THE

Tragicall Historie of

HAMLET,

Prince of Denmarke.

By William Shakespeare.

Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie.

AT LONDON,

Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his shoppe vnder Saint Dunftons Church in Fleetstreet, 1605.
The scene: Denmark

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Claudius, King of Denmark

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, son to the late, and nephew to the present king

Polonius, Principal Secretary of State

Horatio, friend to Hamlet

Laertes, son to Polonius

Valtemand, Cornelius { ambassadors to Norway

Rosencrantz, Guildenstern { formerly fellow-students with Hamlet

Osric, a fantastic fop

A gentleman

A Doctor of Divinity

Marcellus, Barnardo, Francisco { Gentlemen of the Guard

Reynaldo, servant to Polonius

Four or five Players

Two grave-diggers

Fortinbras, Prince of Norway

A Norwegian Captain

English Ambassadors

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, mother to Hamlet

Ophelia, daughter to Polonius

Lords, Ladies, Soldiers, Sailors, Messenger, and Attendants

The Ghost of Hamlet’s father
THE

TRAGEDY OF HAMLET
PRINCE OF DENMARK

[1. 1.] The castle at Elsinore. A narrow platform upon the battlements; turret-doors to right and left. Starlight, very cold.

FRANCISCO, a sentinel armed with a partisan, paces to and fro. A bell tolls twelve. Presently BARNARDO, another sentinel likewise armed, comes from the castle; he starts, hearing Francisco's tread in the darkness.

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. 10
Barnardo. Well, good night:
If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,
The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

HORATIO and MARCELLUS come forth

Francisco [listens]. I think I hear them. Stand ho, who is there?
Horatio. Friends to this ground.
Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane.
4  H A M L E T  1.1.16

Francisco. Give you good night.
Marcellus. O, farewell honest soldier,
Who hath relieved you?
Francisco. Barnardo hath my place;
Give you good night.  [Francisco goes
Marcellus. Holla, Barnardo!
Barnardo. Say,
What, is Horatio there?
Horatio. A piece of him.
20  Barnardo. Welcome Horatio, welcome good Mar-
cellus,
Horatio. What, has this thing appeared again to-night?
Barnardo. I have seen nothing,
Marcellus. 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.
Barnardo. Sit down awhile,
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
What we have two nights seen.
Horatio. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Barnardo speak of this.
Barnardo. Last night of all,
When yon 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—
2.1.40 PRINCE OF DENMARK

A Ghost appears; it is clad in armour from head to foot, and bears a marshal’s truncheon

Marcellus. Peace, break thee off, look where it comes again!

Barnardo. In the same figure like the king that’s dead.

Marcellus. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.

Barnardo. Looks a’ not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Horatio. Most like, it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Barnardo. It would be spoke to.

Marcellus. Question it, Horatio.

Horatio. 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.

Marcellus. It is offended.

Barnardo. See, it stalks away.

Horatio. Stay, speak, speak, I charge thee speak. [the Ghost vanishes

Marcellus. ’Tis gone and will not answer.

Barnardo. How now Horatio, you tremble and look pale,

Is not this something more than fantasy? What think you on’t?

Horatio. Before my God, I might not this believe Without the sensible and true avouch Of mine own eyes.

Marcellus. Is it not like the king?

Horatio. As thou art to thyself.

Such was the very armour he had on, When he the ambitious Norway combated, So frowned he once, when in an angry parle
HAMLET

6

He smote the sledged Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.
Marcellus. Thus twice before, and jump at this
dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch.
Horatio. In what particular thought to work I
know not,
But in the gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

70

Marcellus. 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?

Horatio. That can I,

80

At least the whisper goes so; our last king,
Whose image even but now appeared to us,
Was as you know by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto pricked on by a most emulate pride,
Dared to the combat; in which our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteemed him)
Did slay this Fortinbras, who by a sealed compact,
Well ratified by law and heraldy,
Did forfeit (with his life) all those his lands
Which he stood seized of, to the conqueror,

90

Against the which a moiety competent
Was gaged by our king, which had returned
To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
Had he been vanisher; as by the same co-mart,  
And carriage of the article designed,  
His fell to Hamlet; now sir, young Fortinbras,  
Of unimprovéd mettle hot and full,  
Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there  
Sharked up a list of lawless resolutes  
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 compulsory, 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.

Barnardo. I think it be no other but e’en so;  
Well may it sort that this portentous figure  
Comes arméd through our watch so like the king  
That was and is the question of these wars.

Horatio. 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,  
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead  
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets,  
†And even the like precurse of fierce events,  
As harbingers preceding still the fates  
And prologue to the omen coming on,  
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
Unto our climatures and countrymen,  
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star,  
Upon whose influence Neptune’s empire stands,  
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse.
HAMLET

8

THE GHOST REAPPEARS

But soft, behold, lo where it comes again!
I'll cross it though it blast me...[he 'spreads his arms'!
Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me.

130 If there be any good thing to be done
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me.
If thou art privy to thy country's fate
Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!
Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which they say you spirits oft walk in death,

[a cock crows]

Speak of it—stay and speak—stop it, Marcellus!

140 Marcellus. Shall I strike at it with my partisan?
Horatio. Do if it will not stand.
Barnardo. 'Tis here!
Horatio. 'Tis here!
Marcellus. 'Tis gone! [the GHOST VANISHES

We do it wrong being so majestical
To offer it the show of violence,
For it is as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Barnardo. It was about to speak when the cock crew.
Horatio. And then it started like a guilty thing,
Upon a fearful summons; I have heard

150 The cock that is the trumpet to the morn
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day, and at his warning
Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
1.1.154 PRINCE OF DENMARK

Th’extravagant and erring spirit hies
To his confine, and of the truth herein
This present object made probation.

Marcellus. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever ’gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour’s birth is celebrated
This 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 hallowed, and so gracious is that time.

Horatio. 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?

Marcellus. Let’s do’t, I pray, and I this morning know
Where we shall find him most convenient. [they go

[1. 2.] The Council Chamber in the castle

A ‘flourish’ of trumpets. ‘Enter CLAUDIUS King of Den-
mark, GERTRUDE the Queen, Councillors, POLONIUS and
his son LAERTES,’ VALTEMAND and CORNELIUS, all
clad in gay apparel, as from the coronation; and last of
all Prince HAMLET in black, with downcast eyes. The
King and Queen ascend steps to the thrones.

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 barred
Your better wisoms, 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,
Colleaguéd with this dream of his advantage,
He hath not failed 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 bed-rid 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 Valtemand,
For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,
Giving to you no further personal power
To business with the king, more than the scope