

2 B or Nah: Sexting Hamlet

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Cast: 2F, 2M

- ❖ Hamlet—melancholy Dane riddled with existential angst; M 20s
- ❖ Gertrude—Hamlet's sexy mother, who recently married his uncle and is growing disillusioned with the whole creepy arrangement; F 40s
- ❖ Claudius—dirty old man with a dad-bod; M 50s-60s
- ❖ Ophelia—Hamlet's ex, who is sick of men running the show; F 20s

Synopsis

You think your family's crazy? Mine uncle boinks Mom with a hulking dad-bod. And sexts me. Oh woe, vile video!

(At rise, HAMLET is distraught as he watches a video on his cell phone.)

HAMLET

The horror! Oh, woe, woe! Vile video!

(Buries his head in his elbow to look away, but peeks back at cell in horror. Notices audience, breaks the fourth wall to speak to them.)

HAMLET

So, you think *your* family's crazy? Talk about a clusterfuck! Mine power-mad uncle murdered mine father the king. Then? A hideous quickie marriage. Uncle Claudius wifed mine mother Queen Gertrude. Now dread Uncle boinks Mom with his hulking dad-bod. And sexts me! *(Holds up cell to audience.)* Mine eyes cannot unsee this desecration.

(Offstage, ghostly yowling sounds and screams.)

Plus? Dad's ghost yowls round yon battlements. *(Ghost yowls offstage.)* And if this isn't all whack enough? The ghost of my crazy ex? Who drowned herself and can't be buried in consecrated ground? Stalks me! Top *that* shit, bitches! *(Beat. Takes out a dagger.)* Is this a dagger I see before me? Shalt I go full Oedipus? Gouge out mine own eyes? Or stab vile Claudius through his perverted heart?

CLAUDIUS

(Enters escorting GERTRUDE.) Hamlet, our nephew, our son. *(Tries to embrace HAMLET, who stomps away. CLAUDIUS embraces GERTRUDE instead.)* Gertrude, our sometime sister, now our queen. Your hot mama!

HAMLET

(Gags.) Fie on't, ah fie! He maketh sex eyes at the fair lady who gave me life.

CLAUDIUS

Your father is dead, tis true. But life goes famously on.

HAMLET

(Pulls CLAUDIUS out of GERTRUDE's earshot.) How screwed up is this? *(Shows him cell phone.)* You call this art?

CLAUDIUS

Ah! Tis the dance of love on fleek! 'Gainst a Barry White mixtape. Why doth it offend thee so?

HAMLET

That's my mother, you scumbag!

CLAUDIUS

After we made the beast with two backs, I posted our commingling to IB Anon. So the unwashed masses might enjoy Gertrude too.

HAMLET

Revenge, revenge roils in mine blood.

GERTRUDE

Dear, sweet Hamlet. Come to me.

CLAUDIUS

Call it not revenge porn.

HAMLET

(To audience.)

She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
It is not nor it cannot come to good.
But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue.

CLAUDIUS

If you're having girl problems I feel bad for you, son. I got 99 problems but your mom ain't one. Yass, Queen! *(Kisses GERTRUDE while taking selfie.)*

GERTRUDE

(Speaks to HAMLET as if he's an adorable puppy.) Who's a Gloomy Gus? Who? C'mon, who's a Gloomy Gus? Hamlet's a Gloomy Gus. Yes, he is. Oh, yes, he is. Moping and brooding day and night. All around Elsinore Castle.

CLAUDIUS

Always in dreary nighted colors. What's up with that?

HAMLET

The loyal amongst us are in mourning—duh!

GERTRUDE

All that lives must die
Passing through nature to eternity.

CLAUDIUS

Horn dogs must ever sniff out new prey. *(Smacks GERTRUDE's rump.)*

HAMLET

O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew.
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed

CLAUDIUS

Melted flesh?

GERTRUDE

Seriously? That's just gross.

HAMLET

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!
O God, God,
How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!

GERTRUDE

Give Mama a hug!

HAMLET

Frailty, thy name is woman.

GERTRUDE

C'mon, Gloomy Gus. Give your queen a big ole hug!

HAMLET

To be, or not to be? That is the question—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And, by opposing, end them? To die, to sleep—

(GERTRUDE shrieks and points offstage.)

CLAUDIUS

Tis Big O!

GERTRUDE

The ghost of doomed Ophelia!

OPHEILA

(Enters, wet and bedraggled with seaweed in her hair.) Blah, blah, blah. Thee, thee, thee.
It's all about thee, Hamlet.

HAMLET

The struggle is real.

OPHELIA

You're such an endless dramaboy!

HAMLET

Shall I kill mine self or murder mine uncle?

OPHELIA

Angst! Anguish! Ambiguity! Thou art a needy broken record.

CLAUDIUS

Preach! *(Makes DJ scratching record sound.)*

HAMLET

You call that art?

(HAMLET points dagger at Claudius, then at self, then at CLADIUS.)

