**The Happy Prince**

**By- OSCAR WILDE**

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Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde was an Irish poet and playwright. After writing in different forms throughout the 1880s, he became one of London's most popular playwrights in the early 1890s. [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Wilde)

[**Born**](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=oscar+wilde+born&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMNISy0620i9IzS_ISQVSRcX5eVZJ-UV5i1gF8ouTE4sUyjNzUlIVQEIAYyX4ETcAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQ6BMoADAhegQIDhAG)**:**16 October 1854, [Westland Row, Dublin, Ireland](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=Westland+Row&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFLiArOqstINzLTEspOt9AtS8wtyUoFUUXF-nlVSflHeIlae8NTikpzEvBSFoPxyABvEMy0_AAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoATAhegQIDhAH)

[**Died**](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=oscar+wilde+died&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMNKSz0620i9IzS_ISdVPSU1OTSxOTYkvSC0qzs-zSslMTVnEKpBfnJxYpFCemZOSqgASAgCTji6qQAAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQ6BMoADAiegQIDhAK)**:**30 November 1900, [Paris, France](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=Paris&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFKCsApLsrTks5Ot9AtS8wtyUvVTUpNTE4tTU-ILUouK8_OsUjJTUxaxsgYkFmUWAwCogGNPPwAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoATAiegQIDhAL)

[**Short stories**](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=oscar+wilde+short+stories&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMNJSySi30k_Oz8lJTS7JzM_TTywtycgvKrYqBpIlCsUl-UWZqcWLWCXzi5MTixTKM3NSUhVQ5AB5Dc9PTgAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQ6BMoADAjegQIDhAO)**:**[The Canterville Ghost](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=The+Canterville+Ghost&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFLiBLOS4zOStVQyyq30k_NzclKTSzLz8_QTS0sy8ouKrYqBZIlCcUl-UWZq8SJW0ZCMVAXnxLyS1KKyTKBiBfeM_OISAO-AXvFVAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoATAjegQIDhAP), [The Selfish Giant](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=The+Selfish+Giant&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFLi1k_XNzQyTLasTErSUskot9JPzs_JSU0uyczP008sLcnILyq2KgaSJQrFJflFmanFi1gFQzJSFYJTc9IyizMU3DMT80oAI_SUvlMAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoAjAjegQIDhAQ),[The Remarkable Rocket](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=The+Remarkable+Rocket&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFLiArHMcg2ScnO0VDLKrfST83NyUpNLMvPz9BNLSzLyi4qtioFkiUJxSX5RZmrxIlbRkIxUhaDU3MSi7MSkHCAzPzk7tQQAucchgFYAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoAzAjegQIDhAR),[The Portrait of Mr.W. H.](https://www.google.co.in/search?q=The+Portrait+of+Mr.+W.+H.&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LQz9U3MM0rMFLiArHMkuMLcsq1VDLKrfST83NyUpNLMvPz9BNLSzLyi4qtioFkiUJxSX5RZmrxIlbJkIxUhQCgUFFiZolCfpqCb5GeQriegoceAA2HG4NaAAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiz_7nm47HjAhUFeysKHar9CVMQmxMoBDAjegQIDhAS)

**Introduction:**

The Happy Prince was a beautiful statue. This statue was on a tall pillar. The prince was covered with gold. There were two sapphires in place of his eyes. He had a ruby in his sword hilt. He could see all around the city. When he was alive, he lived in a palace. He was always happy. He had not seen the miseries of life. But now he could see miseries around him. He saw the hungry and the homeless. He was very sad. He was filled with pity. One day, a swallow came there. He saw the prince in tears. The prince told him that he wanted to help the poor and sad people. He sent his ruby and the sapphires of his eyes to the poor people. Now he was blind. He sent his gold also. Now he looked ugly. The swallow began to love the prince. The winter came but the swallow did not go away. He lived with the prince. One day, the swallow died. This broke the leaden heart of the statue. The statue was no longer beautiful. It was melted in a furnace. But the leaden heart did not melt. It was thrown in the dust heap. The dead swallow was also lying there. God sent one of his angels to bring the two most precious things. He took the dead swallow and the leaden heart to God. Both these things were really fit for paradise.

“The Happy Prince” is the story about a beautifully decorated statue of a prince who lived a very happy life. He learnt about sorrow after his death, when his statue was placed at a high point from where the misery of the entire city could be seen. Moved by the plight of the poor, the Happy Prince gave away all his possessions to the needy with the help of a kind swallow. This compassionate bird sacrificed his life for the noble cause of the Prince.

