Hamlet’s Soliloquy

IV. iv. 32-66

How all occasions do inform against me

And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,

If his chief good and market of his time

Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.

Sure he that made us with such large discourse,

Looking before and after, gave us not

That capability and godlike reason

To fust in us unused. Now, whether it be

Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple

Of thinking too precisely on th' event --

A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom

And ever three parts coward -- I do not know

Why yet I live to say, "This things to do,"

Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means

To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me.

Witness this army of such mass and charge,

Led by a delicate and tender prince,

Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,

Makes mouths at the invisible event,

Exposing what is mortal and unsure

To all that fortune, death and danger dare,

Even for an eggshell. Rightly to be great

Is not to stir without great argument,

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw

When honor's at the stake. How stand I then,

That have a father killed, a mother stained,

Excitements of my reason and my blood,

And let all sleep, while to my shame I see

The imminent death of twenty thousand men

That for a fantasy and trick of fame

Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot

Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,

Which is not tomb enough and continent

To hide the slain? O, from this time forth,

My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!