

Notes

- 56 *To be*: to exist, to live.
the question: Hamlet expands in the next four lines, debating with himself which is the more honourable course – patiently to endure earthly misfortunes, or boldly to oppose them.
- 58 *outrageous*: wilful
- 59 *to take . . . troubles*: The metaphor (of fighting with human weapons against the superhuman force of the sea) is an apt expression of Hamlet's sense of futility.
- 60 *by opposing end them*: put an end to one's troubles by fighting against them (rather than stoically enduring them).
- 61 *No more*: that is all.
- 63 *consummation*: final ending.
- 65 *rub*: In the game of bowls, the 'rub' is anything that impedes the course of the bowl.
- 67 *shuffled off*: got free from.
this mortal coil: this whole business of earthly living.
- 68 *give us pause*: make us stop to think.
- 68-9 'That's why misfortune goes on for so long.'
- 70 *time*: this (temporal) world.
- 72 *dispriz'd*: unvalued.
- 74 *merit*: the worthy one.
of: from.
- 75 *his quietus make*: settle his final bill.
- 76 *bodkin*: short dagger.
fardels: burdens.
- 79 *bourn*: frontier
- 80 *puzzles*: perplexes
- 81 *bear*: endure.
- 83 *conscience*: awareness, moral understanding.
make cowards . . . all: cause us all to become cowards.
- 84-5 *the native . . . thought*: the natural colour of courage (which is blood-red) grows pale with too much thinking.
- 86 *pitch*: magnitude.
moment: importance.
- 87 *regard*: consideration