

## **The Taming of the Shrew Synopsis**

The play is set in Padua, Italy. It begins with Lucentio of Pisa and his servant Tranio arriving to go to university when they observe a strange sight: Signor Baptista is being hounded by his two neighbours because he has two daughters eligible for marriage. Hortensio and Gremio are both vying for the younger Bianca and want nothing to do with the elder Katherine, whom they consider ill-tempered. But until the elder is married, Bianca is off-limits, so they agree to try and find a suitor for the angry shrew. When they leave, Lucentio declares his love for Bianca and forgets all about his studies. Instead he switches clothes with his servant and instructs Tranio to present himself as another suitor while he tries to win Bianca's love disguised as a tutor.

Then Petruchio of Verona arrives to visit his friend Hortensio and tells him that his father has passed away and he is looking for a wife. When Hortensio informs him about the rich but scolding Katherine, Petruchio is sold. The next day they arrive at Baptista's along with Gremio and a new suitor Tranio, and Petruchio makes his intentions known to Baptista, giving Hortensio (disguised as a tutor) as a gift to that end. Gremio presents another tutor for Bianca, which is none other than Lucentio, and Baptista welcomes both and sends them in. Petruchio then brokers a dowry deal, contingent on winning Katherine's love. Baptista sends Katherine out to meet Petruchio and the two have a sparring match with words. When Baptista returns, Petruchio insists that there will be a wedding the following Sunday. With one marriage out of the way, Gremio and Tranio bid for Bianca, and Tranio is the winner.

The wedding day comes and Petruchio is nowhere to be found. Kate thinks she has been left at the altar and goes inside crying. Finally, Petruchio arrives in unsuitable wedding attire and Gremio describes the bizarre ceremony. Immediately after, Petruchio insists on leaving with his bride, and when she tries to resist, he carries her off with his servant to his home. They arrive, dirty, cold, and hungry, but Petruchio will not let her (or himself) eat or sleep so that he can tame her. Back in Padua, Tranio dupes a stranger into presenting himself as his father to be the guarantor for his marriage.

Petruchio and Katherine are on the road back to visit her father when he insists that the moon shines so bright. Katherine knows it is the sun, but finally yields to his crazy reality. Then they are joined by Lucentio's real father, Vincentio, as they journey back to Padua. When they arrive they are met with the false father and chaos ensues until Lucentio and Bianca return from getting married to explain the truth of the matter. Vincentio and Baptista are none too pleased about the situation but resign themselves and everyone goes inside to celebrate the marriage. The final scene has the familiar wager from the folk origins of the tale whereby Petruchio proves that his wife is the most obedient when he instructs Katherine to scold the other wives for their misbehaviour. She does so to the amazement of all present after which she and Petruchio celebrate with a kiss.