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*The  
Taming of  
the Shrew*

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WITH DETAILED NOTES

FROM THE WORLD'S

LEADING CENTER FOR

SHAKESPEARE STUDIES

EDITED BY BARBARA A. MOWAT  
AND PAUL WERSTINE

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*The Taming  
of the Shrew*

By  
**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**



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## **THE NEW FOLGER LIBRARY SHAKESPEARE**

Designed to make Shakespeare's great plays available to all readers, the New Folger Library edition of Shakespeare's plays provides accurate texts in modern spelling and punctuation, as well as scene-by-scene action summaries, full explanatory notes, many pictures clarifying Shakespeare's language, and notes recording all significant departures from the early printed versions. Each play is prefaced by a brief introduction, by a guide to reading Shakespeare's language, and by accounts of his life and theater. Each play is followed by an annotated list of further readings and by a "Modern Perspective" written by an expert on that particular play.

Barbara A. Mowat is Director of Academic Programs at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Executive Editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Chair of the Folger Institute, and author of *The Dramaturgy of Shakespeare's Romances* and of essays on Shakespeare's plays and on the editing of the plays.

Paul Werstine is Professor of English at King's University College at The University of Western Ontario, Canada. He is general editor of the New Variorum Shakespeare and author of many papers and articles on the printing and editing of Shakespeare's plays.

# **The Folger Shakespeare Library**

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., a privately funded research library dedicated to Shakespeare and the civilization of early modern Europe, was founded in 1932 by Henry Clay and Emily Jordan Folger. In addition to its role as the world's preeminent Shakespeare collection and its emergence as a leading center for Renaissance studies, the Folger Library offers a wide array of cultural and educational programs and services for the general public.

## **EDITORS**

**BARBARA A. MOWAT**

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## **From the Director of the Library**

For over four decades, the Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare provided accurate and accessible texts of the plays and poems to students, teachers, and millions of other interested readers. Today, in an age often impatient with the past, the passion for Shakespeare continues to grow. No author speaks more powerfully to the human condition, in all its variety, than this actor/playwright from a minor sixteenth-century English village.

Over the years vast changes have occurred in the way Shakespeare's works are edited, performed, studied, and taught. The New Folger Library Shakespeare replaces the earlier versions, bringing to bear the best and most current thinking concerning both the texts and their interpretation. Here is an edition which makes the plays and poems fully understandable for modern readers using uncompromising scholarship. Professors Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine are uniquely qualified to produce this New Folger Shakespeare for a new generation of readers. The Library is grateful for the learning, clarity, and imagination they have brought to this ambitious project.

**Werner Gundersheimer,  
Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library  
from 1984 to 2002**

## Editors' Preface

In recent years, ways of dealing with Shakespeare's texts and with the interpretation of his plays have been undergoing significant change. This edition, while retaining many of the features that have always made the Folger Shakespeare so attractive to the general reader, at the same time reflects these current ways of thinking about Shakespeare. For example, modern readers, actors, and teachers have become interested in the differences between, on the one hand, the early forms in which Shakespeare's plays were first published and, on the other hand, the forms in which editors through the centuries have presented them. In response to this interest, we have based our edition on what we consider the best early printed version of a particular play (explaining our rationale in a section called "An Introduction to This Text") and have marked our changes in the text—unobtrusively, we hope, but in such a way that the curious reader can be aware that a change has been made and can consult the "Textual Notes" to discover what appeared in the early printed version.

Current ways of looking at the plays are reflected in our brief introductions, in many of the commentary notes, in the annotated lists of "Further Reading," and especially in each play's "Modern Perspective," an essay written by an outstanding scholar who brings to the reader his or her fresh assessment of the play in the light of today's interests and concerns.

As in the Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare, which this edition replaces, we include explanatory notes designed to help make Shakespeare's language clearer to a modern reader, and we place the

notes on the page facing the text that they explain. We also follow the earlier edition in including illustrations—of objects, of clothing, of mythological figures—from books and manuscripts in the Folger Library collection. We provide fresh accounts of the life of Shakespeare, of the publishing of his plays, and of the theaters in which his plays were performed, as well as an introduction to the text itself. We also include a section called “Reading Shakespeare’s Language,” in which we try to help readers learn to “break the code” of Elizabethan poetic language.

