

Hamlet:

fl ★ ◦ ♪ + ° ♪ ° **MOGWAI- TAKE ME SOMEWHERE NICE**

Lights on. Hamlet is standing center stage. He doesn't move. His eyes are empty, staring into nothing.

Ophelia enters slowly. She walks up to him, gently. She looks at him, searching his face. Carefully, she takes his hand.

Hamlet doesn't react. Doesn't even blink.

Ophelia waits a moment. Then she lets go of his hand. It falls to his side. She turns around. Takes three slow steps away. Stops. Looks back over her shoulder. Her face shows quiet disappointment. Then she walks off the stage.

Silence.

Hamlet breathes. Once. Again. His hands start shaking. He walks back and forth, restless. His breath quickens. He pulls off his jacket and throws it to the floor.

He stops. Looks at it. Walks over, picks it up.

He hugs the jacket tightly, like it's the only thing left. He drops to his knees and curls around it, holding it close like a person

Bernardo enters.

Act 1

Bernardo: Oh—sorry. I didn't mean to... I'll go. Sorry.

Hamlet: No. I'm sorry.

Bernardo: No, no—I'm sorry.

Hamlet: No, it's me. I shouldn't be like this.

Bernardo: No, I shouldn't have come in. I didn't know you were—

Hamlet: (turning slightly toward him) Bernardo... why are you here?

Bernardo: You really need to come and see something.

Bernardo: (lowering voice) It's about your father.

(Hamlet's eyes dart toward Bernardo, narrowing.)

Hamlet: (slowly) ...He's dead, Bernardo. Unless you suddenly learned how to reverse death, which would be so much more impressive than whatever you're about to tell me.

Bernardo: (frustrated) I saw him.

(Hamlet blinks. Then, he bursts into laughter.)

Hamlet: HA! Oh, Bernardo. You almost got me. (leans in, whispering) But ghosts aren't real. That's just an old tale—

Bernardo: (louder) I saw him, Hamlet. Your father.

(Hamlet stops. He blinks again, processing.)

Hamlet: (very serious) ...Is he... proud of me?

Bernardo: (exasperated) He didn't say anything, he just stood there looking all— (gesturing wildly) ghostly. You need to come and see for yourself!

Hamlet: Fine. But if this turns out to be some ridiculous prank, I will personally haunt you for the rest of your days.

(Just as they're about to leave, Ophelia barges in, clearly upset.)

Ophelia: Hamlet!

(Hamlet sees her—and quickly moves behind Bernardo, trying to hide.)

Ophelia: I can see you.

(Hamlet stays behind Bernardo, peeking slightly. Bernardo glances awkwardly between them.)

Bernardo: Do you want me to—?

Ophelia: (cuts him off, calm but firm) Move, Bernardo.

(Bernardo steps aside. Ophelia walks up to Hamlet. Her voice is calm, but her eyes burn.)

Ophelia: We need to talk.

Hamlet: Can it wait? Bernardo is taking me on a horror tour.

Ophelia: You said we'd talk about our future!

Hamlet: Oh, yes. What a mysterious and unpredictable thing.

Ophelia: If you don't put a ring on this finger today...

(she lifts her hand)

Ophelia: ...I swear, I'm jumping into that lake right now.

(Hamlet just stares. No words. Ophelia turns slightly, like she's really going to do it.)

(Hamlet panics. He quickly looks at Bernardo.)

Hamlet: *(whispers)* What do I do?

Bernardo: *(grinning)* Marry her! She's the most beautiful girl in the whole country! Are you blind? She's perfect!

Hamlet: *(frowning, thinking)* I'll... think about it.

Ophelia: *(laughs dryly)* He'll think about it.

(They all laugh. For a second, it feels light. Then suddenly, Ophelia stops laughing. Her face turns serious.)

Ophelia: No. You have three minutes.

(Hamlet looks at Bernardo with big eyes, silently begging for help. Bernardo shrugs. He's out of advice.)

(Ophelia pulls out a pair of bright swim goggles. Puts them on her head slowly and dramatically.)

Ophelia: I'm going to the lake now.

ACT 2

(The ghost slowly raises an arm, pointing at Hamlet.)

(Hamlet jumps into Bernardo's arms when he sees him.)

Bernardo: Go speak to him!

Ghost: Hamlet... my son...

(Hamlet jumps slightly, but quickly recovers and coughs, pretending to be unimpressed.)

Hamlet: (muttering) Okaaaay, that's sort of convincing.

Bernardo: Go speak to him!

Hamlet: What if I don't want to?

Ghost: (ignoring them) Hamlet... listen to me...

(Hamlet sighs, stepping forward hesitantly.)

