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Hamlet

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This is the story of a frustrated youngster who has the same problem every teenager has... nobody listens.

Hamlet was the Prince of Denmark. After his father's death the country was passed onto his uncle Claudius who in turn married Hamlet's mother Gertrude. All too much for a young man you would say... Sadly not. It doesn't stop there. In the middle of the night the ghost of his father pays a little visit...

"Pssst, Hamlet - son wake up!" the ghost whispered, hovering six inches above the ground.

"Five minutes, still sleepy," Hamlet moaned, pulling the duvet of his four post bed over his face.

"Wake up you lazy berk! It's your father," barked the ghost, "I have something important to tell you."

Hamlet pulled back the covers just enough to allow his eyes to see, and he was in awe of what he was observing. His father was exactly as he remembered him. He wore his best velvet tunic, which was a dark shade of puce, his leggings were pale green and he wore velvet slippers. His face was the same but Hamlet couldn't help but notice that it seemed hollow and weak unlike his living father; the eyes were still green but looked heavy as if they carried a burden and a secret. He also saw that his father was hovering above the foot of his bed and had a glow about him and with the squint of the eyes he could just make out a few drops of some liquid falling from his left ear, although it could have been a shadow. He knew he had to ask what he was thinking.

"I thought you were dead?" Hamlet mumbled through the duvet, to which his father replied, "Well of course I'm bloody dead you idiot!" shaking his translucent head.

"I come to you now as a spirit, to tell you a terrible secret, one that could ripple the foundations of the monarchy and the country. I hope you can handle what I'm about -"

"Get on with it old man. I'm still tired, what's with all the drama?" Hamlet said with the edge of impatience. Hamlet knew his father liked to talk... a lot. And the only reason he does talk, Hamlet thinks, is so he doesn't have to listen to him. Hamlet couldn't help but take into account that he was alive and his father was actually dead. Which means no more orders, no more orders means he can do whatever he likes, he can go out

with mates, meet busty wenches, get pissed and dance till the sun creeps over the hills of Denmark.

“What you smirking at boy?” At this moment Hamlet must have realised he had a slight smile on his face which hastily disappeared, his father still had an authoritative voice.

“I was murdered son, by your treacherous uncle Claudius. He poisoned me in the ear as I slept,” he said looking at the floor. He lifted his head and had a look of misery and anger in his face. Maybe death wasn’t as glamorous as his father had made out, as he sent prisoners to their death. Hamlet wasn’t very bright, he was nobility, what did he need an education for? He would be king one day and he had so many ideas to share with the country maybe this was his opportunity and excuse to become king, and others would have to listen to him.

Unless his uncle would listen to him unlike his father, then he would act upon his *own* accord.

“I want you to murder your uncle, Hamlet. I know you haven’t been the most - err - manly son I wished for but you know it’s nobody’s fault but your own.” The King wasn’t very good at kind words but Hamlet knew what he meant and in a way kind of appreciated it, but it was true though Hamlet resented the idea of killing somebody. All that blood made him feel woozy.

He had so many good ideas for the country and couldn’t wait to share them, so he had to act unless his uncle would listen to him in which case there would be no need to resort to... violence.

“OK father, I’ll make you proud,” Hamlet tried to say with as much meaning and authentication as he could but couldn’t meet his father’s eye. The ghost didn’t register it but thought he must still be tired or couldn’t bare to see his father like this and with the nod of his ghostly head, the figure slowly started to evaporate and like a cloud of smoke drifting toward the heavens he was gone.

The sun was barely over the tops of the cliffs like a small child trying to see over a taller wall when there was a series of violent raps on the bedroom door.

“Hamlet, Prince Hamlet,” came a voice from the other side. “The king requests

your audience. He resides in his study and he does not expect to be kept waiting.”

He knew that voice anywhere; it was Laertes, son of Polonius who was his uncle’s chief councillor and royal arse kiss. Now it seems the king has given him some sort of authority and status around the palace seeing as Claudius has no son of his own. Hamlet and Laertes didn’t get on very well; they had been rivals since they were toddlers with Laertes following rules and books so Hamlet had no time for him. Laertes was two years Hamlet’s senior and resented the fact that Hamlet will one day become king and would be giving orders, or it could be the fact that he tried to get it on with his younger sister Ophelia.

He got himself up and immediately felt the cold that comes from when the first foot touches the ground, and regretted ever leaving the warmth of the bed. He stretched and yawned, shuffled over to the curtains and drew them back. The sun was doing the Full Monty now and Hamlet got the whole view, it hurt his eyes and walked across the room to his wardrobe and started to get dressed. He brushed his hair and with a wink in the mirror was outside his bedroom walking down the long corridor. The carpet was dark red and there were seven rooms down this one corridor, the walls were a lighter red with gold trim and had many portraits of his father as king. He looked at the most recent one which was only a few paces down that was painted three months ago. He felt sad that death could be waiting just around the –

“Ahhhhhhh” he screamed, leaping backwards with his heart in his throat, he saw the housemaid Frann as he turned away from the picture.

