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SEUSSPEARE: HAMLET HEARS A WHO



Seusspeare:

Hamlet Hears a Who

A "Seussified" spoof of Shakespeare's Hamlet

by Christina Hamlett and Jamie Dare



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CAST OF CHARACTERS

BOB Hamlet — King of Denmark

CLAUDIUS — Bob's conniving brother

GERTRUDE — Queen of Denmark

POLLY — Ophelia's mum and Gertrude's chatty BFF

HAMLET — Prince of Denmark; Bob and Gertrude's son

HORATIO — Hamlet's best friend

OPHELIA — Hamlet's wannabe girlfriend

POLONIUS — Ophelia's father

LAERTES — Ophelia's brother

FORTINBRAS — Prince of Norway

URSULA — Fortinbras' go-getter wife

ROSE — Hamlet's college friend

GILDA — Hamlet's college friend

GRAVEDIGGER 1 (female)

GRAVEDIGGER 2 (female)

MOUSETRAP PLAYER 1 — an actor (male)

MOUSETRAP PLAYER 2 — an actor (male)

ANNOUNCER — Theatre announcer
(This is the play's director.)

PRODUCTION NOTES

Cast

9 males, 8 females (*Note: The role of the announcer is played by the show's director who does not otherwise have a role in the show.*)

Costumes

Elizabethan, as indicated in the script.

Props

Cell phones, goblets, Battleship board game, fashion magazines, hanky, pillows, shovels, Norwegian banner, two newspapers, Bluetooth headset, iPads, combat boots, Venti-size Starbucks cups, book (*Fifty Shades of Beige*), daggers and swords, paddle ball game, bag of marbles with one bigger marble, crown, polishing cloth, lampshade, Mardi Gras masks, road map, messenger bag, quill pen, theatre programs and ticket stubs, scepter, large vial, velvet curtain, knife, two fake trees, bakery goods, envelope, Union Jack flag, Harrods bags, shoe box, credit card, skull, iPod, comb, Starbucks menu board, feather duster, cardboard sign (“Will Reign for Food”), wedding bouquet, large box, microphone.

Setting and Circa

All action takes place during the Middle Ages in Denmark's Elsinore Castle. It's a split stage in which Hamlet's chamber (a sparse, dorm-style interior) is Stage Right and his parents' suite (think medieval, shabby chic) is Stage Left. The respective rooms are only illuminated when action transpires in them. Several spotlight scenes will be played in the theatre aisle. Both interiors have wing exits and Upstage windows and share an Upstage door in the wall that divides them. Hamlet's room has a no-frills desk and chair and stackable, modular cubes, most likely from Ikea. A “Copenhagen U” banner hangs on the wall. His parents' quarters have a dining room table and chairs, a distressed armoire, lavish drapes, and two Downstage armchairs for thrones. Everything is pastel or ecru.

Note: Being tech-savvy people — despite the fact that technology has yet to be invented — the characters each have distinctive ringtones associated with their cell phones. While the playwrights have made suggestions to this effect, the actual ringtones may be left to an imaginative director's discretion.

1 *(At rise: The lights go up Stage Left where we see that the table is*
2 *set for dinner. CLAUDIUS stands Downstage Left drinking from a*
3 *goblet while GERTRUDE paces Upstage. She checks her watch*
4 *and keeps looking out the window.)*
5 GERTRUDE: Isn't this a shameful fix?
6 I told him that we'd dine at six.
7 Now here it is at half past eight!
8 Once again, my husband's late.
9 CLAUDIUS: A family habit, as you know.
10 GERTRUDE: 'Tis not like Bob to never show.
11 He could have called —
12 CLAUDIUS: I quite agree.
13 But let's not spoil the reverie. *(Takes her hand.)*
14 Gertrude, sweet, you look divine! *(Kisses her hand.)*
15 I've often wished that you were mine.
16 GERTRUDE: *(Withdraws her hand.)* Oh, bro-in-law, you're such a
17 flirt.
18 CLAUDIUS: Do I smell cupcakes for dessert?
19 GERTRUDE: We mustn't start without my mate.
20 CLAUDIUS: And yet you've said that he is late.
21 When I last saw him in the grove —
22 GERTRUDE: Oh yes, the trees. His treasure trove.
23 I think he loves them more than moi.
24 But I digress, you said you saw —
25 CLAUDIUS: Him fast in slumber on a log. *(Shrugs.)*
26 It seemed, perhaps, from too much grog.
27 GERTRUDE: *(Puzzled)* You didn't nudge him, budge him, shout?
28 CLAUDIUS: I thought I'd let him sleep it out.
29 Was I so wrong to leave him be?
30 GERTRUDE: No, Claudius, twixt you and me, *(Confidentially)*
31 A truth that often causes dread,
32 I sometimes wish that Bob was dead.
33 CLAUDIUS: *(Strokes his chin.)* And if he was and caused you
34 strife ...
35 Would you become a second wife?
36 GERTRUDE: *(Laughs.)* A widowed queen with name renown?
37 To marry twice, I'd marry down!
38 CLAUDIUS: Not unless your second spouse
39 Was ruler of the reigning house.
40 GERTRUDE: Oh, Claudy, you're a silly twit.
41 If Bob were dead, then Hamlet's it.
42 I cannot wed my only son,
43 And so I'll not wed anyone!
44 CLAUDIUS: *(Aside, to the audience)* So she thinks, and so she's
45 said,

