

# PRETTY SHREWD

Adapted from Shakespeare's  
*The Taming of the Shrew*

by Clive Duncan

 vet\_schooltours

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## Author's Note

*Pretty Shrewd* is based on William Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (an early comedy written around 1592). The main storyline, which I've used, is that of Petruchio (Pete) who sets out to *tame* Katherine (Kate) who is a *shrew* (dictionary definition: *a bad tempered or aggressively assertive woman*). Like all "romantic comedies", they start out disliking each other but end up falling in love. In *Pretty Shrewd* I have reversed the roles of Kate and Pete. Whilst *The Taming of the Shrew* is still an amusing play, the idea of a man *taming* a woman makes for uncomfortable watching in the present day (*taming* is what we do to animals and often involves cruelty), but a woman challenging a man, especially one with fixed male values like Pete, opens up possibilities. I have made Pete a stereotypical male and it is important to say that not all men think in the same way that he does, but the aim is that in challenging these entrenched values, you may think about your own views of what it is to be male or female.

Why is this important? In the liberal democratic society that is Western Europe, there is still inequality between men and women. There is a recognised gender pay gap – in many professions women earn less than men for doing the same job. Women are under-represented in board rooms, politics and science, whilst music, sport and the arts are dominated by men. Women are still clearly 2<sup>nd</sup> class and change is slow. The rise of the #metoo movement at the start of the decade grew out of the abuse women were subjected to in Hollywood and beyond, and whilst it gives a welcome platform for women to call out sexual abuse in the workplace, it doesn't stop it from continuing. In the UK I've noticed, over the past few years, the word *misogynist* (dictionary definition: *a person who dislikes, despises or is strongly prejudiced against women*) come into regular use. It's not a new word, but its frequent use is. Behaviour such as wolf-whistling, criticising a female's appearance before performance, low expectations of females in a prominent position, expecting people to conform to gender-typical roles (i.e. *women do the housework*) can all be called misogynistic. Naming such behaviour this way is good because, apart from calling it out, it allows for reflection on the part of the offender and, hopefully, it leads to education. Attitudes towards gender are deep-rooted and introduced to us the moment we leave our mothers' wombs and pop into a pink, blue or gender-neutral coloured baby-grow. Our views are formed very early on by the environment around us which we, when we are older, either a) accept after consideration and live comfortably in our skins, b) reject and find values which suit us better, or c) accept without consideration, and struggle to justify those views. This last is Pete; his values are not his own and he can only feel "right" if they are shared by others, therefore he'll impose them on others. Luckily for Pete, he is challenged and made to think about what he really values and so, is able to change his position. Which means

we can have the happy ending a *romcom* demands. But when attitudes go unchallenged, they become normalised and injustices are allowed to continue.

A few years ago, I spent a happy summer face-painting in an English country park. This isn't a scientific study but most females between the age of 4 and 12 chose to be butterflies, unicorns, pink rabbits, pussycats or have flowers painted on them. Males of the same age group chose lions, tigers, wolves, snakes and T-Rexes. This is good, if this is what the children wanted to be; they were expressing inner feelings in an outwardly colourful way. What concerned me was the girls who asked to be tigers, cheetahs and wolves were persuaded to be butterflies or fairies by their guardians. The boys who wanted butterflies or flowers were told by their guardians that those were for girls and they should choose wolves or snakes instead. I wondered what made their guardians so fearful – it was only face-paint, after all, and easily washed off. But strong messages, which would last longer than the face-paint, were being sent to these children: girls aren't tigers, boys aren't butterflies. A woman asked me, "Are you the face-painter?" I replied that I was. "But you're a man!" she cried. "Face-painters are women!" I told her that my grizzled appearance was just an example of my brilliant face-painting skills and that really, underneath it all, I was a black and white penguin. She wasn't convinced, but she did allow me to face-paint her daughter – as a pink and purple butterfly. If gender politics is present in something as innocent as face-painting, is it any wonder that progress is so very slow in achieving male/female equality?

So, choose a face-paint. What would you like to be? A wolf? Pink rabbit? Tiger? Is that who you think you are? Or, what you'd like to be? Or - what others think you should be.....?

*Clive Duncan*

## **Characters in the play:**

**Kate**

**Bianca** - Kate's best friend and in love with Luke

**Pete** - Bianca's brother

**Luke** - Pete's best friend and in love with Bianca

**Worksheet available online**  
**[www.schooltours.at](http://www.schooltours.at)**

# Pretty Shrewd<sup>1</sup>

by Clive Duncan

## Scene 1 - Pete's Café

*At the back of the acting area is a small counter<sup>2</sup> with cups and plates. In front of the counter is a café table with chairs. A tall stool<sup>3</sup> is next to the counter. There are chalk boards behind the counter with "Today's Specials" written on them. To one side is a coat stand. At the back is a large poster reading – One night only! Pete and Luke - stunning singing duo at Battersea<sup>4</sup> Folk Club.*

*Bianca is behind the counter drying cups. Pete, with his guitar, and Luke sit at the table, they sing "The House of the Rising Sun". During the song Kate comes into the café and sits on the stool at the counter. Bianca serves her with a coffee.*

*Pete stops singing before the end of the song.*

PETE: Too slow! Pick it<sup>5</sup> up – (he clicks his fingers to the beat)...

LUKE: Ok, ok...

PETE: "Mother, tell your children, not to do what I have done..."

LUKE: I was singing that.

PETE: No, you were singing (very slowly) –*Mo-ther -tell-your-children-not-to-do-as-I-have-done*

BIANCA: Chill out<sup>6</sup>, Pete – it's just a song.

PETE: Er, no! – This is the semi-final of the Folk Fest Competition.

LUKE: So, chill out, it's just a competition.

PETE: With a recording contract for the winners, plus £10,000. And a lot of free advertising. This is the rest of our lives and you're telling me to chill out...

LUKE: I was joking. Bianca said – chill out it's only a song, so I said...

PETE: Luke – when you have to explain a joke, it's not that funny.

KATE: You were playing a little fast, Pete.

*There is a moment as Pete and Luke register<sup>7</sup> what Kate has said.*

PETE: I'm sorry?

*Luke motions<sup>8</sup> to Kate to stay out of it...*

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<sup>1</sup> fairly clever

<sup>2</sup> a table or area used for serving food/drink

<sup>3</sup> backless chair

<sup>4</sup> area in South London

<sup>5</sup> i.e. the rhythm

<sup>6</sup> cool down

<sup>7</sup> realize, understand

<sup>8</sup> gestures

KATE: It's a soulful lament, full of regret. The way you were playing it sounds as if he's angry with his mother.

PETE: Is this a social visit, Kate, or will you be paying for that coffee?

BIANCA: Pete!

KATE: Only trying to help.

PETE: Do I look like<sup>9</sup> I need help?

KATE/LUKE/BIANCA: Yes.

PETE: What I need is people to keep this (*points to his nose*) out of<sup>10</sup> my business, and this (*points to his mouth*) shut – especially Miss Smartarse<sup>11</sup>, there (*points to Kate*).

BIANCA: Don't be so rude<sup>12</sup>!

PETE: Is she a paying customer?

*Kate points to the card reader, which Bianca holds up and Kate taps her mobile phone it...*

KATE: I am now.

PETE: (*pretending to be*<sup>13</sup> *friendly*) I'm sorry but the café is now closed. (*He pours her coffee into a paper cup*). Perhaps you'd like this as a takeaway.

BIANCA: Come on through, Kate. We'll go upstairs to my room.

*Kate goes behind the bar.*

PETE: Hey! You're supposed to be minding<sup>14</sup> the café.

BIANCA: You just closed it. See you later.

