

# Francis Hawling, "HAMLET's Reflection in the Scene of the Gravedigger imitated"

## Description

FRANCIS HAWLING

### â€œHAMLETâ€™s Reflection in the Scene of the Gravedigger imitatedâ€•

Sacred to the Memory of Mr. J. Lisset

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All human Bliss, we liken to a Span,  
How short is Friendship, and how frail is Man!  
Fled is the Soul, no sordid Passion knew,

That Eye extinguish'd, neâ€™Mer had venal View,  
The friendly Tongue, which frankly did impart Â  
Â 5

The honest Image, of an open Heart,  
Now mute, and lost, consignâ€™d to endless Night,  
No more profit, and no more delight:  
That gentle Hand, no more the Poor shall bless,

No more it minister to their  
Distress;Â  
10

No more the Anguish of thy Breast be known,  
To throb with tender Sorrows, not thy own:  
What lively Joys in evâ€™ry Face awoke,  
And callâ€™d forth all the Heart, whenâ€™er he spoke?

Whereâ€™s now the easy Joke, the pleasing Jest, Â  
Â 15

Which gave high flavourâ€™d Life, that sprightly Zest;  
The broad loud Laugh, did such Delight afford,  
And spread a wanton Triumph round the Board:  
Ah! Joys, that ever more must be deplorâ€™d!

Ah! never, never more to be  
restorâ€™d!Â  
Â 20

Remorseless Fate! how pitifully sunk,  
A livid, senseless, putrifying Trunk:  
Go, to the Thoughtless, to the Vicious preach,  
Speak to the Vain, the Proud, Ambitious teach,

Tell to the Fair, to what their Beauties tend, Â  
Â 25

And all its Purpose show, and all its End;

View evâ€™ry Age, the present, and the past,  
To this, the Great, and Wisest, come at last,  
No mortal Powâ€™r, its firm Decree can shun,  
â€˜Twas Caesarâ€™s Fate, and Ammonâ€™s mighty Son. 30

#### NOTES:

**Title** A reference to Act V scene 1 of William Shakespeareâ€™s *The Tragedy of Hamlet*, where Hamlet questions mortality and the nature of fate when mourning the loss of his love, Ophelia.

**Dedication** *Mr. J. Lisset* [Unable to trace.]

**1** *Span* â€œA short space of time, esp. as the duration of human lifeâ€• (QED).

**4** *venal* â€œConnected or associated with sordid and unprincipled bargaining; subject to mercenary or corrupt influencesâ€• (QED).

**7** *consignâ€™d* â€œTo commitâ€• (QED).

**16** *flavourâ€™d* â€œA distinctive appealing or enlivening qualityâ€• (QED); *sprightly* â€œWith spiritâ€• (QED).

**18** *wanton* â€œUnrestrained in merriment, jovialâ€• (QED).

**22** *putrifying* Alternate spelling of â€œputrefying,â€• â€œto cause to decompose with a foul smellâ€• (QED); *Trunk* â€œA dead body or corpseâ€• (QED).

**30** *Caesarâ€™s fate* Allusion to the death of the Roman dictator Gaius Julius Caesar who was murdered in the Roman Senate House by a group of nobles in March 15, 44 BCE (*Britannica*). Caesar is also referenced in the scene that this poem imitates: â€œImperious Caesar, dead and turnâ€™d to clay,/ Might stop a hole to keep the wind awayâ€• (Shakespeare *Hamlet*, V.i.220-221); *Ammonâ€™s mighty Son* Alexander the Great (356 BCE-323 BCE), king of the ancient Greek kingdom of Macedon and conqueror of the Persian Empire.

**Source:** *A Miscellany of Original Poems on Various Subjects, Part I* (London, 1751), pp. 132-133. [Google Books]

*Edited by Brittany Prodan*