

# Banquo and king hamlet the friendly ghosts



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Insert Insert of the supervisor Insert of the Insert assignment is due Banquo and King Hamlet, the Friendly Ghosts The use of supernatural elements such as ghosts plays a key role in both the plot and atmosphere of the two famous Shakespeare's tragedies, Hamlet and Macbeth. In Hamlet, the ghost takes the form of the deceased King Hamlet and appears four times. In two of these instances, the ghost is a silent actor who does not utter a single word though spoken to. There are several instances of supernatural manifestations in Macbeth including a floating dagger, the three strange witches, apparitions, and Banquo's ghost. The ghost appears only once but leaves a significant influence on the main actor, Macbeth. In both Hamlet and Macbeth, Shakespeare uses the supernatural element of ghosts to build his plot by making it more dramatic, and to resolve the play's central conflict.

In Hamlet the ghost is first seen by Horatio who interprets its appearance as a warning to Denmark of an impending threat. When it appears again, Horatio confronts it but it vanishes without uttering a word. When Hamlet is informed of visitations by a ghost that looks like his father he vows to confront it. When the ghost reappears, Hamlet calls out asking what its purpose is but it only beckons him to follow which he does despite Horatio and Marcellus's efforts to stop him. It identifies itself as the spirit of Hamlet's father:

" Doomed for a certain term to walk the night,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature,  
Are burned and purged away" (1. 5. 57).

The ghost informs Hamlet that Claudius, who is his uncle and currently his stepfather, is the murderer. This infuriates hamlet significantly enough to

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desire for vengeance. However, the ghost reminds him to be gentle with his mother and leave her judgment to God. The ghost commands Hamlet to avenge his father's death which Hamlet is at first unable to do prompting the ghost to appear to him again in his mother's boudoir. The ghost reproaches Hamlet for not carrying out its orders about avenging his father's murder stating, " Do not forget. This visitation, Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose" (3. 4. 101).

Scared of the witches' prophesy about one of Banquo's sons becoming king, Macbeth sends killers to murder Banquo in the play Macbeth. The witches had prophesied to Banquo that, " Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none" (1. 3. 67). Banquo is murdered but his ghost later appears while Macbeth is hosting a banquet and quietly sits next to him without uttering a word. The ghost's face is drenched in blood and covered with cuts all over. It is a terrifying sight only visible to Macbeth. It is invisible to other people in the feast. It has been argued that since the ghost was only visible to Macbeth, it was not real but actually Macbeth's hallucination borne of an excessive imagination and a guilty conscience. The ghost has such a strong influence on Macbeth that he seems to have lost his sanity. It is an obsession that he later remarks about stating, " For Banquo's issue have I filed my mind . . . And mine eternal jewel / Given to the common enemy of man" (3. 1. 161).

In Hamlet, the ghost serves the function of driving the main character to avenge his father's death while in Macbeth it serves an intimidating function that finally drives the king to his destruction. The ghost in Hamlet gives instructions to the prince while in Macbeth the ghost simply provokes a reaction in the play's protagonist.

### Works Cited

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