

Hamlet

by William Shakespeare

retold by

Virginia Evans – Jenny Dooley – Bob Obee
Olga Afanasyeva – Irina Mikheeva



A reader for Spotlight **11**



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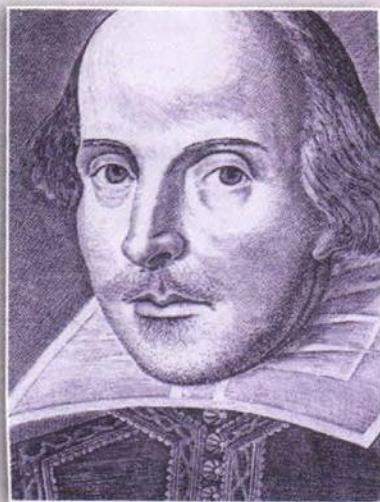
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William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England, on 23rd April, 1564. His father, John Shakespeare, was a successful tradesman, and his mother, Mary Arden, a descendant of a prominent family. We do not know much about Shakespeare's early life, but many people believe that he went to the King Edward VI Grammar School in Stratford and studied Latin and

English literature. When he was 18, he married Anne Hathaway. They had three children: Susanna, Hamnet and Judith.

Shakespeare later moved to London and became an actor and a writer. He wrote many plays and poems between 1586 and 1616. His most famous plays include *Macbeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *The Merchant of Venice* and *Othello*. All of them involve many different characters, each one of whom has a strong and interesting personality. In his plays he portrayed a wide variety of emotions such as greed, selfishness, revenge, kindness and love. Shakespeare's plays were very popular when he was alive, and even more so today. Actors still perform his works, and there are many films based on his plays. Shakespeare's writings have influenced a large number of novelists and poets over the years, and his language has, to a large extent, passed into everyday usage.

Shakespeare died on 23rd April, 1616. He was 52 years old. Today, we remember him as one of the greatest writers in history.



BACKGROUND

The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark is one of Shakespeare's most well-known plays. Shakespeare wrote it between 1600 and the summer of 1602.

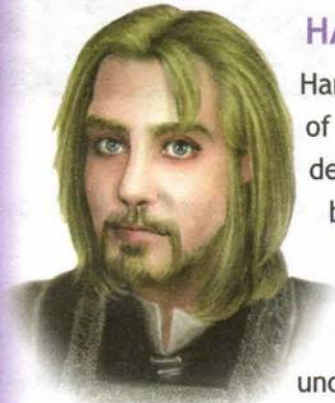
Hamlet is performed more often than any other Shakespearean play in almost every western country and it has been translated into every major language. In the theatre, performing the full play takes around 4 hours, and it is because of this that most theatre companies use a shorter version of the play. Most actors find it very difficult to play the part of Hamlet. Not only does the character have more than 1,400 lines, but he is also a character with a very complicated and controversial personality. His troubled mind is balanced by his clear judgment. His indecisive and hesitant nature is balanced by his rash and impulsive acts.

Every actor has a different idea about how Hamlet should be played, and everyone who reads or sees the play perceives the character in a different way. Perhaps that is why there have been 22 films called *Hamlet* made for cinema and another 16 for television. Another 50 films have been based on the play. At least 26 operas have been written based on *Hamlet*, and modern musicians have also used lines from the play in their songs.

THE PLOT

Prince Hamlet's father, King Hamlet of Denmark, dies suddenly while Hamlet is away at university. The King's brother, Claudius, takes the throne and marries Hamlet's mother, Gertrude, much to Hamlet's dismay. King Hamlet returns to his castle as a ghost seeking revenge for his death. The ghost tells Hamlet that Claudius murdered him when he was asleep, and Hamlet promises to avenge his father's death. However, thoughtful by nature, he delays taking action entering into a deep melancholy and even apparent madness. Claudius asks two of Hamlet's old friends to come to the castle and find out what troubles him, but Hamlet knows that his old friends are Claudius' spies. When a group of actors comes to the castle, Hamlet asks them to perform a special play. The play tells the story of a murder which reminds Claudius of the way he killed his brother. His reaction is so strong that it inevitably proves his guilt. In the end, Hamlet eventually takes action in a situation that ends tragically for everyone.

THE CHARACTERS



HAMLET

Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark. He is in deep sorrow because his father died recently and his mother has married his uncle, Claudius.

Hamlet believes that Claudius murdered his father and he wants to get revenge. He is a clever young man but he appears to be indecisive and hesitant at times.

CLAUDIUS

Claudius is the new King of Denmark. He is Hamlet's uncle and also stepfather. Claudius is an evil, calculating politician driven by his desire for power. However, he occasionally shows signs of human feeling.



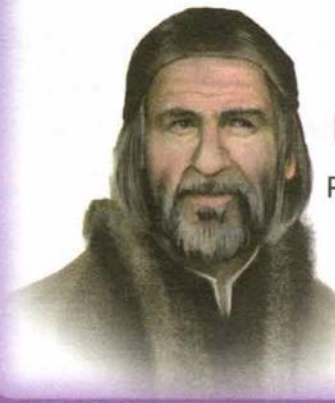
GERTRUDE

Gertrude is Hamlet's mother and the Queen of Denmark. She was married to King Hamlet but she later married his brother, Claudius. She loves her son deeply but she is a rather weak woman unable or unwilling to face the truth.



THE GHOST

The ghost is Hamlet's father. He claims to have been murdered by Claudius and asks Hamlet to avenge his death. It is not clear from the beginning whether the ghost is what it appears to be or a devil sent to tempt Hamlet into murder.



POLONIUS

Polonius is the most important person in Claudius' court. He is a conniving old man, father of Ophelia and Laertes. Polonius is completely trusted by the King, to whom he is loyal, even servile at times.

OPHELIA



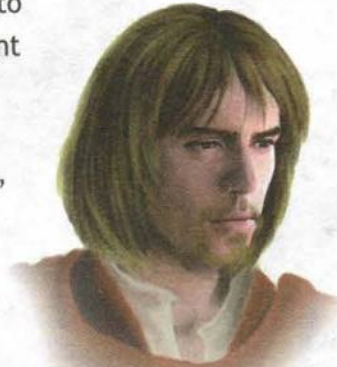
Ophelia is Polonius' daughter. She is a beautiful young woman with whom Hamlet has been in love. She is sweet and innocent and always obeys her father and her

brother, Laertes. Though she is dependent on men, it is men's plots that eventually prove fatal for her.

LAERTES

Laertes is the son of Polonius and brother of Ophelia, whom he loves very much. He spends most of his time in France but he returns to Denmark to fight Hamlet.

Passionate and quick to action, Laertes appears to be far more decisive than reflective Hamlet.



HORATIO

Horatio is Hamlet's close friend from university. He is very loyal throughout the play, supporting and helping his friend. He lives to tell Hamlet's story.



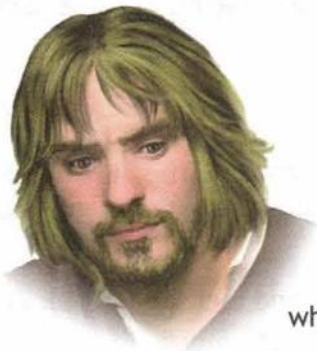
ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are two of Hamlet's old friends. They are invited to the castle by Claudius to find out the cause of Hamlet's strange behaviour. Aware of their true intentions, Hamlet treats them coldly before finally avenging them.



FORTINBRAS

Fortinbras is the Prince of Norway. His father was killed in battle by Hamlet's father, and the two countries were enemies. Claudius makes peace with Fortinbras, who pays a special tribute to Hamlet at the end of the play.





• 1. The New King •

In a big room in Elsinore Castle, Claudius, the new King of Denmark, was giving a speech to the court.

"We are all sad that our beloved King is dead," he said. "He was my brother, and I loved him dearly. However, by marrying our beautiful Queen I have balanced sorrow and joy. Let us not forget that Prince Fortinbras of Norway threatens to attack Denmark," Claudius continued. "Therefore, I have asked his uncle, the present King of Norway, to stop his nephew's plans."

At this moment, Laertes walked up to the King and bowed.

"And now, Laertes, son of good Polonius," said Claudius, "what is it that you want?"

"My lord, I wish to have your permission to return to France," replied Laertes. "I came back to Denmark to see you crowned King, but now I wish to go back again."

"He has my permission. Please let him go, my lord," said Polonius.

"Then I too give you permission, Laertes, to return to France."

Hamlet, the young Prince of Denmark, watched King Claudius and Queen Gertrude silently.

"Hamlet!" cried Claudius. "Why are you still mourning?" He beckoned Hamlet to come closer, and the Prince walked slowly up to the King and Queen.

"Good Hamlet," said his mother the Queen, "don't be so depressed and feel sad for your noble father forever. You know that all living creatures die one day and pass to eternity."

"Yes, Mother, I am aware of this," said Hamlet.

"So why, then, do you still seem so sad?" Gertrude asked her son.

"I do not seem sad, Madam, I am sad," replied Hamlet.



"Every son loses a father," Claudius said, "but to go on mourning is stubbornness. Please, stop feeling sad. Try to think of me as a father and you as a successor to the throne. Stay with us and do not go back to your studies in Wittenberg."

"Yes, dear Hamlet, stay with us," Gertrude echoed the King's words.

"Very well, Mother, if you wish it," said Hamlet.

The court rose, and he was left alone, deeply frustrated.

"O God! If only I could stop existing! How meaningless the whole world seems to me! How could she come to this? My father, not even two months dead, so excellent a king, so loving to my mother, and she has married again. A beast would have mourned longer. And married to my uncle! How weak women are!"

At that moment, Hamlet's friend, Horatio, and two guards entered the room.

"My good friend!" exclaimed Hamlet.

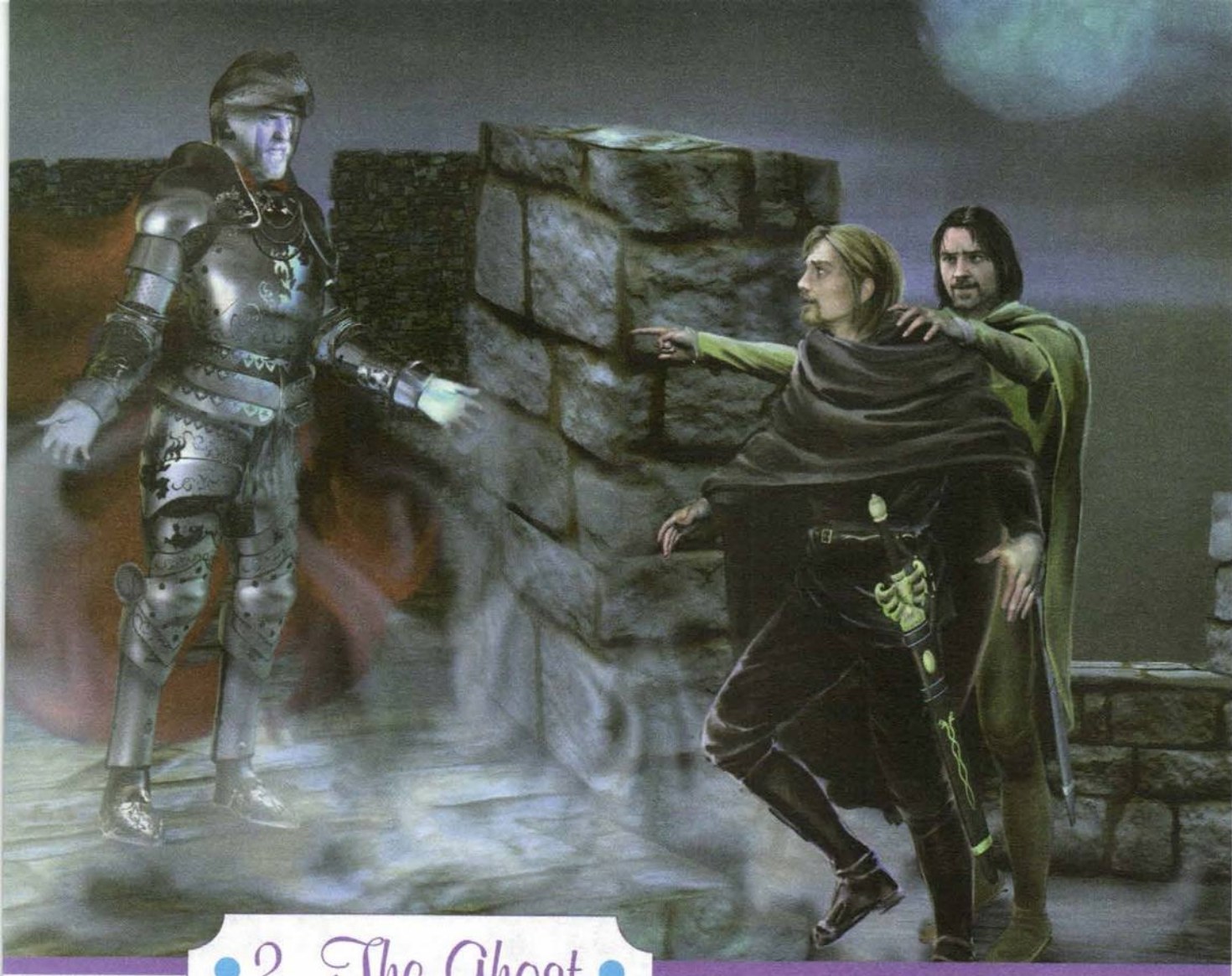
"My lord Hamlet, I bring some news for you. I think I saw your father last night."

Hamlet was quite astonished, but Horatio assured him that he and the guards had seen a figure like the King on the battlements of Elsinore Castle. It was wearing armour and stood silent.

"I will watch tonight. Perhaps it will walk again," said Hamlet convinced.

When Horatio and the guards went, he was left to his thoughts.

"My father's spirit wearing armour! I have a feeling he may have been murdered. I must be patient until the night comes. Then all evil things will be revealed."



• 2. The Ghost •

Just before midnight, Hamlet, Horatio and a guard met on the battlements despite the harsh cold. In the distance they could hear trumpets and shots.

"How shameful! The King is celebrating and getting drunk," said Hamlet in disgust.

At that, Horatio grabbed his arm. "Look, my lord, it is coming," he whispered.

The ghost came around a corner of the battlements, and Hamlet gasped.

"Speak to me!" begged the Prince. "Do not remain silent. Why is it that you, a dead corpse, appear among the living?"

"It beckons you to go with it," whispered Horatio. "Maybe it wishes to speak to you alone. Do not go, my lord. What if it tempts you toward the sea, or to the summit of the cliffs? Think of it. It might be dangerous."

"My life is meaningless to me. Look, it beckons me again. I shall follow it," said Hamlet firmly and he followed the ghostly apparition around the corner of the battlements.

"Something is rotten in the state of Denmark," murmured the guard.

"Listen carefully," said the ghost. "I am your father's spirit, forced to walk at night and burning in fires during the day till my sins are forgiven. You must avenge my evil and unnatural murder."

"Murder?" gasped Hamlet in astonishment.

"Rumour has been spread that I was bitten by a serpent while I was sleeping in my orchard," said the ghost grimly, "but the serpent that bit me now wears my crown."

"My uncle! I was right!" cried Hamlet.



"Yes. That beast poured poison into my ears sending me to death. My own brother took my life, my crown and my queen. But, Hamlet, please do not act against your mother. Deep down she is aware of her fault, so leave her to her own conscience," said the ghost. "Heaven will deal with her. Adieu, Hamlet. Remember me."

With that, the ghost disappeared from the battlements leaving Hamlet extremely upset.

"I will remember you, poor ghost, and take revenge. My confused mind will only keep your memory. O most evil woman, most villainous man!"

Then Horatio and the guard approached Hamlet, worried about his contact with the ghost.

"Lord Hamlet, let us know what happened," said Horatio breathlessly.

"No, you will reveal it."

"Not I, my lord. I swear by heaven I won't," promised Horatio.

"Nor I, my lord," the guard assured the Prince.

"There's a villain living in Denmark," said Hamlet.

"No ghost is necessary to tell us this, my lord," said Horatio.

"Then, without further words, I think we must shake hands and part. I'll go now, and you, good friends, swear never to speak of what you have seen. Also swear that you know nothing about my state of mind, because I may pretend to be a madman for a while."

As the three men took an oath upon Hamlet's sword, the ghost's voice echoed three times from beneath the ground, crying out "Swear, swear, swear!"



• 3. Mysterious Ways •

Laertes had taken his father's and the King's permission and was ready to leave for France. Before he left, he visited his sister Ophelia to say goodbye and give her some advice.

"Farewell, sweet Ophelia, and remember that Hamlet's love for you is not lasting. Perhaps he loves you now but you must not forget that he is a prince, and princes cannot always choose who they are going to marry. Therefore, hold back your feelings."

Ophelia reluctantly agreed and just then their father Polonius appeared. He gave his blessing and advice to his son and, after Laertes had left, he turned to his daughter. "Do not believe Hamlet's vows," he said echoing Laertes' words. "They can't be true."

"I shall obey my lord," Ophelia assured him.

Some days later, however, she ran into her father's room looking very frightened.

"What is it?" asked Polonius alarmed.

"My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber, lord Hamlet came to me with a madman's look as if he had escaped hell."

"Mad for your love?" asked Polonius.

"I do not know, my lord, but I fear so. He took me by the wrist and held me hard and stared and sighed. I have not spoken badly to him lately. I only sent his letters back and did not accept his visits, as you advised me," replied Ophelia.

"That has made him mad!" exclaimed Polonius. "I am sorry that I had not realised this earlier. Come, let us go to the King. He must know about this."



King Claudius was sitting together with Queen Gertrude in a room in Elsinore Castle. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two of Hamlet's old friends, had been invited to the castle as the King and Queen wished to talk to them.

"Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern," said Claudius. "The reason why we have called you here today is that we need your help. You must have heard of Hamlet's strange behaviour. I cannot say what has caused it, other than his father's death. I ask you both, as you grew up together, to find out what is troubling him."

