



Clint Snyder

Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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THE TAMING OF SUE

SPOOF/FARCE. Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. When her favorite TV show is canceled, a spoiled, rich girl tries to direct a play within a play but faces numerous obstacles including a live studio audience, a love triangle, and a "regular" guy who likes to dress up like a shrew (the rodent type). Then there's a crazy person who thinks she's a princess, a guy who doesn't want to help care for an egg named Herbert, and a girl who likes to eat breakfast burritos. The zaniness never ends in this crazy, madcap play!

Performance Time: Approximately 30 minutes.

THE TAMING OF SHREW

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Petruchio rejects the bridal dinner by Georg Goldberg, 1850.

ABOUT THE STORY

The Taming of the Shrew is one of Shakespeare's earliest comedies and is thought to be written between 1590-1592. The plot focuses on the courtship and marriage of Petruchio to Katherine, a willful, stubborn woman. The play shares many characteristics with Shakespeare's other romantic comedies like slapstick humor, disguises, deception, and a happy ending, but it is unique in that it focuses on what married life is like after the wedding. Marital disputes and the character of the shrew—an ill-tempered, argumentative, and uncooperative wife—were often topics in literature at this time as marriages among the upper class were often arranged, and there were few ways to get out of an unhappy marriage. The play remains popular and has become the source of numerous adaptations. The most famous adaptations include the 1967 play featuring Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton and the musical by Cole Porter, *Kiss Me, Kate*.

CHARACTERS

(2 M, 7 F, extras)

DREW: A “regular” guy who likes to dress up like a shrew; wears a shrew costume; male.

MARY-LOU: Drew’s girlfriend who he met at a convention; wears a shrew costume; female.

SUE: Carries around an egg named Herbert; has a crush on Andrew; female.

MOUSIE: Sue’s friend who isn’t sure if it was the chicken or the egg that came first; female.

ANDREW: Drew’s friend who has no interest in dating Sue or helping her care for her egg; male.

GWEN: Andrew’s girlfriend who likes breakfast burritos; female.

BAGS: A crazy person who wears bags on her feet, licks her arm, and thinks she’s a princess; female.

BROOKE: Rich girl who pretends to be Bags’s prince; female.

ANGELA: Rich girl who pretends to be Bags’s servant; female.

EXTRAS: As TV Studio Audience.

Setting

A mansion.

Set

Interior of a mansion. There is a table and chairs. A prearranged set of bleachers or chairs that can be rolled on or brought on is needed for the studio TV audience. A backdrop depicting the mansion's walls may be used but is optional.

PROPS

Teacup
Crown
Platter with a shoe on it
Baby blanket
Egg with sad face drawn on it
Plate with a breakfast burrito on it
Cone

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**"I'M a SHREW,
and I'M NOT an object
that can be traded around,
talked DOWN to,
SHAMED, MAIMed, BLAMED, or tamed.
YOU CANNOT tame THIS SHREW!"**

—Drew

THE TAMING OF SUE

(AT RISE: The inside of a mansion. Brooke is sitting at a table drinking tea. Angela storms on holding Bags, a crazy person, who is passed out.)

BROOKE: What is that?!

ANGELA: Hmmmm?

BROOKE: What do you mean "hmmm"? What do you think I could possibly be referring to?

ANGELA: Oh, the crazy person I knocked out and dragged into the house?

(Pause.)

BROOKE: Yes.

ANGELA: Ahhh, yes, well, you see, I found this crazy person wandering the streets and knocked her out and then I dragged her into the house.

(Pause.)

BROOKE: I got that far.

ANGELA: Oh, all right.

(Angela continues dragging Bags across the floor.)

BROOKE: *(Shouts.)* Stop! Why?! Why are you dragging a bum into our house?!

ANGELA: I think the real question is...why not? And she has a name, by the way.

BROOKE: Well, soooooorrry!

ANGELA: Her name is Bags. I call her that because she has bags on her feet. *(To Bags.)* Isn't that right?

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(Angela shakes Bags violently.)

BROOKE: Uh, Bags is not moving. You sure she's okay?

ANGELA: Sure. I'm sure. The medication is going to wear off any second now, and I need you to pretend like she is a queen. Here, I bought this crown to put on her. *(Places a crown on top of Bags's head.)*

BROOKE: I am not doing that! Why do you want me to do that?!

ANGELA: Because my favorite T.V. show "Toddler Pageant Princesses" got canceled, so I need something to do with my Tuesday evenings, and from the looks of it, so do you.

