fore God, my Lord, well spoken, with good ac-cent, and good dis­cretion.

1. Player. Anon he findes him, / Striking too short at Greekes, His antick Sword, / Rebellious to his Arme, lyes where it falles / Repugnant to command: Vnequall match, / Pyrrbus at Priam drues, in Rage strikes wide: / But with the whiffe and winde of his fell Sword, / Th' vnnenuered Father fails. Then senselesse Illiurn, / Seeing to feele his' blow, with flaming top / Stoopes to his Bace, and with a hideous crash / Takes Prisoner Pyrrbus eare. For loe, his Sword / Which was declining on the Milkie head / Of Reuerend Priam, seem'd i'ts Ayre to sticke: / So as a painted Tyrant Pyrrbus stood, / and like a Newtrall to his will and matter, did nothing. But as we often see against some storme, / A silence in the Heauens, the Racke stand still,/ The bold windes speechless, and the Orbe below / As hush as death: Anon the dreadfull Thunder / Doth rend the Region
in the gods.

Pol. Looke where he has not turnd his cullour, and has teares in's/eyes, prethee no more.

Ham. Tis well, Ile haue thee speake out the rest of this soone,/Good my Lord will you see the players well bestowed; doe you / heare, let them be weillvsed, for they are the abstract and breve/Chronicles of the time; after your death you were better haue a / bad Epitaph then their ill report while you liue.

Pol. My Lord, I will vse them according to their desert.

Ham. Gods bodkin man, much better, vse every man after his de-/sert, & who shall scape whipp- ping, vse them after your owne honor / and dignity, the lesse they deserue the more merrit is in your boun- / ty. Take them in.

Pol. Come sir.s.

Ham. Follow him friends, weele heare a play tomorrow; dost thou/ hear me old friend, can you play the murther of Gonazgo?

Play. I.my Lord.

Ham. Weele hate to morrowe night, you could for neede study/ a speech of some dozen lines, or sixteene lines, which I would set / down and insert in't, could you not?

Play. I my Lord.

So after Pyrrbus pause, / A ro wsed Vengeance sets him new a-worke, / And neuer did the Cyclops hammers fall / On Mars his Armours, forg'd for profe Eterne, / With lesse remorse then Pyrrbus bleeding sword / Now falles on Priam. / Out, out, thou Strumpet-Fortune, all you Gods, / In generall Synod take away her power: / Breake all the Spokes and Fallies from her wheele, / And boule the round Naue downe the hill of Heaven, / As low as to the Friends.

Pol. This is too long. Ham. It shall to the Barbars with your beard. Pry-/thee say on: He's for a ligge, or a tale of Baudry, or hee / sleepes. Say on; come to Hecuba.

1 Play. But who, O who, had seen the inoble Queen. Ham. The inoble Queene? Pol. That's good: Inoble Queene is good.

1 Play. Run bare-foot vp and downe, / Threatning the flame / With Bisson Rheum: A clout about that head, / Where late the Diadem stood, and for a Robe / About her lanke and all ore-teamd Loines, / A blanket in th'Alarum of feare caught vp. / Who this had seene, with tongue in Venome steep'd, / 'Gaint Fortunes State, would Treason haue pronounce'd? / But if the Gods themselves did see her then, / When she saw Pyrrbus make malicious sport / in mincing with his Sword her Husbands limbes, / The instant Burst of Clamour that she made / (Vnlesse things
Ham. Very well, followe that Lord, & looke you mock him not. / My food friends, ile leave tell night, you are welcome to Elsonoure.

[Soliloquy omitted.]

King. An can you by no drift of conference; Get from him why he puts on this confusion, / Grating so harshly all his dayes of quiet / With turbuleant and dangerous lunacie?

Ros. He dooes confessse he feeles himselfe dis-tracted, / But from what cause, a wil by no meanes speake.

Guyl. Nor doe we find him forward to be sounded, / But with a craftie madnes keepes aloofe / When we would bring him on to some confession / Of his true state.

Quee. Did he receive you well?

Ros. Most like a gentle-

Guyl. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Ros. Niggard of questions, but of our demaunds / Most free in his reply.

