

# УИЛЬЯМ ШЕКСПИР

THE TRAGEDY OF  
HAMLET, PRINCE OF  
DENMARK

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**The Tragedy of Hamlet,  
Prince of Denmark**

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# William Shakespeare

## The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

### Dramatis Personae

Claudius, King of Denmark.  
Marcellus, Officer.  
Hamlet, son to the former, and nephew to the present king.  
Polonius, Lord Chamberlain.  
Horatio, friend to Hamlet.  
Laertes, son to Polonius.  
Voltemand, courtier.  
Cornelius, courtier.  
Rosencrantz, courtier.  
Guildenstern, courtier.  
Osric, courtier.  
A Gentleman, courtier.  
A Priest.  
Marcellus, officer.  
Bernardo, officer.  
Francisco, a soldier  
Reynaldo, servant to Polonius.  
Players.  
Two Clowns, gravediggers.  
Fortinbras, Prince of Norway.  
A Norwegian Captain.  
English Ambassadors.  
Getrude, Queen of Denmark, mother to Hamlet.  
Ophelia, daughter to Polonius.  
Ghost of Hamlet's Father.  
Lords, ladies, Officers, Soldiers, Sailors, Messengers, Attendants.

## SCENE. – Elsinore

### ACT I. Scene I. Elsinore. A platform before the Castle

Enter two Sentinels-[first,] Francisco, [who paces up and down at his post; then] Bernardo, [who approaches him].

Ber. Who's there.?  
Fran. Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself.  
Ber. Long live the King!  
Fran. Bernardo?  
Ber. He.  
Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.  
Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve. Get thee to bed, Francisco.  
Fran. For this relief much thanks. 'Tis bitter cold,  
    And I am sick at heart.  
Ber. Have you had quiet guard?  
Fran. Not a mouse stirring.  
Ber. Well, good night.  
    If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,  
    The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Fran. I think I hear them. Stand, ho! Who is there?  
Hor. Friends to this ground.  
Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.  
Fran. Give you good night.  
Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier.  
    Who hath reliev'd you?  
Fran. Bernardo hath my place.  
    Give you good night. Exit.  
Mar. Holla, Bernardo!  
Ber. Say-  
    What, is Horatio there ?  
Hor. A piece of him.  
Ber. Welcome, Horatio. Welcome, good Marcellus.  
Mar. What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?  
Ber. I have seen nothing.  
Mar. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,  
    And will not let belief take hold of him  
    Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us.  
    Therefore I have entreated him along,  
    With us to watch the minutes of this night,  
    That, if again this apparition come,  
    He may approve our eyes and speak to it.  
Hor. Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down awhile,  
And let us once again assail your ears,  
That are so fortified against our story,  
What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,  
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,  
When yond same star that's westward from the pole  
Had made his course t' illumine that part of heaven  
Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,  
The bell then beating one-

Enter Ghost.

Mar. Peace! break thee off! Look where it comes again!

Ber. In the same figure, like the King that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the King? Mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like. It harrows me with fear and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Question it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night  
Together with that fair and warlike form  
In which the majesty of buried Denmark  
Did sometimes march? By heaven I charge thee speak!

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See, it stalks away!

Hor. Stay! Speak, speak! I charge thee speak!

### **Exit Ghost**

Mar. 'Tis gone and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? You tremble and look pale.

Is not this something more than fantasy?

What think you on't?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe

Without the sensible and true avouch

Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the King?

Hor. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on

When he th' ambitious Norway combated.

So frown'd he once when, in an angry parle,

He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.

'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,

With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.

Hor. In what particular thought to work I know not;  
But, in the gross and scope of my opinion,  
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me he that knows,  
Why this same strict and most observant watch  
So nightly toils the subject of the land,  
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon  
And foreign mart for implements of war;  
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task  
Does not divide the Sunday from the week.  
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste  
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day?  
Who is't that can inform me?

Hor. That can I.

