

The Taming of the Shrew

4.1

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! Hoa, Curtis! 10

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? 15

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 know'st, winter tames man, woman, and beast, for it hath tamed my old master, and my new mistress, and myself, fellow Curtis. 20

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. 25

CURTIS I prithee, good Grumio, tell me±±how goes the world? 30

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.

35

GRUMIO Why, 'Jack boy, ho boy!', and as much news as wilt thou.

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 40 trimmed, rushes strewed, cobwebs swept, the serving-men in their new fustian, the white stockings, and every officer his wedding garment on? Be the Jacks fair within, the Jills fair without, the carpets laid, and everything in order? 45

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 50 hangs a tale.

CURTIS Let's ha't, good Grumio.

GRUMIO Lend thine ear.

CURTIS Here.

GRUMIO (*cuffing him*) There. 55

CURTIS This 'tis 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. *Inprimis*, we came down a foul hill, my master riding behind my mistress. 60

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 65 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 70 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. 75

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 80 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. 85

GRUMIO Call them forth.

CURTIS (*calling*) 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? 90

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

CURTIS I call them forth to credit her.
Enter four or five servingmen

GRUMIO Why, she comes to borrow nothing of them.

NATHANIEL Welcome home, Grumio! 95

PHILIP How now, Grumio?

JOSEPH What, Grumio?

NICHOLAS Fellow Grumio!

NATHANIEL How now, old lad!

GRUMIO Welcome you, how now you, what you, fellow 100 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 ~~at~~ Cock's passion, silence! I hear my master. 105

Enter Petruccio and Katherine

PETRUCCIO
Where be these knaves? What, no man at door
To hold my stirrup nor to take my horse?
Where is Nathaniel, Gregory, Philip?

ALL SERVANTS Here, here sir, here sir.

PETRUCCIO
Here sir, here sir, here sir, here sir! 110

You logger-headed and unpolished 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.

PETRUCCIO

You peasant swain, you whoreson, malthorse drudge, 115
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 unpinked i'th' heel.
There was no link to colour Peter's hat, 120
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.

PETRUCCIO

Go, rascals, go and fetch my supper in. 125

Exeunt servants

(Sings)

`Where is the life that late I led?

Where are those±±'

Sit down, Kate, and welcome. Soud, soud, soud, soud.

Enter servants with supper

Why, when, I say?±±Nay, good sweet Kate, be
merry.±±

Off with my boots, you rogues, you villains. When? 130
(Sings)

`It was the friar of orders gray,

As he forth walkeÁd on his way.'

Out, you rogue, you pluck my foot awry.

(Kicking a servant) Take that, and mend the plucking
of the other.

Be merry, Kate. *(Calling)* Some water, here. What,
hoa! 135

Enter one with water

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.

(Calling) Where are my slippers? Shall I have some water?

Come, Kate, and wash, and welcome heartily. 140

[A servant drops water]

You whoreson villain, will you let it fall?

KATHERINE

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

PETRUCCIO

A whoreson, beetle-headed, flap-eared knave.

Come, Kate, sit down, I know you have a stomach.

Will you give thanks, sweet Kate, or else shall I? 145

What's this±±mutton?

FIRST SERVINGMAN Ay.

PETRUCCIO Who brought it?

PETER

I.

PETRUCCIO

'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? 150

There, (*throwing food*) take it to you, trenchers, cups,
and all,

You heedless jolt-heads and unmannered slaves.

What, do you grumble? I'll be with you straight.

He chases the servants away

KATHERINE

I pray you, husband, be not so disquiet.

The meat was well, if you were so contented. 155

PETRUCCIO

I tell thee, Kate, 'twas burnt and dried away,

And I expressly am forbid to touch it,

For it engenders choler, planteth anger,

And better 'twere that both of us did fast,

Since of ourselves ourselves are choleric, 160

Than feed it with such overroasted flesh.

Be patient, tomorrow't shall be mended,

And for this night we'll fast for company.

Come, I will bring thee to thy bridal chamber.

Exeunt

Enter servants severally

NATHANIEL Peter, didst ever see the like? 165

PETER He kills her in her own humour.

Enter Curtis, a servant

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, 170
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

Enter Petruccio

PETRUCCIO

Thus have I politicly begun my reign,
And 'tis my hope to end successfully. 175

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±± 180

That is, to watch her as we watch these kites
That bate and beat, and will not be obedient.

She ate no meat today, nor none shall eat.
Last night she slept not, nor tonight she shall not.

As with the meat, some undeserveÁd fault 185
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 reverent care of her, 190

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. 195

He that knows better how to tame a shrew,

Now let him speak. 'Tis charity to show.

Exit