

spirit of revenge in the average man pass him by. Hamlet is sent to England and is back again due to some difficulty, and sees his ~~brother's~~ fearless peer Fortinbras who simply by being in action a man of courage makes Hamlet again feel the cowardice of his inaction, as is evidenced by the soliloquy IV.IV., 34. *on his way*

When he returns from England time is finally catching up with him and he is forced into action when Laertes seeks to win his revenge on Hamlet for the murder of his father Polonius. Hamlet is set up to be done away with poisoned wine or dagger, but still is able to foil the King's bad intentions by ~~stabbing~~ *stabbing* Laertes, and then the King, even though he is mortally wounded by Laertes poisoned rapier. This scene almost seems to promote the idea that Hamlet kills Claudius for his letting the Queen, his mother, drink from the poisoned cup, thus deflating the whole entire action of the play and Hamlet's great wrestling with his cowardice and inaction. However as the play up to the last act revolves around the time element, or lack of it, pushing Hamlet toward his revenge we can rest assured that Hamlet finally did revenge his father's death.

Hamlet is a play dealing with the entities of retribution, courage, and inaction embodied in a young man who has a moral responsibility to his murdered father. Apparently Shakespeare felt the classical unity of time needed to be altered to present the main characters moral struggle the way he wanted to. Gardner's definition carries with it an aspect of expediency, and this is one quality we see lacking in Shakespeare's Hamlet. Time is not on Hamlet's side, it is a torturing influence on him sending him to great depths of depression. A less even tempered man would have sought his revenge in a fit of passion with out thinking of the fatal consequences, but Hamlet as the time element shows us wanted the right time to seek his vengeance. He had a number of places in the plot where his wrath could have flared and speeded his retribution but these chances passed him by as he wallowed in his indecision and inaction. If time urged Hamlet on it was no stronger than the force of a baby's breath.