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,  
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,  
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,  
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,  
Dar'd to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet  
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)  
Did slay this Fortinbras; who, by a seal'd compact,  
Well ratified by law and heraldry,  
Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands  
Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror;  
Against the which a moiety competent  
Was gaged by our king; which had return'd  
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,  
Had he been vanquisher, as, by the same comart  
And carriage of the article design'd,  
His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras,  
Of unimproved mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,  
Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,  
For food and diet, to some enterprise  
That hath a stomach in't; which is no other,  
As it doth well appear unto our state,  
But to recover of us, by strong hand  
And terms compulsatory, those foresaid lands  
So by his father lost; and this, I take it,  
Is the main motive of our preparations,  
The source of this our watch, and the chief head  
Of this post-haste and romage in the land.

Ber. I think it be no other but e'en so.

Well may it sort that this portentous figure  
Comes armed through our watch, so like the King  
That was and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.  
In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,



Awake the god of day; and at his warning,  
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,  
Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies  
To his confine; and of the truth herein  
This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock.  
Some say that ever, 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;  
And then, they say, no spirit dare stir abroad,  
The nights are wholesome, then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,  
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.  
Hor. So have I heard and do in part believe it.  
But look, the morn, in russet mantle clad,  
Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastward hill.  
Break we our watch up; and by my advice  
Let us impart what we have seen to-night  
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,  
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.  
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,  
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?  
Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know  
Where we shall find him most conveniently. Exeunt.

## Scene II. Elsinore. A room of state in the Castle

Flourish. [Enter Claudius, King of Denmark, Gertrude the Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes and his sister Ophelia, [Voltemand, Cornelius,] Lords Attendant.

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death  
The memory be green, and that it us befitted  
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom  
To be contracted in one brow of woe,  
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature  
That we with wisest sorrow think on him  
Together with remembrance of ourselves.  
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,  
Th' imperial jointress to this warlike state,  
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,  
With an auspicious, and a dropping eye,  
With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,  
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,  
Taken to wife; nor have we herein barr'd  
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone  
With this affair along. For all, our thanks.  
Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,  
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,

Or thinking by our late dear brother's death  
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,  
Collegued with this dream of his advantage,  
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message  
Importing the surrender of those lands  
Lost by his father, with all bands of law,  
To our most valiant brother. So much for him.  
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.  
Thus much the business is: we have here writ  
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,  
Who, impotent and bedrid, scarcely hears  
Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress  
His further gait herein, in that the levies,  
The lists, and full proportions are all made  
Out of his subject; and we here dispatch  
You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltemand,  
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,  
Giving to you no further personal power  
To business with the King, more than the scope  
Of these dilated articles allow. [Gives a paper.]  
Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.  
Cor., Volt. In that, and all things, will we show our duty.  
King. We doubt it nothing. Heartily farewell.

