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Hamlet (Act III, Scene 4)

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# Hamlet

Incidental Music

*music by Daniel Aaron Ramirez*

*play by William Shakespeare*

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*Incidental music to*  
William Shakespeare's

**HAMLET**

ACT III SCENE 4

*composed by*  
Daniel Aaron Ramirez

Instrumentation

Clarinet in Bb

Piano

Violin

\*Actor

\* Piece may be performed with or without an actor.

# Program Notes

## Hamlet

### Act III Scene 4

(segment of incidental music to *Hamlet*)

Act III, Scene 4 is a pivotal scene on which the play hinges, and is in some ways *Hamlet* in a nutshell. It includes a tense confrontation with Hamlet's mother, the impulsive killing of foolish Polonius (a mistake that seals Hamlet's fate), and a visitation from a Ghost.

The instrumentation takes its cue from the suite version of *L'histoire du Soldat* and begins with an introduction that captures Hamlet's frantic energy. We then move from inquisitorial probing to pointed action. It ends with an unsettling sweet melody expressing the affection between Hamlet and Gertrude while Polonius's dead body lay only feet away.

*Hamlet* is a play about action and thought. In *Hamlet*, mockery and sarcasm hide sincerity and vulnerability while heroism is mirrored by clumsy absurdity. It seems to me such a perfect analogy for our time and for music, particularly composing – caught in-between thought and action.

# Hamlet †

## Act 3 Scene 4

### Overture

play by William Shakespeare  
music by Daniel Aaron Ramirez

**A** **Giacoso** (♩ = 102)

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Piano

Violin

B $\flat$  Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

†Note to Actor:

During sections where words and music occur simultaneously the only requirement is that they begin together. The alignment of music and words is approximate. The pacing and rhythm of delivery is entirely up to the discretion of the actor.

Hamlet  
Act 3, Scene 4

B $\flat$  Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

This system contains the first three staves of the score. The B $\flat$  Clarinet staff (top) begins with a melodic line in G major, marked with a fermata. The Piano staff (middle) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. The Violin staff (bottom) plays a melodic line with slurs and accents. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 4/4 and back to 5/4.

B $\flat$  Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

**B**

*f*

This system contains the next three staves. A rehearsal mark 'B' is placed above the B $\flat$  Clarinet staff. The B $\flat$  Clarinet staff continues with a melodic line, including a triplet. The Piano staff continues with harmonic accompaniment. The Violin staff has a rest in the first two measures, then enters with a melodic line starting on a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic. The time signature changes from 5/4 to 4/4, then to 3/4, and back to 4/4.

Musical score for Act 3, Scene 4, featuring Bb Cl., Pno., and Vln. parts. The score is in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The Bb Cl. part starts with a rest, followed by a melodic line with a trill and a triplet. The Pno. part provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line. The Vln. part features a melodic line with a trill and a triplet. Dynamics include *sf* and *f*.

**Act 3 Scene 4**  
**Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS**

Musical score for Act 3, Scene 4, featuring Bb Cl., Pno., and Vln. parts. The score is in common time (C). The Bb Cl. part starts with a rest, followed by a melodic line with a trill and a triplet. The Pno. part provides harmonic support with chords and a bass line. The Vln. part features a melodic line with a trill and a triplet. Dynamics include *p* and *mp*.

Actor POLONIUS: 'A will come straight. Look you lay home to him: Tell him his pranks have been too broad

B $\flat$  Cl. *mp* *p*

Pno. *mp* *p*

Vln. *più mf* *subito mp*

Actor POLONIUS: to bear with, and that your grace hath screened and stood between much heat and him.

22

B $\flat$  Cl. *mp* *p*

Pno. *mp* *p*

Vln. *più mf* *subito mp*

Actor POLONIUS: I'll silence me even here. Pray you be round with him.

26



B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor HAMLET: [*without*] Mother, mother, mother! QUEEN: I'll warrant you, fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

29

*Enter HAMLET*

HAMLET Now, mother, what's the matter?  
 QUEEN Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.  
 HAMLET Mother, you have my father much offended.  
 QUEEN Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.  
 HAMLET Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.  
 QUEEN Why, how now, Hamlet?  
 HAMLET What's the matter now?  
 QUEEN Have you forgot me?  
 HAMLET No, by the rood, not so.  
 You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife,  
 And, would it were not so, you are my mother.  
 QUEEN Nay then, I'll set those to you that can speak.  
 HAMLET Come, come, and sit you down. You shall not budge  
 You go not till I set you up a glass  
 Where you may see the inmost part of you.  
 QUEEN What wilt thou do? Thou wilt not murder me?  
 Help, help, ho!  
 POLONIUS [*behind the arras*] What, ho! Help, help, help!