Hamlet: (dryly) Alright, Dad. What words of wisdom do you have for me? Should I eat more vegetables? Read more philosophy? Work on my swordsmanship—

Ghost: I was murdered...

(Hamlet freezes. His expression shifts from playful skepticism to sudden seriousness.)

Hamlet: (quiet) ...Murdered?

Ghost: (nods) By your uncle...

Hamlet: Oh wow, shocking.

Ghost: ...With poison!

Hamlet: Less shocking.

(A long silence follows. Horatio and Bernardo look at each other.)

Hamlet: Yeah, I figured.

Ghost: ...You figured?

Hamlet: I mean, come on. He married my mother two weeks after you died. That's suspicious even by royal standards.

Ghost: (offended) Then why have you done nothing about it?!

Hamlet: (gesturing vaguely) You know, grief, life, laziness—

Ghost: You have no idea the pain I suffered! My own brother poured poison into my ear as I slept!

All of them: Ew.

Ghost: Avenge me!

Hamlet: Ugh. That sounds like a lot of effort. Maybe later.

Bernardo: (whispering) Hamlet, I don't think "maybe later" is an appropriate response to a ghost demanding vengeance.

Hamlet: (shrugs) It's a negotiation tactic.

Bernardo: (deadpan) You're negotiating with a ghost.

Ophelia: crossing arms Hamlet, I don't know what's weirder. The fact that you're seeing ghosts or the fact that you're too lazy for revenge.

(*Teenage-Dad-Talk*)

Act 3.

fl ★ ◦ ♪ + ° ♪ ° **Queen Elizabeth 2 - Royal Entrance**

(The royal court. King Claudius and Queen Gertrude are seated at a long dining table, eating in silence. Platters of elaborate royal food are scattered along the table. Claudius reaches for something, then pauses.)

Claudius: Darling, could you pass me the salt, please?

(Gertrude stares off into the distance, unblinking. It's like she's in a trance.)

Claudius: (raising his voice slightly) Darling?

(Gertrude blinks suddenly, snapping out of it and turning her head slowly toward him.)

Gertrude: What?

Claudius: (smiling patiently) The salt, my love. Could you pass it?

(Gertrude zones out again, not hearing him. Her eyes glaze over.)

Claudius: (leaning forward) The salt?

Gertrude: (turning slowly) ...What?

(Claudius sighs, stands up, walks all the way to the other end of the table, grabs the salt shaker, and shows it to her.)

Claudius: The salt, darling. I asked you for it.

Gertrude: You already have it in your hand.

(Claudius walks back to his seat, muttering under his breath. Suddenly, Polonius bursts into the room, running and tripping dramatically.)

Polonius: (clears throat, catching his breath) My lord and my lady! I bring forth troubling news most urgent!

Claudius: (sighs) Polonius, everything you say is urgent.

Gertrude: (still a bit dazed) Last week, you ran into the throne room screaming about a missing cheese platter.

Polonius: (offended) It was a royal platter, my Queen!

Claudius: (bored) Just tell us what's wrong this time.

Polonius: (serious, dramatic) It is your stepson. Prince Hamlet is... acting mad.

Gertrude: (raising an eyebrow) Define mad.

Polonius: (smiling proudly) I'm glad you asked, my lady. One moment, please.

(He turns dramatically.)

Polonius: Bernardo!

(Bernardo enters with a stack of papers and tired eyes. He hands one to Polonius and stands beside him like a flight attendant.)

Polonius: (reading) Item one: He has been seen pacing the halls at odd hours, muttering to himself about death, life, and existential despair.

(As he speaks, Bernardo mimes each concept like a stewardess during an airline safety demo:

– At “death,” he clutches his chest and collapses to the floor.

– At “life,” he jumps up dramatically.

– At “existential despair,” he gestures wildly and shrugs toward the heavens.)

Claudius: (shrugs) Sounds like Hamlet.

Polonius: Item two: He has started speaking in riddles! This morning, when I greeted him, he replied, *“The owl sings, but the mouse buries the sun!”*

Claudius: (blinking) ...What does that even mean?

Polonius: I have no idea!

Gertrude: (concerned) Maybe he's just grieving. You know how much he loved his father.
(places a hand on her forehead) Oh, my poor son.

Polonius: My Queen, I fear this is the work of... of...

(He chokes a little, unable to say it. Bernardo jumps in.)

Bernardo: LOVE!

Polonius: (sighs in relief) Thank you. Yes! Love!

Claudius: (blinking) ...What.

Bernardo: (serious) What else could drive a man to madness but the torturous hand of Cupid?

Polonius: Exactly!

Claudius: (raising a finger) ...Murder, betrayal, grief—

Polonius: IT'S LOVE, I TELL YOU!

