



Life is a Dream

Pedro Calderon De La Barca

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By

Pedro Calderon De La Barca

Translated by Edward Fitzgerald

Life Is a Dream is a Spanish-language play by Pedro Calderón de la Barca. First published in 1635 (or possibly in early 1636), it is a philosophical allegory regarding the human situation and the mystery of life. The play has been described as "the supreme example of Spanish Golden Age drama". The story focuses on the fictional Segismundo, Prince of Poland, who has been imprisoned in a tower by his father, King Basilio, following a dire prophecy that the prince would bring disaster to the country and death to the King. Basilio briefly frees Segismundo, but when the prince goes on a rampage, the king imprisons him again, persuading him that it was all a dream.

The play's central theme is the conflict between free will and fate. It remains one of Calderón's best-known and most studied works. Other themes include dreams vs. reality and the conflict between father and son. The play has been adapted for other stage works, in film and as a novel.

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