

Synopsis of  
**The Happy Prince**  
by Oscar Wilde

A prince lives happily in his castle and sees nothing of life outside. After his death, he is placed high above the city as a statue with his entire body covered in gold leaf. His eyes are two sapphires and there is a ruby on the hilt of his sword. The Happy Prince is admired by all of the people in the city for its beauty.

At springtime, a group of swallows fly to Egypt, leaving behind one of their own. The Swallow falls in love with a reed but their love is short-lived, and the brokenhearted swallow makes plans to rejoin his friends. On his journey, he takes shelter under the statue of the Happy Prince. A large drop of water falls on him. A tear falling from the Happy Prince's eye?

The Prince tells the Swallow of a poor seamstress whose son is suffering from a fever and tells the bird to pluck the ruby out of the hilt of his sword and take it to the woman. Then, the statue tells the bird about a young playwright who is weak from hunger, insisting that the Swallow take one of his sapphire eyes to the young man. Finally, the Happy Prince tells him to give his other sapphire eye to a little match-girl in the square below.

After having done so, the Swallow promises to stay with the Happy Prince, who is now **forever** blind. The Swallow flies around the city, observing the poor and reporting what he sees back to the Happy Prince. The statue tells the bird to peel off pieces of his gold leaf and to give it to those who are in need, until all of the gold is gone. At the same time, the Swallow is suffering as the weather gets steadily colder and knows that he will soon die. The Swallow bids farewell to the Happy Prince one more time just before he dies, at which point the Happy Prince's lead heart breaks.

-Johanne Talbot