For each section of each volume, we are indebted to a host of generous experts and fellow scholars. The “Reading Shakespeare’s Language” sections, for example, could not have been written had not Arthur King, of Brigham Young University, and Randal Robinson, author of *Unlocking Shakespeare’s Language*, led the way in untangling Shakespearean language puzzles and shared their insights and methodologies generously with us. “Shakespeare’s Life” profited by the careful reading given it by S. Schoenbaum, “Shakespeare’s Theater” was read and strengthened by Andrew Gurr and John Astington, and “The Publication of Shakespeare’s Plays” is indebted to the comments of Peter W. M. Blayney. We, as editors, take sole responsibility for any errors in our editions.

We are grateful to the authors of the “Modern Perspectives,” to Leeds Barroll and David Bevington for their generous encouragement, to the Huntington and Newberry Libraries for fellowship support, to King’s College for the grants it has provided to Paul Werstine, to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which provided him with a Research Time Stipend for 1990–91, and to the Folger Institute’s Center for Shakespeare Studies for its fortuitous sponsorship of a workshop on “Shakespeare’s Texts for Students and



Teachers" (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and led by Richard Knowles of the University of Wisconsin), a workshop from which we learned an enormous amount about what is wanted by college and high-school teachers of Shakespeare today.

Our biggest debt is to the Folger Shakespeare Library: to Werner Gundersheimer, Director of the Library, who has made possible our edition; to Jean Miller, the Library's Art Curator, who combed the Library holdings for illustrations, and to Julie Ainsworth, Head of the Photography Department, who carefully photographed them; to Peggy O'Brien, Director of Education, who gave us expert advice about the needs being expressed by Shakespeare teachers and students (and to Martha Christian and other "master teachers" who used our texts in manuscript in their classrooms); to the staff of the Academic Programs Division, especially Paul Menzer (who drafted "Further Reading" material), Mary Tonkinson, Lena Cowen Orlin, Molly Haws, and Jessica Hymowitz; and, finally, to the staff of the Library Reading Room, whose patience and support have been invaluable.

Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine



# THE Taming of the Shrew.

*Actus primus. Scena Prima.*

*Enter Beggar, and Hostes, Christophers Sly.*

*Beggar.*

Le pheriee you infath.

*Host.* A paire of stockes you rogue.

*Beg.* Y're a baggage, the *Sly* are no  
Request. Looky in the Chronicles, we came  
in with *Richard Conqueror*: therefore *Pau-*  
*cas palladius*, let the world slide: Selfe.

*Host.* You will not pay for the glasse; you haue burst?  
*Beg.* No, not a denier: go by *S. Ieronimus*, goe to thy  
cold bed, and warme thee.

*Host.* I know my remedie, I must go fetch the Head-  
borough.

*Beg.* Third, or fourth, or fift Borough, Ile answere  
him by Law. Ile not budge an inch boy: Let him come,  
and kindly.

*Falles asleepe.*

*Whide hornes. Enter a Lord from hunting, with his traine.*

*Lo.* Huntiman I charge thee, tender wel my hounds,  
*Brach Marston*, the poore Cutte is imboft.

And couple *Clowder* with the deepe-mouth'd brach,  
Saw'st thou not boy how *Silver* made it good  
At the hedge corner, in the couldest fault.

I would not looke the dogge for twentie pound.

*Hunt.* Why *Belman* is as good as he my Lord,  
He cried vpon it at the meetest losse,  
And twice to day pick'd out the dullest sent,  
Trust me, I take him for the better dogge.

*Lord.* Thou art a Foole, if *Eccho* were as fleet,

I would esteeme him worth a dozen such:  
But sup thee well, and looke vnto them all,  
To morrow I intend to hunt againe.

*Hunt.* I will my Lord.

*Lord.* What's heere? One dead, or drunke? See doth  
he breath?

*1. Hunt.* He breath's my Lord. Were he not warn'd  
with Ale, this were a bed but cold to sleep so foundly.

*Lord.* Oh monstrous beast, how foule and loathsome is thine image:  
Grim death, how foule and loathsome is thine image:  
Sirs, I will practise on this drunken man.

What thinke you, if he were conuay'd to bed,  
Wrap'd in sweet clothes: Rings put vpon his fingers:  
A most delicious banquet by his bed,  
And braue attendants neere him when he wakes,  
Would not the begger then forget himselfe?

*1. Hunt.* Beleeue me Lord, I thinke he cannot choofe.

*2. H.* It would seem strange vnto him when he wak'd

*Lord.* Euen as a flat ring dreame, or worthles fancie.