**D** Quasi Rubato (♩ = 60)

*with affection*

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor

POLONIUS:  
[falls] O, I am slain!

QUEEN:  
O me, what hast thou done?

HAMLET:  
Nay, I know not.  
Is it the King?  
[He lifts up the arras and  
discovers Polonius, dead]

34

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor

QUEEN: O what a rash and bloody deed is this!

36

increase bow pressure with cresc.  
decrease with dim.

Bb Cl. *p*

Pno. *mf* *p*

Vln. *p*

Actor  
39  
 HAMLET: A bloody deed. Almost as bad,  
 good mother, as kill a King, and marry  
 with his brother  
 QUEEN: As kill a King?  
 HAMLET: Ay, lady, it was my word.

Bb Cl. *p*

Pno. *subito p* *mp* *pp*

Vln. *espress.* *p* *pp*

Actor  
 HAMLET: [To Polonius] 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.

HAMLET     [*To Queen*] Leave wringing of your hands. Peace, sit you down,  
And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,  
If it be made of penetrable stuff,  
If damned custom have not brassed it so  
That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

QUEEN     What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy tongue  
In noise so rude against me?

HAMLET     Look here, upon this picture, and on this;  
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.  
See what a grace was seated on this brow.  
This was your husband. Look you now what follows.  
Here is your husband, like a mildewed ear,  
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?  
Would you step from this to this?  
What devil was't  
That thus hat cozened you at hoodman-blind?  
O shame, where is thy blush?

QUEEN             O Hamlet, speak no more.  
Thou turn'st my eyes into my very soul,  
And there I see such black and grained spots  
As will not leave their tinct.

HAMLET             Nay, but to live  
In the rank sweat of an enseamed bed,  
Stewed in corruption, honeying and making love  
Over the nasty sty –

QUEEN             O speak to me no more.  
These words like daggers enter in mine ears.  
No more, sweet Hamlet.

HAMLET             A murderer and a villain,  
A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe  
Of your precedent lord; a Vice of kings,  
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,  
That from a shelf the precious diadem stole  
And put in his pocket –

QUEEN             No more.

HAMLET             A king of shreds and patches –

'Enter the GHOST in his night-gown'

**E** **Misterioso** (♩ = 90)

**B♭ Cl.** *f* *p* 5

**Pno.** *sf*

**Vln.** *ppp* *sul tasto*

Detailed description: This system contains the first three staves of the score. The Bb Clarinet part begins with a dynamic of *f*, then *p*, and features a five-measure slur. The Piano part starts with a *sf* dynamic. The Violin part begins with a *ppp* dynamic and a *sul tasto* instruction, playing a series of notes with a long slur.

**B♭ Cl.** *pp* *trb* 3 6 *p*

**Pno.** *p* *pp*

**Vln.** *pp* *sul pont.* *p* 5 *nat. dolce* *mp*

Detailed description: This system contains the next three staves. The Bb Clarinet part includes a *trb* (trill) and a six-measure slur, with dynamics *pp* and *p*. The Piano part has dynamics *p* and *pp*. The Violin part starts with *pp*, then *sul pont.* (sul ponticello), followed by a five-measure slur and dynamics *p* and *mp*, with *nat. dolce* (natural dolce) markings.

Actor

HAMLET:  
Save me and hover o'er me with  
your wings, You heavenly guards!  
– What would your gracious figure?

QUEEN: Alas, he's mad.

Musical score for B♭ Cl., Pno., and Vln. in Act 3, Scene 4. The B♭ Cl. part features a melodic line starting with a *pp* dynamic, moving to *mf* over a triplet. The Pno. part has a *mp* dynamic in the bass line and a *pp* dynamic in the treble line. The Vln. part has a *p* dynamic with triplet figures.

51 Actor GHOST: Do not forget! this visitation is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.  
But look, amazement on thy mother sits.

