

## THE MOOSE POND BOOK CLUB

### CHARACTERS

MARGE: 65 years old, group leader, mostly serious  
INEZ: 64 years old, a bit timid  
CLARA: 63 years old, mild but confident  
RUTH: 63 years old, colorful, overly confident

SCENE: The ladies of The Moose Pond Book Club sitting at a round table, trying to make sense of Shakespeare

#### MARGE

I don't remember who recommended this story, but I've gotta say, it was definitely an interesting read for our little book club.

#### INEZ

Wasn't it you, Clara Dear?

#### CLARA

Sure was. I read it in college and thought it would be such fun for us.

#### RUTH

I'm not gonna lie. . .I didn't understand it all.

#### INEZ

There were definitely some parts of it that left me wondering, too.

#### CLARA

I had lots of questions when we read it for class, but the professor was *so* good at explaining it. And boy was he a handsome one. Tall and broad shouldered. A Gregory Peck sort.

#### RUTH

Gregory Peck is *so* handsome. Oh, the things I would do to that man. . .

*(All four women giggle and feign embarrassment)*

#### MARGE

Oh, Ruth! You didn't just say that!

RUTH

I just say the things the rest of you are thinking.

MARGE

OK, Ladies. Let's focus. Who wants to start the discussion?

CLARA

I will, unless someone else wants to.

MARGE

Why don't you go right ahead and get us started then, Clara Dear.

CLARA

Thanks, Marge. I'd like to start by saying that I really appreciate Shakespeare and what he did for humanity. And this story, especially, gives us an insider's view into the lives of our ancient ancestors.

INEZ

Well said, Clara. Well said.

RUTH

I'll have to agree with Inez. I thought that was a very insightful start, Clara. But I'm not sure about the title. . . The Taming of the Shrew? What's a 'Shrew' anyways?

MARGE

Well, Ruth, good question. A shrew is a . . . ummm. . . some sort of a . . . Oh, hell, get out the Google machine. (*Takes out smart phone and Googles.*) Let's see here, OK, Google says a shrew is, and I quote, 'a small mole-like mammal.' Hmmm, that certainly changes *my* reading of the story.

CLARA

Actually, mine, too. I don't really remember it being about a small mole-like mammal, but it *has* been years since college. And I *was* paying more attention to the professor than the story anyways. He sure had some moves.

RUTH

Oh, yeah, I really like a man with moves. I remember this one time when Charlie and me were at Woodstock, Charlie took. . .

MARGE

Settle down, Ruth. You've told us all about the things you and Charlie have done—I blush just thinking about it.

RUTH

I know. I'm sorry. I'm just a sexual being. Now, what about this mole?

INEZ

Mole-like mammal.

RUTH

Oh, yeah. Mole-like mammal. So, if Katherine is a mole-like mammal, what is the man? What's his name? Pinocchio? Is he a mole-like mammal too?

MARGE

No, Silly. His name is Petruchio. Not Pinocchio. And I'm pretty sure he's a man.

INEZ

OK, so why then is a man trying to tame a mole-like mammal?

CLARA

I really don't remember Pinocchio trying to tame a mole-like mammal.

RUTH

I think it's something sexual.

MARGE

Something sexual? Between a man and a mole-like mammal?

RUTH

*(Flipping through book)*

Yes. Weird, I know, but you have to remember that there are a lot of things we don't understand about our ancient ancestors. Like on page, um, something something. Yeah, here it is. Pinocchio says to the mole-like mammal, and I quote, 'She's too rough for me.' Charlie tells his buddies that all the time about me. And you girls know *exactly* what's *he's* talking about.

MARGE

OK, Ok, Ruth, I'll give you that one. But we must be missing something here. It just seems, I don't know. Unnatural.

INEZ

Wait. I got something here. I Googled 'Shrew' and read the other definitions. One says a shew is, and I quote, an 'ill-tempered, scolding woman.'

MARGE

Nice job, Inez. Yes, now that makes more sense.

CLARA

So that's why she needs a good taming. Oh, it's all coming back to me now.

INEZ

So, let me get this right. Kathy is an ill-tempered, scolding woman and it's Pinocchio's job to tame her so that she can fit successfully into society?

MARGE

That's exactly right, Inez. That's exactly the way I read it, too.

INEZ

I really like the line where he says, and I quote, 'I will go to her and so she yields to me. For I am rough and woo not like a babe.' That makes so much more sense now that she's not a small mole-like mammal.

CLARA

Oh, my. That Pinocchio is such a man. That's how he tames the ill-tempered, scolding woman. He woos her rough.

MARGE

So, is wooing her the same as taming her?