Quee. Did you assay him to any pastime?

Ros. Maddam, it so fell out that certaine Players / We ore-raught on the way, of these we told him, / And there did seeme in him a kind of ioy/ To heare of it: they are heere about the Court, / And as I thinke, they have already order / This night to play before him.
Pol. 'Tis most true, / And he beseech'd me to intreat your Maiesties / To heare and see the matter.
King. With all my hart, / And it doth much content me / To heare him so inclin'd. / Good gentlemen, give him a further edge, / And drive his purpose into these delights.
Ros. We shall my Lord.
mock him not. My good Friends, Ile leaue you til night / you are welcome to Eisonower?
Rosin. Good my Lord.

[Soliloquy omitted]

King. And can you by no drift of circumstance / Get from him why he puts on this Confusion: / Grating so harshly all his dayes / od quiet / With turbulent and dangerous Lunacy.
Rosin. He does confesse he feeles himselfe distracted, / But from what cause he will by no meanes speake.
Guil. Nor do we finde him forward to be sounded, / But with a crafty Madnesse keepes aloofe: / When we would bring him on to some Confession / Of his true state.
Qu. Did he receiue you well?
Rosin. Most like a Gentleman.
Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.
Rosin. Niggard of question, but of our demands / most free in his reply.
Qu. Did you essay him to any pastime?
Rosin. Madam, it so fell out, that certaine Players / ore-wroght on the way: of these we told him, / And there did seeme in him a kinde of ioy / To heare of it: They are about the Court, / And (as l think) they haue already order / This night to play before him.
Pol. 'Tis most true: / And he beseech'd me to intreate
As in the Ophelia Test, the Q1 version of the Schoolfellow Test is much shorter than its parallels in Q2 and Folio. The meaning, however, remains unchanged, and the results of this test are no more or less successful in one version than in another. Regardless of the positioning of the various stages of this test in the three texts, they are, when brought together, alike in their meaning and contributions to the play as a whole.

The last test of Hamlet's insanity to be examined in this present discussion is the Fishmonger test. While it is, of course, much shorter than the other two and does not contain a major soliloquy, it must be included, nevertheless, because of its significant position in the play and for its relationship to the development of the plot. In Q1, the Fishmonger Test immediately follows the Ophelia Test, while in Q2 and Folio, only the planning stages of the Ophelia Test are completed before Polonius sees Hamlet's approach and launches the Fishmonger Test. It is given, hereafter, in parallel texts so that one may discern that the meaning of the scenes is essentially the same in each version:
The Fishmonger Test

Q1

Cor. Wel, something it is: my Lord, content you a while, I will my selfe goe feel him: let me worke, / Ile try him evey way, see where he comes, / Send you those Gentle-men, let me alone / To finde the depth of this, away, be gone. / Now my good Lord, do you know me?

Ham. Yea very well, y'are a fishmonger.

Cor. Not I my Lord.

Ham. Then sir, I would you were so honest a man, / For to be honest, as this age goes, / Is one man to be pickt out of tenne thousand.

Cor. What doe you reade my Lord?

Ham. Wordes, wordes.

Cor. What's the matter my Lord?

Ham. Betweene who?

Cor. I meane the matter you read my Lord.

Ham. Mary most vile heresie: / For here the Satyrical Satyre writes, / That olde men have hollow eyes, weake backes, / Grey beards, pittifull weake harnes, Gowty legges. / All which sir, I most potently beleue not: / For sir, yourselfe

Q2

Pol. Away, I doe beseech you both away, / Ile boord him presently, how does my good Lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, God-a mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my Lord?

Ham. Excellent, excellent well: y'are a Fishmonger.

Pol. Not I my Lord.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest my Lord.

Ham. I sir to be honest as this world goes, is to bee / One man pickt out of two thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my Lord.

Ham. For if the Sun bread Magots in a dead dogge, / Being a good kissing Carrion --

Ham. Have you a daughter?

Pol. I haue my Lord.

Ham. Let her not walke I'th Sunne: conception is a blessing, / But as your daughter may conceiue, Friend looke to't.

