

Enter Hamlet.

Pol. I hear him coming, with-draw my Lord.

Ham. To be, or not to be, that is the question,  
Whether tis nobler in the minde to suffer  
The slings and arrowes of outragious fortune,  
Or to take Armes against a sea of troubles,  
And by opposing, end them: To die to sleepe  
No more: and by a sleepe, to say we end  
The hart-ake, and the thousand naturall shocks  
That flesh is heire to; tis a consumation  
Deuoutly to be wisht to die to sleepe,  
To sleepe, perchance to dreame, I there's the rub,  
For in that sleepe of death what dreames may come?  
When we haue shuffled off this mortall coyle  
Must giue vs pause, there's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life:  
For who would beare the whips and scornes of time,  
Th'oppressors wrong, the proude mans contumely,  
The pangs of office, and the lawes delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurnes  
That patient merrit of th'vnworthy takes,  
When himselfe might his *quietas* make  
With a bare bodkin; who would fardels beare,  
To grunt and sweat vnder a weary life?  
But that the dread of something after death,



"**To be, or not to be**" is the opening phrase of a [soliloquy](#) given by [Prince Hamlet](#) in the so-called "nunnery scene" of [William Shakespeare's play Hamlet](#) (1601/1602), Act 3, Scene 1. In the speech, Hamlet contemplates death and [suicide](#), bemoaning the pain and unfairness of life but acknowledging that the alternative might be worse. (Wikipedia)

## Hamlet: To be, or not to be,

that is the question:

Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,  
Or to take Arms against a Sea of troubles,  
And by opposing end them: to die, to sleep  
No more; and by a sleep, to say we end  
The heart-ache, and the thousand natural shocks  
That Flesh is heir to? 'Tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep,  
To sleep, perchance to Dream; aye, there's the rub,  
For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come,  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause. There's the respect  
That makes Calamity of so long life:  
For who would bear the Whips and Scorns of time,  
The Oppressor's wrong, the *proud* man's  
Contumely,  
The pangs of *dispised* Love, the Law's delay,

The insolence of Office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of th'unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his Quietus make  
With a bare Bodkin? Who would Fardels bear, [F: *these Fardels*]  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have,  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of Resolution  
Is sicklied o'er, with the pale cast of Thought,  
And enterprises of great *pitch* and moment, [F: *pith*]  
With this regard their Currents turn *awry*, [F: *away*]  
And lose the name of Action. Soft you now,  
The fair Ophelia? Nymph, in thy Orisons  
Be all my sins remember'd.



HAMLET:

## **Sein oder Nichtsein;**

das ist hier die Frage:

Obs edler im Gemüt, die Pfeil und Schleudern  
Des wütenden Geschicks erdulden oder,  
Sich waffnend gegen eine See von Plagen,  
Durch Widerstand sie enden? Sterben - schlafen -  
Nichts weiter! Und zu wissen, daß ein Schlaf  
Das Herzweh und die tausend Stöße endet,  
Die unsers Fleisches Erbteil, 's ist ein Ziel,  
Aufs innigste zu wünschen. Sterben - schlafen -  
Schlafen! Vielleicht auch träumen! Ja, da liegt:  
Was in dem Schlaf für Träume kommen mögen,  
Wenn wir die irdische Verstrickung lösen,  
Das zwingt uns stillzustehn. Das ist die Rücksicht,  
Die Elend läßt zu hohen Jahren kommen.  
Denn wer ertrüg der Zeiten Spott und Geißel,  
Des Mächtigen Druck, des Stolzen Mißhandlungen,  
Verschmähter Liebe Pein, des Rechtes Aufschub,  
Den Übermut der Ämter und die Schmach,  
Die Unwert schweigendem Verdienst erweist,  
Wenn er sich selbst in Ruhstand setzen könnte

Mit einer Nadel bloß? Wer trüge Lasten  
Und stöhnt' und schwitzte unter Lebensmüh?  
Nur daß die Furcht vor etwas nach dem Tod,  
Das unentdeckte Land, von des Bezirk  
Kein Wanderer wiederkehrt, den Willen irrt,  
Daß wir die Übel, die wir haben, lieber  
Ertragen als zu unbekanntem fliehn.  
So macht Bewußtsein Feige aus uns allen;  
Der angeborenen Farbe der Entschließung  
Wird des Gedankens Blässe angekränkelt;  
Und Unternehmen, hochgezielt und wertvoll,  
Durch diese Rücksicht aus der Bahn gelenkt,  
Verlieren so der Handlung Namen. - Still!  
Die reizende Ophelia! - Nympe, schließ  
In dein Gebet all meine Sünden ein!



AMLETO:

## **Essere, o non essere,**

questo è il dilemma:

se sia più nobile nella mente soffrire  
colpi di fionda e dardi d'atroce fortuna  
o prender armi contro un mare d'affanni  
e, opponendosi, por loro fine? Morire, dormire...  
nient'altro, e con un sonno dire che poniamo fine  
al dolore del cuore e ai mille tumulti naturali  
di cui è erede la carne: è una conclusione  
da desiderarsi devotamente. Morire, dormire.  
Dormire, forse sognare. Sì, qui è l'ostacolo,  
perché in quel sonno di morte quali sogni possano venire  
dopo che ci siamo cavati di dosso questo groviglio mortale  
deve farci riflettere. È questo lo scrupolo  
che dà alla sventura una vita così lunga.  
Perché chi sopporterebbe le frustate e gli scherni del  
tempo,  
il torto dell'oppressore, l'ingiuria dell'uomo superbo,  
gli spasimi dell'amore disprezzato, il ritardo della legge,  
l'insolenza delle cariche ufficiali, e il disprezzo  
che il merito paziente riceve dagli indegni,

quando egli stesso potrebbe darsi quietanza  
con un semplice stiletto? Chi porterebbe fardelli,  
grugnendo e sudando sotto il peso di una vita  
faticosa,  
se non fosse che il terrore di qualcosa dopo la morte,  
il paese inesplorato dalla cui frontiera  
nessun viaggiatore fa ritorno, sconcerta la volontà  
e ci fa sopportare i mali che abbiamo  
piuttosto che accorrere verso altri che ci sono ignoti?  
Così la coscienza ci rende tutti codardi,  
e così il colore naturale della risolutezza  
è reso malsano dalla pallida cera del pensiero,  
e imprese di grande altezza e momento  
per questa ragione deviano dal loro corso  
e perdono il nome di azione.

