

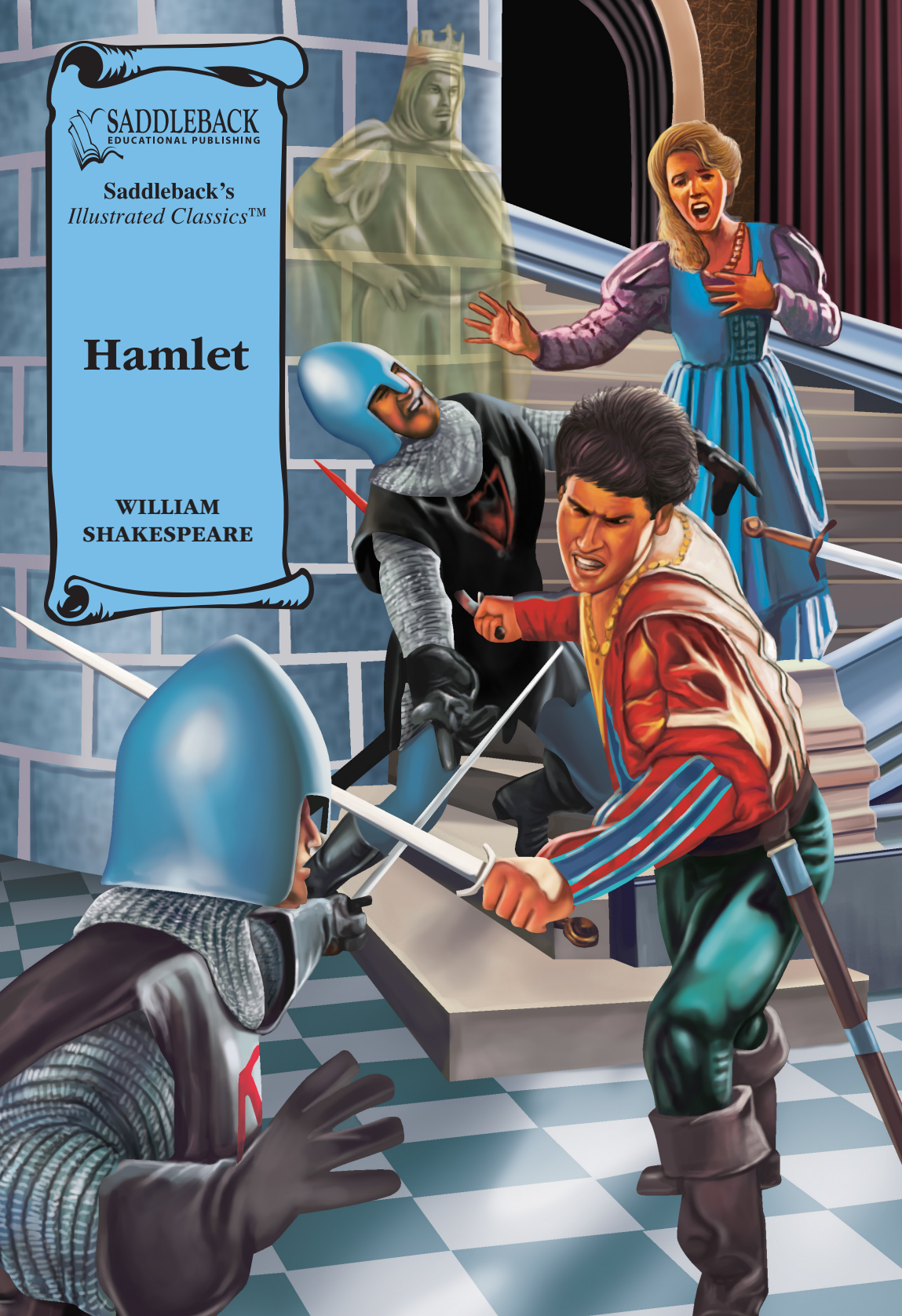


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# Hamlet

**WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE**





## William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, in Stratford-on-Avon, England, the third child of John Shakespeare, a well-to-do merchant, and Mary Arden, his wife. Young William probably attended the Stratford grammar school, where he learned English, Greek, and a great deal of Latin. Historians aren't sure of the exact date of Shakespeare's birth.

