Hamlet:
Prince of Denmark

By William Shakespeare

Adapted by Jennifer Kroll
ACT I

SCENE 1

Narrator 1: It's midnight at Elsinore Castle in Denmark. On a cold, windy platform outside the castle, a guard hears a sudden noise.

Francisco: (nervously) Who's there? Show your face!

Bernardo: It's just me, Francisco. It's time for my shift. Have you had a quiet night, so far?

Francisco: Not a mouse stirring.

Narrator 2: Francisco leaves. A few minutes later, Horatio and Marcellus arrive.

Horatio: Hello, Bernardo. Has the thing appeared again tonight?

Bernardo: Not yet. But it has come every night for the past week.

Narrator 3: The men suddenly freeze as a ghost passes before them.

Marcellus: Look! There it is!

Bernardo: It looks just like the king who died.

Horatio: (to the ghost) What are you and why are you here? Speak to us!

Narrator 1: The ghost looks straight at the men, and then silently vanishes.

Bernardo: It will not speak to us.

Horatio: No. But there may be somebody to whom it will speak. I'll tell Prince Hamlet about this.
SCENE 2

Narrator 2: The next morning in the castle, King Claudius speaks with his family and courtiers.

Claudius: With equal amounts of delight and sadness Queen Gertrude and I celebrated our wedding. Despite the sadness we all feel, we must keep our chins up and look to the future.

Narrator 3: King Claudius turns to his nephew, Hamlet, who stands off to one side, staring at the ground with a dark, brooding expression on his face.

Claudius: Hamlet, why do you still look so miserable?

Gertrude: Please, Hamlet, Don’t keep looking for your noble father in the dust. You know that all lives must someday end and all souls pass into eternity.

Hamlet: Yes, I know.

Gertrude: Then why do you continue to appear so depressed?

Hamlet: I don’t merely appear depressed, madam. How I look on the outside is nothing compared to how I feel on the inside.

Claudius: Remember that your father lost his father and he lost his own father too. Stop brooding over your his death and start thinking about me as your father.

Narrator 1: Later, as the room empties out, Hamlet stands alone, still looking depressed and upset.

Hamlet: (to himself) Oh, how I wish this solid flesh would just melt away. Nothing in this world seems worthwhile to me anymore.

Narrator 2: He sighs and begins to pace.

Hamlet: I can’t believe my mother married my uncle so soon after my father’s death!

Narrator 3: Horatio enters the room.

Horatio: (brightly) Hello, Lord Hamlet!

Hamlet: (cheering up a little) Horatio! It’s good to see you! When did you get back?

Horatio: Not long ago. I came for your father’s funeral.
Hamlet: *(sarcastically)* I think you came to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio: Indeed, my lord, it followed soon after the other event.

Hamlet: *(joking darkly)* Well, we're very thrifty people around here. My mother didn't want to waste any food from the funeral. *(more serious)* You know –I would rather have fought my worst enemy than attend that wedding. All I could think of was my father …

Horatio: *(in a serious tone)* My lord, I think I saw him last night.

Hamlet: *(confusedly)* Saw whom?

Horatio: The king, your father.

Hamlet: *(in a faint voice)* My father?

Horatio: Please, let me explain …

Narrator 1: Horatio begins to explain to Hamlet about the ghost that has been appearing before the guards.

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**SCENE 3**

Narrator 2: Meanwhile, in another part of the castle, Ophelia is saying goodbye to her brother, Laertes, who is going back to France.

Laertes: Ophelia, I'll be worrying about you while I'm away. I want you to be careful with Prince Hamlet. I know he's said some sweet things to you in the past, but —

Narrator 3: Their father, Polonius, enters the room.

Polonius: *(to Ophelia)* What is it, Ophelia, that Hamlet has said to you?

Ophelia: He has expressed his love and made many promises.

Polonius: Hamlet will be trouble for you. I command you to break up with him at once.

Ophelia: *(sadly)* Yes, father.
That night, Hamlet goes with Horatio and Marcellus to the guard platform, hoping to see the ghost. Just before one o'clock, the ghost appears. The three men shake with fear.

Narrator 1:

Hamlet:

Narrator 2:

Hamlet:

Marcellus:

Narrator 3:

Hamlet:

Horatio and Marcellus try to hold Hamlet back, but he struggles free from their grip and runs after the ghost.

