

THE TEMPEST

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Adapted for Young People  
from the original play by  
William Shakespeare

by

Judy Matetzschk-Campbell

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Edited by Andrew Perry

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The Tempest was first produced by Pollyanna Theatre Company in Austin TX at The Daugherty Arts Center Theatre in August 2009. The cast and crew were as follows:

<u>PROSPERA:</u>	Rachel McGinnis
<u>ARIEL:</u>	Michelle Keffer
<u>ANTONIO:</u>	Skip Johnson
<u>ALONSA:</u>	Brie Walker Tschoepe
<u>FERDINAND:</u>	David Meissner
<u>MIRANDA:</u>	Bethany Harbaugh
<u>GONZALA:</u>	Patricia Robinson
<u>BOATSWAIN:</u>	Andrew Perry
<u>DIRECTOR:</u>	Judy Matetzschk-Campbell
<u>STAGE MANAGER:</u>	Andrew Perry
<u>SCENIC DESIGNER:</u>	Ia Ensterä
<u>COSTUME DESIGNER:</u>	Ia Ensterä
<u>LIGHTING DESIGNER:</u>	Don Day
<u>SOUND DESIGNER:</u>	Peter Blackwell
<u>ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER:</u>	Kayla Moore
<u>PRODUCTION ASSISTANT:</u>	William Ott

## Cast of Characters

<u>PROSPERA:</u>	The displaced Duchess of Milan, Mother to MIRANDA, sister to ANTONIO
<u>ARIEL:</u>	A spirit helper
<u>ANTONIO:</u>	The Duke of Milan, brother to PROSPERA
<u>ALONSA:</u>	Queen of Naples, mother of FERDINAND
<u>FERDINAND:</u>	Son of ALONSA, prince of Naples
<u>MIRANDA:</u>	Daughter of PROSPERA
<u>GONZALA:</u>	An honest nobleperson
<u>BOATSWAIN:</u>	The captain of the queen's ship

The goal of this adaptation of *The Tempest* is to introduce young audiences to the major plot which, like many Shakespeare's plays, is based on the conflicts within families, new love, and the battle between humans and nature. The more adult characters and themes have been edited out.

This adaptation also explores how changing the gender of some the most powerful characters in the play in many ways updates the plot, turning it into a play about strong females and loving mothers.

### SCENE

The deck of a ship during a storm & various locations on an island.

### TIME

Any time past, present, or future.

Scene One

SETTING: The deck of a ship at sea in a storm.

AT RISE: Loud noises of thunder and lightning. The BOATSWAIN, GONZALA, ANTONIO, and FERDINAND frantically try to secure the ship's riggings.

BOATSWAIN  
Come on, men! That's the way to do it! Quickly! Quickly! Take in the upper sail. Listen to my orders! Blow your heart out, storm! So long as we have enough room to avoid running aground!

(ALONSA enters.)

ALONSA  
Be careful, good Boatswain! Make my men work.

BOATSWAIN  
Please stay below deck, your Majesty.

ALONSA  
What are you doing?

BOATSWAIN  
I am busy! Can't you hear me giving orders! Your Majesty, you are getting in the way of our work. Stay in your cabins. You are helping the storm, not your men!

GONZALA  
Don't get so wound up, my good man.

BOATSWAIN  
I am only wound up because this sea's wound up. Now, please get out of here! Do you think these waves care anything about queens and officials? Go to your cabins.

GONZALA  
Just remember who you've got on board with you, good man.

BOATSWAIN

Nobody I care about more than myself. You are a queen's advisor. If you can order the storm to calm down, we could all put down our ropes and rest. Harder, men! Get out of our way, I tell you!

(BOATSWAIN exits with  
ALONSA.)

GONZALA

I feel a lot better after talking to this man. He doesn't look like a person who would drown. He looks like he was born to be hanged. I hope he lives long enough through this storm to be hanged!

(BOATSWAIN enters.)

BOATSWAIN

Bring down that top sale! Faster! Now lower, lower! Let the ship sail close to the wind!

(ALONSA enters.)

BOATSWAIN

Yet again? What do you here? Shall we give o'er and drown? Have you a mind to sink?

ALONSA

You are more scared of drowning than we are.

GONZALA

I guarantee he won't drown, even if the ship were as fragile as an eggshell. He will live to be hanged.

BOATSWAIN

Lay her a-hold, a-hold! Set her two courses off to see again. Lay her off!

FERDINAND

All lost! To prayers, to prayers, all is lost!

(FERDINAND & ALONSA kneel  
to pray.)

BOATSWAIN

What, we're going to die?

GONZALA

The queen and the prince are praying. Let us assist them,  
for our case is as theirs.

ANTONIO

I am out of patience with all of this. We have been cheated  
out of our lives by a bunch of incompetent sailors. This  
bigmouth jerk here...

(As he speaks, we see  
PROSPERA and MIRANDA  
appear. They have been  
watching the storm from a  
distance.)

