

# The Taming of the Shrew

*Adapted by  
Eric L. Magnus*

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**STORY OF THE PLAY**

This adaptation of William Shakespeare's zesty classic comedy remains true to the original, but with its tighter construction is more easily accessible to junior and senior high school actors. Set in Padua, Italy, in the late 1500s, the story concerns the shy Bianca and the mean-spirited Katharine, the two daughters of a rich merchant named Baptista. Though Bianca is being courted by a number of young men, Baptista announces that she may not marry until Katharine is wed. None of the men in town are willing to marry Katharine, so Bianca remains unwed, even as more suitors...such as Lucentio, a student who begins working as a tutor in the household just to be near Bianca...line up to wed the maiden. No man approaches Katharine until Petruchio, a wanderer who arrived in Padua just to find a rich wife, falls in love with her. After an intense, occasionally furious, courtship, Katharine eventually agrees to marry him, and they move to Petruchio's shoddy house outside of the city. Soon Lucentio reveals that he is not a student, but instead the son of one of the most respected men in town. Lucentio gets permission to marry Bianca and a mild-mannered Katharine shows up at the wedding, giving advice to her sister on how to be a good wife. A lively, colorful and energetic play!

The original production took place at Olathe South High School on October 23 & 24, 2003 at 7:30pm. The cast included:

Katharina: Jordan Bedford	Bianca: Tian Tian Cai
Baptista: Jessie Hernandez	Petruchio: Ben Fleer
Grumio: Jeff Cook	Gremio: Alex Pederson
Hortensio: Aaron Sielert	Lucentio: Blaze Barrett
Tranio: Taylor Lewis	Biondello: Janelle Friesen
Vincentio: Kenneth Clevenstine	Pedant: Scott Turner
Widow: Katey Wegemer	Curtis: Reuben Dermeyer
Nathaniel: Shannon Ayers	Philip: Bonnie Bailey
Joseph: Kelly LaBruzzo	Gregory: Ryan Mulvenon
Nicholas: Katherine Pinsky	Peter: Sally Doyen
Tailor: Tim Markman	Haberdasher: Chris Farris
Officer: Chris Brosnahan	Servant: Sam Dia

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**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

*(10 m, 3 f, 11 flexible, extras.)*

KATHARINA MINOLA: The shrew. (Katharine/Kate.)

BIANCA MINOLA: Her younger sister.

BAPTISTA MINOLA: Their father.

PETRUCHIO: From Verona, Katherina's suitor, later her husband.

GRUMIO: His servant.

GREMIO: A wealthy old man from Padua, one of Bianca's suitors.

HORTENSIO: Another suitor, disguised as LITIO, a teacher of music and mathematics.

LUCENTIO: From Pisa, a younger suitor, eventually Bianca's husband, disguised as CAMBIO, a teacher of languages.

TRANIO: Lucentio's servant, for much of the time he impersonates Lucentio.

BIONDELLO: Another of Lucentio's servants.

VINCENTIO: Lucentio's father.

PEDANT: From Mantua, tricked into impersonating Vincentio.

WIDOW: Becomes Hortensio's wife.

CURTIS: Servant in Petruchio's household.

NATHANIEL: Another.

PHILIP: Another.

JOSEPH: Another.

GREGORY: Another.

NICHOLAS: Another.

PETER: Another.

A TAILOR

A HABERDASHER

AN OFFICER

A SERVANT

**POSSIBLE DOUBLING** (*See cast chart page 64*)

Servant / Curtis	Nathaniel / Pedant
Philip / Haberdasher	Joseph / Tailor
Nicholas / Vincentio	Gregory / Officer
Peter / Widow	

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**ACT I**  
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: Padua, a public place. LUCENTIO and his man TRANIO enter.)*

LUCENTIO: Tranio, since for the great desire I had to see fair Padua, nursery of arts, I am arrived at this pleasant garden of great Italy. By my father's love, I am arm'd with his good will and thy good company, my trusty servant. Here, let us pause and happily institute a course of learning and ingenious studies. Pisa, renown'd for honorable citizens gave me my being and my father, Vincetino, come of Bentivolii. As his son, brought up in Florence, it shall become me to fulfill his fortune with virtuous deeds. Tell me thy mind, for I have Pisa left and am to Padua come, as he that leaves a shallow marshy pool to plunge him in the deep and seeks to quench his thirst.