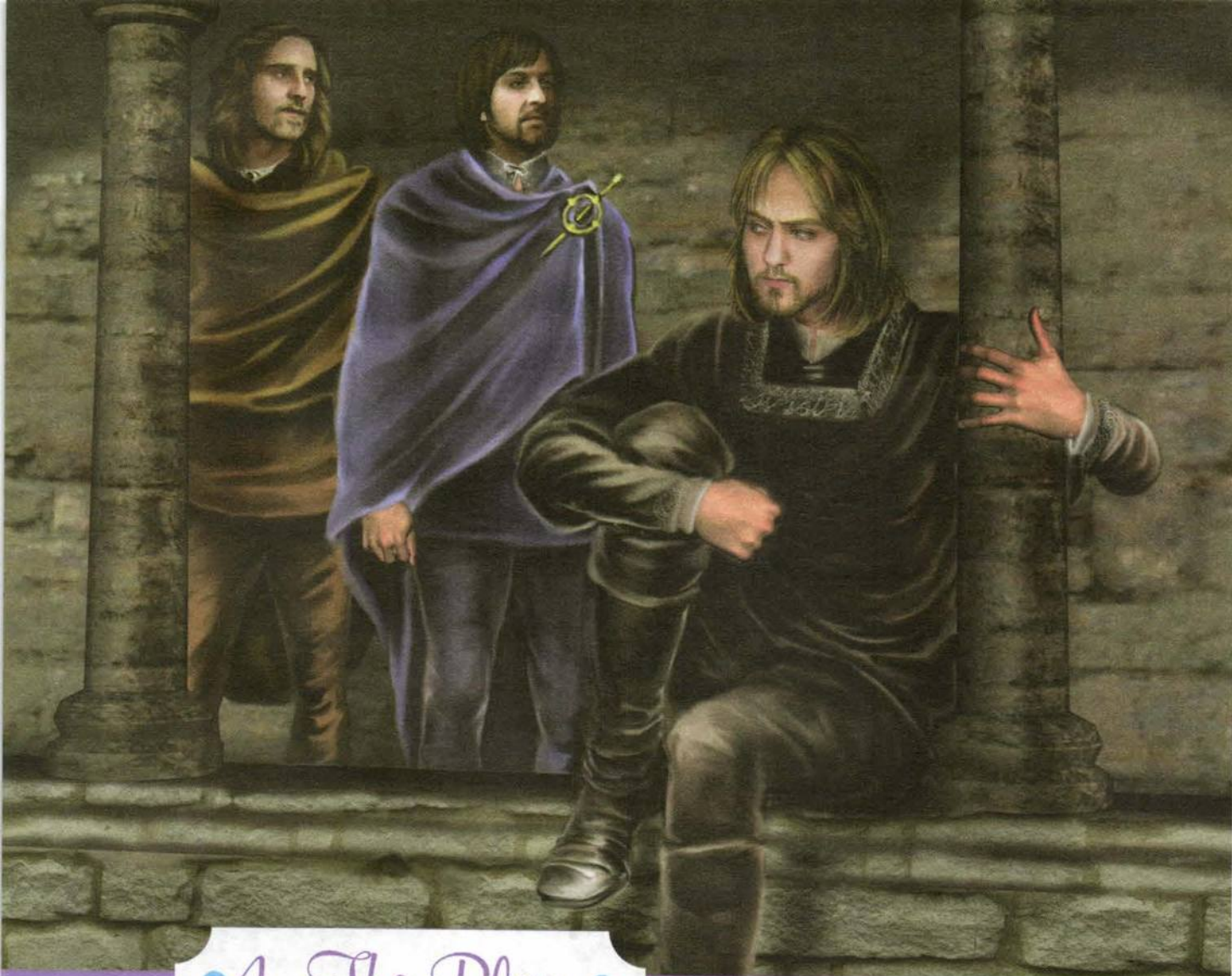
"I am sure there are no other men to whom he is as close," added Gertrude.

"We both obey to do as your majesties wish," said Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and they went off in search of Hamlet while Polonius entered with two attendants.

For a short while the King felt relieved, as he received good news about the situation with Norway. Prince Fortinbras' plans to invade Denmark had been prevented by his uncle the King.

"My lord, your noble son is mad," Polonius immediately turned to the subject of Hamlet. "My daughter told me of his love for her, and I, a faithful and honourable man, gave her advice to receive nothing from him. Ophelia followed my advice, and he became mad."

As soon as Polonius spoke these words, Hamlet appeared. The way he spoke revealed he was not well; he even pretended he didn't know Polonius! Some of his speech, however, was so witty that Polonius began to doubt his madness. He soon left him intending, though, to arrange a meeting between Hamlet and Ophelia to find out the true cause of his strange behaviour.



● 4. The Plan ●

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern lost no time in looking for Hamlet, whom they found alone in the castle. The Prince seemed very pleased to see them.

"My excellent good friends, how are you both?" he greeted them. "What brings you to the prison of Elsinore?"

"Prison, my lord?" asked Guildenstern.

"Denmark's a prison," replied Hamlet.

"Then the whole world is a prison," said Rosencrantz, puzzled.

"A huge one, with many dungeons, of which Denmark is the worst," retorted Hamlet.

"We do not think so, my lord," said Rosencrantz.

"To me it is a prison," insisted Hamlet. "But tell me, what are you doing in Elsinore?"

"We came to visit you, my lord, no other reason," said Rosencrantz.

"Were you not sent for? Is it your own decision? Is it a free visit? Come, be honest with me," said Hamlet. "I know the good King and Queen have sent you."

"For what purpose, my lord?" asked Rosencrantz.

"You must tell me that. Be direct whether you were sent for or not," demanded Hamlet.

"Yes, my lord, we were sent for," admitted Guildenstern.

"I will tell you why," said Hamlet. "I have lately been depressed, lost all my joy, and the whole world seems meaningless to me. All that is wonderful to others, is useless to me. You were sent here to find the reason for my grief."



Quickly changing the subject of discussion, the two friends went on to inform Hamlet about a group of actors travelling towards the castle. Hamlet was particularly delighted. At that moment, trumpets were heard and Polonius announced the actors.

"You are welcome," said Hamlet to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, "but my uncle-father and mother are deceived. I am sometimes mad, not always," and he turned to the actors.

"You're all welcome, masters. I am glad to see you well. Come, give us a taste of your work. Come, act out a speech," the Prince urged one of the players.

The actor acted out a speech, which Hamlet was very impressed with. Later, while the players were led to the guest rooms by Polonius, they paused to listen to Hamlet's request.

"Can you play *The Murder of Gonzago* tomorrow night?"

"Yes, my lord," they replied.

"Could you study a speech of some lines which I will add to the play?"

"Yes, my lord," the actors said again and parted.

Left alone, Hamlet could not help blaming himself.

"O how unworthy I am! This player here could act so passionately, even with tears in his eyes. And all for nothing! For the play. What would he do if he had the motive that I have? Yet, I do nothing. Am I a coward? I shall take revenge! Murder will reveal itself tomorrow night. I'll have these players play something like my father's murder for my uncle to see. I'll observe the King's reaction and find out if he is guilty as the ghost said."



• 5. Broken Vows •

The next day Rosencrantz and Guildenstern appeared to the King and Queen.

"Did you find out the cause of Hamlet's strange behaviour?" asked Claudius.

"He does confess he is not himself, my lord, but he does not reveal the reason," replied Rosencrantz. "Yet, he felt a kind of joy when he heard of actors performing at the court tonight."

"And he asked me to invite your majesties to hear and see the play," added Polonius.

"With all my heart," said the King. "I am glad to hear he is in a good mood."

When Rosencrantz and Guildenstern had left the room, the King requested the Queen to also exit so that Polonius' plan of spying on Hamlet could be put into practice.

"I have sent for Hamlet. Polonius and I will hide while Ophelia meets Hamlet as if by accident. This way we will judge by his behaviour if he suffers because of his love for her," said Claudius.

"I do wish that your beauty is the cause of Hamlet's madness," said Gertrude to Ophelia as she was leaving, "and hope you can set his mind right again."

The Queen left, and the others took their positions behind the wall hanging. Not a minute too soon, for then Hamlet appeared with a moody look on his face.

"To be, or not to be;" he wondered, "that is the question: whether it is better to suffer the difficulties of life or to die, to sleep and end the torture. Is it the fear of something after death, something unknown, that makes us live and bear our suffering?"

Deeply troubled with these thoughts, he caught sight of Ophelia, who looked up from her book and met Hamlet's eyes.



"How are you, my lord?" she asked.

"I am well, thank you," replied Hamlet.

"My lord," Ophelia went on, "I have gifts of yours that I wish to return."

"No, no, I never gave you anything," said Hamlet.

"My honoured lord, you know right well you did, and with most sweet words," contradicted Ophelia.

"I did love you once, but you should not have believed me," sneered Hamlet. "I never loved you. And if you wish to marry," he went on, almost raving, "marry a fool. Because you women take advantage of wise men. Go become a nun, and quickly! I know of your tricks, too. God gives you a face, and you paint it and change it. So no more marriages! To a nunnery, go!"

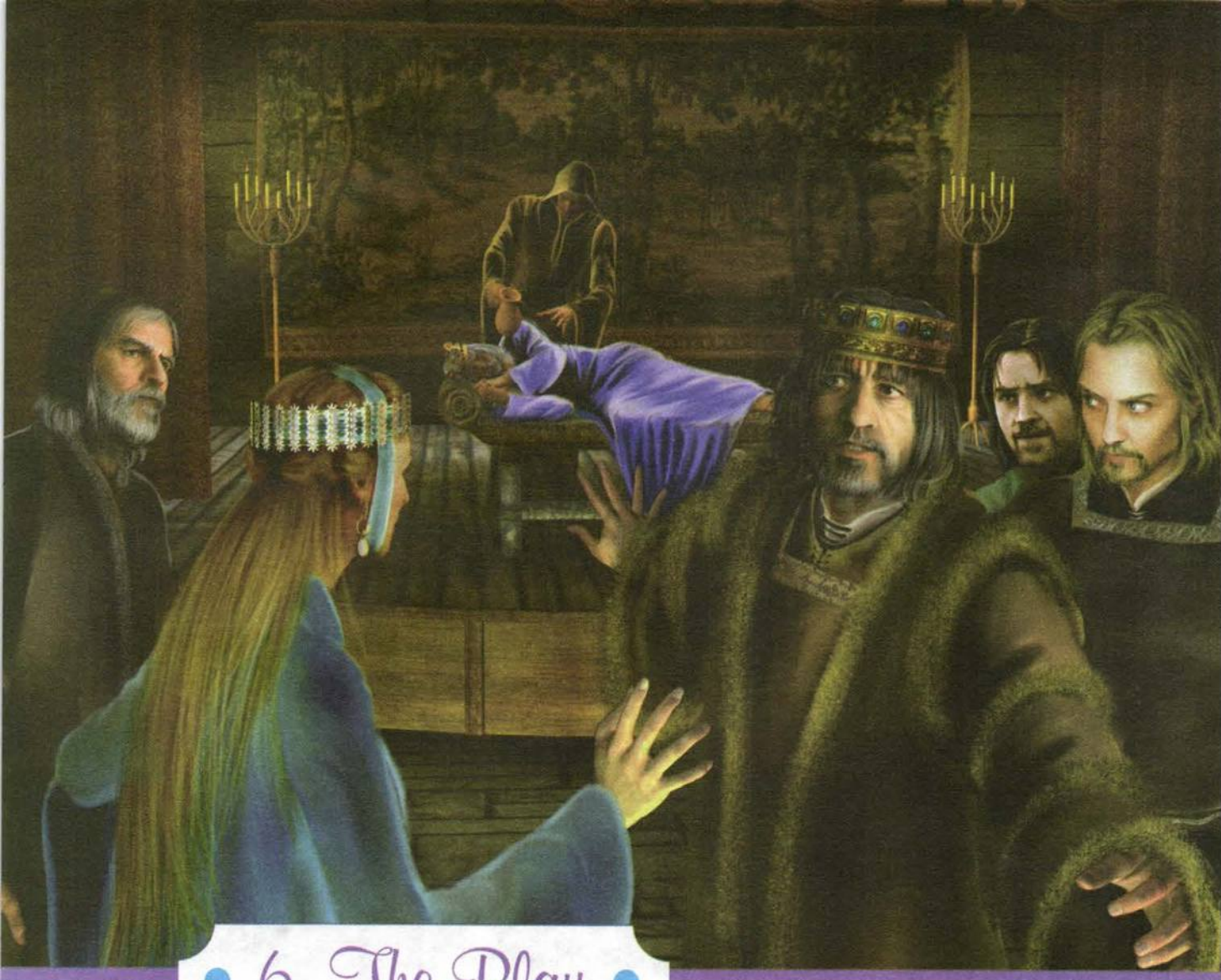
With that, Hamlet stormed out of the room leaving Ophelia devastated.

"His noble mind is damaged! He is overcome by madness. O Heaven help him!" cried Ophelia. "To see what I have seen!"

At this, the King and Polonius came out of their hiding place puzzled.

"Love?" Claudius said. "No, this is not what troubles him. Nor did he seem quite mad. There's something in his soul causing this melancholy that is dangerous. Let us send him off to England for a while and see if different sights or interests will help his troubles."

"But yet I still believe this deep sorrow is the result of his love for my daughter. My lord, let his Queen mother speak to him alone and if she cannot explain his madness, then send him to England," agreed Polonius.



• 6. The Play •

Later on that day there was general excitement in the castle, as the actors were preparing for *The Murder of Gonzago*. After advising them on how to perform, Hamlet had a private conversation with Horatio.

"Horatio, you are an honest man, and do not think I'm trying to flatter you by this. There is a play tonight for the King. One scene of it is like my father's death, which I have told you about. Please, when you see this scene, observe my uncle. If he does not show his hidden guilt, the ghost that we have seen deceived us. Watch carefully, I trust your judgment."

At the sound of trumpets and drums, everyone took their seats and the play began. As it progressed, the audience witnessed the scene where the murderer poured poison into the ear of his brother, the King, while he was sleeping in his orchard. At that, Claudius jumped to his feet.

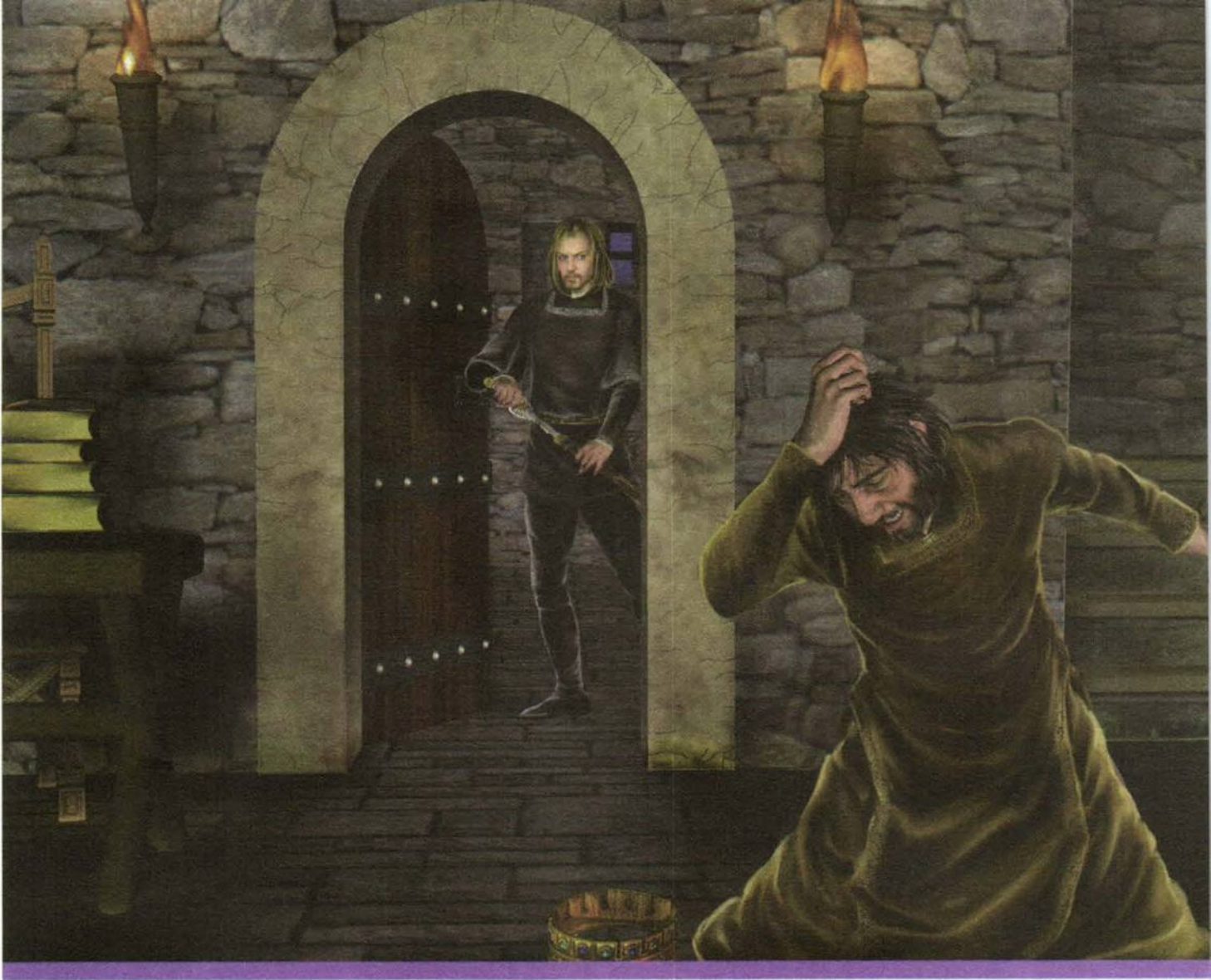
"Give me some light!" he yelled and rushed out of the room. Everyone hurried after him in panic wondering what was wrong, leaving Horatio and Hamlet alone to judge the King's reaction.

"Did you see?" cried Hamlet excitedly. "I'll take the ghost's word to be true."

"I saw it very well too, my lord. The ghost was right," agreed Horatio.

At that moment Rosencrantz and Guildenstern entered to inform Hamlet that Claudius was very disturbed and that his mother, terribly upset, wished to speak to him in private. Seeing that his two former friends were spying on him, Hamlet seemed cold and distant. When he was left alone, and thought again of Claudius' reaction, he became anxious to take revenge for his father's death.

"Now I could drink hot blood and do terrible things," he said decisively.



When they met the King, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were amazed to see Claudius' nervousness and anger.

"I do not like him, nor is it safe for us to tolerate his madness. Therefore, prepare yourselves. You will escort him to England," commanded the King.

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern bowed and left when Polonius entered and told the King that Hamlet was about to visit the Queen.