### **Exeunt Voltemand and Cornelius**

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you?  
You told us of some suit. What is't, Laertes?  
You cannot speak of reason to the Dane  
And lose your voice. What wouldst thou beg, Laertes,  
That shall not be my offer, not thy asking?  
The head is not more native to the heart,  
The hand more instrumental to the mouth,  
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.  
What wouldst thou have, Laertes?  
Laer. My dread lord,  
Your leave and favour to return to France;  
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark  
To show my duty in your coronation,  
Yet now I must confess, that duty done,  
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France  
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.  
King. Have you your father's leave? What says Polonius?  
Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave  
By laboursome petition, and at last  
Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent.  
I do beseech you give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes. Time be thine,  
And thy best graces spend it at thy will!  
But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son-  
Ham. [aside] A little more than kin, and less than kind!  
King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you?  
Ham. Not so, my lord. I am too much i' th' sun.  
Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,  
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.  
Do not for ever with thy veiled lids  
Seek for thy noble father in the dust.  
Thou know'st 'tis common. All that lives must die,  
Passing through nature to eternity.  
Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.  
Queen. If it be,  
Why seems it so particular with thee?  
Ham. Seems, madam, Nay, it is. I know not 'seems.'  
'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,  
Nor customary suits of solemn black,  
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,  
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,  
Nor the dejected havior of the visage,  
Together with all forms, moods, shapes of grief,  
'That can denote me truly. These indeed seem,  
For they are actions that a man might play;  
But I have that within which passeth show-  
These but the trappings and the suits of woe.  
King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,  
To give these mourning duties to your father;  
But you must know, your father lost a father;  
That father lost, lost his, and the survivor bound  
In filial obligation for some term  
To do obsequious sorrow. But to persevere  
In obstinate condolement is a course  
Of impious stubbornness. 'Tis unmanly grief;  
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,  
A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,  
An understanding simple and unschool'd;  
For what we know must be, and is as common  
As any the most vulgar thing to sense,  
Why should we in our peevish opposition  
Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,  
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,  
To reason most absurd, whose common theme  
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,  
From the first corse till he that died to-day,  
'This must be so.' We pray you throw to earth  
This unprevailing woe, and think of us  
As of a father; for let the world take note  
You are the most immediate to our throne,

And with no less nobility of love  
Than that which dearest father bears his son  
Do I impart toward you. For your intent  
In going back to school in Wittenberg,  
It is most retrograde to our desire;  
And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.  
Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet.  
I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.  
Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.  
King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.  
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come.  
This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet  
Sits smiling to my heart; in grace whereof,  
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day  
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,  
And the King's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,  
Respeaking earthly thunder. Come away.

### **Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet**

Ham. O that this too too solid flesh would melt,  
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!  
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd  
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! God!  
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable  
Seem to me all the uses of this world!  
Fie on't! ah, fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden  
That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature  
Possess it merely. That it should come to this!  
But two months dead! Nay, not so much, not two.  
So excellent a king, that was to this  
Hyperion to a satyr; so loving to my mother  
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven  
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!  
Must I remember? Why, she would hang on him  
As if increase of appetite had grown  
By what it fed on; and yet, within a month-  
Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman! -  
A little month, or ere those shoes were old  
With which she followed my poor father's body  
Like Niobe, all tears- why she, even she  
(O God! a beast that wants discourse of reason  
Would have mourn'd longer) married with my uncle;  
My father's brother, but no more like my father  
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears  
Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,  
She married. O, most wicked speed, to post  
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!  
It is not, nor it cannot come to good.  
But break my heart, for I must hold my tongue!

Enter Horatio, Marcellus, and Bernardo.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well.

Horatio! – or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend- I'll change that name with you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord!

Ham. I am very glad to see you. – [To Bernardo] Good even, sir. -

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do my ear that violence

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself. I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I prithee do not mock me, fellow student.

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! The funeral bak'd meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!

My father- methinks I see my father.

Hor. O, where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once. He was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all.

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw? who?

Hor. My lord, the King your father.

Ham. The King my father?

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love let me hear!

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen  
(Marcellus and Bernardo) on their watch  
In the dead vast and middle of the night  
Been thus encount'ed. A figure like your father,  
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,  
Appears before them and with solemn march  
Goes slow and stately by them. Thrice he walk'd  
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,  
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they distill'd  
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,  
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me  
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,  
And I with them the third night kept the watch;  
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,  
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,  
The apparition comes. I knew your father.  
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it?

Hor. My lord, I did;

But answer made it none. Yet once methought  
It lifted up its head and did address  
Itself to motion, like as it would speak;  
But even then the morning cock crew loud,  
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away  
And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true;  
And we did think it writ down in our duty  
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs. But this troubles me.  
Hold you the watch to-night?

Both [Mar. and Ber.] We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you?

Both. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe?

Both. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face?

Hor. O, yes, my lord! He wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly.

