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The Taming of the Shrew

By *William Shakespeare*

Adapted by *Scott Hunter*

CAST OF CHARACTERS

At the Boar's Inn

Hostess, the Owner of a Tavern

Christopher Sly, A Drunken Fool

Benzvolia, a Serving Wench

Quickly, a Serving Wench

Ponce, a Serving Wench

Ford, a Serving Wench

Page, Impersonates the Wife of Sly

The House of Baptista

Baptista, Mother of Kate & Bianca

Kate, a Shrew

Bianca, Kate's Sister

The House of Lucentio

Lucentio, in Love with Bianca

Trania, Impersonates Lucentio

Biandela, Trusty Servant to Lucentio

Vincentia, Old Mother of Lucentio

Pendant, Hired to Impersonate Vincentia

The House Gremio (sad isn't it)

Gremio, Rival of Hortensio

The House of Petruchio

Petruchio, a Rogue

Grumio, Trusty Servant to Petruchio

Grumio, Trusty Servant to Petruchio

Curtis, Clumsy Servant to Petruchio

Pistol, the Huntsman

The House of Hortensio

Hortensio, Suitor to Bianca

Widow, Lusty Bride to Gremio

The Troupe of Players

The Tailor, a Man Who Gives Orders

The Priest, well, a Priest

Barrymore, a Player

Bernhardt, a Player

Burbidge, a Player

Booth, a Player

The Animals

Trigger the Horse, both front and rear

Flicka the Horse, front only

Flicka's Hind, Self-explanatory

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THE PROLOGUE A PUBLIC HOUSE IN ENGLAND

(The curtain rises on a crowded public house. There is a four foot high platform UC with stairs leading up to it on each side and a door on the back wall of the platform that leads to the upstairs guest rooms. A balcony railing protects the front of the platform. A door stage left of the platform leads outside and a door stage right leads to the kitchen. The pub is filled with bar wenches and common men, including PONCE, MISTRESS CURTIS, MISTRESS FORD, BENVOLIA, and MISTRESS QUICKLY. CHRISTOPHER SLY, a great slob of a man, gets up from his table, drunk and disorderly. He staggers up to a table of girls and puts his arms around them. They smack him away. A HOSTESS enters and serves drinks from a tray. SLY corners her on the way back to the kitchen.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Have you no word for your old friend Christopher Sly?

HOSTESS

You'll get no more ale from me.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

I'll Pheeze you, in faith!

HOSTESS

Pheeze me? You pair of socks! You rogue!

(She smashes him over the head with her serving tray. He stumbles back as she exits to the kitchen.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Y'are baggage! Christopher Sly is no rogue! Look in the chronicles! No Sly has ever been a rogue!

PONCE

Until now.

(The HOSTESS goes back to the kitchen. SLY goes up to the other patrons.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

We came in with Richard the Conqueror.

BENVOLIA

And haven't bathed since.

(He steals someone's drink and guzzles it down.)

FORD

That's mine, you pair of radish!

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Let the world slide.

(SLY gets an idea and staggers over to the kitchen door. He opens it and hurls the empty glass inside. He sits down quickly and pretends to have done nothing as the HOSTESS comes out. SLY points at a fellow across the pub. Everyone else in the pub points at SLY.)

HOSTESS

You will pay for the glass.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Not a penny!

HOSTESS

You'll pay or...

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Or what? Go! Go to your cold bed and warm thyself.

(He makes motion to everyone else in the bar that he has shared that bed.)

HOSTESS

I know my remedy.

(She leaves very angry.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Call an officer. I'll not budge an inch. I'll...

(He seems to freeze in mid sentence. Then, like a tree falling, he faints into a deep, snoring sleep on the floor. The door opens and PETRUCHIO, KATE and the rest of their hunting party enters. Two servants PISTOL and PAGE are with them. PISTOL is very eager to please. PAGE has the main quality that he is very masculine.)

PETRUCHIO

Huntsman, I charge thee, tend to our hounds.

PISTOL

Aye, your lordship.

\\

PETRUCHIO

Give them a good supper, and look unto them all.

PISTOL

Tomorrow you intend to hunt again?

PETRUCHIO

Even so.

PISTOL

My lord, did you see how the dog Silver, at the hedge, found the coldest scent.

PETRUCHIO

I would not trade that dog for twenty pounds. See to them.

PISTOL

I will!

(PISTOL exits.)

KATE

Why, my hound Belman is as good a dog as Silver.

PETRUCHIO

Thou art a fool. Silver is worth a dozen such...

(PETRUCHIO stumbles over CHRISOPHER SLY'S body.)

PETRUCHIO

What's here? One dead or drunk?

KATE

Page, See if he breathes.

(PAGE bends down to check. SLY breathes in his face, a terrible smell.)

PAGE

He breathes, my Lord. Oh how he breathes.

(PAGE faints from the smell on top of SLY.)

PETRUCHIO

Oh, monstrous beast.

KATE

How like a swine he lies.

PONCE

Though to call him a swine would be an insult to swine.

(The door opens and the HOSTESS rushes in swinging a huge butcher knife.)

HOSTESS

I will practice on this drunken man!

(She is about to slice him up when she sees the lord and lady. She stops. Drops the knife. Bows low.)

HOSTESS

Royal Sir, your gracious ladyship. Welcome to the Boar's Head.

PETRUCHIO

Are you the...

HOSTESS

We are honored that you honor our honorable hospitality.

PETRUCHIO

Thank you. We would like...

HOSTESS

May I offer you some goat cheese sprinkled with elderberries and washed down with our own...