In 1582, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway. By 1583 the couple had a daughter, Susanna, and two years later the twins, Hamnet and Judith. Somewhere between 1585 and 1592 Shakespeare went to London, where he became first an actor and then a playwright. His acting company, *The King's Men*, appeared most often in the *Globe* theater, a part of which Shakespeare himself owned.

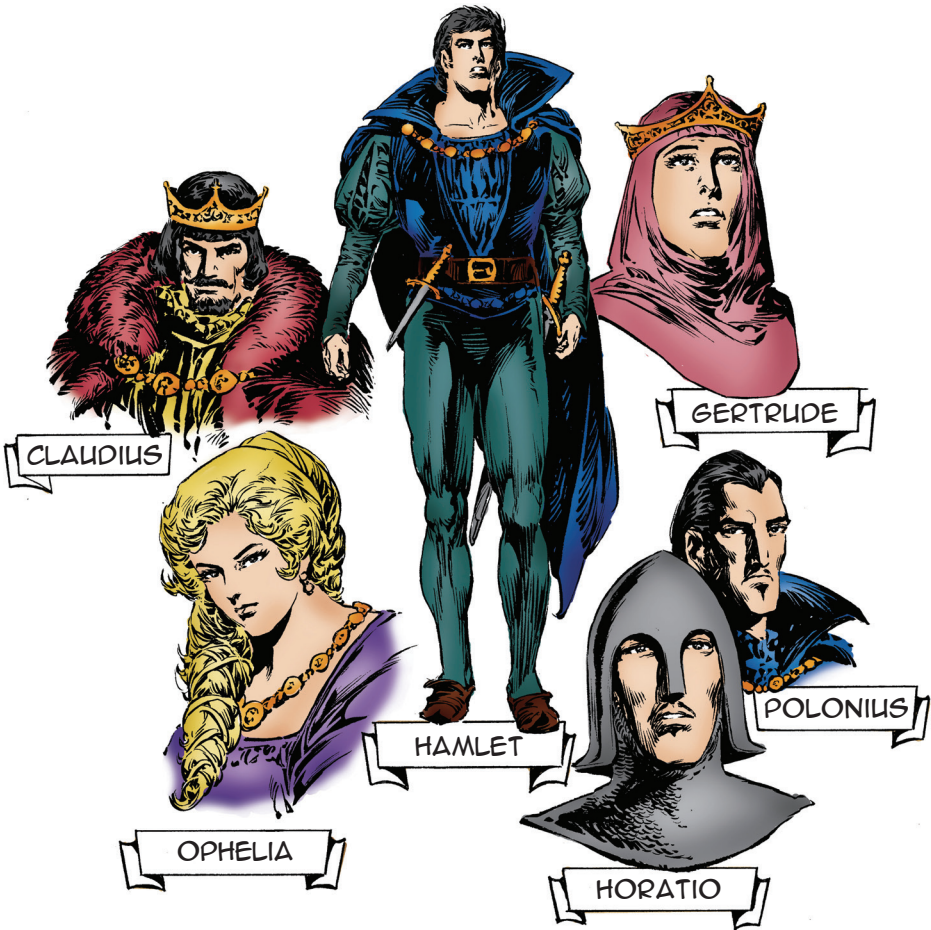
In all, Shakespeare is believed to have written thirty-seven plays, several nondramatic poems, and a number of sonnets. In 1611 when he left the active life of the theater, he returned to Stratford and became a country gentleman, living in the second-largest house in town. For five years he lived a quiet life. Then, on April 23, 1616, William Shakespeare died and was buried in Trinity Church in Stratford. From his own time to the present, Shakespeare is considered one of the greatest writers of the English-speaking world.