ALL ON SHIP

(Ad lib)

God have mercy on us!  
The ship is breaking up!  
We split! We split!  
Goodbye, world...  
We are breaking up!

ANTONIO

We will all sink with our Queen. Goodbye, your Majesty.

GONZALA

Right now I would give a thousand furlongs of sea for one  
little acre of dry ground. But what is destined to happen  
will happen!

(The storm casts them  
overboard.)

(END OF SCENE)

Scene Two

SETTING: On the shore of an island.

AT RISE: MIRANDA and PROSPERA watch the shipwrecked people exit.

MIRANDA

Dear Mother, if you caused this terrible storm with your magic powers, please put an end to it! I suffered along with all of the good people I watched suffer! A fine ship, with some good people in it, I'm sure, smashed to pieces! The poor people died, I'm sure of it!

PROSPERA

Be collected. No more amazement. Tell your piteous heart there's no harm done.

MIRANDA

No harm? How can you say, no harm, Mother? What a horrible day!

PROSPERA

There was no harm, I'm telling you. Everything I did has been for you, my dear daughter. You don't know what you are, since you don't know who I am. I am better than merely Prospera, your humble mother who lives in a poor little shack on a poor little island. You don't know...

MIRANDA

More to know did not meddle with my thoughts.

PROSPERA

It is time for you to know the whole story. Help me off with this magic cloak.

(talking to cloak)

Lie there, my magic...

(to MIRANDA)

Wipe your eyes and take comfort. I arranged the horrible shipwreck, which moved you so. I did it carefully, so that not a single person was hurt. No, not so much as a hair on anyone's head was harmed the ship you saw sink. And it is time for you to know more.

MIRANDA

You have often begun to tell me what I am, but stopped and left me to a bootless inquisition, concluding, "Stay. Not yet."

PROSPERA

The hour's now come. The very minute bids thee open thine ear. Obey and be attentive. Canst though remember a time before we came to this cell? I do not think though canst, for then thou wast not out three years old.

MIRANDA

Sure I can, Mother!

PROSPERA

What do you remember?

MIRANDA

Well, my memory is hazy, more like a dream than a real memory...

PROSPERA

Twelve years ago, Miranda, twelve years ago your mother was the Duchess of Milan, a powerful princess.

MIRANDA

But aren't you my mother?

PROSPERA

(Nodding her head)

Your mother was Duchess of Milan and you were her heir, a true princess.

MIRANDA

Good lord! What evil things were done to us that we were driven here?

PROSPERA

We were pushed out of power by evil deeds. But we were blessed in being helped toward this island.

MIRANDA

It breaks my heart to think how painful it must be for you to recall of this, but please tell me more.



PROSPERA

My brother, your uncle Antonio, my brother whom aside from you, I loved more than anyone else in the world, I trusted to run my state, which at the time was the strongest in the land, betrayed me. I was most beloved among Duchesses, famous for my dignity and my education. Since I was so drawn to studying things like logic, geometry, astronomy, astrology, I let my control of the government slide a bit. I was too wrapped up in my books. But, your disloyal uncle - are you paying attention?

MIRANDA

I am hanging on every word.

PROSPERA

Once Antonio got the knack for granting requests, denying others, promoting those who won his favor while keeping others down, he won over the people who used to be devoted to me. Or he changed them, you might say. Since he had control over the whole government while I studied alone with my books, he soon made everyone sing his own song, whichever song he happened to like. Are you paying attention?

MIRANDA

Yes, I am, Mother. Please go on!

PROSPERA

I neglected practical matters, being totally dedicated to solitude and improving my mind with subjects more valuable than most people imagine. I unwittingly stirred up evil in my disloyal brother. My deep trust in him made him deeply untrustworthy. Your uncle Antonio started to believe that he was the Duke, like a liar who begins to believe in his own lie.

MIRANDA

Mother, how terrible!

PROSPERA

To make his political performance perfect, he had to become the Duke of Milan himself, pushing me aside. The more I studied, the more unfit Antonio judged me to be. He was so power-hungry that he allied himself with the Queen of Naples, agreeing to pay her large sums of money. He put the dukedom of Milan under the humiliating control of the Queen of Naples in order to shove me aside.

MIRANDA

Good heavens! This actually makes me think badly of my grandmother for having such a terrible son!

PROSPERA

According to the agreement that my brother Antonio made with the Queen of Naples, in exchange for money, the Queen would send men to get rid of me and would make my brother Antonio the Duke of Milan. One fateful night at midnight, Antonio opened the gates of Milan and his officers rushed me and you, my baby girl, out into the pitch black of night.

MIRANDA

Why didn't they just kill us that night? Why this island alone?

PROSPERA

They didn't dare. The people of Milan loved me, admired my studies, and would not have stood for it. They had to disguise their real intentions. So they hurried us onto a ship and carried us a number of miles out to see where they put us in a rotting lifeboat. They tossed us into the water to cry to the sea.

MIRANDA

How on Earth did we manage to get to shore at all?