Musical score for B♭ Cl., Pno., and Vln. in Act 3, Scene 4. The B♭ Cl. part is silent. The Pno. part features a complex texture with chords and sustained notes. The Vln. part has a *pp* dynamic with a tremolo effect in the treble line and a sustained note in the bass line.

54 Actor GHOST:  
O step between her and her fighting soul; Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works. Speak to her Hamlet.

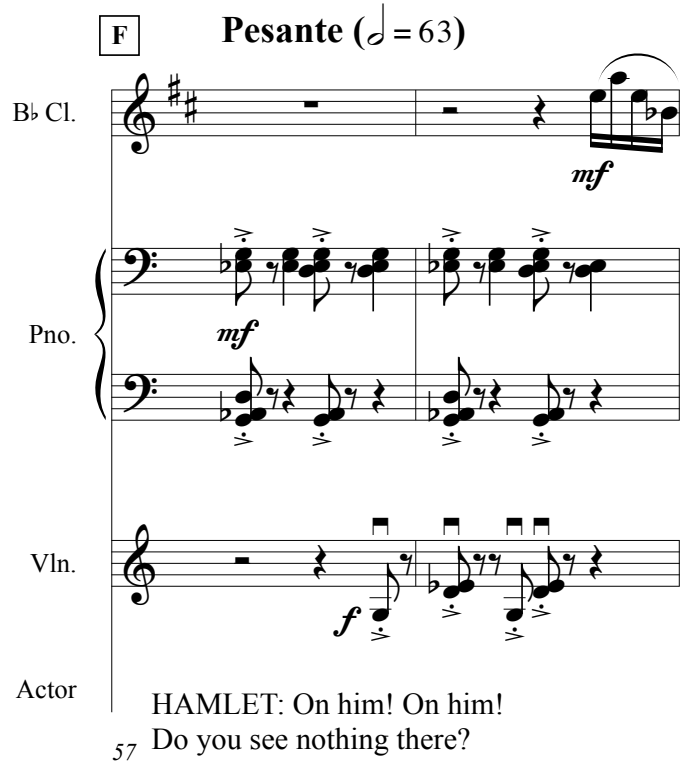
HAMLET

How is it with you, lady?

QUEEN

Alas, how is't with you,  
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,  
And with th'incorporal air do hold discourse?  
O gentle son,  
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper  
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

**F** **Pesante** (♩ = 63)



B♭ Cl. *mf*

Pno. *mf*

Vln. *f*

Actor  
HAMLET: On him! On him!  
57 Do you see nothing there?



B♭ Cl. *mp*

Pno. *mp*

Vln. *mp*

Actor

QUEEN:

Nothing at all, yet all that is I see.

HAMLET:

Nor did you nothing hear?

QUEEN:

No, nothing but ourselves.

The musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is for B♭ Cl. in treble clef, key of D major, 3/4 time. It features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure, a whole rest in the second, and a triplet of eighth notes in the third. The middle staff is for Piano (Pno.) in bass clef, with two parts. The upper part has chords with accents, and the lower part has a bass line with a quintuplet of eighth notes in the first measure. The bottom staff is for Violin (Vln.) in treble clef, with a quintuplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

Actor

HAMLET: Why, look you there! Look how it steals away!  
My father in his habit as he lived! Look where he goes, even now, out at the portal. [*Exit Ghost*]



QUEEN  
This is the very coinage of your brain!  
This bodiless creation ecstasy  
Is very cunning in.

HAMLET  
Ecstasy!  
My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time,  
And makes as healthful music.

**G** **Con amore** (♩ = 78) *rit.*

B♭ Cl. *p* *3* *dolce et cantabile* *mp*

Pno. *mp*

Vln.

Actor **HAMLET:** It is not madness that I have uttered.

67

*a tempo* *mp* *7* *6* *dolce et cantabile* *(mp)* *p*

B♭ Cl. *mp* *7* *6* *(mp)* *p*

Pno. *3* *p*

Vln. *pizz.* *mp* *p* *5:2*

Actor **HAMLET:** Bring me to the test and I the matter will re-word, 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.

68

B♭ Cl. *più mp*

Pno.

