PLAY

The Merchant of Venice

Life of Shakespeare

Willian Shakespeare, one of the greatest dramatist of the world, was born on April

23, 1554 at Stratford-on-Avon in the country of Warwickshire. His father's name was John Shakespeare who was a prosperous businessman of Stratford-on-Avon. He had two sisters and three brothers. His mother belonged to the family of Arden who had been landowners in Warwickshire for many years. We know little about Shakespeare's childhood and education. He was deficient in formal education. He was sent to the Village Free Grammar School where he learnt 'Little Latin and Less Greek'. He seems to have acquired some knowledge of French and Italian. His time at school was cut short by the misfortunes of his father. He was asked to help his father in his business but he did not like the job.

At the age of eighteen, he married Anne Hathway who was eight years senior. He had three children. The first child Susanna was born shortly



after the marriage. After two years, twins were born-a Sonmaned Hamnet and a daughter named Judith. The son, however, died at the age of eleven. He left Startford about 1585 and arrived in London the next year. He did there some small jobs and then started writing plays. He died in 1616 at the age of sixty two on the anniversary of his birth day. He was buried in Startford Church in Avon.

Shakespeare is known more as dramatist than a poet. He lived for the major part of his literary career in London. He started his work as a minor actor in some little known play-house. He is also known as a stable boy in-charge of horses outside the theatre. He started his literary career by writing Comedies, Tragedies, Historical plays and poetry. He wrote thirty-seven plays, one hundred and fifty four sonnets and two longer poems.

The names of the longer poems are The Rape of Lucrece and Venus and Adonis. His famous Comedies are the Merchant of Venice, Twelfth Night, A Mid-Summer Night's Dream, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like it etc. His popular Tragedies are Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth and Othello. Among his historical plays, Richard II, Richard III, Henry IV, Henry V, Julius Caesar and Antony and Cleopatra are widely known. He thought of a drama as a form of poetry. Though his style was decorative, yet it was also forceful and vigorous. He is the most quoted and the most quotable of all English poets. His sonnets are known as Shakespearean sonnets. Some of them are very artificial. The finest and the most passionate sonnets are those in which he expresses his love for his patrons and friends. Indeed, the sonnets are incomparable for the beauty of their imagination and perfection of versification. They possess a very delicate music which has seldom been surpassed.

Shakespeare was one of the most successful English writers of his time. Earls of Essex, Southampton and Lord Pembroke were his close friends. He was also greatly admired by Queen Elizabeth. He was endowed with an evergreen imagination. He had also deep insight into human character. Indeed, he was one of the greatest dramatist of the world.

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Shakespeare As a Dramatist

Shakespeare is one of the greatest dramatist of the world. His plays can be divided into three main headings—

- (a) The tragedies
- (b) Histories which include his Roman plays.
- (c) The Comedies.

A tragedy is a play which ends in the death of the hero or the main character. According to Prof. A.C. Bradley, "A Shakespearean tragedy is a story of exceptional calamity leading to the death of a man in high estate. It is pre-eminently the story of one person, the hero, or at the most two, the hero and the heroine." Tragedy is always concerned with persons of high degree like kings and princes, noblemen, statemen, generals, men of high social standing and character. The hero is over -come by the forces which have been gathering round his and in the end, meets his death and destruction because of a tragic flow in his character. The important tragedies are Othello, Hamlet, King Lear and Macbeth.

A historical play concerns with the life and reign of a British King such as Henry IV, Henry V, Richard II and Henry VIII. There are some plays that are set in ancient Rome such as Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra and Coriolanus. These are also famous as his Roman plays which are set in England and have an English king as the hero slightly differ from the plays which are set in ancient Rome.

A Comedy has a happy ending. It is not merely amusing. Sometimes it has the capacity to make people think and might have a serious purpose behind it. His famous Comedies are Twelfth Night, As You Like It, the Temptest and Merchant of Venice. In As You Like It and Twelfth Night, humour and romance blend in perfect proportion. Some scholars say that Merchant of Venice is not a true Comedy but a tragic Comedy.

Shakespeare was only interested in the audience in the play house. The play house was everything to Shakespeare. So many heroines in his plays willingly change into boys' clothes. This is because the heroines were boys and felt more comfortable in men's clothes.

Secondly, words were very important in Shakespearean plays. He cast his spell on the audience with the magic of words, long speeches and poetic images play with words and sound. He wrote his plays in the form of verse which is famous as a 'blank verse'. The verse is called blank because it is unrhymed . It is used when characters speak about issues which involve deep thoughts and feelings.

Sometimes prose is also used, it is generally used for Comic Character, Characters of lower social position, letters, proclamations etc. In Julius Caesar the warning of Artemidorus to Caesar is in prose. "Caesar, beware of Brutus, take heed of Cassius, come not near Casca, have an eye to Cinna, trust not Trebonius, mark well Metellus Cimber, Decius Brutus loves thee not; thou hast wronged Cassius Ligarius."

Brutus delivers his famous speech in prose in Act III, Scene II. Probably Shakespeare wanted it as a contrast to Mark Antony's speech. In the opening scene of Julius Caesar, the cobbler also talks in prose.



The Merchant of Venice

(The Story)

Antonio was a rich merchant of Venice. He had many friends. He was very intimate with Bassanio. One day he was in a sad mood, by chance he met Bassanio with Lorenzo and Gratiano in the street. Gratiano who was light-hearted and very talkative began to make fun of him. He remarked that Antonio was too much absorbed in worldy affairs. He said that those who thought too much of the world lost it. At this Antonio said, 'I hold the world as the world, a stage where every man plays a part, and mine is a sad one.' Gratiano, however preferred to play the role of a fool. In his opinion some people were reputed to be wise because they said nothing. If they openhed their mouths, their fully would be revealed. Lorenzo and Gratiano departed promissing to meet their friends for dinner.

In Bassanio's opinion Gratiano talked more nonsense than any man in Venice. Antonio asked Bassanio about the lady to whom he intended to make a secret journey, Bassanio said that he was in financial difficulties. He had crippled his fortunes by his extravagant habits. He was worried how to repay his debts. He owed much to Antonio in money. Antonio asked him his plans and promissed to do his best for his friend.

Bassanio said that in Belmont there lived a rich, fair virtuous lady called Portia. She was known for her wealth and worth. Suitors from every land visited her. Her sunny locks were like the golden fleece and many Jasons came in quest of her. Bassanio hoped his suit might be crowned with success.

Antonio said that all his fortunes were on the sea. He had no ready money with him. Antonio asked Bassanio to find out what his credit could do in Venice. He himself promised to try and to make available to him the money that he needed for his journey to fair Portia at Belmont.

Portia's father had made a will. According to it all suitors for Portia's hand were compelled to guess in which of the three caskets, one gold, one silver, one lead, her portrait was hidden. The first who guessed right was to marry her. But each, before he was allowed to choose, must swear that, it he chose wrong he would never thereafter propose marriage to any woman. Some found this condition hard and went away without trying their luck. Others chose but failed to discover the portrait. Portia herself and those who failed promised not to divulge which casket had been chosen.

Bassanio loved Portia and believed she too loved him. He was eager to appear at Belmont as a gentleman of high birth and standing. He needed three thousand ducats for his expenses.

Shylock was a Jew and banker. He did not like Antonio. Antonio had often helped the Christian debtors to escape from Shylock's clutches by lending them money without interest. He had often abused the Jew in public. At first Shylock raised difficulties. He knew Antonio's money was all invested in goods on board the ships bound for distant lands. He wanted to talk to Antonio before lending the money.

Bassanio invited Shylock to dinner. The Jew said to himself, "No, I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you." In the meanwhile Antonio was seen coming along the street. Shylock hated him not only because he was a Christian, but because he lent money free of interest and thus brought down the rate of interest in Venice. He wanted and opportunity to satisfy the old grudge that he bore him. He hated Antonio for looking down upon his nation and his bargain.

Antonio came up and said to the Jew, "Shylock, although I neither lend not borrow at interest, yet to supply the need of a friend I'll break my custom. We want three thousand ducats for three months: will you become my creditor?"

Shylock reminded Antonio how he abused him and hated him. Very tauntingly Shylock asked how could he lend him money when he had on numerous occasions called him a dog. Antonio replied, "I am likely to call you dog again. But lend me this money not as to a friend, but as to an enemy of whom you may exact penalties if he breaks his bond. The Jew promised to be friendly with Antonio and to supply his wants without charging any interest. He only asked him in sport to give him his bond to forfeit a pound of flesh to be cut off his body wheresoever he pleased, if he failed to repay him the sum lent, in three month's time. Antonio promised to do that remarking that it was very kind of the Jew to help him in that way.

Bassanio requested Antonio not to sign such a bond. Antonio, however, felt sure that he would soon get payments worth three times the amount involved in the bond. Antonio promised to seal the bond in the presence of a notary.

Bassanio got ready to sail for Belmont that night. Gratiano desired to accompany him. Bassanio agreed to take him on condition that he would behave at Belmont with modesty and civility. Launcelot, a servant in Shylock's household, had grown weary of serving the Jew. He engaged himself to Bassanio and was also to attend on him on the journey.

Shylock's daughter, Jessica was grieved at parting with Launcelot. Through him she sent a love letter to Lorenzo whom he was to meet at supper with his new master. Jessica considered it a heinous sin to be ashamed of her father. She did not share his nature. If only Lorenzo kept his promise, she would end that strife between love and duty by becoming his wife and a Christian.

Antonio, Lorenzo and other friends were to supper with Bassanio and bid him

farewell before he sailed. Even Shylock, inspite of his earlier refusal, had a greed to join the supper. Thus Lorenzo, who had long loved Jessica, gained the opportunity to carry her off and marry her. She had got a page boy's clothes as a disguise. In the letter carried by Launcelot, she told Lorenzo of her plan. After Shylock's departure, she put on her disguise and waited for Lorenzo. In her lovers company, she escaped carrying a Casket of Jewels and a bag of ducats. The lovers had gone out of Venice before Shylock discovered her flight, In his utter disappointment the Jew cried "My daughter! O my ducats, O my daughter? fled with a Christian! Justice? the law! find the girl! she has the jewels and the ducats upon her." No trace of Jessica could be found. It was presumed she had sailed with Lorenzo on board Bassanio's ship. Antonio, however, certified the Duke of Venice that it was not a fact.

Bassanio and Gratiano spent their time happily at Belmont. Bassanio was happy in the company of his beloved Portia, Gratiano courted her mistress Nerissa. Portia fearing lest Bassanio should choose the wrong casket put off the day as long as possible. She could teach him to choose the right casket but it meant breaking her oath which she was not prepared to do. Earlier the prince of Morocco had chosen the golden casket and found a horrible skull with a written scroll in its empty, and the Prince of Arregon had opened the silver casket containing the portrait of a blinking idiot, presenting him a schedule.

At the end of the three months Bassanio however, insisted on opening the casket of his choice. Portia told him that her he would choose the right one. Bassanio examined the three caskets and thought "The outward show may be no guide to what is written: the world is ever deceived with ornament." Therefore I will have none of the gaudy gold, hard food for midas: nor of the silver, which serves for common trade between man and man; the paleness of the mean lead moves me more than eloquence. This is my choice, and my happiness be the consequence.

Then he opened the leaden casket. He was beside with joy to find Portia's portrait inside. Portia proudly confessed her love for him. She said she was not ambitious for herself but for his sake she wished she were a thousand times more fair and rich. She called herself and unlessoned girl. She sought his guidance. She offered him her ring saying, "when you part from it or lose or to reproach you." She placed the ring on his finger and he promised, "Not while I live shall this ring be parted from my finger.

Gratiano and Nerissa wished them joy and desired to be married along with them. Nerissa had promised her lover Gratiano to marry him only if Bassanio choose the right casket and won the hand of her mistress.

Their hour of joy was, however, darkened by sorrow. Salario, a friend of Antonio, brought a letter for Bassanio. He also brought with him Lorenzo and Jessica whom he had met on the way. Portia welcomed the lovers, Bassanio turned pale on reading the letter. Portia wished to know what news could disturb him so such. He told her how in order to get money for his needs he became indebted to a dear friend and he gave a bond to his bitterest enemy. The letter informed Bassanio that his friend had forfeited the bond.

Antonio's ships had all miscarried. His creditors had grown cruel. His bond to the Jew was forfeited. He hoped to see his friend Bassanio at his death. If his beloved did not allow him to some, he might not. Salario said that none of Antonio's ventures had succeeded. Shylock was no longer prepared to take back his money. He wanted the penalty mentioned in the bond. He wanted strict justice. The Duke and many others had failed to make the Jew change his mind. Jessica interrupted saying that she had heard her father swear to his countrymen that he would have rather Antonio's flesh than twenty times his debt. When Portia learned the term of the agreement which Antonio had signed for Bassanio's sake, she said, "Pay the debt twelve fold rather than let a friend of this description lose a hair through your fault. First go with me to church and call me your wife, then away to Venice. You shall have gold to pay the debt twenty times over. When it is paid bring your true friend to Belmont.

Thus Portia married Bassanio's and Nerissa married Gratiano. Nerissa, too, presented her husband a ring which he swore to keep for ever.

