

Excerpt from...
"THE REAL PROBLEM"
by Bruce Kane

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WARNING No one shall make any changes to this play for the purpose of production. Publication of this plays does not imply its availability for production.

SETTING: The Cauldron – An Elizabethan era pub

CHARACTERS:

Desdemona: Blonde, beautiful, sweet, trusting, married to Othello

Juliet: Young, pretty, impatient – dating Romeo

Katherine: Brunette, voluptuous, ill tempered – engaged to Petruchio

Anne Boleyn: Late wife of Henry VIII. Actually just the head of Anne Boleyn.

Hecate: Waitress at The Cauldron. One of the witches from MacBeth

(Lights up on Juliet pacing impatiently while Desdemona sits at a table on which sits the head of Anne Boleyn.)

JULIET: *(quite Shakespearean)* Romeo... Romeo... Wherefore art thou Romeo?

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ANNE: (*annoyed*) Is she gonna do that all day?

DES: Leave her alone... She's in love.

ANNE: Love... Give me a break. (*to Juliet*) How long have you and this..?

JULIET: Romeo...

ANNE: Romeo... been getting it on?

JULIET: We're not getting it on.

ANNE: Then what's the point?

DES: They just met. A relationship takes time to grow... to mature.

JULIET: The real problem is...

ANNE: I knew it... Now we're getting down to the nitty gritty. What's her name?

JULIET: What's whose name?

ANNE: The real problem. What's her name?

JULIET: There's nobody else.

ANNE: There's always somebody else. Until my recent surgical procedure the real problem was usually me. I'm happy to say.

JULIET: The real problem is that he's a Montague.

ANNE: Oh, crap.

JULIET: Exactly.

DES: So, he's a Montague?

JULIET: Our families hate each other.

DES: Tell me about it.

JULIET: Your families don't get along, either?

DES: His side is fine... It's mine... You know... The whole racial thing.

JULIET: It's terrible. We're always having to sneak around so no one will see us.

ANNE: I know... Isn't that hot?

DES: Oh please... Look what sneaking around got you. *(to Juliet)* Relax... He'll be here.

ANNE: Yeah, when he wants something.

(The front door slams open with a bang. Katherine storms in.)

KATHERINE: I..! Hate..! Men..!

ANNE: Look who's here. The Duchess of "Shrews-bury".

KATHERINE: Men..! Are..! Pigs..!!!

DES: Oh, you don't mean that, Katherine.

KATHERINE: All..! Men..! Are..! Pigs!!!

ANNE: Alright... What did Petruchio do this time?

KATHERINE: He's a man. Isn't that enough?

DES: You say that about every guy you date.

KATHERINE: That's because every guy I date... is a pig!!!

DES: What about Lorenzo? You two were pretty hot and heavy there for a while.

KATHERINE: Until he turned into a... Pig. A whiny, sniveling, momma's boy... Pig!

DES: Antonio wasn't a momma's boy.

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KATHERINE: No Antonio was a preening, self absorbed, narcissistic... Pig!

DES: Okay. Marcello wasn't sniveling, he wasn't self absorbed and he certainly wasn't a momma's boy.

KATHERINE: No, he wasn't any of those things. But he was married... The Pig!!!

ANNE: I didn't know that.

KATHERINE: Neither did I.

ANNE: Face it, Katie. The only reason you fight with all these guys is for the make-up sex afterwards. Not that I blame you.

(Hecate enters carrying a flagon which she places on the table holding Anne's head.)

ANNE: *(to Hecate)* Excuse me.

HECATE: Yes?

ANNE: A straw would be nice.

HECATE: I'll be right back. A flagon of sow's blood, Miss Katherine?

KATHERINE: A double espresso.

HECATE: Coming up.

DES: Maybe you should consider cutting back on the caffeine, Katherine

JULIET: If he doesn't show up soon, I swear I'll never talk to him again.

KATHERINE: What's her problem?

DES: Her young man didn't show up.

KATHERINE: *(to Juliet)* Count your blessings.

ANNE: That's what I tried to tell her.

KATHERINE: *(to Anne)* A girl after my own heart. High five. *(realizes)* Oh... Sorry.

JULIET: What am I going to do?

KATHERINE: For one thing, you're gonna stop mooning around over this... what's his name?

JULIET: Romeo.

KATHERINE: *(mockingly)* Romeo? You're kidding.

JULIET: What's in a name? A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

KATHERINE: Who told you that?

JULIET: He did.

ANNE: Before or after he put his hand down your dress?

DES: Behave yourself.

KATHERINE: You want this Romeo of yours to take you seriously?

JULIET: Yes... With all my heart.

KATHERINE: Then, tell him to take a hike.

JULIET: Excuse me.

KATHERINE: Tell him to get lost... Tell him to take long walk off a short pier.

JULIET: That doesn't make any sense.

DES: Don't listen to her.

ANNE: Listen to her.

KATHERINE: Men only want one thing. And as soon as they get it, they want it from someone else.

ANNE: Amen, sister.

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KATHERINE: As an example of what I'm talking about.... Take Petruchio... Please.

DES: How can you talk like that about the man you're going to marry?

KATHERINE: Who said I was going to marry him?

DES: But your father has announced the date of your forthcoming marriage.

KATHERINE: My father just wants me out of the house. I could be marrying a goat for all he cares.

DES: But once a marriage has been announced...

KATHERINE: My father said I was going to marry Petruchio. I didn't say I was going to marry him.

JULIET: I'm confused.

KATHERINE: Don't be, that's the man's job. It's your job to keep him that way.

ANNE: Where were you when I was tall?

KATHERINE: Remember, it's not the destination that counts. It's the journey. Men love journeys. All you have to do is keep moving the goalposts.

(The play continues...)

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