OPHELIA

Make up your damn mind!

HAMLET

Adulting is hard. *(Points dagger at himself.)*

OPHELIA

Execute your decisions!

HAMLET

FYI, inaction is a form of action. *(Points dagger at CLAUDIUS.)*

OPHELIA

Who knows what the hell they're doing? There's no intelligent design. Just muddle through like everyone else.

HAMLET

I once loved you.

OPHELIA

We are over, done, finished! Quit calling me a stalker.

HAMLET

I never loved you.

OPHELIA

Gaslighter! I've had it up to my eyeballs with your whiny-ass privileged problems.

(HAMLET points dagger at himself.)

OPHELIA

Are you off your meds again?

GERTRUDE

Come on, Hambone! Put down that nasty-wasty dagger. That's my good boy. Wrap those angsty-wangsty arms around me. Mama's melancholy Dane!

CLAUDIUS

The Dane's got 99 problems, and a bitch—

OPHELIA

Drop it, creeper.

HAMLET

Nudes?

CLAUDIUS

Mine most sacred pleasure! *(Texts HAMLET.)*

HAMLET

Not you, vile wretch! Ophelia—Netflix and chill?

OPHELIA

Swipe left. We are never ever ever getting back together.

HAMLET

Get thee to a nunnery!

OPHELIA

The hell with slut-shaming noise.

HAMLET

You drive me to self-destruction! *(Holds dagger to his heart.)*

OPHELIA

Hand over that dagger!

HAMLET

To be or nah?

OPHELIA

Posthaste! Before carcasses drop like flies.

HAMLET

Never!

GERTRUDE

Did you accidentally drown, dear child, when that willow branch snapped?

HAMLET

Or did you commit suicide?

CLAUDIUS

Doomed Ophelia killed herself. Case closed.

OPHELIA

Spoken with yon patriarchy's certitude.

HAMLET

Proper burial? Or nah?

CLAUDIUS

Nah. (*Texts OPHELIA.*)

OPHELIA

(*Checks cell.*) A disembodied phallus assaults mine eyes! Thou art a disrespectful swine. Evermore I'll haunt your skeevy ass, Claudius.

HAMLET

That's my girl!

OPHELIA

Queen Gertrude, this vulgarian exploits you in base fashion.

HAMLET

You should see what the king texted me.

OPHELIA

Oh—and Hamlet? I'll chill with your ghost dad on yon ramparts.

GERTRUDE

Squad goals.

OPHELIA

Dear Queen Gertrude. Why, oh, why did you marry this skeevy old creeper?

Lust?
HAMLET

Fear of loneliness?
OPHELIA

Complicity?
HAMLET

Power!
GERTRUDE

Well, actually, a woman requires a husband.
CLAUDIUS

Else no one takes her seriously.
HAMLET

No *man* you mean!
OPHELIA

Shrill harpy! Angry wench! You drowned yourself because our nephew impregnated you.
Tossed you into the burn pit. With the table scraps.
CLAUDIUS

You know what makes me stabby? Mansplaining!
OPHELIA

The guilt! The burden! (*Inches dagger closer to his heart.*)
HAMLET

(*Takes cell from HAMLET, shows GERTRUDE.*) Behold! How your horrid bedfellow violates your trust.
OPHELIA

Bastard! (*Takes dagger from HAMLET, points it at CLAUDIUS.*) Ladies never make a dent in the machinery by following rules.
GERTRUDE

Please! Place the dagger in mine hand.
OPHELIA

(*GERTRUDE brandishes dagger at CLAUDIUS.*)

OPHELIA

Lady, leap from this cart of carnage, this perpetual cycle of violence. Peace. Follow me.

GERTRUDE

You are but a ghost. A splotch of mist.

HAMLET

Are you a spirit of help? Or a goblin damned?

GERTRUDE

How can you assist me, spirit, if you—

OPHELIA

I faked my death!

GERTRUDE

Brilliant!

CLAUDIUS

Well, actually—

OPHELIA

Tricked you all and settled in a faraway place. A nunnery—

HAMLET

For real?

OPHELIA

Yep.

GERTRUDE

Genius.

OPHELIA

Right? A blissful haven deep in the woods. A nunnery where ladies rule. And no man visits. Dear Queen Gertrude, you have ever been kind to me. You are so much better than—than—this. Remain with duplicitous Claudius—a beast devoid of integrity? And wishy-washy Hamlet? You'll fester in a reeking pile of corpses. Get thee to yon nunnery! You in?

GERTRUDE

I'm in. (*Gives dagger to HAMLET.*) To yon nunnery! (*Exits with OPHELIA.*)

CLAUDIUS

Love sucketh!

HAMLET

Guess that leaves the two of us, big guy.

CLAUDIUS

(Picks up dagger.) To be or nah—

HAMLET

(Spots skull.) Alas, poor Yorick. *(Picks up skull and poses with it, while CLAUDIUS takes photo.)*

END OF PLAY