

~~Unto a mad-brain rudesby, full of spleen,~~ 10  
~~Who wooed in haste and means to wed at leisure.~~  
~~I told you, I, he was a frantic fool,~~  
~~Hiding his bitter jests in blunt behaviour.~~  
~~And to be noted for a merry man,~~  
~~He'll woo a thousand, 'point the day of marriage,~~ 15  
~~Make feast, invite friends, and proclaim the banns,~~  
~~Yet never means to wed where he hath wooed.~~  
~~Now must the world point at poor Katherine~~  
~~And say, 'Lo, there is mad Petruchio's wife~~  
~~If it would please him come and marry her!'~~ 20

TRANIO ~~Patience, good Katherine, and Baptista too.~~  
~~Upon my life, Petruchio means but well,~~  
~~Whatever fortune stays him from his word.~~  
~~Though he be blunt, I know him passing wise;~~  
~~Though he be merry, yet withal he's honest.~~ 25

KATHERINA ~~Would Katherine had never seen him though!~~

START ~~*Exit weeping [followed by Bianca and others]*~~

BAPTISTA Go, girl. I cannot blame thee now to weep,  
 For such an injury would vex a very saint,  
 Much more a shrew of thy impatient humour.

*Enter BIONDELLO.*

BIONDELLO Master, master, news! And such old news as you never 30  
 heard of!

16 Make... friends] Dyce; Make friends, invite F, Oliver; Make friends, invite, yes F2 26 SD followed... others] Capell  
 subst.; not in F 28 a very saint] F, Bond, Riverside, Oliver; a saint F2, NS, Hibbard, Morris 29 thy] F2; not in F  
 30 news! And such old news] Collier; neues, and such neues F, Oliver; old news, and such news Rowe

10 rudesby insolent, unmannerly fellow.

10 spleen caprice, changeable temper. 'Spleen' was originally a physiological term: see Induction 1.133 n.

11 Katherina plays bitterly on the familiar proverb 'to marry in haste and repent at leisure' (Tilley H196).

14 to... for to get a reputation as.

16 \*Make... friends Dyce's emendation follows the analogy of 2.1.305, 'Provide the feast, father, and bid the guests', and this improvement of F's sense and metre has been generally accepted by modern editors.

21-5 Tranio's intimacy with Petruchio in this scene - he is familiar with his eccentric way of dressing at 64 and even offers to lend him some better clothes at 103 - seems surprising. It is possible that the lines were originally written for

Hortensio, Petruchio's 'best beloved and approved friend' (1.2.3): see Textual Analysis, pp. 169-72 below.

22 means but well intends nothing but good.

23 fortune... word accident prevents him from keeping his word.

25 merry humorous, facetious.

28 a very saint Many editors follow F2 and omit 'very'.

29 of \*thy impatient F2's addition of 'thy' improves F's sense and metre.

30 such \*old news Baptista's response makes Rowe's emendation necessary. (See Textual Analysis, pp. 166-7 below, for a discussion of these short-word omissions.) 'Old' could mean 'rare' or 'strange' in this context, or, more likely, it is a reference to Petruchio's clothes and equipment as described below.

BAPTISTA Is it new and old too? How may that be?

BIONDELLO Why, is it not news to hear of Petruchio's coming?

BAPTISTA Is he come?

BIONDELLO Why no, sir.

BAPTISTA What then?

BIONDELLO He is coming.

BAPTISTA When will he be here?

BIONDELLO When he stands where I am and sees you there.

TRANIO But say, what to thine old news?

BIONDELLO Why, Petruchio is coming in a new hat and an old jerkin;  
a pair of old breeches thrice turned; a pair of boots that have been  
candle-cases, one buckled, another laced; an old rusty sword tane  
out of the town armoury, with a broken hilt and chapeless; with  
two broken points; ~~his horse hiped – with an old mothy saddle~~ 45  
~~and stirrups of no kindred – besides, possessed with the glanders~~  
~~and like to mose in the chine; troubled with the lampass, infected~~  
~~with the fashions, full of windgalls, sped with spavins, rayed with~~  
~~the yellows, past cure of the fives, stark spoiled with the staggers,~~  
~~begnawn with the bots, swayed in the back and shoulder-shotten,~~ 50

33 hear] Q; heard F 50 swayed] *Hanmer*; Waid F; weighed *Oliver*

41–62 As Hibbard points out, this description of Petruchio and his horse, Gremio's account of the wedding at 148–72 below, and Petruchio's abuse of the Tailor in 4.3 are all 'bravura pieces, conscious displays of the rhetorical arts of grotesque description, farcical narrative and inventive vituperation' and Shakespeare's achievement in this line can be compared with the linguistic virtuosity of his contemporary Thomas Nashe; see Hibbard, pp. 8–9, and G. R. Hibbard, *The Making of Shakespeare's Dramatic Poetry*, 1981, pp. 95–7.

41 jerkin short jacket.

