




To Be 

or

Not To Be,

Grammatically,   
This is not a  
Question.

By Simon and Seegz 

# To Be or Not To Be

GRAMMATICALLY, THIS IS  
NOT A QUESTION

*By Simon and Seegz*

“I’ll do it!” Simon exclaimed.

“Finally! Someone has to go. I don’t see why doing a book report seems like such a punishment.” Mr. C, Simon’s teacher said.

Simon ran up to the rug, in front of the class. “I did my book report on Hamlet, by William Shakespeare...” Simon rattled off a summary, during which many people’s eyelids drooped. No one noticed when Simon finished his story.

“BANANAZ!!” Simon shouted across the room.

“Woah! The unexpected, but reasonably plausible happened! This book report just got interesting!” Nathaniel, a student in Simon’s class exclaimed.

“Actually I was just getting your attention.” Everyone’s eyelids re-drooped. “But,” Simon continued, “I did make my own modern English adaptation of Hamlet and will call on volunteers to act out the different scenes!”

Everybody’s hand shot into the air like a...um... finger that ...um,uh... whatever. They just shot into the air. “Well,” Simon said, “I’ll take Seegz as Horatio and--

“Who’s that?” Seegz asked. Simon sighed and kept going.

“Jeremiah as Barnardo, Dervon as Fransisco, and Grace as Marcellus. Oh, Joseph, you can be the ghost.”

“Yay! I’m dead!” Joseph exclaimed.

The “show” went okay. Dervon could have grinned a little less and Sophie P. was a little crabby. Also, Raia cracked bad puns (Did you know that men’s briefs used to be manufactured in the WEST UNDIES?), but otherwise it went okay.

After the show, Mr. C exclaimed, “Man, this is cool! You should make a movie with a cast from the class!”

Simon replied, “Sure!!”

“Hmmm...” Simon faced a problem. Sophie P. was saying she would “Only be in the show...” (Simon doubted this) if she could be Ophelia, a main character. Not wanting to exclude anyone, Simon decided to give her a different part. Nana was a much better Ophelia, however. “Aha! I’ll tell Nana that she’s Ophelia but not tell Sophie that,” he thought. He went to go tell Nana the news. Sadly, Nana was so excited that she told Sophie P. that she got the part.

“Well, drat,” Simon muttered; Sophie was hunched grumpily in her chair.

But, besides that incident the casting went very nicely. Seegz was Hamlet and Dervon was great for Horatio. After a bit of indecision, Nathaniel was picked to be Claudius. Sophie was a player and a soldier-- the way Simon got this to happen was by telling her that she got to be two parts. Of course, the two parts were very small parts. Here is the final list:

**Hamlet:** Seegz  
**Claudius:** Nathaniel  
**Ophelia:** Nana  
**Laertes:** Ian  
**Polonius:** Torii  
**Gertrude:** Raia  
**Ghost:** Joseph  
**Rosencranz:** Joseph

**Guildenstern:** Yosef  
**Player 1:** Sophie  
**Player 2:** Jeremiah  
**Player 3:** Grace  
**soldier 1:** Jeremiah  
**Soldier 2:** Grace  
**Soldier 3:** Sophie  
**Osiric:** Yosef

To Simon it looked pretty good. But he still had lots of problems: What should his set be? Who would film it? What about costumes? When? Where? All these thoughts raced through his head. *WHAT SHOULD HE DO?*

“Alright, guys. Scenes four, six and eight today.”

“Okay,” Seegz replied. Everyone else assembled.

“Ready? Action!”

“To be or...um...what’s the line?” Seegz mumbled. “To be or not to be, that...” Seegz threw down his script. “Grammatically that’s not even a question! It’s just two options,” he complained.

“C’mon Seegz,” Simon sighed. “Start over.”

This is how most of the rehearsals went. However, one day a friend of Mr. C’s came in. He was a professional actor. Even though they only got to two scenes, the kids learned a ton on speaking loudly, with expression, and really getting into the character, etc. “*Besides*,” Simon thought, “*I can use his techniques on the other scenes.*”

However, this was not quite as easy as Simon had hoped.

“Uh oh, drat,” Ian muttered one day.

“What?” Simon asked the same day.

“I forgot my script. Nope, not here.”

“Here. Borrow mine,” Nana said helpfully. Nana, Simon was figuring out, was a very good problem solver. Not that Ian wasn’t but, well, he was just a bit forgetful. Now, where we? Um... right!

“Okay!” Simon said after scene two and three were done. “Scene eleven!” Scene eleven was everybody’s favorite scene. In scene eleven, everyone dies. As you may guess, dying was a big attraction to Simon’s cast. So everyone went a bit wild. Everyone *except* Yosef. Yosef, who was Osiric, along with Dervon did not die.

“Can I die? Please? PLEASE? *PLEASE?! PLEASE?!?*” Yosef begged.

“No! Nope! You can not!”

“Pwease?” Yosef, the unappeased, and therefore unpleased pleaded, trying to please the mighty scriptholder.

“NO!” Simon was exasperated. He didn’t have infinite rehearsals to get something done!

“So she can help with my costumes for the show!”

Simon’s art teacher was getting a new student teacher who was a costume designer. This was very good for Simon, because up until this point, Simon had not had a plan for costumes.

However, it was tough to find time to talk to her. Then, one day, Simon finally found time before school, but then he realized that, since his costumes were modern and easy to find, some probably had them. He needed data on who did!

