

The Taming of the Shrew

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SCENE I. PETRUCHIO'S country house.

Enter GRUMIO

GRUMIO

Fie, fie on all tired jades, on all mad masters, and all foul ways! Was ever man so beaten? was ever man so rayed? was ever man so weary? I am sent before to make a fire, and they are coming after to warm them. Now, were not I a little pot and soon hot, my very lips might freeze to my teeth, my tongue to the roof of my mouth, my heart in my belly, ere I should come by a fire to thaw me: but I, with blowing the fire, shall warm myself; for, considering the weather, a taller man than I will take cold. Holla, ho! Curtis.

Enter CURTIS

CURTIS

Who is that calls so coldly?

GRUMIO

A piece of ice: if thou doubt it, thou mayst slide from my shoulder to my heel with no greater a run but my head and my neck. A fire good Curtis.

CURTIS

Is my master and his wife coming, Grumio?

GRUMIO

O, ay, Curtis, ay: and therefore fire, fire; cast on no water.

CURTIS

Is she so hot a shrew as she's reported?

GRUMIO

She was, good Curtis, before this frost: but, thou knowest, winter tames man, woman and beast; for it

hath tamed my old master and my new mistress and myself, fellow Curtis.

CURTIS

Away, you three-inch fool! I am no beast.

GRUMIO

Am I but three inches? why, thy horn is a foot; and so long am I at the least. But wilt thou make a fire, or shall I complain on thee to our mistress, whose hand, she being now at hand, thou shalt soon feel, to thy cold comfort, for being slow in thy hot office?

CURTIS

I prithee, good Grumio, tell me, how goes the world?

GRUMIO

A cold world, Curtis, in every office but thine; and therefore fire: do thy duty, and have thy duty; for my master and mistress are almost frozen to death.

CURTIS

There's fire ready; and therefore, good Grumio, the news.

GRUMIO

Why, 'Jack, boy! ho! boy!' and as much news as will thaw.

CURTIS

Come, you are so full of cony-catching!

GRUMIO

Why, therefore fire; for I have caught extreme cold. Where's the cook? is supper ready, the house trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept; the serving-men in their new fustian, their white stockings, and every officer his wedding-garment on? Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without, the carpets laid, and every thing in order?

CURTIS

All ready; and therefore, I pray thee, news.

GRUMIO

First, know, my horse is tired; my master and mistress fallen out.

CURTIS

How?

GRUMIO

Out of their saddles into the dirt; and thereby hangs a tale.

CURTIS

Let's ha't, good Grumio.

GRUMIO

Lend thine ear.

CURTIS

Here.

GRUMIO

There.

Strikes him

CURTIS

This is to feel a tale, not to hear a tale.

GRUMIO

And therefore 'tis called a sensible tale: and this cuff was but to knock at your ear, and beseech listening. Now I begin: Imprimis, we came down a foul hill, my master riding behind my mistress,--

CURTIS

Both of one horse?

GRUMIO

What's that to thee?

CURTIS

Why, a horse.

GRUMIO

Tell thou the tale: but hadst thou not crossed me,
thou shouldst have heard how her horse fell and she
under her horse; thou shouldst have heard in how
miry a place, how she was bemoiled, how he left her
with the horse upon her, how he beat me because
her horse stumbled, how she waded through the dirt
to pluck him off me, how he swore, how she prayed,
that never prayed before, how I cried, how the
horses ran away, how her bridle was burst, how I
lost my crupper, with many things of worthy memory,
which now shall die in oblivion and thou return
unexperienced to thy grave.

CURTIS

By this reckoning he is more shrew than she.

GRUMIO

Ay; and that thou and the proudest of you all shall
find when he comes home. But what talk I of this?
Call forth Nathaniel, Joseph, Nicholas, Philip,
Walter, Sugarsop and the rest: let their heads be
sleekly combed their blue coats brushed and their
garters of an indifferent knit: let them curtsy
with their left legs and not presume to touch a hair
of my master's horse-tail till they kiss their
hands. Are they all ready?

CURTIS

They are.

GRUMIO

Call them forth.

CURTIS

Do you hear, ho? you must meet my master to
countenance my mistress.

GRUMIO

Why, she hath a face of her own.

CURTIS

Who knows not that?

GRUMIO

Thou, it seems, that calls for company to
countenance her.

CURTIS

I call them forth to credit her.

GRUMIO

Why, she comes to borrow nothing of them.

Enter four or five Serving-men

NATHANIEL

Welcome home, Grumio!

PHILIP

How now, Grumio!

JOSEPH

What, Grumio!

NICHOLAS

Fellow Grumio!

NATHANIEL

How now, old lad?

