

# HAMLET, ACT VI

by Ryan Garns

*Hamlet, Act VI* was first presented as part of the revue *Bride of Mondo Show* on November 2, 2001, at the Globe Playhouse in West Hollywood, California, with the following cast:

(In order of appearance)

Chorus	Chris Stacy
Horatio	Forrest Harding
Hamlet	Matt McCann
Ophelia	Niki Magarity
Laertes	Michael Patrick McGill

Directed by Ryan Garns

Produced by Christine Rosenberry & Ryan Garns

(*Enter* CHORUS.)

CHORUS: We are all familiar with the tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark – a timeless tale of murder and revenge played out in five acts. But now we would like to present you with the rarely seen sixth act, which was originally to have the final curtain. When we last left our story... Hamlet was in a pickle. In an effort to avenge his father's murder he killed his uncle the King, his mother the Queen, his two childhood friends, the King's counselor, the King's counselor's son, and drove the King's counselor's daughter to suicide before finally getting killed himself. But is Hamlet ready to move on? Or have these deaths dampened his enthusiasm? It is here we begin act six of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*...

(CHORUS *exits*. *Enter* HORATIO.)

HORATIO: 'Tis been a fortnight since young Hamlet hath been slain. Whilst I, Horatio, stand o'erlooking the domain of King Fortinbras, former Prince of Norway and successor to the Danish throne – I am but grieved at the loss of Denmark and for the loss of Hamlet, my dear friend. But soft! What noise?

(*Enter* HAMLET.)

HORATIO: S'blood, have I doth seen the ghost of Hamlet? Mine eyes deceive me!

HAMLET: Ho, good Horatio!

HORATIO: And mine ears! Be this an unearthly spirit that come hither to? Or perchance an apparition born of the sniffing of glue?

HAMLET: Dost thou not mark me, Horatio?

HORATIO (*drops to knees*): Ay, my lord. Thou art Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. I prithee do not hurt me! O, prithee, prithee, prithee!

HAMLET: Gentle, sweet, kissable Horatio. I come to thee in the nature of goodwill.

HORATIO: "Goodwill" maybe, my lord. But "nature", as thou say, seems to have taken a miss.

HAMLET: What dost thou mean? Speak, knave!

HORATIO: Beg thy forgiveness, my lord. I am but a mortal...

HAMLET: Ay.

HORATIO: ...And thou art dead.

HAMLET (*beat*): No, I'm not.

HORATIO: Surely, Lord Hamlet, thy death was caused by a poison'd rapier stung upon thee by Laertes, son of Polonius. Upon receiving thy fatal wound, you kill'd him anon. 'Twixt his death and thine, thou also had time to do away with thine uncle, the King of Denmark.

HAMLET: Hmm. I was in a bad place then, wasn't I, Horatio?

HORATIO: Ay, my lord. But everything was wrapped up quite nicely, everyone being dead and all.

HAMLET: Tush, tush. Were that to be true. But I hath escaped the mortal sting of Laertes' venomous rapier.

HORATIO (*stands*): Speak, I am bound to hear.

HAMLET: Unlike Claudius, who hadst poison'd both my parents, Laertes was not a master of deadly potions. The contagion which Laertes anointed his sword was not lethal, but in fact a mild form of codeine.

HORATIO: Codeine, my lord?

HAMLET: Ay. After I was carried out of the hall, I awoke from the effects of drowsiness, found my smoker's cough to be suppressed, and wandered off unnoticed.

HORATIO: What then, my lord?

HAMLET: I stole away to a riverbed where I met with a wandering band of Buddhists. Through meditation they unveiled the err of my violent passions and set me upon the path of peaceful enlightenment.

HORATIO: God be praised! Hamlet, Prince of Denmark lives! Cry it about the streets!

HAMLET: But alas, Horatio, my heart weighs heavy for the bloody acts sprung forth from my rage. And what of poor, innocent Ophelia? That mine unchecked fury should push her to such a bitter end...

*(Enter OPHELIA.)*

OPHELIA: Here I am, Hamlet!

HAMLET *(continuing soliloquy)*: Thou was like a beacon upon mine– wha? *(turns and sees her)* Ophelia!

*(OPHELIA and HAMLET embrace.)*

HORATIO: S'wounds, this cannot be so! Ophelia, we believed thee to be dead!

OPHELIA: Dead, Horatio? Nay, I hath been to a nunnery for six months. Here, I brought thee a souvenir.  
*(hands him a T-shirt that reads "Denmark Nunnery – Get Into The Habit!")*

HAMLET: But thou didst drown thyself in a river. Horatio and I saw thee buried.

OPHELIA: 'Twas not my body thou saw laid i' the earth.

HAMLET: No?

OPHELIA: 'Twas, in fact, my twin sister Beatrice.

HORATIO: Beatrice? Twin sister?

