

Incidental music to
William Shakespeare's

HAMLET

ACT III SCENE 4

composed by
Daniel Aaron Ramirez

Instrumentation

Clarinet in Bb

Piano

Violin

*Actor

Program Notes

Hamlet

Act III Scene 4

(segment of a work in progress to 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
Daniel 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 5/4 time, moving to 4/4 and back to 5/4. The Piano staff (middle) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands. The Violin staff (bottom) plays a melodic line that mirrors the B \flat Clarinet's melody.

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 at the start of the third measure. The time signature changes to 3/4 for the third measure. The Piano and Violin parts continue with their respective parts. A dynamic marking of *f* (forte) is placed below the Violin staff at the beginning of the third measure.

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Act 3 Scene 4
Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS

C

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

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

B♭ 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.

B♭ 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.

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]

B♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor

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

increase bow pressure with cresc.
decrease with dim.

Musical score for Bb Cl., Pno., and Vln. in Act 3, Scene 4. The score is in 4/4 time and features dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, and *mf*. The Bb Cl. part begins with a *p* dynamic. The Pno. part has a *mf* dynamic in the left hand and a *p* dynamic in the right hand. The Vln. part has a *p* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering (e.g., '5').

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.

Musical score for Bb Cl., Pno., and Vln. in Act 3, Scene 4. The score is in 4/4 time and features dynamic markings such as *p*, *mp*, *pp*, and *espress.*. The Bb Cl. part has a *p* dynamic. The Pno. part has a *subito p* dynamic in the left hand and a *mp* dynamic in the right hand. The Vln. part has a *p* dynamic and an *espress.* marking. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and fingering (e.g., '3').

Actor
41
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 \flat 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 transitions to *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 \flat Cl. *pp* *p* 3 6

Pno. *p* *pp*

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

Detailed description: This system contains the next three staves. The Bb Clarinet part has a *pp* dynamic, a trill, and a six-measure slur. The Piano part has a *p* dynamic in the right hand and *pp* in the left. The Violin part starts with *pp*, then moves to *p* with 'sul pont.' and a five-measure slur, ending with *mp* dynamics and 'nat. dolce' markings.

Actor

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

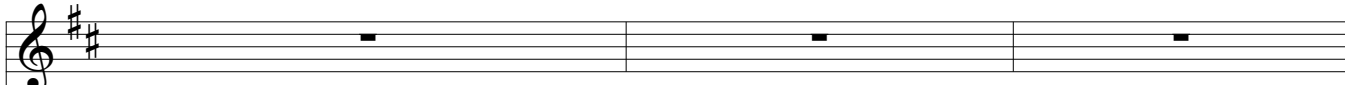
QUEEN: Alas, he's mad.

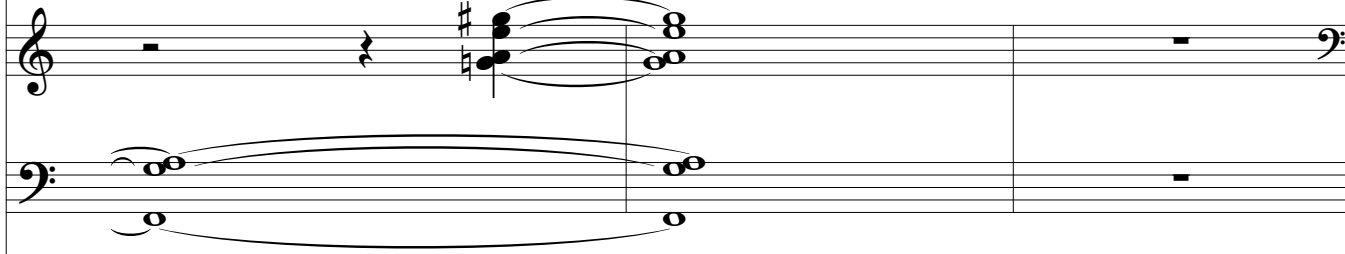
B \flat Cl. 

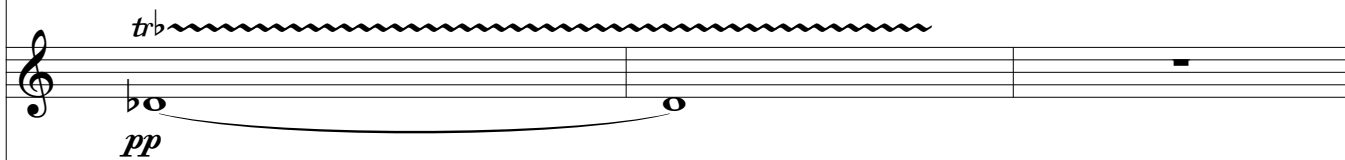
Pno. 