PETRUCHIO

(trying to silence her)

There is a storm brewing. We need a room for the night and some entertainment, if there is any entertainment in this place.

HOSTESS

A room, well... we are short rooms... Wait here.

(She gets an idea and pulls BENVOLIA, a serving wench, aside.)

HOSTESS

Go up stairs and throw Mister Christopher Sly's things out the window. We'll give his room to the Lord and Lady.

BENVOLIA

Throw his things out the window?

HOSTESS

Into the mud. We will be throwing him out the door soon after.

BENVOLIA

Shall I change to clean sheets?

HOSTESS

Look at them. They are Lords and Ladies.

(She forces BENVOLIA to look at the lords and ladies. They exchange forced and uncomfortable waves.)

HOSTESS

Do you imagine they want to sleep in Christopher Sly's drool?

BENVOLIA

Is that “yes” to the clean sheets?

HOSTESS

Go!

(She goes back to PETRUCHIO and KATE who have actually heard ever word she said.)

HOSTESS

The royal suite has just opened up. It will be ready in a moment. All our rooms here at the Boars Head feature...

KATE

And the entertainment?

HOSTESS

There is a wandering acting troop camped by the forest. But, they are nothing...

KATE

The kinder we, it is said, to give thanks for nothing.

HOSTESS

Ford! Quickly!

(She drags her other two serving wenches, FORD and QUICKLY aside.)

HOSTESS

Find the actors and bring them here.

QUICKLY

The actors? But you called them may poles.

FORD

And leeches.

QUICKLY

And joint stools.

FORD

Three Headed toads.

QUICKLY

You told them never to cross your doorstep again.

FORD

You threatened bodily injury.

HOSTESS

Bring them here!

QUICKLY

And if they will not come?

HOSTESS

Beat them with sticks.

(She goes back to PETRUCHIO and just smiles at him, infatuated. BENVOLIA appears at the stairs and signals she is ready.)

BENVOLIA

Ready.

HOSTESS

Your room is ready now. This way.

(The HOSTESS starts to lead, but PETRUCHIO lingers behind thinking and looking at CHRISTOPHER SLY.)

HOSTESS

Oh... Take no mind. We will remove him immediately.

PETRUCHIO

Wait. What think you... if he were dressed up in sweet clothes?

HOSTESS

Sweet clothes?

PETRUCHIO

Yes. Rings upon his fingers. A fine suit.

HOSTESS

I don't really understand.

PETRUCHIO

Or, what if he woke up to a most delicious banquet at his table. And several servants near him when he wakes. Would not this drunken beggar then forget himself?

CURTIS

Forget himself?

PETRUCHIO

Could we convince him that he was someone else.... royalty, perhaps. Could we convince him that he was me?

PONCE

Believe me, Lord, I think he could not help it.

BENVOLIA

It would seem strange.

CURTIS

It would seem like a dream.

PONCE

Or his real life would seem like a dream.

(QUICKLY and PAGE drive in the players, hitting them with sticks to make them go. They are indeed a scurvy lot. BOOTH, BURBIDGE, BARRYMORE, and BERNHART are Shakespearean types and very proud. PRIEST, PENDANT, WIDOW, AND VINCENTIA are a lower class variation in various states of disease. The FLAMBOYANT TAILOR is their leader. They line up in front of PETRUCHIO.)

TAILOR

We didn't steal nothin'.

BURBIDGE

We found the rabbit dead by the road.

BARRYMORE

We have more pride than to be poachers, sir.

BERNHART

We only ate it so it wouldn't go to waste.

BOOTH

And nobody saw us kill it.

PETRUCHIO

You are welcome.

VINCENTIA

What did he say?

WIDOW

I think he said, "welcome."

PENDANT

Welcome?

PRIEST

Did you say, "Welcome?"

PETRUCHIO

Welcome. Will you stay and have some merriment with this drunkard?

(The PLAYERS all look disgusted, as if merriment had some revolting implication.)

TAILOR

Merriment?

BOOTH

With him?

PENDANT

If it pleases your lordship.

BERNHART

If we must.

PRIEST

For the sake of art.

(The PLAYERS all make one move to unbutton before PETRUCHIO stops them.)

PETRUCHIO

Whoa! This drunkard will hear a *play* tonight.

WIDOW

Oh, a play. We thought... never mind. A play!

PETRUCHIO

Yes, and he must take part in it, as will we all.

(Everyone in the pub stands up and protests.)

PUBIANS

No! We're not actors! Why can't I just watch, etc.

PETRUCHIO

It will be fun!

(Everyone quiets.)

Get some clothes from my trunk and dress him. Carry him gently so he doesn't wake.

(Several patrons pick up CHRISTOPHER SLY and carry him to the back where they dress him in a lord's clothes. PETRUCHIO studies BOOTH'S face very carefully.)

PETRUCHIO

I remember this fellow.

BOOTH

It was another man, I tell you.

PETRUCHIO

You played a farmer's son, once. Twas where you wooed the gentlewoman.

BOOTH

Oh, yes. I played Soto, the lover, I think you mean. A play of infinite recollect and...

PETRUCHIO

Thank you...

BOOTH *(emoting)*

Then senseless Ilium,/ Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top/Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash/Takes....

PETRUCHIO

Yes! Could we play a scene like that... Tonight.

BURBIDGE

Tonight?

TAILOR

Our players are not as spry as they once were.

BERNHART

Depleted as we are by age and plague and want of drink.

PETRUCHIO

We will all play parts and help you, if you will guide us.

BARRYMORE

Fear not, my Lord. We can contain ourselves.

