

Hamlet



Hi,
folks! Here
we are
again!

Today I'm going
to tell you the
story of a famous
Prince!

Hamlet, the
Prince of
Denmark!





I have already
confessed you, that
for what regards
Drama I have never
been that original

Hence, Hamlet's
unfortunate story
has been narrated
many times by
other writers.

How many?
Many.



Sources

- Books III and IV of Saxo Grammaticus's 12th-century *Gesta Danorum*.
- The *Ur-Hamlet*, of which Thomas Kyd is a conjectured author.
- Volume 5 (1570) of *Histoires tragiques*, a free translation of Saxo by François de Belleforest.



Publication

- **Hamlet**, in full **Hamlet, Prince of Denmark**, was written about 1599–1601.
- Published in a quarto edition in 1603 from an unauthorized text, with reference to an earlier play.
- The First Folio version was taken from a second quarto of 1604 .
- It was based on Shakespeare's own papers with some annotations by the bookkeeper.



Main Characters

- **Hamlet**: Prince of Denmark
- **Claudius**: King of Denmark and Hamlet's uncle.
- **Gertrude**: Hamlet's mother and the King's wife.
- **Polonius**: the King's chief councillor.
- **Ophelia**: Polonius's daughter
- **Horatio**: Hamlet's best friend
- **The Ghost** of Hamlet's father





And now, it is
time to start!

And
remember:
«All world is a
stage!»



What time is it?

ACT I SCENE I Elsinore. A platform
before the castle.

[FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him
BERNARDO]

BERNARDO

Who's there?

FRANCISCO
unfold yourself.

Nay, answer me: stand, and

BERNARDO

Long live the king!

FRANCISCO

Bernardo?

BERNARDO

He

FRANCISCO
upon your hour.

You come most carefully

BERNARDO

*'Tis now struck twelve;
get thee to bed, Francisco.*



I have always found
very useful to tell
the audience in the
very first lines the
hour the story was
set.

Real time and
fictional time
had to be
synchronized

As it actually was
2:00 p.m. and
there was full light
on stage.



Act I

- Late at night, guards on the battlements of Denmark's Elsinore castle are met by Horatio, Prince Hamlet's friend from school.
- The guards describe a ghost they have seen that resembles Hamlet's father, the recently-deceased king.
- At that moment, the Ghost reappears, and Horatio addresses him.
- He had been chosen to speak to the ghost because he is a scholar.
- Ghost could only speak after they were spoken to.



?@#%*!!

What man art thou that
usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and
warlike form
In which the majesty of
buried Denmark
Did sometimes march? By
heaven I charge thee,
speak!



Horatio



- The ghost is insulted and walks away,

Why?

«*Usurped*» means to take something which you had no right.

Hence

1. The ghost has no right to be on the castle walls.
2. Thou=you was used to address people of lower social status
3. «*I charge thee speak*» , kings were not in the habit of taking orders .



- The guards and Horatio decide to tell Hamlet.
- Claudius, Hamlet's uncle, married Hamlet's recently-widowed mother, becoming the new King of Denmark.
- Everybody in the country is celebrating the new King and his marriage to Gertrude.
- Hamlet continues to mourn for his father's death and laments his mother's lack of loyalty.
- Claudius is not happy with his behaviour.
- He doesn't trust Hamlet.





King Claudius

'Tis sweet and commendable in
your nature, Hamlet,
To give these mourning duties to
your father.
But you must know — your father
lost a father;
That father lost, lost his...

But to persevere
In obstinate
condolement is a
course
Of impious
stubbornness. 'Tis
unmanly grief



Or , to speak more
plainly.... «don't
be such a sissy»

You are not a
girl, but a Prince
and the future
king of this
country!!!



Nomen Omen

- The Elizabethan audience would have soon spotted Claudius as the **villain** of the play.
- Claudius = lame = imperfect
- Hence, his name hinted at his moral imperfection , which made him the fittest of villains.



That it should come to this!
But two months dead – nay, not
so much, not two –
So excellent a king, that was to
this
Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to
my mother
That he might not betem the
winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly.

Frailty, thy
name is
woman!



Hamlet



Hamlet's mood

- Hamlet detests his uncle.
- He finds the choice of marrying so soon and give way to celebrations all over the country disrespectful towards the memory his father.
- He cannot accept to see his mother married to somebody who looks like a «satyr» to him.
- Apparently his mother seems to have forgotten his father and Hamlet finds it unbearable.
- In a word, he is depressed.