“Okay, so do you have the grey shirt or not?” Simon was trying to pry some information out of Sophie P., though it was proving very difficult.

“I do, sort of...,” Sophie started

Simon sighed. “That works!”

“But don’t you think...”

“No! I don’t think! I mean... ah, you know what I mean.”

“I get that you’re mean but don’t you think...”

A few days later, once Simon had gotten all the costumes, he wondered to himself, “What should I do for the set?”

No good ideas came to him that day, nor for that whole week. He was beginning to think that he should just have a black background. But still, how to make it? At least he did make a plan with Hamilton middle schoolers to come and film. This somewhat encouraged Simon.

*“And after all,”* Simon thought, *“I guess we don’t have much of a deadline.”*

One day, at a rehearsal, Raia said, “There once was a magician so bad he made the audience disappear!”

“Raia, can you please stop saying all these bad puns?”

“Umm...”

Simon sighed. “Well, tech rehearsal tomorrow!”

Tomorrow.....

And so, once upon a Tuesday, at 8:31, Simon and the crew came to the cafeteria, where a black background was set up. The filmers were waiting for them.

“What took you so long? We were waiting for you!” (as stated earlier in non-dialogue text), one of the film crew explained and extremely exclaimed.

“Well, um... my, uh, dog ate my schedule,” Simon stammered.

“That’s too bad,” the filmer replied. “Anyway, let’s get started!”

It wasn’t bad, though Simon thought the cast could do better. Sophie P. had a bored expression on stage, and a few notes Simon had given earlier were not followed, though otherwise it went okay.

However, the next day was Even worse? First of all, you’d have to figure out who Even even is, then find out about his or her behavior the preceding day in order to determine whether Even was worse. If you haven’t noticed, this isn’t EVEN relevant to this story, because there is no character named Even! (Gotchya - the editor). When Raia (Gertrude) died she made a strange wonky face. Even worse (oh yeah he was), at the end, Yosef just died for the heck of it. Some people spoke too softly while others spoke almost as if they were yelling. At the end, Simon sighed. “Well, rehearsal tomorrow.”

The next day wasn’t a whole lot better. Nathaniel (Claudius) laughed a lot during his scenes, though that was not part of his character. However, the worst part was the duel. The swords kept on clattering out of their hands and the blades touched their hands a lot, showing that they were fake. Simon went home very exasperated.

Unfortunately, this is how most of their rehearsals went. Every day there would be something wrong, whether with the filming or the staging. From one rehearsal to the next, just as a problem would get corrected, something else would be messed up. Simon realized he had to do something. So he did.

“Okay,” Simon said one day to the cast. “Let’s just go over the staging.” There were many ‘Oh yeah!’s’ and ‘I forgot about that!’s’. Simon hoped they would remember for the final performance. At the end of the discussion, Simon said, “Now, tomorrow’s the final day. Whatever you do there, that will be what’s in the final product. I hope you will all try your best and work for a great finish. A job well done should be your motivation.”

Sophie looked doubtful. "I don't think I'll be very motivated."  
Simon sighed.

"Alright. Today's the day." Simon and his cast left the classroom in a rather jumbled fashion. They walked past a window. "I hope that bird doesn't come in and ruin the show," Simon thought. When the floorboards creaked, Simon thought nervously, "I hope the floor doesn't collapse under our feet while we are filming." This sort of thing happened all the way down the hall. Simon was not able to relax.

"Aren't we supposed to be there at eight-thirty?" Nana pointed out to Simon. "It's only eight."

"Yeah, well... um... I was thinking...that we should...uh... go over some, er, notes first." Simon stammered.

"Good point."

The group continued down the long hall. "What did the actor say to Tiny Tim?" Raia asked, coming behind Simon. "Break a leg!" She laughed. Simon sighed, not wanting to discourage her happy attitude, even though the bad puns were very annoying.

Simon and the crew continued down the long hall. It seemed to last forever (31 minutes). Finally they came to the door. Simon turned to face the group. "I want to say that I hope all the work we put into this really shows. I know you can do a good job. Got it?"

There was a murmured 'yes'. Then, Sophie P. spoke up. "What if the batteries in the camera die?"

"I seriously doubt the film crew would waste their time by not simply getting batteries in the camera."

"I guess," Sophie said doubtfully.

"But what if I have sudden thoughts conflicting the line in the script?" Seegz asked. Simon was ready for this one. He handed him an official looking piece of paper.

#### **RULES OF THE SCRIPT**

**RULE #1) THE SCRIPT IS ALWAYS RIGHT.**

**RULE #2) IN THE EVENT THAT THE SCRIPT IS PERCEIVED TO BE WRONG,  
REFER TO RULE #1.**

"That works," Seegz replied. Simon nodded and turned around.

"Okay, here we go." They walked in the room.

"Where were you? We were waiting for you!" One of the cameramen said once again.

"Um... uh... my, um, cat ate my schedule," Simon replied nervously.

"Do your cat and dog get along well?" the filmer said, completely forgetting about them being late.

"Um...uh... um... let's get started!" It took a while to get the actors organized and even longer with the filmers. Ian was really excited while others, such as Grace, were trembling with fear. One of the cameramen was dropping and fumbling with the batteries.

However the show went perfect. Even Sophie P. spoke with decent expression. All notes were followed the duel was not atrocious. But, at the end of the play, one of the filmers exclaimed, "Aw, who forgot to put the batteries in this thing!?"

***The End***

---

The absolutely irrelevant and unnecessary extra page