After Bassanio's and Gratiano's departure for Venice, Portia pretending that she wanted to spend the time of her husband's absence from home in prayer at a nearby convent, left Jessica and Lorenzo in charge of her household and herself accompanied with Nerissa left for Venice. She sent her servant Balthazar to her cousin Bellario, a learned lawyer at Padua asking his advice on Antonio's case and requesting him for the loan of the dresses of a lawyer and a lawyer's clerk. She had decided to disguise herself as a doctor of law and her maid as a clerk. She wanted to plead Antonio's case before the Duke according to the instructions of her cousin Bellario. Balthazar was to meet her on a fixed point on the road to Venice so that she might not be delayed.

On the day of the trial the Duke urged Shylock to take pity on Antonio in view of the heavy losses and to cancel the bond. The Jew was obstinate. He admitted that he bated Antonio and offered Shylock twice the amount of the loan, but the Jew rejected it contemptuously. The Duke asked the Jew, how shall you hope for mercy if you render none? The Jew replied, "What judgement need I dread, if I do not wrong? The Jew said that the pound of flesh that he demanded was dearly bought by him at a price of 3000 ducats. He demanded only justice. The Duke thought of dismissing the court unless Bellario happened to come that day.

At this juncture Nerissa, dressed as a lawyer's clerk, entered the court. She presented the Duke a letter from Bellario, in which letter had expressed his inability to attend the court because of his illness. As a substitute he recommended a learned young doctor who was supplied with his opinion. The Duke allowed the doctor to attend the court. Portia soon entered in the guise of a doctor. She was welcome by the Duke. Antonio and Shylock were asked to stand forth.

Portia told the Jew that he was prosecuting a strange suit. She asked Antonio if he admitted the bond to which Antonio replied he did. She asked the Jew to be merciful. Portia replied that mercy was not got by compulsion. It was a gift from heaven like the gentle rain. It blessed both, the person who gave it and he attribute of God. She further

said, "remember, Jew, in the course of justice none of us should escape punishment. We pray to heaven for mercy and we should show mercy." The Jew demanded the law and claimed the penalty under his bond Bassanio offered to pay twice or ten times the sum. He requested the doctor to strain the law in Antonio's favour. Portia refused to do so. No power in Venice could alter the law's decree. It could be recorded as a precedent. Sharpening his knife on the sole of his shoe, Shylock exclaimed, "A Daniel come to judgement! O wise young judge.!"

After studying the bond carefully. Portia declared, "The Jew by this may lawfully claim a pound of flesh to be cut by hum of mearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful, Shylock; take thrice your money and let me tear up the bond. Antonio was sick of suspense. He also prayed that judgement must be pronounced. Portia asked Antonio to prepare his bosom for the knife. She asked the Jew if he had a balance to weigh the flesh. The Jew had the scale ready. She further asked him if he had a surgeon too at hand to stop wound lest Antonio be bled to death. The Jew said that it was not in the bond. Antonio prepared his bosom for the knife and blade and affectionate farewell to Bassanio. Antonio said, "Give me your hand Bassanio. Grieve not that I am brought to this for you. Commend me to your wife; say how I died and tell her how I loved you.

Bassanio replied, "Antonio, I am married to a wife who is as dear to me as life itself. But my life, my wife and all the world would I sacrifice to this devil here to deliver you."

"Your wife would give you little thanks for that", Portia remarked, "if she heard you make the offer "Following Bassanio's example Gratiano said, "I have a wife whom I swear I love. I wish she were in heaven that she might entreat some power to soften the heart of this currish Jew." Nerissa said if his wife knew the offer that he was making, she would create trouble in his home.

Pronouncing the judgement Portia said to the Jew; "By law you may cut a pound of the merchant's flesh from off his breast." At this the Jew praised Portia for the judgement. Buy Portia added, "Tarry a little, there is something further". The bond expressly says "a pound of flesh; but if cutting it you shed one drop of Christian sbood, your lands and goods are by law confiscated to the state."

Now Gratiano very ironically remarked, "Mark Jew! O learned judge?"

Portia told the Jew that as he demanded justice he would have more than what he desired. The Jew was thus humbled. He was ready to accept three times the amount of the debt. Bassanio held out the money to the Jew. Portia however, intervened saying that the Jew would have nothing but the penalty. He could get exactly a pound of flesh, neither more nor less, without shedding a drop of blood otherwise he would lose his goods and his life. The Jew now wanted only the payment of his principal. Bassanio offered him three thousand ducats but Portia prevented him. As the Jew had refused the money in open court, he could get merely the penalty mentioned in the bond. The Jew said he waived his claim and got ready to leave the court.

Portia asked the Jew to wait. In her opinion the law had another hold on the Jew.

According to the laws of Venice if an alien who sought, either directly or indirectly, the life of any citizen, he would forfeit one half of his goods to the state and the other half of him against whom he plotted and his life would be at the mercy of the Duke. Therefore she asked Shylock to kneel and beg mercy of Duke.

The Duke granted him his life before he asked for it. The half of his wealth went to Antonio and the other half of his wealth went to state. But if the Jew showed humility, the state might reduce its claim to a fine.

Shylock preferred to lose his rather than his money. Antonio made a generous offer. If the state waived its claim to half of the Jew's wealth, he would gladly pay his share at the Jew's death to Lorenzo who had eloped with Jessica but on two conditions: first, that Shylock should become a Christian; second, that he should make a deed of gift to Lorenzo and Jessica of all he left at his death.

The Duke said the Jew would do that otherwise he would revoke the pardon that he had just given. Shylock had no choice but to accept these terms. He desired to go home as he was not well. He said he would sign the deed as soon as it was sent to him. The Duke permitted the Jew to go home.

Portia wanted to reach Belmont before Bassanio and Gratiano. She, therefore, declined the Duke's invitation to dinner. Bassanio pressed her to accept 3000 ducats as fee. Antonio said he would always remain grateful to her. Portia replied, "He is well paid that is well satisfied." Bassanio then pressed her to take something as a token of remembrance. pretending to yield to their request, Portia wanted Antonio's gloves and Bassanio's ring. Remembering his promise Bassanio draw back his hand, but Portia insisted on getting his ring and nothing else. Bassanio offered to purchase for her the costliest ring in Venice and wanted to be deeply hurt. She said, "I see, sir, you are liberal in your offers. You taught me first to beg and now you teach me how heggaras should be answered. "Bassanio said that he had got that ring from his wife and I had sworn never to part with it. Portia turned it down as an excuse and left the court. Antonio persuade Bassanio to part with the ring and risk his wife's displeasure. Bassanio sent Gratiano after Portia with the ring. Portia thankfully accepted the ring and asked Gratiano to show Nerissa the way to the Jew's house in order to deliver the deeds which the Jew had to sign, Gratiano agreed to do that. Nerissa also managed to get the ring which she had previously given to Gratiano. In high spirits Portia and Nerissa set out on their journey to Belmont.

Lorenzo and Jessica were walking in the moon-light at Belmont when a servant sent on ahead, informed them that Portia would arrive at day-break. Another messenger brought the news that Bassanio would be returning in the morning. Lorenzo arranged music for the return of Portia.

Portia was pleased to be at home again. She was satisfied with the success of her adventure. Lorenzo and Jessica welcomed Portia and Nerissa home. Portia instructed the inmates of her house not to mention her absence to Bassanio and Gratiano. Soon after they arrived accompanied with Antonio. In the meanwhile Gratiano and Nerissa

were found quarrelling over the ring which Gratiano had given away to the lawyer's clerk. Portia asked what the matter was. Gratiano said that the quarrel was about a paltry ring with an inscription like the cutler's poetry on a knife: "Love me and leave me not." Nerissa that Gratiano had given her ring to a woman. She said that no beard would ever grow on the face on the clerk that had her ring. Gratiano repeated that he had given the ring to a frating youth who demanded it as a fee and he did not have the heart to deny him. Portia too held Gratiano guilty to parting with his wife's first gift. She said she was sure her husband Bassanio would not take her ring from his finger for all the wealth in the world. Gratiano said that his lord Bassanio had given his ring to the learned doctor who asked for it and indeed well earned it. Later on his young clerk demanded his ring. Bassanio confirmed the truth of Gratiano's statement. Portia too pretended to suspect that her husband had passed on the ring to some woman. Bassanio asserted that he had first refused to give the ring but had later on sent it to the doctor because he was ashamed to appear ungrateful to the man who had saved the life of his dear friend. Antonio lamented that he was the unhappy cause of these quarrels. Bassanio sought Portia's pardon and swore never again to break an oath to her. Antonio also assured Portia that Bassanio will never again break his faith with her. Then Portia gave Bassanio her second ring Bassanio exclaimed "By heaven, it is the same I gave to the doctor."

At this point Portia produced a letter from Bellario proving that Portia was the doctor and Nerissa was her clerk. She welcomed Antonio and gave him news of safe return of his three ships. A letter meant for Antonio had by chance fallen into her hands. Antonio thanked Portia for giving him his life and living. Nerissa gave Lorenzo the gift deed from the rich Jew of all the would die possessed of . Lorenzo said "Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way of starving people."

Thus is the end, all is happiness. Lorenzo and Jessica join the other two couples. Portia gives Antonio a last surprise—The news that three of his ships "Are richly come to harbour suddenly." There can no reaction from the audience other than Antonio's "I am dumb," and final applause for Shakespeare. He has taken three main stands—(1) The casket story (2) The bond story, and (3) The ring story, and woven them into a single plot, which brings all three stories to a successful conclusion and ensures that all the characters with, one exception—"live happily ever after, just as fairy-tale characters ought to do.

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Scene-Wise Analysis of the Play

Act I, Scene I

Antonio, the great merchant, is sad, but he cannot tell his friends the reason for his sadness. They suggest various possible causes for anxiety, and try to make him laugh, Antonio is waiting to meet his best friend, Bassanio, who confesses to Antonio that he has spent a great deal of money, and also that he is in love with Portia, a rich heiress. Antonio has no more money to lend to Bassanio at present, but promised to help him to borrow from the money-lenders so that he can visit Portia.

Act I, Scene 2

Portia and Nerissa talk about the test which Portia's suitors must take. Some men have already come to Belmont in the hope of marrying her, but when Portia describes them she makes fun of them and shows her dislike. Finally Nerissa reminds her of Bassanio.

Act I, Scene 3

Shylock is able to lend money to Bassanio, but he makes it clear that he hates Antonio. Shylock and Antonio argue about the morality of making a profit from the money-lending, and Shylock reminds Antonio of his past insults. However, he agrees to lend the money but he asks for unusual bond.

Act 2, Scene I

Portia meets the Prince of Morocco, who wants to marry her. He chooses to try his luck with the caskets, although she 5warns him of the penalty he must pay if he makes the wrong choice.

Act 2, Scene 2

Launcelot Gobbo, Shylock's servant, is wondering whether ought to run away from his master. Old Gobbo, his father, comes on to the stage in search of his son. Because he is blind he does not recognize Launcelot, who plays a rather cruel trick on him. Old Gobbo asks Bassanio to give employment to Launcelot; which Bassanio agrees to do. Gratiano also asks a favour from Bassanio: he wants to accompany his to Belmont, Bassanio agrees, but he warns Gratiano that he must behave properly.

Act 2, Scene 3

Launcelot says goodbye to Shylock's daughter, Jessica, who is sorry to see him go.

Act 2, Scene 4

Bassanio's friends have planned some kind of entertainment to amuse the guests at dinner . Launcelot gives, Lorenzo the letter from Jessica, and Lorenzo explains his intentious to the audience.

Act 2, Scene 5

Shylock instructs Jessica to lock up the house carefully; he then goes off to have dinner with Bassanio.

Act 2, Scene 6

Lorenzo and his friends meet outside Shylock's house. Jessica appears on the balcony, rather embarrassed because she is dressed as a boy.

Act 3, Scene 1

Salerio has heard bad news about one of Antonio's ships. Shylock threatens Antonio, when Shylock and Tubal are left on the stage together he gloats over Antonio's danger, Shylock's pleasure over this matter is equal to the pain he suffers in the loss of his daughter.

Act 3, Scene 2

Portia has fallen in love with Bassanio and wants his to wait a few days before making his choice of the caskets. But Bassanio refuses to wait. He meditates a loud on the difference between appearance and reality and then chooses the leaden casket and wins Portia for his wife. Nerissa and Gratiano congratulate him, and Gratiano declares his own marriage plans. Lorenzo and Jessica arrive at Belmont, together with Salerio, who has brought a letter from Antonio. Antonio has written to say he is in Shylock's power.

Act 3, Scene 4

Portia asks Lorenzo to look after he do until she and Nerissa return. They are going to Venice and plan to dress as men to play a trick on their husbands.

Act 4, Scene 5

Launcelot Gobbo teases Jessica about her Jewish nationality. Her husband Lorenzo joins in the fun.

Act 4, Scene 1

The Duke Shylock to show mercy to Antonio, but Shylock refuses and insists on having his pound of flesh. A young lawyer comes into the court—it is Portia in disguise with Nerissa as the lawyer's clerk. Portia makes a speech in praise of mercy but Shylock is unmoved. Portia agrees that he is legally entitled to a pound of Antonio's flesh, and Antonio prepares to die. At the last moment Portia finds a way of escape for Antonio, Bassanio very grateful because his friend's life has been saved, and he offer to reward the young lawyer. Portia asks for a ring.

Act 4, Scene 2

Gratiano gives Bassanio's ring to Portia, who is still disguised as the young lawyer and accompanied by Nerissa as her 'clerk' Nerissa plans to get her own ring from Gratiano.