BROOKE: Fine, but I get to be royalty, too.

ANGELA: Deal.

BAGS: *(Waking up, shouts.)* Bags! Bags everywhere!

ANGELA: That's all right, Your Majesty. You were just having a bad dream.

BAGS: *(Confused.)* Who are you people?

ANGELA: You don't remember? We're your faithful servants.

BROOKE: *(Offended.)* I'm not a servant! I'm royalty!

ANGELA: Right. Right. Whatever.

BAGS: *(To Brooke.)* Who are you?

BROOKE: I...uh...I don't know who am I. Who am I, Angela?

ANGELA: *(To Bags.)* Princess, you must have bopped your head harder than you thought. *(Indicating Brooke.)* That is your faithful prince...love of your life...apple of your eye, supposing you were looking at an apple anyway.

BROOKE: Prince?

BAGS: Prince!

(Bags jumps up, excited and revitalized.)

BROOKE: *(Aside.)* You're going to pay for that one, Angela.

BAGS: *(To Brooke.)* My prince! Princey! Princey! Princey!

(Bags hugs Brooke, who reluctantly returns the hug.)

BROOKE: (*Indicating Bags.*) Oh, no, it's touching me.

BAGS: You don't smell like dogs at all!

(*Pause.*)

BROOKE: Yeah.

BAGS: Oooooohhh! I feel like I'm dating a celebrity... (*Sniffs Brooke.*) ...a *clean* celebrity. I bet you read books with words in them, too, Mr. Movie Star.

ANGELA: Oh, you lucky, lucky princess.

BAGS: It's just strange. I don't remember being a princess. In fact, the last thing I remember I was eating a shoe.

ANGELA: Ah, yes. That's what you were doing when we found you.

BAGS: And the reason I was eating a shoe is because I had nothing else to eat. (*Shouts.*) Bags! (*Turns around suddenly as if someone says something to her.*)

ANGELA: No, no, no. The reason you were eating the shoe is nothing to be alarmed about. You're just clinically insane, Princess. I want to assure you that you lead a life full of the finest luxuries, but you have, sadly, lost your marbles.

BAGS: Oh! How wonderful! How incredibly wonderful! I love marbles! (*Bags claps and laughs for far too long. Pause.*) Well, now, where is my fine dining...my fancy big-screen television?

BROOKE: (*Attempting to deepen her voice but does so poorly.*) Ah, yes, little lady, we'll get my baby anything she needs.

BAGS: Are you sick? Take your vitamins. You should have the expensive chewy gummy ones as you are a prince, after all. Only the best for you, dear.

BROOKE: (*Further attempts to deepen her voice.*) I'm not sick. I'm just full of love and...testosterone.

(*Angela brings out a platter with a shoe on it.*)

ANGELA: (*To Bags.*) Your fine food, Princess.

BAGS: But...that's just a shoe. I was eating a shoe before when I thought I was crazy, but only crazy people don't think they're crazy, and I still have my marbles! I have all of the marbles! *(Pause. Shouts.)* Bags!

BROOKE: *(Deep voice.)* There, there, cupcake. Ho, ho, ho.

BAGS: *(Suddenly excited.)* Are you Santa Claus?

ANGELA: *(To Brooke.)* Just get out of here, would you? You're ruining everything. *(Brooke exits. To Bags.)* Ah, yes, but we were only getting you the best shoe as you requested, of course. It's all the craze among royalty these days.

BAGS: *(Nibbling the shoe. The idea of being royalty starts to go to her head.)* Ahhh, yes...it has a rubbery flavor with a tinge of sidewalk. 'Tis a good shoe, but I grow weary of it. My sensitive royal stomach is full. I now require my massive plasma flat-screen television set.

ANGELA: But...Your Majesty... *(Mousie and Sue enter.)* Ahhhh, you don't want a plasma television.

BAGS: I don't?

ANGELA: Oh, no. That would be something a poor commoner would want. A classy princess such as yourself indulges in live entertainment.

BAGS: *(Slowly, with reverence.)* Live entertainment.

ANGELA: The the-a-ter. With a live audience! *(To TV Studio Audience Members.)* C'mon in, guys!

(TV Studio Audience Members enter and take a seat on the pre-arranged bleachers or chairs.)

BROOKE: How did you make that happen so fast?

ANGELA: You'd be surprised at what you can do with money.

(Audience Members react with laughter. Note: Throughout the remainder of the show they react to the action and serve as a typical laugh track for a show that films with a live studio audience.)