Vln. *arco* *p* *mp* *espress.*

Actor  
HAMLET: Confess yourself to heaven, repent what's past, avoid what is to come,  
and do not spread the compost on the weeds to make them ranker.

70


B♭ Cl. *p* *p* *5*

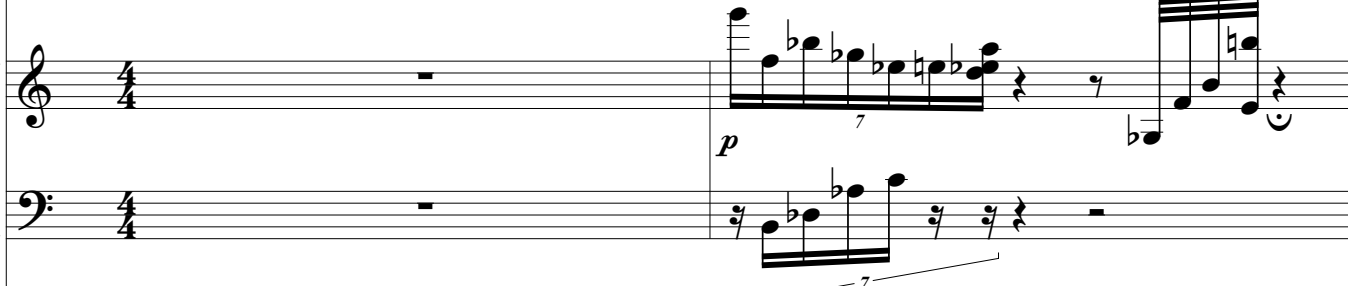
Pno. *p*


Vln.

Actor  
QUEEN: O Hamlet, thou hast cleft my heart in twain.  
HAMLET: O throw away the worser part of it, and live the purer  
with the other half.  
Good night, but go not to my uncle's bed.

73


B $\flat$  Cl. 

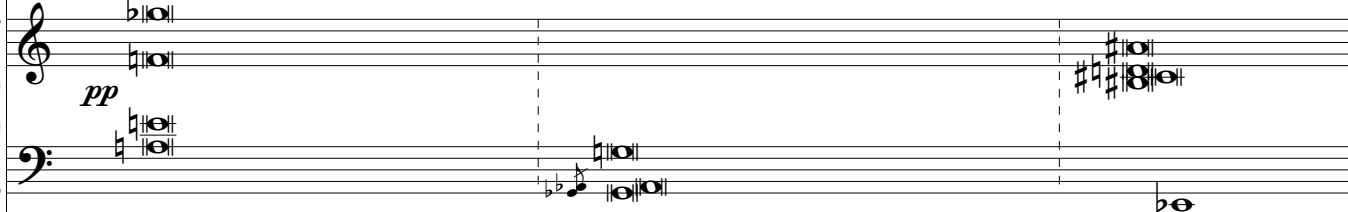
Pno. 

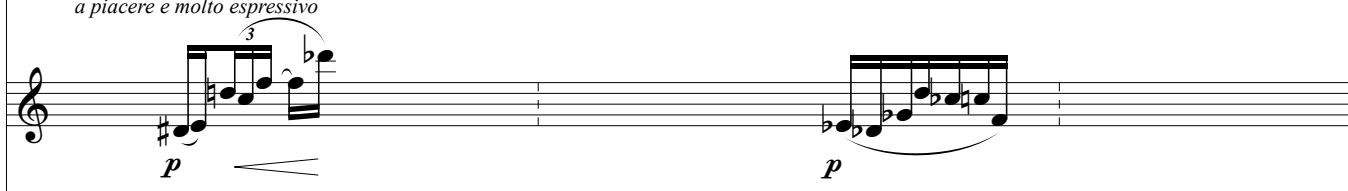
Vln. 

Actor  
75 HAMLET: Assume a virtue if you have it not. For use almost can change the stamp of nature,  
and either serve the devil, or throw him out with wondrous potency. Once more, good night.

**H** \***Rubato** (*quasi recitativo*)

B $\flat$  Cl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Actor  
77 HAMLET: I must be cruel only to be kind.  
This bad begins, and worse remains behind.  
One more word, good lady. QUEEN: What shall I do? HAMLET: Not this by no means that I bid you do:

\*Rhythms are approximate. Musicians are suggested to roughly follow the actors pace, responding to the text. The order of the musical phrases are suggestions but not mandatory. It is possible for the musicians to finish before the actors and vice versa. (In the case of no actor the musicians will respond intuitively and freely to one another).



