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978-0-521-85817-5 - The Cambridge Introduction to Shakespeare's Tragedies

Janette Dillon

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*The Cambridge Introduction to
Shakespeare's Tragedies*

Macbeth clutches an imaginary dagger; Hamlet holds up Yorick's skull; Lear enters with Cordelia in his arms. Do these memorable and iconic moments have anything to tell us about the definition of Shakespearean tragedy? Is it in fact helpful to talk about 'Shakespearean tragedy' as a concept, or are there only Shakespearean tragedies? What kind of figure is the tragic hero? Is there always such a figure? What makes some plays more tragic than others? Beginning with a discussion of tragedy before Shakespeare and considering Shakespeare's tragedies chronologically one by one, this book seeks to investigate such questions in a way that highlights both the distinctiveness and the shared concerns of each play within the broad trajectory of Shakespeare's developing exploration of tragic form.

Janette Dillon is Professor of Drama at the School of English, University of Nottingham.

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