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long?  
Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.  
Both. Longer, longer.  
Hor. Not when I saw't.  
Ham. His beard was grizzled- no?  
Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,  
A sable silver'd.  
Ham. I will watch to-night.  
Perchance 'twill walk again.  
Hor. I warr'nt it will.  
Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,  
I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape  
And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,  
If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,  
Let it be tenable in your silence still;  
And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,  
Give it an understanding but no tongue.  
I will requite your loves. So, fare you well.  
Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,  
I'll visit you.  
All. Our duty to your honour.  
Ham. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

### **Exeunt [all but Hamlet]**

My father's spirit- in arms? All is not well.  
I doubt some foul play. Would the night were come!  
Till then sit still, my soul. Foul deeds will rise,  
Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

Exit.

### **Scene III. Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius**

Enter Laertes and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd. Farewell.  
And, sister, as the winds give benefit  
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,  
But let me hear from you.  
Oph. Do you doubt that?  
Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,  
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood;  
A violet in the youth of primy nature,  
Forward, not permanent- sweet, not lasting;  
The perfume and suppliance of a minute;  
No more.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more.

For nature crescent does not grow alone  
In thews and bulk; but as this temple waxes,  
The inward service of the mind and soul  
Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,  
And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch  
The virtue of his will; but you must fear,  
His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;  
For he himself is subject to his birth.  
He may not, as unvalued persons do,  
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends  
The safety and health of this whole state,  
And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd  
Unto the voice and yielding of that body  
Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,  
It fits your wisdom so far to believe it  
As he in his particular act and place  
May give his saying deed; which is no further  
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.  
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain  
If with too credent ear you list his songs,  
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
To his unmask'd importunity.  
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,  
And keep you in the rear of your affection,  
Out of the shot and danger of desire.  
The chariest maid is prodigal enough  
If she unmask her beauty to the moon.  
Virtue itself scopes not calumnious strokes.  
The canker galls the infants of the spring  
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd,  
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth  
Contagious blastments are most imminent.  
Be wary then; best safety lies in fear.  
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep  
As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,  
Do not as some ungracious pastors do,  
Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,  
Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,  
Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads  
And recks not his own rede.

Laer. O, fear me not!

Enter Polonius.

I stay too long. But here my father comes.  
A double blessing is a double grace;

Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes? Aboard, aboard, for shame!  
The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail,  
And you are stay'd for. There- my blessing with thee!  
And these few precepts in thy memory  
Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,  
Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.  
Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar:  
Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,  
Grapple them unto thy soul with hoops of steel;  
But do not dull thy palm with entertainment  
Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware  
Of entrance to a quarrel; but being in,  
Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee.  
Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice;  
Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.  
Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,  
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;  
For the apparel oft proclaims the man,  
And they in France of the best rank and station  
Are most select and generous, chief in that.  
Neither a borrower nor a lender be;  
For loan oft loses both itself and friend,  
And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.  
This above all- to thine own self be true,  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.  
Farewell. My blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Pol. The time invites you. Go, your servants tend.

Laer. Farewell, Ophelia, and remember well

What I have said to you.

Oph. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,

And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewell. Exit.

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Oph. So please you, something touching the Lord Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought!

'Tis told me he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you, and you yourself

Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.

If it be so- as so 'tis put on me,

And that in way of caution- I must tell you

You do not understand yourself so clearly

As it behooves my daughter and your honour.

What is between you? Give me up the truth.

Oph. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders

Of his affection to me.

Pol. Affection? Pooh! You speak like a green girl,

Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.  
Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?  
Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think,  
Pol. Marry, I will teach you! Think yourself a baby  
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,  
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly,  
Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,  
Running it thus) you'll tender me a fool.  
Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love  
In honourable fashion.  
Pol. Ay, fashion you may call it. Go to, go to!  
Oph. And hath given countenance to his speech, my lord,  
With almost all the holy vows of heaven.  
Pol. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks! I do know,  
When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul  
Lends the tongue vows. These blazes, daughter,  
Giving more light than heat, extinct in both  
Even in their promise, as it is a-making,  
You must not take for fire. From this time  
Be something scanter of your maiden presence.  
Set your entreatments at a higher rate  
Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,  
Believe so much in him, that he is young,  
And with a larger tether may he walk  
Than may be given you. In few, Ophelia,  
Do not believe his vows; for they are brokers,  
Not of that dye which their investments show,  
But mere implorators of unholy suits,  
Breathing like sanctified and pious bawds,  
The better to beguile. This is for all:  
I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth  
Have you so slander any moment leisure  
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.  
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.  
Oph. I shall obey, my lord.