Act 5, Scene I

Lorenzo and Jessica talk lovingly in the moonlight. Messages are brought, telling them that Portia and Bassanio are (separately) on their way home. After a short time, Portia and Nerissa arrive at Belmont, a little later, as day breaks, Bassanio and Gratiano also appear. The wives ask their husbands for the rings, and pretend to be angry; at last they reveal the truth.

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Major Characters in the Play

Portia

Portia is the most beautifully drawn of all Shakespearean heroines and the author has devoted all the fund of his poetry and imagination in making this character very lovable. She possesses in herself all the virtues that go to make perfect womanhood. Fate has made her the heiress of countless wealth and pleasures waited round her without spoiling her or making her proud and hard-hearted towards others. Prosperity has left her generous and quick in sympathy. With what great warmth she welcomes Jessica and Lorenzo and she is equally hospitable in her reception of Antonio when she returns from the Trial Scene. She appreciates the unselfish friendship of Antonio and Bassanio and is prepared to make the utmost sacrifice to save the life of the former.

Portia has so many qualities so finely tempered together that criticism of it naturally dwells upon the harmonious fulness of her character. Most people of marked individuality have the defect of their qualities force of character easily becomes hardness; a strong sense of justice is apt on occasion to pass into severity. Conversely, kindness of heart often becomes undue indulgence. But with Portia's character All Much Ado and Rosalind in As You Like It may be classed together as characters of intellect when compared with others, they are at once distinguished by their mental superiority.

With all her mental ability, Portia is free from pedantry. She does not pose at all as one who is intellectually superior to those around her. She has too much modesty, too keen a sense of humour. She keeps the charm of an "unlessoned girl" without any of the self-consciousness and affectation that sometimes accompany cleverness.

She unites soundness of judgement with sensibility and a buoyant enthusiasm in under taking what her judgement approves :

"Portia—Come on, Nerissa, I have work in hand That you know not of : we'll see our husbands Before they think of us.

Nerissa—Shall they see us?

Portia—They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit, That they shall think we are accomplished

With that we lack."

Portia has a strong sense of honour and justice; yet withal a woman's true instinct of kindness and mercy. Thus she "could teach Bassanio how to choose right" (III. 2. 10-11) and is longing that she may, but will not serve from the terms imposed by her father. And when Bassanio's choice does fall on the right casket, then, in the midst of her great joy, concern for his honour makes urge his to hasten to the help of the friend whom he has brought into such trouble. She is all sympathy and consideration she tells Bassanio—

"O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!"

In the Trial-scene, though she must see justice done, she would far rather show mercy to Shylock by inducing his to show mercy. She stoops to plead with the implacable Jew, whom every-one else in the court would deal with summarily. Knowing that she has the means to confound him, she puts forth all her eloquence in hope of touching his eart, failing once, she gives another chance

"Be merciful:

Take thrice they money; bid me tear the bond."

Failing again she presses him, for his own sake, to do at least some slight "charity"—

"Have by some surgeon.....

It were good you do so much for charity". (IV. 1. 155-9).

Not till Shylock has flung away every preferred chance does she pronounce sentence: a harsh sentence, truly, but the law of Venice—and a judge must administer the law without reference to his personal feelings. What Portia says and does in this scene represents, surely, the perfect reconciliation of justice and mercy.

There is a deep seriousness of character in her: we see it at all the great moments of the action—when she gives herself in those words of exquisite self-surrender to Bassanio (III. 2. 238—45), above all, when she reasons with Shylock and sets forth "the quality of mercy" (IV. 1. 182—200). Yet there is no austerity in this seriousness. Rather, it is relieved by a rippling vivacity of mood, a joyous brilliance of manner and speech.

Gifted with a fine sense of humour, she delights in a comic situation such as the ring-episode, where her assumption of anger (V. 189—138) illustrates her versatility. But how quickly she sees when a jest he gone far enough, how tactfully she drops it (V. 146, 247).

"Give his this;

And bid him kept it better that he other."

She has a very pretty wit, which could, at need, be unpleasant keen, as we feel when she is speaking of her suitors (1. 2); yet she never speaks seriously a single word of caustic satire to anyone.

She has great resourcefulness and self-reliance: the plan of going to Venice to plead is hers, and we can imagine what nerve its execution needs. One might have thought

that the girl who possessed the qualities essential to the part that Portia plays must be somewhat self-assertive and even unfeminine; but we do not think so after knowing her. For each quality in her which is the index of force of character and intellect is balanced by some more specifically feminine quality: by the tenderness of a "gentle spirit" (III. 2. 163) and ardour, by modesty and tact; and the result is an exquisite equipoise. She is greatly Bassanio's superior, we cannot help feeling. One of the most beautiful things where so much is beautiful is her determination not to see this superiority,

Antonio

The Merchant of Venice in the play is Antonio. The play is called after his because, though not himself the chief actor, he is the source and centre of the action. The battle of the bond story is fought round him. It is his generosity that starts the caskets story.

As everyone in the play speaks ill of Shylock, of everyone save Shylock speaks well of "The Merchant of Venice" Antonio. "The kindest man,

The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit

In doing courtesies,.....

Not only Bassanio, but other also praise Antonio in similar manner. Evan the Duck takes "great pains" on his behalf.

Antonio's one fault is his lack of self-assertion. He is too passive. He does not want to spoil Bassanio's chances at Belmont, or cloud his happiness, Antonio keeps silence till it is too late for Bassanio to do anything.

The reason of his passivity is perhaps a strain of sadness in his nature. But a character of this type is essential for the plot. The plot requires two improbable things—that someone should sign the bond, and afterwards, seeing the terrible danger draw near, should forbear to ask aid of the fend who could at any rate have made some effort to meet the danger. The only man in the play—nay in Venice—who would do both things is Antonio, in whom friendship has become almost a passion and self-renunciation a second nature. It has often been remarked that the whole story of King Lear hinges on the utterly irrational and (per se) improbable act of the king in the fist scene, but that this peculiar character makes the act credible and so rationalises the story. The character of the utterly unselfish Antonio is equally indispensable to The Merchant of Venice. Thus the improbabilities of many of the events in the play seem natural and probable because of the peculiarities of Antonio's nature.

Bassanio

Bassanio is a young Venetian nobleman. Bassanio, at the outset does not enlist our sympaty. He has a dedonair and cavalier manner and the first we hear from him is: When shall we throw a party? He is noble by birth, a soldier by profession, and prodigal in habits. He has squandered his fortune away so that he has to borrow money from his friend in order to go to Belmont. According to Professor Quiller Couch he looks like a

predatory young man who looks upon the Belmont expedition as a business proposition. Quiller-Couch also suspects that he delibrately withholds the condition of the caskets from Antonio.

But his character is to be judged less from what he himself says or does than from the reflected picture which we get of his in the words and actions of other people. He is Antonio's choosen friend and Portia's choosen lover. Antonio loves the world only for Bassanio's sake; and for him, Portia, courted by all nations and languages, would be trembled twenty times herself. Nerissa lets us know that he is a scholar and soldier, and "he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon,was the best deserving a fair lady." Gratiano 'must' travel with him, even at the cost of a more subdued behaviour. And Launcelot Gobbo thinks his fortune is made. when he gets into his service, poor though Bassanio was. Among his friends, he is "my lord Bassanio, 'signior Bassanio".

By subtle touches his character is saved from figuring as a sordid, mercenary adventurer. For it is Portia who has fallen in love with him, more than be with her. His love is based more on her virtues than on her beauty. Portia knows that he has no wealth, for he has told her; thus. Once he has arrived at Belmont his bearing is so noble and lover like, that he makes us quite forget his not very worthy motive that, in part at least, took him thither. He shows himself the high-born soldier and lover, careless of outward displays and contemptuous of sham, ready to "hazard" for love, and in the moment of success, he is modest with a grace of humility that equals Portia's own.

When the cup of happiness is at his lips, he bravely puts it by and rushes to Venice to save his friend. Such moments do test a man and show him for what he is and this one counts far more in the effect his character makes on us than all the gentlemanly graces of his conventional equipment. Thus he is able to pass the test of love and friendship because of the greatness of his heart. We feel that he is not an unworthy lover of fair Portia.

Shylock

A Romantic Comedy—The Merchant of Venice is a romantic comedy. A happy ending for the leading characters is essential for a romantic comedy. There is general rejoicing in Act V. However, Shylock is left out of this general rejoicing. Shylock has been defeated of his nond, robbed of his ducats, deserted by his daughter. He is even compelled to give up his religion and become a Christian. Thus The Merchant of Venice is a comedy for all the other characters, but a tragedy for Shylock deserve this fate? We can answer the question by critically analysing Shylock's role in the play.

As far as can Elizabethan audience was concerned. He is a Jew, and he is a money. Leader. English Christians hated the Jews, the Elizabethan's also hated the Jewism profession of usuary—the lending of money for profit.

Shylock first appears as the cautions businessman. He thinks carefully before he gives three thousand ducats to Bassanio's. His reaction to the polite invitation to dinner is unexpected in its venom. Religious differences seem to be less important than professional jealousy:

" I hate him for he is a Christian;

But more for that in law simplicity

He lends out mony gratis."

To some extent Shylock justifies his hostility when he describes how he has been treated by Antonio. He has been insulted, spat upon and kicked out of the way like 'a stranger cur'. We sympathise with him because of this. We have two options. We sympathise with him because of this. We have two options. We may regard Shylock as a kind man and treat his bond as a "Merry spot" only. We may be suspicious of fair terms and a villain's mind.

Launcelot says, "the Jew is the very devil in casuation." This opinion is echoed by Shylock's daughter, Jessica. She says, "Our house is hell." Jessica is 'asham'd to be. (her) father's child', although she knows that it is a heinous sin' for a daughter to have such feelings. We can understand Jessica misery. When her father gives instructions about looking up his house whilst he is away. Jessica is forbidden even to look out of the window to watch the masquers going to Bassanio's feast. Shylock is a kill-joy—and he has also killed his daughter's natural affection for him.

Shylock's grief over the loss of his daughter is equalled, perhaps even surpassed by his anger at the theft of his money. He cries,

"My daughter ! O my ducats ! O my daughter !

Fled with a Christian ! O my Christian ducats !"

The loss of a daughter is a real cause for sorrow. Shylock earns some pity when he says, "My daughter is my flesh and my blood."

Shylock seems to gain our sympathy by his passionate out burst. "Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, liealed by the same means warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? if you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die?"

In these words Shylock appeals to our common humanity. If we give a negative reply to the questions we shall be denying our own humanity, Common humanity ignores all limitations of colour, race or creed. From this point of view we may sympathise with Shylock. But if we study Shylock's stretch further our sympathy gradually vanishes.

Continuing his speech Shylock says. ".....and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? if we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.......The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction."

So far as his revenge is concerned Shylock says he will prove himself to be superior to the Christians in revenge fulness.

During the trial Shylock loses the audience's sympathy by his words and by the action of sharpening the knife on the sole of his shoe.

The events that follow do nothing to moderate the presentation of Shylock in the

terms used by the Duke when he warms Antonio, before the trial beings, that his adversary is,

an inhuman wretch

Uncapable of pity, void and empty

From and dram of mercy.

Shylock demanded a strict observance of the law, and (in poetic justice) it is precisely this that defeats him. Gratiano exults over his down fall but all the other characters in the court speak no unnecessary words, they show no satisfaction until Shylock has left the court.

Recent criticism of 'The Merchant of Venice' emphasizes the suffering human being. However, this was. perhaps not Shakespeare's intention. Shylock is more complex than any of the other characters in the play. He is the best drawn character. We understand why he acts as he does. This makes us sympathatic towards him. This makes us gentle in our censure of Shylock. However, the truth is that Shylock's conduct merits condemnation. We can only refrain from condemning it because we know that he has suffered for being a Jew. But we must condemn his revenge fulness, his inhumanity. The tragic end of Shylock does not mar the comedy because Shylock's conduct deserves condemnation. The villain is rightly punished. We agree with the Duke's estimate of his character.

Tubal

Tubal is a friend of Shylock—a friend with whom he discusses the plan of revenge. Tubal is ready to place himself at the service of Shylock. Shylock mentions him as "Good Tubal". Yet this 'Good Tubal', while telling Shylock of his search for his runaway daughter, torments him with the account of her extravagance in Genoa. Over-conscientious expositors say that Shylock is deceived and abandoned even by his co-religionists. Tubal's function in the play is to show Shylock's passion 'so strange, outrangeous and so variable' roused by the double loss of his daughter and dacats and to prepare us for Antonio's failure to meet the bond. Shakespeare on every occasion makes his characters say what is effective, right and appropriate to the situation.

Salerio and Solanio are little more than convenient card-board figures distinguished from each other only by their different names. They are both parasites and hangers on to Antonio. They are vehement in their expressions of sympathy for Antonio misfortunes and equally energetic in pettifogging and worrying and worrying Shylock. They, in other respects, are but one degree more prominent than the 'Magnifices of Venice', Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia and other attendants', who help to fill the scene.

Launcelot Gobbo

Launcelot Gobbo plays the part of Fool in 'The Merchant of Venice'. But he combines this with the role of servant and messenger. He is sensible enough to be useful on occasions in a menial role and clownish enough to afford diversion in a dull hour Shylock calls him patch. ("The patch is kind enough"), i.e. the fool who wears motley. However, this is probably not true. Launcelot Gobbo is provided by Bassanio with a servant's livery, not the motley of the professional fool. As a motley wearer and professional fool he is quite third rate. His wit consists in a plepteous store of droll malapropisms. It is the sort of wit that soon becomes stale. And Launcelot overdoes it. His practical jokes and buffooneries in the scene in which his old and blind father is his victim are effective on the stage. But even as gags they are extremely poor specimens indeed. He enjoys his life at Belmont tremendously and helps Lorenzo and Jessica to while away the time with his verbal drollery.

