

# The Curse of the Bard

By Stephen Murray

## PERFORMANCE RIGHTS

It is an infringement of the federal copyright law to copy this script in any way or to perform this play without royalty payment. All rights are controlled by Eldridge Publishing Co., Inc. Contact the publisher for additional scripts and further licensing information. On all programs and advertising the author's name must appear as well as this notice: "Produced by special arrangement with Eldridge Publishing Co."

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY

[www.histage.com](http://www.histage.com)  
© 2004 Stephen Murray

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing  
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=1682>

## **STORY OF THE PLAY**

The students of Hilltop High are excited! They're going to put on a performance of "Romeo and Juliet." But the school's drama director, Miss Peggy Donahue, pressed into service by a principal eager to please his superintendent, is horrified. Twenty years before when she was a student at Hilltop High, she starred in a disastrous musical version of Shakespeare's "Scottish play," and she believes the curse lingers on. Sure enough, everything that can go wrong does. The set for the balcony scene collapses, Juliet breaks her leg in a freak accident, her understudy develops laryngitis, and the semi-deaf costumer arrives with cowboy outfits – she thought the show was called "Rodeo and Lariat." Add a hysterical playwright, a stage mom from hell, and a mysterious cult of techies who pledge allegiance to their favorite "tool" – duct tape – and you've got one performance of playful pandemonium, quicker than you can say, "Macbeth" – oops!

## **SYNOPSIS OF SCENES**

### **ACT I**

**Scene 1:** The day before auditions.

**Scene 2:** Audition day.

**Scene 3:** Monday afternoon.

### **ACT II**

**Scene 1:** One week to go.

**Scene 2:** Dress rehearsal.

**Scene 3:** Opening night.

**Scene 4:** After the show.

*The Curse of the Bard*

-3-

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(8 m, 14 w, extras)*

**MISS PEGGY DONAHUE:** Chorus director.

**PRINCIPAL SANDERS:** A distinguished yet bombastic high school principal.

**MALLORY WATSON:** Ambitious student.

**MARGE WATSON:** Mallory's mom; nightmarish stage mother.

**WINIFRED BURNSIDE:** Superintendent's wife and amateur playwright. She is artsy, flamboyant, and pretentious.

**DENISE ADAMS:** Lovely, talented, and less-than-brilliant student.

**PATRICK EMERSON:** Handsome star-football quarterback.

**WENDELL:** A nerdish and awkward student.

**CARLOS:** Student, football teammate of Patrick's.

**LINDSEY:** Stage manager; brilliant, shy student.

**COACH BUTKUS:** Athletic director and football coach. He wears a ball cap, thick glasses, sweat suit, and a whistle around his neck.

**MINDY:** Yearbook editor.

**DONNA TERRANOVA:** Stage crew. Mysterious, spooky Gothic-type figure dressed in black jeans and a black T-shirt. She has her initials made of duct tape on her shirt, one letter over the other.

**URIAH ANDERSON:** Stage crew. Mysterious, spooky Gothic-type figure dressed in black jeans and a black T-shirt. He has his initials made of duct tape on his shirt, one letter over the other. He is very spooky.

**CASSIE PUCHALSKI:** Stage crew. Mysterious, spooky Gothic-type figure dressed in black jeans and a black T-shirt. She has her initials made of duct tape on her shirt, one letter over the other.

**TOM EISENSON:** Stage crew. Mysterious, spooky Gothic-type figure dressed in black jeans and a black T-shirt. He has his initials made of duct tape on his shirt, one letter over the other.

**EDNA PHELPS:** Hearing-impaired school secretary, pianist and costume designer. Elderly yet energetic.

**AMY:** An annoying freshman.

**SARAH:** Student.

**KATRINA:** Student.

**MONISHA:** Student.

**SAM:** Student, football teammate of Patrick's.

**EXTRAS:** Additional Hilltop High students.

*The Curse of the Bard*

-4-

**PROPS**

Audition flyers  
Clipboard with blank papers (sign-up sheet)  
Large musical score  
Envelope containing Mallory's headshot, resume and video  
Whistle (Coach)  
Poster: "Auditions Today"  
Scripts  
3-ring binder  
Camera with flash (Marge)  
Supermarket tabloid (Edna)  
Folder with papers (Peggy)  
Tape measures  
Yearbook  
Rehearsal schedules  
(3) Broken mirrors  
Sword  
Box marked "Good Luck Charms"  
Good luck charms: rabbit's foot, four-leaf clover, sliver dollar, lucky socks, necklace of garlic, and box of Lucky Charms cereal  
Horseshoes  
Witch doctor masks  
Hack saw and wrench  
Bundles of tickets (Marge)  
New scene for play (papers)  
Rolls of duct tape  
(4) T-shirts with letters spelling "D-U-C-T T-A-P-E"  
Cowboy hats and bandannas  
Planks of wood for splint  
Swivel chair on rollers  
Balcony duct taped together on rolling platform  
Bongos (Monisha)  
Leg cast and crutches (Denise)

**SOUND EFFECTS**

Offstage light instrument crash and offstage balcony crash.