Then take him vp, and manage well the iest:  
Carrie him gently to my fairest Chamber,  
And hang it round with all my vntown pictures:  
Balme his foule head in warme distilled waters,  
And burne sweet Wood to make the Lodging sweet:  
Procure me Musicke readie when he wakes,  
To make a dulcet and a heavenly sound:  
And if he chance to speake, be readie straight  
(And with a lowe submissiue reuerence)  
Say, what is it your Honor vvill command:  
Let one attend him vvith a silver Bason  
Full of Rose-water, and bestrew'd with Flowers,  
Another beare the Ewer: the third a Diaper,  
And say wilt please your Lordship coole your hands.  
Some one be readie with a costly suite,  
And sate him what apparel he will weare:  
Another tell him of his Hounds and Horfe,  
And that his Ladie mournes at his disease,  
Perswade him that he hath bin Lunaticke,  
And when he sayes he is, say that he dreames,  
For he is nothing but a mightie Lord:  
This do, and do it kindly, gentle first,  
It will be pastime passing excellent,  
If it be husbanded with modestie.

*1. Hunt.* My Lord I warrant you we will play our part  
As he shall thinke by our true diligence  
He is no lesse then what we say he is.

*Lord.* Take him vp gently, and to bed with him,  
And each one to his office when he wakes.

*Sirrah,* go see what Trumpet 'tis that sounds,  
Belike some Noble Gentleman that meanes  
(Travelling some journey) to repose him heere.

*Enter Servingman.*

How now? who is it?

*Ser.* An't please your Honor, Players  
That offer seruice to your Lordship.

*Enter Players.*

*Lord.* Bid them come neere:  
Now fellows, you are welcome.

*Players.* We thank your Honor.

*Lord.* Do you intend to stay with me to night?

*1. Player.* So please your Lordshippe to accept our  
dutie.

*Lord.* With all my heart. This fellow I remember,  
Since once he plaide a Farmers eldest sonne,  
'Twas where you woo'd the Gentlewoman so well:  
I haue forgot your name: but sure that part

Was

## **Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew***

Love and marriage are the concerns of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. The play offers us some strikingly different models of the process of attracting and choosing a mate and then coming to terms with the mate one has chosen. Some of these models may still seem attractive to us, some not. Lucentio's courtship of and marriage to Bianca are prompted by his idealized love of an apparently ideal woman. When she first appears, Bianca is silent and perfectly obedient to her father. Lucentio then speaks of her as if she were a goddess come to earth. Because her father denies all men the opportunity openly to court Bianca, Lucentio spontaneously throws off his social status as a gentleman in order to disguise himself as a lowly tutor, the only kind of man that Bianca's father, Baptista, will let near her. All that matters to Lucentio is winning Bianca's heart. To marry her—even in secret and in shared defiance of her father—is surely, he believes, to be happy.

An alternative style of wooing adopted by Petruchio in quest of Katherine is notably free of idealism. Petruchio is concerned with money. He takes money from all Bianca's suitors for wooing her older sister, Katherine, who, Baptista has dictated, must be married before Bianca. When Petruchio comes to see Katherine, he first arranges with her father the dowry to be acquired by marrying her. Assured of the money, Petruchio is ready to marry Katherine even against her will. Katherine is the shrew named in the play's title; and, according to all



**"Fair Padua, nursery of arts."**



From Pietro Bertelli, *Theatrum urbium Italicarum* . . . (1599).

the men but Petruchio, her bad temper denies her the status of "ideal woman" accorded Bianca by Lucentio. Yet by the end of the play, Katherine, whether she has been tamed or not, certainly acts much changed. Petruchio then claims to have the more successful marriage. But is the marriage of Petruchio and Katherine a superior match—have they truly learned to love each other?—or is it based on terror and deception?

This question about Katherine and Petruchio is only one of the questions this play raises for us. How are we to respond to Kate's speech at the end of the play, with its celebration of the wife's subordinate position? What does it mean that Bianca, the "ideal" woman, at the end seems unpleasant and bad-tempered, now that she is married? How should we respond to the process by which Petruchio "tames" Kate? As with so many of Shakespeare's plays, how one answers these questions has a lot to do with one's own basic beliefs—here, one's beliefs about men and women, about love and marriage.

After you have read *The Taming of the Shrew*, we invite you to turn to the discussion of the play printed in the back of this book and entitled "A Modern Perspective," written by Professor Karen Newman of Brown University.

