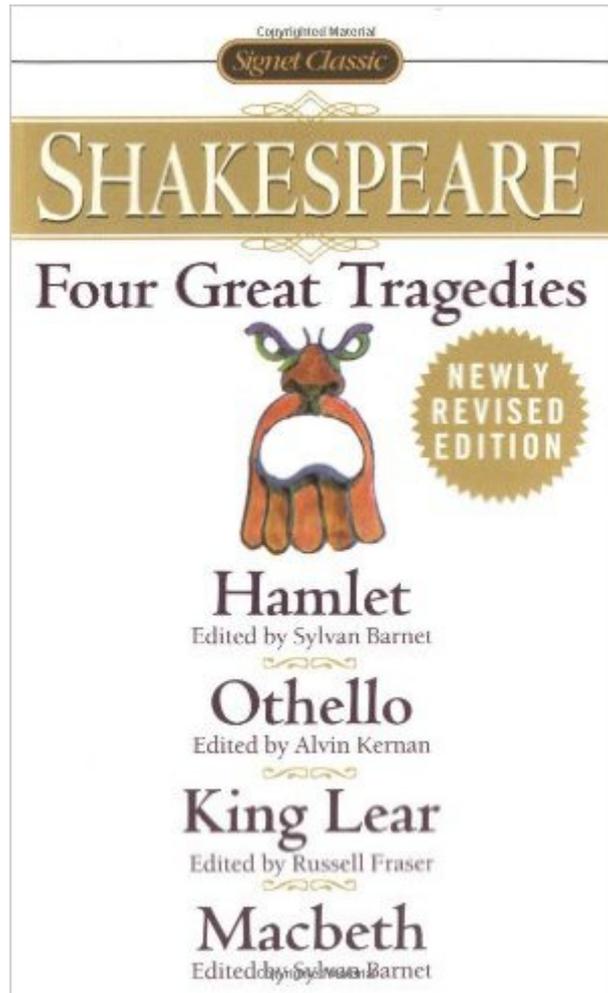


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Four Great Tragedies: Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth (Signet Classics)



Synopsis

The greatest tragic plays of William Shakespeareâincluding Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth. What is tragedy? The Elizabethans defined it as a "lofty" play showing "personages of great state" caught up in a "lamentable" action that "beginneth prosperously and endeth unfortunately." Whether judged by this or any other standard, the plays selected for this collection are considered to be the four central works of Shakespearean tragedy and must be included in any list of the world's finest tragic literature. And to make these plays more accessible for the modern reader, this edition includes the following special features:Â

- Â Reliable texts by noted Shakespeare scholars
- Â Texts printed in the clearest, most readable type
- Â Names of each speaker given in full
- Â Detailed footnotes at the bottom of each page keyed to the numbered lines of the text
- Â Textual notes
- Â Updated bibliography

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Customer Reviews

Four tragedies written by William Shakespeare are provided in this quite portable book. Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and Macbeth all share the pages and are edited by four different people, one for each play. Because of this, the editing techniques, footnotes, and connotations tend to be different from play to play and it isn't recommended to sit down and try to read all four in one go. In particular, the editor for King Lear is very heavy handed in his edits and suggestions of meanings. Regardless, that's really the only poor quality of the book. I, personally, really enjoy this book and the plays chosen. They are all similar in that they sport a common, tragic trait where human paranoia, fear, and deception of the self and from others forces powerful people to destroy not only themselves but

those around them. It's a great viewing of the human soul and the chaos that can abound within if unchecked. Below are a brief synopsis for each play of the story that are really simplistic, but may help someone who is not used to or confident in reading barebones Shakespeare without translation. I like to say that Hamlet is the story of The Lion King to make it easier for readers to understand. An evil uncle usurps and kills the King, father to Hamlet, and Hamlet must come to terms with his mother's marrying of his uncle and avenge his slain father. However, unlike Disney, his hate and rage overtakes Hamlet, leaving him alone and unmanageable. Othello is interesting in that it focuses on racial connotations rather often, making it a great play to discuss from this perspective. Othello is a wonderfully brilliant Moorish soldier who will come to doubt all he holds dear due to an equally brilliant, conniving villain named Iago.

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