

Side 17: Hamlet & Gertrude

	HAMLET	Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down, And let me wring your heart; for so I shall, If it be made of penetrable stuff.
	GERTRUDE	What have I done, that thou darrest wag thy tongue In noise so rude against me?
	HAMLET	Such an act That blurs the grace and blush of modesty, Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose From the fair forehead of an innocent love And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows As false as dicers' oaths.
	GERTRUDE	Ay me, what act, That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?
Forces her to look at two miniatures, one of Claudius, one of the elder Hamlet.	HAMLET	Look here, upon this picture, and on this, The counterfeit presentment of two brothers. See, what a grace was seated on this brow; Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself; An eye like Mars, to threaten and command; A combination and a form indeed, Where every god did seem to set his seal, To give the world assurance of a man: This was your husband. Look you now, what follows: Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear, Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes? Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed, And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes? You cannot call it love; for at your age The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble, And waits upon the judgment: and what judgment Would step from this to this? O shame! where is thy blush? Rebellious hell, If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones, To flaming youth let virtue be as wax, And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame When the compulsive ardour gives the charge, Since frost itself as actively doth burn And reason panders will.
	GERTRUDE	O Hamlet, speak no more: Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul; And there I see such black and grained spots As will not leave their tinct.
	HAMLET	Nay, but to live In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed, Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love Over the nasty sty,--
	GERTRUDE	O, speak to me no more; These words, like daggers, enter in mine ears; No more, sweet Hamlet!
	HAMLET	A murderer and a villain; A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe Of your precedent lord; a vice of kings; A cutpurse of the empire and the rule, That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, And put it in his pocket!
	GERTRUDE	No more!

	HAMLET	A king of shreds and patches,-- Hamlet reacts as if he were seeing the ghost of his father. This time, however, the ghost does not appear either to Gertrude or to us. Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?
	GERTRUDE	Alas, he's mad!
	HAMLET	Do you not come your tardy son to chide, That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by The important acting of your dread command? O, say! Listens for a moment and reacts to the guilt-summoned ghost in his mind, then turns back to his mother. How is't with you, lady?
	GERTRUDE	Alas, how is't with you, That you do bend your eye on vacancy And with the incorporal air do hold discourse? O gentle son, Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?
	HAMLET	On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares! His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones, Would make them capable. Do not look upon me; Lest with this piteous action you convert My stern effects: then what I have to do Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.
	GERTRUDE	To whom do you speak this?
	HAMLET	Do you see nothing there?
	GERTRUDE	Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.
	HAMLET	Nor did you nothing hear?
	GERTRUDE	No, nothing but ourselves.
	HAMLET	Why, look you there! look, how it steals away! My father, in his habit as he lived! Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!
	GERTRUDE	This the very coinage of your brain: This bodiless creation ecstasy Is very cunning in.
	HAMLET	Ecstasy! Mother, for love of grace, Lay not that flattering unction to your soul, That not your trespass, but my madness speaks: It will but skin and film the ulcerous place, Whilst rank corruption, mining all within, Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven; Repent what's past; avoid what is to come.
	GERTRUDE	O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.