

TAMING OF THE SHREWD

(Comedy)

by
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AINSLEY/DAUGHTER	COLLEGE GRADUATE	19	FEMALE
MOTHER/MARISOL	ARTIST PAINTER/POET	49	FEMALE GAY
GRANDMA /BEATRICE	CRICKET CHAMPION	71	FEMALE

ACT ONE. TAMING OF THE SHREWD

AT RISE:

Mid 1920's, three generations of women meet in a community dance hall turned polling headquarters for a small town in Maine. Light Red Walls w/white framed tall windows surround a sturdy oak dance floor which resembles an unfinished impressionist painting from all the scuff marks.

DAUGHTER

My mother a Gangster!?!

MOTHER

This is how you talk to me on such a special day!?!

DAUGHTER

I'm embarrassed!

MOTHER

Then go stand in line with someone else.

DAUGHTER

You are my ride back, so eventually I will have to return to you.

MOTHER

The umbilical chord was cut.

DAUGHTER

And yet there are still strings attached.

MOTHER

Teenage tentacles?

DAUGHTER

This is the guidance you have to offer?

MOTHER

No wonder you are considering becoming a nun.

(Grandmother has entered the voting hall. She is flaunting hellos through the crowd hall).

DAUGHTER

Is that Grandma? I haven't seen her in so long.

MOTHER

She said she wasn't coming because she feared a riot would break out!

DAUGHTER

What a riot!

MOTHER

You mustn't underestimate your Grandmother, Queen Beatrice, she could easily be the start of one. What is she wearing! Dad gave her that hat a century ago.

DAUGHTER

She might smell like moth balls but she looks great!

(Mother winces at daughter).

GRANDMOTHER

You two fighting again?

DAUGHTER

How did...

MOTHER

Not at all, just surprised to see you.

GRANDMOTHER

Come now, they are asking us to move to this line.

(Grandma is in the lead, daughter and mother follow. Music fills the hall while dozens of women shift about the room. Some even add in a dance step or twirl into another line.)

Probably a special line for us.

MOTHER

(Under her breath)

Always has special connections she says, more like concoctions.

DAUGHTER

She stands out just like you.

MOTHER

I'm wearing this suit to express myself with gusto if you don't mind.

DAUGHTER

It's a man's suit! You could of modeled after Bonnie Parker at least!

(The line is formed and Grandma stops and turns around towards her daughter and granddaughter).

GRANDMOTHER

Don't blame your mother darling, it's my fault she's this way.

MOTHER

You always make it about you. Taking all the credit.

DAUGHTER

They are not separating us by race?

MOTHER

We are at the races my darling!

DAUGHTER

But the finish line is all the same!

GRANDMOTHER

Oh, you two poetesses -They probably forgot their passports. Our line is here, American citizens.

MOTHER

I smell vitriol.

GRANDMOTHER

Your mother has an acute sense of smell, but sometimes she sniffs out danger when there is none.

MOTHER

Wasn't you just this morning that feared a riot would break out today?

DAUGHTER

I don't want to be treated better than another.

MOTHER

Don't worry you won't, you are a woman.

DAUGHTER

Oh God.

GRANDMOTHER

Don't start swearing granddaughter. It's unbecoming.

DAUGHTER

Who's swearing!

MOTHER

No worries Beatrice, she's practically a Nun.

DAUGHTER

Oh my God!

GRANDMOTHER

There you go again!

DAUGHTER

Oh G... this is the example you set for a young and supple mind? I can see pieces of the my life's puzzle...

MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER

Good darling!

DAUGHTER

If I'm a Nun, Mama is Capone, what does that make you Grandma?

(Grandma darts off to talk to a friend in line
and avoids the question).

MOTHER

She is a denialist! She's talking to Gladys. She better hurry her flotation ass back in line because I will not go to the end of the line for her.

DAUGHTER

Mother, who is Gladys? Flotation ass?

MOTHER

Long story about a river trip. Gladys is a Mafia wife. Her husband they call Mr. Scrape.

DAUGHTER

Oh God!

MOTHER

And you deny that you want to be a NUN!?All you do is talk about God!

DAUGHTER

God, keep me from choking my Mother.

MOTHER

See!

(Grandma returns from speaking w/Gladys
and cuts off her Granddaughter in mid-
sentence).

DAUGHTER

Mr. Scra...

GRANDMOTHER

Oh, I missed Gladys so much. She is very upset though, she hasn't seen or heard from her husband in 3 weeks. Well, at least we three need not worry, we are all single!

DAUGHTER & MOTHER

Not by choice!

GRANDMOTHER

With that Gangster uniform and that scarf that looks like a nun's...

MOTHER

Habit, Yes Darling daughter...why are you wearing that scarf?

DAUGHTER

I got a bad hair dye job today from Elise and had no time to fix it since I was coming here.

MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER

That stupid bitch! She doesn't know how to deal with our kind of hair!

(In astonishment, the daughter's mouth
hangs open and then sees that a group of
women are gossiping about them).

GRANDMOTHER

I see them Granddaughter. Don't mind them, gossip is as good as a rash.

DAUGHTER

(Sarcastically)

Must be all the conviviality we are oozing from our own little corner.

GRANDMOTHER

They'll be scratching themselves soon enough. That's what my dear mother used to tell me.

DAUGHTER

You mean Great Grandma Carola?

GRANDMOTHER

Yes, my sweet. I wish she was here.

MOTHER

You never liked her.

GRANDMOTHER

Yes I did! I loved my mother.

MOTHER

You said our family tree resembles Medusa!

