

The Taming of the Shrew

1.1

Flourish. 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 fore fruitful Lombardy,
The pleasant garden of great Italy,
And by my father's love and leave am armed 5
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, renowneÁd for grave citizens, 10
Gave me my being, and my father first±±
A merchant of great traffic through the world,
Vincentio, come of the Bentivolii.
Vincentio's son, brought up in Florence,
It shall become to serve all hopes conceived 15
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. 20
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 perdonate, gentle master mine. 25
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, 30
Let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray,
Or so devote to Aristotle's checks
As Ovid be an outcast quite abjured.

Balk logic with acquaintance that you have,
And practise rhetoric in your common talk. 35
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. 40

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. 45
But stay a while, what company is this?

TRANIO

Master, some show to welcome us to town.
*Enter Baptista with his two daughters, Katherine
and Bianca; Gremio, a pantaloon; Hortensio,
suitor to Bianca. Lucentio and Tranio stand by*

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, importune me no farther,
For how I firmly am resolved you know:
That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter 50
Before I have a husband for the elder.
If either of you both love Katherina,
Because I know you well and love you well
Leave shall you have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO

To cart her rather. She's too rough for me. 55
There, there, Hortensio. Will you any wife?

KATHERINE *(to Baptista)*

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. 60

KATHERINE

I'faith, sir, you shall never need to fear.
Iwis 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-legged stool,
And paint your face, and use you like a fool. 65

HORTENSIO
From all such devils, good Lord deliver us.

GREMIO And me too, good Lord.

TRANIO (*aside to Lucentio*)
Husht, master, here's some good pastime toward.
That wench is stark mad or wonderful froward.

LUCENTIO (*aside to Tranio*)
But in the other's silence do I see 70
Maid's mild behaviour and sobriety.
Peace, Tranio.

TRANIO (*aside to Lucentio*)
Well said, master. Mum, and gaze your fill.

BAPTISTA
Gentlemen, that I may soon make good
What I have said±±Bianca, get you in. 75
And let it not displease thee, good Bianca,
For I will love thee ne'er the less, my girl.

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

BIANCA
Sister, content you in my discontent. 80
(*To Baptista*) Sir, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe.
My books and instruments shall be my company,
On them to look and practise by myself.

LUCENTIO (*aside to Tranio*)
Hark, Tranio, thou mayst hear Minerva speak.

HORTENSIO
Signor Baptista, will you be so strange? 85
Sorry am I that our good will effects
Bianca's grief.

GREMIO Why will you mew her up,
Signor Baptista, for this fiend of hell,
And make her bear the penance of her tongue?

BAPTISTA
Gentlemen, content ye. I am resolved. 90
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, 95
Or, Signor 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. Katherina, you may stay, 100
For I have more to commune with Bianca.

Exit

KATHERINE 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 105
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 cake's 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 110
wherein she delights, I will wish him to her father.

HORTENSIO So will I, Signor 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 115
and be happy rivals in Bianca'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! 120

HORTENSIO I say a husband.

GREMIO I say a devil. Think'st 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 125
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 130

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 till by helping 135
Baptista's eldest daughter to a husband we set his
youngest free for a husband, and then have to't afresh.
Sweet Bianca! Happy man be his dole. He that runs
fastest gets the ring. How say you, Signor Gremio?

GREMIO I am agreed, and would I had given him the best 140
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 Hortensio and Gremio. Tranio and
Lucentio remain*

TRANIO
I pray, sir, tell me: is it possible
That love should of a sudden take such hold? 145

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, 150
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. 155
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 touched you, naught remains but so±±
Redime te captum quam queas minimo. 160

LUCENTIO
Gramercies, lad. Go forward, this contents.
The rest will comfort, for thy counsel's sound.

TRANIO
Master, you looked so longly on the maid

Perhaps you marked not what's the pith of all.

LUCENTIO

O yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face, 165
Such as the daughter of Agenor had,
That made great Jove to humble him to her hand
When with his knees he kissed the Cretan strand.

TRANIO

Saw you no more? Marked you not how her sister
Began to scold and raise up such a storm 170
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 (*aside*)

Nay, then 'tis time to stir him from his trance. 175
(*To Lucentio*) I pray, awake, sir. If you love the maid,
Bend thoughts and wits to achieve her. Thus it
stands:

Her elder sister is so curst and shrewd
That till the father rid his hands of her,
Master, your love must live a maid at home, 180
And therefore has he closely mewed her up
Because she will not be annoyed 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? 185

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. 190
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?

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LUCENTIO

Basta, content thee, for I have it full.
We have not yet been seen in any house,
Nor can we be distinguished by our faces
For man or master. Then it follows thus:
Thou shalt be master, Tranio, in my stead; 200
Keep house, and port, and servants, as I should.
I will some other be, some Florentine,
Some Neapolitan, or meaner man of Pisa.
'Tis hatched, and shall be so. Tranio, at once
Uncase thee. Take my coloured hat and cloak. 205
When Biondello comes he waits on thee,
But I will charm him first to keep his tongue.

TRANIO So had you need.

[They exchange clothes]

In brief, sir, sith it your pleasure is,
And I am tied to be obedient±± 210
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. 215

LUCENTIO

Tranio, be so, because Lucentio loves,
And let me be a slave t'achieve that maid
Whose sudden sight hath thrall'd my wounded eye.

Enter Biondello

Here comes the rogue. Sirrah, where have you been?

BIONDELLO Where have *I* been? Nay, how now, where 220
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. 225
Your fellow Tranio here, to save my life

Puts my apparel and my count'nance on,
And I for my escape have put on his,
For in a quarrel since I came ashore
I killed a man, and fear I was descried. 230
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. 235

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. 240

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 thyself execute±±
To make one among these wooers. If thou ask me
why, 245

Sufficeth my reasons are both good and weighty.

Exeunt

The presenters above speak

FIRST SERVINGMAN

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?

BARTHOLOMEW My lord, 'tis but begun. 250

SLY 'Tis a very excellent piece of work, madam lady.

Would 'twere done.

They sit and mark