TAILOR

And I shall direct the pageant.

PETRUCHIO

Hostess. See that these players have food and drink to help loosen their memories.

(The PLAYERS rush to the tables and knock other patrons away.)

HOSTESS

But sir...

PETRUCHIO

These are actors!

HOSTESS

My lord, I will give them all they deserve.

PETRUCHIO

God's bodykins, woman, give them much better. Give every man what he deserves, and who should 'scape whipping?

HOSTESS

As you... command.

(She goes to serve the PLAYERS. PETRUCHIO motions to the other serving wenches.)

PETRUCHIO

You.

BENVOLIA

Your Lordship?

PETRUCHIO

Wash the drunkard's foul head.

FORD

Wash his head?

PETRUCHIO

Attend him with a silver basin, full of rose-water and bestrewed with flowers!

CURTIS

But...

PETRUCHIO

Ah! Make him think he is me.

QUICKLY

As your Lordship requests, so I obey.

PETRUCHIO

If he wakes and speaks, be ready and with a low submissive reverence say, "What is it your honor will command?"

FORD

What is it your honor will command?

PETRUCHIO

No. "What is it your honor will command?"

QUICKLY

"What is it your honor will command?"

PETRUCHIO

That's better.

PRIEST

If he protests, we will persuade him that he hath been sick.

WIDOW

Or Say that he dreams, for he is a mighty Lord!

VINCENTIA

And that he has been asleep for days.

PETRUCHIO

You see, you are in it now.

(PISTOL reenters from tending the hounds. He sees them dressing SLY in the back and runs forward, weapons drawn. The patrons duck and cover as he threatens them.)

PISTOL

They're stealing your clothes. Get behind me. I'll protect you.

PETRUCHIO

Are the hounds taken care of?

PISTOL

Supped and stabled.

PETRUCHIO

Then burn sweet wood to make this lodging sweet.

PISTOL

But, sir, I don't understand why this drunkard...

PETRUCHIO

Hurry along.

PISTOL

Oh? Oh? This is some amusement, is it?

PETRUCHIO

Just so.

PISTOL

I love amusement!

KATE

Wait! Bring my page, Barthol'mew.

PETRUCHIO

Are you planning something?

KATE

Perhaps.

PAGE

Here, my Lady.

KATE

Dress my page Barthol'mew like a lady and call him madam.

PAGE

What?

KATE

Walk and talk as you have observed royal ladies like me do.

PAGE

Walk like you? Me?

KATE

With gentle courtesy, say to the drunkard, "What is it your honor will command of his... noble wife?"

PAGE

No, as I stand. But... Help!

(THE PLAYERS carry the PAGE off and dress him as a woman. The others step back to reveal CHRISTOPHER SLY now dressed as a snoring nobleman, asleep on top of a table. The HOSTESS takes a glass of water and throws it in SLY'S face to wake him.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

For heaven's sake, a glass of ale.

QUICKLY

Will't please your lordship to drink a cup of our finest champagne?

FORD

Will't please your lordship to taste these morsels?

CURTIS

What apparel will your honor wear today?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Lordship? Your honor? I am Christopher Sly; call not me honor or lordship. And never ask me what I'll wear, for I have no more shirts than backs, no more stockings than legs and no more shoes than feet. Indeed, sometimes I have more feet than shoes.

(He sees he is dressed in fine clothes and screams.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

What's this? What are these clothes?

CURTIS

Lord, stop this joking.

BENVOLIA

O, that a mighty man, so rich and so respected... so handsome... should be so confused.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Am I not Christopher Sly? Old Sly's son? By birth a peddler? In my youth a tinker and now a bear-herd?

(The servants laugh.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Ask this serving woman. Do you know me, hostess?

HOSTESS

I know everything about you.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Do I not owe you fourteen crowns on my bill for ale?

HOSTESS

Fourteen crowns! You owe me Twenty-five crowns if it's...

(She recovers her manners)

HOSTESS

It is I who owe you for your patronage.

PONCE

It is your insanity that makes your lady mourn.

CURTIS

It is your insanity that makes your servants droop.

FORD

Oh, noble lord, think about thy birth!

QUICKLY

Call home thy ancient thoughts from banishment and banish hence these lowly dreams.

PONCE

Wilt thou have music.

PISTOL

Wilt thou hunt? Thy greyhounds are quicker than the forest stag?

BENVOLIA

Dost thou like Art? Pictures? We will fetch you Adonis painted by the running brook?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

No, no, no, no, no!!! I am Christopher Sly! Son of Old Sly! Someone pinch me, please.

PONCE

As you wish.

(The servants obey and pinch him.)

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Stop! Do I dream... Or have I dreamed 'til now? I do not sleep... I see, I hear. I speak. Upon my life, I am a lord indeed!

CURTIS

O, How we joy to see your wit restored.

PISTOL

Once more you know who you are.

(PAGE enters dressed as a woman and speaking in high pitched tones.)

PAGE

How fares my noble lord?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Marry, I fare well.

HOSTESS

Your wife, my noble Lord.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Where is my wife?

PAGE

Here. I am she. What is thy will with her?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Are you my wife?

PAGE

My Lord and master, I am your wife in all obedience.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

What must I call her?

FORD

Madam.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Alice madam, or Joan madam... or...?

FORD

Madam, and nothing else. So Lords call Ladies.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Madam... wife..., they say that I have dreamed and slept.

PAGE

Ay, and the time seems thirty years to me.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Me too. Servants, leave me and her alone.

PAGE (*dropping female voice*)

What?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Madam, undress you and come now to bed.