Launcelot Gobbo begins his career as Shylock's servant. In the eyes of Shylock Launcelot Gobbo has almost every fault that a very unsatisfactory servant can have. But even Shylock has a god word for him. His comment—"The patch is kind enough", is indeed his highest praise. But Shylock disapproves of him in every other respect. He is gormandizar. He sleeps and rends apparel out. Thus he wastes him master's substance in knavish indolence.

Launcelot may be idle in his master's service but he knows how to please his master's daughter. Jessica who finds her father's house a hell commends Launcelot as a merry devil whose merry pranks divert her in hellish misery.

Launcelot is also a go-between in Jessica's secret affair with Lorenzo. He plays the part of go-between to perfection. He is of real help to Jessica and Lorenzo in their elopement. In Jessica's elopement with her Christian lover Launcelot plays a decisive part. But for his assistance the lovers would have found it difficult to elude Shylock's vigilance. Shylock must have been furious with Launcelot if he had remained in his service after the discovery of his daughter's flight.

Launcelot, however has feathered his nest in advance by joicing Bassanio's service just before he takes an active part in Jessica's elopement.

Launcelot Gobbo must have been of an ease-loving and lovable temper for he is something of a universal favourite. Even Shylock has a kind word for him. Launcelot manages to rise rapidly in his new master's favour. He is allowed to accompany him to Belmont. He must have been invaluable for relieving the medium of voyage by his clowning.

Arrived at Belmont, Launcelot Gobbo is again thrown into the company of his old mistress Jessica, now happily married to Lorenzo. He enjoys his life at Belmont tremendously and helps Lorenzo and Jessica to while away the time with his verbal drollery. On the whole he plays the part of a fool in 'The Merchant of Venice'. But he combines this with the role of servant and messenger. He is sensible enough to be useful on occasions in a menial role and clownish enough to effort diversion in a dull hour.

Thus we see that Launcelot Gobbo plays some useful part in the play. He connects the Bond story with the casket story, throws Shylock's character into bolder relief and acts as a go-between to Lorenzo and Jessica verity comments Launcelot's is the Gratiano of the lower social sphere. The useful part he plays is made up of small things. With his garrulous quaintness he gives some relief to the serious interest, and that is his chief function. But he also helps to associate the two main stories by exchanging Shylock's service for Bassanio's. He enables us to know something more of Shylock in his home

and of the condition amid which Jessica has grown up. And he furthers the Lorenzo-Jessica story by acting as the lovers' messenger. It each of these little ways Launcelot's part is helpful to the play.

Commenting on his character verity says, "His character speaks for itself. He is a very merry, amusing, affectionate fellow; evidently a good son (II, 2, 59, 60), though with midesy he disclaims the credit jestingly; most good-bumoured, perhaps partly because to pleased with himself and quite boyish in his ways and wit. His wit indeed, on which he evidently plumes himself, has scarcely emerged from the elementary stage of practical jokes (II. 2. 74, 75, note) and clumsy puns (III. 5. 25–40), but he has a keen natural sense of fun. He has picked up from his various masters fine words which he mispronounces and misapplies, and tricks his talk out in odd shreds and patches of learning and Latin (II.2 51, 56, 57), to impress simple people. An original stage-direction (II, 2) describes Launcelot as "the Clown", and the description indicates his main part as a "funy fellow". But it would be absurd to compare him with the clowns of Shakespeare's later comedies."

Lorenzo

Lorenzo is a poet with a great deal of the dreamer and artist about him. He has an artist's soul intensely alive to delight in natural beauty and music. This is well exemplified in his speech in the fifth Act: "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank", etc. His artistic and refined nature draws him to Jessica whose outer beauty is the index of artistic sensibility within. He seems a most suitable lover for a girl of Jessica's type. His is a typical Italian love and joy without a thought of the past or the future recking nothing of Shylock's displeasure which will make his beloved dowerless. He is for the most part of a dreamy inactive nature, as may be seen in the amused tolerance of Launcelot's word-fencing.

He has a saving sense of humour as may be seen in the banker with which he prefers to meet Jessica's enthusiasm on the subject of Portia, which in reality he shares :

Even such a husband

Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

He does not seem a very practical sort of person if one may judge by the description of the lover's extravagance at Genoa: and like his wife, he is not troubled much with moral scruples. He consents to the robbery of Shylock. But he loves Jessica sincerely and idealises her, whatever may have been his first intentions in courting her. The suggestion of the incidents of the elopement seems to be that Lorenzo meant at first no more than trifling with the pretty Jewess and that he rose to the occasion as he found and appreciated Jessica's higher tone and attraction. We must regard Lorenzo as a man of worth and honourable character, for Portia, a judge of character, selects him at first sight as the person to whom to commit her household in her absence.

Gratiano

Finally, Lorenzo is the half-scholar the half-poet with a touch of pedantry about him. His discourse to the little Jessica on "the music of the spheres" and on the powers of music smacks of pedantry.

Among the minor characters of the play, 'The Merchant of Venice'. Gratiano occupies a very important place and makes significant contribution to make he play successful.

Gratiano is a constant companion of Bassanio. He is a big talker and Bassanio tells, not with much truth and definitely with some undindness, that he is the greatest talker of non-sense in entire Venice and that there are two grains (of wisdom) in his two bushels of wheat (talk). But Gratiano is a merry fellow and has a very positive outlook on life. He lays a great store by mirth and cheerfulness. He preaches (and he practises it himself) to Antonio the desirability and advisability of mirth and laughter in life. Although Gratiano is a minor character he does a lot to enliven the atmosphere in the play. He is one of the permanent and familiar social types without whom no company is complete.

Gratiano's spirits run wild in familiar company and Bassanio cautions him to be restained during Bassanio's Belmont visit and Gratiano responds to the call admirably and conducts himself with decorum and grace. It appears that gratiano is non-serious and rude but he is actual a man of wit and wisdom and conceals a very sober mind and behind his exuberance.

He possesses ready wit which shows to advantage in the Court Scene. He provides light humour and entertainment in an otherwise tense situation. He also provides in his speech and action a contrast to Antonio's melancholy.

Thus we can infer that Gratiano's role is significant for the development of the plot and for sustaining the interest and spirit of the audience (or readers). Thus he occupies by right an important place among the minor characters of the play.

Verity writes about Gratiano—

Gratiano is one of the permanent and familiar social types.

We can scarce hope to meet a Portia or an Antonio; but Gratiano is the genial, humorous being without whom no company is complete. His mission in life is to be cheerful, sometimes rather boisterous spirits, and amuse; and he plays his part excellently. To cleverness he lays no claim, and there is, like enough, a large amount of "nothing" in the "infinite deal" (I. I. 114) he talks. Nevertheless, he hits of shrewd pieces of sense, for which the more solemn friends to whom he is a diverting contrast hardly give him sufficient credit. He has seen something of the world, but is too good-hearted to have been made by experience the least bit a cynic: witness his sympathy with Antonio. He can suit himself, as he says (II. 2. 176—83), and as we see from his restrained bearing before Portia, to his surroundings and tactfully "allay his skipping spirit" (II.2. 173). He is well matched with Nerissa, his equal influency and something more than his equal in smart wit."

Nerissa

Nerissa is not a waiting maid in the modern sense, but a confidential companion such as a great lady in Portia's lonely position would naturally have in attendence. One likes Nerissa, apart from her own pleasing qualities, for her devotion to Portia, whom she will not leave if Bassanio's choice falls out amiss.

She resembles Portia in a sense of humour and enjoyment of a comic situation, enters into her plans with zest and 'backs her up' cleverly. As befits "the maid" she pays her "mistress" the compliment of imitation of her manners and tone.

- (i) As a companion to Portia, she throws the latter's character into bolder relief.
- (ii) She represents the lighter aspect of her mistress's life.
- (iii) She serves to make the frivolity and disguise of Portia more significant.
- (iv) She is the mainspring of the Ring Episode.

Mrs. Jameson thus describes her-

"Nerissa is a good specimen of a common genus of characters. She is a clever, confidential, waiting woman who has caught a little of her lady's elegance and in romance; she affects to be lively and sententious, falls in love, and makes her favour conditional on the fortune of the caskets, and sport, numics her mistress with, good emphasis and discretion. Nerissa and the gay talkative Gratiano are as well matched as the incomparable Portia and her magnificent and captivating lover."

Jessica

Jessica receives possibly a little more attention than Nerissa. She is Shakespeare's own creation, and has no counterpart in the old tales. It was necessary to create her to give a glimpse of Shylock's home and domestic life, for a man is not fully known till we have seen this. Possibly Shakespeare felt that the sudden disasters and shocks of the trial scene would be too sharp a punishment for the Jew, and would create sympathy for him, which Shakespeare did not want.

So we are shown early in the play that even Shylock's daughter cannot endure him or his home any longer. We are shown first Launcelot and then Jessica running away from him, and they are made to say:

"Our house is hell"

This makes us feel that Shylock's disasters are deserved. Still many people feel that Jessica was lacking in moral principles; she deserted the losing camp for that of the victor. She was lacking in filial feeling. She is callous enough to say to Lorenzo, 'I will' make fast the doors and guild myself with some more ducats, and be with you straight. "Shylock has enforced in his house so much thrift on her that as soon as she is out of his control, a reaction sets in and she gives herself up to extravagance; in a light-hearted manner suited to youth that has known freedom for the first time, she gives away her mother's ring for a monkey. She might have repented of this later on, but that is outside the play. She is untuttored and unexperienced, but she can take her part beautifully in a duel with Lorenzo and can wistfully remember classical stories of tragic and romantic love in moonlight. She is so sensitive in a way that music makes her unhappy in mood. Her dramatic function is to serve as a foil to Shylock.

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THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE DUKE OF VENICE
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON
THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO

suitors to Portia.

ANTONIO | BASSANIO | The Merchant of Venice

his friend, suitors likewise to Portia.

SALANIO SALARINO GRATIANO SALERIO

friends to Antonio and Bassanio.

LORENZO

in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK TUBAL a rich Jew.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO

a Jew, his friend. the clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO

father of Launcelot.

LEONARDO

servant to Bassanio.

STEPHANO | BALTHASAR

servants to Portia.

PORTIA | NERISSA | JESSICA

a rich heiress. her waiting-maid.

daughter to Shylock.

Magnifices of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other Attendants.

SCENE: Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont the seat of Portia on the Continent.

TEXT

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT-I

SCENE I. Venice, A Street. Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.

Ant. In sooth¹, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by² it,
What stuff made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit³ sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado⁴ to know myself.

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies⁵ with portly sail,

Salan.

There, where your argosies⁵ with portly sail, Like signiors⁶ and rich burghers⁷ on the flood,

Or, as it were, the pageants⁸ of the sea, Do overpeer⁹ the petty traffickers¹⁰, That curt'sy to them, do them reverence, As they fly by them with their woven wings¹¹.

Believe me, sir; had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affection would
Be with my hopes abroad, I should be still¹²
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind;
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt
Would make me sad.

1. In sooth: truly. 2. Came by: acquired. 3. Want-wit: a_dull fellow. 4. Ado: trouble. 5. Argosies: rich merchant ships. 6. Signiors: noblemen. 7. Burghers: citizens. 8. Pageants: grand spectacles. 9. Overseer: surpass. 10. Traffickers: merchant ships. 11. Woven wings: canvas sails. 12. Still: always.

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THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT-I

SCENE I. Venice, A Street. Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO and SALANIO.

- Ant. Indeed I do not know why I feel so sad. The feeling makes me weary, and you that it depresses you. Where I picked it up, found it, or otherwise obtained it, and what it consists of and how it originated, I have yet to discover. This sadness makes me a dull fellow, so that I have much trouble in recognising myself.
- Salar. Your mind is on the sea, where your rich cargo-ships, with swelling sails like wealthy noblemen or rich merchants, move on the waves, and like grand spectacles of the sea they excel the smaller merchant-ships, who bow to them and show respect as they speed past them with their canvas sails.
- Salan. I assure you, sir, if I had such business operations pending, the greater part of my mind would always be fixed on my dealings across the seas. I should always be plucking the grass and throwing it up to see the direction of the wind, peering into maps to study the seaports, harbours and channels, and everything that might suggest disaster to my business ventures would no doubt make me sad.

Salar.	My wind ¹ cooling my broth,	
	Would blow me to an ague ² , when I thought	
	What harm a wind too great might do at sea.	
	I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,	
	But I should think of shallows and of flats;	
	And see my wealthy Andrew ³ dock'd ⁴ in sand,	
	Vailing ⁵ her high-top lower than her ribs ⁶	
	To kiss her burial ⁷ . Should I go to church,	30
	And see the holy edifice of stone,	
	And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,	
	Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,	
	Would scatter all her spices on the stream,	
	Enrobe the roaring water with my silks,	
	And, in a word, but even now worth this,	
	And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought	
	To think on this, and shall I lack the thought	
	That such a thing bechanced ⁸ would make me sad?	
	But tell not me; I know, Antonio	40
	Is sad to think upon his merchandise.	
Ant.	Believe me, no—I thank my fortune for it—	
	My ventures are not in one bottom ⁹ trusted	
	Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate	
	Upon the fortune of this present year;	
	Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.	
Salar.	Why, then you are in love.	
Ant.	Mew, fie ¹⁰	
Salar.	Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad.	
	Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy	50
	For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry.	
	Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,	
	Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:	
	Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,	
	And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper;	
	1. Wind: breath. 2. Ague: fever with shivering. 3. Andrew: ship. 4.	

