HAMLET,
PRINCE OF DENMARK

By William Shakespeare

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE
(16M, 4F + extras)

HAMLET: Son of the late King; nephew of the present King.
CLAUDIUS: King of Denmark.
GERTRUDE: Queen of Denmark. Mother of Hamlet.
HORATIO: Friend of Hamlet
POLONIUS: Lord Chamberlain.
OPHELIA: Daughter of Polonius.
LAERTES: Son of Polonius.
ROSENCRANTZ: Courtier.
GUILDENSTERN: Courtier.
MARCELLUS: Officer.
BERNARDO: Officer.
FRANCISCO: Soldier.
OSRIC: Courtier.
PLAYER KING:
PLAYER QUEEN:
OTHER PLAYERS: 2-6 actors/actresses.
GRAVE DIGGER:
GHOST: Ghost of Hamlet's father.
PRIEST
FEMALE ATTENDANTS: 2 or more.
MESSENGER
EXTRAS: As LORDS, LADIES, OFFICERS, GUARDS, and other ATTENDANTS.

SCENE SYNOPSIS

1/1 Elsinore. A platform before the castle. FRANCISCO is at his post; BERNARDO enters and relieves him; HORATIO and MARCELLUS enter; Francisco exits. The men discuss the Ghost; the GHOST enters; the men speak; the Ghost exits; the men discuss the Ghost; the Ghost enters; Horatio questions the Ghost again; the Ghost exits; the men decide to tell Hamlet about the Ghost.

1/2 A room of state in the castle. The KING and QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES, LORDS, and ATTENDANTS enter; The King allows Laertes to return to France. The King and Queen reproach HAMLET for his mournfulness; Hamlet agrees to stay at Elsinore; all exit, except Hamlet. Hamlet soliloquizes on his desire to die and on the ease with which the Queen remarried. HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO enter and report they have seen the Ghost; Hamlet arranges to watch with them that night; Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo exit; Hamlet speaks and exits.

1/3 A room in Polonius' house. LAERTES advises OPHELIA to receive Hamlet prudently; POLONIUS enters and tells Laertes how he should conduct himself; Laertes exits. Polonius tells OPHELIA to behave circumspectly with Hamlet.

1/4 The platform before the castle. HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS speak; the GHOST enters; Hamlet addresses it; the Ghost beckons; Horatio and Marcellus try to restrain Hamlet, who repulses them and exits with the Ghost; Horatio and Marcellus follow.

1/5 Another part of the platform. The GHOST tells HAMLET he is the spirit of Hamlet's father, who was murdered by the King; the Ghost asks Hamlet to punish the King, but to spare the Queen; the Ghost exits. Hamlet soliloquizes; HORATIO and MARCELLUS enter; Hamlet swears them to silence; the Ghost, below, demands secrecy.

2/1 Elsinore. A room in Polonius' house. POLONIUS and OPHELIA enter, she says that Hamlet seems to have gone mad; Polonius exits to tell the KING.

2/2 A room in the castle. The KING and QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and ATTENDANTS enter; the King asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to discover what is troubling Hamlet; Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and some Attendants exit. POLONIUS enters, speaks, and exits. Polonius suggests they secretly observe Hamlet with Ophelia; the King, the Queen, and Attendants exit. HAMLET enters and speaks to Polonius; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter; Polonius exits; Hamlet says he has lost interest in life. Rosencrantz speaks; Polonius enters and announces the arrival of the Players. Some PLAYERS enter; Hamlet asks Polonius to look after the Players; Polonius exits with all the Players, except the First Player. Hamlet and the First Player speak; the First Player exits; ROSENCRANTZ and Guildenstern exit. Hamlet soliloquizes on his own inaction and determines to confirm the King's guilt.

3/1 Elsinore. A room in the castle. The KING and QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN enter; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern speak; Polonius says Hamlet wants the King to attend the play; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit. The King and Polonius speak about Hamlet; the Queen exits; the King and Polonius speak, then exit. HAMLET enters and wonders whether or not to be. Ophelia enters; Hamlet tells her to enter a nunnery; Hamlet exits; Ophelia regrets the breakdown of Hamlet's noble mind. The King and Polonius enter; the King decides to send Hamlet to England; Polonius suggests the Queen question Hamlet.