**TITLE**

The title of the story, “The Happy Prince”, presents its elements in a symbolic manner. The story is about a prince who used to be happy when he was alive. However, he is very sad after he is placed atop a column as a statue. The prince appeared to be happy only because he knew nothing of life outside of his palace. Only after he died and became a statue did he learn of the people’s suffering and the disparity between the rich and the poor. He now sought happiness by sacrificing himself for the happiness of others. The title thus aptly suggests that the outward happiness of the prince is symbolic of the superficial joys in life. Real happiness lies in having a compassionate heart.

The story is an allegory. It is based on the theme that love and sacrifice are important values in human life and happiness comes to those who make others happy. Those who have compassion and concern get as much joy as those who receive their kindness and charity. Hence, one must try to live a life guided by the virtues of love, sacrifice, benevolence and joy.

This story highlights the three themes. The first theme is that spiritual beauty or inner beauty is more important than outward beauty. The real beauty is love, compassionate heart and sacrifice. The prince and the swallow lost their outward beauty to attain inner beauty by helping the poor and needy. The second theme is the love, charity and sacrifices that make life going on in the world. The third theme os the story is that there is a huge gap between the rich and the poor. We should help the poor and needy people in society so that they are able to lead a happy life.

**MESSAGE**

“The Happy Prince” gives many important messages. The first message is that we must spread happiness around us if we wish to be happy. It is useless to mount statues with gold and jewels when the people are hungry. The Prince could be happy only as long as sorrow was not allowed to enter his palace. Once he saw pain, suffering and injustice, even his lead heart cried. The next message is that the disparity and sorrow in society can be overcome by compassion, generosity and sharing. The generous prince and the gentle swallow sacrificed themselves to bring happiness to the poor and the needy. However, their deaths did not end their lives. The redemptive power of love made them live forever as the precious and chosen ones of God.

The most powerful message or moral lesson given by this story is that it is very essential to help the poor and the downtrodden in society. The second message is, we must be sensitive to the people who are suffering, especially the poor, and help them out. This will reduce their suffering and help them to stand up. This story highlights the virtues of kindness and pity towards others. It also talks about sacrifice towards others. The Happy Prince could have retained his precious stones on his body and retained his glory. But he decided to give them all away to help the poor and needy. This shows the sacrifice done by him.

**Character Sketches**

**The Happy Prince:**The Happy Prince is a very kind-hearted soul. When he was alive he did not see the sorrow of others. But, now he saw a large number of people in suffering and decided to help them. He asked the swallow to distribute the gold leaves and precious stones that adorn his body, to the poor and the needy. God rewards him for his good acts. He was a kind-hearted and noble soul.

**The Swallow:**The swallow is going back to his homeland. As the night approaches, he decides to sleep between the felt of the statue of the Happy Prince. When the little swallow is about the sleep, three successive drops of tears fall upon him. She feels pity and asks the prince for the reason. The Happy Prince tells him he wants to help the poor and needy persons. But since he is a statue now, he cannot move about. So the swallow helps him to distribute the gold leaves and precious stones that adorn his body. The swallow postpones her visit to Egypt and decides to stay back to help the Happy Prince. The swallow realises soon he would die because of the cold winter. Even then the swallow decides to stay back and help the Happy Prince to carry out his charity work. Thus the swallow is also a noble creature who is willing to give up his life for a noble cause.

**Value Points**

* The Happy Prince is a statue of the dead Prince. He is decorated with gold leaves and precious stones.
* He feels sad because he is unable to help the people who are crying in misery.
* He decides to help (people) with his gold leaves, precious sapphires and ruby.
* The swallow acts as his messenger. He distributes all his wealth, among the needy people.
* The Swallow was going to Egypt but the Happy Prince persuaded him to stay for a night to help the poor.
* His death broke the Happy Prince’s heart.
* The Mayor and Town councillors pulled down the statue as it looked shabby.
* They melted the statue but failed to melt the leaden heart.
* One day God asked one of his angels to bring two most precious things from the earth. The Angel brought the leaden heart of the Happy Prince and the dead swallow.
* God was pleased with the angel’s selection.
* The prince and the swallow were given a permanent place in heaven. Then they lived happily in heaven.