

The Taming of the Shrew

3.1

Enter Lucentio with books, as Cambio, Hortensio with a lute, as Licio, and Bianca

LUCENTIO

Fiddler, forbear. You grow too forward, sir.
Have you so soon forgot the entertainment
Her sister Katherine welcomed you withal?

HORTENSIO

But, wrangling pedant, this Bianca is,
The patroness of heavenly harmony. 5
Then give me leave to have prerogative,
And when in music we have spent an hour
Your lecture shall have leisure for as much.

LUCENTIO

Preposterous ass, that never read so far
To know the cause why music was ordained! 10
Was it not to refresh the mind of man
After his studies or his usual pain?
Then give me leave to read philosophy,
And while I pause, serve in your harmony.

HORTENSIO

Sirrah, I will not bear these braves of thine. 15

BIANCA

Why, gentlemen, you do me double wrong
To strive for that which resteth in my choice.
I am no breeching scholar in the schools.
I'll not be tied to hours nor 'pointed times,
But learn my lessons as I please myself; 20
And to cut off all strife, here sit we down.
(*To Hortensio*) Take you your instrument, play you the
whiles.

His lecture will be done ere you have tuned.

HORTENSIO

You'll leave his lecture when I am in tune?

LUCENTIO

That will be never. Tune your instrument. 25

Hortensio tunes his lute. Lucentio opens a book

BIANCA

Where left we last?

LUCENTIO Here, madam.

(Reads)

*`Hic ibat Simois, hic est Sigeia tellus,
Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis.'*

BIANCA Construe them.

30

LUCENTIO *`Hic ibat'*, as I told you before±±*`Simois'*, I am
Lucentio±±*`hic est'*, son unto Vincentio of Pisa±±*`Sigeia
tellus'*, disguised thus to get your love±±*`hic steterat'*,
and that Lucentio that comes a-wooing±±*`Priami'*, is
my man Tranio±±*`regia'*, bearing my port±±*`celsa senis'*, 35
that we might beguile the old pantaloon.

HORTENSIO Madam, my instrument's in tune.

BIANCA Let's hear. (*Hortensio plays*) O fie, the treble jars.

LUCENTIO Spit in the hole, man, and tune again.

Hortensio tunes his lute again

BIANCA Now let me see if I can construe it. *`Hic ibat* 40
Simois', I know you not±±*`hic est Sigeia tellus'*, I trust
you not±±*`hic steterat Priami'*, take heed he hear us
not±±*`regia'*, presume not±±*`celsa senis'*, despair not.

HORTENSIO

Madam, 'tis now in tune.

LUCENTIO All but the bass.

HORTENSIO

The bass is right, 'tis the base knave that jars. 45

(*Aside*) How fiery and forward our pedant is!

Now, for my life, the knave doth court my love.

Pedascule, I'll watch you better yet.

BIANCA (*to Lucentio*)

In time I may believe; yet, I mistrust.

LUCENTIO

Mistrust it not, for sure Aeacides

50

Was Ajax, called so from his grandfather.

BIANCA

I must believe my master, else, I promise you,

I should be arguing still upon that doubt.

But let it rest. Now Licio, to you.

Good master, take it not unkindly, pray,

55

That I have been thus pleasant with you both.

HORTENSIO (*to Lucentio*)

You may go walk and give me leave awhile.

My lessons make no music in three parts.

LUCENTIO

Are you so formal, sir? Well, I must wait.

(*Aside*) And watch withal, for but I be deceived 60

Our fine musician groweth amorous.

HORTENSIO

Madam, before you touch the instrument

To learn the order of my fingering,

I must begin with rudiments of art,

To teach you gamut in a briefer sort, 65

More pleasant, pithy, and effectual

Than hath been taught by any of my trade;

And there it is in writing, fairly drawn.

He gives a paper

BIANCA

Why, I am past my gamut long ago.

HORTENSIO

Yet read the gamut of Hortensio. 70

BIANCA (*reads*)

`Gam-ut I am, the ground of all accord,

A±re±to plead Hortensio's passion.

B±mi±Bianca, take him for thy lord,

C±fa, ut±that loves with all affection.

D±sol, re±one clef, two notes have I, 75

E±la, mi±show pity, or I die.'

Call you this gamut? Tut, I like it not.

Old fashions please me best. I am not so nice

To change true rules for odd inventions.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

Mistress, your father prays you leave your books 80

And help to dress your sister's chamber up.

You know tomorrow is the wedding day.

BIANCA

Farewell, sweet masters both. I must be gone.

LUCENTIO

Faith, mistress, then I have no cause to stay.

Exeunt Bianca, Messenger, and Lucentio

HORTENSIO

But I have cause to pry into this pedant. 85

Methinks he looks as though he were in love.

Yet if thy thoughts, Bianca, be so humble
To cast thy wand'ring eyes on every stale,
Seize thee that list. If once I find thee ranging,
Hortensio will be quit with thee by changing.

Exit