

PRINCE Come, shall we hear this music?

CLAUDIO Yea, my good lord. How still the evening is,
As hushed on purpose to grace harmony!

PRINCE *[aside to Claudio]* See you where Benedick hath hid himself?

CLAUDIO *[aside to Prince]* O, very well my lord. The music ended,
We'll fit the kid-fox with a pennyworth.

PRINCE Come, Balthasar, we'll hear that song again.

BALTHASAR O, good my lord, tax not so bad a voice
To slander music any more than once.

PRINCE It is the witness still of excellency
To put a strange face on his own perfection.
I pray thee, sing, and let me woo no more.

BALTHASAR Because you talk of wooing, I will sing,
Since many a wooer doth commence his suit
To her he thinks not worthy, yet he woos,
Yet will he swear he loves.

PRINCE Nay, pray thee, come,
Or if thou wilt hold longer argument,
Do it in notes.

BALTHASAR Note this before my notes:
There's not a note of mine that's worth the noting.

PRINCE Why, these are very crotchets that he speaks!
Note notes, forsooth, and nothing.

[Music plays.]

BENEDICK *[aside]* Now, divine air! Now is his soul ravished. Is it not strange that
sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies? Well, a
horn for my money, when all's done.

BALTHASAR *[sings]* Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more,
Men were deceivers ever,
One foot in sea and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey, nonny nonny.

Sing no more ditties, sing no mo,
Of dumps so dull and heavy.
The fraud of men was ever so,
Since summer first was leavy.
Then sigh not so, but let them go,
And be you blithe and bonny,
Converting all your sounds of woe
Into Hey, nonny nonny.

By my troth, a good song.

And an ill singer, my lord.

Ha, no, no, faith, thou sing'st well enough for a shift.

An he had been a dog that should have howled thus, they would have hanged him. And I pray God his bad voice bode no mischief. I had as lief have heard the night raven, come what plague could have come after it.

Yea, marry, dost thou hear, Balthasar? I pray thee get us some excellent music, for tomorrow night we would have it at the Lady Hero's chamber window.

The best I can, my lord.

Do so. Farewell.

[Balthasar exits.]