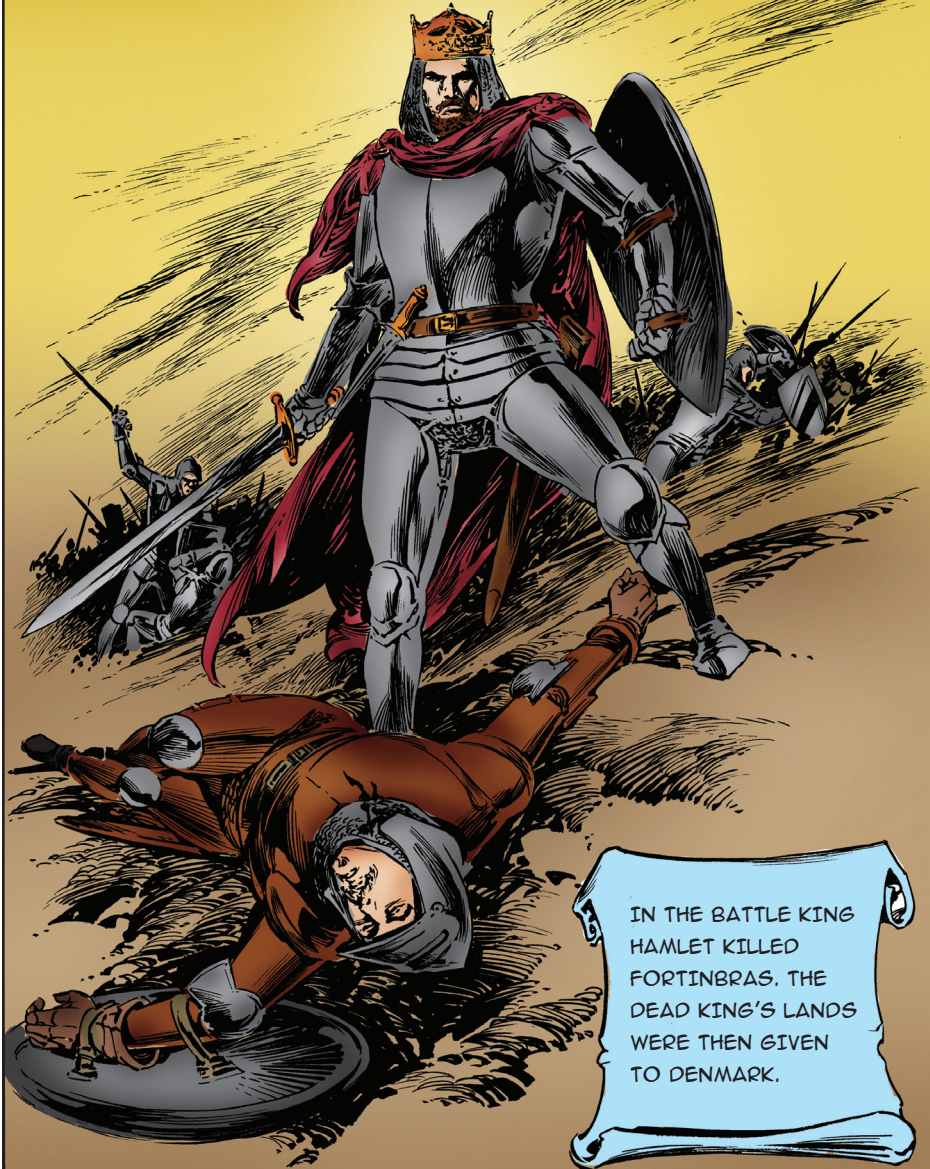


*William Shakespeare*

# Hamlet



ONCE LONG AGO, KING FORTINBRAS OF NORWAY FOUGHT A BATTLE WITH KING HAMLET OF DENMARK. THE WINNER, THEY AGREED, WOULD BECOME OWNER OF ALL THE OTHER KING'S RICHES.



IN THE BATTLE KING HAMLET KILLED FORTINBRAS. THE DEAD KING'S LANDS WERE THEN GIVEN TO DENMARK.



BUT SOON KING HAM-LET HIMSELF DIED. MANY GATHERED AT HIS FUNERAL.