(SLY chases PAGE. PAGE tries to talk SLY out of it as he runs in and out between the patrons and up and over the tables.)

PAGE

Thrice noble Lord, come now, I entreat you, to pardon me yet for a night or two, or, if not so, until the sun be set! For your physicians have charged, in peril of your former malady, that I should absent me from your bed.

(SLY chases the page around until PETRUCHIO stops him, and motions the TAILOR forward.)

TAILOR

Sir, your players are arrived.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

My players?

BERNHART

Hearing of your recovery, we are come to play the pleasant comedy.

BOOTH

Your doctors, insist upon the comedy.

BURBIDGE

Melancholy is the nurse of frenzy.

PAGE

Oh good a play.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

It is not a pantomime is it?

BERNHART

No. It is more pleasing stuff.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Well, we'll see it. Come, wife, sit by my side.

(SLY and PAGE sit. The PLAYERS look bewildered.)

WIDOW

My Lord...?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Yes?

WIDOW

Have you forgotten?

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Forgotten? No... Forgotten what?

BURBIDGE

You, yourself have practiced a part.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

I practiced a part?

VINCENTIA

Yes, perhaps you are still too ill for merriment?

PAGE

I'm sure of it.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Wait... No, I remember no such thing.

BARRYMORE

We will assist you, for your part is one that may be played extempore.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Extempore?

BERNHART

You may improvise.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Am I... such a good actor?

BOOTH

As you are nobly born, my lord, you are the best actor in Christendom.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

Well...What says, madam wife?

PAGE

It is extempore, after all.

CHRISTOPHER SLY

We shall do it, and let the world slip. We shall never be younger.

(The PLAYERS whisk him back stage to get in costume. The stage clears for the TAILOR.)

TAILOR

Ladies and gentle men. This evening's performance for the benefit of his mighty lordship Christopher Sly and starring the honorable and lofty lordship Christopher Sly himself, is entitled "The Taming of the Shrew." Let the play begin.

ACT I, SCENE 1 - A STREET IN PADUA

(BOOTH and BARRYMORE hang a sign on the balcony that says, "A Street In Padua.")

BARRYMORE

The city of Padua, Italy.

BOOTH

Birth place of the arts and pleasant garden of all Italy.

(LUCENTIO, a young, handsome nobleman, appears on the balcony overlooking the town. TRANIA, his opportunist but loyal female servant, soon joins him.)

BERNHART

Lucentio, the rich... rich son of the widow Vincentia

PRIEST

Has come to Padua to study virtue and philosophy.

BURBIDGE

With his Mother's love and leave, he has come armed with his good will..., his money and his trusty servant Trania.

(The NARRATORS exit.)

LUCENTIO

Trusty servant Trania, tell me thy mind.

TRANIA

I am in all ways like yourself. I am glad that you continue your resolve to suck the sweets of sweet philosophy... Only...

LUCENTIO

Yes, Trania?

TRANIA

Good Master, while I do admire this virtue and this moral discipline..., I am bored. In brief. No profit grows where no pleasure is taken.

LUCENTIO

Gramercies, Trania....

(BAPTISTA, followed closely by GREMIO, and HORTENSIO enter below. BAPTISTA'S daughters, the sweet, virtuous and beautiful BIANCA and the shrew KATE enter on their heels. GREMIO is an old man and carries a cane he likes to shake at those he disagrees with. HORTENSIO is younger and a bit nerdish. LUCENTIO and TRANIA watch from above on the balcony.)

LUCENTIO

But stay awhile... what company is this?

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, ask me no further, for I am firmly resolved not to bestow my youngest daughter before I have a husband for the elder!

(HORTENSIO and GREMIO start to protest.)

BAPTISTA

If either of you love Katharina, you shall have leave to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO

To cart her rather. She is too rough for me. Hortensio you may have her for wife.

KATE *(to BAPTISTA)*

I pray you, is it your will to give me to these mates.

HORTENSIO

Mates, maid! You are no mate for me, unless you were of a gentler and milder mould.

KATE

In faith, sir, you shall never need to fear. If I were your wife my care should be to comb your noodle with a three-legged stool and paint your face and use you like a fool.

HORTENSIO

From all such devils, good Lord deliver us.

GREMIO

And me too!

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, I shall make good on what I have said. Bianca, go inside, and let it not displease you. For I will love you never the less.

BIANCA

Sister, content you in my discontent - Mother, to your pleasure humbly I subscribe. My books and musical instruments shall be my company, on them to look and practice by myself.

(She turns to leave, and for the first time comes face to face with LUCENTIO. A brief refrain of the Halleluiah Chorus instantly sounds as all on stage momentarily freeze. When the music cuts and everyone resumes their activity, BIANCA and LUCENTIO remain frozen, staring at each other.)

HORTENSIO

Baptista, will you be so cruel?

GREMIO

Will you make Bianca bear the penance of her sister's tongue?

BAPTISTA

Gentlemen, content ye! I am resolved... Go in Bianca. Bianca! In!

(BIANCA staggers off. LUCENTIO comes half way down the stairs to watch her depart. He remains entranced.)

BAPTISTA

Bianca loves music and poetry. I will keep schoolmasters within my house fit to instruct her. Hortensio, Gremio if you know any such teachers, refer them to me, I will be very kind. Katharina, you may stay.

(BAPTISTA gestures that HORTENSIO and GREMIO might want to court her. They do a quick jerk away.)

KATE

I trust I may go, too.

BAPTISTA

I have more to commune with Bianca.

KATE

What? Shall I be appointed hours, as though I knew not what to take and what to leave? Ha!