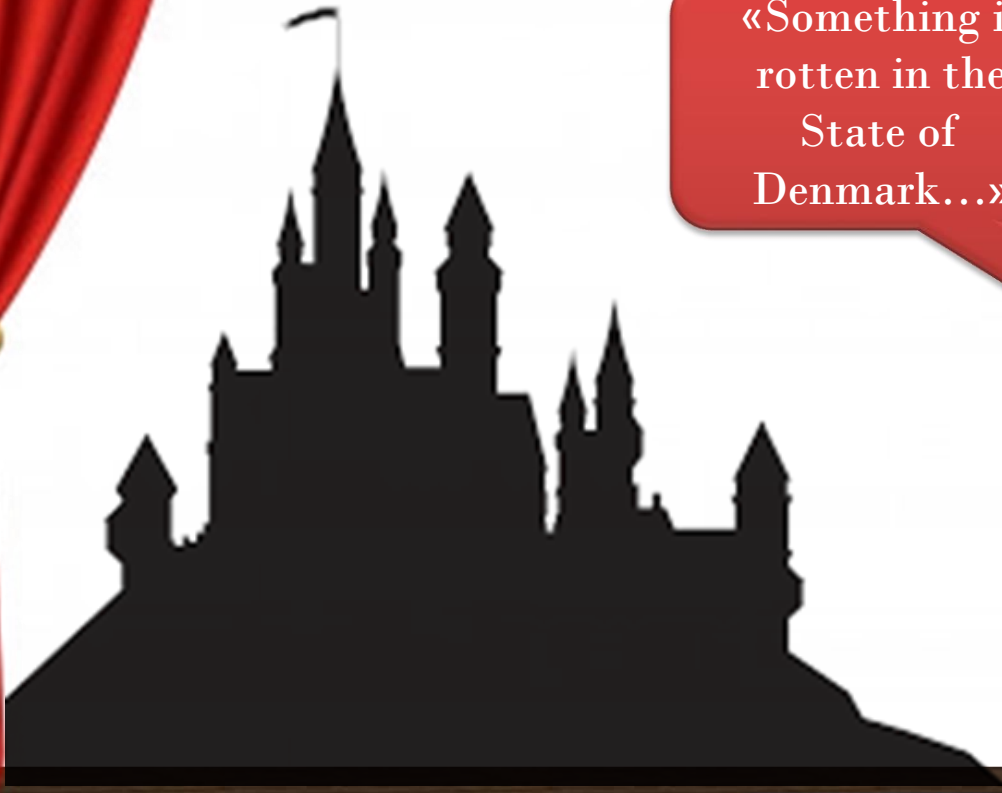
The Fair Ophelia

- The royal attendant Polonius says farewell to his son Laertes, who is departing for France.
- Laertes warns his sister, Ophelia, away from Hamlet and thinking too much of his attentions towards her.
- Hamlet has been in love with her.
- Ophelia is sweet, innocent and obedient.





«Something is
rotten in the
State of
Denmark...»



Marcellus



Something is rotten....

- Hamlet hears of the Ghost from Horatio and Marcellus, he wants to see it for himself.
- Ghosts were believed as signs of bad omen.

Hence

- The presence of the ghost means that there must be something wrong (rotten) .
- The ghost has come to put things right.





Angels and ministers of grace defend
us!

Be thou a spirit of health or goblin
damned,


Bring with thee airs from heaven or
blasts from hell,

Be thy events wicked or charitable,
Thou comest in such a questionable
shape

That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee
Hamlet,

King, father, royal Dane. Oh, answer
me!





I am thy father's spirit,
Doomed for a certain
term to walk the night,

If thou didst ever thy dear
father love..... Revenge his
foul and most unnatural
murder.

Murder??





Sleeping within mine orchard,
(...)
thy uncle stole
With juice of cursèd hebenon
in a vial,
And in the porches of mine
ears did pour
The leperous distillment,

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's
hand
Of life, of crown, of queen at once
dispatched,
Cut off even in the blossoms of my
sin,
Unhousled, disappointed, unaneled,





If thou hast nature in
thee, bear it not.
Let not the royal bed
of Denmark be
A couch for luxury and
damnèd incest.

Adieu, adieu,
Hamlet!
Remember me.