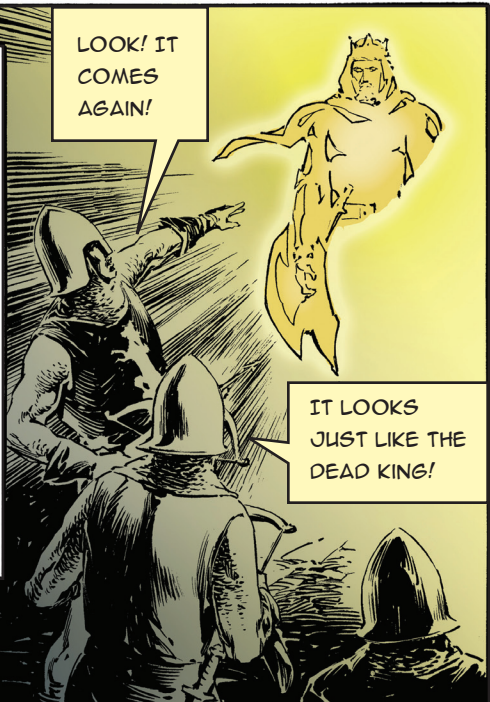


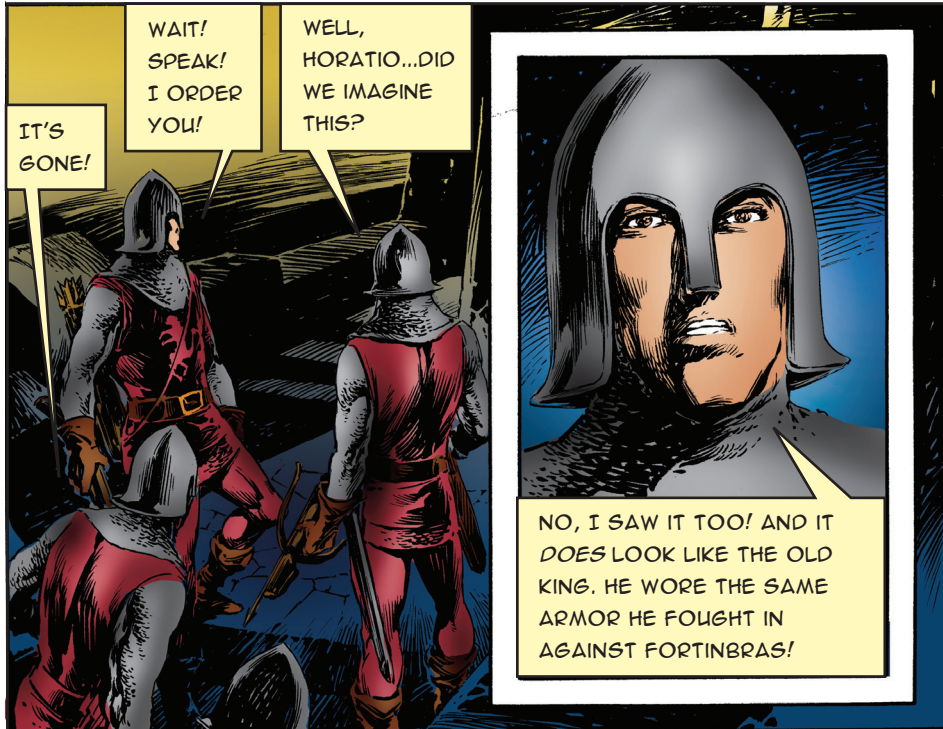
THE KING'S BROTHER CLAUDIUS BECAME THE NEW KING. A MONTH LATER, HE MARRIED HAMLET'S MOTHER.

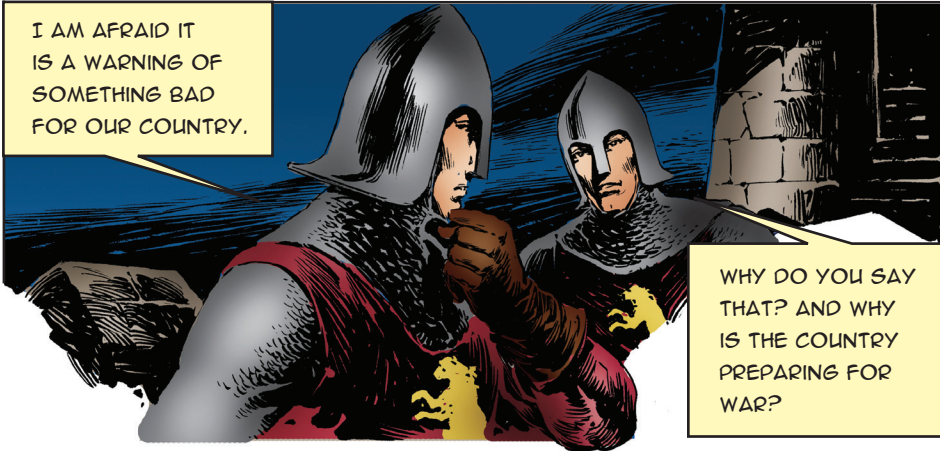


THEN STRANGE THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN. AT MIDNIGHT, AT THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD...

I AM HERE TO TAKE MY TURN, FRANCISCO. HAS YOUR GUARD DUTY BEEN PEACEFUL?







