

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Swords, Scenes & Soliloquies

HAMLET

9

Act 2, scene 2 : Hamlet's Rogue and Peasant Slave Soliloquy

BOTH: Now I am alone...

O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!

Is it not monstrous that this player here, but in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit

That from her working, all his visage wann'd, tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect, a
broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!

Yet I, a dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak, like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
and can say nothing;
no, not for a king, upon whose property and most dear life
A damn'd defeat was made.

BOTH: Am I a coward?

Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? who does me this?

BOTH: Ha!!

It cannot be but I am pigeon-liver'd and lack gall!

bloody, bawdy villain! Remorseless, treacherous,

lecherous, kindless villain!

BOTH: O, vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave, that I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words, and fall a-cursing...Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain!

BOTH: I have heard that guilty creatures sitting at a play

Have by the very cunning of the scene been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;

For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak with most miraculous organ.

I'll have these players play something like the murder of my father before mine uncle:
I'll observe his looks;

I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench, I know my course....

BOTH: the play 's the thing wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.