OPHELIA: Ay. The "crazy" one. Loony as a horse buggy, she was – we were a pair of matching bookends, different as night and day. O, but how she didst adore a minuet, The Ballet Russes, and crêpes suzette. As children we used to jest others with our likenesses, one pretending to be the other. Alas, our foolery should come to this.

HORATIO: Pray your forgiveness, Ophelia. I find this all quite unbelievable. I could not tell thy sister from thyself.

OPHELIA (*warms up to HAMLET*): But Hamlet, my lord, my love – he who hath made many tenders of love to me behind closed chambers – surely *thou* could tell the difference ‘twixt Beatrice and myself?

HAMLET (*nervously chuckles*): ...Ay, fairest Ophelia. My confusion was in jest.

OPHELIA (*laughs*): Methinks thou art ribbing me.

HAMLET (*sotto*): Methinks I ribbed Beatrice as well.

HORATIO: This is truly a glorious day! For both Hamlet and Ophelia are alive and well!

HAMLET: Let us celebrate! For if we may survive such impossible odds, then nothing can come between us!

(*Enter LAERTES, looking bloody and injured, holding a sword.*)

LAERTES: Pray thee not to be so fast upon thy exeunt!

ALL: Laertes!

HAMLET: But I thought thee was...

LAERTES: Dead? Ha! ‘Tis the presumption I wished thou to be privy to!

HORATIO (*sits down*): Forgive me, my lord. This is becoming most tedious.

LAERTES: Thou hast kill’d my father, Hamlet. For that I shall see thee dead and served unto tiny maggots to sup upon thy sweet carrion quiche!

HAMLET: But Laertes, I thoughtst thou hath renounced vengeance upon me?

LAERTES: Mere words spewed forth from the effects of codeine. Thou hast murdered; an act most foul and cowardly – running my father through with a dagger whilst he stood defenseless behind a curtain! To this point I stand: I’ll be revenged most thoroughly for my father!

OPHELIA: Dost thou thinkest thou art alone, brother? Hamlet hath kill’d my father, too. Thou knowest as well as I that Daddy was a pervert! ‘Twas always eavesdropping

and sneaking behind the drapes – sometimes proclaiming himself “Polonius The Naughty Pixie!” Thou should be thankful he wasn’t slain whilst wearing his elf costume. Thus I pray thee to sheathe thy sword. Thou cannot seek the blood of Hamlet for our father’s comeuppance.

LAERTES: Get away, Beatrice!

OPHELIA: Ophelia–

LAERTES: –Ophelia! Sorry. Away with thee, lest my foil find your bosom.

HAMLET: Let him pass, Ophelia. If it is vengeance Laertes wants, then he shall have it.

*(HAMLET and LAERTES assume dueling stances, swords extended. After a beat, HAMLET flicks his wrist and knocks LAERTES’ sword to the ground. Duel over.)*

LAERTES *(drop to knees)*: Thou has defeated me, Hamlet. Do your worst!

HAMLET: Dost thou not see, Laertes? Vengeance is a hollow pursuit; one I knoweth all too well. Cast away your anger. ‘Tis foolhardy.

LAERTES: If thou will not kill me, then vengeance shall be mine!

HAMLET: Then I charge thee to heed one of the four noble truths of the Buddha!

LAERTES: My lord?

HAMLET: That thou may only reach Nirvana through meditation and by following the path of righteousness in action, thought, and attitude.

LAERTES: My lord, wilt thou teach me more of this Buddha?

HAMLET: Ay.

LAERTES *(rises)*: Than I shall eighty-six my sword and come away with thee. I want to lead a good life.

HORATIO: Hurrah!

LAERTES: And I happily give over my remaining sister – to open her chaste treasure to your manly importunity!

HAMLET: Thou art too kind, Laertes.

OPHELIA: Well, everything seems to be wonderful again.

HORATIO: Ay. Now that thee have returned, Lord Hamlet, wilt thou assume the Danish throne from Fortinbras?

HAMLET: Methinks not, Horatio. For I have learned something today: the road of politics is paved with the evil of men's hearts. Its machinations and bloodshed have left me without mother to suckle, nor father to borrow money. Perhaps one day a system of government shall be forged that doth without kings and queens. A democracy, Horatio, where the very notion of a son taking over his father's political post would be unthinkable. Until then I shall go forth and lead a simple life. Perhaps join the priesthood. Or perhaps the four of us shall form a band of crimefighters, with Horatio and Laertes and my trusty sidekicks.

OPHELIA: And I, my lord, the plucky brains behind the operation shall be!

HAMLET: That's right! Together we shall rid the world of evil doers.

HORATIO: Zounds!

OPHELIA: Jinkies!

HAMLET: We'll make things ripping in the state of Denmark! Come away! We shall to my place for some wine and opium!

*(Exeunt HAMLET, HORATIO, OPHELIA and LAERTES, arm-in-arm, as "Believe It Or Not", the theme from Greatest American Hero, begins to play. Blackout.)*

**THE END**