Pol. How say you by that? Still harping on my daught-ter: yet he knew me not at first; he said I was a Fish-mon-ger: he is farre gone, farre gone: and truly in my youth / I suffered much extremity for loue, very neere this. Ile speake to him againe. What do you read my Lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter. my Lord?
shalbe olde as I am,/ 
If like a Crabbe, you 
could goe backward. 

Cor. How pregnant 
his replies are, and full 
of wit: / Yet at first 
he tooke me for a 
fishmonger: / All this 
comes by loue, the 
vemenecie of loue. / 
And when I was yong, I 
wasvery idle, / And 
suffered much extasie 
in loue, very neere 
this: / Will you walke 
out of the aire my 
Lord?

Ham. Into my graue. 
Cor. By the masse 
that's out of the aire 
indeed, / Very shrewd 
answers, / My lord I 
will take my leaue of 
you. 

Ham. You can take 
nothing from me sir, / 
I will more willingly 
part with all, / Olde 
doating foole. 

What doe you reade my/
Lord. 

Ham. Words, words, 

words. 

Pol. What is the 
matter my Lord. 

Ham. Betweene who. 

Pol. I mean the 
matter that you reade 
my Lord.

Ham. Slaunders sir; 
for the satericall rou- 
ue sayes here, that 
old / men haue gray 
beards, that their faces 
are wrinkled, their 
eyes / purging thicke 
Amber, & plumentree gum, 
& that they have a 
plentifull / lack of 
it, together with most 
weake hams, all which 
sir /though I most power-
fully and potentiely 
believe, yet I hold it 
not / honesty to have 
it thus set downe, for 
your selfe sir shall 
growe old / as I am: 
if like a Crab you 
could go backward. 

Pol. Though this be 
madnesse, yet there 
is method in't, will 
you / walke out of the 
ayre my Lord? 

Ham. Into my graue. 
Pol. Indeed that's 
out of the ayre; how 
pregnant sometimes / 
his replies are, a hap-
pinew that often mad-
nesse hits on, which 
reason / and sanctity 
could not so prosperously 
be delivered of. I will 
leave him and my 
daughter. My Lord, I 
will take my leaue of 
you.
Ham. You cannot take from mee any thing that my Lord. I will not more / will- ingly part withall: old fooles, except my life, except my life, except

It is obvious that this scene in Q1 is not much shorter than its counterparts in Q2 of Folio. No major differences in thought content are noticeable in the three versions, thereby making the location of this scene within the play of little importance.

The accompanying chart enables one to see that entire scenes in Hamlet have been somehow shifted, adjusted, or rearranged in Q1 in comparison with the structural pattern manifest in Q2 and Folio. Since the arrangement of the soliloquies in Q2 and Folio shows a logical and careful pattern of character development, one assumes that this is also the pattern in which Shakespeare originally conceived of them. It is unlikely that he was responsible for the order contained in Q1. If, as Duthie suggests, Q1 was used as the text of a touring company, some justification of this arrangement of these scenes may be feasible.65 For example, it would probably be much easier for an audience to follow this Q1 arrangement, particularly individuals unaccustomed

to attending the performance of plays, because scenes are not divided or interrupted as they are in Q2 and Folio. Such an arrangement as that of Q1 would also seem to hold potential advantages for the acting company, especially since it would enable a group to perform with a minimum of changes in stage properties. Scholars unwilling to accept this theory of the touring text with reference to the state of Q1, yet who still prefer the arrangement of the scenes in Q1, must ask themselves the following: which is more important to the logical development of the philosophy of character and action in the play—having the Ophelia Test performed without interruption? or having the soliloquies given in what appears to be the proper order? The answer would seem to be obvious. Although the Ophelia Test contains several important passages, they are not of the same importance (with regards for the natural sequence of time) as is the matter of the development of the tragic hero.

