

One Music Lesson, Two Versions

Either of the authors (if indeed they were different authors) knew the other version, but decided to adapt it, or improve it, or otherwise change it. In one version the music teacher really is one (Valeria), in the other he is a suitor in disguise (Hortensio/Litio). Is there any way we could guess, from the handling of this musical scene, which way the adaptation went?

The Taming of A Shrew

Enter Valeria with a Lute and Kate with him.

Val. The senseless trees by music have been moved
And at the sound of pleasant tuned strings,
Have savage beasts hung down their list'ning heads,
As though they had been cast into a trance.
Then it may be that she whom naught can please,
With music's sound in time may be surprised,
Come lovely mistress will you take your lute,
And play the lesson that I taught you last?

Kate. It is no matter whether I do or no,
For trust me I take no great delight in it.

Val. I would sweet mistress that it lay in me,
To help you to that thing that's your delight.

Kate. In you with a pestilence, are you so kind?
Then make a night cap of your fiddle's case,
To warm your head, and hide your filthy face.

Val. If that sweet mistress were your heart's content,
You should command a greater thing than that,
Although it were ten times to my disgrace.

Kate. You're so kind 'twere pity you should be hanged,
And yet methinks the fool doth look asquint.

Val. Why mistress do you mock me?

Kate. No, but I mean to move thee.

Val. Well, will you play a little?

Kate. Ay, give me the Lute. *She plays.*

Val. That stop was false, play it again.

Kate. Then mend it thou, thou filthy ass.

Val. What, do you bid me kiss your arse?

Kate. How now jack sauce, you're a jolly mate,
You're best be still lest I cross your pate,
And make your music fly about your ears,
I'll make it and your foolish coxcomb meet.

She offers to strike him with the lute.

Val. Hold mistress, 'zounds will you break my lute?

Kate. Ay on thy head, and if thou speak to me,
There take it up and fiddle somewhere else,
She throws it down.

And see you come no more into this place,
Lest that I clap your fiddle on your face. *Exit Kate.*

Val. 'Zounds, teach her to play upon the lute?
The devil shall teach her first, I am glad she's gone,
For I was ne'er so 'fraid in all my life,
But that my lute should fly about mine ears,
My master shall teach her his self for me,
For I'll keep me far enough without her reach,
For he and Polidor sent me before
To be with her and teach her on the lute,
Whilst they did court the other gentlewomen,
And here methinks they come together.

Enter Aurelius, Polidor, Emelia, and Philena.

Pol. How now Valeria, where's your mistress?

Val. At the vengeance I think and nowhere else.

Aur. Why Valeria, will she not learn apace?

Val. Yes by 'r lady she has learnt too much already,
And that I had felt had I not spoke her fair,
But she shall ne'er be learnt for me again.

Aur. Well Valeria go to my chamber,
And bear him company that came today
From Sestos, where our aged father dwells.

Exit Valeria.

The Taming of The Shrew

Enter Hortensio as Litio with his head broke

Bapt. How now, my friend, why dost thou look so pale?

Hort. (as Litio). For fear, I promise you, if I look pale.

Bapt. What, will my daughter prove a good musician?

Hort. (as Litio). I think she'll sooner prove a soldier!

Iron may hold with her, but never lutes.

Bapt. Why, then thou canst not break her to the lute?

Hort. (as Litio). Why, no, for she hath broke the lute to me.

I did but tell her she mistook her frets,

And bowed her hand to teach her fingering,

When, with a most impatient devilish spirit,

“Frets' call you these?” quoth she. “I'll fume with them!”

And with that word she struck me on the head,

And through the instrument my pate made way,

And there I stood amazed for a while,

As on a pillory, looking through the lute,

While she did call me “rascal fiddler,”

And “twangling Jack,” with twenty such vile terms,

As had she studied to misuse me so.

Petr. Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench.

I love her ten times more than ere I did.

O, how I long to have some chat with her!

Bapt., to Hort. as Litio. Well, go with me, and be not so discomfited.

Proceed in practice with my younger daughter.

She's apt to learn, and thankful for good turns.—

Signior Petruchio, will you go with us,

Or shall I send my daughter Kate to you?

Petr. I pray you do. I'll attend her here—

All but Petruchio exit.

A thing neuertheless frequently vsed, and part of a Gentlewoman's bringing vp, to sing, and dance, and play on the Lute, or some such instrument, before she can say her *Pater noster*, or ten Commandements, 'tis the next way their parents thinke to get them husbands. They are compelled to learne, and by that meanes, 'tis a great allurement as it is often vsed, and many are vndone by it.

Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: John Lichfield and James Short, for Henry Cripps, 1621), p. 582.

Another Music Lesson

The Taming of The Shrew, Act III, sc. 3

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

Hort. 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.

Luc. Preposterous ass, that never read so far
To know the cause why music was ordained.
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

Hort. 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.

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

Luc. aside. That will be never.

Tune your instrument.

Bianca. Where left we last?

Luc. Here, madam:

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

Bianca. Conster them.

Luc.

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.

Hort. Madam, my instrument's in tune.

Bianca. Let's hear. Oh fie, the treble jars!

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

Bianca. Now let me see if I can conster 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.

Hort. Madam, 'tis now in tune.

Luc. All but the bass.

Hort. The bass is right. 'Tis the base knave that jars.

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.

Luc. Mistrust it not, for sure Aeacides
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, Litio, to you.
Good master, take it not unkindly, pray,
That I have been thus pleasant with you both.

Hort. You may go walk, and give me leave awhile.
My lessons make no music in three parts.

Luc. Are you so formal, sir? Well, I must wait
And watch withal, for, but I be deceived,
Our fine musician groweth amorous.

Hort. 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.

Hort. Yet read the gamut of Hortensio.

Bianca.

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 odd inventions.

Servant. Mistress, your father prays you leave your books
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.

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

Hort. But I have cause to pry into this pedant.
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.

He exits.