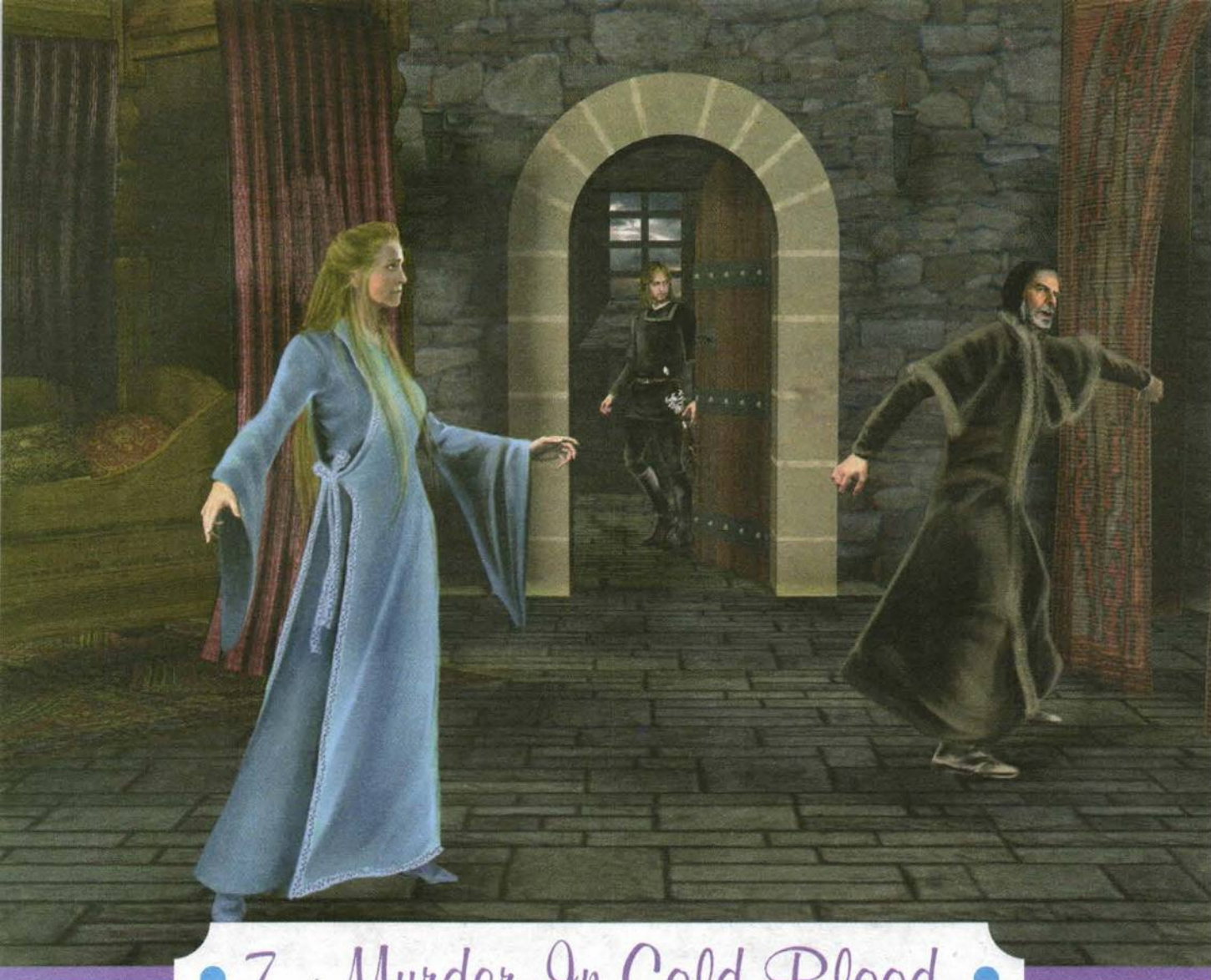
"I'm sure she will be strict with him, my lord. I'll hide myself behind the wall hanging and listen to their speech. I will inform you about it before you go to bed."

When he was left alone, Claudius was tortured by remorse.

"What I have done!" he groaned. "I have committed the worst of crimes, the oldest of sins. A brother's murder. And yet, though I may be forgiven for my sin by praying, this is not possible. What prayer can forgive me? I am still King of Denmark. I still have the possessions of my crime: my crown, my ambition and my queen. These are the proof of my guilt."

As he was kneeling down, a dark figure crept behind him. Claudius did not see Hamlet, who was hovering in the shadows.

"Now I'll do it, now, while he's praying," he thought, drawing his sword but he immediately had second thoughts. "If I kill him while he's praying and asking for forgiveness, I will send him to heaven. This is not revenge! When he is drunk or in a rage or doing something bad, this is when I'll strike so that his soul goes straight to hell!"



● 7. Murder In Cold Blood ●

Polonius hurried off to the Queen's chamber.

"Hamlet will come here immediately, my lady. Be strict with him and tell him you can no longer tolerate his behaviour," he urged the Queen. "I'll hide myself behind this hanging here."

No sooner had Polonius hidden himself than Hamlet appeared.

"Now, Mother, what's the matter?" he said.

"Hamlet, you have offended your father greatly," said Gertrude.

"Mother," snapped Hamlet, "you have offended my father greatly."

"You are very thoughtless," said Queen Gertrude angrily.

"You are very sinful," Hamlet answered back.

"What is this, Hamlet? Have you forgotten who I am?" asked Gertrude.

"By no means, my lady. You are the Queen, your husband's brother's wife and — I wish you were not so — you are also my mother," replied Hamlet.

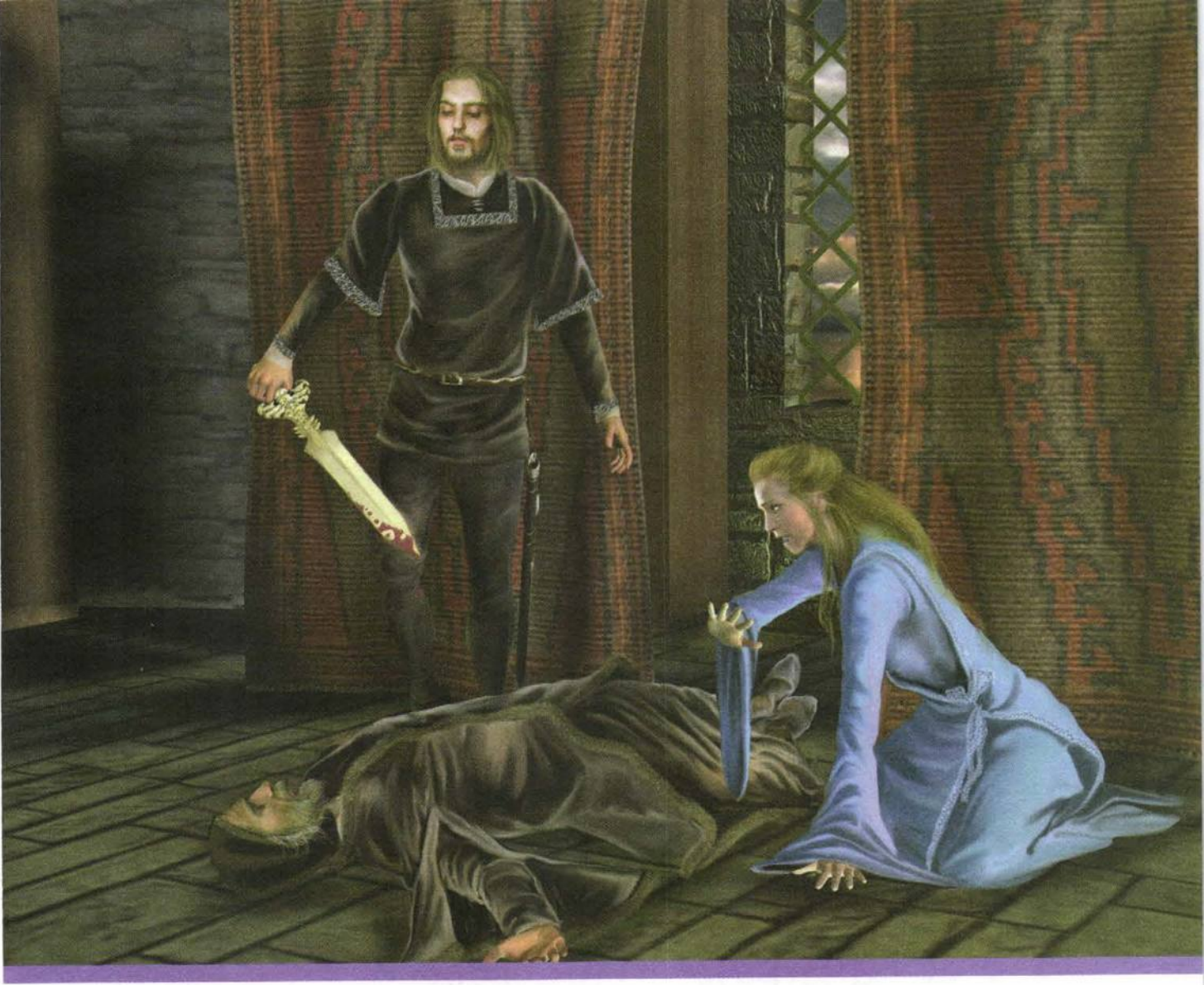
"I cannot tolerate this rudeness," said the Queen impatiently.

"Come, come and sit down. I'll show you who you really are," Hamlet went on in a rage.

Gertrude was so terrified by the anger in Hamlet's voice that she was afraid he was going to kill her and screamed. This made Polonius cry out from behind the wall hanging.

"What is that? A rat?" said Hamlet and in an instant thrust his sword through the hanging and killed Polonius mistaking him for the King.

"What have you done?" cried Gertrude. "What a terrible thing this is!" she exclaimed.



"Almost as terrible, Stepmother, as murdering a king and marrying his brother."

"As murdering a king?" echoed Gertrude. "What have I done to deserve such rudeness?"

"Look here upon this picture, and on this. This *was* your husband. Here *is* your husband, so inferior. What in the world blinded you to marry him? And you feel no shame!"

"Hamlet, speak no more!" cried the Queen. "You've made me see into my soul and I can't bear it! Your words are like knives in my ears."

"To live with a murderer and villain who stole the crown he wears," Hamlet went on.

"Speak to me no more!" begged Gertrude.

Suddenly, a figure appeared before them. It was the ghost.

"What is it that you want, gracious figure? Have you come because I haven't yet done what you asked? O say!" cried Hamlet.

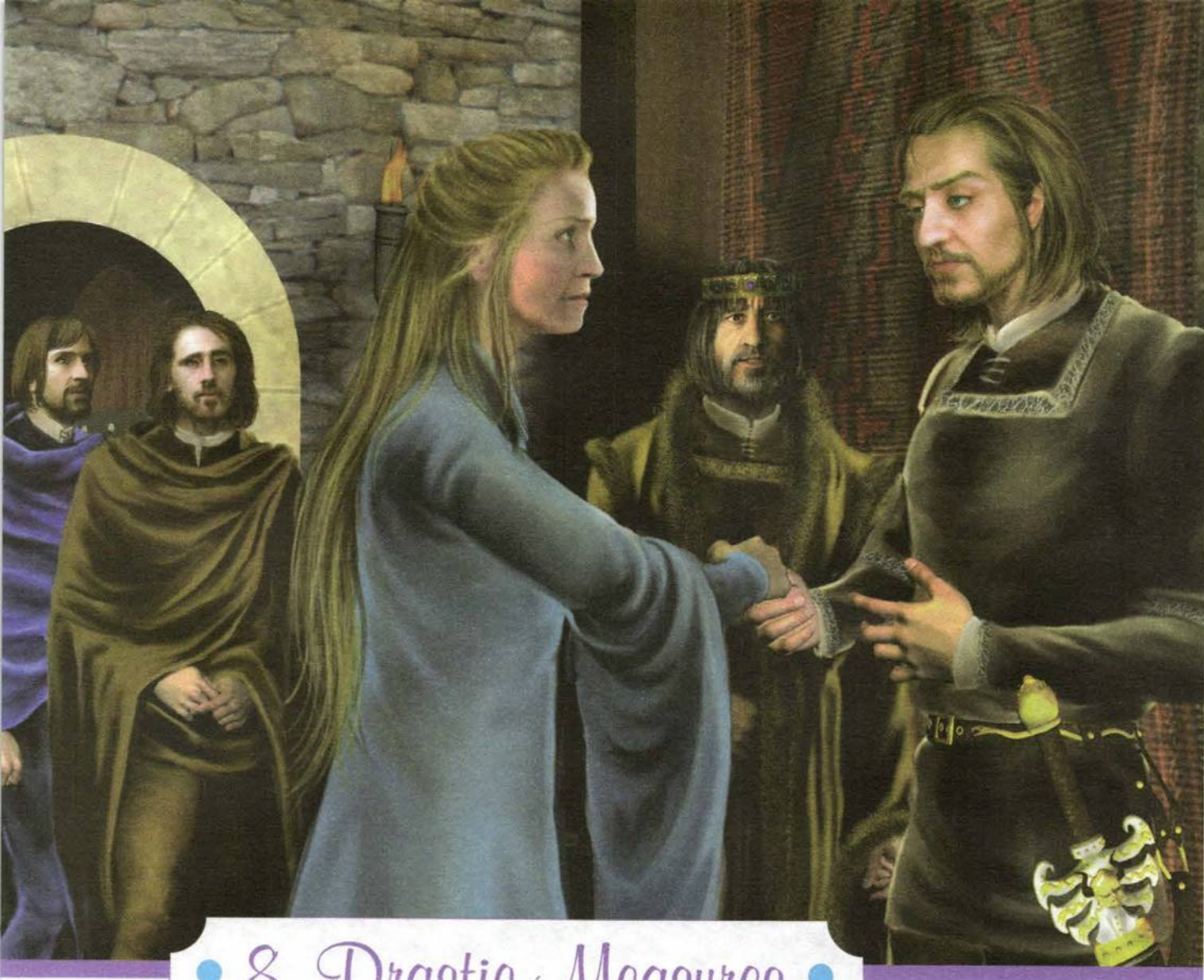
"Do not forget," said the ghost. "This visit is to remind you of your purpose. But look how shocked your mother looks. Speak to her, Hamlet."

"It is my father I am speaking to, Mother. Look where he leaves the room. This is not madness," said Hamlet to the Queen, who thought that he was mad talking to himself. "I'm not mad but cunning."

Devastated, Gertrude promised not to reveal a word.

"I must go to England now with my two schoolfellows, whom I trust as I trust poisonous snakes. For they are setting a trap for me," said Hamlet, "but they will fall into it."

With this, he left his mother's room dragging Polonius' body behind him.



● 8. Drastic Measures ●

Queen Gertrude's worry was not unnoticed by the King later that night.

"What are all these sighs? Where is your son?" he asked her.

"Ah, my good lord, what I have seen tonight!" cried Gertrude. "Hamlet is mad, and in his madness he killed good Polonius, who was hidden behind the wall hanging."

"He did such a thing!" cried Claudius. "If I had hidden there instead of him, I would be dead now! His liberty is full of threats to us all. Alas, how shall we explain this to everyone at court? He must be sent away to England immediately."

Under the King's command, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern went off to find Polonius' body and bring it into the chapel. But Hamlet was not clear about the body's whereabouts.

"The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body," said Hamlet to surprised Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Thus, they brought him to King Claudius but Hamlet went on talking confusingly to him as well. It was after some time that he revealed Polonius' body was somewhere in the castle.

"Hamlet, because of what you did and for your own safety, we must send you to England," Claudius told him, taking advantage of Polonius' death to justify Hamlet's immediate departure. "Therefore prepare yourself now. Everything is ready for England."

"For England. Good. Farewell, dear Mother," Hamlet said to Gertrude ignoring Claudius.

"Follow him at once," the King commanded Guildenstern. "Make sure he boards the ship. Do not delay, for everything is sealed in this letter. Away!"



Alone with his thoughts, Claudius hoped the King of England would act as he had written to him.

“King of England, please honour our mutual loyalty and fulfil my command which signifies the immediate death of Hamlet. Do it, for he is like a fever in my blood and you must help cure me.”

Hamlet, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern were on their way to board the ship to England when they met a large group of soldiers marching over the fields.

“Good sir, whose forces are these?” Hamlet asked their captain.

“They are of Norway, sir,” he replied. “We are on our way to attack Poland under the command of young Fortinbras of Norway. We have asked permission to pass through your country.”

“Is it against the heart of Poland that you aim to attack or near the frontier?” asked Hamlet.

“To be honest, we are fighting for a little piece of land,” replied the captain, “that is worthless both to Poland and to us.”

“Two thousand souls fighting over something insignificant. I thank you, sir,” said Hamlet.

“God be with you, sir,” said the captain in return and marched on with his troops.

At Hamlet’s request, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern moved a bit ahead leaving him to his thoughts. Once again his lack of courage troubled him.

“How everything urges me to take revenge! Look how this army, led by a delicate young prince, ignores danger and takes action. How can I, that have a murdered father and a dishonoured mother, stand silent while I see twenty thousand men prepared to die for a tiny piece of land? I should feel ashamed. From this moment I promise I’ll have the courage to take revenge!”



• 9. Twists Of Fate •

On Horatio's advice, the Queen met Ophelia, who behaved in a strange way.

"He is dead and gone, lady. White as the mountain snow," Ophelia babbled. "They say the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but don't know what we may be."

"This is the result of deep sorrow!" exclaimed Claudius. "First, her father dead and secretly buried; next, Hamlet gone. And the common people are whispering to each other."

At that moment Laertes, who had secretly returned from France, burst into the room raging at Claudius and swearing revenge. Outside, a group of people shouted "Laertes shall be King!"

"You evil King, give me my father!" shouted Laertes.

"I am not guilty of your father's death but truly sad for it," said Claudius trying to calm him.

They were interrupted by a noise at the door as Ophelia reentered and started babbling again.

"O rose of May, sweet Ophelia!" cried Laertes in despair.

