

Untitled Hamlet Adaptation

By Megan Conrad & Jasmine Moore

Adapted from: Shakespeare's *Hamlet*

Director's Notes

Who would've thought that we of all people would be writing an adaptation of Hamlet? We sure as hell didn't. So what is this about you may ask? Well, it's about Hamlet (could you not gather that from the title?) Our play begins right where Shakespeare's *Hamlet* ends. Well, sort of. Where we last left our heroes, Hamlet & Claudius, they were sprawled out dead on a battle floor. In our play, we are exploring Hamlet and Claudius in purgatory. What happens when you wake up in purgatory and given a one shot chance of redemption? What happens when you get a chance to fix the one spot in your life where you fucked up? Can you do it? Is it even possible? Well, we aren't going to spoil it for you. You're just going to have to read/watch and find out. Sit back and enjoy the ride.

-Jasmine & Megan  xx

Characters List

In order of appearance

Hamlet - a young, good looking man. He is sure of himself. Has his wits about him.

Claudius- a strong looking man, however he is the biggest cry-baby scary cat you've ever seen.

The Voice* -an ominous, strong voice. Really witty. Thinks they're funny and charismatic... they're not.

Marcellus*- watch-guard

Bernardo*- watch-guard

Horatio- Hamlet's best friend.

The Ghost* - Hamlet's dead father. Tries to play up his "ghost-y-ness" He's funny. Really likeable

Gertrude*- Strikingly, Drop dead gorgeous. Bad-ass. Gives 0 fucks. The love of Claudius' life. Torn between loving Claudius & protecting her son, Hamlet.

Ophelia*- Beautiful. More of an understated beauty. Caring. Soft. The love of Hamlet's life)

(*for the purposes of our small production, these characters are double cast: The Voice/The Ghost, Marcellus/Ophelia, Bernardo/Gertrude)

Scene 1

Dark stage. Chopin's Funeral March begins playing. Lights slowly rise. We see two separate worlds: Hamlet's & Claudius. Each world includes a tattered couch, a side table, a mirror and a picture of the girl they loved (Hamlet & Ophelia and Claudius and Gertrude). They each explore their worlds.

Hamlet: Where am I?

Claudius: What's going on?

Hamlet: Hellllooooo?

Claudius: Is anybody there?

A flash of light comes from above

Claudius: *girlish shriek and hide behind couch*

Hamlet: What the fu----

The Voice: Wazzupppp **like the guy from Scream**

Claudius: *pops head up from behind couch... slowly*

Hamlet & Claudius: What is going on?!

The Voice: Y'all look bad as shit? Y'all been thru a fight or sumn'?

Crickets

The Voice: ... Okay so you're proooobably wondering why you're here and where you are and why the hell I'm talking so funny?

Hamlet & Claudius: Uh, yea

The Voice: **game show host voice** WELLLLLCOMMEEEE TO PURGATORYYYYYYY. I'm your hostess with the mostess giving you a ONE SHOT CHANCE AT REEEEEDEEEEMMPPTIOOOONNN. The rules are clear. Go back to the place in life where you fucked up. Fix what you did wrong. Come back here and we'll have ourselves a little partay. Shouldn't be too hard right? Good luck... I'm winking at you right now, you just can't see it. Byyyeeee.

Hamlet: Redemption?

Claudius: A second chance?

Hamlet: Can I do it?

Claudius: Where *did* it all go wrong?

Hamlet: I know....

End Scene 1

Scene 2 (Choice1)

Spotlight on Hamlet's world. As Hamlet speaks his world comes into focus and his dialogue

slowly morphs into iambic pentameter

Hamlet: Where it all went wrong. So many choices.

Not the du-el. For my fate was sealed then.

Perhaps Polonius? Nah that's stupid

I would not be here if it had not been...

O, my father. The night his ghost appeared

World has been set. It is nighttime. ENTER HORATIO, BERNARDO, MARCELLUS.

Standing guard over castle. Hamlet stands off to the side and watches this conversation happen. (Horatio, Bernardo & Marcellus lines are Hamlet text. Hamlet, has his new dialogue).

Marcellus: Holla! Bernardo!

BERNARDO: Say, What, is Horatio there?

HORATIO: A piece of him.

BERNARDO: Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

MARCELLUS: What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

BERNARDO: I have seen nothing.

MARCELLUS:

Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,

And will not let belief take hold of him

Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night;

That if again this apparition come,
He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

HORATIO: Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

ENTER Hamlet

Hamlet: Ho, what 'twill not appear?

Marcellus: 'Tis the ghost of the King my Lord.

Horatio: Look, my lord, it comes!

