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Hamlet's Mysterious Love Example

William Shakespeare wrote a multitude of plays with complicated love stories, and Hamlet is no exception. Throughout the play, Hamlet is claimed to be many things; a murderer, a madman, and a lovesick fool. In Shakespeare's plays, love itself is considered a disease which is why Polonius, Laertes, and Claudius scheme behind his back to battle his madness, among other things. A subplot in the play of complicated theatrics is the love story of Ophelia and Hamlet. One wonders, did Hamlet truly love Ophelia? Despite Hamlet's incessant affirmations that he does not love, trust, or respect her, his genuine feelings for her manifest at his weakest moments.

The plot against Hamlet's person causes the fundamental rift between Ophelia and Hamlet, leading to the dissimulation of his true sentiments. Claudius, Hamlet's hated step-father, devises a plan to do away with him, since he is on the path of exposing him as the killer of Hamlet's father's, enlists Ophelia's Father and brother, Polonius and Laertes. Hamlet writes Ophelia a love letter claiming, doubt truth be a liar but never doubt I love He insinuates that even if everything else in her life is untrue, his love never shall be. He tells her to never suspect the veracity of his emotion, despite what others imply. Her Father and brother then go on to warn her that his love is

fleeting and to ignore his favor, and she obeys and hands over the letter, betraying Hamlet's trust. From this point on, Hamlet's feelings are masked and there is a dispute about whether or not they are honest. One instance, when Hamlet knows Polonius is watching he admits, I did love you, and then goes on to conflict himself and deny he cares for her and essentially shames her. However, Hamlet knows full well that and words spoken to Ophelia end in the ears of Polonius and eventually Claudius. This knowledge that none of his words are between the two, cloaks his amorous feelings in darkness until her death.

Another reason why Hamlet's sincere affection is unforthcoming is his conflicted nature throughout the play. The famous beginning quote of his soliloquy, to be, or not to be; that is the question. Hamlet struggles with deciding between not only life and death but also truth and falsity. So many retain nefarious agendas, deceit reigns heavy in his life and he knows not whom to trust; Ophelia, being one of them. The majority of the play Hamlet is trying to convince every one of his insanity, and Ophelia bears the brunt of the verbal cruelty. When Hamlet berates her, knowing Polonius is lurking she reacts thinking, and I, of ladies most deject and wretched, That sucked the honey of his music vows, Now see that noble and most sovereign reason out of time and harsh. In order to carry out his plan, he indirectly shatters Ophelia's mind and heart. He may have decided he did not love her but when she drowns, he passionately, "I loved Ophelia: forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love make up my sum". He is truly heartbroken by her demise, and at the site of her grave, he agrees to duel with her brother Laertes. Hamlet is constantly at odds with himself and others and is indecisive about much. By the finale, he concludes with certainty that he loved Ophelia.

All of Shakespeare's plays have turbulent romances, and that of Ophelia and Hamlet proves one of the most tempestuous. Throughout a drama filled with duplicity and treachery, it is easy to believe that Hamlet's love for Ophelia could not withstand the history of artifice between the two. Taking into consideration his past of death, despair, and possible madness one must realize the feeble position any human would be in. Yet, there is substantial evidence pointing to the fact that in the face of the malevolence, Hamlet continued to love and care for Ophelia until both of their untimely deaths. A love that transcends death, the afterlife, poison, and familial loyalty.