Narrator 3:

Hamlet: (trying to catch his breath) Speak to me here, ghost. I can go no more.

Ghost: (in a spooky, ghostly voice) If you ever loved me, revenge my murder.

Hamlet: (in a faint voice) Murder?

Ghost:

Hamlet:

Ghost:

Hamlet:

Ghost:

Narrator 1:

The ghost vanishes.
### ACT II

#### SCENE 5

**Narrator 2:** The next day, Ophelia follows her father’s instructions and tries to avoid Hamlet. Eventually, he comes looking for her. After his visit, Ophelia runs to see her father.

**Polonius:** Ophelia — you look upset. What happened?

**Ophelia:** I’m so frightened! Hamlet came to see me in my room. His clothes were all dirty. He was very pale and his knees were shaking very hard. He acted like a crazy person!

**Polonius:** Maybe his love for you is driving him mad. What did he say?

**Ophelia:** He just grabbed me hard by the wrist and, for long moments, he studied my face. He seemed so changed, so strange.

**Polonius:** What has caused the change? Have you said any hard words to him lately?

**Ophelia:** No, my lord. But I have refused to accept his letters, and I’ve tried to stay away from him, just as you asked me to do.

**Polonius:** That is driving him crazy. I will tell the king about this.

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#### SCENE 6

**Narrator 3:** In the castle’s assembly hall, King Claudius and Queen Gertrude speak with two young courtiers, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who have just arrived from England.

**Claudius:** Thanks for coming back to Denmark so quickly. We really need your help here. It’s Hamlet. He seems very depressed. We’d like you to find out what’s bothering him.

**Gertrude:** We are hoping you can cheer him up!

**Rosencrantz:** Anything we can do for you, Your Majesties…

**Narrator 1:** Polonius enters the room.

**Polonius:** Your highnesses, I think I know what’s been troubling Hamlet. He is crazy in love with Ophelia.
Narrator 2: Claudius and Gertrude look over the love letters that Polonius hands them.

Gertrude: (to Claudius) Do you think Polonius could be right?

Narrator 3: Hamlet appears at the end of the hall, his face buried in a book.

Claudius: Here he comes now. Let’s leave him alone with his friends.

Narrator 1: The king, the queen and Polonius leave.

Rosencrantz: Lord Hamlet!

Narrator 2: Hamlet looks up from his book.

Hamlet: (cheering somewhat) My good friends! How are you?

Rosencrantz: Not too bad.

Narrator 3: Hamlet asks Rosencrantz and Guildenstern about their travels. As they describe their voyage, they mention that they recently passed a theater troupe on the road.

Guildenstern: One of the best troupes in all of Europe. They’ll be here soon.

Narrator 1: A little later, a flourish of trumpets can be heard, and the theater troupe enters the castle. The prince and his friends go to meet them.

Hamlet: Welcome, actors!

Rosencrantz: Will you perform for us?

Actor: Yes, indeed.

Hamlet: What shows do you play?

Actor: Julius Caesar, The Fall of Troy—we can do any story you’d like.

Hamlet: How about The Murder of Gonzago? Do you know that play?

Actor: Yes.

Hamlet: Good. I’d like to see you perform that one tomorrow night.

Narrator 2: A little later, Hamlet paces in the library, alone, talking to himself.

Hamlet: Am I a coward? A villain? Here I am—the son of a murdered father. I’ve been ordered by his ghost to avenge his death…
**Narrator 3:** Hamlet pauses for a moment.

**Hamlet:** But what is that ghost was really a demon, sent to test me? I need to make sure that my uncle is guilty before I kill him. That’s where this theater troupe will help. I’ll watch Claudius’s reaction to their performance tomorrow.

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**ACT III**

**SCENE 7**

**Narrator 1:** By the next day, Hamlet’s mental health has become the talk of the castle.

**Claudius:** *(to Rosencrantz)* When you talked to Hamlet yesterday, did he tell you what’s been bothering him?

**Rosencrantz:** He wouldn’t say.

**Gertrude:** Have you managed to get him interested in any fun activity?

**Guildenstern:** A theater troupe arrived at the castle yesterday. Hamlet seemed very excited to see the actors perform. In fact, he wants you to attend their play tonight.

