

ACT III, scene i

Bianca/Hortensio/Lucentio

LUCENTIO

Fiddler, forbear; you grow too forward, sir:
Have you so soon forgot the entertainment
Her sister Katharina welcomed you withal?

HORTENSIO

But, wrangling pedant, this is
The patroness of heavenly harmony:
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 ordain'd!
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.

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.
And, to cut off all strife, here sit we down:
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.

BIANCA

Where left we last?

LUCENTIO

Here, madam:
'Hic ibat Simois; hic est Sigeia tellus;
Hic steterat Priami regia celsa senis.'

BIANCA
Construe them.

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,' that we might
beguile the old pantaloon.

HORTENSIO
Madam, my instrument's in tune.

BIANCA
Let's hear. O fie! the treble jars.

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

BIANCA
Now let me see if I can construe it: 'Hic ibat
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 base.

HORTENSIO
The base is right; 'tis the base knave that jars.

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

In time I may believe, yet I mistrust.

LUCENTIO

Mistrust it not: for, sure, AEacides
Was Ajax, call'd 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 masters, take it not unkindly, pray,
That I have been thus pleasant with you both.

HORTENSIO

You may go walk, and give me leave a while:
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,
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,
More pleasant, pithy and effectual,
Than hath been taught by any of my trade:
And there it is in writing, fairly drawn.

BIANCA

Why, I am past my gamut long ago.

HORTENSIO

Yet read the gamut of Hortensio.

BIANCA

[Reads] "Gamut' 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:
'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 old inventions.