



Arts Engagement
and Education

HAMLET

“O that this too solid flesh would melt”

From *Hamlet*

By William Shakespeare: <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk>

Gender: Male/Male Presenting

Style: Classical Dramatic

Age Range: 20s-30s

Link to Buy Script: www.target.com

Play Synopsis

Prince Hamlet is depressed. Having been summoned home to Denmark from school in Germany to attend his father's funeral, he is shocked to find his mother Gertrude already remarried. The Queen has wed Hamlet's Uncle Claudius, the dead king's brother.

To Hamlet, the marriage is "foul incest." Worse still, Claudius has had himself crowned King despite the fact that Hamlet was his father's heir to the throne. Hamlet suspects foul play. When his father's ghost visits the castle, Hamlet's suspicions are confirmed. The Ghost complains that he is unable to rest in peace because he was murdered.

Claudius, says the Ghost, poured poison in King Hamlet's ear while the old king napped. Unable to confess and find salvation, King Hamlet is now consigned, for a time, to spend his days in Purgatory and walk the earth by night. He entreats Hamlet to avenge his death, but to spare Gertrude, to let Heaven decide her fate.

Before this Moment

Claudius, Gertrude, Hamlet, and various courtiers entering. Claudius starts explaining why he and Gertrude have married immediately after the King's death. The King's funeral has barely concluded by the time his brother has moved in on his wife and his kingdom. Claudius acknowledges that the marriage happened fast and that the kingdom should mourn: But, he also says they have to think about the future.

According to Claudius, quickly making his 'sometime sister' into his new wife was in the best interest of the kingdom. If the kingdom grieves for too long, then Young Fortinbras, the prince of Norway, might think that they are vulnerable to attack. Claudius has written to Fortinbras's uncle to put a stop to any plans. Claudius also thinks that Hamlet is too depressed about his father's death and should move on with his life.

When Horatio, Bernardo and Marcellus arrive to bring news of the ghost, Intrigued, Hamlet decides to join them on guard that night in hopes of seeing the ghost for himself.

Monologue (Act I, Scene II)

O that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on't! ah, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!
But two months dead! Nay, not so much, not two.
So excellent a king, that was to this
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month-
Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman!-

Helpful Links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dL0o36T3sZI&list=PLPC-8uBbkZRkb1nW7Ibi8TeiDHCLj3NXk&index=129>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4kc88Z7EIQ>