GRANDMOTHER

Well, in jest. Did you know that Medusa started off as a rape victim and then became a monster because of it.

MOTHER

I didn't know that.

(A long pause. Mother looks at daughter and back to Grandmother.)

DAUGHTER

Can we celebrate this amazing miracle for women today? We have come so far even with so many deep rooted obstacles.

MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER

YES!

GRANDMOTHER

Smart like her Grandmama!

MOTHER

Always about...

GRANDMOTHER

(Interrupts)

And see your Mama is right to wear that suit. Women practically have to be men to be treated equally.

MOTHER

I never really liked men.

DAUGHTER

Daddy?

GRANDMOTHER

Don't answer that daughter.

MOTHER

Don't tell me what to do!

GRANDMOTHER

You never listened well.

MOTHER

As a matter of fact I got tired of hearing NO! I had a corset of 'NO' wrapped around me like a straight jacket.

DAUGHTER

GOD! If you two kiss and make-up, I promise I will not become a NUN.

MOTHER

First of all your Grandmother doesn't like to be touched. Secondly, she never considered me equal to her. I was born solely to serve her agenda. Women are just the foot soldiers in the great scheme of things.

GRANDMOTHER

(Defensively)

Is that why you are hiding under that uniform?

(Mother and Grandmother are fuming).

MOTHER

It's a genuine Stillson!

DAUGHTER

God!

MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER

Shush!

DAUGHTER

Oh my GOD! I will not shush! I will speak!

(Long Pause: Grandmother and Mother stare at the daughter and wait in anticipation of a big speech).

Why can't we love and accept each other just as we are, equally?!

(Grandma & Mother stare at each other and then back at daughter and then begin arguing again. They are quickly escorted to take their fight outside by a woman. Daughter (Ainsley) tries to gather her senses and notices the "gossip group" staring. As she is just about to make her disdain known, the music stops and an announcement is made with a megaphone.)

"This polling facility is shutting down due to a bomb threat! Everyone evacuate immediately! Everyone evacuate immediately."

DAUGHTER

(fearfully)

What in God's name...

(Daughter runs out and finds Grandma and Mother arguing!)

MAAAAAMMMMAAA! GRAAANDMAAAAA! BOMB THREAT!!!!

((Nonchalantly, they take notice of daughter yelling and then go back to arguing again).

GRANDMOTHER

It's your ex-husband's doing, trying to stop you from voting!

MOTHER

It's Gladys's Mafia husband shutting us down by blowing us up!

GRANDMOTHER

Unlikely, because he's dead!

MOTHER

Good!

DAUGHTER

Oh my God! Hurry! Move!

They all three begin to hurry down the road in a mad rush to their car!

GRANDMOTHER

I wanted to be an equal citizen and not a second citizen. Damn my heel broke!

MOTHER

George bought you another pair of cheap shoes! You have to keep moving Beatrice! Or we might be a zero citizen! We may have to drive 100 miles for the next voting place.

GRANDMOTHER

I can't vote today with my shoe broken.

MOTHER

You write with your feet? What does a shoe have to do with voting?

GRANDMOTHER

What does a suit have to do with voting?

DAUGHTER

We have a flat tire!

GRANDMOTHER

I'll go find a man! We are going to blow up!

MOTHER

That's what happens after you've been with one.

DAUGHTER

I thought you loved your pregnancy with me?!

MOTHER

I did! Best thing I ever did!

(Grandma returns disheveled).

GRANDMOTHER

I cannot find a man!!!!

MOTHER

Never good to admit even at your age.

DAUGHTER

HEY! We are going to change this tire as a team! Pass the, the, the...

MOTHER

(Long Pause) Lug Wrench? Okay, on one condition...

DAUGHTER

(sarcastically)

Of course Mama, what?!

MOTHER

That you will never become a Nun.

GRANDMOTHER

We may need her to become a Nun after this ordeal!

MOTHER

Always about what you need...

DAUGHTER

(Interrupts)

I was never going to become a NUN!

MOTHER

That's my girl!

DAUGHTER

I never wanted to fall-in-love again after Myles, that's all...and I...

MOTHER

Ah, that's my girl too...the deeply romantic...oh Yes, Myles.

(Grandma Interrupts)

GRANDMOTHER

You two too much mushy...

MOTHER

Your Grandmother is a sociopath! No feelings! Zilch!

DAUGHTER

(Yelling)

Who were you two going to vote for today for God sakes!?!

MOTHER & GRANDMOTHER

(Yelling)

Isn't that obvious!

DAUGHTER

(Yelling)

NO! Not any more!

ANNOUNCEMENT: "The Bomb Threat is over, The Bomb threat is over. Device has been identified, device has been identified as unthreatening."

(Daughter kicks the tire and a saxophone solo starts to distill the moment.)

To hell with this! Ouch! Fuck!

(Daughter begins to walk quickly towards the Speakeasy.)

MOTHER

That's my girl!

GRANDMOTHER

That's your my girl uh? Swearing and walking away from a job undone!

MOTHER

I'm going to join my daughter for a drink.

GRANDMOTHER

She's not old enough!

MOTHER

Apparently, she knows something we don't.

Mother walks towards Speakeasy to join Daughter.

GRANDMOTHER

(Yelling)

I thought we were going to change the tire! We should not change the tire actually, because it is a man's job...Apparently, so is this damn bomb threat. What a coward! Can't even pull off a proper bomb threat!

(Grandma limps towards the Speakeasy
holding her high-heel in one hand).

I have connections in that SPEAKEASY!

THE END