*Hamlet* Act 2 Scene 2

1 Now I am alone.

 O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I! Rogue =a dishonest or unprincipled man

 Is it not monstrous that this player here,

 But in fiction, in a dream of passion,

5 Could force his soul so to his own conceit Conceit =fanciful expression; elaborate metaphor

 That from her working all his visage waned,

 Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,

 A broken voice, and his whole function suiting

 With forms to his conceit—and all for nothing!

10 For Hecuba!

 What’s Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,

 That he should weep for her? What would he do

 Had he the motive and the cue for passion

 That I have? He would drown the stage with tears

15 And cleave the general ear with horrid speech, Cleave =split apart

 Make mad the guilty and appall the free, Appall =greatly dismay or horrify

 Confound the ignorant and amaze indeed

 The very faculties of eyes and ears. Yet I,

 A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak Rascal =mischievous or cheeky person

20 Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my case, John-a-dreams =a dreamer, an unproductive person

 And can say nothing—no, not for a king

 Upon whose property and most dear life

 A damned defeat was made. Am I a coward?

 Who calls me “villain”? breaks my pate across? Pate =head

25 Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?

 Tweaks me by the nose? Gives me the lie I’ th’ throat

 As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?

 Ha! ’Swounds, I should take it! For it cannot be ‘Swounds =swoon or faint

 But I am pigeon-livered and lack gall Pigeon-livered =cowardly Gall =bold and impudent behavior

30 To make oppression bitter, or ere this

 I should have fatted all the region kites Kites =birds Offal =refuse, waste; animal entrails given to slaves to eat;

 With this slave’s offal. Bloody, bawdy villain! Bawdy =humorously indecent, sexual

 Remoreseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain! Kindless =obsolete inhuman

 O vengeance!

35 Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave,

 That I, The son of a dear father murdered,

 Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,

 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words

 And fall a-cursing like a very drab,

40 A Scullion! Fie upon ’t , foh! Scullion =the lowliest of kitchen servants Foh =front of the restaurant or all staff outside the kitchen