**Claudius:** I’m relieved! Go and keep cheering him up.

**Rosencrantz:** We will, my lord.

**Narrator 2:** Rosencrantz and Guildenstern leave.

**Claudius:** *(to Gertrude)* My dear, will you leave us alone? Polonius and I are going to set up a meeting between Hamlet and Ophelia to see how he reacts.

**Gertrude:** As you wish.

**Narrator 3:** The queen leaves. The king and Polonius get Ophelia to stand in the hallway pretending to read a book. When they see Hamlet coming, they hide.

**Hamlet:** *(talking to himself)* To be or not to be —that is the question. Is it nobler to suffer in silence? Or should I fight back against this sea of troubles? To die, to sleep —that would end all this pain. Part of me wishes that I could die, but I also worry about death.

**Narrator 1:** Hamlet sees Ophelia.
Ophelia: Good day, my lord. How are you today?

Hamlet: Well, well, well.

Ophelia: I have some things here that I wish to return to you.

Narrator 2: She holds out a bundle of love letters and jewelry. Hamlet looks at her blankly.

Hamlet: I never gave you such things.

Ophelia: You know you did. You also said many sweet words when you gave them to me.

Hamlet: You should never believe sweet words in this sour world.

Narrator 2: Hamlet begins to scream at Ophelia.

Hamlet: Go to a convent! Why would you wish to marry anyhow and bring new sinners into this world?

Narrator 1: Eventually Hamlet gets tired and leaves. Ophelia stares after him with tears in her eyes.

Claudius: (to Polonius) I don’t think love is the cause of Hamlet’s behavior. And I don’t think he is crazy either. But I do think he is dangerous. I’ll send him to England.

Polonius: As you wish, my lord. But before he leaves, why don’t you have the queen talk with Hamlet privately one more time? Perhaps she will be able to get some answers out of him.

Narrator 2: Claudius agrees. A message is sent to Hamlet, saying that he must see his mother after the theater play.

SCENE 8

Narrator 3: That night, the king, the queen and all the courtiers attend the performance of The Murder of Gonzago. The play is the story of a woman who has her husband poisoned. After his death, she marries the poisoner. At the moment in the play when the poisoner is pouring the deadly potion into a sleeping man’s ears, King Claudius suddenly rises, looking shaken.

Claudius: (shouting) Give me some light! Stop the play! Everybody out! Lights! Lights!

Narrator 1: The lights are lit. In confusion, everyone leaves the room.
### SCENE 9

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Narrator 2:</th>
<th>Later that night, Queen Gertrude speaks to Polonius in her private chamber.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polonius:</td>
<td>You must tell Hamlet that his behavior has been unacceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>I will. But hide now. I hear him coming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Polonius hides behind the tapestry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Why did you want to see me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>Hamlet, you have offended your father.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrator 2:</th>
<th>A little later, King Claudius talks to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in his private chambers.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td>I don’t think it’s safe to keep Hamlet here. He’s been acting in a very strange way. Return to England and take him with you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guildenstern:</td>
<td>Your safety is our greatest concern, your Majesty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern leave Claudius alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td><em>(to himself)</em> I have committed a terrible offense. To kill my own brother! And now guilt and fear chase me every minute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Claudius falls to his knees and attempts to pray.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td><em>(to himself)</em> I want to pray, but what words can I use? How can I ask for forgiveness when I continue to wear my brother’s crown? When I continue to be married to the queen? I’m stuck in a pit of corruption and sin, and I can’t get out of it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Hamlet enters the room quietly, with his sword in his hand.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td><em>(to himself)</em> Now I should do it. I should kill him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>He raises his sword, then he pauses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td><em>(to himself)</em> But look at him. He’s praying. If I kill him now, he might go straight to heaven. My father had no chance to confess before he was killed. No! I’ll wait.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Hamlet puts his sword down and leaves.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Speech</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td><em>(laughing darkly)</em> Mother, you have offended my father!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td><em>(with anger and shock)</em> Hamlet, have you forgotten to whom you’re speaking?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>No, I haven’t. You’re the queen, your husband’s brother’s wife. And you are also my mother. I wish it wasn’t the case!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>She rises to leave, looking indignant and scared.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>I’ll not speak to you, if you’re going to be like this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Hamlet grabs his mother by the arm, holding her back.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>No — sit down and listen to me!</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Gertrude struggles with Hamlet. She looks very frightened.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>What are you going to do? Are you going to kill me? <em>(shouting out)</em> Help! Help!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polonius:</td>
<td><em>(in a muffled voice)</em> What’s going on?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Hamlet turns and sees someone hiding behind the tapestry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Ah! I smell a rat!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Hamlet draws his sword and runs it through the tapestry. Polonius cries and falls to the ground, dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>Oh, Hamlet! What a bloody act!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Yes, a bloody act — almost as bad as to kill a king and marry his brother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td><em>(with shock)</em> Kill a king!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Yes. That’s what I said.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Hamlet pulls the tapestry aside and discovers Polonius’s body.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## ACT IV