PROSPERA

With God's help! We had a little food and fresh water that a friend, a true noblewoman from Naples, Gonzala, had given us out of her kindness and loyalty to me. She knew what Antonio was doing was wrong but she had no power to stop him. Gonzala had been chosen to carry out the plan and put us to sea. But she gave us clothes and other necessities. And knowing how much I loved my books, she gave me some books from my library. One was of magic, the one I've studied most. I've been studying these books, Miranda, for all these many years and they have given me great powers.

MIRANDA

Gonzala... I wish I could see that woman someday.

PROSPERA

(puts her cloak back on)

Sit still and listen. We arrived on this island.

(She is casting a spell on  
MIRANDA, putting her to  
sleep.)

PROSPERA (Cont.)

I have acted as your teacher here, and given you a better education than most princesses get.

MIRANDA

May God thank you for it. But Mother, why did you conjure this storm and why today?

PROSPERA

It is my enemies who have happened to wreck their ship on this island. As I see it, my fate hangs on this very lucky event, and if I handle it wrong, I'll suffer for the rest of my life. And so will you, my girl. Now, no more questions. Sleep now.

(MIRANDA sleeps.)

Come to me, servant, come! I'm ready now. Come to me, Ariel.

(ARIEL enters.)

ARIEL

All hail, great mistress! Grave madame, hail! I come to answer thy best pleasure, be't to fly, to swim, to dive into the fire, to ride on the curled clouds. To thy strong bidding, task Ariel and all her quality.

PROSPERA

Spirit, did you carry out the storm just as I ordered?

ARIEL

Down to the last detail. I boarded the Queen's ship, and in every corner of it, from the deck to the cabins, I made everyone terrified. I flashed about faster than lightning. I was lightning!

PROSPERA

Good spirit! Who could ever be so steady and strong that a disturbance like that wouldn't infect his reason?

ARIEL

Everyone there did get a little crazy. The sailors dove into the sea, leaving behind the ship that I set on fire. The Queen's son, Ferdinand, with his hair standing straight up, was the first person to jump into the waves.

PROSPERA

Good job! Was it near the shore?

ARIEL

Very near, my mistress.

PROSPERA

Are they all safe, Ariel?

ARIEL

Nobody was hurt in the slightest. I saw to that! Even their clothes are unstained, and look fresher than before the storm. I separated them into groups around the island, just as you ordered. I sent the Queen's son off by himself to a faraway nook on the island, just as you instructed. Ferdinand is sitting there now sighing, with his arms crossed, like this.

(ARIEL demonstrates.)

PROSPERA

And what did you do with the ship?

ARIEL

The Queen's ship is completely safe. No lasting damage. It is hidden in that deep cove on the other side of the island. Again, just as you instructed. The Boatswain is below deck, sleeping from the magic spell I cast over him. He and the ship will be ready when you need them.

PROSPERA

Areal, you have done your work exactly. But there is more work to be done. What time is it?

ARIEL

Past the mid-day...

PROSPERA

We cannot waste a minute between now and six o'clock.

ARIEL

Since you are giving me new assignments, let me remind you, my mistress, what you promised me but have not granted yet.

PROSPERA

What? A bad mood? What could you possibly ask me for?

ARIEL

My freedom, my mistress.

PROSPERA

Before your sentence has been completed? Do not say another word!

ARIEL

I prithee, remember I have done thee worthy service, told thee no lies, made thee no mistakings, served without grudge or grumblings. Thou didst promise to take a full year off of my sentence!

PROSPERA

Have you forgotten the torture I freed you from?

ARIEL

No.

PROSPERA

Have you forgotten the horrid Sycorax! She who imprisoned you! You, my slave, were her servant at the time, as you admit yourself. But you would not carry out her horrible orders. You refused her terrible deeds. In a fit of rage she locked you up in the hollow of a pine tree and left you there for twelve years. During that time she died, and you were trapped, moaning and groaning. There was no one on this island to help you.

ARIEL

That is true, but...

PROSPERA

How tortured you were when I found you. Your groans made wolves howl. Even the bears felt sorry for you. It was my magic from my books that saved you when I arrived on this island and heard you. It was I who have already set you free once.

ARIEL

I remember. Thank you, Mistress.

PROSPERA

And it is I who can put you back where I found you! If you complain any more, that is exactly what I will do.

ARIEL

Please forgive me, Mistress. I will be obedient and do as you wish without complaining.

PROSPERA

Do so, and I will give you your freedom in just two short days. You have my word.

ARIEL

That is noble of you, Mistress. Just tell me, what shall I do for you? I will do it. What shall I do?

PROSPERA

(handing her a garment)

Go disguise yourself as a sea nymph. Be invisible to everyone except to me, your Mistress. Put this on. It holds some of my magic. Hurry, go and dress!

(ARIEL exits and MIRANDA stirs.)

PROSPERA

Wake, dear heart, wake! Thou hast slept well. Awake!

MIRANDA

Your story must have made me very sleepy.

PROSPERA

Shake off that sleep and come with me.

(They exit.)

(END OF SCENE)