

# Hamlet and the Ghost

by

**William Shakespeare**

(1564-1616)

from

**Hamlet**

(Act 1, Scene 5)

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[Ghost]

My hour is almost come,  
when I to sulphurous and tormenting flames  
must render up myself.

[Hamlet]

Alas, poor ghost!

[Ghost]

I am thy father's spirit,  
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,  
And for the day confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature  
Are burnt and purged 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 (porcupine):  
But this eternal blazon must not be  
To ears of flesh and blood.  
List, list, O, list!

(William Shakespeare (1564-1616), Hamlet I.5)

End

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