

The Taming of the Shrew







Katharine, the Shrew¹, was the eldest daughter of Baptista, a rich gentleman of Padua. She was a lady of such an ungovernable spirit and fiery temper, such a loud-tongued scold², that she was known in Padua by no other name than Katharine the Shrew.

It seemed very unlikely, indeed impossible, that any gentleman would ever be found who would venture to marry this lady, and therefore Baptista was much blamed for deferring³ his consent to many excellent offers that were made to her gentle sister Bianca, putting off all Bianca's suitors with this excuse that when the eldest sister was fairly off his hands, they should have free leave to address young Bianca.

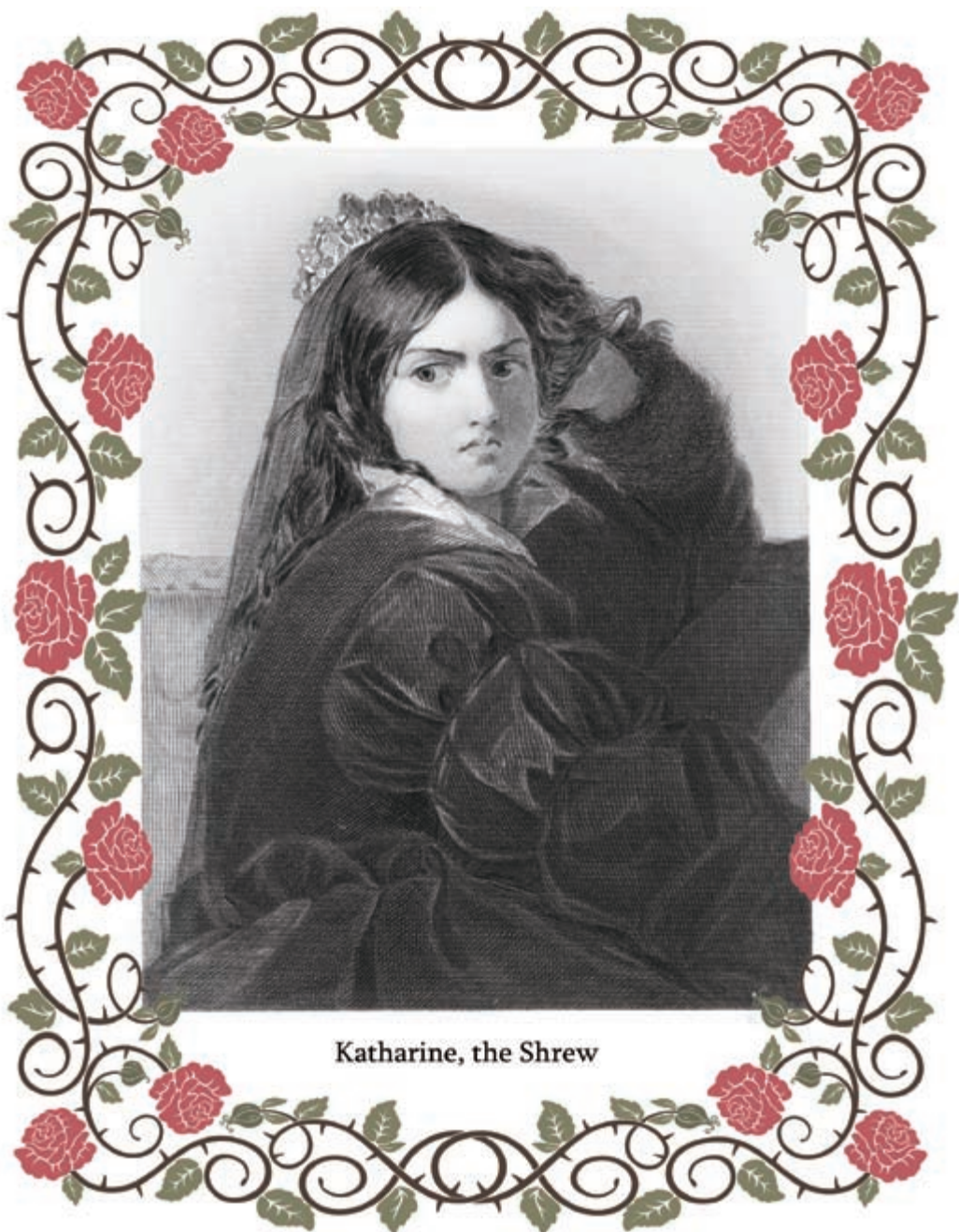
It happened, however, that a gentleman, named Petruchio, came to Padua, purposely to look out for a wife, who, nothing discouraged by these reports of Katharine's temper, and hearing she was rich and handsome, resolved upon marrying this famous termagant⁴, and taming her into a meek and manageable wife.

1 shrew [ˈruː] (n.) 悍婦

2 scold [skould] (n.) 好罵人者

3 defer [dɪˈfɜːr] (v.) 延緩

4 termagant [ˈtɜːrməɡənt] (n.) 好爭吵的女子；悍婦



Katharine, the Shrew



And truly none was so fit to set about this herculean⁵ labor as Petruchio, whose spirit was as high as Katharine's, and he was a witty and most happy-tempered humorist, and withal⁶ so wise, and of such a true judgment, that he well knew how to feign⁷ a passionate and furious deportment⁸, when his spirits were so calm that himself could have laughed merrily at his own angry feigning, for his natural temper was careless and easy.