(Gertrude sighs, shaking her head.)

Gertrude: And who, exactly, is Hamlet supposedly in love with?

Bernardo: Ophelia.

Polonius: Yes, my daughter Ophelia!

(Ophelia walks in wearing swim fins, a bright pink inflatable pool ring, and diving goggles perched on her head.)

Ophelia: Oh no.

Gertrude: (sitting up) Ophelia, is this true?

Ophelia: (groaning) Please don't make this a thing.

Bernardo: (offended) It is a thing, child! The Prince has gone mad because of you!

Polonius: Yes, it is a thing, my child!

Bernardo: The Prince has gone mad because of you!

Polonius: Exactly! Because of you!

Ophelia: No, he's gone mad because—(pauses, then sighs)—never mind, it's fine.

Claudius: (raising an eyebrow) Have you spoken to Hamlet?

Ophelia: (arms crossed) He's impossible! One minute he's moody, the next minute he's making jokes, and then he suddenly wants to talk about the meaning of life!

Gertrude: (softly) That sounds like him.

Claudius: Hmm. Watch him. Follow everything he does.

Bernardo: (rubbing temples) I am so tired. First a ghost, now an unhinged prince? I need a vacation.

Polonius: (pats his shoulder) We all do.

Act 4

(The royal hall. King Claudius is pacing back and forth, looking increasingly distressed. Gertrude is seated, rubbing her temples. Polonius is standing to the side, holding more scrolls.)

Claudius: (muttering) He's up to something. I know he is.

Gertrude: (sighs) Who, dear?

Claudius: Hamlet!

Gertrude: (deadpan) Of course.

Polonius: (nodding) Yes, the Prince's madness is growing more... concerning.

Claudius: Or... it's an act.

(Polonius and Gertrude exchange a glance.)

Gertrude: You think he's pretending to be insane?

Claudius: (leaning in) Oh, come on, Gertrude! He's not just acting weird—he's being calculated about it! He glares at me too much, he mutters things under his breath, and he—he threw a loaf of bread at me at breakfast this morning!

Gertrude: (pauses) ...What?

Claudius: A whole loaf! Just—whoosh—right at my face!

Claudius: That boy is planning something. And I will find out what.

(A loud crash is heard from the hall. Gertrude goes to see what is happening)

Act 5

(Hamlet walks restlessly and talks to himself around the castle.)

Gertrude: What's wrong with you, Hamlet? You've lost your mind!

Hamlet: Me? I've lost my mind? Have you seen what you've done? You married a traitor! My dad... my dad's dead because of him! And you act like nothing happened. How can you?

Gertrude: I don't know what to do! You're making me feel so guilty...

Ophelia: (to Hamlet) Speaking of guilt, are you ever going to acknowledge my existence? Or should I just write "Ignored by Hamlet" on my tombstone?

Hamlet: (dramatic sigh) Love is like a poorly written tragedy—

Ophelia: If you throw one more metaphor at me, I swear, I'm heading straight for the lake.

(Hamlet stares. Then continues monologuing.)

Act 6

(The castle is in chaos. Hamlet stands in the great hall, dramatically sighing as everyone around him panics.)

King: Guards! Arrest Hamlet! He's completely lost it!

Hamlet: Lost it? No, dear uncle. I simply misplaced it... and then I found it in a monologue.

Ghost (appears suddenly): BOO!

(Everyone screams. Hamlet sighs.)

Hamlet: Dad, not now. We're having a moment.

Ghost: Sorry. Force of habit. Anyway, revenge?

Hamlet: Ugh, fine. But let's make it quick dinner's in an hour.

(Cue dramatic duel between Hamlet and the King. Swords clash, insults are exchanged, someone spills wine in slow motion. In the end, Hamlet delivers the final blow.)

King (dying): This... was... very... inconvenient.

(He collapses. Everyone stares in awkward silence.)

Bernardo: So... is now a good time to mention the castle's on fire?

(The castle is indeed on fire.)

Ophelia: crossing arms Fantastic. My boyfriend is a lunatic, my father-in-law is a ghost, and now my house is on fire. I need a break.

Hamlet: waving dismissively Go take a walk. Maybe by the lake.

(Pause. Everyone realizes what's about to happen.)

Horatio: Wait

(Too late. A distant PLOP is heard.)

Guard: Uhm... I think she just drowned.

(Silence. Then, Ophelia's ghost appears, floating above the water.)

Ghost Ophelia: So... now what?

Ghost King: Ha! Welcome to the club! We have tea at 5.

(Curtain falls as everyone scrambles out of the burning castle. The ghosts dance in the background.)

THE END.