

# Hamlet fortinbras death



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## Hamlet Analysis

### Hamlet's Last Soliloquy

“ Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means / To do't” (IV. iv. 46-47). *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare is a tragic narrative poem that tells the story of a prince named Hamlet, whose father was murdered by his uncle. Avenging his father's death and deciding whether to kill his Uncle Claudius becomes a mental struggle for Hamlet throughout the narrative. There are different characters in the play that Hamlet interacts with, but the answers Hamlet needs end up coming from within him. Shakespeare uses soliloquies to show a character's thoughts by speaking them aloud, as the character walks alone in the scene. Hamlet's last soliloquy in Act IV, Scene IV shows a dramatic transformation of his character. He begins as a coward, continually postponing the murder of his uncle. After his transformation, he decides to be true to himself and carry out what he intended from the beginning and the death of Claudius becomes inevitable.

Scene IV begins at the coast of Denmark with the character Fortinbras, who is the prince of Norway and good friend of Hamlet's. Fortinbras's army is preparing for a march on the kingdom of the Danish king as he previously promised would occur. Hamlet learns from the captain of Fortinbras's ship that Fortinbras is preparing to engage in war so that the extent of Norway's land can be obtained. Hamlet admires and respects Fortinbras for his ability to take action when Fortinbras promises he will:

Witness this army of such mass and charge,

Led by a delicate and tender prince,

Whose spirit with divine ambition puffed

Makes mouths at the invisible event,

Exposing what is mortal and unsure

To all that fortune, death and danger dare,

Even for an eggshell (IV. iv. 48-54).

When Hamlet states how he admires Fortinbras, he points out how youthful and superior Fortinbras's qualities are by calling him " delicate and tender." Hamlet points out Fortinbras's bravery by saying he makes mean faces (" makes mouths") at what lies ahead. This is to be held in high regard in Hamlet's eyes because what lies ahead is never really known and most likely to be feared. Hamlet admires that no matter what fortune, danger, and death could do to Fortinbras and his army, they still march on. The admiration in Hamlet's tone and words for Fortinbras inspires him to be the brave prince that Hamlet desires to be. The impression given in the text is that Hamlet hears his own words for Fortinbras and wants that esteem and honor for his own name.

Hamlet begins to compare himself to Fortinbras. It is implied that Hamlet realizes his weaknesses by comparing himself to the noble Fortinbras.

Hamlet covets Fortinbras's ability to control his army and his state. The narrative shows Hamlet's inability to control himself, or his own actions so using Fortinbras as a model is what will end up pushing Hamlet to become the honorable man he wishes to be. " Rightly to be great / Is not to stir without great argument, / But greatly to find quarrel in a straw/ When

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honor's at the stake" (IV. iv. 54-57). He is implying here, as Fortinbras would agree, usually true greatness does not mean rushing into a battle over something insignificant; however, when defending one's honor, even something that seems minor deserves action to be taken immediately. From the text, the impression given describes how Hamlet is being questioned when he knows his father was murdered by his uncle and has yet to do anything about it. Here, it appears that a change is coming over Hamlet. He is no longer

debating in his mind whether or not Claudius should be killed, but realizing what he must do in order to protect his own honor and that of his father's. He continues here with " How stand I, then, / That have a father killed, a mother stained, / Excitements of my reason and my blood," (IV, iv. 57-59). Hamlet now knows that he has been living with this shame of knowing his father was killed by his own blood and questions himself as if to say " How am I standing here living my life knowing what has happened?"

" O, from this time forth / My thoughts be bloody or be nothing worth!" (IV, iv. 66-67). This is the pivotal point of the play. It as if an epiphany finally comes over Hamlet and all of his cowardice and second-guessing himself is over. Hamlet is now ready and brave enough to do what he has been set out to do all along.

Unlike the famous, " To be or not to be..." soliloquy, Hamlet is no longer fearing the consequences of his future actions. Before his last soliloquy, Hamlet could be described as virtuous and full of integrity, but he was still a coward. Hamlet never followed through with the murder of his uncle. He

would even try to make excuses for his actions. When Claudius was praying and talking to God, Hamlet used his being “ holy” at the moment not to kill him. Hamlet was always putting off his uncle’s death. Hamlet became progressively more confused and the struggle between his thoughts and the consequences seemed to get worse—until the inspiration of Fortinbras and his good virtues and leadership skills helped Hamlet to see clearly what needed to be done.

At the end of the narrative, most every character dies, including Hamlet. His death cannot be looked at as heroic nor can it be looked at as shameful. He avenged his father’s death. That was much of the focus of *Hamlet* and he succeeded in doing so.

Fortinbras had an immense influence on Hamlet’s logic and helped him to get his revenge. Hamlet’s last soliloquy in Act IV, Scene IV shows the metamorphosis Hamlet needed to draw the courage to kill the king. Shakespeare accomplishes a dramatic transformation of character and uses it to convey no matter how great the change is, it can still end in tragedy.