

Hamlet

Shakespeare
in Rhyme 7



HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

In Denmark, there once did live 1
Queen Gertrude, who had suffered a loss.
Her husband, King Hamlet had so much to give
But his sudden death left her as the boss.

Within two months, Queen Gertrude had taken 2
The dead King's brother in marriage,
Leaving her subjects somewhat shaken
As they looked at the wedding carriage.

Claudius was the brother's name 3
But he lacked the King's honour and charm.
Young Prince Hamlet wouldn't treat him the same
As his late father but did him no harm.

This Hamlet seemed to lose interest in life, 4
After his regent father had died.
When Gertrude again became a wife,
Prince Hamlet showed a darker side.

Since his father's death he'd dressed in black, 5
Even on Queen Gertrude's second wedding day.
He hoped to put her behaviour back on track
But with Claudius he suspected foul play.

Although Claudius had said that a serpent's sting 6
Had taken the King of Denmark's life,
Hamlet was reluctant to believe this thing,
Suspecting his uncle of murder and strife.

It bothered Hamlet, not knowing for sure 7
Whether his suspicions of Claudius were true.
He wondered if his mother's innocence was pure
Or if she'd helped in changing the old for the new.

One day a rumour reached Prince Hamlet's ears 8
About a ghostly figure being seen
By the palace guards, bringing midnight fears
But on communication it wasn't too keen.





Horatio, a close friend of Hamlet had said 9
That the mysterious ghost appeared to resemble
The dead King with a face not angry but sad instead;
When daylight grew it would no longer assemble.

Hamlet decided to spend that night 10
With the palace guards to see
If the belief that the King's ghost walked was right
And if so, what could its purpose be.

With Horatio and Marcellus, Hamlet stood by 11
And after a while the ghost appeared and drew near.
Fearful at first, Hamlet gave prayer a try
But its lack of danger soon became clear.

Hamlet addressed the spectre as father and King, 12
For it seemed to desire conversation with him.
He was led to a private place where it did bring
News to Hamlet, which he found rather grim.

This was indeed his father's ghost, 13
Having been murdered by Claudius, his brother
Who poured poison in his ears, which made his blood roast;
He now asked his son to avenge him, one way or another.

The King's ghost also showed great sadness 14
That Gertrude had married his murderer even though
She was not a party to Claudius' scheming and madness;
Hamlet was not to strike her with a vengeful blow.

Gertrude's conscience and Heaven would deal 15
With her punishment in due time,
According to the ghost who made Hamlet feel
Ready to act against Claudius for this crime.

The ghost then left Hamlet alone 16
With its words firmly in his head.
He told only Horatio of the seeds it had sown
But fear of discovery left him in dread.





He, therefore, decided to pretend to be mad 17
In order to avoid Claudius' suspicion at court.
He changed his manner, speech and the clothes that he had
And appeared as a prince of the lunatic sort.

Gertrude and Claudius began to think 18
That love for a girl was to blame.
Before Hamlet's life had begun to sink,
With Ophelia he had played the courtship game.

In order for Hamlet to keep to his plan 19
He had to ignore this fair girl
But Ophelia was too nice to forget this young man,
Despite his rudeness and his mind in a whirl.

She remembered Hamlet before his change 20
When his behaviour was courteous and charming
And told herself that his manner was so strange
Due to a disease of the mind, which made him alarming.

Yet Hamlet could not fully forget 21
His feelings for this lady so fine.
He sent her a mad letter but in it was set
Signs of his affection on every line.

She showed this letter to Polonius, her father 22
Who then informed the new King and his Queen.
They felt the madness wasn't with grief but rather
With love for Ophelia, but could a cure be seen?

Despite the success of his act, Hamlet had 23
Difficulty in planning to kill
His uncle even though he may have been bad;
With doubts of the ghost, his mind did fill.

Hamlet felt that he needed more proof 24
Than the words of a mysterious ghost.
A troupe of players who could raise the roof,
Meanwhile, came to the palace to please their host.





The players were old friends of the Prince 25
And he asked one of them to give a speech
About the death of King Priam which helped to convince
Him that revenge of a real King was within reach.

Hamlet asked the troupe to perform a play 26
Similar to the death of his father, the King.
He would see what Claudius would do and say,
Hoping for more proof of his guilt, it might bring.

When this special drama was ready 27
He invited Gertrude and Claudius to attend.
The act of poisoning made Hamlet's uncle unsteady;
Feeling sick, he left before the end.

Now that he'd seen Claudius' reaction 28
Hamlet felt sure of his uncle's crime.
With Horatio he enjoyed this satisfaction,
Knowing that the ghost hadn't wasted his time.

Meanwhile, Claudius had decided to arrange 29
A meeting between Gertrude and her son
To express their displeasure at his mad change,
With Polonius in hiding to ensure this was done.

Hamlet was duly summoned to Gertrude's room 30
And she rebuked him for causing offence
To his new father, not the one in a tomb
But her use of this title removed his sense.