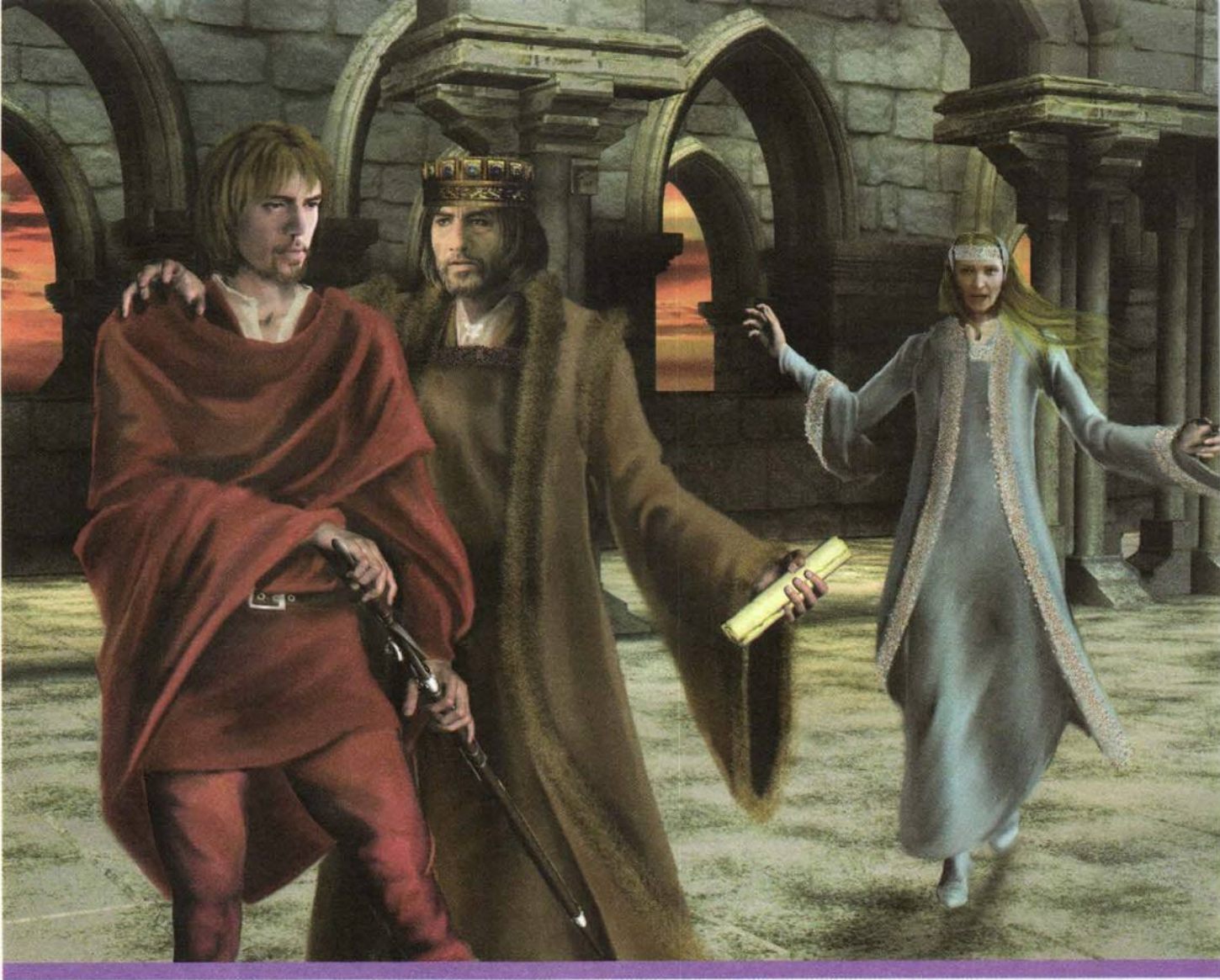
Just then, in another part of the castle, Horatio received a letter from Hamlet. It read:

My dear Horatio,

Take the sailors to the King as they have letters for him, too. They will bring you where I am. Our ship was taken by pirates but I managed to escape. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are on their way to England. Of them I have much news to tell you.

Hamlet

Horatio lost no time in acting as Hamlet had asked. Meanwhile, Claudius and Laertes were continuing their conversation in another room of the castle.



“He who killed your noble father, Laertes, wanted my own life,” said Claudius. “But the Queen, his mother, and the people love him dearly,” he explained, “therefore punishing him would make them upset. I cannot fight their great love for him.”

At that moment a messenger with letters entered, and Claudius was informed about Hamlet’s return to Denmark. Although he was surprised at first, he finally thought this a good opportunity for Laertes to take his revenge.

“Remember how jealous Hamlet was of you once for being a better swordsman than him,” said Claudius. “Challenge him to a duel where you will choose a sharpened sword and he a blunted one.”

“And to be sure, I will poison my sword,” said Laertes, agreeing with the King’s idea, “so that, even with a slight scratch, Hamlet will not escape death!”

“And even if he escapes your poisonous hit,” added Claudius wickedly, “when he feels hot and dry and asks for drink, I will have prepared him a poisoned one.”

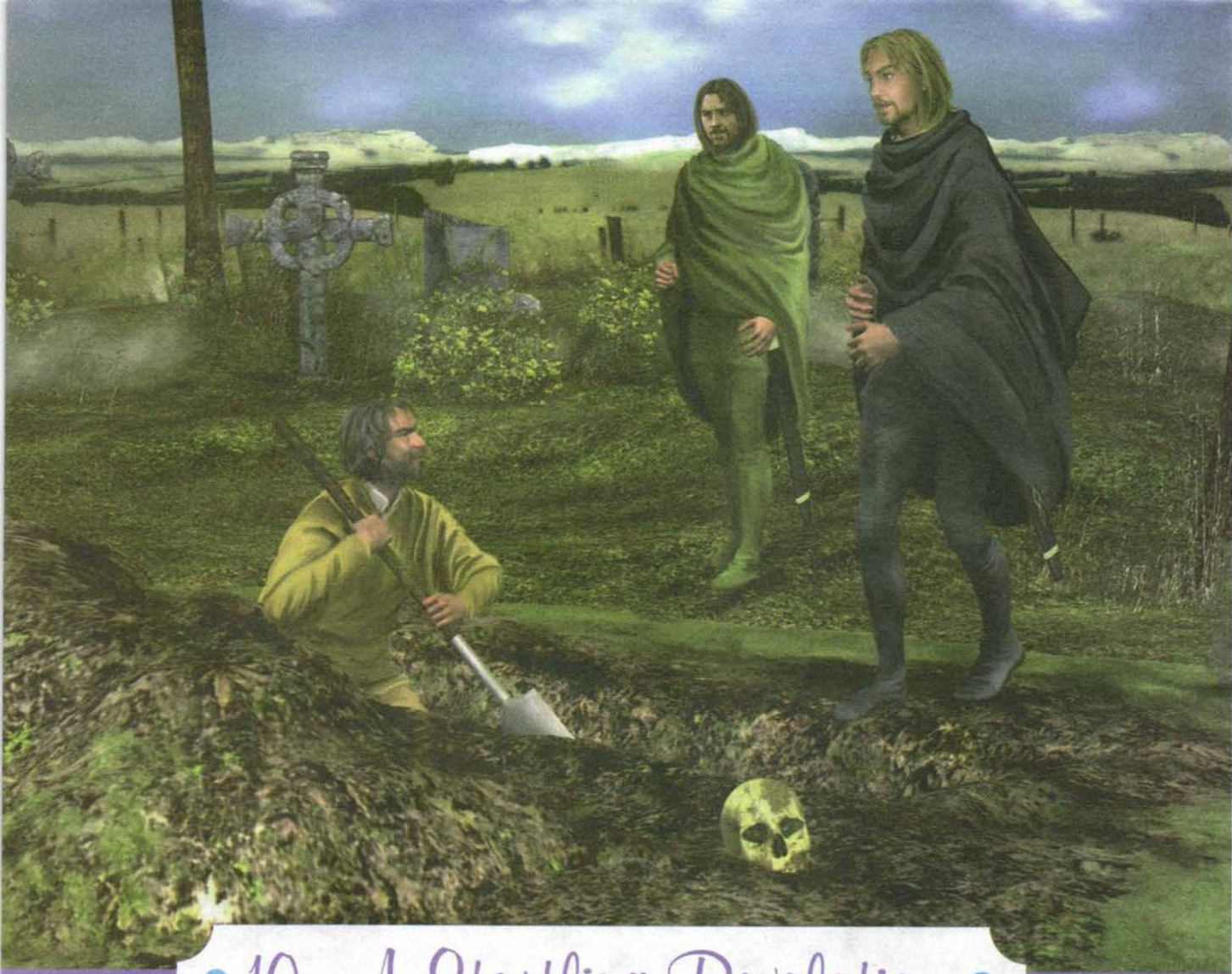
Their evil plans were interrupted by the Queen, who came running in.

“One tragedy follows another so fast. Your sister has drowned, Laertes.”

“Drowned? Where?” said Laertes horrified.

“There is a willow tree by the river where Ophelia climbed to hang her flower garlands when a branch broke, and she fell down into the river. Her clothes, heavy with water, pulled the poor girl from her melodious song to death.”

At this tragic news, Laertes burst out of the room in a rage.



• 10. A Startling Revelation •

On their way to the castle, Hamlet and Horatio came across two peasants carrying a spade and a pickaxe. They were digging a grave and having a lively conversation.

"Is she to be given a proper burial? How can that be since she drowned herself? It must have been self-defence, it cannot be anything else," said the first gravedigger.

"Will you hear the truth about it? If she had not been someone important, she would not be given a proper burial," said the second one.

"Come, my spade. Go and fetch me something to drink for I am thirsty," the first responded.

As he was left alone singing merrily, he was heard by Hamlet and Horatio at a distance. Hamlet was surprised at the peasant's lightheartedness and was even shocked to see him throw up two skulls, one after the other.

"That skull once could speak. Was this person so unimportant that their head can be thrown about like this now?" he wondered and, drawing near, he turned to address the digger.

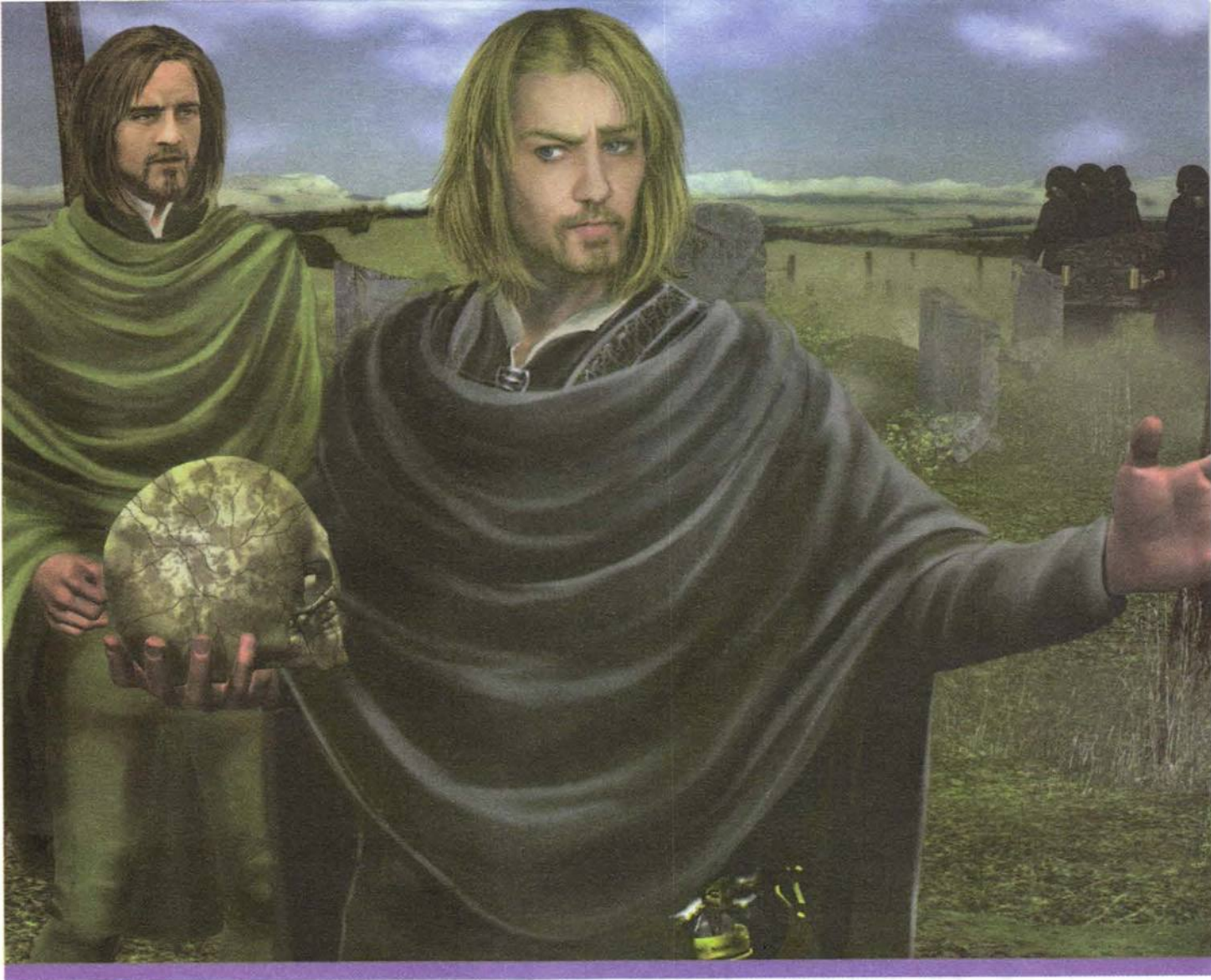
"Whose grave is this, sir?"

"Mine, sir. I am not lying in it, and yet it is mine," replied the man.

"This is for the dead so you are lying," Hamlet retorted as cleverly. "What man are you digging it for?"

"For no man or woman either. For one that was a woman but, rest her soul, she's now dead."

"How cleverly he uses words!" Hamlet thought impressed. "Tell me, how long have you been a grave maker?" he asked.



"Since the day that our last King Hamlet won Fortinbras. The very day that young Hamlet was born — he that was mad and sent to England. Here's a skull now. It has lain in the earth for twenty-three years," said the gravedigger, holding it up.

"Whose was it?" asked Hamlet.

"Yorick's. He was the King's jester," replied the second gravedigger, who had just come back.

"Hamlet took the skull into his hands and held it up.

"Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio. He carried me on his back a thousand times; and now, how horrible! Here hung his lips. Where are your songs, your jokes and tricks now?" said Hamlet appalled and threw the skull down. "We will all follow him sooner or later. Even great men die, are buried and turn into dust. Of dust we are made and to dust we return!" Hamlet reasoned.

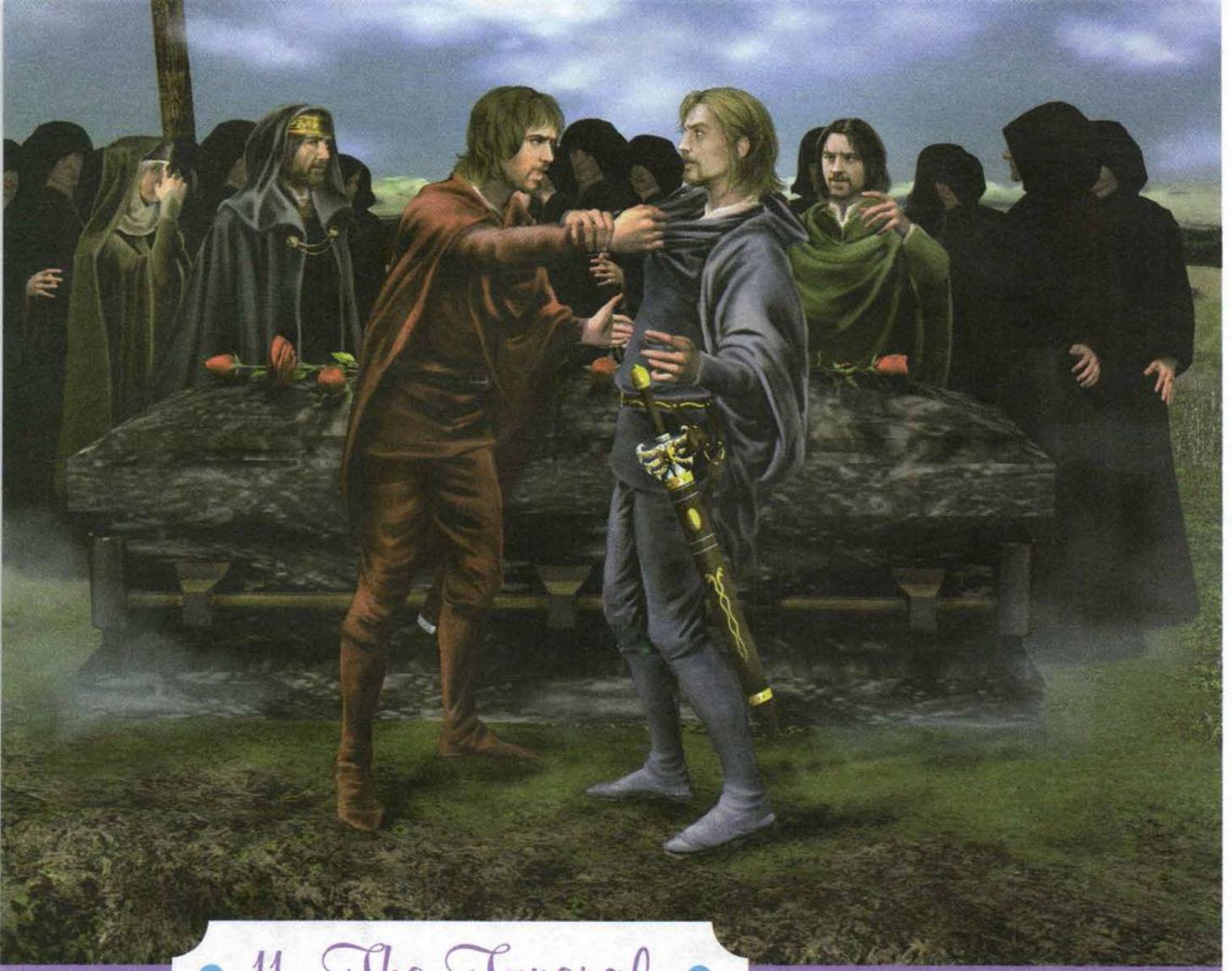
At that moment a funeral procession entered the graveyard.

"Here comes the King, Queen and courtiers," said Hamlet. "Who is it they are burying? Let us hide back here a while and watch."

"Since her death might be suicide, the most we can do for her is pray," said the priest. "Stones should be thrown on her instead. No more can be done. It would be unholy for the dead," he declared. "She must be buried with no delay."

"Lay her in the earth, and from her pure flesh may violets spring. I tell you, priest, my sister will be an angel while you rot in hell!" said Laertes in a rage.

"What, fair Ophelia!" gasped Hamlet in astonishment.



• 11. The Funeral •

Queen Gertrude mournfully scattered flowers on Ophelia's coffin.

"Farewell. I had hoped you would be my Hamlet's wife. I should have scattered flowers on your bride-bed, dear maid, and not on your grave," wept the Queen.

Laertes, equally devastated, could not accept the fact that his sister had died so unjustly.

"Cursed be the one who did this to you!" he cried staring at her lifeless body and moved forwards. "Wait a while, till I have held her once more in my arms."

At this, Hamlet, sorrowful and outraged, moved forwards too and swore his own love for Ophelia.

"The devil take your soul," cursed Laertes closing his fingers around Hamlet's throat.

"Take your fingers from my throat, for though I am not quick to action, yet I have something dangerous in me. Away your hand!" Hamlet warned him and went on in a fury. "I loved Ophelia as forty thousand brothers together could not have done. Show me what you would do for her," he challenged Laertes. "Would you weep, would you fight, would you tear yourself, eat a crocodile? I would do it. Be buried alive with her and so will I."

Claudius, thinking Hamlet was having another of his fits and could be dangerous, urged the courtiers to part the two men.

"This is madness! Pull them apart," shouted the King.

After Hamlet and Horatio had left the graveyard, the King turned to Laertes.

"Remember our plan and be patient. We will soon arrange what we have discussed. And you, Gertrude," he now turned to the Queen, "keep an eye on your son."



Hamlet and Horatio returned to the castle, where they had a serious conversation.

"Do you remember the situation before I came back?" Hamlet asked his loyal friend.

"Remember it, my lord!" replied Horatio.

"While we were sailing, there was something in my heart that would not let me sleep. In the dark, I stole Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's bag and returned to my room to unseal their letter from the King; where I found, Horatio, — O wicked King! — an exact command to the King of England that my head should be cut off."

