

MANGA SHAKESPEARE[®]

HAMLET



GLOSSARY



A LITTLE MORE THAN KIN AND LESS THAN KIND...

p. 15: Hamlet
(Act 1, Scene 2)

Hamlet's first words are a sinister riddle: because his Uncle Claudius now also calls him his son, he replies by complaining that there are too many family relationships between them ('more than kin') and too few bonds of affection ('less than kind')



BUT NO MORE LIKE MY FATHER THAN I TO HERCULES

p. 19: Hamlet
(Act 1, Scene 2)

In Classical mythology, Hercules was the strongest man in the world, who performed twelve tasks, or labours, each more difficult than the last



'TIS NOT ALONE MY SUITS OF SOLEMN BLACK... NOR THE DEJECTED VISAGE THAT CAN DENOTE ME TRULY

p. 17: Hamlet
(Act 1, Scene 2)

'It isn't just my mourning clothes... or the depressed expression on my face that can perfectly represent my inner feelings'



WEIGH WHAT LOSS YOUR HONOUR MAY SUSTAIN IF YOU LOSE YOUR HEART

p. 27: Laertes
(Act 1, Scene 3)

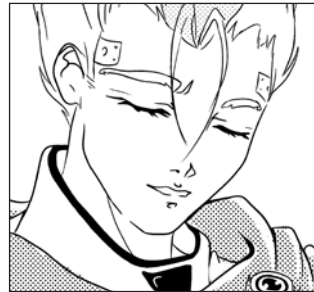
'Consider what your reputation will suffer if you return Hamlet's love'



RETROGRADE TO OUR DESIRE

p. 18: Claudius
(Act 1, Scene 2)

'Contrary to our wishes'



I THINK IT LACKS OF TWELVE

p. 32: Horatio
(Act 1, Scene 4)

'I think it is before twelve o'clock'



CONCEPTION IS A BLESSING, BUT NOT AS YOUR DAUGHTER MAY CONCEIVE

p. 57: Hamlet
(Act 2, Scene 2)

Hamlet is playing with two senses of 'conception', only the first of which he says is fortunate ('a blessing'): the ability to understand or comprehend (implying that Polonius is stupid), and the act of becoming pregnant



BUT WHEREFORE I KNOW NOT

p. 62: Hamlet
(Act 2, Scene 2)

'Wherefore' is an Elizabethan word for 'why'



WILL YOU WALK OUT OF THE AIR, MY LORD?

p. 58: Polonius
(Act 2, Scene 2)

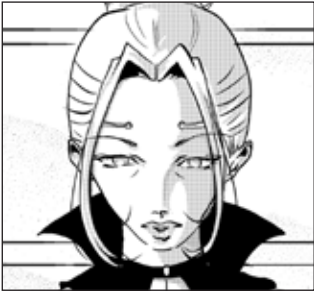
Polonius simply asks Hamlet if he might care for a stroll in the open air to clear his head. Hamlet chooses to take him literally: starved of air, he would indeed be dead



AENEAS' TALE TO DIDO, WHERE HE SPEAKS OF PRIAM'S SLAUGHTER

p. 69: Hamlet
(Act 2, Scene 2)

Hamlet is referring to the Roman poet Virgil's epic poem *The Aeneid*, in which its shipwrecked hero Aeneas describes to Queen Dido the destruction by the Greeks of his home city of Troy, and the death of Priam, the Trojan King



DID YOU ASSAY HIM TO ANY PASTIME?

p. 75: Gertrude *(Act 3, Scene 1)*
'Did you manage to persuade him to relax and do something fun?'



TO BE OR NOT TO BE... THAT IS THE QUESTION

p. 78: Hamlet *(Act 3, Scene 1)*
This is one of the most famous speeches in Shakespeare: a private monologue (or 'soliloquy') addressed to the audience in which the hero confides his innermost thoughts and worries. This one asks one of the most profound questions anyone can ask of themselves: *Is life worth carrying on with?*



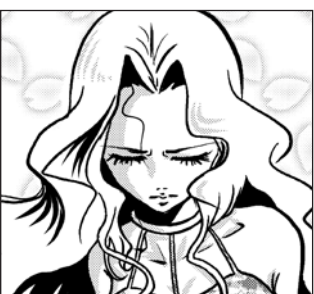
YOU JIG, YOU AMBLE AND YOU LISP AND MAKE YOUR WANTONNESS YOUR IGNORANCE

p. 83: Hamlet *(Act 3, Scene 1)*
Hamlet's sense of betrayal leads him to accuse Ophelia of leading him on (or at least he pretends that he feels that way), suddenly now turning on the graceful way she dances, walks, and speaks – presumably all the things he once liked about her. His last six words mean something like 'And you pretend you don't know what you're doing when you come on to me'



