

The Taming of the Shrew abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Enchantment

Situation: Lucentio, the wealthy young man from Pisa, is eager, so he says, to “institute a course of learning and ingenious studies” being in Padua “the pleasant garden of great Italy, the nursery of arts.” However, Tranio, his good friend and servant, realistically suggests that his master use music and poetry to good ends for “no profit grows where is no pleasure ta’en.”

Lucentio and his servant, Tranio, enter on a street in Padua.

Lucentio to Tranio, No. 1

Tranio, with my father’s love and my
Great desire, armed with his goodwill and thy
Good company, happily now we’ve met
In Padua, the pleasant garden of
Great Italy, nursery of arts. Let
Us here institute a course for the love
Of learning with ingenious studies;
Studies that come to serve all hopes to please
My father, to deck his fortune with good
Deeds. Therefore, Tranio, unabated
Virtue is the philosophy that should
Lead me from Pisa, like an unsated
Man, when leaving a shallow pond, doth first
Plunge into the deep pool to quench his thirst.

Tranio to Lucentio

Pardon me, gentle master. I am all
Affected as you and too seek the call
To continue to suck the sweets of sweet
Philosophy. But good master, while we
Do admire this virtue and want to meet
This test of moral discipline, let’s be
Neither stoics nor artless, I pray, or
Risk renouncing the appeal of love for
Devotion to Aristotle’s checks. Balk
Logic and mathematics with your friends,
And practice rhetoric in your common talk,
And use sweet poetry to lively ends.
No profit grows where pleasure’s not taken.
Study what you like or be forsaken.

LUCENTIO: Thanks, Tranio, well dost thou advise.