He seemed to lose respect for his mother 31
And she intended to call for support.
He grabbed her wrists but could not smother
Her cry for help to someone at court.

Behind a curtain Polonius was hidden 32
And when he heard Gertrude's cry,
He too called for help, although unbidden
But for this he was soon to die.





Thinking that Claudius was hidden there, 33
Hamlet drew forth his sword and stabbed
At the curtain without any thought or care
But it was a dead Polonius that he eventually grabbed.

Although his mother condemned this act, 34
Hamlet said that her crime was worse
By joining Claudius in a wedding pact;
He hoped such talk would lift her curse.

Hamlet also made good use 35
Of pictures of Claudius and the dead King,
Making a comparison in order to abuse
Her current husband who'd done a bad thing.

Queen Gertrude began to feel ashamed 36
When suddenly the ghost appeared.
It reminded Hamlet who was really to be blamed
But his mother couldn't see this spirit so weird.

The ghost then left Hamlet to finish his talk 37
With Gertrude, still puzzled by the ghost's effect
On her son who eventually let her walk
Once she agreed to be more select.

When Hamlet checked the body behind the screen 38
And found it was Polonius that he'd killed,
Claudius had an excuse to remove from the scene
The young Prince in a manner most skilled.

Hamlet was placed on board a ship, 39
Bound for England quite soon,
To avoid Polonius' murder charge grip
But for Claudius this act seemed out of tune.

Two men went with Hamlet as an escort, 40
Carrying letters of instruction regarding the Prince,
Asking the English to kill him when caught;
Through their hands his blood would rinse.





Luckily, Hamlet had suspected foul play 41
And he found the letters that night,
Removing his reference in a certain way
But naming his escorts to be put out of sight.

Not long after, his ship was attacked 42
By pirates greedy for loot.
Hamlet fought hard but wasn't well backed
By his crew, who failed to follow suit.

Hamlet leapt aboard the pirate ship, 43
Expecting the others to do the same
But they sailed away having lost their grip;
Fortunately the pirates played a fair game.

Having recognised the young Prince, 44
The pirates put him ashore
Hoping that such a good turn would convince
The royal court to one day even the score.

He knew that when his escort ship arrived 45
Claudius' two men would be put to death.
He informed the court that he'd survived
But Ophelia's funeral caught his breath.

It seems that she was so distraught 46
At the death of her father by Hamlet's sword
That she began to act very oddly in court,
Giving out tunes and flowers with strange accord.

One day Ophelia visited a small brook 47
Over which a small tree grew.
On this tree she tried to hook
Garlands of flowers but got in a stew.

The branch on which she stood gave way 48
And into the water Ophelia went.
Although she began to sing and play
She soon went under and her life was spent.





Ophelia's funeral was underway when
Hamlet returned to the royal court.
Laertes, her brother was so sad just then
That he jumped into her grave, very distraught. 49

When Hamlet witnessed this emotional act 50
He remembered his own love for Ophelia, so strong,
And jumped in with Laertes where he was attacked
For doing Ophelia and Polonius such wrong.

The two young men were pulled apart 51
And Hamlet explained that his grieving action
Was to outdo Laertes' broken heart;
The two men were reconciled with some satisfaction.

Claudius, however, saw a chance 52
To put an end to Hamlet for good,
Using Laertes grief as a poisoned lance
In order to make his hatred for the Prince understood.

Laertes was brought into the plot 53
By Claudius, who asked him to suggest
To Hamlet that he give swordplay a shot
But their match would not be fought in jest.

Hamlet agreed to a friendly fight 54
But just before the contest,
Claudius brought poison into sight,
On the point of a sword and in wine of the best.

Laertes took the poison tipped sword 55
And at first fought Hamlet with care.
He then struck a blow, which the Prince couldn't afford
But now it was Laertes' turn to beware.

As the men struggled, Hamlet seized 56
Laertes' weapon so foul
And struck him a blow which rather displeased
Ophelia's brother who threw in the towel.





Just then, Queen Gertrude gave alarm
For she had sipped some poisoned wine
Intended for Hamlet if the sword did no harm;
A suspicion of poison was her final line. 57

As she lay dead, Hamlet instructed
That all the doors be closed and locked
Whilst the truth was being deducted;
With Laertes' confession he was then shocked. 58

Laertes spoke of the poison he'd used
And that their lives were ebbing away.
Before dying, Laertes accused
Claudius of all the misery that day. 59

As Hamlet realized that his end was near,
He stabbed Claudius with the poisoned tip
Of the evil sword that had cost him so dear;
He hadn't let a chance for revenge slip. 60

After killing Claudius, Hamlet addressed
Horatio before the poison finished him too,
Asking that his noble friend do his best
To tell the true story about this terrible brew. 61

Horatio promised that the truth would be heard,
About Hamlet who would have made a fine king.
The Prince then died but would have preferred
To rule and serve Denmark, a most honourable thing. 62

THE END