Vln. 

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

B \flat Cl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Actor GHOST:
54 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.

Vln.

Actor

59

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♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) in treble clef, key of D major, and 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 bottom two staves are for Piano (Pno.) in bass clef. The upper voice of the piano accompaniment consists of chords 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 lower voice consists of a bass 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 violin (Vln.) staff is in treble clef and 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 score includes dynamic markings such as *p* and *p* 3, and articulation marks like accents and slurs.

Actor
63 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 \flat 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* *pizz.* *mp* *p* *5:2*

B \flat Cl. *mp* *7* *6* *dolce et cantabile* *(mp)*

Pno. *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♭ 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♭ Cl.

Pno.

Vln.

Actor

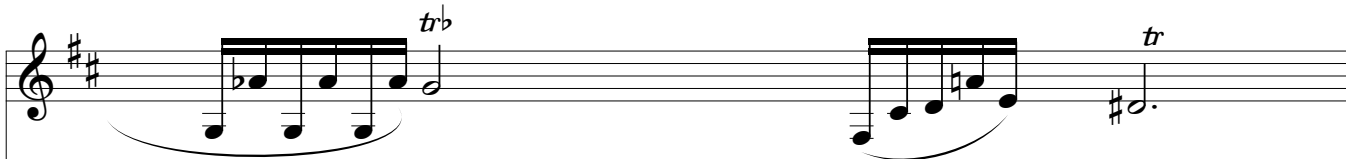
77

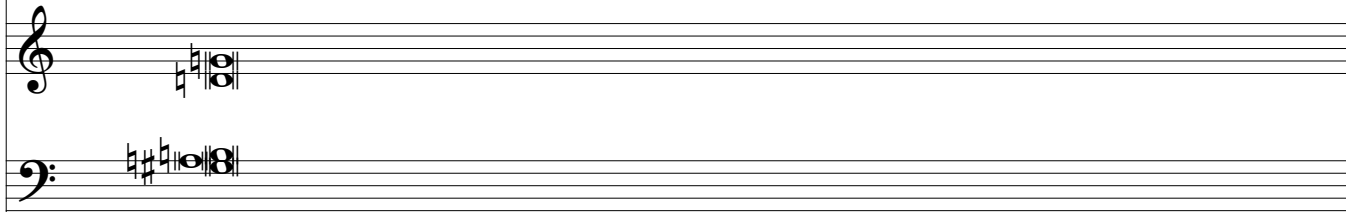
HAMLET: I must be cruel only to be kind.
This bad begins, and worse remains behind.
One more word, good lady.


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).

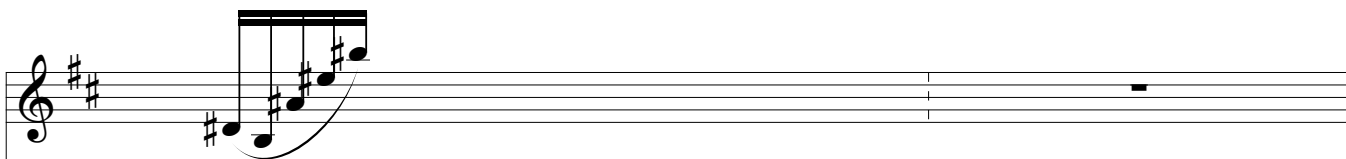
B♭ Cl. 

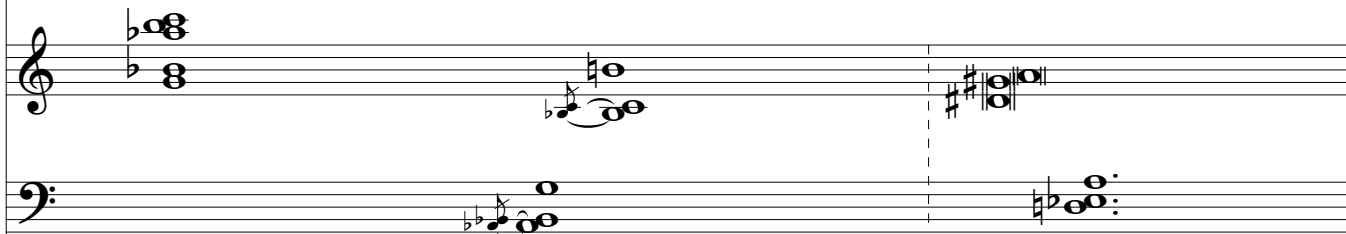
Pno. 