(BAPTISTA exits quickly, somewhat afraid. KATE pursues.)

GREMIO

Hortensio, you may go to the devil's dam. Yet for the love I bear sweet Bianca, if I can find a find schoolmaster to teach her, I will refer him to her mother.

HORTENSIO

So will I Signor Gremio.

GREMIO

Farewell.

HORTENSIO

A word first.

GREMIO

And that word is?

HORTENSIO

That we may yet again be happy rivals in Bianca's love, we should put aside our quarrels and both work to find one thing.

GREMIO

What's that I pray?

HORTENSIO

A husband for her sister.

GREMIO

A husband? A devil.

HORTENSIO

I say a husband.

GREMIO

I say a devil. Do you think, though her mother be rich, any man is so very a fool to be married to hell?

HORTENSIO

Though it pass your patience, and mine, to endure her, there may be men in the world who would take her with all her faults... and enough money... But, come, we shall be friends until getting Baptista's eldest daughter a husband, we set her youngest free.

GREMIO

Sweet Bianca!

HORTENSIO

How say you, Gremio?

GREMIO

I am agreed. And I will give the best horse in all Padua to the man that can woo Katrina, wed her, bed her, and rid the house of her!

(GREMIO and HORTENSIO exit. LUCENTIO is still staring after BIANCA.)

TRANIA

Here is some good pastime. That wench is stark mad or wonderful forward.

(LUCENTIO continues to stare.)

TRANIA

Master....? Mum? And gaze your fill.

(TRANIA snaps her fingers in front of LUCENTIO eyes.)

TRANIA

I pray, sir, tell me, is it possible that love should take such sudden hold?

LUCENTIO

O, Till I found it to be true, I never thought it possible or likely. But see! While I stood idly looking on, I found the effect of love in idleness. Trania, I burn, I pine, I perish if I do not achieve this modest young girl.

TRANIA
The one Katherina?

LUCENTIO
The one Bianca!

TRANIA
Oh.

LUCENTIO
Assist me, Trania, for I know thou canst.

TRANIA
Master, you looked so longly on the maid, perhaps you missed something.

LUCENTIO
Oh yes, I saw sweet beauty in her face as would make great Jove humble himself.

TRANIA
Saw you no more? Marked you not how her sister began to scold and raise up such a storm that mortal ears might hardly endure the din?

LUCENTIO
I saw her coral lips to move and with her breath she did perfume the air.

TRANIA
I pray, awake, sir.

(TRANIA whacks LUCENTIO on the back of the head to snap him out of it.)

TRANIA
If you love the maid, bend thoughts and wits to achieve her.

LUCENTIO
Yes.

TRANIA
Thus it stands. Her eldest sister is so curst and shrewd that till the mother rids the house of Katherina, your love must live a maid.

LUCENTIO
Ah, what a cruel mother's she!

TRANIA
But...

LUCENTIO

But?

TRANIA

But the mother took some care to get cunning schoolmasters to instruct Bianca.

LUCENTIO

Schoolmasters.

TRANIA

Ay, and now it is plotted.

(They think.)

BOTH

I have it!

LUCENTIO

Tell me thine first.

TRANIA

You will pretend to be a schoolmaster and undertake the teaching of the maid.

LUCENTIO

That is my devise! May it be done?

TRANIA

Not possible; for who shall bear your part in Padua as Vincentia's son? Keep your house, study your books, welcome your friends, visit and banquet? Spend large quantities of your money? Party?

LUCENTIO

I have it! We have not yet been seen in any house, nor can we be distinguished by our faces, then it follows thus. Thou shalt pretend to be me, Trania,

TRANIA

Pretend to be you?

LUCENTIO

Exactly! Keep my house and port and servants...

TRANIA

And money.

LUCENTIO

Just as I should. I shall pretend to be a teacher. Trania, at once, uncase thee, Take my hat and cloak! And I'll take yours!

(He switches coats and hats with TRANIA. He is now a girl and she a boy.)

TRANIA

I am tied to be obedient - For so your Mother charged me at our parting. "Be of service to my son," quoth she, although, I think, twas in another sense. I am content to be Lucentio!

(They turn to leave and BIANDELA, LUCENTIO'S very simple but very honest female servant enters behind them carrying bags. The suitcases are piled high on her and she staggers to make progress.)

BIANDELA

Master, your bags have been recovered and....

(TRANIA and LUCENTIO turn around. BIANDELA drops the bags in shock.)

BIANDELA

Master, has Trania stolen your clothes? Or have you stolen hers? Or both? Pray? What's the news?

LUCENTIO

My other trusty servant Biandela... Come here, 'tis no time to jest. Trania here..., ummm... to save my life...

TRANIA

To save his life.

LUCENTIO

Puts on my apparel and countenance, and I, for my escape, have put on hers. For in a quarrel, since I came ashore, I killed a man, and fear I was seen...

BIANDELA

You killed a man?

LUCENTIO

Oh, yes. Biandela, wait on Trania, I charge you, while I escape from here in disguise to save my life. You understand me?

BIANDELA

I, sir..., never a whit.

LUCENTIO

No more is Trania. Trania is changed to Lucentio.

BIANDELA

The better for her.

TRANIA

Not for my sake but for your master's. Keep this quiet.

(They pile the suitcases back onto BIANDELA and exit talking. BIANDELA staggers off after them.)

LUCENTIO

Maybe I could fit into that little blue dress.

TRANIA

The one with the puffy sleeves?

LUCENTIO

That's the one.

