

The Taming of the Shrew

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SCENE I. Padua. A public place.

Enter LUCENTIO and his man TRANIO

LUCENTIO

Tranio, since for the great desire I had
To see fair Padua, nursery of arts,
I am arrived for fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy;
And by my father's love and leave am arm'd
With his good will and thy good company,
My trusty servant, well approved in all,
Here let us breathe and haply institute
A course of learning and ingenious studies.
Pisa renown'd for grave citizens
Gave me my being and my father first,
A merchant of great traffic through the world,
Vincetino come of Bentivolii.
Vincetino's son brought up in Florence
It shall become to serve all hopes conceived,
To deck his fortune with his virtuous deeds:
And therefore, Tranio, for the time I study,
Virtue and that part of philosophy
Will I apply that treats of happiness
By virtue specially to be achieved.
Tell me thy mind; for I have Pisa left
And am to Padua come, as he that leaves
A shallow plash to plunge him in the deep
And with satiety seeks to quench his thirst.

TRANIO

Mi perdonato, gentle master mine,
I am in all affected as yourself;
Glad that you thus continue your resolve
To suck the sweets of sweet philosophy.
Only, good master, while we do admire
This virtue and this moral discipline,
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray;
Or so devote to Aristotle's cheques
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured:
Balk logic with acquaintance that you have
And practise rhetoric in your common talk;
Music and poesy use to quicken you;
The mathematics and the metaphysics,
Fall to them as you find your stomach serves you;

No profit grows where is no pleasure ta'en:
In brief, sir, study what you most affect.

LUCENTIO

Gramercies, Tranio, well dost thou advise.
If, Biondello, thou wert come ashore,
We could at once put us in readiness,
And take a lodging fit to entertain
Such friends as time in Padua shall beget.
But stay a while: what company is this?

TRANIO

Master, some show to welcome us to town.

Enter BAPTISTA, KATHARINA, BIANCA, GREMIO, and HORTENSIO. LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand by

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,
For how I firmly am resolved you know;
That is, not bestow my youngest daughter
Before I have a husband for the elder:
If either of you both love Katharina,
Because I know you well and love you well,
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO

[Aside] To cart her rather: she's too rough for me.
There, There, Hortensio, will you any wife?

KATHARINA

I pray you, sir, is it your will
To make a stale of me amongst these mates?

HORTENSIO

Mates, maid! how mean you that? no mates for you,
Unless you were of gentler, milder mould.

KATHARINA

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear:
I wis it is not half way to her heart;
But if it were, doubt not her care should be
To comb your noddle with a three-legg'd stool
And paint your face and use you like a fool.

HORTENSIA

From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

GREMIO

And me too, good Lord!

TRANIO

Hush, master! here's some good pastime toward:
That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.

LUCENTIO

But in the other's silence do I see
Maid's mild behavior and sobriety.
Peace, Tranio!

TRANIO

Well said, master; mum! and gaze your fill.

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, that I may soon make good
What I have said, Bianca, get you in:
And let it not displease thee, good Bianca,
For I will love thee ne'er the less, my girl.

KATHARINA

A pretty peat! it is best
Put finger in the eye, an she knew why.

BIANCA

Sister, content you in my discontent.
Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe:
My books and instruments shall be my company,
On them to took and practise by myself.

LUCENTIO

Hark, Tranio! thou may'st hear Minerva speak.

HORTENSIO

Signior Baptista, will you be so strange?
Sorry am I that our good will effects
Bianca's grief.

GREMIO

Why will you mew her up,

Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell,
And make her bear the penance of her tongue?

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, content ye; I am resolved:
Go in, Bianca:

Exit BIANCA

And for I know she taketh most delight
In music, instruments and poetry,
Schoolmasters will I keep within my house,
Fit to instruct her youth. If you, Hortensio,
Or Signior Gremio, you, know any such,
Prefer them hither; for to cunning men
I will be very kind, and liberal
To mine own children in good bringing up:
And so farewell. Katharina, you may stay;
For I have more to commune with Bianca.

Exit

KATHARINA

Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not? What,
shall I be appointed hours; as though, belike, I
knew not what to take and what to leave, ha?

Exit

GREMIO

You may go to the devil's dam: your gifts are so
good, here's none will hold you. Their love is not
so great, Hortensio, but we may blow our nails
together, and fast it fairly out: our cakes dough on
both sides. Farewell: yet for the love I bear my
sweet Bianca, if I can by any means light on a fit
man to teach her that wherein she delights, I will
wish him to her father.

HORTENSIO

So will I, Signior Gremio: but a word, I pray.
Though the nature of our quarrel yet never brooked
parle, know now, upon advice, it toucheth us both,
that we may yet again have access to our fair
mistress and be happy rivals in Bianco's love, to
labour and effect one thing specially.

GREMIO

What's that, I pray?

HORTENSIO

Marry, sir, to get a husband for her sister.

GREMIO

A husband! a devil.

HORTENSIO

I say, a husband.

GREMIO

I say, a devil. Thinkest thou, Hortensio, though her father be very rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to hell?

HORTENSIO

Tush, Gremio, though it pass your patience and mine to endure her loud alarums, why, man, there be good fellows in the world, an a man could light on them, would take her with all faults, and money enough.

GREMIO

I cannot tell; but I had as lief take her dowry with this condition, to be whipped at the high cross every morning.