THOSE THAT ARE MARRIED ALREADY... ALL BUT ONE SHALL LIVE

p. 84: Hamlet *(Act 3, Scene 1)*
The 'one' married person Hamlet refers to here is probably his hated Uncle Claudius



THAT SUCKED THE HONEY OF HIS VOWS

p. 84: Ophelia *(Act 3, Scene 1)*
Ophelia means that the loving words Hamlet has previously given her have been as sweet as honey



I DID ENACT JULIUS CAESAR. I WAS KILLED IN THE CAPITOL... BRUTUS KILLED ME

p. 92: Polonius *(Act 3, Scene 2)*
The actor playing Polonius in the original performance of *Hamlet* may in fact have played Julius Caesar in Shakespeare's recent play about his assassination, stabbed to death on the steps of the Senate House in ancient Rome (although Polonius doesn't know it, much the same thing is about to happen to him...)



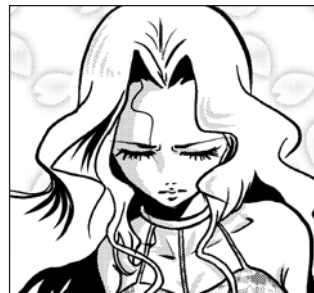
IT WAS A BRUTE PART OF HIM TO KILL SO CAPITAL A CALF THERE

p. 92: Hamlet *(Act 3, Scene 2)*
Hamlet makes a number of puns: it was Brutus's *brutal* rôle in that play to *butcher* such an *excellent* idiot



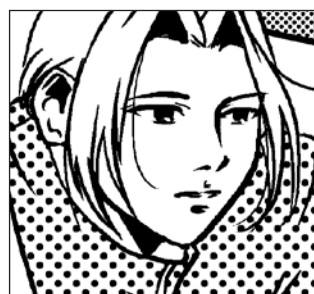
FOR O, FOR O, THE HOBBY-HORSE IS FORGOT!

p. 95: Hamlet *(Act 3, Scene 2)*
Hamlet is quoting an Elizabethan catch-phrase about memory: we might say something along the lines of elephants never forgetting – but a 'hobby-horse' was also a theatrical prop in May Day games and morris-dances (the 'horse's' body, with head and tail, being worn like a harness over the shoulders)



YOU ARE A GOOD CHORUS, MY LORD

p. 99: Ophelia *(Act 3, Scene 2)*
In Shakespeare's theatre, the 'chorus' of a play would give a speech to introduce it to the audience (is Ophelia letting him know that she now understands?)



WHAT IS YOUR CAUSE OF DISTEMPER?

p. 103: Rosencrantz *(Act 3, Scene 2)*
Rosencrantz asks Hamlet a question (= 'What is it that has made you feel out of sorts in this way?') that goes to the heart of the play – and to all our hearts



CALL ME WHAT INSTRUMENT YOU WILL, THOUGH YOU CAN FRET ME... YOU CANNOT PLAY UPON ME!

p. 105: Hamlet
[Act 3, Scene 2]
Hamlet warns his so-called friends that they can't manipulate him – for all that they both *irritate* (or *fret*) him and also seek to treat him like the neck of a guitar by fitting him with the *ridges* (or *frets*) with which to change chords



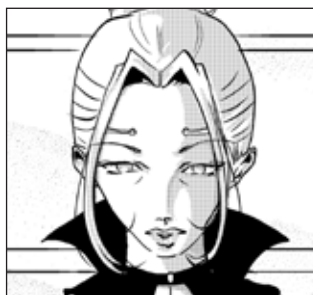
TELL HIM HIS PRANKS HAVE BEEN TOO BROAD TO BEAR WITH... AND THAT YOUR GRACE HATH STOOD BETWEEN MUCH HEAT AND HIM

p. 113: Polonius
[Act 3, Scene 4]
'Tell him his childish behaviour has been grossly unacceptable... and that you yourself have protected him from getting into hot water because of it'



NEVER ALONE DID THE KING SIGH, BUT WITH A GENERAL GROAN

p. 108: Rosencrantz
[Act 3, Scene 3]
Rosencrantz is making the point (a commonplace of Shakespeare's time) that the health and welfare of the entire nation depends on the well-being of its king (or queen)



THIS IS THE VERY COINAGE OF YOUR BRAIN

p. 121: Gertrude
[Act 3, Scene 4]
'Coinage' means *invention* or *fabrication* (Hamlet's brain being likened to the heated furnace of a mint used in the production of coins)

ACT FOUR



THE BODY IS WITH THE KING. BUT THE KING IS NOT WITH THE BODY

p. 126: Hamlet
[Act 4, Scene 2]
Hamlet is making another riddling joke, but no one has yet quite worked out what he means