"Is it possible?" Horatio asked in astonishment.

"Here's the letter. You can read it later. But will you hear what I did next?" Hamlet went on.

"Most certainly, my lord," said Horatio eager to listen.

"I devised a new letter, signed and sealed it. I had my father's royal seal in my pocket. The exchange was never known. And will you hear what I wrote? That the King of England should put the messengers to sudden death."

"So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz will die instead of you," said Horatio.

"My conscience is clear. For their death is the result of their wickedness," said Hamlet in anger.

"What a king this is!" exclaimed Horatio appalled.

"He will soon know how things are in England. I am only sorry, good Horatio, that I have been so violent to Laertes. For like him, I want to avenge my father's death, and his determination has strengthened me."



• 12. The Duel •

While Hamlet and Horatio were talking, a messenger arrived.

"Sweet lord, I bring news from His Majesty. He told me to inform you that he has laid a bet on you. You are challenged to a duel by Laertes, whose excellence at sword fighting you are aware of. The King, sir, has bet that Laertes is not superior to you."

"Sir, I will walk here in the hall. I will win for the King if I can. If not, I'll gain nothing but my shame," said Hamlet and turned to Horatio.

"It seems foolish, yet I have a fear in me."

"Then don't go, my lord. I'll tell everyone you are not well," said Horatio.

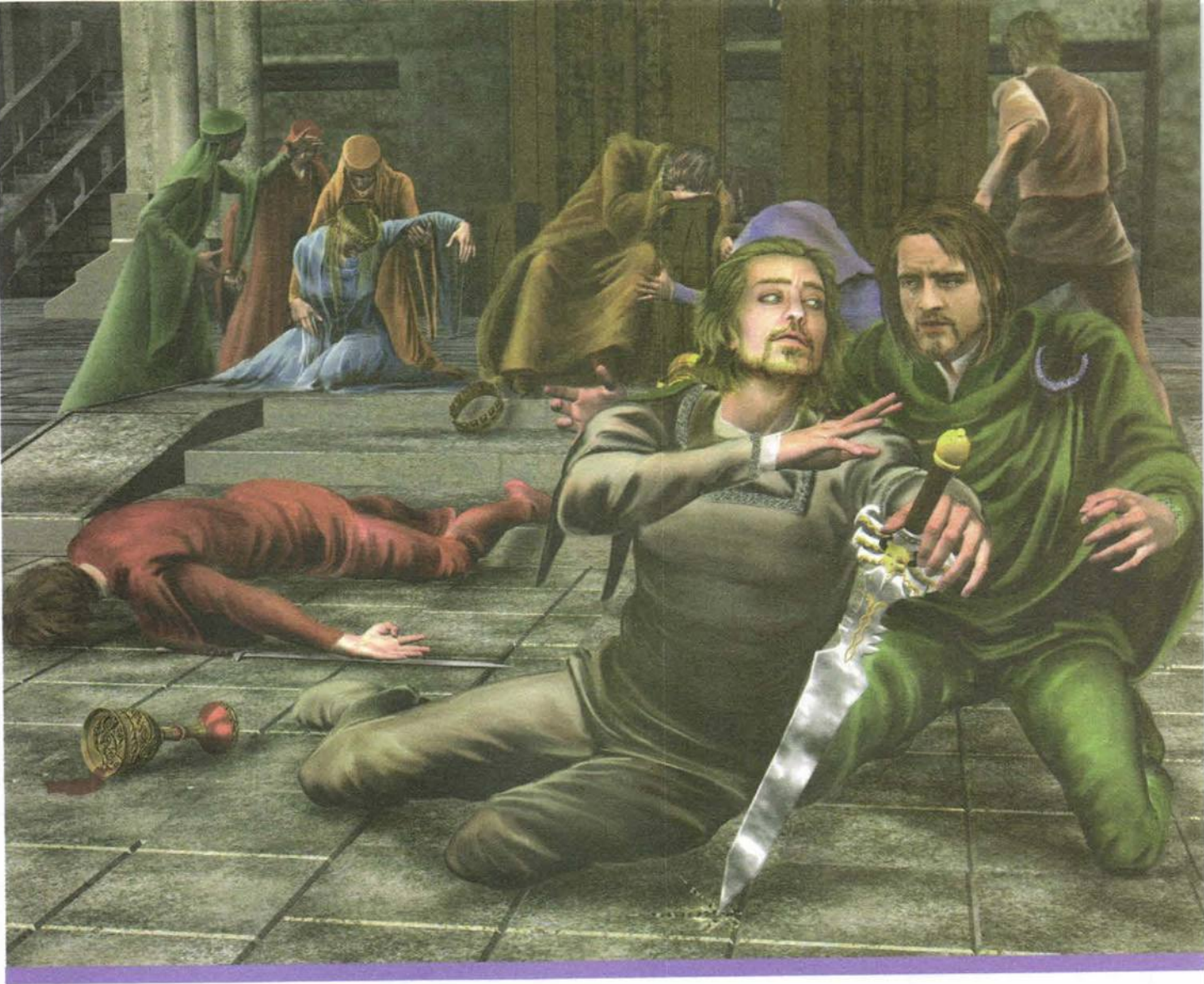
"One must be ready for death. If it does not come now, yet it will come," said Hamlet decisively. When everyone had walked into the hall, Claudius urged Hamlet to shake hands with Laertes.

"Forgive me, sir. I've wronged you. Yet, I admit that it wasn't Hamlet who wronged you, but his madness," said Hamlet to Laertes, who accepted his offer of apology but couldn't forgive him so easily.

With no delay, the duel began after Laertes had carefully chosen the sharpened, poisoned sword. Hamlet scored the first hit but refused to drink from the cup the King offered him. It was Gertrude who picked up the cup, instead, to drink to her son's success when he scored a second hit.

"Gertrude, do not drink," said Claudius, but he was too late to stop the Queen.

Meanwhile, Laertes had managed to hit Hamlet with the poisoned sword. However, while fighting the two rivals exchanged swords, and this time it was Hamlet who wounded Laertes with the poisoned one. At that moment the Queen fell down.



"She fainted when seeing them bleed," said Claudius hastily trying to cover up what he had done.

"No, no, the drink, the drink! My dear Hamlet, I am poisoned," said the Queen breathlessly.

"This is a villain's work!" cried Hamlet. "Lock the door! Find out the guilty one."

"He is here, Hamlet. You are dying. The murderous instrument is in your hand, sharpened and poisoned. I am justly killed with my own wickedness. Your mother has been poisoned. The King is to blame," admitted Laertes.

At these words, Hamlet, enraged, plunged the poisoned sword into Claudius and forced the poisoned wine into his mouth. "Here, you evil, murderous Dane. Follow my mother," he cried.

Immediately after, Hamlet exchanged forgiveness with Laertes. His dying words addressed to Horatio, who was looking at the drops of the poisoned wine wishing to die with his lord.

"Horatio, if you ever considered me a dear friend, stay alive to tell my story," pleaded Hamlet stopping him. At that moment a servant announced the arrival of Prince Fortinbras of Norway and some English ambassadors. Hamlet again spoke to Horatio.

"I'm dying, Horatio! I cannot live to hear the news but I do give Fortinbras my dying vote for King. Tell him all that has happened. O!" he gasped and passed away.

After Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's death was announced, Fortinbras was the last to speak. "Let four captains carry Hamlet like a soldier, for he would have been a worthy King. Let the soldiers' music play loudly for him. Take up the body. Go order the soldiers to shoot and give Hamlet the royal burial he deserves."



Activities

Before you start

The Author

Answer the questions.

- 1 Who wrote *Hamlet*?
- 2 When and where was the author born?
- 3 Which school did he go to?
- 4 Who did he marry?
- 5 How many children did he have?
- 6 Which are his most famous plays?
- 7 What did he write about?
- 8 When did William Shakespeare die?

Background

Correct the sentences.

- 1 Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet* between 1600 and the winter of 1602.
- 2 The performance of the full play takes around 5 hours.
- 3 Most actors find it very easy to play the part of Hamlet.
- 4 Hamlet's character is straightforward.
- 5 Every actor perceives Hamlet's character in the same way.
- 6 There have been 22 films called *Hamlet* made for television.
- 7 27 operas have been written based on *Hamlet*.
- 8 Some old songs contain lines from *Hamlet*.

The Plot

Look at the words. How are they related to the story?

- Hamlet • King Hamlet • Claudius
- Gertrude • castle • ghost • revenge
- mad • stepfather • old school friends
- special play • murder • tragic end

The Characters

Say who is ...

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------|
| 1 | evil | |
| 2 | weak | |
| 3 | loyal | |
| 4 | depressed | |
| 5 | conniving | |
| 6 | clever but indecisive | |
| 7 | passionate and decisive | |
| 8 | innocent | |
| 9 | calculating | |

Episode 1

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the title and the pictures on pages 8 and 9. What do you think is happening at the beginning of the story? Listen and read to find out if your answers are correct.

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and choose the correct words.

- 1 Claudius is Hamlet's **father/uncle**.
- 2 Fortinbras wants to **attack/protect** Denmark.
- 3 Laertes wants to return to **France/England**.
- 4 Claudius wants Hamlet to stop **complaining/mourning**.
- 5 Claudius has married Gertrude within **two/four months** after King Hamlet's death.
- 6 Hamlet thinks that the world is **meaningless/wonderful**.
- 7 Hamlet's father is a **guard/ghost**.

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 Why do you think Hamlet is angry with his mother?
- 2 What do you think Hamlet's father wants to tell him?
- 3 How do you think Hamlet's feelings have been affected by his father's death?

Think! Why do you think the queen married Claudius? Spend three minutes writing a few sentences on the question. Read your sentences to the class.

Episode 2

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the pictures.

- 1 Who are the people in the first picture and where are they? Why do you think they are there?
- 2 Why is Hamlet kneeling down in the second picture? How do you think he is feeling?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and answer the questions.

- 1 Where do Hamlet and the ghost meet?
- 2 Why does Horatio warn Hamlet to be careful?
- 3 Why does Hamlet ignore Horatio's advice?
- 4 How does Claudius say the King died?
- 5 How did the King really die?
- 6 What does the ghost want Hamlet to do?
- 7 What does Hamlet decide to do?

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 How do you think Hamlet feels when he sees the ghost?
- 2 How do you think Hamlet feels when he hears the truth about his father's death?
- 3 Why is Hamlet going to pretend to be mad?
- 4 What do you think is going to happen in the next episode?

Think! What powerful symbolic action is used in this episode to show that Denmark is corrupt? Explain your answer.

Episode 3

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the title. In what way is it related to the previous episode?
- 2 Look at the pictures. What do you think the people are talking about?

While Reading

- 3 Read or listen to the episode and tick (✓) Yes if the following statements are correct, or No if they are incorrect.

	Yes	No
1 Laertes believes Hamlet's love for Ophelia is lasting.	☐	☒
2 Ophelia does not accept her father's advice.	☐	☐
3 When Hamlet visits Ophelia, he behaves like a madman.	☐	☐
4 Ophelia decides to speak to King Claudius about Hamlet.	☐	☐
5 Rosencrantz and Guildenstern refuse to spy on Hamlet.	☐	☐
6 Polonius tells Claudius that Hamlet is mad for Ophelia.	☐	☐
7 Hamlet pretends that he doesn't know Polonius.	☐	☐
8 Polonius is sure about Hamlet's madness.	☐	☐

After Reading

- 4 Answer the questions in groups.
 - 1 Why is Ophelia discouraged from taking Hamlet's promises seriously? What are the restrictions Hamlet is faced with?
 - 2 Why is Hamlet rude to Polonius?

Think! Judging from her conversation with her father and brother, what can you tell about Ophelia's character? Would you act the same way?

Episode 4

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the pictures. Who is visiting Hamlet? How has his mood changed from the first to the second picture?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and correct the words in bold.
 - 1 The Prince seems very **unhappy** to see Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.
 - 2 Hamlet refers to Denmark as a **paradise** when speaking.
 - 3 Hamlet says that he has been **delighted** about the world and life recently.
 - 4 Hamlet is particularly **saddened** to hear about the travelling actors.
 - 5 Hamlet wants the actors to add an extra **episode** to the play.
- 3 Answer the following questions.
 - 1 What kind of mood do Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find Hamlet in?
 - 2 What does Hamlet ask the actors to do?
 - 3 Why is Hamlet blaming himself at the end of the episode?

After Reading

- 4 Answer the questions.
 - 1 Why does Hamlet say that the King and Queen are deceived?
 - 2 What does Hamlet mean when he says "Murder will reveal itself tomorrow night"?

Think! Why do you think Hamlet calls Denmark a prison? In three minutes write a few sentences on the topic. Read your sentences to the class.

Episode 5

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the pictures. How does Ophelia's emotional state change from the first to the second picture?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and put the events in the correct order.

- ☐ The King and Polonius come out of their hiding place.
- ☐ Ophelia looks up from her book and meets Hamlet's eyes.
- ☒ 1 Rosencrantz and Guildenstern visit the King and Queen.
- ☐ Hamlet is troubled, pondering "to be, or not to be".
- ☐ Claudius and Polonius discuss Polonius' plan to spy on Hamlet.
- ☐ Claudius considers sending Hamlet to England.
- ☐ Ophelia offers to give Hamlet's gifts back to him.
- ☐ Hamlet tells Ophelia that he does not love her.

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 "To be, or not to be" is the most famous line in English literature, revealing Hamlet's thoughtful nature. What does it mean? What is it that makes it difficult for Hamlet to decide between life and death?
- 2 What do you think Claudius is going to do with Hamlet? Why?

Think! What sort of life do you think Ophelia would lead if she went to a nunnery? Why would this be an appropriate punishment?

Episode 6

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the title and the pictures. Do things seem to be getting better, or worse? Why?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and complete the text with the words in the list. One word is not used.

- soul • private • remorse • pours
- disturbed • witnesses • second
- carefully • rushes

Hamlet gives the actors a speech to read and he tells Horatio to watch Claudius 1) The audience 2) the story of a murderer who 3) poison into the ear of his brother the King. When Claudius sees this, he jumps to his feet and he 4) out of the room. Claudius feels afraid. He is 5) about the play and he knows that something is wrong. He goes to his room tortured by 6) Hamlet walks past Claudius' room. When he sees Claudius praying, he decides to kill him but he has 7) thoughts. He wants to kill him when doing something bad so that his 8) will go to hell.

After Reading

- 3 Answer the questions.

- 1 Why do you think Hamlet asked Horatio to watch Claudius?
- 2 Although Hamlet seems ready to take revenge, he delays action once again. What prevents him from killing Claudius?

Think! Does the performance enlighten Gertrude as to how King Hamlet died or do you think she already knew?

Episode 7

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the title and the pictures. What do you think is happening in this episode? Is Hamlet doing what he is expected to do?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and mark the sentences as *T* (true) or *F* (false).

- 1 Hamlet is pleased with Gertrude.
- 2 Gertrude thinks Hamlet is being rude.
- 3 Gertrude tries to leave the room.
- 4 Hamlet sees something moving behind the door.
- 5 Hamlet thinks the one hiding is Claudius.
- 6 Hamlet kills Polonius.
- 7 Gertrude sees the ghost.
- 8 Hamlet trusts Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 Do you think Hamlet shows disrespect for his mother? Why does he call her a "stepmother"?
- 2 Do you think Gertrude realises her fault finally?
- 3 What do you think is going to happen in the next episode?

Think! Why do you think Shakespeare chooses not to have Gertrude see the ghost? In three minutes write a few sentences on the topic. Read your sentences to the class.

Episode 8

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the pictures.
 - 1 What do you think is going on in the first picture? How is it related to the title?
 - 2 What appears to be happening in the second picture?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and match the speech quotes to the characters. Some of the characters may not be used.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|
| 1 | ☐ | "Ah, my good lord, what I have seen tonight!" |
| 2 | ☐ | "God be with you, sir." |
| 3 | ☐ | "How everything urges me to take revenge!" |
| 4 | ☐ | "The body is with the King, but the King is not with the body." |
| 5 | ☐ | "Follow him at once." |
| 6 | ☐ | "To be honest, we are fighting for a little piece of land." |
| 7 | ☐ | "If I had hidden there instead of him, I would be dead now!" |

- | | | | | | |
|---|----------|---|---------|---|----------|
| a | Claudius | c | captain | e | Polonius |
| b | Gertrude | d | Hamlet | f | ghost |

After Reading

- 3 Answer the questions.

- 1 Why do you think Claudius wants to have Hamlet killed away from Denmark?
- 2 Why doesn't Hamlet say goodbye to Claudius?
- 3 Hamlet's encounter with Fortinbras' army is another occasion that shows his lack of will to action. Explain why.

Think! Claudius says Hamlet is like a fever in his blood. What does he mean by this?

Episode 9

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the two pictures. What do they tell us about the outcome of the episode?

While Reading

- 2 Read or listen to the episode and say who the words in bold in the following sentences refer to.

- 1 She is in a state of deep sorrow.
- 2 She will talk to her.
- 3 Their father's death made her mad.
- 4 They brought him a letter from Hamlet.
- 5 He went to meet Hamlet.
- 6 He cannot fight their great love for him.
- 7 He will help him get revenge.
- 8 They will fight a duel.
- 9 She drowned.
- 10 He will poison his drink.

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 Why does Laertes return to Denmark?
- 2 Why do you think Ophelia becomes mad?
- 3 Claudius' behaviour in this episode proves him to be most evil and calculating. Can you explain why by referring to the text?
- 4 What do you think is going to happen in the next episode?

Think! Based on the story so far, do you think Ophelia's death was an accident or suicide? Explain.

Episode 10

Before Reading

- 1 Look at the pictures and answer the questions.
 - 1 What is going on in the first picture?
 - 2 How do you think Hamlet feels in the second picture?

While Reading

- 2 Answer the following questions.

- 1 How do Hamlet and Horatio come across the gravediggers?
- 2 Why do the gravediggers believe that if the dead person hadn't been someone important, she wouldn't have a proper burial?
- 3 Whose skull do they find while digging?
- 4 How does Hamlet react when he sees the skull? Why?
- 5 Why do the King, Queen and courtiers come to the graveyard?
- 6 Why is Laertes angry with the priest?

After Reading

- 3 Discuss in pairs:

- 1 Why does Hamlet think the gravedigger uses words cleverly?
- 2 Laertes says, "From her pure flesh may violets spring." What does he mean by this?
- 3 What is Hamlet's attitude towards the dead?

Think! Why does Hamlet feel the need to hide when he sees the funeral procession approaching?

Episode 11

Before Reading

1 Look at the pictures.

- 1 What seems to be happening in the first picture? Why, do you think?
- 2 What do you think Hamlet and Horatio are discussing in the second picture?

