

The Taming of the Shrew

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SCENE II. Padua. Before HORTENSIO'S house.

Enter PETRUCHIO and his man GRUMIO

PETRUCHIO

Verona, for a while I take my leave,
To see my friends in Padua, but of all
My best beloved and approved friend,
Hortensio; and I trow this is his house.
Here, sirrah Grumio; knock, I say.

GRUMIO

Knock, sir! whom should I knock? is there man has
rebused your worship?

PETRUCHIO

Villain, I say, knock me here soundly.

GRUMIO

Knock you here, sir! why, sir, what am I, sir, that
I should knock you here, sir?

PETRUCHIO

Villain, I say, knock me at this gate
And rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pate.

GRUMIO

My master is grown quarrelsome. I should knock
you first,
And then I know after who comes by the worst.

PETRUCHIO

Will it not be?
Faith, sirrah, an you'll not knock, I'll ring it;
I'll try how you can sol, fa, and sing it.

He wrings him by the ears

GRUMIO

Help, masters, help! my master is mad.

PETRUCHIO

Now, knock when I bid you, sirrah villain!

Enter HORTENSIO

HORTENSIO

How now! what's the matter? My old friend Grumio!
and my good friend Petruchio! How do you all at Verona?

PETRUCHIO

Signior Hortensio, come you to part the fray?
'Con tutto il cuore, ben trovato,' may I say.

HORTENSIO

'Alla nostra casa ben venuto, molto honorato signor
mio Petruchio.' Rise, Grumio, rise: we will compound
this quarrel.

GRUMIO

Nay, 'tis no matter, sir, what he 'leges in Latin.
if this be not a lawful case for me to leave his
service, look you, sir, he bid me knock him and rap
him soundly, sir: well, was it fit for a servant to
use his master so, being perhaps, for aught I see,
two and thirty, a pip out? Whom would to God I had
well knock'd at first, Then had not Grumio come by the worst.

PETRUCHIO

A senseless villain! Good Hortensio,
I bade the rascal knock upon your gate
And could not get him for my heart to do it.

GRUMIO

Knock at the gate! O heavens! Spake you not these
words plain, 'Sirrah, knock me here, rap me here,
knock me well, and knock me soundly'? And come you
now with, 'knocking at the gate'?

PETRUCHIO

Sirrah, be gone, or talk not, I advise you.

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, patience; I am Grumio's pledge:
Why, this's a heavy chance 'twixt him and you,
Your ancient, trusty, pleasant servant Grumio.
And tell me now, sweet friend, what happy gale
Blows you to Padua here from old Verona?

PETRUCHIO

Such wind as scatters young men through the world,
To seek their fortunes farther than at home
Where small experience grows. But in a few,
Signior Hortensio, thus it stands with me:
Antonio, my father, is deceased;
And I have thrust myself into this maze,
Haply to wive and thrive as best I may:
Crowns in my purse I have and goods at home,
And so am come abroad to see the world.

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, shall I then come roundly to thee
And wish thee to a shrewd ill-favour'd wife?
Thou'ldst thank me but a little for my counsel:
And yet I'll promise thee she shall be rich
And very rich: but thou'rt too much my friend,
And I'll not wish thee to her.

PETRUCHIO

Signior Hortensio, 'twixt such friends as we
Few words suffice; and therefore, if thou know
One rich enough to be Petruchio's wife,
As wealth is burden of my wooing dance,
Be she as foul as was Florentius' love,
As old as Sibyl and as curst and shrewd
As Socrates' Xanthippe, or a worse,
She moves me not, or not removes, at least,
Affection's edge in me, were she as rough
As are the swelling Adriatic seas:
I come to wive it wealthily in Padua;
If wealthily, then happily in Padua.

GRUMIO

Nay, look you, sir, he tells you flatly what his
mind is: Why give him gold enough and marry him to
a puppet or an aglet-baby; or an old trot with ne'er
a tooth in her head, though she have as many diseases
as two and fifty horses: why, nothing comes amiss,
so money comes withal.

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, since we are stepp'd thus far in,
I will continue that I broach'd in jest.
I can, Petruchio, help thee to a wife
With wealth enough and young and beauteous,
Brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman:
Her only fault, and that is faults enough,
Is that she is intolerable curst
And shrewd and froward, so beyond all measure
That, were my state far worsen than it is,
I would not wed her for a mine of gold.