TRANIO: Mi perdonato, gentle master mine. 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, let's be no stoics nor no stocks, I pray; or so devoted to Aristotle's principles as Ovid to be an outcast quite ignored. Balk logic with acquaintances that you have and practice rhetoric in your common talk. Music and poems use to enliven you. The mathematics and the metaphysics, partake of them as you find the inclination serves you. No profit grows where is no pleasure taken. In brief, sir, study what you most enjoy.

LUCENTIO: Grazie, Tranio, well dost thou advise. If, Biondello, 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. But stay a while. What company is this?

TRANIO: Master, some show to welcome us to town.

*(Enter BAPTISTA, KATHARINA, BIANCA, GREMIO, and HORTENSIO. LUCENTIO and TRANIO stand by.)*

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BAPTISTA: Gentlemen, importune me no farther, for how I firmly am resolved you know. That is, not to bestow my youngest daughter before I have a husband for the elder. If either of you both love Katharina, because I know you well and love you well, you shall have leave have to court her at your pleasure.

GREMIO: (*Aside.*) To cart her rather. She's too rough for me. Hortensio, will you take a wife?

KATHARINA: 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 a gentler, milder mold.

KATHARINA: In faith, sir, you shall never need to fear. Indeed, it is not halfway in 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.

HORTENSIA: From all such devils, good Lord deliver us!

GREMIO: And me too, good Lord!

TRANIO: (*Aside to LUCENTIO.*) Master! Here's some good pastime. That wench is stark mad or wonderful perverse.

LUCENTIO: (*Quietly to TRANIO.*) But in the other's silence do I see a Maid's mild behavior and sobriety. Peace, Tranio!

BAPTISTA: Gentlemen, that I may soon make good what I have said. Bianca, get you in, and let it not displease thee, good Bianca, for I will love thee never the less, my girl.

KATHARINA: A pretty peat! It is best to put a finger in the eye, an she knew why.

BIANCA: Sister, content you in my discontent. Sir, to your will humbly I subscribe. My books and instruments shall be my company, on them to look and practice by myself.

LUCENTIO: Hark, Tranio! Thou may'st hear Minerva speak.

HORTENSIO: Signior Baptista, will you be so distant? Sorry am I that our good will effects Bianca's grief.

GREMIO: Why will you confine her, Signior Baptista, for this fiend of hell, and make her bear the penance of her tongue? (*Referring to Katharina.*)

BAPTISTA: Gentlemen, content ye; I am resolved. Go in, Bianca. (*Exit BIANCA.*)

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BAPTISTA: *(Cont.)* 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, or Signior Gremio, know any such, refer them hither; for to cunning men I will be very kind, and liberal to mine own children in good bringing up. And so farewell. Katharina, you may stay, for I have more to commune with Bianca. *(Exit BAPTISTA.)*

KATHARINA: Why may I not? Shall I be appointed hours; as though, I knew not what to take and what to leave? *(Exit KATHARINA.)*

GREMIO: *(To the exiting KATHARINA.)* You may go to the devil's dam. Your gifts are so good, there's none will hold you. Farewell! Yet for the love I bear my sweet Bianca, if I can by any means find a fit man to teach her that wherein she delights, I will refer him to her father.

HORTENSIO: So will I, Signior Gremio: but a word, I pray. Though the nature of our quarrel yet never permitted discussion, know now, upon reflection, it toucheth us both. We may yet again have access to our fair mistress and be happy rivals in Bianca's love, if we labor 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.

HORTENSIO: I say, a husband.

GREMIO: I say, a devil. Thinkest thou, Hortensio. Though her father be very rich, is any man so very a fool to be married to hell?

HORTENSIO: Tush, Gremio. Though it pass your patience and mine to endure her loud tantrums, there be good fellows in the world would take her with all her faults...and money.

GREMIO: I had as lief take her dowry 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 the law makes us friends till, by helping Baptista's eldest daughter to a husband, we set his youngest free for a husband. Sweet Bianca! Happy man be his fate! He that runs fastest gets the ring. How say you, Signior Gremio?

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