*Bianca and Kate go.*

LUKE: Why do you give Kate a hard time?

PETE: Kate is a friend of my sister's – she's no friend of mine.

LUKE: Yeah, but you've got to admit – she's a bit of all right<sup>15</sup>...

PETE: A bit of all right?

LUKE: You know – good looking, clever, funny...

PETE: And doesn't she know it? I wish Bianca wouldn't hang around with her – she's a bad influence.

LUKE: If you had your way, you'd lock Bianca in a cupboard.

PETE: I'm her brother – it's my job to protect her.

LUKE: She's young, she needs a bit of space<sup>16</sup>.

PETE: She's seventeen, she's studying for her exams – what space does she need?

LUKE: What does any seventeen-year-old need – fun, friends ...boyfriends...

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<sup>9</sup> Does it seem that

<sup>10</sup> idiom – not to interfere in

<sup>11</sup> 'clever pants'

<sup>12</sup> cheeky, impertinent

<sup>13</sup> acting as if he is

<sup>14</sup> taking care of, looking after

<sup>15</sup> (colloq. for) attractive, sexy

<sup>16</sup> freedom

PETE: Over my dead body<sup>17</sup>! Whilst she lives under my roof there will be no boys.

LUKE: So it's good that she spends time with Kate – it keeps her occupied.

PETE: Can we rehearse<sup>18</sup>, please? The next stage of the competition is tonight and it's important...

LUKE: Recording contract, £10,000, and a lot of free advertising – I know.

PETE: It's more than that; do you think I want to run a café for the rest of my life?

LUKE: I thought you liked running the café...

PETE: Grumpy<sup>19</sup> customers, working all hours, doing the books<sup>20</sup> when we're closed, the cleaning, preparing food for the next day – and then there's the fridge...

LUKE: The fridge?

PETE: Always breaking down.

LUKE: Get a new one.

PETE: Money...

LUKE: So that's why you want to win the competition – ten thousand pounds - get a new fridge.

PETE: No! I want the recording contract. Wouldn't it be great if we could earn a living singing and playing? Making albums, playing concerts, playing on TV shows. That's why we've got to win tonight, so we can get to the final, and then – who knows...

LUKE: How long have we been playing together?

PETE: Four years.

LUKE: In all that time, have I ever let you down?

PETE: Er...

LUKE: ...often?

PETE: How many times is often?

LUKE: What I mean is – you can trust me.

PETE: (*Uncertain*) Yeah – I know.

LUKE: So, let's rehearse! You think it should be faster? Count me in...

PETE: 1 – 2 – 3 – 4...

*Bianca runs in.*

BIANCA: Pete! The refrigerator! All the ice cream is melting!

PETE: We have got to win that competition!

*Pete hurries off<sup>21</sup>. Bianca waits till he's gone and then rushes to Luke. They kiss.*

BIANCA: I've missed you.

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<sup>17</sup> Not if I can stop it

<sup>18</sup> practise

<sup>19</sup> annoyed, in a bad mood, difficult

<sup>20</sup> preparing the accounts

<sup>21</sup> rushes away

LUKE: I've missed you, too. (*Gently putting her down*) But we should be a little bit careful.

BIANCA: You don't love me anymore!

LUKE: Of course I do! It's just that Pete is in the other room.

*Bianca throws her arms around Luke.*

BIANCA: We should tell him.

*Luke breaks away.*

LUKE: You're mad!

BIANCA: You *don't* love me.

LUKE: You know what Pete's like.

BIANCA: His sister, his best friend – together. What could make him happier?

LUKE: A new fridge! Listen, if you'd just had the conversation I've had, you'd understand. "No boyfriends for Bianca whilst she's living under my roof".

BIANCA: This is 2026!

LUKE: Not in Pete's Café - we're back in the 'sixties' - the fifteen sixties!

BIANCA: I don't like being secretive<sup>22</sup> about it, sneaking off<sup>23</sup> to a pub or the cinema so we can be together. I want to be open – and if Pete doesn't like it... well, what can he do?

*Luke hugs her from behind.*

LUKE: Ok, we'll tell him. But not today. We'll tell him once this singing competition is over – win or lose.

*Pete returns, screwdriver in hand...*

PETE: The fuse<sup>24</sup> is blown...

*Luke picks Bianca up and squeezes her.*

LUKE: Heimlich manoeuvre<sup>25</sup>!

*Bianca plays along and starts to cough. Luke puts her down and slaps her on the back.*

BIANCA: Something stuck. A sweet. Went down the wrong way!

PETE: Be careful – one disaster a day is enough for me. We've got some fuses, somewhere.

*Pete puts the screwdriver on the countertop and disappears beneath it – Bianca takes the opportunity to kiss Luke. He tries to fight her off. Pete jumps up again...*

PETE: Got one! Er...

BIANCA: Thanks so much – you saved my life.

LUKE: Ha! It was nothing – I'd have done the same for... for Pete!

PETE: Do you know anything about fuses? This is the third one I've changed this week.

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<sup>22</sup> private, hidden

<sup>23</sup> going quietly and secretly

<sup>24</sup> Sicherung

<sup>25</sup> a first-aid procedure for someone who is choking on something s/he has eaten. It involves grabbing the person from behind and putting sudden strong pressure on their stomach.

*Bianca is blowing kisses to Luke from behind Pete's back.*

LUKE: It's for safety, when the fuse blows, the kisses are too strong...

PETE: Kisses?

LUKE: Current! Electrical current<sup>26</sup> – the flow is too great, 'cos something in the fridge isn't right, so it... stop it! – Stops it... from working by blowing the fuse.

PETE: You don't know anything about fuses.

LUKE: Not much, no.

*Pete sees Bianca.*

PETE: What are you doing?

*She changes the action to fanning<sup>27</sup> herself.*

BIANCA: Whew! Hot – all that coughing.

PETE: I hope this lasts longer than the last fuse did.

*Pete goes. Bianca and Luke collapse in each other's arms with laughter.*

BIANCA: Heimlich? Quick thinking.

LUKE: Have you got a death wish? If he catches us...

*Pete is back.*

PETE: Forgot the screwdriver...

*Bianca pushes Luke into a waltz.*

BIANCA: And right together, left together, right together...

PETE: What are you doing?

BIANCA: The waltz!

LUKE: The tango!

PETE: I mean why are you fooling about? There's a big puddle<sup>28</sup> under the fridge, Bianca – get a mop<sup>29</sup> and bucket. Luke – you could help too...

BIANCA: On my way!

LUKE: I'll tune the guitar...

*Pete picks up the screwdriver and goes.*

BIANCA: This is why we have to tell him.

LUKE: After the competition.

*They kiss again. This kiss grows. Pete returns. He stops and watches them. After a moment...*

PETE: You must think I am so stupid.

*Bianca and Luke spring apart.*

BIANCA: It's not what you think...

LUKE: I can explain...

PETE: I don't want to know. How long have you... has this...?

LUKE: Three months.

PETE: Behind my back? You've betrayed me<sup>30</sup>!

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<sup>26</sup> flow

<sup>27</sup>(with her hand)

<sup>28</sup> pool of water

<sup>29</sup> (used for cleaning floors with water)

LUKE: We fell in love, Pete, we didn't plan it.

PETE: With my baby sister.

BIANCA: I'm seventeen!

LUKE: We were going to tell you – we were waiting for the right moment.

PETE: (*to Bianca*) And you don't mind, what people will say?

BIANCA: People?

*Kate appears behind the counter.*

PETE: The neighbours, the customers...the café's Instagram comments will be full of filthy innuendo or brainless gossip.

BIANCA: Luke's your best friend – if he's good enough for you, he's good enough for me. Who cares about the *WhatsApp* group?