ACT I, SCENE 2 - HORTENSIO'S HOUSE

(BERNHART, BOOTH, BARRYMORE, and BURBIDGE change the banner to one reading, "At Hortensio's Gate." The PRIEST and the WIDOW push out freestanding door with a small window to look out of, the door to HORTENSIO'S house.)

BERNHART

A gate, outside of Hortensio's House.

BOOTH

Petruchio, a gentleman from Verona and his grooms... Grumio and Grumio... have come to Padua to see his boyhood friend Hortensio.

BARRYMORE

Thus it is with Petruchio. His father is deceased.

BURBIDGE

And when he died, Petruchio lost a father's companionship and a son's allowance.

PRIEST

Petruchio has ventured into Padua haply to find a wife.

WIDOW

A wife with a dowry.

PRIEST

A rich dowry.

WIDOW

A rich, rich dowry.

BOOTH

Anon comes Petruchio.

(PETRUCHIO comes riding in on a HORSE, or rather two men in a horse suit. PETRUCHIO'S two crazy servants GRUMIO 1 and GRUMIO 2 run along side the horse.)

PETRUCHIO

This is the house of Hortensio. Grumios.

GRUMIOS

Yes sir.

PETRUCHIO

Knock, I say.

GRUMIO 1

Knock, sir?

GRUMIO 2

Whom should we knock, sir?

GRUMIO 1

Is there any man has rebused your worship.

PETRUCHIO

Villains, I say, knock me here, soundly.

GRUMIO 1

Knock *you* here, sir?

GRUMIO 2

Why sir, who are we to knock *you* here, sir?

PETRUCHIO

Villains, I say knock me at this gate, and rap me well, or I'll knock your knave's pates.

GRUMIO 2

My master has grown quarrelsome.

GRUMIO 1

I should knock you first? And then I know who comes by the worst.

(PETRUCHIO dismounts, hits the horse on the rump, and watches it gallop away.)

PETRUCHIO

Will it not be? Faith, sirs, and you'll not knock? I'll wring it.

(PETRUCHIO grabs both GRUMIOS by the back of the neck and slams their heads against the door. The servants roll across the floor in pain.)

GRUMIO2

Help masters.

GRUMIO 1

Help.

GRUMIO 2

My master is mad.

PETRUCHIO

Now, knock when I bid you!

(HORTENSIO throws open the little window and sticks out a gun and points it at PETRUCHIO.)

HORTENSIO

How now! What's the matter?

(He recognizes PETRUCHIO.)

Petruchio? My good friend!

(HORTENSIO opens the door and rushes to bear hug PETRUCHIO.)

GRUMIO 1

If this not be lawful cause for us to leave his service.

GRUMIO 2

Look you sir, he bid us knock him and rap him soundly.

PETRUCHIO

Senseless villains. I bade the rascals knock upon your gate and could not get them for my heart to do it.

GRUMIO 1

Knock at the gate?

GRUMIO 2

O heavens. Spake you these words plain, Sir, knock *me* here!

GRUMIO 1

Rap me there!

GRUMIO 2

Knock me well!

GRUMIO 1

And knock me soundly!

GRUMIO 2

And come you now with - knocking at the gate?

PETRUCHIO

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

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, patience. And tell me now, sweet friend, what happy gale blows you to Padua from old Verona?

PETRUCHIO

Such wind as scatters young men through the world; to seek their fortunes further from home, to wive and thrive as best I may.

(At the word "wive" HORTENSIO gets an idea and goes deep in thought.)

PETRUCHIO

Hortensio?

HORTENSIO

Wive?

PETRUCHIO

Haply.

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, I know just the... No..., shall I wish thee to a shrewd ill-favored wife? But thou art too much my friend, and I'll not wish thee to her. And yet, I'll promise thee, she is... rich.

PETRUCHIO

Rich?

HORTENSIO

And very rich.

PETRUCHIO

Signor Hortensio, twixt such friends as we, few words suffice, and therefore, if you know one rich enough to be Petruchio's wife be she foul, old, curst, and shrewd I come to wive, if wealthily then happily in Padua.

GRUMIO 1

Nay, look you sir, he tells you flatly what his mind is.

GRUMIO 2

Why, give him gold enough and marry him to a puppet.

GRUMIO 1

Or an old trot with never a tooth in her head, and she has as many diseases as fifty horses.

GRUMIO 2

Why, nothing comes amiss, if money comes withal.

HORTENSIO

Petruchio, since we have stepped thus far in, I will continue what I broached in jest. I can help thee get a wife with wealth enough and young and beauteous and brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman. Her only fault is that she is intolerably curst and shrewd and forward, so far beyond all measure that I would not wed her for a mine of gold.

PETRUCHIO

Peace. Thou knowest not gold's effect. Tell me her name, for I will board her though she chides as loud as thunder.

HORTENSIO

Her mother is Baptista, an affable and courteous gentlewoman. Her name is Katarina Minola, renowned in Padua for her scolding tongue.

GRUMIO 2

O my word, if she knew him as well as we do, she would think scolding would do little good upon him.

PETRUCHIO

I will not sleep until I see her.

HORTENSIO

And I must go with you, for in Baptista's keep is my treasure, the youngest daughter, beautiful Bianca. And none shall have access unto Bianca till Katherine the curst have got a husband.

GRUMIO 1

Katherine the curst, a title for a maid, of all titles the worst.

HORTENSIO

Now shall my friend Petruchio do me a favor. Offer me disguised in sober robes, to Baptista as a schoolmaster.

PETRUCHIO

Offer you as a schoolmaster?