B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor

QUEEN: Be thou assured, if words be made of breath, and breath of life,  
I have no life to breathe what thou hast said to me.

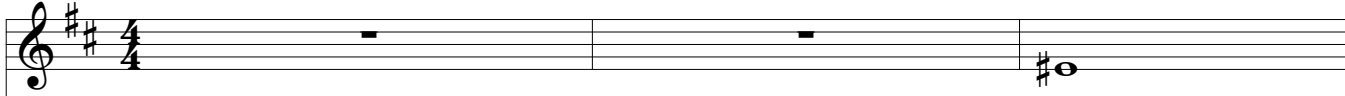
83

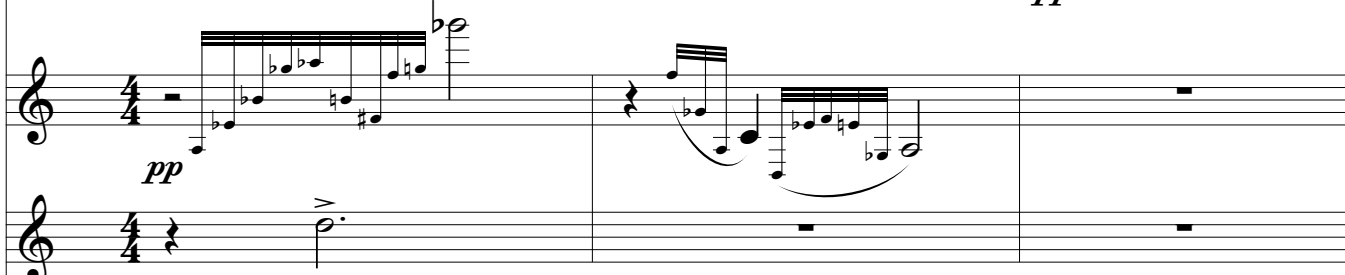
HAMLET I must to England, you know that?


QUEEN Alack,  
I had forgot, 'tis so concluded on.

HAMLET There's letters sealed, and my two school-fellows –  
Whom I will trust as I will adders fanged –  
They bear the mandate. They must sweep my way  
And marshal me to knavery: let it work,  
For 'tis the sport to have the engineer  
Hoist with his own petar, and't shall go hard  
But I will delve one yard below their mines,  
And blow them at the moon. O, 'tis most sweet  
When in one line two crafts directly meet.  
This man shall send me packing.

**I** Tempo - *Con amore* (♩ = 78)


B♭ Cl. 

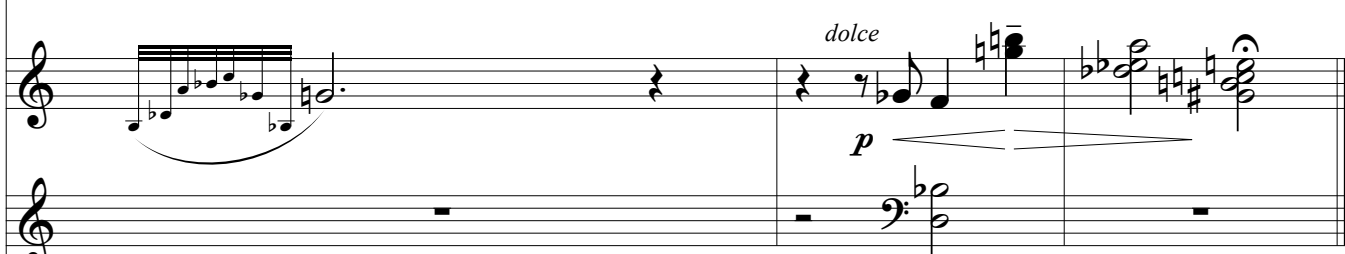
Pno. 


Vln. 

Actor HAMLET: I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room. Mother, good night indeed.  
This counsellor is now most still, most secret, and most grave, who was in life a foolish prating knave.

87

B♭ Cl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Actor HAMLET: Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you. Good night, mother.  
[Exit Hamlet, tugging Polonius]

90