### SCENE 10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrator 1:</th>
<th>After Polonius’s murder, the king and the queen hurry Hamlet off to England. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern accompany him, carrying a letter for the English king.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Although no official announcement of Polonius’s death is made, Ophelia soon finds out. Badly shaken and afraid that she’s losing her mind, she writes to her brother, Laertes, begging him to come back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>By the time Laertes returns to Denmark, Ophelia has gone crazy. Laertes wants to avenge his father’s death and his sister’s mental collapse by killing Hamlet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>It becomes clear that he may soon have the opportunity after two letters arrive from Hamlet. Horatio receives the first one…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horatio: <em>(reading)</em></td>
<td>We were on our way to England when our ship was attacked by pirates and we were taken prisoner. Fortunately, they finally released us. As you read this, I’m on my way back to Denmark. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern continue on their way to England. I have much more to tell you, but it can wait until I see you next. Your friend, Hamlet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>The king receives a different letter. He shares the contents with Laertes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius: <em>(reading)</em></td>
<td>Your Majesty, I am about to arrive in Denmark and I ask you to show mercy toward me. I will explain the circumstances of my return as soon as I see you. Hamlet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td>He’s coming back! Now he’ll have to face what he has done!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td>Laertes, your desire for revenge is natural, and I won’t try to stop you. However, I want you to do it my way —OK? I have a plan through which you can get your revenge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td>What do you propose?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td>I’ll talk Hamlet into fencing with you. During the match, you can kill him and pretend that it was an accident.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td>I’ll put some poison on the tip of my sword, so that even a small cut will kill him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Claudius:** And just in case that fails, we’ll also have a cup of poisoned wine ready for him.

**Narrator 3:** Just then, Claudius and Laertes hear an anguished cry. The queen rushes into the room.

**Gertrude:** Laertes, your sister has drowned!

**Laertes:** *(sounding stricken)* Drowned? Where?

**Gertrude:** In the river, down by the weeping willow. She went down there, covered herself in flower garlands, and then lay down in the water, singing. Eventually, the water pulled her under.

**Laertes:** Ophelia? Drowned? Alas!

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**ACT V**

**SCENE 11**

**Narrator 1:** When Hamlet returns to Denmark, the first person he goes to see is his friend Horatio. The two talk as they walk around the churchyard.

**Hamlet:** When Rosencrantz and Guildernstern weren’t looking, I read the letter they were carrying. Claudius had requested the king of England to cut my head off as soon as I reached his court.