While Reading

2 Read or listen to the episode and answer the questions.

- 1 How is Gertrude mourning Ophelia's death?
- 2 Why does Laertes become furious with Hamlet?
- 3 What is Hamlet trying to prove with his passionate speech?
- 4 What is Claudius' reaction to the incident between Hamlet and Laertes?
- 5 What does Hamlet find in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's bags?
- 6 What does Hamlet do when he finds Claudius' letter?

After Reading

3 Discuss the questions in pairs.

- 1 Do you think Hamlet was right to trick Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? Why (not)?
- 2 How does Hamlet feel about Laertes at the end of the episode? What do you think he's going to do next?

Think! What makes a good friend? In three minutes write a few sentences on the topic. Read your sentences to the class.

Episode 12

Before Reading

1 Look at the pictures.

- 1 What is going on in the first picture? How do you think each one feels?
- 2 Judging from the second picture, how do you think the play will end?

While Reading

2 Read or listen to the episode and choose the correct words.

Hamlet is 1) **challenged/forced** to a duel with Laertes. When Hamlet enters the throne room, he 2) **holds/shakes** hands with his rival and tells him he has wronged him because of his 3) **thoughtlessness/madness**. Laertes chooses a 4) **sharpened/blunted**, poisoned sword but it's Hamlet who 5) **scores/aims** the first hit. When Claudius offers him some poisoned wine, Gertrude takes the cup and drinks, 6) **too/instead**. While fighting, Laertes and Hamlet 7) **drop/exchange** swords and Hamlet wounds Laertes with the poisoned one. Gertrude is dying and so are Hamlet and Laertes, who reveals that Claudius is to 8) **blame/punish**. Hamlet 9) **plunges/throws** the poisoned sword into Claudius and forces the poisoned wine into his mouth. When Horatio is about to drink too and die with his lord, Hamlet stops him. Horatio must live to tell everyone Hamlet's 10) **story/tale**.

After Reading

3 Discuss in pairs:

What kind of leader do you think Fortinbras represents?

Think! What qualities should a good leader have according to you?

Hamlet Final Comprehension Quiz

- 1 When was *Hamlet* written?
A between 1700 and the summer of 1702
B between 1600 and the summer of 1602
C between 1600 and the winter of 1602
- 2 The full performance of *Hamlet* is said to take
A 30 minutes B 2 hours C 4 hours
- 3 At the beginning of the play, the King has just
A died B retired C won a war
- 4 Hamlet finds out quickly that his father has been
A married B asleep C murdered
- 5 Who does Hamlet find out is guilty for what has happened?
A his mother B his brother C his uncle
- 6 Hamlet confirms his suspicions of who is guilty with a
A play performance B verbal accusation
C note to them
- 7 What two people seem to be involved in the death of the former King?
A Claudius/Polonius B Gertrude/Claudius
C Horatio/Ophelia
- 8 Hamlet's plan to fool everyone is to pretend to be
A silly B mad C brave
- 9 By mistake, Hamlet kills, who hides behind a curtain to spy on him.
A Claudius B Laertes C Polonius
- 10 King Claudius fears Hamlet's insanity and his pursuit of the truth so he
A kills him B sends him away
C makes him King
- 11 plots Hamlet's death by sending a letter to the King of England to kill him.
A Claudius B Gertrude C Polonius
- 12 In the end, everyone in the play dies except for
A Ophelia B Laertes C Horatio

Overview

- 1 One of the elements of literature is conflict, that is when a character faces a challenge or a struggle. There are three types of conflict: man versus man, man versus himself, man versus nature. Can you find examples of conflict in *Hamlet*?
- 2 Is Hamlet a man of action or a man of inaction? How does his indecision affect the plot?
- 3 List the characters who betray or disappoint Hamlet and their actions. Now list the characters who stand by him and their actions. How do they affect Hamlet emotionally?
- 4 Compare and contrast Ophelia's death to Gertrude's. What are the similarities and differences?
- 5 What kind of leader do you think Hamlet would have made if he had lived?
- 6 How many instances of spying can you find in the play? To what extent are they justified?
- 7 How modern a character do you think Hamlet is? Justify your answer.

Discuss in groups.

- Can you think of an alternative title for the story?
- Can you think of a different ending for the story? Is it more of a happy ending, or even more tragic than Shakespeare's? Discuss it and briefly write it down.
- Which is your favourite character in *Hamlet*? Why?
- Which character do you like the least? Why?
- What lessons do you think the story teaches us?

Topics For Further Discussion

Episode 1

- 1 In his speech King Claudius addresses the court in such a way as to avoid public disapproval. What is the delicate issue he has to deal with? Do you think he makes a good or bad impression as King?
- 2 Claudius assumes a fatherly role toward Hamlet. Do you think he is convincing? Is Hamlet likely to follow his advice?
- 3 In his despair Hamlet wishes he could die and thinks all women are weak. Is his way of thinking justifiable? How would you characterise him as a person?
- 4 From the beginning of the episode there is an atmosphere of uncertainty and anxiety, as the dead King's throne has been inherited by an unexpected heir. How is this atmosphere heightened at the end of the episode?

Episode 2

- 1 What is Hamlet's attitude toward Claudius? Do you think he is right?
- 2 How would you characterise Horatio in contrast to Hamlet? Justify your answer by referring to the text.
- 3 Do the ghost and Hamlet share the same opinion about Gertrude?

Episode 3

- 1 The state of Laertes' family contrasts sharply with the state of Hamlet's family. In what way are the two men different as far as family is concerned?
- 2 Based on his encounters with Ophelia, the King and Queen, and Hamlet, how would you characterise Polonius?

- 3 How do you think Claudius feels about his position as King? How can you tell?

Episode 4

- 1 What do you think of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? Justify your opinion.
- 2 Comment on Hamlet's speech at the end of the episode. What emotional state is he in?

Episode 5

- 1 Although Hamlet has announced earlier that he is going to pretend to be mad, his behaviour in this episode makes the reader doubt whether he is just pretending. Explain why.

Episode 6

- 1 Horatio as well as Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Hamlet's friends. Do you think they all deserve to be called his friends?
- 2 What do Claudius' words of remorse reveal about his character? Do you think he is a different man now from what he used to be?
- 3 The play presented to the King and his court has a different effect on Claudius from the one it has on Hamlet. Explain in what way each man is affected. What course of action is each one going to take?

Episode 7

- 1 Though Gertrude's speech is quite limited, it allows us to have a close look at her character. Based on her confrontation with her son, comment on the different states of feeling she goes through. Do you think she is trustworthy? Why?

- 2 Gertrude proves to be dependent on men, who seem to determine the way she feels and acts. This links her to Ophelia. Comment on the similarity of the two women's character.
- 3 Throughout the play Hamlet has difficulty coordinating his thoughts and actions. How is this illustrated in the episode?

Episode 8

- 1 Although she has promised Hamlet not to betray him, Gertrude immediately turns him in to the King. Why do you think she does such a thing? How is her reaction related to her nature?
- 2 While other male characters in the play are concerned with honour, morality and justice, Claudius is a selfish, ambitious king only interested in maintaining his power. How is this shown in the episode?
- 3 In this episode Hamlet appears to be a different character. In what way?

Episode 9

- 1 The health of a state is closely connected to the morality of its ruler. In the case of Claudius, the state is corrupted. How is corruption illustrated in the text?
- 2 Laertes is sharply contrasted with Hamlet as far as course of action is concerned. How is this contrast shown in the text?
- 3 Madness is a major topic in this episode too, this time torturing Ophelia. Do you think her insanity is the same as Hamlet's insanity?

Episode 10

- 1 This episode combines the comic with the tragic element. Can you refer to the text to illustrate this combination?
- 2 Earlier, with his famous line "to be, or not to be", Hamlet was concerned about death, especially the afterlife. Here the matter of death troubles him again, but this time it is physical decay and the certainty of death that concern him. How is this shown in the text?
- 3 What topic of religious importance is brought up in this episode?

Episode 11

- 1 What emotional state is Hamlet in at Ophelia's funeral? Does his present behaviour match his behaviour in his encounter with Ophelia earlier in the play?
- 2 Comment on the bond between Claudius and Laertes in contrast with the bond between Hamlet and Horatio.

Episode 12

- 1 After the shock of Ophelia's death, there seems to be a change in Hamlet's mental state. He is not wholly obsessed with himself and his family but shows a concern for others. How is this illustrated in this episode?
- 2 In contrast to the rest of the play, where action is always delayed, the final scene is full of action and violence. Characters drop one after the other so that everyone takes revenge and there is justice for everyone. In what way does justice prevail?

Word List

EPISODE 1

armour (n) = metal or leather clothing used by soldiers in the past to protect their body in combat
 assure (v) = tell sb that sth is definitely true
 astonished (adj) = amazed
 aware (adj) = having knowledge or showing perception of something
 battlements (n) = a wall round the top of a castle, with gaps through which weapons can be used
 beast (n) = a wild animal
 beckon (v) = summon or signal sb, often as an invitation
 beloved (adj) = sb or sth dearly loved
 bow (v) = bend the top part of your body forward out of respect for sb
 convince (v) = persuade sb that what you say is true
 creature (n) = a living thing
 crown (v) = place a crown on the head of a new king or queen as part of an official ceremony
 court (n) = a royal person's officers and advisers
 deeply (adv) = to a great extent
 depressed (adj) = low in spirits, very unhappy
 echo (v) = repeat what sb else has just said
 eternity (n) = time without end, the time after death
 evil (adj) = deliberately harmful
 exclaim (v) = say sth suddenly and loudly because of anger, surprise or excitement
 figure (n) = a bodily shape or form of a person
 frustrated (adj) = upset and impatient because of a situation that is hard to control or change
 guard (n) = sb whose job is to protect a person or place
 meaningless (adj) = having no meaning, insignificant
 mourn (v) = be greatly sad for sb's death

patient (adj) = able to wait calmly for sth to happen or tolerate a bad situation without complaining or getting angry
 permission (n) = formal consent
 reveal (v) = make something known that was previously hidden
 sorrow (n) = deep sadness
 stubbornness (n) = unreasonable determination not to change your mind
 successor (n) = sb who takes a job or position previously held by sb else
 threaten (v) = say you will harm sb if they do not do what you want
 throne (n) = a special chair used by a king or queen

EPISODE 2

adieu (n) = farewell, goodbye
 apparition (n) = a ghost
 approach (v) = draw closer; come nearer to sb or sth
 astonishment (n) = amazement or wonder
 avenge (v) = hurt or punish sb because they have harmed or offended you
 beneath (prep) = directly under sth or in a lower position
 breathlessly (adv) = in a way that shows difficulty in breathing
 cliff (n) = a high area of rock or mountain with a very steep side
 conscience (n) = the part of your mind that tells you whether your actions are morally right or wrong
 corpse (n) = the dead body of a human being
 despite (prep) = in spite of, used to refer to two contrasting things
 disgust (n) = a feeling of very strong dislike
 extremely (adv) = to a great degree; very
 firmly (adv) = steadily, resolutely
 gasp (v) = breathe hard; lose your breath because of shock or fatigue
 grab (v) = take hold of sb or sth with a sudden or violent movement; snatch

grimly (adv) = very seriously, sternly
 harsh (adj) = severe
 oath (n) = a formal promise to tell the truth
 orchard (n) = a place where fruit trees are grown
 part (v) = separate, detach
 pour (v) = make a liquid flow out of or into a container
 remain (v) = continue to be in the same state or condition
 rumour (n) = information that is passed from one person to another and which may or may not be true
 serpent (n) = a snake
 shameful (adj) = full of shame, bringing disgrace
 sin (n) = an action or type of behaviour against the laws of God
 spirit (n) = a ghost or supernatural being
 spread (v) = tell a lot of people about sth
 state of mind (phr) = the mental condition sb is in
 summit (n) = the peak or highest point of something
 swear (v) = promise under an oath to do sth
 sword (n) = a weapon, usually made of steel, with a long pointed blade
 tempt (v) = make sb want sth even though it may be wrong or harmful
 unnatural (adj) = different from what you normally expect; strange
 upset (adj) = unhappy and worried because of sth unpleasant or disappointing; troubled
 villainous (adj) = willingly trying to harm other people; evil

EPISODE 3

alarmed (adj) = afraid or anxious
 arrange (v) = organise or make plans for sth
 attendant (n) = a person whose job is to serve or help a superior
 blessing (n) = approval and encouragement
 cause (v) = make sth happen
 cause (n) = the person, thing or event that makes sth happen

chamber (n) = a bedroom or private room
 faithful (adj) = true, loyal
 farewell (n) = goodbye
 honourable (adj) = deserving to be respected and admired
 intend (v) = decide or plan to do sth
 invade (v) = enter an area using military force in order to take control of it
 lasting (adj) = continuing to exist or having an effect for a very long time
 majesty (n) = a term used to refer to a king or queen
 noble (adj) = morally good or of high rank in birth
 obey (v) = do what sb in authority or a law tells you to do
 prevent (v) = stop sth from happening or sb from doing sth
 relieved (adj) = no longer worried about sth
 search (n) = the act of looking for sb or sth
 sew (v) = make or repair clothes using a needle and thread
 sigh (v) = let out a long breath to show relief or discomfort
 stare (v) = look at sb or sth for a very long time
 vow (n) = a serious promise
 witty (adj) = amusing in a clever way
 wrist (n) = the part of the human body that joins the hand to the arm

EPISODE 4

admit (v) = agree, often unwillingly, that sth is true
 announce (v) = make sth known publicly
 blame (v) = hold sb responsible for sth bad
 coward (n) = sb who is not brave
 deceive (v) = cause sb to believe sth that is not true; trick
 decision (n) = a choice or judgment, usually made after a period of thought
 delighted (adj) = extremely pleased
 demand (v) = ask for sth in a very forceful way
 direct (adj) = straightforward

discussion (n) = a conversation including different ideas or opinions about a topic
 dungeon (n) = a dark underground prison
 grief (n) = deep sorrow or sadness
 guilty (adj) = responsible for morally or socially unacceptable behaviour
 impressed (adj) = feeling admiration and respect for sb or sth
 insist (v) = say firmly that sth is true or must be done
 motive (n) = the reason that makes sb do sth
 observe (v) = watch carefully in order to find out sth
 particularly (adv) = especially
 passionately (adv) = in a way that shows enthusiasm or very strong feelings
 purpose (n) = aim, goal
 puzzled (adj) = confused
 request (n) = a polite or formal demand
 retort (v) = reply or answer back quickly in an angry or humorous way
 unworthy (adj) = not deserving respect
 urge (v) = strongly suggest that sb does sth
 useless (adj) = not useful; worthless

EPISODE 5

by accident (phr) = in a way that is not planned or intended
 bear (v) = endure, tolerate
 catch sight of (phr) = suddenly see sb or sth
 confess (v) = admit doing sth wrong
 contradict (v) = say the opposite of what has been said
 devastated (adj) = extremely shocked and sad
 judge (v) = form an opinion about sb or sth after thinking carefully
 melancholy (n) = an intense feeling of sadness
 moody (adj) = changing quickly from being in a good mood to being in a bad mood; gloomy
 nun (n) = a woman who devotes herself to God by being in a religious order

nunnery (n) = a place where nuns live; convent
 overcome (v) = overwhelm with an emotion difficult to deal with
 position (n) = the place where sb or sth is
 put into practice (phr) = actually carry out an idea
 rave (v) = speak in an excited, uncontrolled or crazy way
 set sth right (phr) = correct sth
 sight (n) = a famous or interesting place worth seeing
 sneer (v) = smile or speak in an unkind way that shows contempt
 soul (n) = that part of a person that is not physical but relates to character, thought and feelings and is believed to exist after death
 storm (v) = move or walk in a violent or angry manner; rush
 take advantage of (phr) = use sb or sth in order to benefit
 torture (n) = severe physical or mental suffering

EPISODE 6

amazed (adj) = very surprised, astonished
 ambition (n) = a strong desire to be successful, rich or powerful
 anxious (adj) = nervous or worried about sth; uneasy
 commit (v) = do sth wrong or illegal
 creep (v) = move slowly and quietly so as not to attract attention
 decisively (adv) = in a way that shows determination
 distant (adj) = cold and unfriendly
 disturbed (adj) = worried or upset
 draw (v) = take sth out of a container
 escort (v) = accompany
 excitedly (adv) = in a way that shows enthusiasm or nervousness
 excitement (n) = the feeling of being excited
 flatter (v) = praise sb excessively but not sincerely
 groan (v) = make a long deep sound because of pain or disappointment
 guilt (n) = condition or fact of having committed a crime

have second thoughts (phr) = start having doubts about a decision you have made
 hover (v) = stay nervously in the same place because you are not certain what to do
 in panic (phr) = in a state of fear or nervousness that makes you unable to think clearly or act sensibly
 in private (phr) = not in public
 judgment (n) = the ability to make sensible decisions about what to do
 kneel down (phr v) = bend the knees so that your body is resting on them
 nervousness (n) = anxiety, tension
 possession (n) = sth that you own
 pray (v) = speak to God in order to ask for help or express gratitude
 prayer (n) = words you say when you speak to God
 proof (n) = evidence that shows if sth is true or not
 rage (n) = violent, uncontrolled anger
 remorse (n) = a strong feeling of sadness and regret about sth wrong you have done
 scene (n) = a part of a play
 shadow (n) = the dark area (of a room, etc.)
 strict (adj) = severe in discipline
 strike (v) = deliberately hit sb
 tolerate (v) = put up with sb or sth, endure
 witness (v) = see sth happen, especially a crime or accident

EPISODE 7

drag (v) = pull something along the ground
 gracious (adj) = behaving in a kind and generous way
 hanging (n) = sth that hangs or is suspended from a wall or ceiling; a curtain
 impatiently (adv) = restlessly, anxiously
 inferior (adj) = less important than sb else, of lower rank
 mistake sb/sth for (phr) = wrongly think that one person or thing is sb or sth else; confuse with another

offend (v) = say or do sth rude that upsets people
 regret (v) = feel sorry about sth you have done
 rudeness (n) = impolite words or behaviour
 schoolfellow (n) = a schoolmate or friend from school
 set a trap for sb (phr) = trick sb in order to catch them or find out their true intentions
 shame (n) = the feeling you get after you have done sth wrong or embarrassing
 sinful (adj) = immoral
 snap (v) = say sth quickly in an angry way
 speechless (adj) = temporarily unable to speak, usually because of shock
 terrified (adj) = extremely frightened; horrified
 thoughtless (adj) = ignoring other people's feelings; inconsiderate
 thrust (v) = push forcefully
 trust (v) = believe sb is honest and rely on them