INEZ

Seems to me that they're different things. I mean, if a man's wooing a woman, he's sweet and caring and listens good. If a man's taming a woman, he's rough and tough and uses whips and things.

RUTH

Oh, Daddy! So, Pinocchio's using whips and things on the ill-tempered, scolding woman? I missed that part. What page is that on, Inez? I'd like a closer read of it.

CLARA

Yes, what page, Inez Dear? That's really worth a bit more investigation. Who knew Shakespeare had such animal sexuality?

RUTH

So wonderfully experimental!

INEZ

It's not in the story—I was just figuring.

CLARA

I didn't understand this thing in the story when it says, 'such a one as leaves a gentleman, and makes a god of such a cullion.' What the heck's a cullion?

MARGE

Oh, yes, I stumbled on that one also, Clara. Google it!

INEZ (*Googling*)

Oh, my. Google says that a cullion is a. . .Umm. . .a cullion is a (*softly*) testicle.

RUTH

*Oh yes!*

MARGE

A testicle?!? A cullion is a testicle?!

CLARA

So, let me get this straight. A gentleman's testicle is a god?

INEZ

That's what Google says. Was this Shakespeare guy very religious? Because a testicle being a god seems awfully biblical to me.

RUTH

So, if a gentleman has *two* testicles, he's *twice* the god?

MARGE

Oh, Ruth. You're too silly! All men have two testicles!

RUTH

Well, actually, Marge, that's not *exactly* true. There was this guy at the commune with Charlie and me name of One Nut Joe who. . .

MARGE

OK, Ruth, we get it. My goodness.

INEZ

But then why would Shakespeare give Pinocchio only one testicle?

MARGE

Maybe two testicles is an evolution thing. Maybe our ancient ancestors only had one.

INEZ

Oh, Doggies! This is getting steamy!

CLARA

I know. I might need a tall glass of ice water before this discussion is done.

RUTH

I'd like a tall glass of water like that Gregory Peck. Oh, the things I'd do to that man!

MARGE

I'm more a Jackie Gleason sort, but Gregory Peck would certainly do in a pinch. And I'm pinching right about now!

RUTH

Not to change the subject, Ladies, but there's this part of the story where Pinocchio tells the ill-tempered, scolding woman, and I quote, 'Come, sit on me.' I laughed so hard. It reminded me of this cartoon I saw in one of Charlie's old girly magazines. This beautiful young buxomy thing is sitting on Pinocchio's face and she's screaming, 'Lie, ya bastard! Lie!'

INEZ

Oh my goodness! Ruth!

CLARA

Wow. I'm gonna need a cold shower.

MARGE

Me too, Clara. Me too.

INEZ

It'll be a cold pitcher of tea for this girl. That'll settle things down a bit.

RUTH

Oh, no, not me. I sure hope Charlie's got his blue pills close by, because I'm going home to jump his bones!

MARGE

Well, be careful of that new hip, Ruth Honey. OK, There's one more thing I want to cover this evening. Pinocchio says to the ill-tempered, scolding woman, and I quote, 'What, with my tongue in your tail?' And she says, and I quote, 'Well, asses are meant to bare, and so are you.' Do you think that means what I think that means?

RUTH

Holy moly! The ill-tempered, scolding woman wants to get naked with Pinocchio!

CLARA

That's the way I read it too, Ruth. Oh. my!

INEZ

Oh boy. That Pinocchio is some man. So romantic!

RUTH

Holy moly!

MARGE

And his tongue. . .and he's naked. . .and. . .you're right, Ruth. . .holy moly! It does mean what I though it means. (*Fanning herself*) I'm thinking it's about time to end this meeting. Don't you ladies?

INEZ

Oh, yes.

CLARA

Oh, please let's end it. I have. . .um. . . housework to do.

RUTH

No housework for this girl. I need to get home and jump Charlie's bones!

MARGE

OK, then, quickly, Ladies. Let's figure out a book for next month. Any suggestions?

INEZ

I was thinking that maybe we need to reach out of our comfort zone and read something like a biography. Maybe Hillary Clinton's or Michelle Obama's?

MARGE

OK, OK, not a bad idea. Any other suggestions?

CLARA

I like the idea of reading stuff that's outside our comfort zone, as Inez suggests, but I also think we should read an old favorite from time to time. And it's been three months since we last read it, so I suggest we read *Shades of Gray*.

MARGE

Oh, Clara, that's a perfect suggestion. Anyone second it?

RUTH

Oh, Yes. I *so* second *Shades of Gray*. It's a classic. What a wonderful idea, Clara.

MARGE

All in favor?

ALL TOGETHER

Yes! Yes please! I'm in! Oh yeah!

MARGE

And so it is. Meeting adjourned. Let's get out of here.

END SCENE