PETE: I do! I don't want my sister splattered all over social media – everyone suggesting that you've thrown yourself at the first person who's come along. You can do so much better than Luke!

LUKE: Thanks!

KATE: When you bought your guitar, Pete, didn't you try out<sup>31</sup> a few?

PETE: Try out a few? This is my sister we're talking about.

KATE: I was talking about Luke.

LUKE: Thanks!

PETE: And what has it got to do with you?

KATE: No more than it has to do with you. Bianca's nearly eighteen; she should be allowed to make her own mistakes in life, not have someone do it for her.

LUKE: Thanks.

PETE: I can't believe you could do this to me – either of you. Luke – my best friend. My sister! Well, best friend no more. Out! I never want to see you again. Don't come back – you are barred from<sup>32</sup> this café!

*Pete picks up Luke's jacket and thrusts<sup>33</sup> it at him.*

LUKE: What about the competition, the recording contract, the new fridge....?

PETE: I could never sing with someone who could stab me<sup>34</sup> in the back.

Traitor<sup>35</sup>! Out!

*Luke storms off.*

PETE: (*to Bianca*) As for you...

BIANCA: Go to my room?

PETE: I've got a fridge to fix – then we'll talk.

KATE: Who needs a fridge when you're around?

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<sup>30</sup> broken my trust

<sup>31</sup> experiment with

<sup>32</sup> not allowed in

<sup>33</sup> pushes it violently

<sup>34</sup> kill me with a knife

<sup>35</sup> a betrayer, someone who breaks trust

*Pete goes. Bianca collapses at the table and cries.*

KATE: Your brother, Bianca, is a male chauvinist pig<sup>36</sup>!

BIANCA: What am I going to do? I'll never see Luke again.

KATE: Oh, I'm sure he'll be back.

*Luke returns.*

LUKE: Right! Where is he?

KATE: Told you.

LUKE: We'll sort this out – man to man!

BIANCA: No! You'll get hurt.

LUKE: Oh thanks.

KATE: Fighting won't help.

LUKE: It'll make me feel better... What do you suggest?

KATE: We've got to persuade Pete to<sup>37</sup> change his mind.

BIANCA: Oh, simple! Can a leopard change its spots<sup>38</sup>?

KATE: Pete's a pussycat<sup>39</sup> – not a leopard.

LUKE: You don't know him – once he's made his mind up about something...

BIANCA: And he has to be right. About everything. All the time.

LUKE: Even when he's wrong.

KATE: Poor thing – some men are like that. Never mind, I'll soon sort him out.

BIANCA: Ha! You think you can get round Pete?

KATE: In four easy stages.

BIANCA: Oh? And they are?

KATE: Ok – step one: confuse<sup>40</sup> him. To soften him up<sup>41</sup>.

LUKE: Confuse Pete? How?

KATE: Tease him<sup>42</sup>, infuriate him<sup>43</sup>, frighten him, shock him. And then, step two: surprise him.

BIANCA: What do you plan to do?

KATE: If I told you, it wouldn't be a surprise. Next, step three: I'll make him feel calm and relaxed, that everything is all right, that he's on top of the world...

LUKE: Nice... And step four?

*Kate claps her hands.*

KATE: Squash<sup>44</sup> him flat!

BIANCA: That sounds a bit harsh<sup>45</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup> man who is a prejudiced bastard

<sup>37</sup> convince Pete of the need

<sup>38</sup> Can an animal change its basic nature?

<sup>39</sup> someone who is soft and easy to deal with

<sup>40</sup> disorient

<sup>41</sup> weaken

<sup>42</sup> Provoke him in a playful or unkind way

<sup>43</sup> make him extremely angry

<sup>44</sup> crush

<sup>45</sup> hard, brutal

KATE: Do you want to be able to see Luke again? Ten pounds says I can do it.  
 LUKE: You're on! It'll be worth ten pounds to get Bianca back and if it doesn't work, I'm ten quid up<sup>46</sup> ...

BIANCA: Thanks!

KATE: But you have to do what I tell you. Luke, go before Pete finds you here, it'll just make him worse. *(She pushes him out of the café)* Don't come back until we tell you to.  
*Luke pushes past Kate to give Bianca a farewell kiss. Kate prises them apart<sup>47</sup>. Luke goes.*

KATE: Go! Bianca – stay in your room, pretend you're unwell – I need time alone with Pete.

BIANCA: I'm supposed to be minding the café.

KATE: That's why I'm here.  
*Bianca goes. Kate tidies up the café and then sees Pete's guitar. She picks it up and strums<sup>48</sup> a few chords. She plays and sings "Katy Cruel". Through the song, Pete comes in to listen. When Kate "notices<sup>49</sup>" Pete she stops.*

KATE: Was I disturbing you<sup>50</sup>?

PETE: I was looking for Bianca.

KATE: In her room. Although it might be best to leave her alone for a while – she's upset<sup>51</sup>. I hope you don't mind me playing your guitar...

PETE: She should be upset – going out with Luke behind my back.

KATE: Better someone you know and trust than a total stranger.

PETE: That's not the point. Bianca and Luke did not tell me about... it... because they knew it was wrong. If it's wrong they shouldn't have been doing it.

KATE: A man of principle...

PETE: It's important to have values<sup>52</sup>.

KATE: I agree; so long as you're honest and live by your principles...

PETE: I am – I do.

KATE: ...but are values worth it if they cost too much?

PETE: What do you mean?

KATE: You've lost your best friend, your sister and your chance in the Folk Fest competition. Expensive!

PETE: If you're not prepared to pay the price – your values are worthless...

KATE: We might be able to save something out of this...

PETE: Don't ask me to change my mind about Bianca and Luke.

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<sup>46</sup> (colloq.) pounds (Sterling); I will have made £10.

<sup>47</sup> uses force to separate them

<sup>48</sup> moves her hand up and down across the strings

<sup>49</sup> becomes aware of

<sup>50</sup> breaking your concentration

<sup>51</sup> unhappy, worried

<sup>52</sup> moral qualities

KATE: I meant the competition...

PETE: But I can't go by myself. I've entered the competition as a duo, the judges would never accept it.

KATE: So, you need a new partner.

PETE: The competition is tonight – is someone going to walk into the café who likes folk music and can sing?

KATE: Someone already has. (*She strums a chord*) Ta daa!

PETE: No! I can't sing with you.

KATE: Against your principles to sing with a girl?

PETE: But we're not... (*he gestures flow between them...*)

KATE: Were you and Luke? I'm offering to sing with you – not marriage. You just heard me and you thought I was pretty good; what else would tear<sup>53</sup> you away from your melting fridge? So here's a chance not to lose out on the big time. Are you going to take it? What time is the competition and where?

PETE: Eight o'clock - in Birmingham.

KATE: Birmingham? That's miles away! I'll go and get ready. I'll text you my address – come and pick me up.

*Kate is leaving.*

PETE: Kate! We don't like each other – why would you do this?

KATE: Because I like winning!

*She goes.*

## Scene 2 - Pete's Car

*Two chairs and a steering wheel make Pete's car. Pete is in the driving seat. He is restless and checks his watch...*

PETE: Come on, come on, come one, we said five o'clock...

*Pete gets out of the car as Kate appears. She is wearing a stunning<sup>54</sup> outfit.*

KATE: You're here – at last.

PETE: You're the one who's late!

KATE: How can I be late – I live here?

PETE: What are you wearing?

KATE: Is this your car? Will it make it all the way to Birmingham?

PETE: We're going to a folk singing festival – not a lap dancing<sup>55</sup> club.

KATE: You like it, though - I can tell by the way you're admiring my legs.

PETE: I was not...!!!

