

SCENE FIVE: ***The Police Station***

SERGEANT STRIPES: Goodness me, he was certainly one messed-up young man, wasn't he?

HORATIO: Yes. I was beginning to get really worried about him. He was having really bad nightmares and was even talking about suicide.

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: Maybe he murdered all of these people when the balance of his mind was disturbed, then?

HORATIO: He didn't.

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: Well someone must have murdered all of these people. Bodies don't just turn up of their own accord you know and if you didn't kill them...

HORATIO: I didn't...

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: Then someone else must have. If Hamlet wanted to get revenge for his father's murder and was losing his mind about this, then the suspicion naturally falls on him.

HORATIO: He didn't kill them, well, not all of them anyway.

SERGEANT STRIPES: So who did, then, the tooth fairy?

HORATIO: *(Angrily)* Look, do you want me to tell you what happened or don't you?

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: That'll do, Sergeant. Carry on, Mr Horatio.

HORATIO: Hamlet simply couldn't face killing anyone in cold blood and he was having doubts about whether the ghost was genuine or the devil in disguise sent to torment him, so he decided to set a trap for King Claudius.

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: What sort of trap?

HORATIO: He wanted to be sure that King Claudius had killed his father, so he hired a group of actors to perform a play.

SERGEANT STRIPES: *(Sarcastically)* Oh, that's a good idea.

HORATIO: *(Wearily)* Well it worked, so it must have been, mustn't it?

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD: How did he trap the king?

HORATIO: Hamlet asked the actors to perform a play which told a story that was exactly the same as what had happened to his father. He also wrote some extra lines for them to include...

CHIEF INSPECTOR PLOD and SERGEANT STRIPES watch the action. HORATIO exits.

SCENE SIX: *Outside the Castle Grounds*

HAMLET and ACTOR 1 enter.

HAMLET: You do know that the king and queen will be at your performance this evening?

ACTOR 1: Ooh! We love giving royal command performances.

HAMLET: And you have rehearsed the play just as I instructed?

ACTOR 1: Yes, exactly as you said.

HAMLET: And you have included the extra lines I wrote?

ACTOR 1: Yes, yes. It's all in hand, don't worry. This is our job, remember, this is what we do. We act, we're creative, we're spontaneous...

HAMLET: I don't want you to be spontaneous, I want you to perform exactly what I've asked you to.

ACTOR 1: Stop fretting! It'll be absolutely fine, sweetie, I promise.

HAMLET: Just make sure it is.

ACTOR 1 exits. HORATIO enters.

HORATIO: What's happening?

HAMLET: I've hired the actors to perform a play for the king and queen and I want you to do me a favour while it's going on.

HORATIO: Sure, what?

HAMLET: Watch the king.

HORATIO: What for?

HAMLET: Watch his reaction to the play. I want you to notice any reaction he has to it.

HORATIO: Will he react?

HAMLET: *(Determinedly)* He should.

HORATIO: No problem, I'll keep a close eye on him.

HAMLET: Thank you, Horatio, you're a good friend. Come on, let's go and have a quick drink before the entertainment starts.

HAMLET and HORATIO exit.