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Denmark: Variations 1, 2, 5

James Tadd Adcox

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DENMARK:
Variations 1, 2, 5

Version of Hamlet in which the ghost never reappears. The first three scenes occur as in the original. In act I scene 4 Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus enter and deliver their lines as written, up to Hamlet's speech ("it is a custom/more honor'd in the breach, than the observance" etc). After which the three actors remain onstage, waiting, expectant, until the last member of the audience leaves; at which point the actors may do as they wish.

Version of Hamlet in which every character who has lost a father continually howls. This includes not only Hamlet, Fortinbras, and later Ophelia and Laertes; but, additionally, Polonius, Claudius, Gertrude, and the ghost itself. Some scenes become a gathering of characters howling; others are a strange mixture of certain characters howling while the rest struggle to be heard.

Version of Hamlet in which the prince never appears. All other characters speak their lines as indicated in the script. When it is time for Hamlet to speak, there is silence. It is clear that the other characters know something is missing; there is the sense of mourning in the air. Horatio, in particular, seems unable to meet the others' eyes.