

Hamlet
Act II Quiz (12)

Act 2, Scene 1

Act 2 opens in a room in Polonius' house, two months after _____ has seen his father's ghost. Polonius is making arrangements to send his servant, Reynaldo, to Paris to spy on _____. Polonius justifies his actions by arguing that he is only concerned for the well-being of his son, so far away from home. The frightened _____ rushes into the room to tell her father that Hamlet came to see her while she was sewing, and that it had been a terrifying experience. _____ at once assumes that the loss of Ophelia's affections has driven Hamlet insane. He expresses regret that he ever asked his daughter to behave so heartlessly toward the love-sick prince, and he decides the King must know that Hamlet has gone mad.

Act 2, Scene 2

King Claudius has noticed Hamlet's strange behaviour even before old Polonius can tell his tale. _____ has summoned two of Hamlet's classmates at Wittenberg -- Guildenstern and Rosencrantz -- hoping that they will be able to uncover what has sparked such a transformation in Hamlet. The two leave to seek out the Prince and Polonius is granted license to speak before the King and Queen. He begins a tiresome explanation of his theories about the nature of Hamlet's madness, and produces a love letter that _____ has sent to Ophelia. The _____ believes Polonius is probably right, and she knows that her hasty marriage and the death of Hamlet's father have also been responsible for his dramatic change in behaviour. In the midst of the discussion, the King receives good news from his messengers, Voltimand and Cornelius, back from Norway. They inform him that the King of Norway has decided to redirect his attack toward Poland, if the Norwegian army is granted safe passage through _____. Happy with the news, the King turns again to Polonius, and, after more tedious pontificating by the old man, the King agrees to eavesdrop on Hamlet when he next visits Ophelia.

Polonius sees _____ approaching and he advises the King and Queen to leave him alone with the Prince. Hamlet does speak with Polonius, but his answers are

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nonsensical and rude; due not only to his desire to perpetuate his facade as a madman, but also to his utter lack of regard for Polonius, whom he sees as a "great baby." After a few moments, Polonius gives up, convinced that Hamlet's babbling is a result of his insanity. _____ and Guildenstern enter the room and Hamlet greets them with excitement. Hamlet makes the two admit that they are spies of the King and then gives them an answer to the burning question: the trouble is, simply put, melancholia. Rosencrantz tells Hamlet that the players will be there soon, and when they do arrive, Hamlet greets them enthusiastically and asks the First Player to recite a scene from a story about the Trojan War. Hamlet is so moved that he asks the First Player to stop speaking and also to perform a play in front of the court that evening. The play will be *The Murder of Gonzago*, and Hamlet will intermittently add dialogue that he himself will write. Polonius leads Rosencrantz and _____ away, and Hamlet is left alone, safe to reveal his secret anguish.

Hamlet still cannot decide what is true or untrue; right or wrong. Is the Ghost an evil spirit? Is it tempting the Prince to orchestrate his own demise? Hamlet must be sure of his uncle's guilt before seeking revenge. His plan is to reenact the murder of his father during the production of *The Murder of Gonzago*. If _____ turns pale, Hamlet will have his proof:

"The play's the thing

Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king (2.2.606-07)."