

## A summary of the story

Act 5 Scene 1

Two gravediggers (also known as clowns) discuss Ophelia's death whilst they work. They think she committed suicide but is being given a Christian burial because of her high status.

Hamlet talks to the gravedigger about the skulls that are being thrown out of the graves. Hamlet is revolted that Yorick (someone he once knew) is now only bones.

Claudius, Gertrude, Laertes and others arrive for Ophelia's funeral. Laertes is angry that Ophelia is not receiving much of a funeral.

Hamlet is shocked to realise it's Ophelia's funeral. Laertes is so distressed he jumps into her grave. Hamlet appears and the two men fight. Hamlet leaves and Claudius reminds Laertes of their plan.

Act 5 Scene 2

Hamlet tells Horatio about Claudius's intention to have him executed in England. He found out by searching Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's cabin. Hamlet replaces the letter with one ordering Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's deaths, which he forges in the king's name.

Osric, a lord, arrives to invite Hamlet to the duel. He says that Claudius has bet Laertes that Hamlet will win. Horatio tries to talk Hamlet out of the duel but Hamlet accepts.

Hamlet offers his apologies to Laertes for killing Polonius, claiming it was his madness. Laertes accepts the apology. Claudius says he will drink a toast if Hamlet wins and puts a pearl in the wine. The duel begins. Claudius offers the wine to Hamlet but Hamlet delays and continues fighting. Laertes wounds Hamlet. Gertrude drinks the wine and dies. The two men exchange swords in the fight and Hamlet wounds Laertes. Laertes tells Hamlet the king planned the trick. Hamlet wounds the king with the poisoned sword and then forces him to drink the wine. The king dies, followed by Laertes. Horatio tries to commit suicide by drinking from the poisoned cup but Hamlet stops him. Hamlet hears Fortinbras arriving (from victory in Poland) and announces that he would like him to be king. Hamlet dies.