|  |  |
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|  | O, my offence is rank: it smells to heaven; |
|  | It hath the primal eldest curse upon’t - |
|  | A brother's murder. Pray can I not, |
|  | Though inclination be as sharp as will, |
|  | My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent |
|  | And like a man to double business bound |
|  | I stand in pause where I shall first begin, |
|  | And both neglect. What if this cursed hand |
|  | Were thicker than itself with brother's blood? |
|  | Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens |
|  | To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy |
|  | But to confront the visage of offence? |
|  | And what's in prayer but this twofold force |
|  | -To be forestalled ere we come to fall, |
|  | Or pardoned, being down? Then I'll look up: |
|  | My fault is past. But, O, what form of prayer |
|  | Can serve my turn: 'Forgive me my foul murder'? |
|  | That cannot be, since I am still possessed |
|  | Of those effects for which I did the murder, |
|  | My crown, mine own ambition and my Queen. |
|  | May one be pardon'd and retain the offence? |
|  | In the corrupted currents of this world |
|  | Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice, |
|  | And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself |
|  | Buys out the law; but 'tis not so above: |
|  | There is no shuffling, there the action lies |
|  | In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled, |
|  | Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults, |
|  | To give in evidence. What then? What rests? |
|  | Try what repentance can - what can it not? - |
|  | Yet what can it, when one can not repent? |
|  | O wretched state, O bosom black as death, |
|  | O limed soul, that, struggling to be free |
|  | Art more engaged. Help, angels, make assay. |
|  | Bow, stubborn knees, and, heart with strings of steel, |
|  | Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe. |
|  | All may be well.  *ENTER HAMLET* |
| HAMLET | [Now might I do it. But now ‘a is a- praying;](http://www.shakespeare-online.com/plays/hamlet/soliloquies/doitpatanalysis.html) |
|  | And now I'll do it. *(draws sword)* - and so ‘a goes to heaven, |
|  | And so am I revenged! That would be scanned: |
|  | A villain kills my father, and for that, |
|  | I, his sole son, do this same villain send |
|  | To heaven. |
|  | Why, this is base and silly, not revenge. |
|  | ‘A took my father grossly full of bread |
|  | With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May, |
|  | And how his audit stands who knows, save heaven? |
|  | But in our circumstance and course of thought, |
|  | 'Tis heavy with him. And am I then revenged |
|  | To take him in the purging of his soul, |
|  | When he is fit and season'd for his passage? |
|  | No! *(sheathes sword)* |
|  | Up sword, and know thou a more horrid hent |
|  | When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage, |
|  | Or in th’incestuous pleasure of his bed, |
|  | At gaming, a-swearing, or about some act |
|  | That has no relish of salvation in't. |
|  | Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven, |
|  | And that his soul may be as damned and black |
|  | As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays; |
|  | This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.  *EXIT HAMLET* |
| KING CLAUDIUS | *[Rising]* My words fly up, my thoughts remain below. |
|  | Words without thoughts never to heaven go.  *EXIT CLAUDIUS* |