### **Exeunt**

## **Scene IV. Elsinore. The platform before the Castle**

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.  
Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.  
Ham. What hour now?  
Hor. I think it lacks of twelve.  
Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not. It then draws near the season  
Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

A flourish of trumpets, and two pieces go off.

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham. The King doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,  
Keeps wassail, and the swagg'ring upspring reels,  
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,  
The kettledrum and trumpet thus bray out  
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't;

But to my mind, though I am native here  
And to the manner born, it is a custom  
More honour'd in the breach than the observance.  
This heavy-headed revel east and west  
Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations;  
They clip us drunkards and with swinish phrase  
Soil our addition; and indeed it takes  
From our achievements, though perform'd at height,  
The pith and marrow of our attribute.  
So oft it chanceth in particular men  
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As in their birth, – wherein they are not guilty,  
Since nature cannot choose his origin, –  
By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,  
Or by some habit that too much o'erleavens  
The form of plausive manners, that these men  
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,  
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,  
Their virtues else – be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo –  
Shall in the general censure take corruption  
From that particular fault. The dram of e'il  
Doth all the noble substance often dote To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd,  
Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,  
Be thy intents wicked or charitable,  
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape  
That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee Hamlet,  
King, father, royal Dane. O, answer me?  
Let me not burst in ignorance, but tell  
Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,  
Have burst their cerements; why the sepulchre

Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,  
Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws  
To cast thee up again. What may this mean  
That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel,  
Revisits thus the glimpses of the moon,  
Making night hideous, and we fools of nature  
So horridly to shake our disposition  
With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?  
Say, why is this? wherefore? What should we do?

Ghost beckons Hamlet.

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,  
As if it some impartment did desire  
To you alone.

Mar. Look with what courteous action  
It waves you to a more removed ground.  
But do not go with it!

Hor. No, by no means!

Ham. It will not speak. Then will I follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord!

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?

I do not set my life at a pin's fee;  
And for my soul, what can it do to that,  
Being a thing immortal as itself?  
It waves me forth again. I'll follow it.

Hor. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my lord,  
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,  
And there assume some other, horrible form  
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
And draw you into madness? Think of it.  
The very place puts toys of desperation,  
Without more motive, into every brain  
That looks so many fadoms to the sea  
And hears it roar beneath.

Ham. It waves me still.

Go on. I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands!

Hor. Be rul'd. You shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out

And makes each petty artire in this body  
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve.

[Ghost beckons.]

Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen.

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me! -  
I say, away! - Go on. I'll follow thee.

### **Exeunt Ghost and Hamlet**

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.  
Mar. Let's follow. 'Tis not fit thus to obey him.  
Hor. Have after. To what issue wail this come?  
Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.  
Hor. Heaven will direct it.  
Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

### **Exeunt**

## **Scene V. Elsinore. The Castle. Another part of the fortifications**

Enter Ghost and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? Speak! I'll go no further.  
Ghost. Mark me.  
Ham. I will.  
Ghost. My hour is almost come,  
    When I to sulph'rous and tormenting flames  
    Must render up myself.  
Ham. Alas, poor ghost!  
Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing  
    To what I shall unfold.  
Ham. Speak. I am bound to hear.  
Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.  
Ham. 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 an end  
    Like quills upon the fretful porpentine.  
    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-  
Ham. O God!  
Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.  
Ham. Murder?