At the same time, the German play, Der bestrafte Bruderermord, agrees with Q1 in the sequence of the Ophelia Test. However, there is one matter making it impossible to develop any sound theory of the linkage of these two plays; namely, in IV.vi., one notes a vast difference in Q1 in comparison with Q2, Folio, and Bruderermord. Greg thinks that this scene in Q1 owes its existence to the hand of a reporter:
In it he develops the motive of an understanding between the Queen and Hamlet that he had already adumbrated at the end of the closet scene. This is consonant with the story as told by Belleforest but now with the authoritative text of the play.66

One may readily note the differences between Q and Q and Folio in the following parallel texts of IV.vi.

Act IV Sc. VI Horatio receives letter from Hamlet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hor. Madame, your sonne is safe arriv'd in Denmark, This letter I even now receiv'd of him, / Whereas he writes how he escap't the danger, / And subtle treason that the king had plotted. / Being crossed by the contention of the windes, / He found the Packet sent to the King of England, / Wherein he saw himself betray'd to death, / As at his next conversion with your grace, / He will relate the circumstance at full.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queene. Then I perceive there's treason in his looks/ That seem'd to sugar o're his villanie: / But I will soothe and please him for a time,/ For murderous minde are always jealous, / But know not you Horatio where he is?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hor. Yes Madame, and he hath appoynted me / To meete him on the east</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hor. What are they that would Speake with me? 

Gent. Sea-faring men sir, they say they have Letters for you. 

Hor. Let them come in. / I do not know from part of the world / I should be greeted. If not from Lord Hamlet. 

Say. God blesse you sir. 

Horo. Let him blesse thee to. 

Say. A shall sir and please him, there's a Letter for you sir, it came / fro the Embassador that was bound for England, if your name be Horatio as I am let to know it is. 

Hor. Horatio, when thou shalt have over lookt this, giue these Fellowes some meanes to the King; they haue Letters for him: Ere we were two daies old at Sea, a Pyrate of very warlike appoint-ment gaue / vs chase, finding our selues 

66 Hardin Craig, A New Look at Shakespeare's Quartos, p. 72.
side of the Cittie / To morrow morning.

Queene. 0 faile not, good Horatio, and withall, com-/
mend to him, bid him a while / Be wary of his presence, lest that he Faile in that he goes about.

Hor. Madam, neuer make doubt of that: / I thinke by this the news be come to court:/ He is arriv'd obserue the King, and you shall / Quickly finde Hamlet being here, / Things fell not to his minde.

Queene. But what became of Gilderstone and Rosencraft?

Hor. He being set ashore, they went for England,/ And in the Packet therewrit down that doome / To be perform'd on them poyned for him:/ And by great chance he had his fathers Seale,/ So all was done without discouerie.

Queene. Thanks be to heauen for blessing of the prince, / Horatio once againe I take my leaue, / With thousand mothers blessings to my sonne.

Horat. Madam adue.
The Q₁ version is completely different from that of the other two texts in that the scene in Q₁ greatly simplifies the action and avoids the improbability of Hamlet's delaying his report to Horatio until after the events of the graveyard scene. The disturbing problem about Q₁ in this order of the plot is that it shows the Queen to be entirely in sympathy with Hamlet and makes her fully cognizant of the whole plot, yet the fact remains that she does nothing to aid him. Since this scene does simplify the action of the play, one thinks it likely that it was used in Q₁ for this very reason. Indeed, many of the most noticeable variations in Q₁, such as the compression of speeches, seem to have been undertaken with an eye for economy of time, space, and personnel.