Ghost: BOO

Everyone stares at the Ghost.

Ghost: **clearly embarrassed, clears throat**

I am thy father's spirit,
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night,
And for the day confined to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purged away.
If thou didst ever thy dear father love--

HAMLET: O God!

Ghost: Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.

Go to page 8 IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED WALK AWAY

Go to page 9 IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED KILL 'EM

IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED WALK AWAY

HAMLET: *aside*

Murder! The action most foul.

Alack, to go 'long with this plan will drive me mad

To kill Claudius ends badly, that knoweth I.

I havn't a do-over end in a scowl

Aye! Now I know what to do

This action will redeem

This time I alter the ending scene

I shall simply will walk away instead

Ghost: So?

Hamlet: I'm sorry sir. No can do

Hamlet: Fuck this shit I'm out

Hamlet begins to back up. Marcellus & Bernardo are still behind him. Hamlet backs up into

MARCELLUS' spear & dies

Blackout.

End Scene 2

IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED KILL 'EM

HAMLET: *aside*

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This time I alter the ending scene

I shall kill the king... Quickly this time

Ghost: So?

Hamlet: Hie, he shall meet his end swiftly

Spotlight on Hamlet and the others exit

Hamlet: Hark, where goes my Uncle?

enter CLAUDIUS

Claudius: *checking out his reflection in a sword*

Hamlet: *runs to kill Claudius...he has nothing*

Claudius: Who goes there?

Claudius sees Hamlet and girly screams, somehow Claudius kills Hamlet.

Blackout.

End Scene 2

Scene 3

Claudius: Wrong? I am never wrong. Why would I need a do-over?

Pause

I mean there was that whole murdering my brother thing

I guess.... Well shit....

There is a flash of bright, bright light, we are immediately transported to King Hamlet's bedroom.

We see Gertrude in 1602 sexy nighties

Gertrude: Hello, my love.

Claudius is filled with joy seeing the love of his life and runs to her.

Claudius: Gertrude, my everlasting light. How I've missed thee.

Gertrude: Do you have the poison for the king dear?

Claudius pulls a vial out of his pocket.

Claudius: I have it here, are you sure about this?

Gertrude: Yes, I want to be with you forever.

This cannot happen unless the king is dead.

Don't you want to be with me.

Claudius: Yes, of course. Maybe in another way?

Gertrude: What else could we do?

We have thought of everything.

Go to page 11 IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED ROMEO AND JULIET

Go to page 12-13 IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED KILL HAMLET

IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED ROMEO AND JULIET

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We can end end this most serene, me and queen.

To take this poison today we won't rue.

Forever in heaven me and you.

Gertrude: You want ME to drink this poison.

Claudius: No I want US to drink this poison.

We shall then be together for eternity.

Gertrude: The shit one does for love.

They look at each other knowingly. Claudius grabs nearby shot glasses and pours each of them a shot of poison. He takes one for himself and hands the other to Gertrude.

Claudius: Bottoms up.

The hit the glass on the table, clink, the drink. They embrace each other and as they slowly start to lose consciousness the lights fade.

Blackout

End scene 3

IF THE AUDIENCE PICKED KILL HAMLET

Claudius: Murder! The action most foul.

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To kill your son is my cue.

I'm sorry my queen but that is the choice I've come to.

Gertrude: What doest tho mean Claudius?

Kill my son? Not my husband?

Claudius: I musn't kill the king, it shant end well

Killing your son ensures our love everlasting.

Killing your husband ensures my demise.

Do not fret Gertrude, after today,

Nothing shall stand in the way of our love.

Gertrude: *aside*

My one true love, or my son?

I thought I would have both after today.

Now it seems I shall only have one.

I love them both so dearly, which do I chose.

Hamlet, my dear boy, he cannot die.

I could tell Claudius no, but he is a sneaky man.

He could still kill my son, I must save Hamlet.

Gertrude pulls out a dagger from a strap on her leg. She hides it behind her back as she walks over to Claudius.

I love you, but you won't kill my son.

She stabs him with the dagger, crying. He falls to the ground as the lights fade.

Blackout

End scene 3

Scene 4

Hamlet and Claudius wake up back in their rooms they started in before the do-over. The room looks the same as before they left.

The Voice: ANNNDD we're backkkkk. How was the tripppp ladies and gentss.

Hamlet: I'm back?

Claudius: Wait, no! I thought I rocked that shit, but I'm still here??

Hamlet: What went wrong? Can I leave now??

The Voice: Having some trouble? *Laughs at their misery* Even with a do-over you're still messing up.

Claudius: So does this mean I'm stuck here forever?

