

The stellar academic, and recently graduated Doctor in Medicine, Thomas Smith, has a deceptively normal appearance.

Thomas Smith was born Matilda Smith. Her father, Henry, was a wealthy, important, and heartless trader, and her mother, Margery, wasn't sure how he'd react to a daughter, so through a combination of distraction, lies, and his general cluelessness, she managed to convince him he had a son (Thomas). In secret, Matilda's mother allowed her to be herself, but also taught her how to act like a boy, and why she should.

The disguise worked well enough that Matilda's father never knew he had a daughter. He died when she was 15, and by then her craft had been so perfected that she was able to take over his businesses, and act as the male authority that backed up her mother, who actually wanted to run the business (unlike Matilda) and understood the business and made the decisions. Once the employees and customers of her father's trading company (Henry Smith Trading Co - export of goods smithied and manufactured in London, import of luxury goods from the continent and elsewhere) had gotten used to the idea of dealing with a woman (her mother), Matilda was free to pursue her dream of getting an education, since she was so good, by now, at impersonating a man that she felt confident she could get herself into a university and graduate.

When Thomas Smith started his education at the University of Bologna, he quickly gained a reputation as a brilliant scholar and excellent pupil. Unfortunately, he also gained a reputation as an "exquisite boy" and has had to fend off unwanted admirers for most of his academic career (which he naively thought wouldn't be a problem for an apparent male). Despite this ongoing and obnoxious distraction, Thomas completed his Doctorate in Medicine, and along the way made good friends with his master, a Mathematicus named Domenicus (who formed a bond with Thomas by being the first to figure out his secret, and help him to keep it secret). After Thomas graduated, Domenicus began teaching him Learned Magic, but before Thomas had gotten too far into his studies, he got an urgent call from home that his mother was dying. He rushed back to London, but was pleasantly surprised to discover that Margery was not dying, just very sick; and the newly minted doctor was overjoyed to be able to help her to a full recovery.

After being away so long, Matilda decided to get a position close to London, so she secured a teaching position for Thomas Smith at Oxford. She remains in correspondence with Domenicus, and has plans to go back and resume her studies, but not to miss another English summer.