“Bloody hell, you have to stop creeping up on me like that. How long have you been standing there?”

“Long enough to know that you have been wasting time, now get a move on you lazy boy,” she said with authority. She turned on her heels and started to walk down the corridor in the direction she obviously came from however Hamlet wouldn’t put it past her if she was watching him since he left his bedroom and came from the opposite direction. He shuddered. She was creepy and scared the shit out of him. She was smaller than he was and old, very old with the smell of death on her breath. He wondered when she would take her last one. Hamlet didn’t hate her, he just preferred if she was not living. She always wore black and had an uncanny resemblance to a witch, with her big

crooked nose, hairy warts and piercing yellow eyes that could turn milk sour, her dark dirty hair and broken yellow teeth – DAMN! That bitch was ugly. She probably had webbed feet. That’s why he couldn’t hear the sound of her feet approaching. With another shudder he followed her down the corridor while she talked to herself.

“Damn kids these days, all they want do is party all night and day, no responsibilities or a brain cell between them.”

“Maybe you should try it you old bat,” Hamlet mumbled under his breath.

“What was that boy?” she said spinning on the spot and glaring with those yellow eyes.

“I said I might buy a new hat.” She squinted at him with the deepest loathing then carried on walking down the corridor and when she came to the end, opened the door for him to go up the stairs, she gave him a little smile, which gave the impression that this wasn’t going to be pleasant.

A smile didn’t really complement her face, whereas a brown paper bag might. With a grimace and a sigh he ascended the marble staircase; got to the top and knocked three times on the large oak door.

“Enter!”

Hamlet looked to the ceiling and sighed once more. Today was not going to be a good day. He pushed the door open and stepped into what used to be his father’s study...

Later that evening Hamlet was plotting the murder of his ignorant uncle. The little meeting they had went exactly as he imagined... badly. His uncle and “king” said there were to be a few changes; first, Hamlet was given a curfew. At eighteen, he has a time to be home. Secondly, he would be educated in as little time as possible which means no free time during the day and to cap it all his tutor would be no other than Laertes. No way! He wouldn’t take this, it should be him who is giving orders. He thought his uncle might hear him out but his ideas fell upon death ears. Now he knew what to do. Tonight was the celebration of a new king. All the most respected people in Denmark would be there. That’s when he’ll confront him and they would battle to the death.

On second thoughts it would be easier to just put some poison in his wine; no

need for violence was there?

Just a few droplets (hoping his father's spirit isn't watching), then stab him. Then he would be king and others would have no choice but to listen to him.

That evening, an hour before the feast, Hamlet was making some last minute preparations in the kitchen. He had a change of mind; he wouldn't pour the poison in his drink at the feast, oh no it would be too risky. He decided to put the poison in his uncle's wine flask. The one that gets placed on his table. Then when he pours himself a drink to toast his coronation he shall fall down dead and the kingdom will finally belong to him.

After adding the finishing touches, he quickly put the cap on and hastily fled the kitchen at the sound of approaching footsteps.

When he got back to his room he put the empty bottle under his pillow and got himself ready for an entertaining evening.

He greeted the best men and their wives from all over the country, then seated himself down at the long table near the back wall facing all the other tables. He sat next to his mother and next to her was Claudius.

His uncle stood to make his speech, "Men of Denmark, I have called you here to celebrate a new era of the kingdom, eat and be merry for tonight we drink to my health!" With that there was a big cheer and Hamlet couldn't help but give a little smile. Everyone drank to his health but this wasn't the wine with the poison in it. That wine was for after the meal.

The food was brought out and laid upon the table, it was the finest cuisine in all of the country and Hamlet enjoyed it very much.

The wine was brought out and Hamlet watched with eager anticipation as they were laid out on each table. His plan couldn't fail. He knew what he was doing. He peered around his mother to get a better look as his uncle poured himself a reasonable measure, smiling and joking. Hamlet hoped it was a good one because an even better one was coming his way. He stood up once more to give his last speech; he raised the cup to his lips. Hamlet's eyes widened as he watched in eagerness. His uncle took a large gulp with the rest of the people in the dining room. The smile fell from this face. He touched his forehead and cheeks. They were burning him. He tried to loosen his collar but still the

heat tormented him. He started to choke and dropped his cup to the floor. The Queen was up and at first looked like she was trying to save him but then she started to clutch at her own throat. Baffled Hamlet looked around and saw everybody doing the same. What is this he thought Simple Simon says?

It then dawned on him what he had done: when he poured the poison into the flask the kitchen staff then must have mixed it altogether. No sooner had he come to this conclusion than he heard the sudden sound of bodies hitting the marble floor. He looked around once more. This time he was standing and took in what he had just done. Was it a bad thing? He was now king, his uncle was dead and so too was his traitorous mother and all the other powerful men in Denmark. So this made him complete ruler of the country. He stood with his hands on his hips and had a little chuckle to himself. Finally he was king and now somebody would take him seriously and appreciate his genius. He lifted up the goblet, “to me,” he said, then drank the rest of his wine...