1 **But, truth be told, old Bob is dead.** (*Cue the sinister music*
2 *as the lights go down Stage Left. They come up Stage Right where*
3 *HAMLET, HORATIO, ROSE, and GILDA are hanging out in*
4 *HAMLET's dorm room. The two GIRLS are reading fashion*
5 *magazines while HAMLET and HORATIO play a board game.*)
6 **HAMLET: A-5.**
7 **HORATIO:** (*Gleefully*) **Miss! H-6. A hit?**
8 **HAMLET: Gah, you sank my battleship.** (*HORATIO fist-pumps as a*
9 *dejected HAMLET closes the game board. His cell phone rings. It's*
10 *OPHELIA's ringtone, Mendelssohn's "Wedding March." His*
11 *friends ad-lib their annoyance: "Not again," "Here we go," etc.*
12 *HAMLET hits a button, ending the call.*)
13 **HORATIO: Hamlet, bro, my closest friend,**
14 **Ophelia's calls, they have to end.**
15 **ROSE: She called at eight and eight-fifteen,**
16 **And every minute in between.**
17 **And then there was that sappy text.**
18 **Holograms, I fear, are next.**
19 **HAMLET: You think she is a needy mess?**
20 **HORATIO: Dude, hello. Resounding "Yes."**
21 **GILDA: For sure she's not your average pest.**
22 **She's far more zealous than the rest.**
23 **She's like a creepy stalker fan.**
24 **I wish I had her data plan.**
25 **HAMLET: I'm at a loss, then. What to do?**
26 **Rose and Gilda, what say you?**
27 **Female counsel I do seek**
28 **For havoc I am loathe to wreak.**
29 **ROSE: Tell her quickly.**
30 **GILDA: Tell her straight.**
31 **ROSE: Tell her now, and don't be late.**
32 **GILDA: Tell her that she has to go.**
33 **ROSE: Tell her in the driving snow.**
34 **GILDA: Tell her on dry land or sea.**
35 **HORATIO: Tell her, "It's not you, it's me."** (*The GIRLS boo and*
36 *playfully toss some pillows at HORATIO.*)
37 **HAMLET: I dare not cause Ophelia strife.**
38 **Our mothers are best friends for life.**
39 **They're in a book club and they chat**
40 **'Bout me and her and this and that.**
41 **They mostly gossip, yes indeed,**
42 **But here and there, they try to read.**
43 **HORATIO: And don't forget Ophelia's bro.**
44 **That stack of his, he tends to blow.**
45 **HAMLET: 'Tis true, he has the shortest fuse.**

1 He doesn't like to fail or lose.
 2 Laertes' brains are in his fists.
 3 He loves to fight. In fact, insists.
 4 ROSE: Perhaps we need another tack.
 5 A tactful tack that's not all whack.
 6 GILDA: What say we make her cut you loose.
 7 Play the fool, act like a goose.
 8 ROSE: Embarrass her. Don't wash, don't shave.
 9 At dinner parties, start the wave.
 10 HORATIO: Try yodeling. Dress like an elf.
 11 In other words, just be yourself.
 12 HAMLET: Hardy har, such roguish chaff.
 13 So funny I forgot to laugh. *(There's a knock on the Upstage*
 14 *door. HAMLET opens it, revealing GERTRUDE, dabbing her eyes*
 15 *with a hanky. She invites herself in. HORATIO, ROSE, and*
 16 *GILDA stand as they ad-lib greetings.)*
 17 Hello, Mother. Waltz right in.
 18 You're unexpected. How've you been?
 19 GERTRUDE: I bear sad news, please have a seat.
 20 But not on something worn or cheap.
 21 *(Surveys the budget décor.)*
 22 On second thought, 'tis fine to stand.
 23 You can take this like a man.
 24 ROSE: Perhaps you'd like some privacy?
 25 GILDA: We can go. We'll let you be.
 26 HORATIO: I'm comfy here. I'll take a pass.
 27 ROSE: *(Chiding)* Horatio! We're late for class. *(ROSE and GILDA*
 28 *grab HORATIO by the elbows and they quickly exit.)*
 29 HAMLET: Mother! Tell me. What's amiss?
 30 I do not like the looks of this.
 31 GERTRUDE: You know your father likes to nap
 32 In the grove — i.e., deathtrap.
 33 A snake did strike him as he slept.
 34 Now he's gone. Oh, how I've wept! *(HAMLET clutches his*
 35 *chest and sinks into the chair.)*
 36 HAMLET: Dad bought the farm? Oh fie, oh my!
 37 Wherefore, wherefore, wherefore, why?
 38 GERTRUDE: I'll leave you be, to grieve alone.
 39 Off to pick a new headstone! *(Catches herself.)*
 40 Er — parting is such sweet, sweet sorrow.
 41 Funeral's set for noon tomorrow. *(She exits. HAMLET sits in*
 42 *shock for a moment.)*
 43 HAMLET: My heart is broken. Tattered. Sunk. *(Shifts*
 44 *uncomfortably.)*
 45 Mother's right. This chair is junk. *(HAMLET's cell phone*

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