**Horatio:** So what did you do?

**Hamlet:** I made some changes to the letter and put it back.

**Narrator 2:** Horatio and Hamlet come upon a gravedigger, who is singing as he digs.

**Hamlet:** How can he sing like that when he’s digging graves?

**Horatio:** He’s dug so many that he can do it without thinking about it.

**Narrator 3:** Hamlet leans down and picks up a skull that’s been exposed.

**Hamlet:** This skull had a tongue in it once, and could sing too. *(to the gravedigger)* Whose was it? Do you know?

**Gravedigger:** That skull was Yorick’s. He was the king’s jester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hamlet:</th>
<th>Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio. When I was a little boy, he carried me on his back a thousand times.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>A funeral procession enters the churchyard. Hamlet and Horatio stand back, watching as the king, the queen, Laertes and several lords and ladies approach a grave. A body is lowered down. The queen throws petals into the open grave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>Farewell, Ophelia! I hoped you would be my daughter-in-law. I thought I’d be putting flower petals on your bridal bed, not on your grave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Ophelia! Dead? Oh no!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td>I hope doom falls heavily on the man responsible for this!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Hamlet steps forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>(to Laertes) I fear I may be the man of whom you speak. Laertes, please know that I never meant this to happen! I loved Ophelia!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td>Hamlet! You’re back! Now you’ll pay!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Laertes goes for Hamlet! They wrestle until they are forced to part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude:</td>
<td>(to Laertes) Please, don’t hurt him! He was crazy when he killed your father and he didn’t mean to cause your sister’s death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Eventually, Laertes calms down. But as Hamlet and Horatio exit the churchyard, Claudius leans over and whispers in Laertes’s ear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudius:</td>
<td>Just be patient. You will have your revenge.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**SCENE 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Narrator 2:</th>
<th>The next day, a message comes for Hamlet.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Osric:</td>
<td>His majesty wants me to tell you that he has made a bet with the king of France. Laertes has become a famous fencer there and king Claudius has bet that he will be able to beat him!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Okey, I’ll see if I can win this bet for the king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Osric departs. Soon, servants come in carrying cushions and wine and begin setting up for the match.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horatio:</td>
<td>(worried) If you feel uncomfortable, just say the word, and I’ll do what I can to stop the match.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hamlet: There is no way to stop your fate. If my time has come, my time has come.

Narrator 1: Laertes, Claudius, Gertrude and other lords and ladies arrive.

Claudius: Come, Hamlet—shake hands with Laertes before the match.

Narrator 2: Hamlet takes Laertes’s hand.

Hamlet: Sir, I am sorry. I have done you wrong. But I did not intend to. It was my madness, not I.

Laertes: I pardon you.

Hamlet: Let’s fence now. Your talent should shine here today.

Narrator 3: Hamlet and Laertes begin to fence.

Claudius: You look thirsty, Hamlet. Here, have a drink.

Narrator 1: Claudius holds a cup out to Hamlet.

Hamlet: I’ll finish this round. Set my drink over there.

Narrator 2: The match continues.

Claudius: (to Gertrude) Our son is going to win!

Narrator 3: Gertrude picks up the cup that Claudius has offered to Hamlet.

Gertrude: Here’s to your success, my son!

Claudius: (to Gertrude) No! Don’t drink from that cup!

Narrator 1: It is too late. The Queen drinks the poisoned wine.

Narrator 2: The match continues and Laertes wounds Hamlet. Accidentally they change swords and Hamlet wounds Laertes. The queen suddenly falls down.

Hamlet: The queen! What’s wrong?

Claudius: She fainted when she saw you both bleeding.

Gertrude: (gasp) No! The wine! My dear Hamlet! I am poisoned!

Hamlet: My mother is poisoned! There is a villain in this room!

Narrator 3: The room erupts in chaos. Hamlet turns and looks at the king.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Speech</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td><em>(in a commanding voice)</em> Lock the doors! I’m going to finish this now!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Laertes collapses, gasping.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laertes:</td>
<td><em>(in a faint voice)</em> It’s too late, Hamlet. You only have half-hour left to live. The sword you are holding has poison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>Poison in the sword… and in the wine…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Hamlet stabs the king.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>And drink this!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Hamlet grabs the goblet and forces the king to drink poisoned wine. Horatio tries to grab the goblet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horatio:</td>
<td>Give me some of that poison! If my best friend is going to die, so am I!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td>No!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrator 1:</td>
<td>Hamlet drinks the rest of the wine to prevent Horatio from drinking it. Then he collapses onto the floor. Horatio kneels beside him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamlet:</td>
<td><em>(faintly)</em> Horatio, you must stay here and tell my sad story.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrator 2:</td>
<td>Tears stream from Horatio’s eyes as he watches Hamlet’s breathing slow, then stop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Horatio:</td>
<td><em>(tenderly)</em> A noble heart has cracked. Good night, sweet prince.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrator 3:</td>
<td>Just then, a trumpet announces an arrival at the castle. The ambassador from England enters the room.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambassador:</td>
<td>What a horrifying sight! I guess I have come too late to deliver my news to the king. His command has been carried out. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horatio:</td>
<td>You seek thanks from one who never gave that command. <em>(to the others in the room)</em> Let’s take these bodies away. We will bury Lord Hamlet like a soldier. Had he lived, he would have been a great king!</td>
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</tbody>
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