- The Ghost appears to Hamlet, claiming indeed to be the ghost of his father.
- He tells Hamlet about how Claudius, the current King and Hamlet's uncle, murdered him.
- He wants his son to revenge him.
- He also tells him that the target of his revenge must be only Claudius and leave his mother out.
- Hamlet swears vengeance for his father.

BUT.....





Oh, villain,
villain, smiling
damnèd
villain!@%#°!!

The time is out of
joint. Oh, cursèd
spite,
That ever I was
born to set it right!



The Cursed Spite

- As soon as the Ghost walks away, Hamlet feels the burden of the prospect of revenge.
- Claudius with his unnatural action (the murder of a brother) had changed the course of things.
- It was Hamlet's task to put things right, as son of the murdered king.
- But he finds this new course of fate (spite) cursed.
- He believed he was born to be Prince and King one day.
- Will he be able to set things right?



BUT

- Would you trust the words of a ghost, even if it comes in the shape of your dead father?
- Would you kill only because a ghost imparted you to do so?

Hence:

Hamlet decides to feign madness while he test the truth of the Ghost's allegations.



Act II

- According to his plan, Hamlet begins to act strangely.
- He rejects Ophelia, while Claudius and Polonius, the royal attendant, spy on him.
- They had hoped to find the reason for Hamlet's sudden change in behaviour but could not.



- Claudius summons Guildenstern and Rosencrantz, old friends of Hamlet to find out what's got into him.
- Their arrival coincides with a group of travelling actors that Hamlet happens to know well.
- Hamlet writes a play which includes scenes that mimic the murder of Hamlet's father.
- During rehearsal, Hamlet and the actors plot to present Hamlet's play before the King and Queen.



Act III

- Claudius asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern what they have learned about Hamlet's malady.
- The two reply that they have not been able to find its cause.
- They do mention, however, that Hamlet was very enthusiastic about the players' performance that night, **which prompts Claudius to agree to attend the play.**
- Polonius and Claudius then begin their plan to **loose Ophelia on Hamlet** and mark their encounter, hoping to find the root of his madness.
- They instruct Ophelia to pretend that she is simply reading a book and withdraw behind a tapestry.



To be, or not to
be — that is the
question.

Whether 'tis nobler in the
mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of
outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a
sea of troubles
And, by opposing, end
them. To die, to sleep,
No more.



The Theme of Suicide

- Hamlet breaks on the scene and muses about the option of committing suicide, but:

Is it worthy of a Prince?

- Hamlet's sufferance is great and deep, like an arrow that pierces him.
- The act of revenge is seen like «*a sea of trouble*», thus pointing out his being unfit to act and his depressive state as well.
- Committing suicide, he would put an end to all.

REMEMBER

During this famous soliloquy, Hamlet has no skull in his hands, but a dagger («*bare bodkin*»)



And by a sleep, to say we
end
The heartache and the
thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to — 'tis
a consummation
Devoutly to be wished.

To die, to sleep;
To sleep, perchance to dream. Ay,
there's the rub.
For in that sleep of death, what
dreams may come
When we have shuffled off this
mortal coil
Must give us pause. There's the
respect
That makes calamity of so long
life.



The Nature of Death

- Death is a way to put an end to man's sorrow, that is why it is to be wished. But:

What does it mean to die?

- Death in a way is like sleep, but what are the dreams of death like?
- The fear of death makes us bear the sorrows and injustices of life, which is a «*calamity*» for him.



- «Space Odyssey 2001» by Kubrik
- The computer Hal 9000 is about to be turned off, which is seen like its death and asks:

«Shall I dream?»



For who would bear the whips
and scorns of time,
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud
man's contumely,
The pangs of despised love, the
law's delay,
The insolence of office, and the
spurns
That patient merit of the
unworthy takes,
When he himself might his
quietus make
With a bare bodkin?



Who would fardels bear,
To grunt and sweat under a
weary life,
But that the dread of something
after death,
The undiscovered country from
whose bourn
No traveler returns, puzzles the
will,
And makes us rather bear those
ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know
not of?





Thus **conscience** does make
cowards of us all,
And thus the native hue of
resolution
Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of
thought.
And enterprises of great pith and
moment —
With this regard their currents turn
awry
And **lose the name of action**.



And Lose the Name of Action

- “To be or not to be” arrives as a surprise – it slows down the action just as the action is really beginning to move.
- Hamlet becomes wrapped up in his own thoughts, regardless of his surroundings, thus exploring the nature of death.
- He concludes by saying that we would rather suffer the woes we know, painful as they are, than go on to possible woes we cannot conceive of.
- Hence, thought (reason/moral) leads man from action to inaction.



