

Hamlet's Downfall Quotes

1) Hamlet loses his morality

- a. "How now, a rat? Dead for a ducat, dead!" (stabs his sword through the arras and kills POLONIUS) Polonius says, "O, I am slain." (3.4 29-30).
- b. "Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell! I took thee for thy better: take thy fortune; Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger." (3.4 38-40)
- c. "Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio, A royal knavery-an exact command... That on the supervise, no leisure bated, No, not to stay the grinding of the ax, My head should be struck off... I sat me down, Devised a new commission, write it fair- An earnest conjuration from the King... Without debatement further, more or less, He should those bearers put to sudden death, Not shriving time allowed" (5.2 21-52).
- d. "Why, man, they did make love to this employment; They are not near my conscience; their defeat Does by their own insinuation grow: 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes Between the pass and fell incensed points Of mighty opposites." (5.2 64-69)

2) Hamlet loses his mind/sanity

- a. "Here, as before, never, so help you mercy, How strange or odd some'er I bear myself (As I perchance hereafter shall think meet To put an antic disposition on)" (1.5 189-192)
- b. "How say you by that — still harping on my daughter, yet he knew me not at first. He said I was a fishmonger. He is far gone, far gone. And truly, in my youth I suffered much extremity for love, very near this." (2.2 204-208)
- c. "How pregnant sometimes his replies are! A happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of." (2.2 226-229)
- d. "It is not madness That I have uttered. Bring me to the test, And I the matter will reword, which madness Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace, Lay not that flattering unction to your soul That not your trespass but my madness speaks." (3.4 161-167)
- e. "This is mere madness. And thus a while the fit will work on him. Anon, as patient as the female dove when that her golden couplets are disclosed, his silence will sit drooping" (5.1 302-306)
- f. "Was't Hamlet wronged Laertes? Never Hamlet. If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away, And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes, Then Hamlet does it not. Hamlet denies it. Who does it, then? His madness" (5.2 203-207).

3) Loses people he loves

(Ophelia)

- a. "You should not have believed me, for virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it. I loved you not" (3.1 127-129)
- b. "Get thee to a nunnery, farewell. Or if thou wilt need to marry. Marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go, and quickly too. Farewell" (3.1 148-152).
- c. "One woe doth tread upon another's heel, So fast they follow. Your sister's drowned, Laertes" (4.7 187-188)
- d. "But it was only a matter of time before her clothes, heavy with the water they absorbed, pulled the poor thing out of her song, down into the mud at the bottom of the brook" (4.7 205-208).
- e. "Sweets to the sweet. Farewell! I hoped thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife. I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet maid, And not have strewed thy grave" (5.1 254-257).
- f. "I loved Ophelia. Forty thousand brothers Could not with all their quantity of love Make up my sum" (5.1 285-287).

(Gertrude)

- g. "This was your husband. Look you now at what follows. Here is your husband, like a mildewed 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?" (3.4 74-77).
 - h. "A bloody deed? Almost as bad, good mother, As kill a king and marry with his brother." (3.4 30)
 - i. "O, speak to me no more! / These words like daggers enter in mine ears. / No more, sweet Hamlet!" (3.4,107-109).
 - j. "O Hamlet, speak no more! / Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul, / And there I see such black and grained spots" (3.4,99-101).
 - k. "No, no, the drink, the drink!—O my dear Hamlet! The drink, the drink! I am poisoned" (5.2 305)
 - l. "Here, thou incestuous, murderous, damned Dane, Drink off this potion. Is thy union here? Follow my mother" (5.2 345-347).
- 4) Hamlet's loss of birthright
- a. "Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death. The memory be green, and that it us befitted to bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom to be contracted in one brow of woe, yet so far hath discretion fought with nature that we with wisest sorrow think on him together with remembrance of ourselves. Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen, the imperial jointress to this warlike state, have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,-- With an auspicious and a dropping eye, with mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage, in equal scale weighing delight and dole,-- Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd your better wisdoms, which have freely gone with this affair along." (2.1 1-16)
 - b. "Let four captains Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage; For he was likely, had he been put on, To have proved most royally: and, for his passage, The soldiers' music and the rites of war Speak loudly for him." (5.2 441-446)
 - c. "Let us haste to hear it, And call the noblest to the audience. For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune. I have some rights of memory in this kingdom, Which now claim my vantage doth invite me." (5.2 387-392)
- 5) Hamlet's loss of honor
- a. "Do you think I meant country matters?... That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs... I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying... It would cost you a groaning to take off mine edge" (3.2 123-274).
- 6) Hamlet's death
- a. "It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain. No medicine in the world can do thee good. In thee there is not half an hour of life. The treacherous instrument is in thy hand, Unbated and envenomed. The foul practice Hath turned itself on me. Lo, here I lie, Never to rise again. Thy mother's poisoned. I can no more. The king, the king's to blame" (5.2 309-316).
 - b. "let it be.—Horatio, I am dead. Thou livest. Report me and my cause aright To the unsatisfied" (5.2 333-335).
 - c. "Oh, I'm dying, Horatio! This strong poison's overpowering me" (5.2 351-352)
 - d. "Heaven make thee free of it! I follow thee. I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu! You that look pale and tremble at this chance, That are but mutes or audience to this act, Had I but time-- as this fell sergeant, death, Is strict in his arrest--O, I could tell you-- But let it be. Horatio, I am dead; Thou livest; report me and my cause aright To the unsatisfied." (5.2 353-361)

- e. "The potent poison quite o'ercrows my spirit. I cannot live to hear the news from England. But I do prophesy th' election lights On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice. So tell him, with th' occurrents, more and less, Which have solicited— the rest is silence"(5.2 390-395)