1. Wind: breath. 2. Ague: fever with shivering. 3. Andrew: ship. 4. Dock'd: stuck. 5. Vailing: lowering. 6. Ribs: sides. 7. Burial: the sands enclosing her. 8. Such a thing bechanced: if such a thing happened. 9. Bottom: ship. 10. Fie: shame.

Salar.

Whenever I blew on my soup to make it cool, the act would make me tremble like ague to think of the damage too strong a wind might do. I could not see the sand run from one half of the hourglass into the other without thinking of dangerous shallow waters and quicksands, imagining that I saw my rich ship grounded in sand, her mast inclined down lower than her sides, as if trying to kiss the sands that enclosed her. I could not go to church and see the holy building, built of stone without being reminded of dangerous rocks, which, if they but touched the sides of my good ship, would scatter her cargo of spices on the waters and throw out my rich silks to dress the roaring waves. In short, to think that at one minute I might own so much, and the next minute, nothing! Is it possible that I can think about this without thinking that if such a thing happened it would be very sad? I know that Antonio is melancholy because of the thought of his merchandise.

Ant.

Believe me, that is not the case. I thank my good fortune that my business enterprises are not all at risked in one single ship, nor to any place. Nor does my financial position depend on the business ventures of this year, so it is not my merchandise that makes me sad.

Salar.

Indeed, then, you must be in love.

Ant.

Shame, Shame!

Salar.

What, not in love either! Then we may say that you are sad merely because you have no grounds for being merry. It would be as easy for you to laugh and frisk and say that you were gay because you had no cause to be sad. Now, by Janus, the Roman (two-headed) god, I declare that Nature has made some strange types of men! Some are always looking out from eyes half-closed with laughter, and laugh like parrots if they but hear a bagpipe played.

And other of such vinegar aspect',

That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,

Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO and GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,

Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:

60

We leave you now with better company.

Salar. I would have stay'd till I had made you merry, If worthier friends had not prevented

me.

Ant. You worth is very dear in my regard.

I take it, your own business calls on you

And you embrace the occasion to depart.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lord.

Bass. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh?

say when?

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

70

Salar. We'll make our leisures too attend on yours.

IExeunt Salarino and Salanio.

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,

We two will leave you; but at dinner-time,

I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

Bass. I will not fail you.

Gra. You look not well, Signior Antonio;

You have too much respect upon the world: They lose it that do buy it with much care: Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano—

80

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

1. Of such vinegar aspect: with such a sour expression.

Others there are with such a sour expression that they will not open their lips in a smile when even the grave Nestor says that a laugh is good.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO.

Salan. Here comes your noble kinsman, Bassanio, with Gratiano and Lorenzo. Goodbye, Antonio. We shall now leave you to better company than ours.

Salar. I should have stayed with you till I had made you cheerful, if the arrival of those more worthy friends had not prevented me.

Ant. I have a deep regard for you. I suppose that it is your own business affairs which call you away, and that is why you take this opportunity to go.

Salar. Good morning, my good lord.

Bass. Good gentlemen, will both of you tell us when we are to have some merriment? Tell me when. You have become as if strangers to me. Is that necessary?

Salar. We shall find a leisure hour to wait upon you.

(Salarino and Salanio depart)

Lor. My Lord Bassanio, since you have met your friend Antonio here, we two shall leave you. But I beg that you will remember where we have to meet again at dinner-time.

Bass. I shall not fail to be there.

Gra. You do not look well, Sir Antonio. You are too much wrapped up with worldly affairs. People lose all when they incure so much anxiety over business. Believe me, you are strangely changed.

Ant. I regard this world, Gratiano, merely as a stage on which every man has a part to play. Mine is a sad part.

90

100

110

Gra. Let me play the fool;

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come.

And let my liver rather heat with wine

Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,

Sit like his grandsire² cut in alabaster³?

Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice

By being peevish⁴? I tell thee what, Antonio—

I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—

There are a sort of men whose visages⁵

Do cream and mantle⁶ like a standing pond,

And do a wilful stillness⁷ entertain,

With purpose to be dressed in an opinion⁸

Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit⁹:

As who should say, 'I am Sir Oracle,

And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!'

O my Antonio, I do know of these

That therefore only are reputed wise.

For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,

If they should speak, would almost damn those ears

Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools

I'll tell thee more of this another time;

But fish not, with this melancholy bait 10

For this fool gudgeon¹¹, this opinion....,

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile,

I'll end my -exhortation 12 after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time:

I must be one of those same dumb wise men.

For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra. Well, keep me company but two years moe¹³

Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant. Farewell: I'll grow a talker for this gear 14,

1. Old wrinkles: wrinkles of age. 2. Grandsire: (statute of) grandfather.

3. Alabaster: white marbel. 4. Peevish: ill-tempered. 5. Visages: faces.

6. Cream and mantle: are as if covered with the cream and slime (of gravity). 7. Wilful stillness: deliberate silence. 8. To he dressed in an opinion: to earn a reputation. 9. Conceit: thought. 10. Melancholy bait: bait of melancholy. 11. Gudgeon: a worthless, stupid fish. 12. Exhortation: good advice. 13. Moe: more. 14. For this gear: because of this advice.

Gra. I prefer to play the clown. Let me remain mirthful and laughing till the wrinkles of old age come to me, and may I rather heat my body with wine than cool my spirits with mournful. groans. Why should a man with warm blood in his veins sit like a statue of his grandfather carved out of white marble? Why should he be sleepy in walking hours, and fret himself into an attack of biliousness by ill-temper? Let me tell you this, Antonio, I love you, and it is my love that makes me speak. There is a certain type of man with face covered over as a stagnant pool is covered with slime and other things. Such a man maintains a deliberate silence with the idea of earning a reputation for wisdom, serious gravity, and profound thought.

It is just as if they said, "I am the fountain of wisdom, and when I speak, let others keep silent." O, Antonio, I know that kind of men; they get a reputation for wisdom by merely keeping quiet, when I am certain that, if they did speak, those who heard them would incur damnation in hell for the sin of calling their brothers fools. I shall speak further of this at another time. But do not put out this bait of melancholy silence in order to catch such a cheap fish as popularity. Come, good Lorenzo. Goodbye in the meantime. I shall finish my good advice to you after dinner.

- Lor. Then we shall leave you till dinner time. I must be one of those silent wise men, for Gratiano never allows me to speak.
- *Gra.* If you only remain in my company for two years more, you will have forgotten the sound of your own voice.
- Ant. I shall become a talker after this advice.

Gra. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible¹. [Gratiano and Lorenzo go laughing arm-in-arm.] Ant. Is that any thing now? Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search. Ant. Well, tell me now what lady is the same To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, That you to-day promised to tell me of? Bass. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, How much I have disable² mine estate, By something showing a more swelling port³ Than my faint means would grant continuance: 130 Nor do I now make moan to be abridged⁴ From such a noble rate⁵; but my chief care Is, to come fairly off from the great debts Wherein my time⁶, something too prodigal⁷, Hath left me gaged⁸. To you, Antonio, I owe the most, in money and in love; And from your love I have a warranty To unburden all my 'plots and purposes How to get clear of all the debts I owe. Ant. 140 I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;

Bass. Lie all unlock'd to your occasions ¹¹
In my school days, when I had lost one shaft ¹²,
I shot his fellow ¹³ of the self-same flight:

And if it stand, as you yourself still do, Within the eye of honour, be assured

My purse, my person, my extremist means 10,

^{1.} Not vendible: with no chance in the matrimonial market. 2. Disable: squandered. 3, Swelling port: showy, fashionable style. 4. Abridged: curtailed. 5. Noble rate: lordly way of living. 6. Time: manner of living. 7. Prodigal: extravagant. 8. Gaged: involved. 9. Warranty: assurance. 10. Extremist means: utmost resources. 11. Occasions: needs. 12. Shaft: arrow 13. Fellow: a similar arrow.

Gra. Thanks indeed, for silence is only to be praised in a driedox-tongue, or a girl who has no chance in the marriage market.

(Gratiano and Lorenzo depart arm in arm, laughing.)

Ant. Do you think that is the truth?

Bass. Gratiano gives out much idle talk, more than any other man in all Venice. His speech consists of about two grains of good sense hidden in two bushels of nonsense. You may search all day till you find them, and when you do find them, you discover that they were not worth the search.

Ant. Well, tell me now who the lady is to whom you have vowed you will go on a secret pilgrimage. You promised to tell me about her today.

Bass. You are aware, Antonio, how I have spent my means by keeping up a more fashionable standard than my modest income will allow me to continue. I do not complain at having to drop this lordly style of living, but my main desire is to come honourably out of the great debts in which my extravagant expenditure has landed me. I owe most to you, Antonio, both in money and in love. Your, friendship gives me sufficient confidence to reveal all my plans and intentions to you, by which I hope to clear off all the debts that I owe.

Ant. Let me know it all, good Bassanio. If your scheme is, like yourself, perfectly honourable, you may be sure that my money, my body, my utmost resources, will all be placed at your disposal.

Bass. In my school-days, when I had lost an arrow, I used to shoot another in the same direction, but keeping more careful.

	The self-same way with more advised watch ¹	
	The other forth, and by adventuring both	
	I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,	150
	Because what follows is pure innocence.	
	I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,	
	That which I owe is lost; but if you please	
	To shoot another arrow that self way	
	Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,	
	As I will watch the aim, or to find both,	
	Or bring your latter hazard ³ back again,	
	And thankfully rest debtor for the first.	
Ant.	You know me well, and herein spend but time	
	To wind about my love with circumstance ⁴ ,	160
	And out of doubt you do me now more wrong	
	In making question of ⁵ my uttermost ⁶ ,	
	Than if you had made waste of all I have:	
	Then do bust, say to me what I should do	
	That in your knowledge may by me be done,	
	And I am prest unto it ⁷ : therefore, speak.	
Bass.	In Belmont is a lady richly left;	
	And she is fair and, fairer than that word,	
	Of wondrous virtues—sometimes from her eyes	
	I did receive fair speechless message	170
	Her name is Portia, nothing .undervalued ⁸	
	To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia—	
	Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,	
	For the four winds blow in from every coast	
	Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks	
	Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,	
	Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand ⁹ ,	
	And many Jasons come in quest of her	
	O my Antonio, had I but the means	
	To hold a rival place with one of them,	180
	I have a mind presages 10 me such thrift 11,	
	That I should questionless be fortunate!	
	1. Advised watch: careful observation. 2. Adventuring: risking. 3. Latter	

^{1.} Advised watch: careful observation. 2. Adventuring: risking. 3. Latter hazard: second loan. 4. Circumstance: indirect speech. 5. Making question of: doubting. 5. Uttermost: extreme efforts. 6. Prest unto it: engaged to do it, drawn to your aid. 8. Nothing undervalued: in no way inferior. 9. Strand: shore. 10. Presages: foretells, promises. 11 Thrift: success.

watch, in order to find the first. By risking a second arrow, I often recovered both. I mention this childhood's illustration, because what I have to propose now is quite innocent. I owe much to you, and like a self-willed young man. I have lost whatever I got from you. But if you care to send another loan in the same direction, to search for your first loan, then I do not doubt that I shall watch so carefully that I shall recover both for you. I shall at any rate be able to bring back your second loan, and remain your grateful debtor for the original one.

Ant. You know me so well that you only waste time by appealing to my love with indirect talk. Certainly you wrong me more by doubting my utmost readiness to help you than you would do by squandering all that I possess. You have only to tell me what you want me to do, if you know that I am able to do it, and already I shall feel engaged to do it. Speak out!

Bass. In Belmont there is a lady who has inherited much riches. She is beautiful, and, more than that, she has wonderful personal qualities. At times I have received from her eyes lovely and silent messages. Her name is Portia, and she is no less wonderful than was the daughter of Cato, who was the wife of Brutus. Indeed her merit is known throughout the wide world, for famous suitors are wind-borne towards her from every land. Her bright hair overhangs her forehead like the Golden Fleece of story, so that her home at Belmont has become like the ancient kingdom of Colchis, and many a Jason comes there to attempt to win her. O, Antonio, had I but the means to take my place as a competitor with them, I have a feeling that promises me such good fortune that I should doubtlessly be the winner.

Por.

Ant. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;

Neither have I money, nor commodity

To raise a present sum: therefore go forth;

Try what my credit can in Venice do:

That shall be racked¹, even to the uttermost,

To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia....

Go, presently inquire, and so will I,

Where money is, and I no question make

To have it of my trust² or for my sake.

190 [Exeunt.

SCENE II Belmont. A hall in PORTIA'S house Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aweary of this great world.

Ner. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for aught³ I see, they are as sick that surfeit⁴ with too much as they that starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean⁵: superfluity comes sooner by⁶ white hairs, but competency⁷ lives longer.

