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Hands up Hamlet!

Here we have a Prince of Denmark, Hamlet. He is a very charming young lad, but don't be fooled, he can turn on his charm to make you believe his plan for revenge is justified. Hamlet killed the Principal Secretary of State, Polonius, and he admitted it.

Young Hamlet is not just a charmer, but a murderer!

*Fatti non foste a viver come bruti,
ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza.*

(Divine Comedy by Dante Alighieri, Inferno, canto 26, lines 119-120)

As the great Italian poet said in his work, all of us - men and women in this court of law - mankind was not gifted reason to waste it by taking the life of another with such audacity. Poor Polonius had the misfortune of walking behind an arras in the very moment the defendant wished to thrust a sword through it with youthful, reckless vigor. A hint of madness, perhaps? It shall be upon you, o men of the jury, to decide.

Our dear lord Hamlet, Prince of Denmark: one day it could be you that sits upon the throne of our kingdom. Of course, I hope it is a day far away, my king Claudius.

Men of the jury, do we want a corpse to be made of our good king Claudius?

Do we want a mad king who stabs his advisors if they disagree? A maniac who orders a slaughter of innocents? Or, perhaps worse, a fool who doesn't know how to reason?

This is a court of law in the most holy Kingdom of Denmark: it is my - and by extension, our - duty to protect the stability of this land, its people, and its throne.

There is no place beneath the crown for such a person: a madman, maybe, but a murderer, without doubt.

(Ophelia makes her testimony)

Men and women of the jury, you just heard firsthand the words of a young, broken girl whose father was just murdered for no apparent reason. Lady Ophelia lost a parent once, and her father has now been taken away. Furthermore, Prince Hamlet disgraced the maiden with foul words, "Get thee to a nunnery", he said. An offense unlike any other, to any woman: does he think her unworthy of marriage? Or perhaps he believed her a lustful woman? Regardless, neither her nor her brother - now her sole remaining relative - deserved such insults. Prince Hamlet has become a loathed disgrace to the family of our late Secretary of State, destroying it with murder and slander.

(Claudius makes his testimony)

Our beloved king - may God grant him a long and glorious life - just gave us a precious statement. For those still in the dark, Prince Hamlet has been given an illustrious education at the University of Wittenberg. It is an ancient and expensive school: one where the heir to the throne has been taught the ideals and theories formed by intellectuals all over Europe. None of them - I can say that with absolute certainty - advocated in favor of murder.

Men of the court, the people of Denmark do not pay taxes to fund the education of a murderer. We do not work year after year to form a madman, a maniac, a misanthrope with no regard for human life.

In conclusion, gentlemen, the matter is simple: our prince has killed a man. Maniac or sane he may be, he took the life of a father, friend and Secretary of State of Denmark.

One day, Prince Hamlet will sit upon the throne - I repeat, my king, I hope it's a day faraway - and if he wants to prove himself a worthy king, he must accept his responsibilities.

No such crime can go unpunished.