HORTENSIO

A music teacher, to instruct Bianca. Then I may have leave and leisure to make love to her and, unsuspected, court her by herself.

(Enter GREMIO and LUCENTIO. LUCENTIO is disguised as a woman and speaks with a woman's voice. He carries school books and pretends to be a teacher. GREMIO carries one of the books, but looks at it upside down.)

GREMIO

What will you read to her?

LUCENTIO

Whatever I read to her, I'll plead for you as for my patron, and perhaps with more successful words than you, unless you were a scholar.

GREMIO

Oh, this learning. What a thing it is.

HORTENSIO

God save you, Signor Gremio.

GREMIO

You are well met. Do you know where I am going? To Baptista's. I promised to inquire carefully about a schoolmaster for the fair Bianca and, by good fortune, I have lighted well on this young woman, well read in poetry and other books. Good books, I warrant you.

HORTENSIO

Tis well. I have met a gentleman that has promised to help me, too. A fine musician to instruct my fair Bianca, so beloved of me.

GREMIO

So beloved of me!

HORTENSIO

Gremio, it is not the time to vent our love. Listen to me and I'll tell you news. Here is a gentleman, whom by chance I met, will undertake to woo and marry curst Katherine.

GRUMIO 2

Aye. If her dowry please him.

GREMIO

Hortensio, have you told him all her faults?

PETRUCHIO

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

GREMIO

Oh, sir, if you have the stomach, go to it. But will you woo this wildcat?

GRUMIO 2

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

PETRUCHIO

Why did I come here but for that intent? Do you think a little din can daunt my ears?

GRUMIO 1

Has he not heard lions roar?

GRUMIO 2

Heard the sea puffed up with winds?

GRUMIO 1

Has he not heard great artillery thunder in the skies?

GRUMIO 2

Neighing steeds and trumpets?

GRUMIO 1

And do you do you tell me now of a mere woman's tongue?

GRUMIO 2

Tush, tush.

GRUMIO 1

Tush!

GRUMIO 2

Fear boys with bugs. For he fears none!

GRUMIOS

Petruchio!!

(Enter TRANIA dressed up as LUCENTIO and acting like a man. She wears a beard and walks with manly swagger. BIONDELLO follows.)

TRANIA

Gentlemen, if I may be bold, which way to the house of Baptista Minola?

BIANDELA

Baptista that has the fair daughter Bianca seeking a suitor.

GREMIO

Straight away. The big house on the left.

TRANIA

Thank you , sir.

GREMIO

Have you business with Baptista Minola?

BIANDELA

Baptista that has the fair daughter Bianca seeking a suitor.

(aside to TRANIA)

Am I doing well?

TRANIA

Even so, Biandela.

(to GREMIO)

More pleasure than business, sir.

GREMIO

Are you a suitor then for the maid you speak of?

TRANIA

And if I am, is it any offense. Let's away Biandela.

HORTENSIO

A word, ere you go.

(GREMIO and HORTENSIO cut off TRANIA'S path to exit.)

TRANIA

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

GREMIO

But Bianca is not! She is not free.

TRANIA

For what reason?

GREMIO

Bianca's the choice love of Signor Gremio!

HORTENSIO

Ha! She's the chosen of Signor Hortensio!

TRANIA

Softly, my masters. Helen of Troy had a thousand wooers, though Paris thought he was alone. Come Biandela, to Baptista's.

BIANDELA

Baptista that has the fair daughter Bianca seeking a suitor.

TRANIA

Yes.

(They exit followed closely by the others all jockeying for position.)

ACT I, SCENE 3 - BAPTISTA'S HOUSE

(The PLAYERS unroll a banner that says, "The House Of Baptista." Some roll off the freestanding door. The PRIEST pauses to narrate before exiting.)

PRIEST

An ordinary day at the house of Baptista.

(BIANCA screams and runs in tied to a chair. Her upper torso and arms are strapped down so that she cannot move anything but her feet. KATE chases close behind her. Kate snaps a bull whip at BIANCA'S heels. BIANCA jumps.)

BIANCA

Good sister, wrong me not, nor wrong yourself to make a bondmaid or slave of me. Unbind my hands. I will rid myself of these clothes, yea, to my petticoat. Or what you will command me I will do, so well I know my duty to my elders.

(KATE grabs a handful of BIANCA'S hair, sits her down, and pulls her head back.)

KATE

Of all thy suitors, here I charge thee tell, whom thou lovest best.

BIANCA

Believe me, sister, of all men alive I never yet beheld that special face which I could fancy more than any other.

KATE

Thou liest! Is it not Hortensio?

BIANCA

If you like him, sister, here I swear you shall have him. I'll plead for you myself!

KATE

Oh, then you fancy riches more! You will have Gremio to keep you fair.

BIANCA

Is it for him you do envy me? Nay, then you jest, and now I see you have but jested all this while. I prithee, Kate....,

(She bats her eyelids and uses her little girl voice that always works on others.)

...untie my hands?

KATE

If that be jest, then so is this.

(KATE cracks the whip and chases BIANCA around the stage. BAPTISTA rushes in. BIANCA hides behind her.)

BAPTISTA

How now, dame, whence grows this insolence? Bianca, stand aside. Poor girl, she weeps! Go ply thy needle.

(Back to KATE. BIANCA gloats at KATE behind BAPTISTA'S back.)

Meddle not with her. Why dost thou wrong her who never did wrong thee?

KATE

Her silence flouts me! And I'll be revenged!

(KATE runs after BIANCA and is restrained by BAPTISTA.)