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<sup>53</sup> pull, drag

<sup>54</sup> knock-out, extremely attractive

<sup>55</sup> erotic dancing in front of a seated person

KATE: Now you're looking at my boobs<sup>56</sup>. You'll find the brain is just behind the eyes.

PETE: If there is a brain.

KATE: I'll change – it'll only take me half an hour.

*Kate starts to go.*

PETE: Get in! We're late enough as it is.

*They both get into the car. Pete starts the car.*

KATE: Do you know the way, Peter?

PETE: It's Pete.

KATE: But I shall call you Peter. Like Peter the Great<sup>57</sup>, or Peter the Rabbit<sup>58</sup>, although you could never be as good as Saint Peter. "Pete" is short and sharp! But "Peter" is sweeter and neater. It's warm, like a heater and full, like a litre. And that's why I'll call you Peter.

PETE: And I shall call you... dumb<sup>59</sup>!

KATE: Oh, such a sharp<sup>60</sup> wit. Don't cut yourself with it...

PETE: It's a long drive to Birmingham – can we not talk...

*They drive. Pete looks at Kate's legs – she catches him out.*

KATE: Can we have some music on?

*She fiddles<sup>61</sup> with the car radio.*

PETE: It doesn't work.

*They drive.*

KATE: Brrr! Can we have the heating on?

*She fiddles with the heating controls.*

PETE: It doesn't work.

*They drive. Pete looks at Kate's legs – she catches him out.*

KATE: How about some intelligent conversation? Don't tell me – it doesn't work!

PETE: I'm driving – I need to focus on the road ahead...

KATE: So why do you keep staring at my legs?

PETE: I do not!

KATE: You do! Every time I do this...

*She crosses her legs.*

PETE: You're doing it on purpose to distract me<sup>62</sup>.

KATE: So, you are happy to look at me, but you don't want to talk to me.

PETE: I don't want to talk to you because I don't like you.

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<sup>56</sup> (colloq.) breasts

<sup>57</sup> Russian emperor from 1682 to 1725, who turned Russia into a huge empire that became a major European power.

<sup>58</sup> *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* is a British children's book written and illustrated by Beatrix Potter

<sup>59</sup> stupid, idiotic

<sup>60</sup> like a knife

<sup>61</sup> plays

<sup>62</sup> intentionally take my attention away

KATE: You like looking at my legs and they're me. When you were looking at my boobs – I could see what you were thinking...

PETE: Is this a suitable conversation?

KATE: What? Politics?

PETE: Talking about your... body is not political.

KATE: I think *#Me Too* would disagree.

PETE: Oh, come on! That's all about men beating up on women... sexually....

KATE: It's about power.

PETE: ...you can't accuse me of... of... that.

KATE: You ogle<sup>63</sup> my body, but you don't want to talk to me. You'll engage<sup>64</sup> physically, but not mentally...

PETE: Then don't wear revealing<sup>65</sup> clothes!

KATE: Ah! It's my fault for having legs and a chest! I'll wear a sack<sup>66</sup> next time. Even then, you'd want to see what's underneath...

PETE: You're just being silly, now.

KATE: The female's job is to make the male feel comfortable – mentally and physically. That's what a lot of men believe. So, when women challenge<sup>67</sup> you, you don't accept the challenge<sup>68</sup>, you just put us down. (*Mimicking*<sup>69</sup>: "*You're just being silly, now.*") Women have struggled for equality for centuries and we still haven't got it because men are frightened of talking to women. I mean *really* talking to women. Why? Because you don't want to share the power.

PETE: You are such a... stuck-up<sup>70</sup>... know-it-all....

KATE: Hey! You can attack my argument, but don't attack me...

PETE: Women have had equality for years! The most powerful person in Europe is a woman!<sup>71</sup>

KATE: And her name is....?

PETE: Ursula... something or other, I don't know! Blonde woman, nice face.

KATE: And if she didn't have a nice face, you wouldn't even remember her first name! Women make up 12% of our world leaders. 12% to 88%. Is that equal? My stupid female brain doesn't do big sums.  
At the rate it's changing it'll be the next century before women have equality there. And why do women still get paid less than men? Why are rock bands

---

<sup>63</sup> keep staring at in a sexual way

<sup>64</sup> become involved

<sup>65</sup> showing your body openly

<sup>66</sup> shapeless dress

<sup>67</sup> question critically

<sup>68</sup> invitation

<sup>69</sup> imitating ironically

<sup>70</sup> arrogant

<sup>71</sup> refers to Ursula von der Leyen

usually male? Film directors? Why are there more male politicians, company executives, sports directors, officers in the armed forces? I know what you're going to say – I shouldn't worry my pretty little head about it!

PETE: I don't... I'm... Look... Don't put words into my mouth.

KATE: If I didn't, Peter, you'd have nothing to say.

PETE: What!?... I...er...I...er...

*Kate puts both her hands behind her head and stretches out her legs.*

KATE: Forget it, Pete. Just enjoy the scenery....

*A car horn sounds as Pete almost crashes...*

KATE: Whoa<sup>72</sup>! Watch the road!

PETE: See what you made me do?

KATE: You're driving and you blame me. That proves my point entirely!

PETE: Can we just... drive?

*They drive.*

KATE: Are we on the motorway?

PETE: The M6. Birmingham is fifty miles.

KATE: Can we stop at the next service station?

PETE: We'll be late for the gig.

KATE: It will only take a minute. Look! Services in one mile!

PETE: If we're late for the gig they won't let us play.

KATE: But I need to pee<sup>73</sup>.

PETE: What?

KATE: Urinate<sup>74</sup>. It's a biological function. Most people do it, don't you?

PETE: Why didn't you go before you got in the car?

KATE: Are we talking seconds, minutes or hours? I went before I left the house, but I thought it would be anti-social to pee in the street just before climbing into this old wreck.

PETE: So – you have a weak bladder<sup>75</sup>?

KATE: It was fine before I drank the coffee at your place. Are we going to stop or not?

PETE: If we stop we'll be late for the gig. If we're late for the gig we won't be able to play and this will be a wasted journey.

*Kate finds a paper cup from under the seat.*

KATE: Ok – don't stop.

PETE: Yeah? You'll be ok?

KATE: Yes. I'll use this.

PETE: What!?

KATE: Then we don't have to stop.

---

<sup>72</sup> careful!

<sup>73</sup> (colloq.) go to the toilet

<sup>74</sup> Pass water

<sup>75</sup> organ that collects urine

PETE: Service station! I'll stop, I'll stop! Ok?

### Scene 3 - Motorway service station

*Pete waits, hands in pockets, checking his watch constantly. Kate drifts on*<sup>76</sup>.

PETE: We are now, officially, in a hurry...

KATE: I'm starving, shall we have something to eat?

PETE: We have to leave – five minutes ago!

KATE: You don't expect me to sing on an empty stomach. And coffee – I need something to warm me up. Your car is freezing.

PETE: You should have dressed sensibly<sup>77</sup>.

KATE: Look! There's a hamburger place. I'll find a table.

*She starts to go but Pete stops her.*

PETE: We haven't got time!

KATE: I'm hungry and I need to eat. You go on without me. I'll hitch a ride<sup>78</sup> back to London.

PETE: You're crazy! This side of the motorway is heading north. What if something happens to you?

KATE: Peter! You care about me – how sweet.

PETE: I don't care about you... it's just – I need someone to sing with at the competition!

KATE: So be nice to me, or you are on your own. Now, about that hamburger... *Kate is off again.*

PETE: No! We'll get a takeaway. I'll drive – you eat.

KATE: Ok, let's get a takeaway.

PETE: You wait here. I'll get it.