I AM AFRAID IT IS A WARNING OF SOMETHING BAD FOR OUR COUNTRY.

WHY DO YOU SAY THAT? AND WHY IS THE COUNTRY PREPARING FOR WAR?



I'LL TELL YOU. YOU REMEMBER THAT OUR NOW-DEAD KING ONCE KILLED THE OLD KING FORTINBRAS IN BATTLE. THEY HAD AGREED THAT THE WINNER COULD TAKE ALL OF THE LOSER'S LANDS.



NOW THE SON, YOUNG FORTINBRAS, HAS GATHERED AN UNLAWFUL ARMY.



THEY SAY HE MEANS TO TAKE BACK FROM US THE LANDS HIS FATHER LOST. WE MUST PREPARE TO FIGHT IF HE ATTACKS US!

AND THAT MAY BE WHY KING HAMLET'S GHOST HAS APPEARED TO US!



SUDDENLY THE GHOST RETURNED. HORATIO MADE UP HIS MIND THAT IT WOULD SPEAK TO HIM.



SPEAK, SPIRIT! IF I CAN HELP YOU...



OR IF YOU CAN WARN US OF DANGER TO OUR COUNTRY...

OR IF YOU CAN TELL US OF A TREASURE YOU ONCE BURIED, SPEAK!



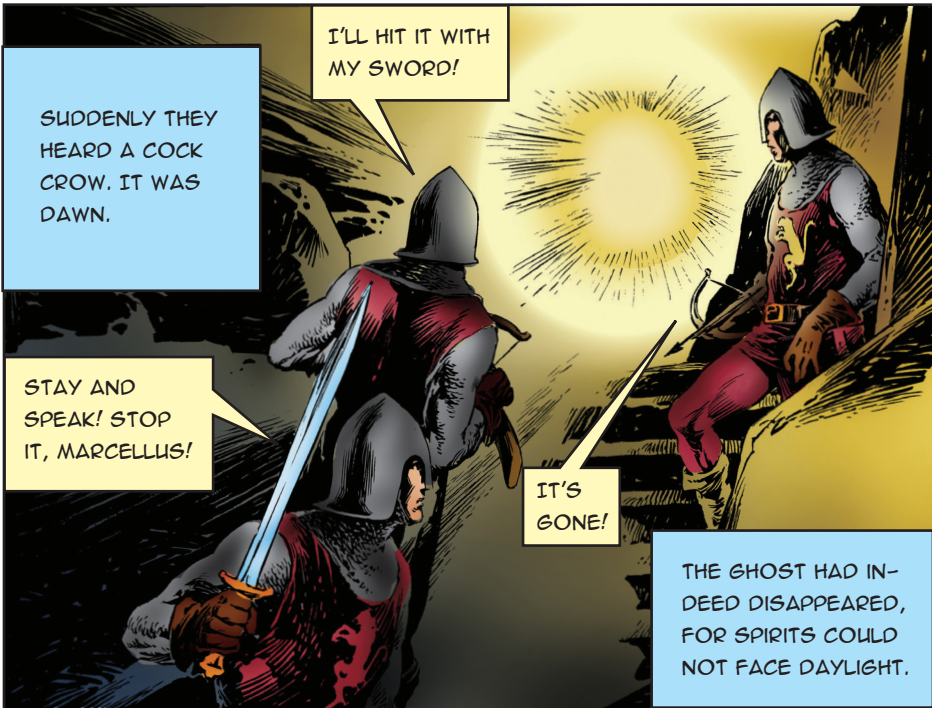
SUDDENLY THEY HEARD A COCK CROW. IT WAS DAWN.

STAY AND SPEAK! STOP IT, MARCELLUS!

I'LL HIT IT WITH MY SWORD!

IT'S GONE!

THE GHOST HAD INDEED DISAPPEARED, FOR SPIRITS COULD NOT FACE DAYLIGHT.







SUCH QUICK ACTION WAS NECESSARY TO KEEP THE COUNTRY STRONG.



THEN CLAUDIUS TURNED TO LAERTES, THE SON OF POLONIUS, THE KING'S ADVISOR.

AND NOW, LAERTES...



WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I RETURNED HERE FOR KING HAMLET'S FUNERAL. NOW I ASK TO RETURN TO MY STUDIES IN FRANCE.



IF YOUR FATHER AGREES, YOU MAY GO.

I DO, SIR!

THANK YOU.