PETRUCHIO

Hortensio, peace! thou know'st not gold's effect:
Tell me her father's name and 'tis enough;
For I will board her, though she chide as loud
As thunder when the clouds in autumn crack.

HORTENSIO

Her father is Baptista Minola,
An affable and courteous gentleman:
Her name is Katharina Minola,
Renown'd in Padua for her scolding tongue.

PETRUCHIO

I know her father, though I know not her;
And he knew my deceased father well.
I will not sleep, Hortensio, till I see her;
And therefore let me be thus bold with you
To give you over at this first encounter,
Unless you will accompany me thither.

GRUMIO

I pray you, sir, let him go while the humour lasts.
O' my word, an she knew him as well as I do, she
would think scolding would do little good upon him:
she may perhaps call him half a score knaves or so:
why, that's nothing; an he begin once, he'll rail in
his rope-tricks. I'll tell you what sir, an she
stand him but a little, he will throw a figure in
her face and so disfigure her with it that she
shall have no more eyes to see withal than a cat.
You know him not, sir.

HORTENSIO

Tarry, Petruchio, I must go with thee,
For in Baptista's keep my treasure is:
He hath the jewel of my life in hold,
His youngest daughter, beautiful Binaca,

And her withholds from me and other more,
Sutors to her and rivals in my love,
Supposing it a thing impossible,
For those defects I have before rehearsed,
That ever Katharina will be woo'd;
Therefore this order hath Baptista ta'en,
That none shall have access unto Bianca
Till Katharina the curst have got a husband.

GRUMIO

Katharina the curst!
A title for a maid of all titles the worst.

HORTENSIO

Now shall my friend Petruchio do me grace,
And offer me disguised in sober robes
To old Baptista as a schoolmaster
Well seen in music, to instruct Bianca;
That so I may, by this device, at least
Have leave and leisure to make love to her
And unsuspected court her by herself.

GRUMIO

Here's no knavery! See, to beguile the old folks,
how the young folks lay their heads together!

Enter GREMIO, and LUCENTIO disguised

Master, master, look about you: who goes there, ha?

HORTENSIO

Peace, Grumio! it is the rival of my love.
Petruchio, stand by a while.

GRUMIO

A proper stripling and an amorous!

GREMIO

O, very well; I have perused the note.
Hark you, sir: I'll have them very fairly bound:
All books of love, see that at any hand;
And see you read no other lectures to her:
You understand me: over and beside
Signior Baptista's liberality,
I'll mend it with a largess. Take your paper too,
And let me have them very well perfumed
For she is sweeter than perfume itself

To whom they go to. What will you read to her?

LUCENTIO

Whate'er I read to her, I'll plead for you
As for my patron, stand you so assured,
As firmly as yourself were still in place:
Yea, and perhaps with more successful words
Than you, unless you were a scholar, sir.

GREMIO

O this learning, what a thing it is!

GRUMIO

O this woodcock, what an ass it is!

PETRUCHIO

Peace, sirrah!

HORTENSIO

Grumio, mum! God save you, Signior Gremio.

GREMIO

And you are well met, Signior Hortensio.
Trow you whither I am going? To Baptista Minola.
I promised to inquire carefully
About a schoolmaster for the fair Bianca:
And by good fortune I have lighted well
On this young man, for learning and behavior
Fit for her turn, well read in poetry
And other books, good ones, I warrant ye.

HORTENSIO

'Tis well; and I have met a gentleman
Hath promised me to help me to another,
A fine musician to instruct our mistress;
So shall I no whit be behind in duty
To fair Bianca, so beloved of me.

GREMIO

Beloved of me; and that my deeds shall prove.

GRUMIO

And that his bags shall prove.

HORTENSIO

Gremio, 'tis now no time to vent our love:
Listen to me, and if you speak me fair,
I'll tell you news indifferent good for either.
Here is a gentleman whom by chance I met,
Upon agreement from us to his liking,
Will undertake to woo curst Katharina,
Yea, and to marry her, if her dowry please.

GREMIO

So said, so done, is well.
Hortensio, have you told him all her faults?

PETRUCHIO

I know she is an irksome brawling scold:
If that be all, masters, I hear no harm.

GREMIO

No, say'st me so, friend? What countryman?