*Pete starts to go.*

KATE: Hey! You don't know what I want.

PETE: A hamburger!

KATE: Just because I said there was a hamburger place doesn't mean...

PETE: So, what do you want?

KATE: Good question – what shall I have...?

PETE: Are you doing this on purpose<sup>79</sup>?

KATE: Being hungry?

PETE: Taking for ever...

KATE: If you'd stop interrupting me... Ok... this is what I want: a chicken and bacon burger, but with no bacon...

PETE: Isn't that a chicken burger?

---

<sup>76</sup> wanders slowly on

<sup>77</sup> with common sense

<sup>78</sup> get a lift

<sup>79</sup> intentionally

KATE: Ah – but a chicken burger comes with mayonnaise, which I don't want, but a chicken and bacon burger comes with ketchup, but I don't want the bacon...

PETE: I shouldn't have asked...

KATE: Lettuce<sup>80</sup>, but I don't want gherkins<sup>81</sup>, tomatoes but forget the onions. Medium fries with no salt but get some mayonnaise ...

*A man wearing a hi-viz<sup>82</sup> jacket and beanie hat<sup>83</sup> strolls<sup>84</sup> past.*

KATE: A latte, no sugar, but a sprinkling<sup>85</sup> of chocolate... wow! Look at that man – nice jacket!

PETE: What? It's a hi-viz. He's a truck driver or something. Can we hurry things up a bit?

KATE: I've forgotten what I ordered...

PETE: (*fast*) Chicken and bacon burger with ketchup no bacon, lettuce no gherkin, tomato no onion, fries with mayonnaise but no salt, latte with chocolate sprinkles no sugar...

KATE: Impressive!

PETE: I run a café, I'm used to annoying customers!

KATE: Oh, just get me a cheese sandwich and a cup of tea.

*Pete goes off in frustration.*

KATE: Stage one almost complete.

*The man in the hi-viz jacket passes again.*

KATE: And that would help to complete it.

*She looks to where Pete has gone, then follows the man in the hi-viz jacket, disappearing just as Pete gets back with a carrier bag of food. He goes to where Kate was standing and realises she's gone. He spins<sup>86</sup> around looking for her.*

PETE: Kate? Kate! Kate!

*He looks at his watch and then sinks to his knees. Kate returns carrying a large bulky<sup>87</sup> carrier bag.*

KATE: Come on! We'll be late for the competition.

## Scene 4 - The Competition

*Pete is "on stage" tuning his guitar. Jenny, a competition judge, is taking his details.*

---

<sup>80</sup> salad leaves

<sup>81</sup> small cucumbers (in vinegar)

<sup>82</sup> abbreviation for high-visibility clothing (e.g. yellow safety jacket)

<sup>83</sup> one that is small, round and fits tightly

<sup>84</sup> walks slowly

<sup>85</sup> light covering

<sup>86</sup> turns quickly

<sup>87</sup> voluminous, taking up a lot of space

JENNY: You're lucky, five minutes later and you'd have been disqualified<sup>88</sup>.

PETE: The journey has been very difficult.

JENNY: What are you singing tonight?

PETE: "The House of the Rising Sun".

JENNY: Lovely. And you're a duo – Pete and Luke. Where is Luke?

PETE: In the ladies<sup>89</sup>.

JENNY: Oh! Does Luke identify as female?

PETE: What? Ah, Luke couldn't make it. Tonight, we are Pete and... er... Kate.

JENNY: Right – well, I'll give you a couple of minutes and then I'll introduce you.

*Jenny goes. Pete finishes tuning his guitar and then looks nervously around for Kate. She appears wearing a very large hi-viz jacket and a beanie hat.*

PETE: What are you wearing!?

KATE: You were right. I was dressed for a party, not a folk festival.

PETE: And wearing a hi-viz jacket is suitable?

KATE: For a competition it is – we want to be highly visible...

PETE: Take it off!

KATE: If it goes, I go.

PETE: I wish I hadn't come.

KATE: But it's an adventure.

PETE: It's a nightmare<sup>90</sup>! This is not how I do things. I like things to be organised...

KATE: No, you like to control things.

PETE: You're doing this on purpose! You are deliberately<sup>91</sup> ruining any chance of me winning this competition!

KATE: I'm only trying to help.

PETE: You've argued all the way here; you've embarrassed me<sup>92</sup> with the clothes you wear, I have never felt so stressed in all my life. I can only think of one good thing...

KATE: What's that?

PETE: It can't get any worse!

KATE: (*aside*) Step one is complete!

*Jenny, appears and heads towards them.*

KATE: Get ready for a surprise!

PETE: Oh no! It *can* get worse...

JENNY: (*to the audience*) We've a delightful singing duo for you now – Kate and Peter...

PETE: It's Pete and Kate!

---

<sup>88</sup> officially excluded

<sup>89</sup> women's toilets

<sup>90</sup> bad dream

<sup>91</sup> intentionally, on purpose

<sup>92</sup> made me feel awkward and ashamed

JENNY: ... With a traditional song from Bonny<sup>93</sup> Scotland....

PETE: Aaaghhh<sup>94</sup>!

KATE: I changed the song...

PETE: Nooooo!

JENNY: Give it up for Kate and Pete and... “The Raggle Taggle<sup>95</sup> Gypsy”!

KATE: Play A minor...

*Kate and Pete sing “The Raggle Taggle Gypsy”.*

## Scene 5 - Pete’s Café

*Bianca comes into the café from the back. She carries a small suitcase which she puts on the table. She pulls an envelope from her pocket and props<sup>96</sup> it up against a coffee cup on the counter – it says “Pete” on it in big letters. She goes to the coat stand and begins to put her coat on.*

*Kate enters from outside.*

KATE: Your brother is worse than I thought...

BIANCA: I wasn’t expecting you back so soon.

KATE: (*Seeing the suitcase*) So I see.

BIANCA: If I can’t see Luke then I’m not staying.

KATE: There’s no need to go.

BIANCA: Pete’s changed his mind!?

KATE: Not yet. But he will. We are just about to go into stage three...

*Luke comes in from behind the counter.*

LUKE: How did the competition go?

KATE: I’ll tell you... aaghh! What are you doing here!?

LUKE: I’ve come to get Bianca. We’re running away.

*Kate laughs.*

KATE: Don’t be ridiculous. Where to?

LUKE: Brighton<sup>97</sup>.

KATE: This isn’t Romeo and Juliet. You need to be patient. I’ve got Pete eating out of the palm of my hand<sup>98</sup>, just a little more time, I promise you, and he will have changed his mind. If you run away, you’ll soon get fed up<sup>99</sup> with each other, you won’t know anyone, you’ll have no money. Do it my way and life can return to how it was – only better. Don’t you want that?

*They nod.*

---

<sup>93</sup> beautiful

<sup>94</sup> Expression of shock and horror

<sup>95</sup> roughly dressed with unkempt hair

<sup>96</sup> sets, places (to support it)

<sup>97</sup> Popular seaside resort on the South Coast

<sup>98</sup> doing exactly what I want him to do

<sup>99</sup> bored

KATE: Right. Take the suitcase upstairs. Luke, get out of here. Pete's parked around the corner, he's bringing in the gear<sup>100</sup> and will be here any mom(ent)...

*Pete backs into the café carrying his guitar case in one hand, brief case in another. Luke dips<sup>101</sup> below the café table. Kate snatches up<sup>102</sup> the suitcase from the table, thrusts it at Bianca who, not knowing what to do with it, puts it on the counter.*

PETE: *(turning around)* Ah, Bianca, I thought you'd be in bed, it's so late.  
*(Seeing the suitcase)* Visitors?

BIANCA: Yes.

KATE: No!

