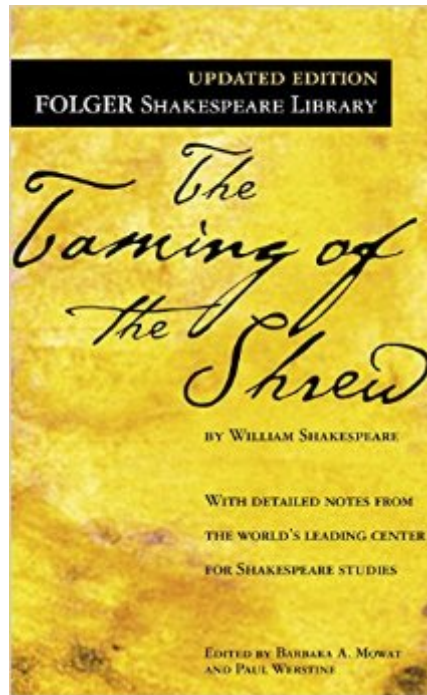


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The Taming Of The Shrew (Folger Shakespeare Library)



Synopsis

Love and marriage are the concerns of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. Lucentio's marriage to Bianca is prompted by his idealized love of an apparently ideal woman. Petruchio's wooing of Katherine, however, is free of idealism. Petruchio takes money from Bianca's suitors to woo her, since Katherine must marry before her sister by her father's decree; he also arranges the dowry with her father. Petruchio is then ready to marry Katherine, even against her will. Katherine, the shrew of the play's title, certainly acts much changed. But have she and Petruchio learned to love each other? Or is the marriage based on terror and deception? The authoritative edition of *The Taming of the Shrew* from The Folger Shakespeare Library, the trusted and widely used Shakespeare series for students and general readers, includes:

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Essay by Karen Newman

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Customer Reviews

"The Taming of the Shrew" is probably William Shakespeare's second most controversial play -- nobody can figure out if it's misogynistic or a biting double satire on the sexes. Whatever it is, it's still a witty and hilarious comedy that pits the titular "shrew" against a crazy guy determined to browbeat her into traditional subservience... and while they're no Beatrice and Benedick, it is lots of fun. Framing device: a local lord and his hunting party stumble across a drunken tinker, and decide to play an elaborate prank on him. They dress him in rich clothes, arrange fine food for him, and even drag a protesting servant boy in to pretend to be his wife. And they put on a performance for him as well: Baptista Minola has two daughters, the hot-tempered razor-tongued Katharina and the quiet, demure Bianca. Since Bianca is not allowed to marry until Katharina is, her suitors form an alliance to get the elder sister out of the way, which is made more complex when a young student named Lucio falls in love with Bianca, and comes up with a clever plan to woo her. Enter Petruchio, an impoverished nobleman with as sharp a wit as Katharina -- and since he's the only one willing to marry her, her father jumps on the chance. From the very beginning, Petruchio beats her over the head with crazy reverse psychology, a ridiculous wedding ceremony, and a honeymoon from hell. It's often debated whether "The Taming of the Shrew" is a sexist play or not, since the strong-willed, independent Katharina ends up another little obedient wifie, lecturing the other wives on giving their husbands "love, fair looks and true obedience." Blech.

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