Por. Good sentences⁸ and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, that be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood; but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

1. Racked: strained. 2. Of my trust: because of my business credit. 3. Aught: anything. 4: Surfeit: to be supplied to excess. 5. Seated in the mean: situated in a middle position. 6. Comes sooner by: acquires sooner. 7. Competency: one who has just enough. 8. Sentences: opinions. 9. Had been: would have been. 10. Divine: clergyman.

Ant. You know that all my money is invested in trading ventures at sea. -I have no ready money, nor any possessions on which money could be raised. But go out and see what my credit can raise in Venice. It shall be stretched to the utmost limit to equip you for Belmont, to win fair Portia. Go and inquire at once, and I shall do the same, wherever money is to be had; and I have no doubt that I shall get it, either because of my business credit or for personal reasons.

SCENE II. Belmont. A hall in Portia's house. Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. Indeed, Nerissa, my little body is tired of this great world.

Ner. You would be tired, dear lady, if you had as many miseries as you have good fortunes. Yet as far as I can observe, those people are just .as sick who have too much as others who are ill, starving on nothing. It is not bad fortune, then, to be situated between the two extremes. The man who has too much soon grows white-haired, but he who has just enough lives longer.

Por. Good words, and well spoken.

Ner. It would be better if they were well followed.

Por. If it were as easy to do good as it is to know what is good, then small chapels would be great churches and poor men's cottages would be royal palaces. He is a good priest who follows his own teachings. I can more easily teach twenty pupils the right path to follow than be one of the twenty and follow my own teachings. The mind can draw up laws for the body to follow, but the heat of desire jumps over such cold laws. The madness of youth will make one leap over the net of good advice, just as a hare avoids the snare. But this kind of logic is not the kind that will get me a husband. Oh, is it not a case of choosing! I can neither choose the one I should like nor refuse the one I dislike, for the desires I may have in life are checked by the desires of a father who is dead. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I can neither choose nor refuse a husband?

Ner. Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations: therefore the lottery, that he hath devised in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you,—will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por. I pray thee, over-name¹ them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at² my affection.

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt³ indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself. I am afeard my lady his mother played false with a Smith.

Ner. Then there is the County Palatine.

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Por. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say, "An you will not have me, choose." He hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's-head⁴ with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

Ner. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

Por. God made him, and therefore, let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine—he is every man in no man—if a throstle⁵ sing, he falls straight a-capering⁶: he will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me, I would forgive him; for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite⁷ him.

Ner. What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

^{1.} Over-name: name them over. 2. Level at: conjecture, deduce. 3. Colt: a wild young horse. 4. Death's-head: a skull with two crossed bones underneath. 5. Throstle: thrush. 6. A-capering: jumping about, dancing. 7. Requite: return his love.

Ner. Your father was always a good man, and such men at their death have good inspirations; so the trial of chance which he has planned,—namely the choice between the three boxes of gold, silver, and lead, in which the one who chooses his meaning correctly will win you,—will, I have no doubt, never be guessed correctly by degree of love which you may have for any of those royal candidates for your love who have

already come?

Por. Please name them over, and, as you name them, I shall comment on them, and, according to my remarks you may deduce my affections.

Ner. First there is the Prince from Naples.

Por. Yes, just like a wild young horse. He does nothing but talk of his horse, and he makes it a great part of his own qualifications that he can shoe his own horse. I fear his mother must have had a love affair with a blacksmith!

Ner. Then there is the German Palatine Count.

Por. He does nothing but frown, just as if to say, "I care little whether you want me or not." He hears good stories without a smile. I fear he will prove a sad philosopher when he is old, since he is full of such unpleasant gloom in his youth. I should rather marry a skeleton with a bone in his mouth than either of these. God protect me from them both!

Ner. What do you say to the French lord, Monsieur LeBon?

Por. Because God made him, we may consider him to be a man. I know it is wrong to ridicule others, but he is more attached to his horse than is the Prince_ of Naples; he frowns more than even the German Count. He has every man's fault, but he is not a man at all. If he hears a thrush sing, he begins to leap about, and he would draw sword against his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should be as if married to twenty husbands. If he were to despise me, I should never forgive him; but if he should love me passionately, I could never return it.

Ner. Well, what do you think of Falconbridge, the young Baron from England?

Por. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath I neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show ? How oddly he is suited ! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round house in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

63

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under ⁵, for another.

Ner. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an⁶ the worst fall⁷ that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift⁸ to go without him.

Ner. If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge 82

Ner: You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determinations: which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition 11, depending on the caskets.

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not

1. Hath: speaks, knows. 2. A poor pennyworth in: a poor knowledge of. 3. With a dumb-show: with a man by means of signs. 4. Suited: dressed. 5. Sealed under: signed as a security. 6. An: if. 7. Fall: happen. 8. Make shift: manage. 9. Contrary: wrong 10. Sponge: drunkard. 11. Imposition: conditions imposed.

Por. You know that I say nothing to him, for he does not understand me, nor do I understand him. He speaks neither Latin, French nor Italian, and you could swear in court that I have a poor knowledge of English. He looks a fine figure of a man, but who can hold conversation with a man by means of signs? And how strangely he dresses! I think he bought his jacket in Italy, his trousers in France, his cap in Germany, and his manners everywhere.

Ner. Well, what is your opinion of his neighbour, the Scottish Lord?

Por. That he seems to love his neighbour, for he took a blow on the face from the Englishman and swore that he would return it whenever he was able. I think the Frenchman stood security for him, taking a similar blow as if signing for him.

Ner. Then how do you like the young Baron, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por: Very badly in the morning, when he is sober, and still worse in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When at his best, he is a miserable type of man, and when at his worst, he is no better than a beast. Let the worst happen, I hope I shall not have to accept him.

Ner. If he should volunteer to make the choice, and should choose the right casket, you would be refusing to honour your father's will if you did not accept him.

Por. So, as a safeguard against the worst, please place a large glass of Rhine wine on the wrong casket, for even if the devil be in the casket, as long as that temptation is outside, he will choose it. I shall do anything. Nerissa, rather than be married to a drunkard.

Ner. You need not fear, lady, having to accept any of these lords. They have informed me of their decision, and that is to return to their homes and to trouble you no more with their suits, unless you are to be won by some other means than your father's behest of the method of the caskets.

Por. If I were to live to be as old as the ancient Sibylla, I should die as much a virgin as Diana unless I am won in the manner laid down in my father's will. I am glad that this

Por.

crowd of one among them but I dote on 1 his very absence, and I pray Godgrant them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

Ner. True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

100

A Servant enters.

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave: and there is a forerunner² come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word, the prince his master will be here tonight.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devn I had rather he should shrive me³ than wive⁴ me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

While we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

[Exeunt.]

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SCENE III. A Street in Venice, in front of Shylock's House. Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.

Shy. Three thousand ducats—well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months. Shy. For three months—well.

Bass. For the which as I told you, Antonio shall be bound⁵.

Shy. Antonio shall become bound—well.

1. Dote on : doting for. 2. Forerunner : advance messenger. 3. Shrive me : hear my confession and give spiritual comfort. 4. Wive : many. 5. Be bound : stand security.

wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one of them. Whose absence I do not long for, and I pray God to grant them a happy departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, who came here in the company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio. That, I think, was his name.

Ner. True, madam. Of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, he seemed to me most deserving to win a fair lady.

Por. I remember him well, and what I remember makes me agree that he is worthy of your praise.

(A Servent enters)

Hulloa! What is the news!

Serv. The four visitors wish to see you, madam, to take leave of you. Then there is an advance messenger come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word that the prince, his master, will be here tonight.

Por. If I could welcome this fifth suitor as gladly as I say farewell to the other four, I should be glad to bear of his arrival. If-he happens to have the virtues of a saint but the black complexion of a devil, I should prefer to have him for religious consolation rather than as a husband.

Come, Nerissa. Lead on, servant. As we are getting rid of four suitors, another is knocking at the door.

(They go out)

SCENE III. A Street in Venice. Before Shylock's house. Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.

Shylock. You want three thousand ducats. Is that correct? Bass. Yes, Sir. For three months.

Shy. For three months. Yes?

Bass. And for this, as I told you, Antonio will be security for me.

Shy. Antonio to be your security. Well?

Shy.

Bass. May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

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Bass. Your answer to that. Shy. Antonio is a good³ man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation⁴ to the contrary?

Shy. Ho, no, no, no, no : my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient⁵. Yet his means are in supposition⁶: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men; there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves, and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

22

Bass. Be assured you may.

Shy. I will be assured I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me⁷. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

Shy. Yes, to smell pork; to eat of the habitation⁸ which your prophet the Nazarite⁹ conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. (aloud) What news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

(Aside) How like a fawning ¹⁰ publican ¹¹ he looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian,

But more, for that in low simplicity

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^{1.} Stead: help. 2. Pleasure: oblige. 3. Good: sound, reliable (financially). 4. Imputation: allegation. 5. Sufficient: satisfactory security. 6. In supposition: subject to the risks of business. 7. I will bethink me: I shall think it over. 8. The habitation: the flesh of swine. 9. Nazarite: Jesus of Nazareth. 10. Fawning: servile. 11 Publican: tax-collector.

Bass. Can you oblige me? Will you do me this favour? May I have your answer? Shy. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio to be the security.

Bass. Yes. I want your answer to that request.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you ever heard any allegation that he is not?

Shy. Ho, no, no, my meaning in saying that he is a good man is to let you know that I think that he is satisfactory security. But his resources have been put out in business ventures. He has one merchant ship sailing for Tripoli and another for the Indies. I hear moreover on the Stock Exchange that he has a third at Mexico, a fourth in England, and he has other business investments poured out overseas. But ships are only planks of wood sailors are mortal men, and, just as we have land rats and water rats, so there are land robbers and sea-robbers, by which last I mean pirates. Then there are the dangers of seas, the storms and the rocks. The man Antonio is sufficient security all the same. Three thousand ducats! I think I may safely accept him as security.

Bass. You may rest assured that you may.

Shy. I should like to be convinced that I may, and in order to be convinced, I shall think it over. May. I discuss it with Antonio?

Bass. Yes. Would you like to dine with us?

Shy. What! to have the- smell of pork, to eat the flesh of that animal into which Jesus of Nazareth put the evil spirits! I am ready to buy and sell with you, talk with you or walk with you, and all the rest, but I shall not eat with you, drink with you, or pray with you. What is the news on the Exchange? Who is this approaching?

Enter ANTONIO.

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. (Aside) He looks just like a servile tax-collector! I hate him because he is a Christian, but even more because in his foolish.

	He lends out money gratis ¹ and brings down		
	The rate of usance ² here with us in Venice.		
	If I can catch him once upon the hip ³ ,		
	I will feed fat ⁴ the ancient grudge I bear him.	40	
	He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,		
	Even there where merchants most do congregate ⁵ ,		
	On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift ⁶ ,		
	Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,		
	If I forgive him!		
Bass.	(touching him). Shylock, do you hear?	46	
Shy.	I am debating of ⁷ my present store,		
•	And, by the near guess of my memory,		
	I cannot instantly raise up the gross ⁸		
	Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?	50	
	Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,		
	Will furnish me. But soft ⁹ ! how many months		
	Do you desire? (To Ant.) Rest you fair, good signior;		
	Your worship was the last man in our mouths.		
Ant.	Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow		
	By taking nor by giving excess,		
	Yet, to supply the ripe ¹⁰ wants of my friend,		
	I'll break a custom. (To Bassanio).		
	Is he yet possess'd ¹¹ How much ye would?		
Shy.	Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.	60	
Ant.	And for three months.		
Shy.	I had forgot—three months—you told me so. Well then, your bond; and let m	ne see—	
=	but hear you; Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow		
	Upon advantage ¹² .		
	1. Gratis: free of charge (interest). 2. The rate of usance: the rate of		
	interest 3 Catch him once upon the him; get a hold upon him 4. Feed		

1. Gratis: free of charge (interest). 2. The rate of usance: the rate of interest. 3. Catch him once upon the hip: get a hold upon him. 4. Feed fat: fully gratify. 5. Congregate: gather. 6. Well-won thrift: hardearned profits. 7. Debating of: calculating. 8. Gross: the full sum. 9. Soft: wait. 10. Ripe: urgent. 11. Possess'd: informed. 12. Advantage: interest.

Simplicity he lends out money free of interest, and so brings down the rate of interest for us here in Venice. If I can once get a hold on him, I shall fully satisfy my long-standing grievance against him. He hates our holy Jewish race and he speaks abusively, in the places where merchants most often meet, of !ne and my business deals and my hard-earned profits, which he halls by the name of 'usury'. May a curse fall on the Jews if I ever forgive him.

Bass (Tapping his arm) Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am reckoning how much ready money I have at present, and as far as I can calculate by memory alone, I cannot at once raise the full amount of three thousand ducats. That does not matter. Tubal, a wealthy Jew of my community, will let me have it. But wait! For how many months do you want it? (To Antonio) Greetings, my good sir. Your honour's name has just been the subject of our talk.

Ant. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow, taking another man's spare money nor giving my own, yet in order to meet the immediate needs of my friend here, I shall break a custom. (*To Bassanio*) Have you told him yet how much you want?

Shy. Yes, three thousand ducats.

Ant. And for three months.

Shy. I had forgotten; yes, it was three months. You told me so. Well, then your bond—but let me consider—but listen to my words. I think you said that you neither lend nor borrow upon interest?