One last observation concerns the soliloquies in the three texts. The fifth soliloquy ("How all occasions do inform against me") is conspicuously absent from Q₁ and Folio. In all three texts, Fortinbras opens the scene by instructing one of his captains to ask Hamlet for safe conduct through Denmark. This speech is almost identically presented in the three texts; however, the parallels then end, for neither Q₁ nor Folio contains the conversation which follows between Hamlet and the captain or the fifth soliloquy, all of which material is present in Q₂. The conversation pursuant to the soliloquy is highly important because it affords the captain an opportunity to characterize the leader of the Norwegian
army for Hamlet and stresses the subject of honor involving their imminent battle over a worthless piece of ground. It is a conversation which firmly establishes the necessity of action in matters of honor and is responsible for Hamlet's renewal of his attack upon himself for his own lethargy causing him to vow that "... from this time forth / My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth." More importantly, perhaps, Hamlet in the fifth soliloquy also lavishes great praise upon Fortinbras, suggesting the possibility of the speech having been inserted for the purpose of Hamlet's flattery of the Norwegian prince. However, one does not mean to imply that the fifth soliloquy may have been inserted lightly by a hack poet; on the contrary, it has been proved beyond a doubt to be the work of Shakespeare. At the same time, this fifth soliloquy may have appeared in Shakespeare's original draft of the play and excluded from the Q1 and Folio copy for my number of the reasons alluded to in Chapter I. Since almost one-half of the play as it is now known is missing from Q1, there is little difficulty in one's thinking that this soliloquy, too, was omitted. In the case of the missing soliloquy in the Folio, one is confronted by another problem which is a great deal more difficult to resolve. For example, if one assumes that the fifth soliloquy was originally meant for the flattery of Fortinbras by Hamlet, or that it was intended to be used as a subtle commentary upon foreign policy,
then it is possible to think that it was not included in the Folio text because it had failed in its purpose or had achieved its purpose as was, thereafter, no longer considered pertinent to the play. Indeed, one notes that the entire scene, with the exception of Fortinbras' opening speech, is too neatly omitted from the Folio text. Furthermore, neither the speeches immediately preceding nor those directly following the exchange between the captain and Hamlet and Hamlet's soliloquy are in the slightest way in disagreement with those contained in Q2 and Folio. It appears, then, that this last soliloquy was intentionally omitted from Q1 and Folio for reasons which, one has to admit, are not clear.

When the soliloquies are compared in the three texts, one notes that they are alike in meaning, although in Q1 they do not fall into the sequence established in the other two versions. A subsequent examination of the three tests of Hamlet (the Ophelia Test, the Schoolfellow Test, and the Fishmonger Test) clearly reveals that entire sections of the play have been shifted in Q1 and that these sections, in turn, are also responsible for the improper order of the soliloquies in this version of the play. Had these three tests not contained the soliloquies, their rearrangement within the play might possibly have produced no serious problem in the reading. On the other hand, the arrangement of scenes in Q1 is, while not as subtle or skilled as that
which occurs in Q₂ and Folio, nonetheless in agreement with the order set forth in the source, Belleforest's *Historie Tragiques*, and are, furthermore, soundly linked. For a reporter or even an actor-thief to have made such changes as would have been necessary, had he seen or acted in the play at one time, would seem to have been difficult, especially were his knowledge of the play restricted to the pattern provided by the Globe prompt-book and not the Globe acting version. In addition, the fact that the order of the scenes in Q₁ is similar to that contained in Belleforest may account for the insertion of a different sequence in IV.vi.

But the question remains, why were these changes undertaken in the first place?

Craig suggests that Q₁ came from the prompt-book 'copy of Lord Chamberlain's Men when this company had returned to London from tour. He thinks this explanation to be the "natural inference," as indeed it would appear to be. Consequently, there would have been no necessity for the company's having to obtain an original copy of the play by means of any kind of an underhanded method.

Probably the company made up their "book" from one of Shakespeare's original documents. However, because of the length of this play, they may have found it further necessary

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to construct a shorter version of the drama. It is not at all impossible to think that Shakespeare himself might have been asked to help with this abridgment. At any rate, in the preparation of this "book" the company probably thought it wise to follow the sequence of events laid down in the main source, Belleforest, because of its structural simplicity. Thus, utilizing Shakespeare's dialogue, pared down to include only the most basic ideas, they prepared a new version of the play. This conjectural process would account for the compression of thought and the obvious similarities to Belleforest such as occur in IV.vi., which, as it has been shown, serves to advance the plot yet saves a vast amount of acting time. If this be the case, the so-called corruptions in Q₁ were the result not of the origin of Q₁ but of the natural processes of degeneration which affect any drama under such circumstances. One should take into account, as well, the fact that a travelling group would have been particularly prone to error or to alteration of a text because of its incompetent or inadequate acting personnel.
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