BIANCA: Mrs McCann.

PETE: Mrs McCann? Who's Mrs McCann?

BIANCA: A customer.

PETE: This time of night?

BIANCA: She likes our coffee.

PETE: It must be keeping her awake. Where is... Mrs McCann?

BIANCA: In the ladies!

PETE: *(to Kate)* Have you told her about the competition?

KATE: Mrs McCann?

PETE: Bianca.

KATE: I thought you'd want to.

PETE: We won! We won the semi-final!!

BIANCA: Fantastic!

*Luke jumps up to shout "hooray!" but bangs<sup>103</sup> his head on the table. He ducks<sup>104</sup> down again. Pete spins round.*

PETE: Someone's knocking!

BIANCA: Mrs McCann!

KATE: In the ladies.

PETE: Do you think she's locked herself in?

KATE: I'll go and see. Pete, tell Bianca all about it. Everything! Every single wonderful moment!

*Kate moves off to the "ladies"...*

PETE: It was amazing, Bianca. Everyone loved us. We had a last minute change of plan – we thought we'd do "The Raggle Taggle Gypsy", instead.

*Kate motions to Bianca to "keep him talking". She motions to Luke "come here". Luke, still under the table, moves towards Kate taking the table with him.*

---

<sup>100</sup> equipment

<sup>101</sup> dives gently

<sup>102</sup> picks up quickly (and aggressively)

<sup>103</sup> hits, strikes

<sup>104</sup> dives

PETE: Well – it went down a storm<sup>105</sup>. Some of the audience got to their feet at the end to applaud... And when they made the announcement – “In first place – Pete and Kate.”

*Without looking Pete puts his briefcase on the table which is no longer there. Kate catches it and then grabs hold of<sup>106</sup> Luke from under the table and propels<sup>107</sup> him off into the “ladies”.*

PETE: ... it was the most amazing feeling. But it means we’re in the final! This could be it, Bianca, this could be it!

BIANCA: It’s a good thing you had Kate to help you out....

PETE: Kate? Oh... yes – she helped a little bit....

*Pete puts a hand out to lean on the table that is no longer there. He falls over. Kate points to the suitcase on the counter. Bianca throws it to her. Kate throws it into the “ladies” and then puts the table back. Bianca helps Pete to his feet. He tries to work out how he missed the table.*

KATE: If I only helped a little bit, you won’t need me at all at the finals.

PETE: I was joking... of course you helped....

KATE: You couldn’t have done it without me...

PETE: Yes, you made us late, almost got us disqualified, dressed like a maniac<sup>108</sup> and changed the song without telling me...

KATE: But we won! Let’s celebrate! Open a bottle of something...

PETE: Shouldn’t we be going to bed?

KATE: We hardly know each other! I don’t even kiss on a first date...

PETE: No, no - I meant it’s late - early start in the morning...

KATE: Ten minutes – then I’ll go.

BIANCA: And Mrs McCann is still in the ladies...

*Pete gives in and goes off behind the counter to find a bottle...*

KATE: Quick! Get him out.

*Bianca runs to the “ladies” – she returns dragging<sup>109</sup> Luke by the hand... Pete returns with a bottle, Bianca pushes Luke back into the “ladies”. Kate sits at the table. Pete pours wine.*

KATE: You haven’t asked me yet?

PETE: Asked you what?

KATE: Will I come with you to the finals.

PETE: Why shouldn’t you?

KATE: You’re the folk singer, not me. I just went tonight because I like winning. Really – it’s Pete and Luke...

PETE: I don’t want to talk about him.

---

<sup>105</sup> was very well received, was extremely successful

<sup>106</sup> seizes

<sup>107</sup> pushes

<sup>108</sup> mad person

<sup>109</sup> pulling

KATE: You think the world revolves<sup>110</sup> around you. It doesn't. It revolves around me! If you want me to help you win the final, you are going to have to ask me very nicely.

PETE: Don't be so ridiculous.

*Kate gets up.*

KATE: Good night, then. You needn't take me home. I'll see you around...

*Kate is almost out of the door.*

PETE: Kate! (*Reluctantly*<sup>111</sup>) Will you sing in the final with me?

KATE: Did you say something?

PETE: Yes – will you sing in the final with me? Please.

KATE: When is it?

PETE: You know when it is! It's in two days' time. Why are you doing this?

*Kate starts to go.*

PETE: Will you? I want you to. I do. Will you please sing with me, Kate?

KATE: No!

PETE: What!? Why not?

KATE: You're a terrible person. I've had a horrible time tonight. You've let me know constantly<sup>112</sup> how much you hate me. You're rude to me, you treat me badly and I never want to see you again. Ever! (*Kate starts to "cry".*) I was trying to help you, that's all.

*Pete does not know how to deal with a crying Kate. Kate "cries" all the more.*

PETE: Er... don't cry...

*She "cries" even more. Pete goes to her. He pats her on the shoulder to no effect. He awkwardly<sup>113</sup> puts his arms around her and gives her a very stiff<sup>114</sup> hug...*

PETE: There, there...

*Kate snuggles into<sup>115</sup> him. Pete doesn't know how to respond and almost pulls away.*

PETE: Er...

KATE: I really wanted you to win tonight, because I know how much it means to you...

PETE: It means everything to me.

KATE: And I always thought you were so kind; you've looked after Bianca ever since your parents died. You've sacrificed<sup>116</sup> so much for her...

PETE: She's the only family I have.

KATE: But then today... you were mean to Bianca and horrible to me...

---

<sup>110</sup> turns, moves, spins

<sup>111</sup> unwillingly

<sup>112</sup> all the time

<sup>113</sup> clumsily, in an embarrassed way

<sup>114</sup> formal

<sup>115</sup> gets up close to (for affection)

<sup>116</sup> given up

PETE: I'm... I'm sorry...

KATE: I wish you did like me.

*Pete is beginning to enjoy the hug.*

PETE: Do you?

KATE: I'd like someone to look after me the way you look after Bianca...

PETE: Kate... I really do want you to sing with me in the final... because I... I do like you... I like you very much...

KATE: Good – because I like you.

*She looks at Pete – he kisses her. She kisses him back but then breaks away from him.*

PETE: What's the matter?

KATE: We can't do this! What will people say? It will be all over the café's Instagram - filthy innuendo and brainless gossip.

PETE: Don't be daft<sup>117</sup>!

KATE: But that's what you said when Bianca kissed Luke.

PETE: This is different!

KATE: Why? Because it's you? Don't your principles<sup>118</sup> apply to you? How can I throw myself at the first person that comes along, after what you said?

PETE: But – Kate...

KATE: I like you very much, Pete... but we mustn't see each other again... I don't think I can sing with you in the final.

*Luke, wearing a dress, cardigan and head scarf borrowed from Bianca's suitcase, appears from the "ladies". He is pretending to be an old woman with a stoop<sup>119</sup> and his head bowed<sup>120</sup>. Bianca is guiding him by the arm. Kate is heading for the door.*

BIANCA: Mrs McCann is just going home...

PETE: Stay!

BIANCA: But it's way past her bedtime!

PETE: Not Mrs McCann – Kate! I never know where I am with you – you say one thing but do another.

KATE: Exciting, isn't it?

PETE: Yes. Yes, it is – very annoying, though.

KATE: Come on, Mrs McCann, we can walk together. Goodbye, Pete. It wouldn't be right, you and me. I am Bianca's best friend. I can't betray her...

PETE: Please don't do this to me...

KATE: These are your rules, Pete, not mine. Bye, Bianca.

PETE: Ok! I'm wrong! I've got it all wrong. I'm wrong, I'm wrong, I'm wrong!

BIANCA: What about?

