

I The play opens with a meeting between Hamlet's friend, Horatio, and two of the palace guards. Hamlet requests that the following night they should perform a play about a man who kills his brother and marries his brother's widow, in the hope that it will provoke a guilty reaction in Claudius. Act III A colour illustration of a comedy and tragedy theatre masks general illustrations. They conclude that Hamlet's madness hasn't been caused by Ophelia, and Claudius thinks Hamlet should be sent away to live in England if nobody can find out what's wrong with him. When Hamlet hears someone moving behind a tapestry, he thinks it's Claudius, and stabs the intruder. Act IV Claudius sends Hamlet away to England with his friends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. On his return to Denmark, Hamlet meets Horatio in the graveyard. They agree that they will dip Laertes's sword in poison, and also bring some poisoned wine to the duel for Hamlet to drink. As he's dying, Laertes confesses the plot he and Claudius hatched to kill Hamlet, and asks for Hamlet's forgiveness. The ghost then appears to the group, and they decide to tell Hamlet about it. We then cut to the following morning, and the wedding of the King's widow, Gertrude, to his brother, Claudius. The following scene shows us a conversation between the new King's advisor, Polonius, and his son and daughter, Laertes and Ophelia. Polonius is convinced that Hamlet is still in love with Ophelia, and he tells Claudius. He sends a letter to his friend Horatio, explaining that he has stowed away on a pirate ship that is bringing him back to Denmark. He teams up with Claudius, and the pair devise a way to bring about Hamlet's death. However, Claudius and Laertes have already hatched their plan to kill Hamlet. At the duel, Hamlet refuses to drink the wine, which Claudius has offered him. Hamlet then stabs Claudius with the poisoned sword, killing him. The guards inform Horatio that they have seen a ghost resembling the King, who has recently died. Claudius has taken the throne, and Hamlet is extremely unhappy about this and his mother's wedding. Horatio and the guards inform Hamlet about the ghost. The ghost tells him that he was murdered by Claudius, and he wants Hamlet to avenge his murder by killing Claudius. However, he doesn't want Hamlet to harm Gertrude in any way. He thinks the best way to do this is by feigning mental illness, and he informs Horatio and one of the guards of his plan. Act II Hamlet starts to carry out his plan, acting strangely. Ophelia breaks off her relationship with him, and she tells Polonius that Hamlet's behaviour is extremely out of character. A travelling theatre company then arrives at the palace. Ophelia's funeral procession then arrives.