GRUMIO

Welcome, you;--how now, you;-- what, you;--fellow,
you;--and thus much for greeting. Now, my spruce
companions, is all ready, and all things neat?

NATHANIEL

All things is ready. How near is our master?

GRUMIO

E'en at hand, alighted by this; and therefore be
not--Cock's passion, silence! I hear my master.

Enter PETRUCHIO and KATHARINA

PETRUCHIO

Where be these knaves? What, no man at door
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse!
Where is Nathaniel, Gregory, Philip?
ALL SERVING-MEN Here, here, sir; here, sir.

PETRUCHIO

Here, sir! here, sir! here, sir! here, sir!
You logger-headed and unpolish'd grooms!
What, no attendance? no regard? no duty?
Where is the foolish knave I sent before?

GRUMIO

Here, sir; as foolish as I was before.

PETRUCHIO

You peasant swain! you whoreson malt-horse drudge!
Did I not bid thee meet me in the park,
And bring along these rascal knaves with thee?

GRUMIO

Nathaniel's coat, sir, was not fully made,
And Gabriel's pumps were all unpink'd i' the heel;
There was no link to colour Peter's hat,
And Walter's dagger was not come from sheathing:
There were none fine but Adam, Ralph, and Gregory;
The rest were ragged, old, and beggarly;
Yet, as they are, here are they come to meet you.

PETRUCHIO

Go, rascals, go, and fetch my supper in.

Exeunt Servants

Singing

Where is the life that late I led--
Where are those--Sit down, Kate, and welcome.--
Sound, sound, sound, sound!

Re-enter Servants with supper

Why, when, I say? Nay, good sweet Kate, be merry.
Off with my boots, you rogues! you villains, when?

Sings

It was the friar of orders grey,
As he forth walked on his way:--

Out, you rogue! you pluck my foot awry:
Take that, and mend the plucking off the other.

Strikes him

Be merry, Kate. Some water, here; what, ho!
Where's my spaniel Troilus? Sirrah, get you hence,
And bid my cousin Ferdinand come hither:
One, Kate, that you must kiss, and be acquainted with.
Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?

Enter one with water

Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily.
You whoreson villain! will you let it fall?

Strikes him

KATHARINA

Patience, I pray you; 'twas a fault unwilling.

PETRUCHIO

A whoreson beetle-headed, flap-ear'd knave!
Come, Kate, sit down; I know you have a stomach.
Will you give thanks, sweet Kate; or else shall I?
What's this? mutton?

First Servant

Ay.

PETRUCHIO

Who brought it?

PETER

I.

PETRUCHIO

'Tis burnt; and so is all the meat.
What dogs are these! Where is the rascal cook?
How durst you, villains, bring it from the dresser,
And serve it thus to me that love it not?
Theretake it to you, trenchers, cups, and all;

Throws the meat, & c. about the stage

You heedless joltheads and unmanner'd slaves!
What, do you grumble? I'll be with you straight.

KATHARINA

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet:
The meat was well, if you were so contented.

PETRUCHIO

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away;
And I expressly am forbid to touch it,
For it engenders cholera, planteth anger;
And better 'twere that both of us did fast,
Since, of ourselves, ourselves are choleric,
Than feed it with such over-roasted flesh.
Be patient; to-morrow 't shall be mended,
And, for this night, we'll fast for company:
Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

Exeunt

Re-enter Servants severally

NATHANIEL

Peter, didst ever see the like?

PETER

He kills her in her own humour.

Re-enter CURTIS

GRUMIO

Where is he?

CURTIS

In her chamber, making a sermon of continency to her;
And rails, and swears, and rates, that she, poor soul,
Knows not which way to stand, to look, to speak,
And sits as one new-risen from a dream.
Away, away! for he is coming hither.

Exeunt

Re-enter PETRUCHIO

PETRUCHIO

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
And 'tis my hope to end successfully.
My falcon now is sharp and passing empty;
And till she stoop she must not be full-gorged,

For then she never looks upon her lure.
Another way I have to man my haggard,
To make her come and know her keeper's call,
That is, to watch her, as we watch these kites
That bate and beat and will not be obedient.
She eat no meat to-day, nor none shall eat;
Last night she slept not, nor to-night she shall not;
As with the meat, some undeserved fault
I'll find about the making of the bed;
And here I'll fling the pillow, there the bolster,
This way the coverlet, another way the sheets:
Ay, and amid this hurly I intend
That all is done in reverend care of her;
And in conclusion she shall watch all night:
And if she chance to nod I'll rail and brawl
And with the clamour keep her still awake.
This is a way to kill a wife with kindness;
And thus I'll curb her mad and headstrong humour.
He that knows better how to tame a shrew,
Now let him speak: 'tis charity to show.

Exit