Claudius cries like a baby. Hamlet flops on the couch dejectedly.

The Voice: Stop pouting! I never said this was over. I'm a great, handsome, smart, whimsical....

Claudius and Hamlet: Could you get on with it already!

The Voice: Oh right, sorry. Sometimes I get distracted by my awesomeness. ANYWHOO... I kinda, sorta, lied before. Remember the whole "ONE SHOT CHANCE AT RREEEDDDEMMMPPPTTTIIIOOOONNN" thing I mentioned before?

Claudius: I don't remember I was to busy screaming back there. *Points to couch*

Hamlet: Yeah, sure.

The Voice: Great, welllll you actually get a TWO TIME SHOT CHANCE AT RREEEDDDEMMMPPPTTTIIIOOOONNN. WOOOOOTTTTTT. Hold the applause, thank you thank you.

Hamlet: No one clapped for you dude.

Claudius: *clapping*

The Voice: Alright y'all. *Sings do this thing from mean girls the musical.*

Hamlet: Here we go again...

Claudius: *Jamming to whatever the voice is singing.*

*Eye of the tiger plays as the scene transitions back to Hamlets world. Claudius gets so pumped
he runs energetically off-stage.*

End Scene 4

Scene 5

Marcellus: Holla! Bernardo!

BERNARDO: Say, What, is Horatio there?

HORATIO: A piece of him.

BERNARDO: Welcome, Horatio: welcome, good Marcellus.

MARCELLUS: What, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

BERNARDO: I have seen nothing.

HORATIO: Tush, tush, 'twill not appear.

ENTER Hamlet

Hamlet: Ho, what 'twill not appear?

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Horatio: Look, my lord, it comes!

Ghost: BOO

Everyone stares at the Ghost.

Ghost: **clearly embarrassed, clears throat**

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If thou didst ever thy dear father love--

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HAMLET: *aside.. Say it as fast as possible*

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Claudius: I have it here, are you sure about this?

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Don't you want to be with me.

Claudius: Yes, of course. Maybe in another way?

Gertrude: What else could we do?

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walks over to Claudius.*

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She stabs him with the dagger, crying. He falls to the ground as the lights fade.

Blackout

SCENE 7

Blackout

The Voice: Welcome back y'all! How was the trip down memory lane? Surprised to be back? Haha yeaaaaaaa but it's iight. You're probably confused, allow me to explain. This was a test of the human condition. Those in heaven like to see if humans can ever *truly* learn from their mistakes. Can they rewrite the past? **Ophelia and Gertrude begin to talk at the same time now** Simple answer, no. You can not have a do-over.

Lights rise on stage. We see Hamlet & Claudius back in their respective purgatory's. Spotlight rises on Ophelia & Gertrude. Hamlet is shocked, Claudius has already seen his love. Ophelia looks radiant, holding a bouquet of flowers. Gertrude looks hot stil.

There is no such thing as a do-over.

Hamlet: Ophelia what are you-

Ophelia: Even though you had the chance to change your fate, the outcome remains the same.

Gertrude: You see, at the end of the day, you are who you are. Every choice you make will end in the same way.

Ophelia: You are fated from the day you are born to walk a certain path.

Gertrude: Many have tried to evade this fortune and none have succeeded.

Ophelia: Oedipus tried

Gertrude: He tried so hard

Ophelia & Gertrude: But he failed. As did you. You were never meant to succeed.

Ophelia: Yes, you picked a time in your life where you fucked up.

Gertrude: But the sad truth is, life is a hodgepodge of fuck ups.

Ophelia: There isn't just one moment in time that changes everything.

Gertrude: You cannot change the core of a person based on one decision.

Hamlet: So what you're saying is

Claudius: I never had a chance?

Ophelia & Gertrude: Did you not listen to a thing I just said?

Hamlet & Claudius: Just clarifying. Sorry my love.

Hamlet: So, what happens now?

Claudius: Where do I go from here?

Hamlet: Am I doomed to a lonely eternity?

Gertrude & Ophelia: Can you let me speak?

Silence

Gertrude & Ophelia: Thank you. In my hands, I hold the key to your FATE.

Hamlet: STOP, Have you had that the *entire time*

Ophelia: Yes?

Hamlet: Then why did I have to go through all of that?

Ophelia: It was a learning experience. How many times do I have to say that?

Gertrude: Ahem, anyway, you lived a good life my dear. Here you go, open it -

The two couples embrace. Each man processes what he just learned.

Hamlet: Well here we go

Claudius: There's nothing like knowing where you're gonna spend the rest of eternity

The men open their envelopes. After reading what the letter says both men look up and gasp.

Black out

END