The Fair Ophelia

- Hamlet catches sight of Ophelia.
- After a short conversation she attempts to return some of the remembrances that Hamlet gave when courting her.
- Hamlet replies caustically, questioning Ophelia's honesty.



Get thee to a nunnery, go,
farewell. Or if thou wilt
needs marry, marry a fool;
for
wise men know well enough
what monsters you make of
them. To a nunnery go, and
quickly too. Farewell.



Oh, what a noble
mind is here
o'erthrown!
The courtier's,
soldier's, scholar's,
eye, tongue, sword;
Th' expectancy and
rose of the fair state



Is Hamlet Mad or Not?

- Claudius and Polonius step out of their hiding place.
- The king states that he does not believe that Hamlet is mad because of his foiled love for Ophelia, or really mad at all.
- He believes he is tormented for some hidden reason.
- He determines to send Hamlet on a diplomatic mission to England before he can cause any serious trouble.
- Polonius suggests in parting that Claudius arrange a private interview between Hamlet and his mother after the play that evening.
- Claudius agrees.



The Mouse Trap



- It's the night of the performance of the play
- When the play begins, Hamlet carefully observes Claudius.
- When the fictional king in the play is murdered in much the same way Hamlet's father was, Claudius flees, clearly rattled.
- Hamlet confirms the reaction with Horatio, thrilled that he finally has proof Claudius murdered his father.
- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern arrive to tell Hamlet that Gertrude wants to see him immediately.



And so he goes to heaven,
And so I am revenged?
That would be scanned.
A villain kills my father and
for that,
I, his sole son, do this same
villain send
To heaven.

What form of
prayer
can serve my turn
— "Forgive me my
foul murder"?

Now might I
do it pat. Now
he is praying,
And now I'll
do't.



And so he goes to heaven...

- Hamlet is summoned by his distressed mother, Gertrude.
- On the way, he happens upon Claudius kneeling and attempting to pray.
- Hamlet reasons that to kill the King now would only send his soul to heaven rather than hell.
- Hamlet decides to spare his life for the time being.



The Ghost Again

- Polonius hides in Gertrude's room to protect her from her unpredictable son.
- When Hamlet arrives to scold his mother, he hears Polonius moving behind the arras (a kind of tapestry).
- He stabs the tapestry and, in so doing, kills Polonius.
- The ghost of Hamlet's father reappears and warns his son not to delay revenge or upset his mother.





Do not forget.
This visitation
Is but to whet
thy almost
blunted purpose.
Speak to her,
Hamlet.

How is it with
you, lady?



Real of Imagined?

- The ghost appears for the third time, but only Hamlet can see him,

WHY?

1. Reinforces the idea, at his mother's eyes, that Hamlet is mad
2. After the distressful confrontation with his mother, it may be the product of Hamlet's allucination.
3. Hamlet feels guilty as he has not acted yet
4. The ghost urges him to act
5. Great scenical effect (unexpected)



Act IV

- Hamlet is sent to England, supposedly as an ambassador, just as King Fortinbras of Norway crosses Denmark with an army to attack Poland.
- During his journey, Hamlet discovers Claudius has a plan to have him killed once he arrives.
- He returns to Denmark alone, sending his companions Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to their deaths in his place.
- Rejected by Hamlet, Ophelia is now desolate at the loss of her father. She goes mad and drowns.



Act V

- On the way back to Denmark, Hamlet meets Horatio in the graveyard (along with a gravedigger), where they talk of the chances of life and death.
- Ophelia's funeral procession arrives at the very same graveyard (what luck!).
- Hamlet confronts Laertes, Ophelia's brother, who has taken his father's place at the court.



- A duel is arranged between Hamlet and Laertes.
- During the match, Claudius conspires with Laertes to kill Hamlet.
- They plan that Hamlet will die either on a poisoned rapier or with poisoned wine.
- The plans go awry when Gertrude unwittingly drinks from the poisoned cup and dies.
- Then both Laertes and Hamlet are wounded by the poisoned blade, and Laertes dies.
- Hamlet, in his death throes, kills Claudius.
- Hamlet dies, leaving only his friend Horatio to explain the truth to the new king, Fortinbras, as he returns in victory from the Polish wars.



The End



Eeva Lammien / Freney 3art Tumblr.com