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

Ham. 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  
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,  
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear.  
'Tis given out that, sleeping in my orchard,  
A serpent stung me. So the whole ear of Denmark  
Is by a forged process of my death  
Rankly abus'd. But know, thou noble youth,  
The serpent that did sting thy father's life  
Now wears his crown.

Ham. O my prophetic soul!  
My uncle?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,  
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts-  
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power  
So to seduce! – won to his shameful lust  
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.  
O Hamlet, what a falling-off was there,  
From me, whose love was of that dignity  
That it went hand in hand even with the vow  
I made to her in marriage, and to decline  
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor  
To those of mine!  
But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,  
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,  
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,  
Will sate itself in a celestial bed  
And prey on garbage.  
But soft! methinks I scent the morning air.  
Brief let me be. Sleeping within my orchard,  
My custom always of the afternoon,  
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,  
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,  
And in the porches of my ears did pour  
The leperous distilment; whose effect  
Holds such an enmity with blood of man  
That swift as quicksilver it courses through  
The natural gates and alleys of the body,  
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset  
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,  
The thin and wholesome blood. So did it mine;  
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,  
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust  
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand  
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd;  
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,  
Unhous'led, disappointed, unanel'd,  
No reckoning made, but sent to my account  
With all my imperfections on my head.

Ham. O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!

Ghost. If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not.  
Let not the royal bed of Denmark be  
A couch for luxury and damned incest.  
But, howsoever thou pursuest this act,  
Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive  
Against thy mother aught. Leave her to heaven,  
And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge  
To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once.  
The glowworm shows the matin to be near  
And gins to pale his uneffectual fire.  
Adieu, adieu, adieu! Remember me. Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?  
And shall I couple hell? Hold, hold, my heart!  
And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,  
But bear me stiffly up. Remember thee?  
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat  
In this distracted globe. Remember thee?  
Yea, from the table of my memory  
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past  
That youth and observation copied there,  
And thy commandment all alone shall live  
Within the book and volume of my brain,  
Unmix'd with baser matter. Yes, by heaven!  
O most pernicious woman!  
O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain!  
My tables! Meet it is I set it down  
That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;  
At least I am sure it may be so in Denmark. [Writes.]  
So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word:  
It is 'Adieu, adieu! Remember me.'  
I have sworn't.  
Hor. (within) My lord, my lord!

Enter Horatio and Marcellus.

Mar. Lord Hamlet!

Hor. Heaven secure him!

Ham. So be it!

Mar. Illo, ho, ho, my lord!

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! Come, bird, come.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?  
Hor. What news, my lord?  
Mar. O, wonderful!  
Hor. Good my lord, tell it.  
Ham. No, you will reveal it.  
Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven!  
Mar. Nor I, my lord.  
Ham. How say you then? Would heart of man once think it?  
But you'll be secret?  
Both. Ay, by heaven, my lord.  
Ham. There's neer a villain dwelling in all Denmark  
But he's an arrant knave.  
Hor. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the grave  
To tell us this.  
Ham. Why, right! You are in the right!  
And so, without more circumstance at all,  
I hold it fit that we shake hands and part;  
You, as your business and desires shall point you,  
For every man hath business and desire,  
Such as it is; and for my own poor part,  
Look you, I'll go pray.  
Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord.  
Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily;  
Yes, faith, heartily.  
Hor. There's no offence, my lord.  
Ham. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,  
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,  
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you.  
For your desire to know what is between us,  
O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends,  
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,  
Give me one poor request.  
Hor. What is't, my lord? We will.  
Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-night.  
Both. My lord, we will not.  
Ham. Nay, but swear't.  
Hor. In faith,  
My lord, not I.  
Mar. Nor I, my lord- in faith.  
Ham. Upon my sword.  
Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.  
Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost cries under the stage.