HORTENSIO

Faith, as you say, there's small choice in rotten apples. But come; since this bar in law makes us friends, it shall be so far forth friendly maintained all by helping Baptista's eldest daughter to a husband we set his youngest free for a husband, and then have to't a fresh. Sweet Bianca! Happy man be his dole! He that runs fastest gets the ring. How say you, Signior Gremio?

GREMIO

I am agreed; and would I had given him the best horse in Padua to begin his wooing that would thoroughly woo her, wed her and bed her and rid the house of her! Come on.

Exeunt GREMIO and HORTENSIO

TRANIO

I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible
That love should of a sudden take such hold?

LUCENTIO

O Tranio, till I found it to be true,
I never thought it possible or likely;
But see, while idly I stood looking on,
I found the effect of love in idleness:
And now in plainness do confess to thee,
That art to me as secret and as dear
As Anna to the queen of Carthage was,
Tranio, I burn, I pine, I perish, Tranio,
If I achieve not this young modest girl.
Counsel me, Tranio, for I know thou canst;
Assist me, Tranio, for I know thou wilt.

TRANIO

Master, it is no time to chide you now;
Affection is not rated from the heart:
If love have touch'd you, nought remains but so,
'Redime te captum quam queas minimo.'

LUCENTIO

Gramercies, lad, go forward; this contents:
The rest will comfort, for thy counsel's sound.

TRANIO

Master, you look'd so longly on the maid,
Perhaps you mark'd not what's the pith of all.

LUCENTIO

O yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face,
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand.
When with his knees he kiss'd the Cretan strand.

TRANIO

Saw you no more? mark'd you not how her sister
Began to scold and raise up such a storm
That mortal ears might hardly endure the din?

LUCENTIO

Tranio, I saw her coral lips to move
And with her breath she did perfume the air:

Sacred and sweet was all I saw in her.

TRANIO

Nay, then, 'tis time to stir him from his trance.
I pray, awake, sir: if you love the maid,
Bend thoughts and wits to achieve her. Thus it stands:
Her eldest sister is so curst and shrewd
That till the father rid his hands of her,
Master, your love must live a maid at home;
And therefore has he closely mew'd her up,
Because she will not be annoy'd with suitors.

LUCENTIO

Ah, Tranio, what a cruel father's he!
But art thou not advised, he took some care
To get her cunning schoolmasters to instruct her?

TRANIO

Ay, marry, am I, sir; and now 'tis plotted.

LUCENTIO

I have it, Tranio.

TRANIO

Master, for my hand,
Both our inventions meet and jump in one.

LUCENTIO

Tell me thine first.

TRANIO

You will be schoolmaster
And undertake the teaching of the maid:
That's your device.

LUCENTIO

It is: may it be done?

TRANIO

Not possible; for who shall bear your part,
And be in Padua here Vincentio's son,
Keep house and ply his book, welcome his friends,
Visit his countrymen and banquet them?

LUCENTIO

Basta; content thee, for I have it full.
We have not yet been seen in any house,
Nor can we lie distinguish'd by our faces
For man or master; then it follows thus;
Thou shalt be master, Tranio, in my stead,
Keep house and port and servants as I should:
I will some other be, some Florentine,
Some Neapolitan, or meaner man of Pisa.
'Tis hatch'd and shall be so: Tranio, at once
Uncase thee; take my colour'd hat and cloak:
When Biondello comes, he waits on thee;
But I will charm him first to keep his tongue.

TRANIO

So had you need.
In brief, sir, sith it your pleasure is,
And I am tied to be obedient;
For so your father charged me at our parting,
'Be serviceable to my son,' quoth he,
Although I think 'twas in another sense;
I am content to be Lucentio,
Because so well I love Lucentio.

LUCENTIO

Tranio, be so, because Lucentio loves:
And let me be a slave, to achieve that maid
Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye.
Here comes the rogue.

Enter BIONDELLO

Sirrah, where have you been?

BIONDELLO

Where have I been! Nay, how now! where are you?
Master, has my fellow Tranio stolen your clothes? Or
you stolen his? or both? pray, what's the news?

LUCENTIO

Sirrah, come hither: 'tis no time to jest,
And therefore frame your manners to the time.
Your fellow Tranio here, to save my life,
Puts my apparel and my countenance on,
And I for my escape have put on his;
For in a quarrel since I came ashore
I kill'd a man and fear I was descried:
Wait you on him, I charge you, as becomes,

While I make way from hence to save my life:
You understand me?

BIONDELLO

I, sir! ne'er a whit.

LUCENTIO

And not a jot of Tranio in your mouth:
Tranio is changed into Lucentio.

BIONDELLO

The better for him: would I were so too!

TRANIO

So could I, faith, boy, to have the next wish after,
That Lucentio indeed had Baptista's youngest daughter.
But, sirrah, not for my sake, but your master's, I advise
You use your manners discreetly in all kind of companies:
When I am alone, why, then I am Tranio;
But in all places else your master Lucentio.

LUCENTIO

Tranio, let's go: one thing more rests, that
thysself execute, to make one among these wooers: if
thou ask me why, sufficeth, my reasons are both good
and weighty.

Exeunt

The presenters above speak

First Servant

My lord, you nod; you do not mind the play.

SLY

Yes, by Saint Anne, do I. A good matter, surely:
comes there any more of it?

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My lord, 'tis but begun.

SLY

'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady:
would 'twere done!

They sit and mark

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