EPISODE 8

advantage (n) = sth that puts you in a better position than other people
 board (v) = get on a ship, plane, train, etc in order to travel somewhere
 chapel (n) = small church
 confusingly (adv) = in a way that is unclear and difficult to understand
 delay (v) = wait until a later time to do sth
 delicate (adj) = fragile, sensitive
 departure (n) = the act of leaving a place, especially at the start of a journey
 dishonoured (adj) = having lost other people's respect because of unacceptable behaviour
 force (n) = a group of soldiers; army
 frontier (n) = the border between two countries
 fulfil (v) = carry out
 ignore (v) = deliberately pay no attention to sb or sth
 in return (phr) = in reply

insignificant (adj) = not important
 instead of (phr) = in the place of
 justify (v) = prove or show something to be reasonable
 liberty (n) = the freedom to do what you want
 loyalty (n) = the quality of remaining faithful to your friends, principles, etc
 mutual (adj) = shared by two or more people
 ponder (v) = think about sth carefully
 seal (v) = close an envelope or package by using sth sticky so that it cannot be opened
 signify (v) = mean sth, be a sign that represents sth
 threat (n) = a statement or expression of one's intention to punish or harm
 tiny (adj) = extremely small
 troop (n) = a group of soldiers
 unnoticed (adj) = not observed by anyone
 whereabouts (n) = the present location of a person or thing
 worthless (adj) = lacking worth or value; useless

EPISODE 9

babble (v) = talk in a confused or excited way that sounds silly or makes no sense
 blunted (adj) = not sharp or pointed; dull
 branch (n) = the part of a tree that grows out from the trunk and has leaves or fruit on it
 burst (v) = move somewhere suddenly or quickly
 challenge (v) = invite sb to compete or fight against you
 despair (n) = a feeling that you have no hope at all
 drown (v) = die from being unable to breathe while under water
 garland (n) = a ring of flowers or leaves
 horrified (adj) = extremely frightened
 interrupt (v) = break the continuity of a process or activity
 jealous (adj) = feeling angry or unhappy because sb else has sth that you wish you had; envious

meanwhile (adv) = while sth else is happening, in the meantime
 messenger (n) = sb whose job is to deliver messages
 opportunity (n) = a chance or possibility to do sth you want
 scratch (n) = a small cut on sb's skin
 sharpened (adj) = having a sharper edge or point
 slight (adj) = very small in degree or quantity
 wickedly (adv) = in a way that shows immorality or evil
 willow (n) = a type of tree that has long thin branches and long narrow leaves and grows near water

EPISODE 10

appalled (adj) = shocked or disgusted
 burial (n) = the act or ceremony of putting a dead body into the ground
 courtier (n) = sb who attends to the King and Queen in a royal court
 declare (v) = make sth known officially and publicly, state formally
 dig (v) = make a hole in the ground by removing earth with a tool
 dust (n) = very small bits of earth
 fair (adj) = beautiful, pretty
 flesh (n) = the soft part of the body between the skin and the bones
 funeral (n) = a religious ceremony for burying sb who has died
 grave (n) = the place in the ground where a dead body is buried
 gravedigger (n) = sb whose job is to dig graves
 graveyard (n) = an area of ground where people are buried; cemetery
 jester (n) = a person employed to entertain people at the royal court
 lightheartedness (n) = the state of being free from care, anxiety or seriousness
 merrily (adv) = in a happy way
 on sb's way (phr) = moving along towards a place
 peasant (n) = a poor farmer of low social status

pickaxe (n) = a tool with a pointed iron bar used for garden or ground work such as digging soil or breaking up rocks
 priest (n) = sb authorised to perform religious duties and ceremonies
 procession (n) = a line of people or vehicles moving slowly as part of a ceremony
 proper (adj) = socially acceptable and correct; appropriate
 pure (adj) = innocent, virtuous
 rot (v) = decay, deteriorate or decompose
 self-defence (n) = sth you do to protect yourself or your property
 skull (n) = the bony part of the head that encloses the brain
 spade (n) = a digging tool with a flat metal blade pushed into the ground with the foot; shovel
 spring (v) = move upwards or forwards suddenly and quickly
 suicide (n) = the act of killing oneself
 unholy (adj) = not holy, sinful

EPISODE 11

coffin (n) = a long box that a dead body is buried in
 cursed (adj) = suffering as a result of punishment by God
 determination (n) = the quality of being firmly decisive
 devise (v) = plan; invent a new way of doing sth
 eager (adj) = very keen and excited about sth
 equally (adv) = to the same degree or amount
 exchange (n) = the act of giving or taking one thing in return for another
 fit (n) = a sudden physical or emotional attack
 fury (n) = violent or very strong anger; rage
 maid (n) = a young unmarried woman or girl, especially in the past
 mournfully (adv) = in a way that shows great sadness

outraged (adj) = feeling great anger and shock
 seal (n) = a stamp with a special design that shows the official authority of a person or government
 scatter (v) = throw or drop things so that they spread all over the place
 sign (v) = write your name on sth
 strengthen (v) = make stronger
 tear (v) = pull sth to pieces; rip
 unjustly (adv) = in an unfair, dishonest manner
 unseal (v) = break or remove the seal of something; open
 weep (v) = cry

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ambassador (n) = an official representative of a government to another country
 announce (v) = make sth known publicly
 bleed (v) = lose blood, especially because of an injury
 consider (v) = think of sb or sth as
 excellence (n) = the quality of being extremely good
 faint (v) = suddenly become unconscious for a short time
 gain (v) = acquire or get possession of sth
 hastily (adv) = quickly, in a hurry
 murderous (adj) = very dangerous capable of killing
 pass away (phr v) = die
 plead (v) = ask for sth in an emotional way; beg
 plunge (v) = cause to enter quickly and forcibly
 rival (n) = a competitor, opponent
 superior (adj) = better than sb else, of higher rank
 vote (n) = an act of showing who you are in favour of in an election
 worthy (adj) = deserving respect; valuable
 wound (v) = injure
 wrong (v) = treat or judge sb unfairly

Play

Characters: Hamlet
Claudius
Gertrude
Horatio
Polonius
Ghost
Rosencrantz
Guildenstern
Laertes
Ophelia
Guard
Ambassador 1
Ambassador 2

Actor 1
Actor 2
Captain
Soldiers
Messenger
Servant
Sailor 1
Sailor 2
Gravedigger 1
Gravedigger 2
Priest
Fortinbras

Narrator(s): At least one
student dressed in
black T-shirt and
black leggings

Scene 1

**SONG: Winter in
Denmark**

The young Prince of Denmark
Is lonely and sad
His life seems so empty
His luck seems so bad
His father has gone
And his uncle is mean
He feels more unhappy
Than he's ever been

CHORUS: *It's winter in Denmark
There's snow everywhere
There's ice on the ground
And revenge in the air*

The new King of Denmark
Is not a good man
He's greedy for power
He takes what he can
The crown is now his
And he's married the Queen
He feels he is greater
Than he's ever been

REPEAT CHORUS



Narrator:

King Hamlet of Denmark is dead. His brother, Claudius, has become the new King. King Hamlet's wife, Gertrude, has married Claudius just two months after the King's funeral.

Claudius:

My beloved brother is dead, and I am your new King. We all loved him dearly, but we must not be sad anymore. By marrying our beautiful Queen I have balanced sorrow with joy.





All: To the King and Queen!

Claudius: Also, let us not forget about the future of Denmark. Fortinbras, the Prince of Norway, is planning to attack our country. We must protect Denmark from his army. I have already asked his uncle, the present King of Norway, to stop Fortinbras.

All: To Denmark!

Polonius: Please, my lord. My son, Laertes, wants to speak to you.

Claudius: What is it, Laertes?

Laertes: My lord, I returned to Denmark to attend your coronation, but now I wish to return to France.

Claudius: What does your father say?

Polonius: My lord, he has my permission.

Claudius: Dear Laertes, to me you are as worthy as your father, good Polonius. Therefore, you may return to France.

Laertes: Thank you, my lord.

Claudius: But what are we going to do with Prince Hamlet? Why are you still mourning, my son?

Hamlet: I am not your son. My father is dead.

Gertrude: Come, Hamlet. Everyone dies one day. You cannot seem sad forever.

Hamlet: I do not seem sad, Mother. I am sad.

Claudius: Please, stop mourning, Hamlet. You have a new father now. Stay with us and do not go back to your studies in Wittenberg.

Hamlet: I wish to go back there. I was enjoying my studies.

Claudius: I don't think that is a good idea. You should stay here and do your duty as the Prince of Denmark.

Gertrude: O, please stay in Denmark, Hamlet.

Hamlet: Very well, Mother, if you wish it.

Claudius: That is wonderful news! Come, my dear. Let us go and celebrate.

Hamlet: I wish I could die! My life is so meaningless. My father was such a good king and loved my mother deeply. And she, after two months, married my uncle! My good friend, Horatio!

Horatio: My lord. I bring some news for you. I think I saw your father's ghost last night, outside the castle.

**SONG: *It's Hard to
Lose Somebody***



Scene 2

- Hamlet:** My father's ghost?
- Horatio:** The guards say that it comes to the castle every night, but it stands silent, dressed in armour.
- Hamlet:** How strange! Could my father have been murdered? We will wait for the ghost tonight and find out what this means.
- Narrator:** Hamlet feels that his mother does not care about his father anymore. He cannot understand how she could forget someone she loved so quickly.



I can't forget my father
He was my everything
My teacher and my hero
My father and my king

CHORUS: *It's hard to lose somebody
When no one seems to care
They act as though the one I loved
Was never even there
How can they live without him?
How can they let him go?
How can they all forget him
When I still miss him so?*

I won't forget my father
I'll keep his memory strong
To forget someone so quickly
Is impossible and wrong

REPEAT CHORUS



- Narrator:** It is close to midnight. Hamlet, Horatio and a guard wait outside the castle. At midnight, they see a strange figure walking through the fog.
- Horatio:** Look, my lord, it is coming.
- Hamlet:** Answer me! Why are you here?
- Horatio:** It wants to speak to you. It beckons you to go closer. But do not go, my lord. It may be dangerous.
- Hamlet:** My life is worthless. I shall follow it.
- Horatio:** What if it tempts you toward the sea or to the summit of the cliffs?
- Hamlet:** It still beckons me. I shall follow it.
- Guard:** Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. Let's stay close, my lord. Do not go.
- Hamlet:** Hold off your hands.



SONG: Revenge

Ghost: I am your father's spirit burning in fires until my sins are forgiven. I am here to tell you the truth about my death. You must avenge my murder.

Hamlet: Murder?

Ghost: Claudius told the people that a snake bit me while I was sleeping in the orchard. This is a lie!

Hamlet: A lie? Then what really happened?

Ghost: The truth is that Claudius came to me while I was sleeping and poured poison into my ear. The poison ran into my blood and I died in just a few seconds.

Hamlet: Your brother murdered you! I knew something was not right!

Ghost: My own brother took away my life and my queen. But, please, Hamlet, do not harm your mother. Deep down she knows her fault. I must leave you now. Remember me, Hamlet, and take revenge.

Hamlet: I will remember you, Father. I will not let that evil murderer wear your crown!

Horatio: What did it say, my lord?

Hamlet: Swear never to speak about it. No one must know.

Guard: We swear, my lord.

Hamlet: There's a villain living in Denmark.

Horatio: We don't need a ghost to tell us this, my lord.

Hamlet: Then, there is nothing more to say. I will pretend to be mad for a while. The King and Queen will never know what I am thinking. Then I can carry out my plan and get revenge for my father's murder. Now swear on my sword, not to say a word.

Horatio and Guard: We swear, my lord.

Ghost: Swear, swear, swear!

Narrator: Hamlet wants revenge for his father's death. But is it good to want revenge?



When people treat you badly
What do you want to do?
Do you want to get revenge
And treat them badly, too?

CHORUS: *Revenge won't make you happy
It can only make you sad
To try to hurt bad people
Will make you just as bad*

Scene 3 Part 1



Scene 3 Part 2

So when somebody hurts you
Be strong and walk away
Don't try to make them sorry
Don't try to make them pay

REPEAT CHORUS



- Narrator:** Laertes was about to leave for France.
- Laertes:** Farewell, sweet Ophelia, and remember that Hamlet's love for you will not last. He may love you now, but he is a prince and cannot choose who he marries, so be careful. You must hold back your feelings.
- Ophelia:** I will, my dear brother. I promise. Farewell.
- Polonius:** Farewell, my son. You have my blessing. Now, my daughter, what is it? What has your brother said to you?
- Ophelia:** My lord, he gave me the same advice as you did in the past; not to encourage Hamlet.
- Polonius:** Well-thought advice. Do not believe Hamlet's vows. They cannot be true.
- Ophelia:** My lord, he has shown me his affection many times lately but I am frightened.
- Polonius:** What is it, in the name of God?
- Ophelia:** My lord, as I was sewing in my chamber, Hamlet came to me like a madman. He stared and sighed, spoke strangely and then stormed out.
- Polonius:** Have you talked to him rudely lately?
- Ophelia:** No, my lord. I only sent his letters back and did not accept his visits as you advised me.
- Polonius:** Then it is your love that has made him mad. The King must hear this troubling news.



- Narrator:** Polonius decided to speak to the King, who had already asked two of Hamlet's old friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to come to the castle. Meanwhile, Fortinbras' attack against Denmark has been prevented.
- Claudius:** Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. The reason why we have called you here today is that we need your help. You must have heard of Hamlet's strange behaviour. I ask you both, as his friends, to find out what is troubling him.



- Gertrude:** I am sure there are no other men to whom he is as close.
- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:** We both obey, your majesties.
- Polonius:** My lord, I am worried about Hamlet. He has been acting strange lately.
- Claudius:** Strange? What is wrong with him?
- Polonius:** To tell the truth, I think Hamlet is mad. I believe that his love for my daughter, Ophelia, is the reason for his madness.
- Claudius:** Do you think this is true? How has she received Hamlet?
- Polonius:** As an honourable father, I advised her to stay away from Hamlet, and this made him mad.
- Gertrude:** It is very likely.
- Polonius:** You know sometimes he walks here. I'll send my daughter to him and we will find out if he is mad because of her.
- Claudius:** Very well. We will try it.
- Gertrude:** Here, I see him coming now.
- Polonius:** Go away now, quickly. Let me speak to him alone.
- Polonius:** Good morning, Hamlet. How are you?
- Hamlet:** Very well.
- Polonius:** What are you reading?
- Hamlet:** Word, words, words.
- Polonius:** Do you know me, my lord?
- Hamlet:** Of course I know you! You are a fishmonger. Have you got a daughter?
- Polonius:** I have, my lord.
- Hamlet:** Any daughter of yours is not a blessing.
- Polonius:** His answers show madness. I will leave him and arrange a meeting between him and my daughter soon, and observe them to see if love is the cause of his strange behaviour.
- Polonius:** I will now take your permission to leave, sir.
- Hamlet:** The only thing you can take from me is my life.
- Polonius:** O dear. Now I am sure. Hamlet is quite mad.
- Narrator:** Polonius thinks that Hamlet is mad because he is in love with Ophelia. But can love really make people crazy?



**SONG: What Love
Can Do**

Do you know what love can do?
Love can make your dreams come true
Love can take you low or high
Love can make you wonder why

CHORUS: Love can bring you happiness
Love can make you sad
Love can turn your world around
Love can make you mad
Love can make you miss someone
When you are apart
Love can make you laugh and cry
Love can break your heart

Everything you've heard is true
There is nothing love can't do
Love is strange, and love is strong
Love can last your whole life long

REPEAT CHORUS



**Scene 4
Part 1**



Narrator: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find Hamlet alone in the castle.

Hamlet: Rosencrantz! Guildenstern! How are you? What are you doing here in this prison?

Rosencrantz: Prison, my lord?

Hamlet: Denmark is a prison.

Guildenstern: That is not true, my friend.

Hamlet: It is a prison to me. But, tell me, why are you here?

Rosencrantz: We came to see you.

Hamlet: Tell me the truth. Did Claudius send you?

Rosencrantz: What for, my lord?

Hamlet: Be sincere and tell me.

Guildenstern: Yes, my lord, he and your mother are worried about you.

Hamlet: I know the reason. I have lost my joy lately and they want you to find out the cause of my misery.

Guildenstern: I'm sure, my lord, you will cheer up soon. We passed some travelling actors on our way here. They are coming to perform for the King and Queen.

Hamlet: My uncle-father and mother are deceived.

Guildenstern: In what way, my dear lord?

Hamlet: I am sometimes mad, not always. I have an idea! I must go and talk to these actors. They can help me with my plan for revenge.

Scene 4
Part 2



Polonius: The actors have arrived, my lord.
Hamlet: You are all welcome, masters. I am glad to see you well. I would like you to perform a play called *The Murder of Gonzago*, for the King tomorrow night. Do you know it?

Actor 1: Of course, my lord.

Hamlet: And will you do me one more favour?

Actor 1: Anything you wish, sir.

Hamlet: Can you study an extra speech which I will add to the play?

Actor 1: We will be happy to perform your speech, sir.

Hamlet: Very well. Lead the actors to their rooms.

Polonius: Yes, my lord.

Hamlet: My good friends, I will leave you until night.

Rosencrantz: Good, my lord.

Hamlet: Murder will reveal itself tomorrow night. I can't wait to see Claudius' face when he sees the play! The murder is just like the one he committed. The murderer pours poison into the victim's ear. I will observe the King's reaction and see if he is guilty as the ghost said.



Narrator: Still worried about Hamlet's strange behaviour, Claudius is anxious to hear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's report.

Claudius: Did you find out the cause of Hamlet's strange behaviour?

Rosencrantz: He does confess he is not well, my lord, but does not reveal the reason. However, he was happy to hear of actors performing at the court tonight.

Polonius: And he asked me to invite your majesties to come and see the play.

Claudius: With all my heart. Good gentlemen, don't leave your friend alone.

Rosencrantz: We won't, my lord.

Polonius: Now, my lord, about the matter we discussed the other day. Ophelia and Hamlet are going to meet here soon. Then you will see that I am right about Hamlet's madness being caused by his love for my daughter.

Claudius: Very well. Gertrude, you must leave us.

- Gertrude:** Sweet Ophelia, I do wish that you are the cause of my son's madness and I really hope you will help him be himself again.
- Polonius:** We will find out what is wrong with Hamlet. Ophelia will sit here and read. We will hide behind this curtain. When Hamlet comes, we will watch him and hear what he says.
- Claudius:** Good, we must hide now, Hamlet is coming.
- Hamlet:** To be, or not to be; that is the question: whether it is better to suffer the difficulties of life or to die, to sleep and end the torture. Is it the fear of something after death, something unknown that makes us live and bear our burden?
- Ophelia:** My lord, Hamlet, how are you?
- Hamlet:** I thank you; well.
- Ophelia:** My lord, I wish to return some gifts you gave me.
- Hamlet:** I did not give you any gifts.
- Ophelia:** You know right well you did, and you gave them to me with sweet words.
- Hamlet:** I did love you once.
- Ophelia:** Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.
- Hamlet:** You should not have believed me. I never loved you!
- Ophelia:** Was I deceived then?
- Hamlet:** Go to a nunnery. And if you wish to marry, marry a fool. Because you women take advantage of wise men. Go to a nunnery, quickly!
- Ophelia:** O heaven, help him!
- Hamlet:** And I know of your tricks, too. God gives you a face, and you paint it and change it. So no more marriages! To a nunnery, go!
- Ophelia:** His mind is damaged! He is overcome by madness!
- Polonius:** It is true. Hamlet is mad because of his love for my daughter.
- Claudius:** No, it is not love that bothers him. There is something dangerous in his soul that troubles him. Let us send him off to England. A change of scenery may do him good.
- Polonius:** My lord, I still believe his love for my daughter is the cause of his madness. Let his mother speak to him first. If she cannot explain his madness, then send him to England.



