

# *The Merchant of Venice*

Act V, sc. 1 (line 54)

## **LORENZO**

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music

Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter Musicians*

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn!

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,

And draw her home with music.

*Music*

## **JESSICA**

*I am never merry when I hear sweet music.*

## **LORENZO**

The reason is, your spirits are attentive:  
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,  
Which is the hot condition of their blood;  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;  
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,  
But music for the time doth change his nature.  
The man that hath no music in himself,  
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music