Ghost. Swear.  
Ham. Aha boy, say'st thou so? Art thou there, truepenny?  
Come on! You hear this fellow in the cellarage.  
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.  
Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen.  
Swear by my sword.  
Ghost. [beneath] Swear.  
Ham. Hic et ubique? Then we'll shift our ground.  
Come hither, gentlemen,  
And lay your hands again upon my sword.  
Never to speak of this that you have heard:  
Swear by my sword.  
Ghost. [beneath] Swear by his sword.  
Ham. Well said, old mole! Canst work i' th' earth so fast?  
A worthy pioner! Once more remove, good friends."  
Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!  
Ham. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.  
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.  
But come!  
Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,  
How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself  
(As I perchance hereafter shall think meet  
To put an antic disposition on),  
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,  
With arms encumb'ed thus, or this head-shake,  
Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,  
As 'Well, well, we know,' or 'We could, an if we would,'  
Or 'If we list to speak,' or 'There be, an if they might,'  
Or such ambiguous giving out, to note  
That you know aught of me- this is not to do,  
So grace and mercy at your most need help you,  
Swear.  
Ghost. [beneath] Swear.  
[They swear.]  
Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,  
With all my love I do commend me to you;  
And what so poor a man as Hamlet is  
May do t' express his love and friending to you,  
God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;  
And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.  
The time is out of joint. O cursed spite  
That ever I was born to set it right!  
Nay, come, let's go together.

### **Exeunt**

## Act II. Scene I. Elsinore. A room in the house of Polonius

Enter Polonius and Reynaldo.

Pol. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvell's wisely, good Reynaldo,  
Before You visit him, to make inquire  
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. 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?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. '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.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

Pol. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling,  
Drabbing. You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 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.

Rey. But, my good lord-

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,  
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift,  
And I believe it is a fetch of warrant.  
You laying these slight sullies on my son

As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' th' working,  
Mark you,  
Your party in converse, him you would sound,  
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes  
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd  
He closes with you in this consequence:  
'Good sir,' or so, or 'friend,' or 'gentleman'-  
According to the phrase or the addition  
Of man and country-

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, sir, does 'a this- 'a does- What was I about to say?

By the mass, I was about to say something! Where did I leave?

Rey. At 'closes in the consequence,' at 'friend or so,' and gentleman.'

Pol. At 'closes in the consequence'— Ay, marry!

He closes thus: 'I know the gentleman.

I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,

Or then, or then, with such or such; and, as you say,

There was 'a gaming; there o'ertook in's rouse;

There falling out at tennis'; or perchance,

'I saw him enter such a house of sale,'

Videlicet, a brothel, or so forth.

See you now-

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth;

And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,

With windlasses and with assays of bias,

By indirections find directions out.

So, by my former lecture and advice,

Shall you my son. You have me, have you not

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God b' wi' ye, fare ye well!

Rey. Good my lord! [Going.]

Pol. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his music.

Rey. Well, my lord.

Pol. Farewell!

### **Exit Reynaldo**

Enter Ophelia.

How now, Ophelia? What's the matter?

Oph. O my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, i' th' name of God I

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd,

No hat upon his head, his stockings foul'd,  
Ungart' red, and down-gyved to his ankle;  
Pale as his shirt, his knees knocking each other,  
And with a look so piteous in purport  
As if he had been loosed out of hell  
To speak of horrors- he comes before me.

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Oph. My lord, I do not know,  
But truly I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Oph. He took me by the wrist and held me hard;  
Then goes he to the length of all his arm,  
And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,  
He falls to such perusal of my face  
As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so.  
At last, a little shaking of mine arm,  
And thrice his head thus waving up and down,  
He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound  
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk  
And end his being. That done, he lets me go,  
And with his head over his shoulder turn'd  
He seem'd to find his way without his eyes,  
For out o' doors he went without their help  
And to the last bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me. I will go seek the King.

This is the very ecstasy of love,  
Whose violent property fordoes itself  
And leads the will to desperate undertakings  
As oft as any passion under heaven  
That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.

What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Oph. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,

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