---

<sup>117</sup> silly

<sup>118</sup> moral values

<sup>119</sup> bent over position

<sup>120</sup> bent down, lowered

PETE: Everything! About Kate. About you and Luke...

BIANCA: You mean you don't mind me and Luke being together?

PETE: *(Beat)* No.

*Bianca hugs Pete. Luke high fives<sup>121</sup> Kate.*

PETE: I see now how selfish I've been. Kate has made me see that. I was only trying to protect you, Bianca. I just wanted the best for you. But Luke's all right. He's a bit of an idiot at times, but he's nice enough. He can't sing very well, but he's the good looking member of the band. You could do a lot worse than Luke. But then you could do a lot better...

*Luke is getting wound up<sup>122</sup> by these insults, Kate calms him down. Pete gets his phone out.*

PETE: Just to show you that I mean it, I'm going to phone him right now and tell him...

*Luke panics. He starts to scrabble for<sup>123</sup> his phone underneath his dress. Pete is pressing the dial button.*

BIANCA: No!

KATE: No! He'll be fast asleep – tucked up<sup>124</sup> in bed.

PETE: Ok, I'll tell him tomorrow.

*He turns the phone off.*

BIANCA: You're sure about this? You won't change your mind tomorrow?

PETE: No. Thanks to Kate; she's made me see sense.

*Pete and Bianca hug. Luke gives Kate a £10 note. Pete looks at it.*

KATE: For the coffee! Come on Mrs McCann, time you were going.

*She tries to get Luke out of the café.*

PETE: Kate... will you sing with me at the final?

*Luke is about to say something, Kate stops him. She goes to Pete and kisses him.*

*Bianca goes to Luke and kisses him. Kate sees this and waves to them to stop.*

*Pete senses something going on and turns to look... Bianca kisses both of Luke's cheeks...*

BIANCA: Good night, Mrs McCann – do come again....

## Scene 6 - The Final

*Pete and Luke set up the guitar and music stand. Bianca and Kate drift on and watch them for a moment.*

BIANCA: Ah – look at them! Friends again ... sweet...

KATE: Like ...Beavis and Butt-Head<sup>125</sup>...

---

<sup>121</sup> slaps the flat of his palm against Kate's

<sup>122</sup> annoyed

<sup>123</sup> feel roughly

<sup>124</sup> wrapped tightly

<sup>125</sup> two dim-witted teenage protagonist of a famous animated series in the 1990s

BIANCA: It's wonderful that you and Pete are together. Me and Luke, you and Pete...

KATE: Like... ABBA<sup>126</sup>? Hey, don't get too excited. I'm doing this for you, not for Pete. We haven't got to stage four yet.

BIANCA: Yeah, but you like Pete, though...

KATE: He's nice enough, but you know what he's like.

BIANCA: He's changed – you changed him...

KATE: Ha! A leopard can't change its spots – remember?

BIANCA: He likes you, Kate. He really does.

KATE: Listen, Bianca, when the first flush<sup>127</sup> of romance wears off<sup>128</sup>, he'll be just like he always was.

BIANCA: But you should have seen him this morning - joking with the customers, singing in the café - he was happy. Because of you. He's serious, Kate.

KATE: I suppose he's telling everyone that I'm his girlfriend.

BIANCA: Aren't you?

KATE: I'm singing in this competition with him, that's all.

BIANCA: But you kissed him.

KATE: One kiss doth not a couple make!<sup>129</sup>

BIANCA: Please don't do this. I don't want you to hurt him.

KATE: How much did he hurt you when he wanted you to stop seeing Luke? He says he was protecting you, but no one needs protection from Luke. Look at him.

BIANCA: Ok, but he's changed his mind about all that. He sees how selfish he's been. He's even grateful to you that you put him through what you did – your step one and step two. But he thinks that you and he are... If you don't like him, Kate, you should tell him.

KATE: If I do he'll just go back to how he always was; and he'll find a way to split you and Luke up.

BIANCA: Your plan worked, Kate. You won the bet. You don't have to keep going with it.

KATE: Ok – I'll tell him.

BIANCA: Oh, I get it. You want to hurt him, that's the game, isn't it? What is stage four? Squash him flat! You're going to do it because you can.

Because it gives you some sort of power. You are going to lead him on and then just drop him. Pete might have hurt me, but he thought it was for the best. You're going to hurt Pete because you enjoy it!

*Bianca runs off. Kate goes after her.*

*Pete and Luke enter.*

---

<sup>126</sup> Swedish pop group (2+2), from the 1970s

<sup>127</sup> sudden strong feeling

<sup>128</sup> disappears, vanishes

<sup>129</sup> A re-working of the proverb "One swallow does not a summer make". Originally from Aristotle.

*Luke tunes the guitar. Pete takes it off him. Luke looks lost.*

LUKE: What are you singing tonight?

PETE: “Scarborough Fair”.

LUKE: Classic folk – should be good. Have you rehearsed it – with Kate?

PETE: A bit. We could have done with more rehearsal time...

LUKE: Well, if you’re stuck<sup>130</sup> – just let me know...

PETE: Luke, I really want to sing with Kate tonight, because she helped me get this far and...

LUKE: I helped you get as far as the semi-final...

PETE: I know and I’m very grateful...

LUKE: And what happens after tonight? Will we still sing together? Are we still Pete and Luke – stunning singing duo?

PETE: Er...

LUKE: Oh, I see. It’s going to be Pete and Kate from now on, isn’t it?

PETE: It’s not you, Luke, honest, it’s me. I feel differently about things. We’ve been good together, but I want to find the right direction to go in...

LUKE: And I’m not good enough for you...

PETE: No! It’s not that. If anyone’s to blame here, it’s me.

LUKE: Is this supposed to make me feel better? What has Kate got that I haven’t?

PETE: I get to kiss Kate.

LUKE: And that’s it? After four years together, gigging around London, practising all those harmonies, learning all those songs, I’m tossed<sup>131</sup> on one side because you can kiss Kate!

*Kate returns by herself. Luke sees her.*

LUKE: You’re welcome to him!

*Luke flounces off<sup>132</sup>.*

KATE: What’s wrong with him?

PETE: I’ve upset him.

KATE: And I’ve upset Bianca.

PETE: It’s because I’m singing with you tonight.

KATE: I don’t want to come between you and Luke. Perhaps he should sing with you.

PETE: I want to sing with you every night.

KATE: I’m just in it for the competition.

PETE: Don’t worry about Luke, he’ll get over it. What happened with you the other night has been the best thing ever. Being with you is so exciting. I was stuck, but you freed me up<sup>133</sup>. And the past couple of days – I couldn’t wait for you to come round so we could rehearse. Each time someone came

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<sup>130</sup> if you have a problem, if you are at a loss

<sup>131</sup> thrown

<sup>132</sup> moves away in an exaggerated way to show he’s angry

<sup>133</sup> I was jammed, wasn’t able to move on, but you helped me to do so

through the café door I hoped it would be you – and then when you did... I don't think I really knew what being happy was till now...

KATE: Pete, you're sounding like one of those stupid love songs. This is life.

It's been two days – nothing has changed just because .... we kissed.

PETE: Now who's stuck? Though I do understand – it's pretty scary ...

KATE: You just don't change do you? Everything is all or nothing with you.

Everything has to be according to Pete.

PETE: No, it's not. It's just that I've got it all worked out, that's all.

KATE: *You've* got it worked out?

PETE: We win the competition tonight – we get into the recording studio, record an album and then do our first tour together. How romantic would that be?

KATE: Very – if that's what you want. I couldn't think of anything worse. Did you not think about discussing any of this? Why does everything have to be done your way?

PETE: You can talk! When we went to Birmingham you had to have it all your own way; stop here, get me this, get me that...