PETRUCHIO

Born in Verona, old Antonio's son:
My father dead, my fortune lives for me;
And I do hope good days and long to see.

GREMIO

O sir, such a life, with such a wife, were strange!
But if you have a stomach, to't i' God's name:
You shall have me assisting you in all.
But will you woo this wild-cat?

PETRUCHIO

Will I live?

GRUMIO

Will he woo her? ay, or I'll hang her.

PETRUCHIO

Why came I hither but to that intent?
Think you a little din can daunt mine ears?
Have I not in my time heard lions roar?
Have I not heard the sea puff'd up with winds
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,

And heaven's artillery thunder in the skies?
Have I not in a pitched battle heard
Loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets' clang?
And do you tell me of a woman's tongue,
That gives not half so great a blow to hear
As will a chestnut in a farmer's fire?
Tush, tush! fear boys with bugs.

GRUMIO

For he fears none.

GREMIO

Hortensio, hark:
This gentleman is happily arrived,
My mind presumes, for his own good and ours.

HORTENSIO

I promised we would be contributors
And bear his charging of wooing, whatsoever.

GREMIO

And so we will, provided that he win her.

GRUMIO

I would I were as sure of a good dinner.

Enter TRANIO brave, and BIONDELLO

TRANIO

Gentlemen, God save you. If I may be bold,
Tell me, I beseech you, which is the readiest way
To the house of Signior Baptista Minola?

BIONDELLO

He that has the two fair daughters: is't he you mean?

TRANIO

Even he, Biondello.

GREMIO

Hark you, sir; you mean not her to--

TRANIO

Perhaps, him and her, sir: what have you to do?

PETRUCHIO

Not her that chides, sir, at any hand, I pray.

TRANIO

I love no chiders, sir. Biondello, let's away.

LUCENTIO

Well begun, Tranio.

HORTENSIO

Sir, a word ere you go;
Are you a suitor to the maid you talk of, yea or no?

TRANIO

And if I be, sir, is it any offence?

GREMIO

No; if without more words you will get you hence.

TRANIO

Why, sir, I pray, are not the streets as free
For me as for you?

GREMIO

But so is not she.

TRANIO

For what reason, I beseech you?

GREMIO

For this reason, if you'll know,
That she's the choice love of Signior Gremio.

HORTENSIO

That she's the chosen of Signior Hortensio.

TRANIO

Softly, my masters! if you be gentlemen,
Do me this right; hear me with patience.

Baptista is a noble gentleman,
To whom my father is not all unknown;
And were his daughter fairer than she is,
She may more suitors have and me for one.
Fair Leda's daughter had a thousand wooers;
Then well one more may fair Bianca have:
And so she shall; Lucentio shall make one,
Though Paris came in hope to speed alone.

GREMIO

What! this gentleman will out-talk us all.

LUCENTIO

Sir, give him head: I know he'll prove a jade.

PETRUCHIO

Hortensio, to what end are all these words?

HORTENSIO

Sir, let me be so bold as ask you,
Did you yet ever see Baptista's daughter?

TRANIO

No, sir; but hear I do that he hath two,
The one as famous for a scolding tongue
As is the other for beauteous modesty.

PETRUCHIO

Sir, sir, the first's for me; let her go by.

GREMIO

Yea, leave that labour to great Hercules;
And let it be more than Alcides' twelve.

PETRUCHIO

Sir, understand you this of me in sooth:
The youngest daughter whom you hearken for
Her father keeps from all access of suitors,
And will not promise her to any man
Until the elder sister first be wed:
The younger then is free and not before.

TRANIO

If it be so, sir, that you are the man

Must stead us all and me amongst the rest,
And if you break the ice and do this feat,
Achieve the elder, set the younger free
For our access, whose hap shall be to have her
Will not so graceless be to be ingrate.

HORTENSIO

Sir, you say well and well you do conceive;
And since you do profess to be a suitor,
You must, as we do, gratify this gentleman,
To whom we all rest generally beholding.

TRANIO

Sir, I shall not be slack: in sign whereof,
Please ye we may contrive this afternoon,
And quaff carouses to our mistress' health,
And do as adversaries do in law,
Strive mightily, but eat and drink as friends.

GRUMIO BIONDELLO

O excellent motion! Fellows, let's be gone.

HORTENSIO

The motion's good indeed and be it so,
Petruccio, I shall be your ben venuto.

Exeunt

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