

# William Shakespeare's *HAMLET* | PLOT SUMMARY

## CAMP SHAKESPEARE 2025

- The King of Denmark has died and his wife, Gertrude, has married his brother, Claudius. The king's son Hamlet has come home to Elsinore for his father's funeral.
- Hamlet sees the ghost of his father. The ghost tells him that it was his brother Claudius, the new king, who killed him and commands Hamlet to get revenge.
- Hamlet has been behaving strangely and Claudius asks Hamlet's childhood friends, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, to find out why.
- A group of travelling actors visit the castle and Hamlet asks them to perform a play about a man who murders a sleeping king, to see how Claudius reacts.
- Hamlet tells his girlfriend Ophelia that he never loved her and then asks Gertrude how she can be happy when her husband has only just died.
- The actors perform the story of the murder of a sleeping king and Claudius storms out. This confirms Hamlet's belief that Claudius killed his father.
- Hamlet and his mother Gertrude argue about his behaviour. During their argument Hamlet accidentally kills Polonius, Ophelia's father.
- Hamlet will not tell anyone where Polonius' body is. Claudius sends him to England but he doesn't arrive.
- Ophelia's brother, Laertes, comes home and finds Ophelia has gone mad with grief. She kills herself and Claudius and Laertes plot to murder Hamlet.
- Hamlet agrees to fight Laertes. During the duel, Gertrude drinks poison and both Hamlet and Laertes are fatally wounded. Hamlet kills Claudius before he dies.

*Courtesy Royal Shakespeare Company  
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