

The Taming of the Shrew

3.2

*Enter Baptista, Gremio, Tranio as Lucentio,
Katherine, Bianca, and others, attendants*

BAPTISTA (to Tranio)

Signor Lucentio, this is the 'pointed day
That Katherine and Petruccio should be married,
And yet we hear not of our son-in-law.
What will be said, what mockery will it be,
To want the bridegroom when the priest attends
To speak the ceremonial rites of marriage?
What says Lucentio to this shame of ours?

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KATHERINE

No shame but mine. I must forsooth be forced
To give my hand opposed against my heart
Unto a mad-brain rudesby full of spleen, 10
Who wooed in haste and means to wed at leisure.
I told you, I, he was a frantic fool,
Hiding his bitter jests in blunt behaviour,
And to be noted for a merry man
He'll woo a thousand, 'point the day of marriage, 15
Make friends, invite them, and proclaim the banns,
Yet never means to wed where he hath wooed.
Now must the world point at poor Katherine
And say 'Lo, there is mad Petruccio's wife,
If it would please him come and marry her.' 20

TRANIO

Patience, good Katherine, and Baptista, too.
Upon my life, Petruccio means but well.
Whatever fortune stays him from his word,
Though he be blunt, I know him passing wise;
Though he be merry, yet withal he's honest. 25

KATHERINE

Would Katherine had never seen him, though.
Exit weeping

BAPTISTA

Go, girl. I cannot blame thee now to weep.
For such an injury would vex a very saint,

Much more a shrew of thy impatient humour.

Enter Biondello

BIONDELLO Master, master, news±±old news, and such 30
news as you never heard of.

BAPTISTA Is it new and old too? How may that be?

BIONDELLO Why, is it not news to hear of Petruccio's
coming?

BAPTISTA Is he come? 35

BIONDELLO Why, no, sir.

BAPTISTA What then?

BIONDELLO He is coming.

BAPTISTA When will he be here?

BIONDELLO When he stands where I am and sees you 40
there.

TRANIO But say, what to thine old news?

BIONDELLO Why, Petruccio is coming in a new hat and
an old jerkin, a pair of old breeches thrice-turned, a
pair of boots that have been candle-cases, one buckled, 45
another laced, an old rusty sword ta'en out of the town
armoury with a broken hilt, and chapeless, with two
broken points, his horse hipped, with an old mothy
saddle and stirrups of no kindred, besides, possessed
with the glanders and like to mose in the chine, troubled 50
with the lampass, infected with the fashions, full of
windgalls, sped with spavins, rayed with the yellows,
past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers,
begnawn with the bots, weighed in the back and
shoulder-shotten, near-legged before and with a half- 55
cheeked bit and a headstall of sheep's leather which,
being restrained to keep him from stumbling, hath been
often burst and now repaired with knots, one girth six
times pieced, and a woman's crupper of velour which
hath two letters for her name fairly set down in studs, 60
and here and there pieced with packthread.

BAPTISTA Who comes with him?

BIONDELLO O sir, his lackey, for all the world caparisoned
like the horse, with a linen stock on one leg and a
kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and 65
blue list; an old hat, and the humour of forty fancies
pricked in't for a feather±±a monster, a very monster

in apparel, and not like a Christian footboy or a gentleman's lackey.

TRANIO

'Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion; 70
Yet oftentimes he goes but mean-apparelled.

BAPTISTA

I am glad he's come, howsoe'er he comes.

BIONDELLO Why, sir, he comes not.

BAPTISTA Didst thou not say he comes?

BIONDELLO Who? That Petruccio came? 75

BAPTISTA Ay, that Petruccio came.

BIONDELLO No, sir. I say his horse comes with him on his back.

BAPTISTA Why, that's all one.

BIONDELLO

Nay, by Saint Jamy, 80
I hold you a penny,
A horse and a man
Is more than one,
And yet not many.

Enter Petruccio and Grumio, fantastically dressed

PETRUCCIO Come, where be these gallants? Who's at 85
home?

BAPTISTA You are welcome, sir.

PETRUCCIO And yet I come not well.

BAPTISTA And yet you halt not.

TRANIO

Not so well apparelled as I wish you were. 90

PETRUCCIO

Were it not better I should rush in thus±±
But where is Kate? Where is my lovely bride?
How does my father? Gentles, methinks you frown.
And wherefore gaze this goodly company
As if they saw some wondrous monument, 95
Some comet or unusual prodigy?

BAPTISTA

Why, sir, you know this is your wedding day.
First were we sad, fearing you would not come;
Now sadder that you come so unprovided.
Fie, doff this habit, shame to your estate, 100
An eyesore to our solemn festival.

TRANIO

And tell us what occasion of import
Hath all so long detained you from your wife
And sent you hither so unlike yourself?

PETRUCCIO

Tedious it were to tell, and harsh to hear. 105
Sufficeth I am come to keep my word,
Though in some part enforceÁd to digress,
Which at more leisure I will so excuse
As you shall well be satisfied withal.
But where is Kate? I stay too long from her. 110
The morning wears, 'tis time we were at church.

TRANIO

See not your bride in these unreverent robes.
Go to my chamber, put on clothes of mine.

PETRUCCIO

Not I, believe me. Thus I'll visit her.

BAPTISTA

But thus, I trust, you will not marry her. 115

PETRUCCIO

Good sooth, even thus. Therefore ha' done with
words.
To me she's married, not unto my clothes.
Could I repair what she will wear in me
As I can change these poor accoutrements,
'Twere well for Kate and better for myself. 120
But what a fool am I to chat with you
When I should bid good morrow to my bride,
And seal the title with a lovely kiss!
Exit [with Grumio]

TRANIO

He hath some meaning in his mad attire.
We will persuade him, be it possible, 125
To put on better ere he go to church.
[Exit with Gremio]

BAPTISTA

I'll after him, and see the event of this.
[Exeunt]