KATE

What? Will you not suffer me? Now I see she is your treasure, she must have a husband; I must dance barefoot on her wedding day! Talk not to me! I will go sit and weep till I can find occasion for revenge!

(KATE breaks free and chases the still tied BIANCA up stairs and off stage.)

BAPTISTA

Was ever woman as grieved as I? But who comes here?

(Enter GREMIO, LUCENTIO, PETRUCHIO, the GRUMIOS, HORTENSIO, TRANIA and BIANDELA, all still jockeying for position. HORTENSIO is in disguise. He has a long beard and carries a lute.)

GREMIO

Good morrow neighbor Baptista.

BAPTISTA

God save you, gentlemen.

PETRUCHIO

And you, good madam. Pray, have you not a daughter called Katharina, fair and virtuous?

BAPTISTA

I have a daughter sir... called Katharina.

PETRUCHIO

I am a gentleman of Verona, that hearing of her beauty and her wit, her affability and her bashful modesty, her wondrous qualities and mild behavior, am bold to make mine eye the witness of that report which so often have heard.

(There is a long pause where BAPTISTA is speechless. Finally HORTENSIO nudges PETRUCHIO as if to ask to be introduced.)

And... and I do present you with a man of mine, cunning in music to instruct her and her sister Bianca. Accept him or else you do me wrong. His name is...

HORTENSIO

Licio.

PETRUCHIO

Licio?

BAPTISTA

You are welcome, sir. And he for your good sake. But for my daughter Katherine? I know this. She is not for your turn.

PETRUCHIO

I see you do not mean to part with her?

BAPTISTA

Mistake me not.

GREMIO

Save your tale, Petruchio. Let us speak too. To express the like kindness myself, I freely give unto you this young scholar, as cunning in Greek and Latin and other languages as the other in music. Her name is Cambio.

TRANIA

Pardon me, sir. The boldness is mine, that being a stranger in this city, do make myself a suitor to your daughter, Bianca, fair and virtuous. Nor is your firm resolve unknown to me, This liberty is all I request, that... upon knowledge of my parentage, I may have welcome amongst the rest that woo.

BAPTISTA

Your name is?

TRANIA

Lucentio of Pisa, son of the widow Vincentia!

BAPTISTA

Vincentia? I know her well,

TRANIA

You know her? Well... ah...

BAPTISTA

By reputation. A mighty woman by report.

PETRUCHIO

Baptista, my business asketh haste and every day I cannot come to woo.

(BAPTISTA appears totally confused, then runs everyone out of the room but PETRUCHIO.)

BAPTISTA

Go to my daughters. Tell them you are their tutors. Bid them use you well. You are all welcome for dinner.

(GRUMIOS run to get to dinner first, Everyone else hurries to be the first tutor in line.)

PETRUCHIO

Tell me - If I get your daughter's love, what dowry shall I have with her to wife?

BAPTISTA

After my death, the one half of my lands.

(PETRUCHIO laughs and turns to leave.)

BAPTISTA

And ten thousand....

(Screams from HORTENSIO and KATE can be heard off stage.)

BAPTISTA

Twenty thousand crowns now.

(PETRUCHIO comes back.)

PETRUCHIO

And for that dowry, I'll assure her of her widowhood, be it that she survives me. Let contracts be drawn between us.

BAPTISTA

Ay, when that special thing is obtained, that is, her love.

PETRUCHIO

Why that is nothing... mother... for I tell you I am as peremptory as she proud minded, for I am rough and woo not like a babe.

(HORTENSIO bursts into the room, and runs down the stairs. His lute is broken over his head and he wears it like a hat. He is near hysterical.)

BAPTISTA

How now? Why dost thou look so pale?

HORTENSIO

For fear!

BAPTISTA

Will Katharina prove a good musician?

HORTENSIO

I think she'll sooner prove a soldier.

BAPTISTA

Canst thou not break her to the lute?

HORTENSIO

She hath broke the lute to me! I did but tell her she mistook her fret. "Frets, you call these," quoth she. And with that word she struck me... on the head. And there I stood, amazed for a while, my head through the instrument.

PETRUCHIO

Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench; I love her ten times more than ever I did.

BAPTISTA *(to HORTENSIO)*

Proceed in practice with my younger daughter. She's apt to learn and thankful for help.

(HORTENSIO runs off happy.)

BAPTISTA

Signor Petruchio, Shall I send my daughter to you?

PETRUCHIO

I will attend her here.

(BAPTISTA exits up stairs to find KATE.)

And woo her with some spirit when she comes. Say that she rail?

(He hears screaming off stage.)

Why then I'll tell her plain she sings as sweetly as a nightingale.

(GREMIO and LUCENTIO burst out the upstairs door and run down the stairs. GREMIO pauses to mouth something to PETRUCHIO but can't get the words out and so runs out.)

Say that she frown?

(TRANIA and BIANDELA burst out the upstairs door and sprint away.)

I'll say she looks clear as morning roses newly washed with dew; Say she be mute, and will not speak a word?

(The two GRUMIOS burst through the door and roll down the steps on each side of the platform. When they hit the ground they just keep rolling until they are all the way off the stage.)

Then I'll commend her volubility. If she do bid me pack, I'll give her thanks as though she bid me stay a week.

(BIANCA bursts through the door, still tied to the chair. KATE chases her down the stairs, holding a small knife as a weapon, and is about to follow her off the stage when PETRUCHIO interrupts.)

PETRUCHIO

Good morrow, Kate; for that's your name I hear.

(KATE freezes. She turns and looks at PETRUCHIO. There is a momentary meet cute. They both seem surprised and interested in what they see. Then KATE returns to attack mode.)