KATE: That was to give you a taste of your own medicine<sup>134</sup>.

PETE: Why would I need that?

KATE: To cure you, of course.

PETE: Of what?

KATE: Of being a bore<sup>135</sup> – of being an overbearing<sup>136</sup> idiot...

PETE: And am I cured?

KATE: Obviously not!

PETE: Then some doctor you are...

KATE: I won the bet, didn't I!? The plan worked!

PETE: What bet? What plan?

KATE: I didn't mean... I shouldn't have said...

PETE: This was part of a plan? The whole thing? The trip to Birmingham? Everything?

KATE: Yes. Sorry.

PETE: Even the kiss?

KATE: That wasn't supposed to happen...

PETE: So... none of this is real. You were just pretending so you could win your bet.

KATE: I was trying to help Bianca and Luke. The bet was just part of it.

PETE: I am an idiot.

KATE: No. You're not. I'm sorry...

PETE: I'm sorry, too – I thought that we... Perhaps I had better sing with Luke tonight, after all.

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<sup>134</sup> to make you feel what it's like when you do it to me

<sup>135</sup> an annoying person

<sup>136</sup> bossy and controlling

KATE: Yes, of course – if that’s what you want.  
PETE: Yes. I’d better go and find him. We’ll be on in a minute or two.  
*Pete turns to go but stops.*  
PETE: How much was the bet for?  
KATE: Ten pounds.  
*Bianca enters.*  
PETE: Seen Luke?  
BIANCA: He’s at the bar.  
*Pete goes.*  
BIANCA: Is stage four complete? You’ve squashed him flat?  
KATE: I think I’ll go home.  
BIANCA: Job done, then. I hope you enjoyed it.  
KATE: I didn’t intend to, Bianca, it just happened. No, I didn’t enjoy it.  
BIANCA: See you, then.  
KATE: Yeah, see you.  
*Kate goes. Bianca sits down as Pete and Luke return. They head straight for the guitar which Pete picks up.*  
LUKE: *(to the audience)* Hi there! It’s fantastic to be part of the Folk Fest Competition Final. He’s Pete and I’m Luke. Together we’re Pete and Luke and this is – “Scarborough Fair”...  
*Luke’s about to sing but Pete hesitates<sup>137</sup>.*  
PETE: *(to the audience)* Sorry. I’ve changed my mind – about the song.  
LUKE: What!  
PETE: *(to the audience)* We are going to sing a different one. And I’m singing it tonight for Kate, because this is how I feel about her. It’s called “Dink’s Song”.  
LUKE: But I don’t know it!  
PETE: Just hum along...  
*Pete and Luke sing “Dink’s Song”.*

## Scene 7 - Pete’s Café

*Bianca is behind the counter. Kate comes in to the café.*  
KATE: What’s happened?  
BIANCA: Nothing.  
KATE: I got your text. You said you wanted to see me.  
BIANCA: I do. I haven’t seen you for over a week. What sort of friend are you?  
KATE: I thought you didn’t want to see me again.  
BIANCA: Did I say that? Coffee?  
*Bianca pours two coffees which they take to the table.*

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<sup>137</sup> holds back (feeling uncertain)

KATE: What happened at the competition?

BIANCA: We lost.

KATE: Poor Pete. He must be really upset – I know how much he really wanted to win. Still got the same old fridge then?

*Pete's head pops up from below the counter listening with interest.*

BIANCA: You're feeling sorry for Pete?

KATE: It's all my fault. I shouldn't have let Luke sing with him.

*Luke's head pops up from below the counter – he doesn't like what he's hearing.*

BIANCA: What's wrong with his singing?

KATE: Nothing, but he didn't know the words.

BIANCA: That's because Pete changed songs... How did you know that?

KATE: I stayed to listen. I don't know which moved me most, the song, or that he changed song at the last moment, or that he sang it for me.

*She turns around. Luke and Pete dip down beneath the counter.*

KATE: Where is Pete?

BIANCA: Were you hoping he was in?

KATE: I would like to see him ... yes.

*The heads come up from below the counter.*

BIANCA: Isn't he a horrible pig who can't change?

KATE: No. Not at all.

*Luke hands over a ten pound note to Pete.*

KATE: He was – probably still is at times...

*Luke takes the ten pound note back.*

KATE: But you were right, Bianca, he really has changed – a bit. But then we can all be stupid at times, some more than others. How is Luke?

*Luke is about to say something, Pete clasps<sup>138</sup> his hand over his mouth to keep him quiet.*

BIANCA: Oh, you know Luke ... can't keep his mouth shut.

KATE: Is he still dressing up in women's clothing?

*Pete lets Luke go and looks at him suspiciously<sup>139</sup>.*

BIANCA: Women's clothing?

KATE: Mrs McCann! That was so funny, Pete never suspected<sup>140</sup>, did he? His best friend stood behind him dressed up like an old lady...

*Pete realises he's been had<sup>141</sup>. He takes the ten pound note back and glowers<sup>142</sup> at Luke...*

BIANCA: Yes, that was funny. Ha! Pete still doesn't know anything about it.

KATE: You should tell him – he'd find it funny.

BIANCA: Yes, he would. If Pete was here – what would you say to him, Kate?

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<sup>138</sup> holds tightly

<sup>139</sup> uncertainly, as if Pete thinks Luke is guilty of something

<sup>140</sup> realized

<sup>141</sup> (colloq.) taken in, tricked

<sup>142</sup> looks angrily

*As Kate turns, they duck down again. She goes and sits on the stool in front of the counter.*

KATE: Oh... I would tell him that he was an idiot, a fool, an oaf<sup>143</sup>, a thick-headed donkey brain who can't bear to be wrong and never listens...

*Pete is up again, looking horrified. Luke comes up to take the ten pound note...*

KATE: But that I was sorry that I hurt him. And that I was wrong.

*Luke wants clarification<sup>144</sup> – “wrong about what” – he doesn't know who should have the money.*

BIANCA: Wrong about what? That he is a thick-headed donkey brain or... isn't...?

KATE: I was wrong when I said I didn't like him. I do like Pete – very, very much. I have missed him so much this week.

PETE: Kate.

*Kate turns as Luke gives Pete the ten pound note back.*

KATE: Is this a bet?

*An awkward<sup>145</sup> moment – they didn't mean for her to find out.*

PETE: I'm afraid so.

BIANCA: Sorry.

LUKE: Yeah.

KATE: Did you win the ten pounds?

PETE: I won much more than that – I hope.

KATE: What was the bet?

LUKE: I bet ten pounds that you had given up on him...

PETE: And I bet that deep down... you loved me really. Because I really love you.

KATE: We've both won the bet.

PETE: And I'm glad I didn't win the competition. That night I lost two things – the competition and you. When I got home, Kate, I realised that it hurt more losing you... You were right, I needed step four to understand how much you meant. You're pretty shrewd, Kate.

*Kate kisses Pete. Luke and Bianca whoop<sup>146</sup> for joy but then get embarrassed as they run out of whoops and Kate and Pete are still kissing...*

LUKE: Let's not overdo<sup>147</sup> the kissing thing...

*Bianca picks up her coffee cup.*

BIANCA: A toast...!

*They each pick up a cup and raise it...*

BIANCA: To Kate and Pete!

PETE: To Bianca and Luke!

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<sup>143</sup> stupid, awkward person

<sup>144</sup> a clear explanation

<sup>145</sup> difficult, embarrassing

<sup>146</sup> give a loud cry

<sup>147</sup> exaggerate

LUKE: To Pete and Luke – stunning singing duo!  
*They play and sing “Your Gonna Miss Me When I’m Gone”*

***The End***