

*His sits back down. Sullivan speaks to the group.*

SULLIVAN

Since we've stopped...how are my Hamlets feeling?

*James and Julius step forward.*

JAMES

I mean, this guy talks a lot.

SULLIVAN

Very true. Which is why I thought it might be more productive to have two of you play the role. Divide up the work load, so to speak.

JULIUS

Yeah, we can see that. But we actually had an idea.

SULLIVAN

Oh?

JULIUS

Yeah, we were thinking--

JAMES

If it's okay with you, you know?

JULIUS

Yeah, and if it *is*, then what if...

*They look at each other.*

SULLIVAN

It's okay, gentlemen, go ahead.

JAMES

What if instead of just splitting up the lines we play Hamlet as brothers?

*Beat. Sullivan gets quietly excited.*

SULLIVAN

Interesting.

*James and Julius move to the center, each with a copy of the play in their hands.*

JULIUS

Here, let us show you.

JAMES

Yeah, we were working this out in the yard the other day.

JULIUS

We had to change a word or two here and there, but like...it ain't the Bible, right?

SULLIVAN

Depends who you ask.

JAMES

Shit, really?

SULLIVAN

I'm not a purist. Let's see what you have.

*Beat. James and Julius set themselves. Some of the other men watch, and some follow along in their own copies of the play. Maybe the lights shift slightly as they get into it.*

JAMES

So, like the Hamlet brothers are alone in the thrown room.

JULIUS

Depressed and shit, 'cause of everything going on.

JAMES

And just all talked down to by their greasy uncle.

JULIUS

Who happens to be the new king.

JAMES

Right. So...

*The two men perch on some chairs or against a wall or something.*

JAMES

O that this too too solid flesh would melt, thaw, and resolve itself into a dew.

*He looks at Julius, turning the monologue into a scene.*

JULIUS

Or that the Everlasting had not fixed his canon 'gainst self-slaughter.

JAMES

O God, God, how weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world!

JULIUS

Fie on't, ah, fie, 'tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely.

JAMES

That it should come to this: but two months dead.

JULIUS

Nay, not so much, not two.

JAMES

So excellent a king, so loving to our mother that he might not beteem the winds of heaven visit her face too roughly.

JULIUS

Heaven and earth, must we remember?

JAMES

Why, she would hang on him as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on; and yet within a month--

JULIUS

Let us not think on't!

JAMES

Frailty, thy name is woman! O God!

JULIUS

A beast that wants discourse of reason would have mourned longer! Married with our uncle.

JAMES

Our father's brother.

JULIUS

But no more like our father than I to Hercules.

JAMES

Within a month, ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears had left the flushing in her galled eyes--

JULIUS

She married.

JAMES

Oh, most wicked speed! To post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets!

JULIUS

It is not, nor it cannot come to good.

*They have come to the end of the monologue. They turn to Sullivan, but before anyone can speak,*

*Hard Baby raps loudly on the wall, continuing the scene. The sound startles everyone, and even Clark seems to be paying attention.*

HARD BABY

Hail to your lordships!

*James and Julius look at each other and then to Sullivan. She nods at them to keep going. Julius looks over at Hard Baby.*

JULIUS

I am glad to see you well.

JAMES

Horatio! Or do I forget myself?

HARD BABY

The same, my lords, and your poor servant ever.

JULIUS

Sir, our good friend, I'll change that name with you. And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio?

HARD BABY

My lords, I came to see your father's funeral.

JAMES

I prithee do not mock us, fellow student.

JULIUS

I think it was to see our mother's wedding.

HARD BABY

*(to Julius)*

Indeed, my lord, it followed hard upon.

JULIUS

Thrift, thrift, Horatio. The funeral baked meats did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

JAMES

Would I had my dearest foe in heaven or ever I had seen that day, Horatio! My father, methinks I see my father.

HARD BABY

Where, my lord?

JULIUS

In his mind's eye, Horatio.

HARD BABY

I saw him once. He was a goodly king.

JULIUS

He was a man, take him for all in all, I shall not look upon his like again.

*Beat. Hard Baby looks at them. He steps between James and Julius, a large arm around each shoulder.*

HARD BABY

My lords, I think I saw him yesternight.

JAMES

Saw who?

HARD BABY

My lords, the king your father.

*Beat. Sullivan and others look on, appreciating what they saw.*

SULLIVAN

Well, gentlemen...

SOFT BABY

Yo, that shit was dope!

SULLIVAN

Indeed, Soft Baby, it was a story well told. James, Julius, I have to say...

JAMES

Kinda worked out pretty cool, huh?

SULLIVAN

It really did. I'm a little jealous I didn't think of it first.

JULIUS

That's okay, Sully, we'll make you an accessory.

SULLIVAN

Two brothers. Representing both the rage and the indecision that Hamlet feels. Both desperately want to avenge the murder of their father. But how? When? Will they act together or will one go off on his own?

BERNARD

Cool.

SULLIVAN

Indeed. Hard Baby...