



William Shakespeare

*The Tragedy of Hamlet,
Prince of Denmark*



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DRAMATIS PERSONAE

HAMLET, Prince of Denmark.

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark, Hamlet's uncle.

The GHOST of the late king, Hamlet's father.

GERTRUDE, the Queen, Hamlet's mother, now wife
of Claudius.

POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.

LAERTES, Son to Polonius.

OPHELIA, Daughter to Polonius.

HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.

FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway.

VOLTEMAND, Courtier.

CORNELIUS, Courtier.

ROSENCRANTZ, Courtier.

GUILDENSTERN, Courtier.

MARCELLUS, Officer.

BARNARDO, Officer.

FRANCISCO, a Soldier

OSRIC, Courtier.

REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius.

PLAYERS.

A Gentleman, Courtier.

A Priest.

Two Clowns, Grave-diggers.

A Captain.

English Ambassadors.

Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers,
and Attendants.

SCENE. Elsinore.

ACT I

S_{cene} I

ELSINORE.

A PLATFORM BEFORE THE CASTLE.

[Enter Francisco and Barnardo, two sentinels]

BARNARDO

Who's there?

FRANCISCO

Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.

BARNARDO

Long live the King!

FRANCISCO

Barnardo?

BARNARDO

He.

FRANCISCO

You come most carefully upon your hour.

BARNARDO

'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, Francisco.

FRANCISCO

For this relief much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

BARNARDO

Have you had quiet guard?

FRANCISCO

Not a mouse stirring.

BARNARDO

Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

FRANCISCO

I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?

[Enter Horatio and Marcellus]

HORATIO

Friends to this ground.

MARCELLUS

And liegemen to the Dane.

FRANCISCO

Give you good night.

MARCELLUS

O, farewell, honest soldier,
Who hath reliev'd you?

FRANCISCO

Barnardo has my place.
Give you good night.

[Exit]

MARCELLUS

Holla, Barnardo!

BARNARDO

Say,
What, is Horatio there?

HORATIO

A piece of him.

S_{cene} V

A MORE REMOTE PART OF THE CASTLE.

[Enter Ghost and Hamlet]

HAMLET

Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak, I'll go no further.

GHOST

Mark me.

HAMLET

I will.

GHOST

My hour is almost come,
When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

HAMLET

Alas, poor ghost!

GHOST

Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing
To what I shall unfold.

HAMLET

Speak, I am bound to hear.

GHOST

So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

HAMLET

What?

GHOST

I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word
Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes like stars start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O, list!
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

HAMLET

O God!

GHOST

Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

HAMLET

Murder!

GHOST

Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

HAMLET

Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love
May sweep to my revenge.

GHOST

I find thee apt;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed

ACT II

Scene I

A ROOM IN POLONIUS'S HOUSE.

[Enter Polonius and Reynaldo]

POLONIUS

Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

REYNALDO

I will, my lord.

POLONIUS

You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make inquiry
Of his behaviour.

REYNALDO

My lord, I did intend it.

POLONIUS

Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Enquire me first what Danskers are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expense; and finding
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer
Than your particular demands will touch it.
Take you as 'twere some distant knowledge of him,
As thus, 'I know his father and his friends,
And in part him'—do you mark this, Reynaldo?

REYNALDO

Ay, very well, my lord.

POLONIUS

'And in part him, but,' you may say, 'not well;
But if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;' and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

REYNALDO

As gaming, my lord?

POLONIUS

Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing. You may go so far.

REYNALDO

My lord, that would dishonour him.

POLONIUS

Faith no, as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults
so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

REYNALDO

But my good lord—

POLONIUS

Wherefore should you do this?

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