**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: The auditorium of Hilltop High School, a bare stage. PRINCIPAL SANDERS ENTERS putting up signs on the walls saying, "Play Auditions." STUDENTS ENTER, and upon seeing the signs, become excited about the chance to perform in a play. Some are carrying copies of the audition flyer.)*

SARAH: Look at this! *(Reading.)* Play auditions tomorrow at 3 o'clock. Can you believe it?!

KATRINA: Wow! A play. Wouldn't it be fun to be in a play?

MONISHA: Why don't we go to the auditions?

*(PATRICK ENTERS and is curious about the girls' conversation.)*

SARAH: I'll go if you go.

KATRINA: I'll go if you go.

MONISHA: Then I guess we'll all go!

PATRICK: Where are you going?

*(SARAH, KATRINA, and MONISHA are startled and scream.)*

KATRINA: Patrick, you scared us.

PATRICK: What's all the fuss about?

SARAH: The play auditions tomorrow.

MONISHA: I don't suppose a big shot football player like you would want to be in a play.

PATRICK: Why not? Sounds like fun. I'll see you at the auditions, girls. *(PATRICK grabs a flyer off the wall and EXITS.)*

MONISHA: *(In awe.)* Our star quarterback is trying out for the play!

SARAH: I am definitely going to the audition now.

KATRINA: Me too!

*The Curse of the Bard*

-6-

*(MISS PEGGY DONAHUE, the school chorus director, ENTERS. She seems to be in a hurry.)*

MONISHA: Hi, Miss Donahue!

SARAH, KATRINA, and MONISHA: See you at the auditions!

*(SARAH, KATRINA, and MONISHA EXIT.)*

PEGGY: Auditions? What for?

*(MALLORY, DENISE, CARLOS, MINDY, AMY, SAM, and additional extras ENTER excitedly. They all speak in rapid succession to PEGGY. Peggy is confused and uncertain how to respond. EXTRAS may improvise an appropriate line similar to the others. LINDSEY ENTERS but lags behind the others without immediately speaking to Peggy.)*

MALLORY: I'm looking forward to the auditions, Miss Donahue.

DENISE: Wow! A play will be totally cool!

CARLOS: Will there be swords in this play? That would be awesome!

MINDY: I don't want a big part. Just something.

AMY: Can freshman audition? I want to audition!

SAM: I can do my own stunts!

*(ALL STUDENTS except LINDSEY EXIT excitedly. Lindsey approaches PEGGY shyly.)*

LINDSEY: Hello, Miss Donahue.

PEGGY: What? Oh, yes, hello, Lindsey.

*(LINDSEY pauses as if to speak, then EXITS timidly. WENDELL ENTERS.)*

WENDELL: Miss Donahue?

PEGGY: Yes, Wendell.

WENDELL: I just wanted to inform you that I will indeed be attending the auditions tomorrow afternoon.

*The Curse of the Bard*

-7-

PEGGY: That's great, Wendell. Now, tell me. What are these auditions for?

WENDELL: Surely you jest, Miss Donahue. The play, of course. The notices are everywhere. I'm certain you will have a big turnout.

PEGGY: A play? There hasn't been a play at Hilltop High since I ... for several years.

WENDELL: I was not aware of that. I suppose that makes this an extra-special event. I have to go. I need to do an Internet search on audition preparation. See you tomorrow, Miss Donahue!

*(WENDELL EXITS. PRINCIPAL SANDERS ENTERS.)*

PEGGY: Principal Sanders?

SANDERS: Yes, Miss Donahue.

PEGGY: Is it true that you have decided to have Hilltop High put on a play?

SANDERS: Absolutely, Miss Donahue. And you are directing it.

PEGGY: But ... but ... but --

SANDERS: It's not like you to be speechless, Miss Donahue.

PEGGY: I'm a little upset, Principal Sanders.

SANDERS: I suppose I did just drop a little bomb on you with the play and all. But look how excited the students are!

PEGGY: Of course they're excited. There hasn't been a play here at Hilltop High for twenty years.

SANDERS: Exactly!

PEGGY: They have no idea how dangerous it is.

SANDERS: Dangerous? Theatre isn't dangerous. Well ... maybe that show "Cats" ... if you've got allergies ...

PEGGY: I'm talking about the curse.

SANDERS: The curse?

PEGGY: The curse of the "Scottish play."

SANDERS: "Brigadoon?"

PEGGY: No, Shakespeare's Scottish play.

SANDERS: *(Guessing blindly.)* "Hamlet"? No, he was Danish. I'll get it. Hmm, "The Merchant of Venice." No, Venice isn't in Scotland ....

### **End of Freeview**

Download your complete script from Eldridge Publishing  
<http://www.histage.com/playdetails.asp?PID=1682>

Eldridge Publishing, a leading drama play publisher since 1906, offers more than a thousand full-length plays, one-act plays, melodramas, holiday plays, religious plays, children's theatre plays and musicals of all kinds.

For more than a hundred years, our family-owned business has had the privilege of publishing some of the finest playwrights, allowing their work to come alive on stages worldwide.

We look forward to being a part of your next theatrical production.

Eldridge Publishing... for the start of your theatre experience!