3/2 A hall in the castle. HAMLET asks the PLAYERS not to overact; the Players exit. POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN enter, speak, and exit. HORATIO enters; Hamlet asks Horatio to observe the King for signs of guilt. The KING and QUEEN, Polonius, OPHELIA, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, LORDS and GUARD enter; they speak to Hamlet. Hamlet and Ophelia comment; PROLOGUE enters, speaks, and exits; Hamlet and Ophelia comment; the PLAYER KING and PLAYER QUEEN enter and speak; the Player Queen exits; the audience comments; a Player enters as LUCIANUS and poisons the Player King. The King rises; the play is stopped; all exit, except Hamlet and Horatio, who now are convinced of the King's guilt. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter and speak; the Players enter with recorders; Hamlet is scornful of Guildenstern's manipulations. Polonius enters, calls Hamlet to the Queen, and exits; Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, Horatio, and Players exit. Hamlet soliloquizes.

3/3 A room in the castle. The KING commissions ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN to accompany Hamlet to England; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit. POLONIUS enters, and says he will hide in the Queen's room; Polonius exits. The King soliloquizes about his guilt and lack of repentance; HAMLET enters, but refrains from killing the KING.

3/4 The Queen's closet. The QUEEN and POLONIUS enter; Polonius hides. HAMLET enters; the Queen and Hamlet criticize each other; Polonius cries out; Hamlet stabs the arras and kills Polonius. Hamlet uncovers Polonius; he continues to castigate the Queen; the GHOST enters; Hamlet and the Ghost speak; the Ghost exits. The Queen thinks Hamlet is mad; they speak; Hamlet removes Polonius.

4/1 A room in the castle. The KING and QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN enter; Rosencrantz and GUILDENSTERN exit; the Queen says that Hamlet has killed Polonius; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern enter; the King tells them to seek Hamlet and the corpse; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit; the King speaks.

4/2 Another room in the castle. HAMLET enters, followed by ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN; they summon Hamlet to the King.

4/3 Another room in the castle. The KING, and ATTENDANTS enter; the King says that Hamlet is dangerous. ROSENCRANTZ enters and speaks; HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN enter; the King and Hamlet speak; Attendants exit to recover the body. The King says Hamlet must leave for England; Hamlet exits; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern exit. The King soliloquizes on Hamlet's planned execution in England.

Scene Four is cut in its entirety

4/5 Elsinore. A room in the castle. The QUEEN and HORATIO discuss Ophelia's madness; Horatio exits, and re-enters with OPHELIA; Ophelia sings; the KING enters; Ophelia sings, and exits; Horatio exits. The King enumerates the recent sorrows. LAERTES enters, demands an explanation of Polonius' death; the King calms him; Ophelia enters, sings, speaks madly, and exits; the King promises Laertes satisfaction.

4/6 Another room in the castle. HORATIO reads a letter from Hamlet which describes Hamlet's return to Denmark.

4/7 Another room in the castle. The KING and LAERTES enter and speak; a MESSENGER enters with letters from Hamlet; the Messenger exits. The King and Laertes plot to kill Hamlet. The QUEEN enters and says that Ophelia has drowned; Laertes exits.

5/1 Elsinore. A churchyard. HAMLET and HORATIO enter on GRAVEDIGGER who is singing. Hamlet and the Gravedigger discuss death. The KING and QUEEN, LAERTES, LORDS, and PRIESTS enter with Ophelia's corpse; Laertes complains about the unceremonious funeral; Laertes leaps into the grave in despair; Hamlet also leaps into the grave; Laertes attacks Hamlet; Attendants part them; Hamlet says he loved Ophelia; Hamlet exits; Horatio exits.

5/2 A hall in the castle. HAMLET and HORATIO enter; Hamlet describes how he escaped execution. OSRIC enters and says that Laertes challenges HAMLET to a duel; Osric exits. The KING and QUEEN, LAERTES, LORDS, Osric, and ATTENDANTS enter; Hamlet apologizes to Laertes; they choose their foils and fence. Hamlet hits Laertes; Hamlet refuses the King's offer of wine; Hamlet hits Laertes again. The Queen drinks from the poisoned cup. Laertes wounds Hamlet; they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes. The Queen falls, says her drink was poisoned, and dies. Laertes falls; he tells Hamlet that the foil is poisoned and the King is to blame; Hamlet stabs the King; the King dies. Laertes and Hamlet forgive each other; Laertes dies. Hamlet asks Horatio to vindicate him; Hamlet dies in Horatio's arms.

End of Freeview

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