## **Reading Shakespeare's Language**

For many people today, reading Shakespeare's language can be a problem—but it is a problem that can be solved. Those who have studied Latin (or even French or German or Spanish) and those who are used to reading poetry, will have little difficulty understanding the language of Shakespeare's poetic drama. Others, though,

need to develop the skills of untangling unusual sentence structures and of recognizing and understanding poetic compressions, omissions, and wordplay. And even those skilled in reading unusual sentence structures may have occasional trouble with Shakespeare's words. Four hundred years of "static" intervene between his speaking and our hearing. Most of his immense vocabulary is still in use, but a few of his words are not, and, worse, some of his words now have meanings quite different from those they had in the sixteenth century. In the theater, most of these difficulties are solved for us by actors who study the language and articulate it for us so that the essential meaning is heard—or, when combined with stage action, is at least *felt*. When reading on one's own, one must do what each actor does: go over the lines (often with a dictionary close at hand) until the puzzles are solved and the lines yield up their poetry and the characters speak in words and phrases that are, suddenly, rewarding and wonderfully memorable.

### Shakespeare's Words

As you begin to read the opening scenes of a play by Shakespeare, you may notice occasional unfamiliar words. Some are unfamiliar simply because we no longer use them. In the opening scenes of *The Taming of the Shrew*, for example, you will find the words *feeze* you (i.e., fix you, do for you), *an* (i.e., if), *bestraught* (i.e., distracted), and *iwis* (i.e., certainly). Words of this kind are explained in notes to the text and will become familiar the more of Shakespeare's plays you read.

Some words are strange not because of the "static" introduced by changes in language over the past centuries but because these are words that Shakespeare is

using to build a dramatic world that has its own space and time. *The Taming of the Shrew* is a particularly complicated example of Shakespeare's construction of a dramatic world in that he creates one world in what we call the "Induction"—a world inhabited by an English beggar and an English lord and his attendants—and then creates a second, Italian, world for the main body of the play. In the Induction we find *rogues*, *stocks*, and *headboroughs*, as well as references to deep-mouthed brachs, wanton pictures, obeisances, and embracements. In the opening scenes of the main body of the play, the setting in Italy and the story's focus on wooing are created through repeated references to Padua, to Lombardy, to Pisa, to dowries, to Ovid, to poesy, and to Minerva, and through such Italian phrases as *Mi perdonato* and *basta*. These "local" references create the Padua that Kate, Petruchio, Lucentio, and Bianca inhabit and will become increasingly familiar to you as you get further into the play.

In *The Taming of the Shrew*, as in all of Shakespeare's writing, the most problematic words are those that we still use but that we use with a different meaning. In the opening scenes of *The Taming of the Shrew*, for example, the word *heavy* has the meaning of "distressing," the word *envious* is used where we would say "malicious," *brave* where we would say "splendid," *idle* where we would say "silly," and *curst* where we would say "bad-tempered." Such words will be explained in the notes to the text, but they, too, will become familiar as you continue to read Shakespeare's language.

## Shakespeare's Sentences

In an English sentence, meaning is quite dependent on the place given each word. "The dog bit the boy" and



"The boy bit the dog" mean very different things, even though the individual words are the same. Because English places such importance on the positions of words in sentences, on the way words are arranged, unusual arrangements can puzzle a reader. Shakespeare frequently shifts his sentences away from "normal" English arrangements—often to create the rhythm he seeks, sometimes to use a line's poetic rhythm to emphasize a particular word, sometimes to give a character his or her own speech patterns or to allow the character to speak in a special way. Again, when we attend a good performance of the play, the actors will have worked out the sentence structures and will articulate the sentences so that the meaning is clear. In reading for yourself, do as the actor does. That is, when you become puzzled by a character's speech, check to see if words are being presented in an unusual sequence.

Look first for the placement of subject and verb. Shakespeare often places the verb before the subject (e.g., instead of "He goes," we find "Goes he"). In the Induction to *The Taming of the Shrew*, we find such a construction when Christopher Sly is told "Hence comes it that your kindred shuns your house" (In.2.28) (instead of "Hence it comes that . . ."); Hortensio uses this same kind of construction when, at 1.1.87–88, he says, "Sorry *am* I that our goodwill effects / Bianca's grief." Such inversions rarely cause much confusion. More problematic is Shakespeare's frequent placing of the object before the subject and verb (e.g., instead of "I hit him," we might find "Him I hit"). Tranio's "Music and poesy use to quicken you" (1.1.36) is an example of such an inversion (the normal order would be "Use music and poesy . . ."), as are Baptista's "Schoolmasters will I keep" (1.1.96), Lucentio's "Vincenzio's son . . . / It shall become" (1.1.14–15), and Petruchio's "Crowns in my purse I have" (1.2.58). Occasionally in