Scene 5



Rosencrantz: My lord! Hamlet wishes everyone to come to the hall. Everything is ready for the play!

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

Narrator: At the sound of trumpets and drums everyone took their seats. Before the play began, Hamlet talked to the actors and Horatio.

Hamlet: Here is my speech. Read it well.

Actor 1: We will, sir. Thank you.

Hamlet: My dear Horatio, I want you to watch Claudius during the play. I trust your judgment, so observe him well. We will soon see if what the ghost said was true.

Horatio: I will, my lord.

Hamlet: Come everyone, the play is starting!

Gertrude: Come here, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Hamlet: No, good Mother. I'd rather sit by Ophelia. She is more attractive.

Polonius: Do you see this, my lord?

Ophelia: You are in a good mood, my lord.

Hamlet: Why should I not be in a good mood? Look how cheerful my mother looks, and it's two hours since my father died.

Ophelia: Two months, my lord.

Hamlet: So long? Two months, and I'm still mourning? O heavens!

Narrator: The play begins, and, as it progresses, the audience witnesses the scene where the murderer pours poison into the ear of his brother, the King, while he is sleeping in his orchard.

Ophelia: What is happening, Hamlet? I don't understand.

Hamlet: Look, Ophelia. The King is sleeping. The murderer is pouring poison into the King's ear.

Actor 2: My brother, the King, is dead! Now I can wear his crown and marry his wife!

Claudius: Give me some light! I want to leave!

Polonius: Lights! Lights!

Hamlet: Did you see, Horatio?

Horatio: Very well, my lord.

Hamlet: Did you notice the King when the actors talked of poisoning?

Horatio: I noticed very well, my lord.

Hamlet: The ghost was right!

Guildenstern: Hamlet, your father is very angry. And your mother wishes to see you in her room.

Hamlet: Then I must go to her. Now that I know the truth I could do terrible things! Leave me, you cheat!

Rosencrantz: Hamlet, please don't be hostile to us. You loved us once.

Hamlet: Say what you want. You can irritate me but you can never deceive me.

Narrator: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are pretending to be Hamlet's friends. They are spying on him, but they are setting their own trap.



SONG: True Friends

If someone thinks about you
And will be there till the end
If someone cares about you
Then you know you've got a friend

CHORUS: True friends will never hurt you
They'll never tell a lie
True friends will never trick you
And they'll never make you cry
A true friend will support you
They'll be there when you call
A true friend tries to help you
And to catch you when you fall

We all need someone special
To listen and to care
True friends are truly special
Because they're always there

REPEAT CHORUS



Narrator: Guildenstern and Rosencrantz find Claudius. They tell him about Hamlet's coldness, and the King is afraid. He is upset about the play and knows that something is wrong.

Claudius: Hamlet is becoming dangerous. I will not tolerate his madness anymore. He must leave Denmark at once. I want you to take him to England. Prepare yourselves.

Rosencrantz and
Guildenstern: Yes, my lord.

Claudius: O what a terrible thing I have done! To murder my own brother is the worst crime. I must pray, but what prayer can forgive me? I still have my crown, my ambition and my queen. These are the proof of my guilt.

**Scene 6
Part 1**



Scene 6 Part 2



Hamlet: It would be easy to kill him now. But no; if I kill him while he's praying, he will go to heaven, and that is not revenge. I will wait until he does something really sinful. This is when I'll strike and send his soul to hell.

Claudius: My prayer is empty of meaning. I can't say I'm sorry for my action when I'm happy to be King.



Narrator: Terribly upset about the play, Gertrude is waiting for Hamlet.

Polonius: My lady, you must be strict with Hamlet. Tell him that you cannot tolerate his behaviour anymore.

Gertrude: I will, but you must hide, Polonius! Hamlet is coming!

Hamlet: Now, Mother, what's the matter?

Gertrude: Hamlet, you have offended your father greatly!

Hamlet: No, Mother. You have offended my father greatly!

Gertrude: You are very thoughtless.

Hamlet: You are very sinful.

Gertrude: What is this, Hamlet? Don't you respect your own mother?

Hamlet: I wish you were not my mother! You are my father's brother's wife!

Gertrude: I cannot tolerate this rudeness!

Hamlet: You will stay here! Sit down!

Gertrude: Let go of me, Hamlet! Help, help!

Polonius: Help!

Hamlet: What is that behind the curtain? Is it a rat? Away with it!

Gertrude: What have you done?

Hamlet: Is it the King? No! It is Polonius. The old fool!

Gertrude: O Hamlet! What a terrible thing this is!

Hamlet: Almost as terrible, Stepmother, as murdering a king and marrying his brother.

Gertrude: As murdering a king? What have I done to deserve this, Hamlet?

Hamlet: Look at this, Mother. This *was* your husband. And now, here *is* your present husband. How could you lose this good, loving man and marry this other evil, selfish creature? And you feel no shame!



Scene 7 Part 1

- Gertrude:** Hamlet, you've made me see into my soul and I can't bear it!
- Hamlet:** To live with an evil murderer who stole the crown he wears.
- Gertrude:** Speak to me no more, I beg you!
- Hamlet:** Father! Have you come to remind me of the promise I gave you?
- Ghost:** Do not forget your purpose. But look at your mother. She is in shock. Talk to her.
- Gertrude:** Hamlet, who are you talking to?
- Hamlet:** It is my father, Mother. There, look at him. He is leaving the room.
- Gertrude:** I see nothing but ourselves. It is your imagination.
- Hamlet:** This is not madness, Mother. I am not mad but cunning.
- Gertrude:** I'm speechless. What shall I do?
- Hamlet:** Repent for what you did and stay away from the King.
- Gertrude:** I will, my lord. I assure you.
- Hamlet:** Now I must go to England with my two school fellows. There is a letter sealed, and those snakes are setting a trap for me. Come, sir, to finish with you. Goodnight, Mother.
- ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
- Narrator:** Back at the court, Gertrude was so upset that Claudius could see something was wrong.
- Claudius:** My dear, why are you sighing? You look ill! What happened? Where is your son?
- Gertrude:** O, Claudius! In his madness Hamlet killed good Polonius, who was hidden behind the curtain.
- Claudius:** He did such a thing! If I had hidden there, I would be dead now! What are we going to tell the court? Rosencrantz! Guildenstern!
- Rosencrantz and Guildenstern:** Yes, my lord?
- Claudius:** I need your help. Find Hamlet and bring Polonius' body to the chapel.
- Rosencrantz:** Of course, my lord.
- ◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
- Narrator:** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern find Hamlet.
- Rosencrantz:** Hamlet! What have you done with Polonius' body?

Scene 7 Part 2



SONG: Family

- Hamlet:** I put it in the ground, where it belongs.
- Rosencrantz:** Please, sir. Tell us where you buried it so that we can take it to the chapel.
- Hamlet:** I'm not going to answer a sponge like you. The King squeezes you to get what he wants.
- Rosencrantz:** I do not understand you, my lord. Tell us where the body is.
- Hamlet:** The body is with the King but the King is not with the body.
- Rosencrantz:** Then you must come with us to see the King.
- Guildenstern:** My lord, Hamlet will not tell us where the body is.
- Claudius:** Hamlet, I am worried about what you have done and I am afraid for your safety. You must leave for England at once. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern will go with you. Prepare yourself. Everything is ready for England.
- Hamlet:** For England? Good. Goodbye, dear Mother.
- Claudius:** Won't you say goodbye to your father, Hamlet?
- Hamlet:** Come, for England.
- Claudius:** Follow him at once. Make sure he leaves tonight, for everything is sealed in this letter. Away!
- Guildenstern:** Yes, my lord.
- Claudius:** King of England, you must do as I have asked you in my letter. Hamlet is like a fever in my blood and the only cure is his immediate death.
- Narrator:** The only thing Claudius is interested in is power. He believes that power is more important than family. Do you think he is right?



When troubles get you down
You know just who to call
Your family can help
They know you best of all

CHORUS: *Family comes first
They're always there for you
When times are good or bad
Their love is always true*

Your family support you
They're there through thick and thin
Your family's a team
Together you can win

REPEAT CHORUS

Scene 8 Part 1

Scene 8 Part 2



- Narrator:** On his way to the ship Hamlet met an army marching over the fields.
- Hamlet:** Whose forces are these, sir?
- Captain:** They are of Norway, sir. We are going to attack Poland under the command of young Fortinbras.
- Hamlet:** What part of the country are you fighting for?
- Captain:** To tell you the truth, we're fighting for a little piece of land that's worthless.
- Hamlet:** Two thousand souls fighting over something insignificant. Thank you, sir. Goodbye.
- Captain:** God be with you, sir.
- Rosencrantz:** Shall we go on, my lord?
- Hamlet:** Walk ahead and I will be straight with you.
- Hamlet:** Look how this army ignores danger and takes action. I, that have a father killed and a mother dishonoured, do nothing, and these men are prepared to die for a tiny piece of land. I should feel ashamed. I promise I'll take revenge!



- Narrator:** Hamlet's madness and Polonius' death have caused Ophelia to behave in a very strange way.
- Ophelia:** He is dead and gone. White as the mountain snow. They say the owl was a baker's daughter.
- Claudius:** This is the result of deep sorrow! O, Gertrude, she has lost her mind. Her father dead and secretly buried, your son gone. And the people are whispering to each other.
- Laertes:** You evil king! What did you do to my father?
- Gertrude:** Calmly, good Laertes.
- Claudius:** Laertes, your father is dead, but I did not kill him.
- Laertes:** Come what may, I'll take revenge! What is this noise? Sweet Ophelia! Look at her! Do you see this, o God?
- Claudius:** Laertes, I share your sadness. Please, come with me and we will set things right.
- Laertes:** Why haven't you punished the guilty one?
- Claudius:** The Queen, his mother, and the people love Hamlet dearly. I cannot fight their love for him and upset the Kingdom.

Scene 8
Part 3

Scene 8
Part 4



Narrator: Meanwhile, some sailors bring Horatio a letter from Hamlet. When Horatio reads it, he is very surprised.

Horatio: *Horatio,
Take the sailors to the King as they have letters for him too. They will bring you to me. While we were sailing, pirates took over our ship. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are on their way to England. Of them I have much to tell you. Your friend,
Hamlet*

Sailors: Here are the letters for the King and Queen.

Horatio: Take them to the King and then take me to Hamlet.



Narrator: When Claudius read the letter from Hamlet, he couldn't believe his eyes.

Claudius: *My lord,
I am back in Denmark. I will come to the castle tomorrow and tell you the reasons for my return.
Hamlet*

Claudius: What does this mean? What about Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

Laertes: Let him come, my lord. This way I will take revenge for my father's death.

Claudius: You are right, but we must be careful. I have a plan. You and Hamlet will fight a duel.

Laertes: A duel?

Claudius: Yes. It must look like a fair fight, but you will choose a sharpened sword and he a blunted one.

Laertes: And to be sure Hamlet won't escape death, I will poison my sword.

Claudius: And even if he escapes your hit, when he feels hot and asks for drink, I will give him a poisoned one.

Gertrude: O my lord! O dear Laertes! One tragedy follows another. Ophelia has drowned!

Laertes: Drowned? Where?

Gertrude: By the river. She climbed a tree to hang her flowers when a branch broke and she fell into the water.

Narrator: Hamlet has killed Polonius, and now Laertes wants to kill Hamlet. But do you think two wrongs can make a right?

SONG: *Two Wrongs
Don't Make
a Right*

When somebody hurts you
You want to hurt them, too
But when you act in anger
The one you hurt is you

CHORUS: *Anger gets you nowhere
Two wrongs don't make a right
Anger makes you crazy
So just give up the fight
Don't make matters even worse
Don't do another wrong
Put away your anger
And prove that you are strong*

Anger can destroy you
It turns your heart to stone
Anger drives your friends away
And leaves you all alone

REPEAT CHORUS

Scene 9
Part 1



Narrator:

Hamlet and Horatio were on their way to the castle when they saw two men digging a grave.

Gravedigger 1: Is she to be given a proper burial? How can that be since she drowned herself?

Gravedigger 2: Do you want the truth? If she had not been someone important, she wouldn't be given a proper burial.

Gravedigger 1: Give me my spade now and bring me something to drink.

Hamlet: Whose grave is this?

Gravedigger 1: Mine, sir. I'm not lying in it, and yet it is mine.

Hamlet: This is for the dead so you are lying. What man are you digging it for?

Gravedigger 1: For no man.

Hamlet: I see. What woman is it for, then?

Gravedigger 1: For no woman.

Hamlet: Not for a man and not for a woman! Who is it for, then?

Gravedigger 1: For one that was a woman but now is dead.

Hamlet: How cleverly he uses words! Tell me, how long have you been a grave maker?

Gravedigger 1: Since the day young Hamlet was born — he that was mad and sent to England.

Scene 9
Part 2



SONG: Always Say
"I Love You"

Hamlet: How long do bodies lie in the ground before they rot away and turn into dust?

Gravedigger 1: Well, this skull here has been in the earth for twenty-three years.

Hamlet: Whose was it?

Gravedigger 2: Yorick's. He was the King's jester.

Hamlet: Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio. He carried me on his back a thousand times. Look at him now. How horrible! We will all follow him sooner or later. Even great men die and turn into dust. Of dust we are made and to dust we return! But look! Here comes the King and Queen and courtiers. Who is it they follow? Let us hide back here and watch.



Laertes: Can't we do anything more for her?

Priest: The most we can do is pray since her death might be suicide. Anything more would be unholy for the dead. Stones should be thrown on her instead.

Laertes: I tell you, priest, my sister will be an angel while you rot in hell! Lay her in the earth.

Hamlet: What, fair Ophelia!

Gertrude: Farewell, sweet Ophelia. I hoped you would have been my Hamlet's wife.

Laertes: Cursed be the one who did this to you! Wait, I want to hold her in my arms once more.

Hamlet: If there is someone whose grief is unbearable, it is me, Hamlet of Denmark.

Laertes: The devil take your soul.

Hamlet: Take your fingers from my throat for I am dangerous. Away your hand. I would do anything for her. What would you do? I would be buried alive with her.

Claudius: This is madness. Pull them apart! Laertes, remember our plan and be patient. And you, Gertrude, keep an eye on your son.

Narrator: Hamlet really loved Ophelia, but he did not tell her until it was too late.



We don't know what will happen
Or what's around the bend
Maybe things will change soon
Or maybe they will end

Scene 10

Part 1

CHORUS: Always say "I Love You"
Don't ever try to wait
Always share your feelings
Before it is too late

If you love somebody
Tell them right away
Don't waste another minute
Share your love today

REPEAT CHORUS



Narrator: Hamlet was very upset. He returned to the castle, with Horatio.

Hamlet: Do you remember the situation before I came back?

Horatio: Yes, my lord.

Hamlet: When we were on the ship, something in my heart would not let me sleep. In the dark, I looked in Rosencrantz's and Guildenstern's bags and found a letter from the King. He had written it to the King of England and told him to cut off my head!

Horatio: Is it possible? It can't be true!

Hamlet: It is true. Here is the letter. You can read it later, but listen what I did next.

Horatio: What did you do, my lord?

Hamlet: I wrote a new letter and exchanged it with the original. Now the King of England will arrange two deaths instead of one!

Horatio: You asked the King of England to kill Rosencrantz and Guildenstern?

Hamlet: Those spies deserve to die! I have a clear conscience. The next day, the pirates attacked the ship, and you know the rest of the story.

Horatio: What a king this is!

Hamlet: He will soon find out about things in England. But I am very sorry that I was violent to Laertes. We have the same desire; to avenge our fathers' deaths.

Messenger: My lord, I bring news from the King. He wants you to fight a duel with Laertes. He has bet that you will win.

Hamlet: Then we will meet in the throne room. I will win for the King if I can; if not I will gain nothing but my shame.

Messenger: I will deliver the message, my lord.



Scene 10
Part 2



Hamlet: Horatio, it is foolish but I have a fear in me.
Horatio: Don't go then, my lord. I'll tell them you are not well.
Hamlet: One must be ready for death. It will come sooner or later.



Narrator: When Hamlet entered the throne room, everyone was in their seats.
Claudius: Come, Hamlet. Shake Laertes' hand.
Hamlet: Laertes, forgive me. I know I've wronged you but it was my madness, not me.
Laertes: Let's start. This duel will be a friendly fight.
Claudius: Now, Laertes, choose your sword.
Laertes: I will take this one.
Hamlet: Then let us fight as friends! Here's one!
Laertes: Just a scratch.
Claudius: Hamlet, here is a drink for you! To your health!
Hamlet: Not now. Later. Here's another!
Laertes: Only a touch again.
Gertrude: I drink to you, Hamlet!
Claudius: No! Gertrude, do not drink.
Laertes: I have you now!
Laertes: Wait! That is my sword!
Hamlet: Here's the other. Take that!
Laertes: I have been killed by my own treachery.
Servant: Look at the Queen!
Claudius: She fainted to see them bleed.
Gertrude: No, no, the drink, the drink! My dear Hamlet, I've been poisoned.
Hamlet: Lock the door and find the guilty one!
Laertes: Hamlet, you are dying too. The murderous sword is in your hand, sharpened and poisoned. And now I am justly killed. Your mother has been poisoned. The King is to blame.
Hamlet: You evil murderer, take this and finish your wine! Follow my mother!
Claudius: Hamlet! No!
Horatio: Here's some wine left. I will die with you, my lord.

SONG: Forgive and Forget



- Hamlet:** Give me the cup, Horatio. If you ever thought me a dear friend, you must live to tell my story.
- Servant:** Prince Fortinbras of Norway and the English ambassadors have arrived.
- Hamlet:** I'm dying, Horatio! I cannot live to hear the news from England but I do give Fortinbras my dying vote for King. Tell him all that has happened. O, o!
- Ambassador 1:** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.
- Horatio:** Let me speak to all of you of how things have happened. I will explain everything.
- Fortinbras:** We will all hear you with no delay. But first, let four captains carry Hamlet like a soldier, for he would have been an excellent King. Let the soldiers' music play loudly for him. Take up the body. Go, order the soldiers to shoot and give Hamlet the royal burial he deserves.



What can we learn from this story?
It's clear that revenge doesn't pay
Plans for revenge have their dangers
There must be an easier way

CHORUS: *Anger's a dangerous feeling
So even when you are upset
Just walk away from your anger
And try to forgive and forget*

Look at this unhappy ending
Now you must know that it's true
Getting revenge only hurts you
Forgiving's the right thing to do

REPEAT CHORUS