42 turned i.e. turned inside out to get more wear out of them.

43 candle-cases i.e. worn out and used for storing candles.

44 chapeless without a sheath.

45 points Tagged laces used to fasten hose to doublet.

45 his horse An old and wretched horse is an important feature of folktale versions of the Shrew story; see p. 12 above. Most of the diseases mentioned here are discussed by Gervase Markham in *A Discourse of Horsmanship* (1593).

45 hiped lame in the hips.

46 of no kindred not matching.

46 glanders Disease causing swelling of the jaw and discharge from nostrils.

47 mose...chine Probably an error (attributable either to Biondello or to some transmitter of the text) for 'mourn of the chine', meaning to suffer from the final stages of glanders.

47–8 lampass...fashions Further diseases affecting the animal's mouth. Clearly Biondello includes all the horse-diseases he can think of for the sake of comic exaggeration.

48 windgalls Tumours on the fetlocks.

48 sped...spavins ruined by swellings on the leg-joints.

48–9 rayed...yellows discoloured with jaundice.

49 fives Swelling of glands below the ears.

49 stark spoiled quite destroyed.

49 staggers Disease causing giddiness and loss of balance.

50 begnawn...bots eaten by intestinal worms.

50 \*swayed F reads 'Waid', which has not been satisfactorily explained, though the meaning might be 'weighed', i.e. overloaded to the point of permanent damage or distortion. *Hanmer's* emendation to 'swayed' (meaning 'strained', hence 'sagging' or 'crooked') is supported by several contemporary examples: see *OED* *Swayed* *ppl* a 1 and *Sway-backed*.

50 shoulder-shotten with a dislocated shoulder.

~~near-legged before, and with a half-checked bit and a headstall of sheep's leather, which, being restrained to keep him from stumbling, hath been often burst and now repaired with knots; one girth six times pieced, and a woman's crupper of velour, which hath two letters for her name fairly set down in studs, and here and there pieced with packthread.~~

55

BAPTISTA Who comes with him?

BIONDELLO O sir, his lackey, ~~for all the world caparisoned like the horse~~, with a linen stock on one leg and a kersey boot-hose on the other, gartered with a red and blue list; an old hat and the humour of forty fancies pricked in't for a feather; a monster, a very monster in apparel, and not like a Christian footboy or a gentleman's lackey.

60

TRANIO 'Tis some odd humour pricks him to this fashion,

~~Yet oftentimes he goes but mean-apparelled.~~

BAPTISTA I am glad he's come, howsoe'er he comes.

65

BIONDELLO Why, sir, he comes not.

BAPTISTA Didst thou not say he comes?

BIONDELLO Who? That Petruchio came?

BAPTISTA Ay, that Petruchio came. **END**

~~BIONDELLO No, sir, I say his horse comes with him on his back.~~

70

~~BAPTISTA Why, that's all one.~~

~~BIONDELLO Nay, by Saint Jamy,~~

51 half-checked] *Hanmer*; half-checkt *F*, *Oliver* 53 now repaired] *F*, *Bond*, *Riverside*, *Oliver*; new-repaired *NS*, *conj.* *Walker*, *Hibbard*, *Morris* 72-6 *Nay...many*] *As five lines of verse*, *Collier*; *as prose*, *F*; *as two lines of verse divided after penny*, *Rowe*?

51 near-legged before knock-kneed at the front.

51 half-checked having the 'cheeks' or side-pieces broken or wrongly adjusted.

51 headstall Part of bridle or halter that goes round the head.

52 sheep's leather i.e. not the more usual (and stronger) pigskin or cowhide.

52 restrained drawn up tight.

53 girth Saddle-strap going under the horse's belly.

54 pieced patched, mended.

54 woman's...velour The crupper is the strap passing under the horse's tail to hold the saddle steady. A woman's crupper might be covered with velour (a fabric like velvet) and studded with her initials.

56 pieced...packthread mended with string.

58 caparisoned fitted out.

59 stock stocking.

59 kersey Woollen cloth.

59 boot-hose Overstocking usually worn with riding-boots.

60 list strip of cloth.

60-1 humour...fancies The exact meaning is obscure; some excessively elaborate decoration is implied.

61 for instead of.

63 odd...pricks strange whim that incites.

70 his horse comes Biondello indulges in the kind of quibbling Grumio has employed in his deliberate mistaking of Petruchio (1.2.6-40) and is to use again with Curtis (4.1.73-9). It is a common feature of the clowns in the early comedies (see, for example, *TGV* 1.1, 2.5, etc.), though other characters often find it irritating or tedious, as when Lorenzo comments on Launcelot Gobbo's witticisms in this vein 'How every fool can play upon the word' (*MV* 3.5.43).

71 all one the same thing.

72-6 This jingle (which is printed as prose in *F*) has not been traced. It is generally assumed to be from some lost ballad or riddle. In this context it rather oddly anticipates a fragment of the conversation between Grumio and Curtis in the