Vln. 

Actor HAMLET: Let the bloat King tempt you again to bed, pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his mouse, and let him for a pair of reechy kisses, or paddling in your neck with his damned fingers,

80

B♭ Cl. 

Pno. 

Vln. 

Actor HAMLET: make you to ravel all this matter out that I essentially am not in madness, but mad in craft.

81

B \flat 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.

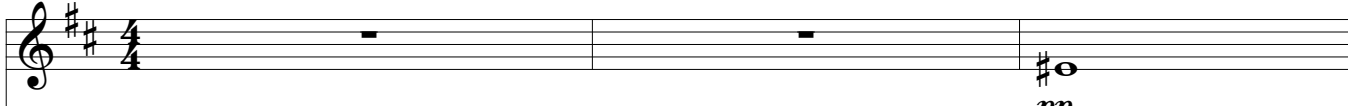
83

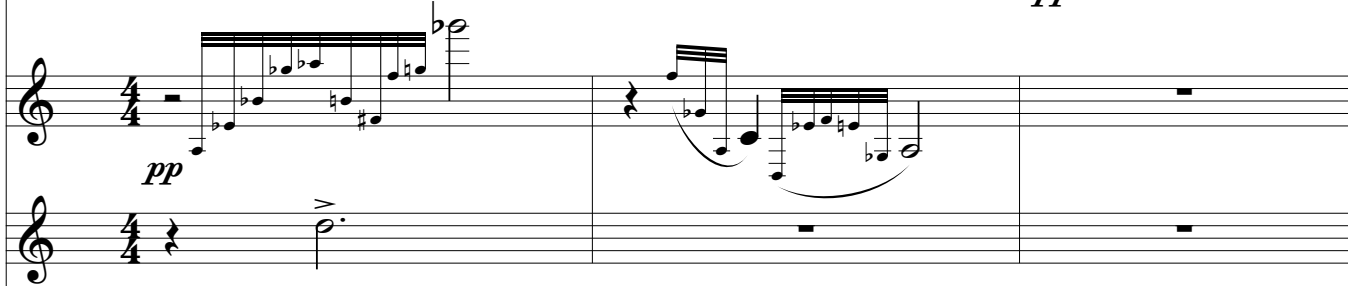
HAMLET I must to England, you know that?

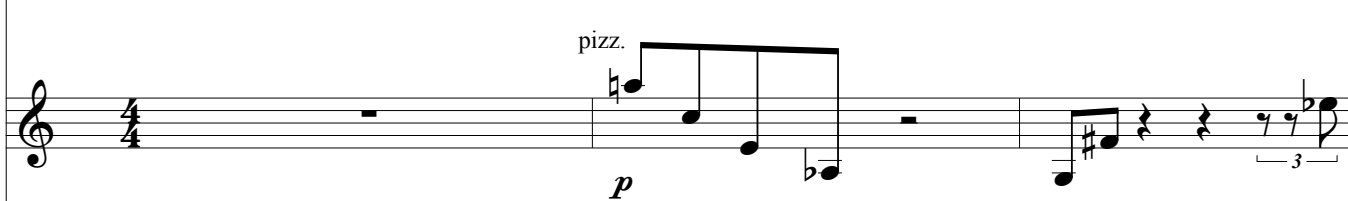
QUEEN Alack,
I had forgot, 'tis so concluded on.

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. 

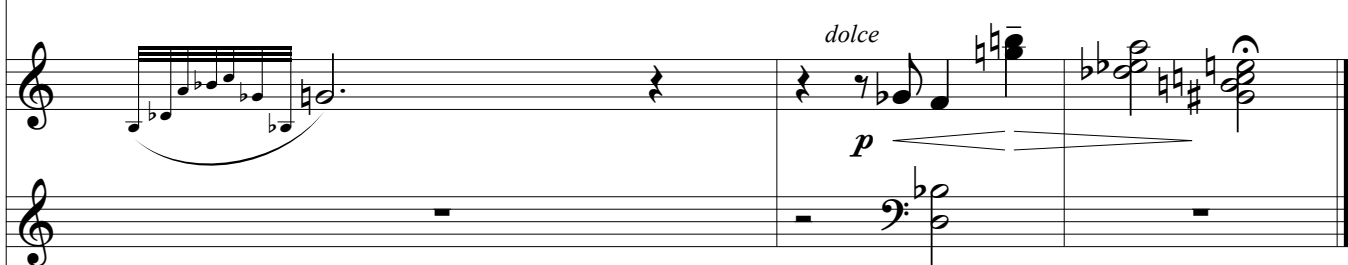
Pno. 


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