	1
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English-XII

Ant.	I do never use it.	
Shy.	When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—	
	This Jacob from our holy Abraham was ¹ ,	
	As his wise mother wrought in his behalf.	
	The third possessor; any, he was the third—	70
Ant.	And what of him? did he take interest?	
Shy.	No, not take interest—not, as you would say,	
	Directly interest: mark what Jacob did	
	When Laban and himself were compromised ²	
	That all the eanlings ³ which were streak'd and pied ⁴	
	Should fall as Jacob's hire ⁵ .	
	This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:	
	And thrift ⁶ is blessing, if men steal it not.	
Ant.	This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;	
	A thing not in his power to bring to pass,	80
	But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.	
	Was this inserted to make interest good?	
	Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?	
Shy.	I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast: But note me, signior.	
Ant.	Mark you this, Bassanio.	
	The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.	
	An evil soul, producing holy witness,	
	Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,	
	A goodly apple rotten at the heart:	90
	O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!	
Shy.	Three thousand ducats; 'tis a good round sum.	
	Three months from twelve; then, let me see; the rate—	
Ant.	Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?	
Shy.	Signior Antonio, many a time and oft	
	In the Rialto you have rated ⁸ me	
	About my moneys and my usances ⁹ ;	
	1. Was: was descended. 2. Compromised: agreed. 3. Eanlings: new-	
	born lambs. 4. Pied: spotted. 5. Hire: payment. 6. Thrift: profit. 7.	
	Beholding: obliged. 8. Rated: abused. 9. Usances: money-lending	
	practices	

- Ant. Never do so.
- Shy. When our prophet Jacob looked after his uncle Laban's sheep—this Jacob was descended from our holy Abraham, and his shrewd mother schemed on his behalf so that he became the third owner of the family property; yes, he was the third—
- Ant. What about him? Did he take interest?
- Shy. No, he did not take interest, not as you would use the word, meaning direct interest. But mark what Jacob did after Laban and he had agreed that all the new-born lambs that were striped or spotted should be Jacob's share as his payment. That was the way to succeed, and he was blessed in doing so. All profit is a blessing, as long as men do not steal it.
- Ant. That was a matter of chance, sir, for which Jacob served, and it was a thing which his power could not cause to happen. It was controlled and influenced by the hand of God. Was this mentioned in order to justify interest? Or do you think of your gold and silver as ewes and rams?
- Shy. I cannot say, I make my money increase as fast as ewes and rams. But hear me, sir.
- Ant. Take note of this, Bassanio, the devil can quote from the Bible when he wants to make it justify his purpose. A bad man producing holy arguments' is like a villain with a smiling face, a nice-looking apple which is rotten inside. O, what a fine outer appearance falsehood has!
- Shy. Three thousand ducats. It is a good substantial sum. Three months from twelve, yes, let me see. The rate—
- Ant. Well, Shylock, are you going to oblige us?
- Shy. Signior Antonio, many times have you abused me in the Rialto about my money and my money-lending practices.

Ant.

Shy.

Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,	
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.	1
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine ³ ',	1
And all for use of that which is mine own.	
Well then, it now appears you need my help: Go to, then; you come to me, and you say,	
'Shylock, we would have moneys': you say so;	
You, that did void your rheum ⁴ upon my beard,	
And foot ⁵ me as you spurn a stranger cur ⁶	
Overy our threshold: money is your suit ⁷ .	
What should I say to you? Should I not say,	
Ilath a dog money? is it possible	1
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' or	1
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key ⁸ ,	
With bated breath ⁹ and whispering humbleness ¹⁰ ,	
Say this,—	
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;	
You spurn'd me such a day; another time	
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies,	
I'll lend you this much moneys'?	
I am as like to call thee so again,	
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.	1
If thou will lend this money, lend it not	1
As to thy friends—for when did friendship take	
A breed 11 for barren metal of his friend?—	
But lend it rather to thine enemy;	
Who, if he break ¹² , thou mayst with better face	
Exact the penalty.	
Why, look you, how you storm!	
I would be friends with you and have your love,	
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,	
Supply your present wants, and take no doit 13	1
Of usance ¹⁴ for my moneys, and you'll not hear me:	
This is kind ¹⁵ I offer.	
Timble Kind Torrer.	
1. Sufferance: endurance. 2. Badge: characteristic. 3. Gaberdine: cloak.	
4. Void your rheum: cast your spit. 5. Foot: kick. 6. Stranger cur: stray	
dog. 7. Suit: request. 8. In a bondman's key: in a servile tone. 9. Bated	
breath: lowered voice. 10. Whispering humbleness: humble whisper.	
11. Breed: profit. 12. Break: fail. 13. Doit: a small copper coin. 14.	
Usance: interest. 15. Kind: kindness.	

I have shrugged my shoulders and endured it patiently, for endurance is the characteristic of all my people. You call me unbeliever, murderous dog, and you spit on my Jewish robe, all because to make use of my own money. Now it seems that you are in need of my help. All right. You come to see me and you say, "Shylock, we are in need of money". You say this, you that did throw your spit upon my beard and kick me as you would kick a stray dog out of your house. Your request is for money. `What am I to say to you? Shall I not say, "How can a dog have money? Is it possible for a pariah dog to lend three thousand ducats?" Or shall I bow down low, and in a servile tone, with lowered voice and in a humble whisper say this, "Good sir, last Wednesday you spat upon me. On another day, you pushed me out of the way. Another time you called me 'Dog'. Because of those acts of politeness, I shall lend you the money you want."

Ant. I am just as likely to call you all those things again, to spit on you again, and to push you aside again. If you lend me money, do not lend it as you would do to a friend, for when did a friend ever make a profit on base money Tent to his friend? Lend it to me rather as to your enemy, to one from whom if he should fail, you may exact the penalty.

Shy. Now, see how you have become angry! I should like to be friendly with you and have your love, to forget the shameful things you have done to me. To supply what you need now, and take not one pie of interest on my money, and you will not listen to me. It is kindness that I offer

Bass. This were kindness.

Shy. This kindness will I show.

> Go with me to a notary, seal me there Your single bond and, in a merry sport, If you repay me not on such a day, In such a place, such sum or sums as are Express'd in the condition², let the forfeit³

Be nominated for an equal⁴ pound

Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Content, in faith: I'll seal to such a bond, And say there is much kindness in the Jew. Ant.

Bass. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:

I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant. Why, fear not, mean; I will not forfeit it:

Within these two months, that's a month before

This bond expires, I do expect return

Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

140

150

160

Shv.O father Abraham, what these Christians are,

> Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this; If he should break his day, what should I gain

By the exaction of the forfeitures⁵?

A pound of man's flesh taken from a man Is not so estimable, profitable neither, As flesh of muttons, beefs or goats.

I say, To buy his favour, I extend this friendship.;

If he will take it, so—if not, adieu;

And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy.Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;

Give him direction for this merry bond:

And I will go and purse⁶ the ducats straight⁷;

1. Single bond: individual bond, singed by you only. 2. Condition: agreement. 3. Forfeit: penalty. 4. Equal: exact. 5. Forfeiture: penalty.

6. Purse: put in a purse. 7. Straight: at once.

Bass. That would indeed be kindness.

Shy. I shall show this kindness. Come with me to a lawyer, and there give me your signature to your individual bond. And, just as a jest if you do not repay me on a stipulated day, in an agreed place, the sums of money that are involved in this transaction, then let us name as the penalty an exact pound of your flesh, to be cut off and taken away from whatever part of your body I please.

Ant. I am indeed content. I shall sign my name to such a bond and say that a Jew can be capable of kindness.

Bass. You will not sign such a bond for me. I should prefer to remain in my need.

Ant. What, man, do not fear that I shall forfeit it. Within the next two months, that is, a month before the bond expires, I expect to get back nine times the value of this bond.

Shy. O, holy Abraham, what men these Christians are! Their own sharp dealings make them suspect the intentions of others. Tell me, I beg of you, if he should have to break the bond to pay on a certain day, what should I gain by taking such a penalty? A pound of human flesh taken from a man is not so valuable or profitable as the flesh of sheep, cattle, or goats. I tell you it is to gain his favour that I offer this act of friendship. If he will accept it, all right. If not, goodbye. But do not wrong me for offering an act of love.

Ant. Yes, Shylock, I shall sign such a bond.

Shy. Then meet me soon at the notary's office and give him instructions about this humorous bond. I shall go home and put the

See to my house, left in the fearful guard Of an unthrifty knave, and presently I will be with you.

Ant. He thee³, gentle Jew.

The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

[Exit Shylock.] 170

Bass. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.
 Ant. Come on; in this there can be no dismay⁴;
 My ships come home a month before the day.

[Exeunt.

ACT-II

SCENE I. Belmont. A hall in PORTIA'S house. Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his Train; PORTIA, NERISSA and others attending.

Mor. Mislike⁵ me not for my complexion,

The shadow'd livery⁶ of the burnished⁷ sun,

To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.

Bring me the fairest creature northward born,

Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,

And let us make incision ¹⁰ for your love,

To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.

I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine

Hath feared 1 the valiant: by my love, I swear

The best-regarded 12 virgins of our clime

Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,

Except to steal your thoughts¹³, my gentle queen.

Por. In terms of choice I am not solely led

By nice direction of a maiden's eyes.

Besides, the lottery of my destiny

Bars¹⁴ me the right of voluntary choosing:

But if my father had not scanted me¹⁵

1. Fearful: unsafe. 2. Unthrifty: wasteful. 3. Hie thee: make haste. 4. Dismay: ground for fear. 5. Mislike: dislike. 6. Shadow'd livery: dark uniform. 7. Burnished: burning, bright. 8. Phoebus' fire: the heat of the sun. 9. Thaws: melts. 10. Incision: blood-letting. 11. Feared: frightened. 12. Best-regarded: choicest. 13. Steal your thoughts: gain your attention. 14. Bars: prohibits. 15. Scanted me: curtailed my choice.

10

ducats at once in a purse, and see that my house is all right, for it is left in the unsafe charge of an unreliable fellow, and soon I shall be with you again.

(Shylock goes out)

Ant. Go, kind, Jew. The Jew will soon become a Christian, for he is growing kind.

Bass. I do not like apparently kind terms when they come from one with the mind of a

villain.

Ant. Come on! In this there can be no reason for fear. My ships are sure to be back a

month before the day which has been agreed upon.

ACT-II

SCENE I. Belmont. A hall in Portia's house. Sound of trumpets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his following. PORTIA, NERISSA and others are in attendance.

Morocco.

Do not dislike me because of my black skin, the dark uniform of those exposed to the burning sun, to whom I am a neighbour and a close relative. Bring me the fairest man born in the north, where the heat of the sun is hardly enough to melt the icicles, and let us have a blood-letting as the test in. competing for -your love, and then see whether his blood is more red than mine. I tell you lady, this appearance of mine has frightened the bravest men. By my love for you, I swear that the choicest maidens of my country have also loved it. I would not change my colour unless it were to gain your attention, my gentle queen.

Por.

As regards the conditions of choice, I am not led solely by the attractive looks which please a maiden's eyes. In addition, my destiny is to have a trial of chance which prohibits me from choosing as I might wish. But if my father had not curtailed

Mor.	And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself His wife who wins me by that means I told you. Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair As any corner I have look'd on yet For my affection Even for that I thank you:	20
MOI.	Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets,	
	To try my fortune—By this scimitar ²	
	That slew the Sophy ³ and a Persian prince	
	That slew the Sophy ³ and a Persian prince That won three fields ⁴ of Sultan Solyman,—	
	I would outstare the sternest eyes that look,	
	Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth:	
	Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear,	30
	Yea, mock ⁵ the lion when he roars for prey,	
	To win the; lady. But, alas the while!	
	If Hercules and Lichas play at dice	
	Which is the better man, the greater throw	
	May turn by, fortune from the weaker hand:	
	So is Alcides beaten by his page,	
	And so may I, blind fortune, leading me,	
	Miss that which one unworthier may attain,	
-	And die with grieving.	40
Por.	You must take your chance;	40
	And either not attempt to choose at all,	
	Or swear, before you choose, if you choose wrong,	
	Never to speak to lady afterward	
14	In way of marriage: therefore be advised ⁶ .	
Mor.	Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.	
Por.	First, forward to the temple: after dinner Your hazard shall be made.	
Mor.	Good fortune then!	
WIOI.	To make me blest or cursed'st among men.	
	To make the diest of cursed staniong men.	[Cornets, and exeunt.]
		[Corners, una exeum.]

 $^{1.\,}Hedged: confined.\,2.\,Scimitar: sword.\,3.\,Sophy: the\,Shah\,of\,Persia.$

^{4.} Fields: battles. 5. Mock: challenge. 6. Be advised: consider carefully.

my choice and confined me by this which his shrewdness has devised, so that I must become the wife of whomsoever wins me by the means I have told you of, then you, famous prince, would have appeared as fair as any candidate for my affection that I have yet looked upon.

Mor.

For those kind words I thank you. Therefore I beg of you, take me at once to the caskets that I may try my fortune. I swear by this sword, which slew the Shah of Persia, and a Persian prince who had won three engagements against the Sultan of Turkey. I should look defiantly into the most bold eyes, I should defy the most daring heart on earth, I should take away the young sucking cubs from the mother bear, even challenge the hungry lion which is roaring for his prey, to win you, lady. But alas, alas! If the great Hercules plays a game of chance with his servant Lichas to decide which is the better man, the winning throw may come, by chance from the hand of the weaker man, and the great Hercules may be beaten by his own servant. So if I have only blind fortune to lead me, I may miss that which one less worthy may gain, and then I should die of grief.