AND THOU MUST CURE ME

p. 131: Claudius
[Act 4, Scene 3]
In the first version Shakespeare wrote of the play, he included an extra scene here (act 4, scene 4), in which Hamlet, in the custody of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, meets a Captain in Fortinbras's approaching army, and then rebukes himself for not being more decisive ('How all occasions do inform against me...'). Shakespeare later cut it in rehearsals



NOT WHERE HE EATS, BUT WHERE HE IS EATEN

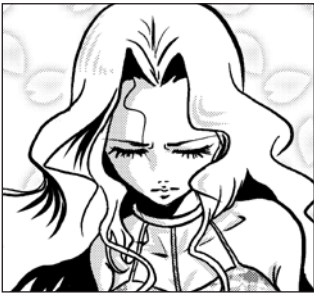
p. 128: Hamlet
[Act 4, Scene 3]
As Shakespeare's full text explains, Hamlet means that Polonius's body is now food for 'worms' or 'maggots'



AND, ENGLAND, EFFECT THE PRESENT DEATH OF HAMLET! DO IT, ENGLAND!

p. 131: Claudius
[Act 4, Scene 3]
By 'England', Claudius here means the king of England





THEY SAY THE OWL WAS A BAKER'S DAUGHTER

p. 134: Ophelia
(Act 4, Scene 5)

After the riddling speeches of Hamlet's pretended insanity, Ophelia has now been driven mad for real, speaking 'things in doubt [= with no obvious meaning] that carry but half sense', as Gertrude has just been warned (p. 132)



"THEY HAVE DEALT WITH ME LIKE THIEVES OF MERCY"

p. 147: Hamlet
(Act 4, Scene 6)

'Their kind treatment of me has transformed their criminality into virtue.' (Hamlet's letter shows his characteristic love of paradox)



WHEN SORROWS COME, THEY COME NOT SINGLE SPIES, BUT IN BATTALIONS

p. 136: Claudius
(Act 4, Scene 5)

This is Claudius's version of the saying 'It never rains but it pours', and imagines an invading army – like that of the Norwegian Fortinbras, who will eventually succeed to the Danish throne



I WILL WORK HIM TO AN EXPLOIT NOW RIPE IN MY DEVICE

p. 151: Claudius
(Act 4, Scene 7)

'I'll persuade him into a plot whose design is now maturing in my mind.' This is the first mention of the duel – with poisoned swords – which is shortly to supply the play with its bloody climax



THE PEOPLE MUDDIED IN THEIR THOUGHTS AND WHISPERS FOR POLONIUS' DEATH

p. 136: Claudius
(Act 4, Scene 5)

'The restless population agitated by rumours and suspicions over Polonius's death.' (Claudius is demonstrating his political instincts)



I'LL ANOINT MY SWORD WITH AN UNCTION OF A MOUNTEBANK...

p. 154: Laertes
(Act 4, Scene 7)

'I'll dip the point of my sword in some poisonous ointment that I'll get from a passing quack'



ALAS, POOR YORICK!

p. 163: Hamlet
(Act 5, Scene 1)

Hamlet's words over Yorick's skull may reflect Shakespeare's own feelings about the great Elizabethan comedian Richard Tarleton, who died in 1588, and whose 'gibes' [= wisecracks] the playwright may have enjoyed in person



THEY DID MAKE LOVE TO THIS EMPLOYMENT

p. 172: Hamlet
(Act 5, Scene 2)

'They knew what they were doing when they agreed to act as the King's agents – and they loved doing it'



HER DEATH WAS DOUBTFUL...

p. 164: Priest
(Act 5, Scene 1)

Since Ophelia seems to have committed suicide, the Priest is objecting to Ophelia's burial in sanctified ground





**THE KING, SIR, HAS
WAGED THAT IN A DOZEN
PASSES BETWEEN YOU
AND HIM, HE SHALL NOT
EXCEED YOU THREE HITS**

p. 175: Osric

(Act 5, Scene 2)

Claudius's – typically tortuous – bet is that after twelve bouts or rounds of fencing ('passes'), Laertes's total of successful blows ('hits') on Hamlet will not exceed Hamlet's total of blows on him by more than three (in the event, of course, the exhibition match degenerates into a bloody duel). 'Foils' – mentioned by Hamlet in his reply – are the same as 'rapiers'



**A HIT! A VERY
PALPABLE HIT!**

p. 181: Osric

(Act 5, Scene 2)

This line ('palpable' = *definite*) is one of the very many in *Hamlet* that have passed into the language ('For this relief much thanks', 'In my mind's eye', 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be', 'To thine own self be true', 'Something is rotten in the state of Denmark' – and that's just the first act)