The boisterous⁹ airs he assumed¹⁰ when he became the husband of Katharine being but in sport, or more properly speaking, affected by his excellent discernment¹¹, as the only means to overcome, in her own way, the passionate ways of the furious Katharine.

5 herculean [ˌhɜːr'kjuːliːən] (a.) 需要體力或智力的

6 withal [wɪ'ðɔːl] (adv.) [古代用法] 而且；此外

7 feign [feɪn] (v.) 假裝

8 deportment [dɪ'pɔːtmənt] (n.) 行為；舉止

9 boisterous ['bɔɪstərəs] (a.) 喧鬧的

10 assume [ə'suːm] (v.) 假裝；裝出

11 discernment [dɪ'sɜːnmənt] (n.) 判斷力；明辨力



A courting then Petruchio went to Katharine the Shrew; and first of all he applied to Baptista her father, for leave to woo¹² his *gentle daughter* Katharine, as Petruchio called her, saying archly¹³, that having heard of her bashful¹⁴ modesty and mild behaviour, he had come from Verona to solicit¹⁵ her love.

Her father, though he wished her married, was forced to confess Katharine would ill answer this character, it being soon apparent of what manner of gentleness she was composed, for her music-master rushed into the room to complain that the gentle Katharine, his pupil, had broken his head with her lute¹⁶, for presuming¹⁷ to find fault with her performance; which, when Petruchio heard, he said, “It is a brave wench¹⁸; I love her more than ever, and long to have some chat with her.”

12 woo [wu:] (v.) [舊式用法] 追求；求婚

13 archly ['ɑ:rtli] (adv.) 調皮地

14 bashful ['bæʃəl] (a.) 害羞的

15 solicit [sə'lisɪt] (v.) 懇求

16 lute [lu:t] (n.) 魯特琴

17 presuming [prɪ'zu:mɪŋ] (V-ing) 敢於；擅敢

18 wench [wrentʃ] (n.) [古代用法] 少女；少婦



And hurrying the old gentleman for a positive answer, he said, “My business is in haste, Signior Baptista, I cannot come every day to woo. You knew my father: he is dead, and has left me heir to all his lands and goods. Then tell me, if I get your daughter’s love, what dowry¹⁹ you will give with her.”



Baptista thought his manner was somewhat blunt²⁰ for a lover; but being glad to get Katharine married, he answered that he would give her twenty thousand crowns for her dowry, and half his estate at his death: so this odd match was quickly agreed on, and Baptista went to apprise²¹ his shrewish daughter of her lover’s addresses, and sent her in to Petruchio to listen to his suit.

¹⁹ dowry ['daʊəri] (n.) 嫁妝

²⁰ blunt [blʌnt] (a.) 直言的；不客氣的

²¹ apprise [ə'praɪz] (v.) [正式用法] 通知；報告



In the meantime Petruchio was settling with himself the mode of courtship he should pursue; and he said, “I will woo her with some spirit when she comes. If she rails²² at me, why then I will tell her she sings as sweetly as a nightingale; and if she frowns²³, I will say she looks as clear as roses newly washed with dew. If she will not speak a word, I will praise the eloquence²⁴ of her language; and if she bids me leave her, I will give her thanks as if she bid²⁵ me stay with her a week.”

Now the stately Katharine entered, and Petruchio first addressed her with “Good morrow, Kate, for that is your name, I hear.”

Katharine, not liking this plain salutation, said disdainfully²⁶, “They call me Katharine who do speak to me.”

“You lie,” replied the lover; “for you are called plain Kate, and bonny²⁷ Kate, and sometimes Kate the Shrew: but, Kate, you are the prettiest Kate in Christendom²⁸, and therefore, Kate, hearing your mildness praised in every town, I am come to woo you for my wife.”

22 rail [reɪl] (v.) 〔文學用法〕挑剔；抱怨

23 frown ['fraʊn] (v.) 皺眉頭

24 eloquence ['eləkwəns] (n.) 口才；雄辯

25 bid [bɪd] (v.) 說（問候的話等）

26 disdainfully [dɪs'deɪnfəli] (adv.) 輕蔑地

27 bonny ['bʌ:ni] (a.) 可愛的；美好的

28 Christendom ['krɪsəndəm] (n.) 基督教世界

Act 2, Scene 1



PETRUCHIO. Why, what's a moveable?

KATHARINA. A join'd-stool.

PETRUCHIO. Thou hast hit it: come, sit on me.



A strange courtship they made of it. She in loud and angry terms showing him how justly she had gained the name of Shrew, while he still praised her sweet and courteous words, till at length, hearing her father coming, he said (intending to make as quick a wooing as possible), “Sweet Katharine, let us set this idle chat aside, for your father has consented that you shall be my wife, your dowry is agreed on, and whether you will or no, I will marry you.”

And now Baptista entering, Petruchio told him his daughter had received him kindly, and that she had promised to be married the next Sunday. This Katharine denied, saying she would rather see him hanged on Sunday, and reproached²⁹ her father for wishing to wed her to such a madcap ruffian³⁰ as Petruchio.

²⁹ reproach [rɪˈpraʊtʃ] (v.) 責備

³⁰ ruffian [ˈrʌfiən] (n.) 惡棍