BAGS: The the-a-ter. Hmm...I will take you up on your...the...a-ter.

ANGELA: All right, just, uh, give me a minute to get everything all set up.

BAGS: All right, but hurry, or I shall require another one of your finest shoes to tide me over.

ANGELA: Right.

MOUSIE: Angela, you really have to stop letting strangers into our house.

(Audience Members react with an "Uh-oh!")

SUE: *(To Angela.)* Yeah, last time, one of them slept in my bed and then I got fleas, but I didn't know it was from a person. I thought it was Peaches, my cat, so we got into a heated argument and she ran away and never came back.

MOUSIE: I just don't think you had a very healthy relationship. She peed on your leg constantly.

SUE: *(Shouts.)* You take that back! Peaches and I had mutual respect for one another! She would give me little presents constantly.

MOUSIE: What presents?

SUE: She used to cough up hair in my lap. She gave me everything she had to give!

BAGS: I had a cat once, but then I realized it was actually a large rat and I set the poor, confused thing free.

MOUSIE: You had a pet rat and you set it free? How sweet.

BAGS: You didn't let me finish. I set it free into a glue trap, where it slowly died. Poor thing. Well, I guess that's what happens when you pretend to be a cat. Stupid thing.

MOUSIE: That's...unsettling.

SUE: *(To Angela.)* Which brings me back to my point: Get that stranger out of here!

BAGS: Maybe it's just me, but the live entertainment seems very mouthy.

ANGELA: *(To others, stage whisper. Indicating Bags.)* She's not a stranger, guys, remember? She's the princess.

SUE: Oh, and I'm the queen of merry old England. Pour me a cup of tea and polish my crown.

(Pause.)

MOUSIE: *(Surprised.)* Really? I didn't know that. And I've known you for a while—

SUE: You are so gullible sometimes.

MOUSIE: I do not have gills!

SUE: That's not what that means!

MOUSIE: Just listen to me breathe. *(Breathes loudly for several seconds.)* Okay, I better stop before I pass out.

ANGELA: *(Shouts.)* Hey, ladies! It just so happens that I am extremely bored, so I would appreciate it if you just played along and pretended this bum was a princess and we are all live entertainers.

SUE: Yeah, just one problem with that...you just blabbed your secret right in front of Princess Nutty over there.

BAGS: *(Shouts.)* Bags!

ANGELA: She's kind of insane. I think we're going to be all right.

(Mousie stares as Bags "licks" Angela's arms. Pause.)

MOUSIE: I'm not so sure.

ANGELA: *(To Bags.)* Just one moment, Princess. The live entertainment is just getting started.

BAGS: Don't change the channel. I like this show, although the characters could definitely use some wardrobe help.

SUE: *(Insulted.)* Hey, dingbat! You're one to talk!

ANGELA: *(To Sue, aside.)* Just play along, and I'll give you whatever you want.

(Pause.)

SUE: Whatever I want?

ANGELA: Whatever you want. Now, what were you about to do right before you came here?

MOUSIE: We were going to invite a boy over.

SUE: Andrew.

MOUSIE: Andrew.

BAGS: Andy!

(Mousie and Sue glare at Bags.)

ANGELA: Great! Romantic triangles make for great entertainment. When is he coming over?

(Andrew and Gwen enter. Drew enters dressed as a shrew.)

SUE: Right now.

MOUSIE: That was fast.

ANGELA: And convenient. *(To Andrew, Drew, and Gwen.)*

Welcome to our home!

ANDREW: Thanks.

DREW: I don't have time for this.

GWEN: This place smells like dirty rats.

BAGS: That would be me, but as I already explained, the situation is under control thanks to a little glue and a lot of patience.

SUE: Who is she?

GWEN: Who is she?

BAGS: Ohhh! A mystery, perhaps?!

DREW: Ladies, ladies, calm down now. There is plenty of the Drewster to go around.

SUE: Eeeew, no one is fighting over you.

GWEN: *(To Drew.)* Yeah, you're gross.

SUE: *(To Drew.)* And why are you dressed like a rat?

MOUSIE: *(To Drew.)* That's interesting. You're dressed like a rat, and my name is Mousie! It's like we were siblings in another life or something.

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BAGS: Oooohhh! A family drama!

DREW: (*Insulted.*) I'm not dressed like a rat! I'm dressed like
a *shrew*.

MOUSIE: Oh! You mean like a mouse?

DREW: (*Insulted.*) No! Not like a mouse...like a shrew.

[END OF FREEVIEW]