Por.

You must take the chance, and you must either make no effort to choose the right casket, or swear before choosing that, if you make the wrong choice, you will never again speak to any lady on the subject of marriage. So consider well.

Mor.

And I will not. Come, take me to the place that I may take my chance.

Por.

First let us go forward to the temple. After dinner your choice will be made.

Mor.

May I have good fortune, then, to make me the most happy or the most wretched among men.

(Trumpets sound They go)

SCENE II. Venice. A Street before Shylock's House. Enter LAUNCELOT, scratching his head

Laun.

Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot', or 'good Gobbo' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away'. My conscience says 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo', or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heeds'. Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Via²!, says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend: 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind', says the fiend; 'and run', Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me, "My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son, or rather an honest woman's son; for indeed my father did something smack, something grow to⁴, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says launcelot, budge not'. 'Budge⁵', says the fiend. 'Budge not'; says my conscience. 'Conscience', say I, 'you counsel—well'; 'Fiend', say I, 'you counsel well'; to be ruled⁶ by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who (God bless the mark⁷!) is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence⁸, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal⁹; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

He runs and falls into the arms of his father, OLD GOBBO who comes along the street, with a basket.

Gob. (gaps) Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

1. Fiend: Satan, the devil. 2. Via: lit, "The road"; here, "go". 3. Hanging about the neck of: restraining, holding back. 4. Did something smack, something grow to: had a trace of dishonesty (or villainy). 5. Budge: move. 6. To be ruled: if I am guided. 7. God bless the mark!: May God preserve us. 8. Saving your reverence: same as "God bless the mark!". 9. Incarnal: mistake for "incarnate", in human flesh.

SCENE II. Venice. A Street before Shylock's House Enter LAUNCELOT, scratching his head.

Launcelot. Indeed my conscience will not prevent me from running away from this Jew, my master. The devil stand's at my elbow and tempts me, saying, "Gobbo Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot" or "Good Gobbo" or "Good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, make a good start and run away." But my conscience says, "No, take care, honest Launcelot, take care, honest Gobbo," (or as before) "Good Launcelot Gobbo, do not run. Scorn the idea of running away." Well, the bold devil advises me to pack up and go. "Away!" says the devil, "For heaven's sake have a brave mind and run away." Well, my conscience, pleading with my heart, says very wisely to me, "My honest friend, Launcelot, since you are an honest man's son, or rather an honest woman's son," (for my father had rather a bad streak, something ill about him to prejudice people) my conscience says, "Launcelot, do not move." "Move!" says the devil. "Do not move," say my conscience. Then I say to my conscience, "You advise me well." To the Devil I say, "Devil, you advise me well." If I am guided by my conscience, I should stay with my master the Jew, who (May God preserve us!) is a kind of devil himself. To run away from the Jew, I should be guided by this fiend, who, with. due respects, is the Devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil in human flesh, and, by my word, my conscience offers me very hard advice in advising me to stay with the Jew. The devil gives me more friendly advice. I shall run away, devil. My legs are at your service; I will run.

> (He runs and comes against his father, Old Gobbo, who is coming along the street, carrying a basket.)

Gobbo. Sir, young man, can you tell me the way to the house of the big Jew? *Laun.* (Aside) O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who! being more than sandblind¹, high-gravel-blind², knows me not: I will try confusions³ with him.

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's? 32

Laun. Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry⁴, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly⁵ to the Jew's house.

Gob. By God's sonties⁶, it will be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? (Aside) Mark me now; now will I raise the waters⁷,—(aloud) Talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gob. No 'master', sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and. God be thanked, well to live⁸.

Laun. Well, let his father be what a' will, we talk of young master Launcelot.

Gob. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun. But I pray you, old man, ergo⁹, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Gob. Of Launcelot, an't ¹⁰ please your mastership.

Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three ¹¹, and such branches of lear Ting, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob. Marry, God forbid! the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post ¹², a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father?

^{1.} Sand-blind: half-blind. 2. High-gravel-blind: more than half-blind.

^{3.} Confusions: mistake for "conclusions". 4. Marry: by Mary. 5. Indirectly: mistake for "directly". 6. Sonties: saints. 7. Waters: tears. 8. Well to live: (1) in good health (2) well to do. 9. Ergo: therefore (Lat.). 10. An't: if it.

^{11.} Sisters three: the Fates—Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos. 12. Hovelpost: post of a hovel or shed.

Laun. (Aside). O heavens, this is the father who did beget me! He is more than half-blind, he is stone blind, and does not know me. I shall try to deal with him.

Gobbo. Sir, young gentleman, I beg of you, which is the way to the big Jew's?

Laun. Turn to your right at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left. By Mary, I say, at the very next turning, turn to neither hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gobbo. By God's saints this will be a hard way to find. Can you tell me whether Launcelot, who lives with the Jew, is living with him or not?

Laun. Is it young Master Launcelot you mean? (Aside) Now see how I shall bring tears to his eyes! (Aloud) Are you inquiring for young Master Launcelot?

Gobbo. He is not to be called "Master", sir, as he is the son of a poor man. His father—although I say it myself—is an honest man, though exceedingly poor, and lives a good life.

Laun. Well, no matter what his father may be, we are talking of your Master Launcelot.

Gobbo. Yes, sir, young friend Launcelot.

Laun. But I ask you therefore, old man, I beg you to say, are you referring to young Master Launcelot?

Gobbo. To Launcelot, if you please, sir.

Laun. Therefore, Master Launcelot. Do not speak about Master Launcelot, old man. The young gentleman, according to his fate or destiny, or such things, or the three Sisters of the ancient Greeks, and such other learned conceptions of fate, is indeed dead, or, as you would say in plain words, gone to heaven.

Gobbo. May the Virgin Mary forbid that this be so! The boy was the very staff of my old age, my sole support.

Laun. Do I look like a staff, or a post supporting a hut, a staff or a prop? Don't you know me, father?

Gob. Alack¹ the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but I pray you, tell me, is my boy—God rest his soul—alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. (kneels). Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may, but in the end truth will out.

Gob. Pray you, sir, stand up: I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

Laun. I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man², and I am sure Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. (He feels his face). Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou has got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse³ has on his tail.

Laun. It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward: I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face when I last saw him.

Gob. Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I have set up my reset⁴ to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground....My master's a very Jew⁵: give him a present! give him a halter: I am furnished in his service; you may tell⁶ every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries: if I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground....O rare fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

1. Alack: alas. 2. Man: servant. 3. Fill-horse: shaft-horse. 4. Set up my reset: have made up my mind. 5. A very Jew: truly a Jew. 6. Tell: count.

Gobbo. Alas! the day, young gentleman I do not know you, but pray tell me—is my boy—God give him peace—dead or alive?

Laun. Do you not recognize me, father?

Gobbo. Alas, sir, I am half-blind. I do not know you.

Laun. Now indeed, even if your eyes were quite good, you might still fail to recognise me, for it is a wise father who can be sure that a child is his own. (Launcelot kneels before him). Well, old man, I shall give you news of your son. Give me your blessing. Truth will be revealed and murder cannot be hidden for long. A man's son may hide, but in the end the truth will come out.

Gobbo. Please get up. I am sure that you cannot be my son, Launcelot Gobbo.

Laun. Please, father, let us have no more jesting about it, but give me your blessing. I am Launcelot, who used to be your boy, and is your son, and shall always be your child.

Gobbo. I cannot think that you are my son.

Laun. I do not know what to say about that. At any rate, I am Launcelot, servant of the Jew, and Margery your wife, is my mother.

Gobbo. Yes, her name is Margery. Indeed I can swear, if you are truly Launcelot, that you are truly my own son. (He feels Launcelot's face) May the Lord be praised! what a beard you have! You have more hair on your face than Dobbin, my shaft-horse, -has on his tail.

Laun. Then it looks as if Dobbin's tail is growing less, for I am sure be had more hair on his tail than I have on my face when I last saw him.

Gobbo. Lord, how you have changed! How do you and your master get on together? I have brought him a present. How are you agreeing now?

Laun. Well, quite well. But as far as I am concerned, as I have made up my mind to run away, so I shall not rest till I have covered some distance. My master is truly a Jew. Give him a present! Give him a rope to hang himself. I am always hungry in his service, and you could count every rib in my body with your finger. Father, I am glad you have come. Give me your present to give to one, Master Bassanio, who indeed gives his servants fine new uniforms. If I cannot serve him, I shall run as far away as the limit of God's earth. O splendid fortune! Here comes the very gentleman. Go to him, father, for you may call me a Jew if I agree to serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other followers.

Bass. (To a servant) You

(*To a servant*) You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the furthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries making; and desire Gratiano to come anon ¹ to my lodging.

(Exit a Servant)

Laun. (Pushing his father towards Bassanio) To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy²! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Laun. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify³—
(hides himself behind his father)

Gob. He truth a great infection⁴, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Laun. (*Coming forward*) Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—(retreats).

Gob. His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins⁵—

Laun. (Comes forward) To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father; being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify⁶ unto you—(retreats).

Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and thy suit is-Laun. (Comes forward) In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

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^{1.} Anon: soon. 2. Gramercy: God's mercy on you (a form of thanks).

³ Specify: explain. 4. Infection: wrong word for "affection" (desire).

^{5.} Cater-cousins: on friendly terms. 6.-Frutify: blunder for "certify" (confirm, explain). 7. Impertinent: wrong word for "pertinent" (pertains to, concerns).

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO and other followers

Bass. (To a servant) You may do so, but let it be so speedy that supper is ready by five o'clock at the latest. See that these letters are delivered, give orders for the making of the servants' uniforms, and ask Gratiano to come soon to my lodgings. (The servant

goes out).

Laun. (Pushing his father towards Bassanio) To him. father. Gobbo. God bless you, sir!

Bass. And God's mercy on you! Do you want anything from me?

Gobbo. Here is my son, a poor boy-

Laun. Not altogether a poor boy, sir, but a servant of the rich Jew, and desirous, sir, as my father will explain—(Hides behind his father).

Gobbo. He is very anxious, sir, to serve, as one might say-

Laun. (Coming forward) Indeed the long and the short of it is that I am serving the Jew, and would like, as my father will explain—(Gets behind his father again).

Gobbo. His master and he (with all due respect to you, sir) are not quite on friendly terms-Laun. (Coming forward again) Briefly, the fact is that the Jew has done me wrong, and caused me, as this old man, my father, will, I hope, explain-

Gobbo. I have here some doves for cooking which I would like to give to you, sir, and my request is-

Laun. (*Coming forward*) In short the petition concerns myself, as your Honour will hear from this honest old man, and although it is I, his son, who say it, he is my father, though old and poor.

Bass. Let one of you do the speaking. What is it you want?

Bass.

Laun. Serve you, sir.

That is the very defect¹ of the matter, sir. Gob.

I know thee well; thou has obtain'd thy suit: Bass.

Shylock thy master spoke with me this day, And hath preferr'd² thee, if it be preferment³ To leave a rich Jew's service, to become

The follower of so poor a gentleman.

The old proverb is very well parted⁴ between my master Shylock and you, sir: you Laun.

have 'the grace of God' sir, and he hath enough.

Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son. Take leave of thy old master and inquire

My lodging out. (to his followers) give him a livery⁵

More guarded⁶ than his fellows; see it done.

(Turns to Leonardo and whispers to him.)

Laun.

Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; I have ne'er a tongue in my head. Well (looking on his palm), if any man in Italy have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune. Go to, here's a simple line of life: here's a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed⁸, here are simple 'scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench⁹ for this gear¹⁰. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

(Exeunt Launcelot and old Gobbo)

Bass. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:

These things being bought and orderly bestowed¹¹

Return in haste, for I do feast to-night

My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie¹² thee, go.

1. Defect: blunder for "effect" (substance) 2. Preferr'd: recommended.

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^{3.} Preferment: promotion. 4. Parted: divided. 5. Livery: uniform.

^{6.} Guarded: braided with more trimmings. 7. Table: palm. 8. With the edge of a feather-bed: perhaps "by falling Aver the side of a featherbed". 9. Wench: lady. 10. For this gear: for this kind of thing (fortunetelling). 11 Orderly bestowed: carefully placed on board the ship. 12. Hie: make haste.

Laun. To enter your service, sir.

Gobbo. That is the sum and substance of our request, sir.

Bass. I know you well, and I agree to your request. Shylock, your master, spoke about you just today, and has recommended you, if it is any promotion to leave the service of a

rich Jew to serve as poor a man as I.

Laun. The old proverb applies very truly to you and my master, that you have God's blessing

while he has enough of wealth.

Bass. You speak fluently. Go along with your son, old man. Finish up your affairs with your

old master, and then ask the way to my residence. (*To his followers*) Give him a uniform with more trimming on it than that of the other servants. See that this is done.

(Turns and whispers to Leonardo).

Laun. Father, come along. So you said that I could not get a post! You said that I could not

speak up for myself! Well (*looking at palm of his hand*), if any man in Italy has a more fortunate palm, which he places on the Bible when he is swearing an oath, then I shall have good fortune. See, here is my lifeline, and here is the line which deals with marriage. I am to have fifteen wives; that is nothing! Eleven -widows and nine virgins, a fine record for one man! Then I am to escape from drowning three times, and be in danger of my life from falling out of a feather bed. These are simple escapes. Well, if Fortune is a woman, she is a good one for this kind of fortune-telling. Come, father, I shall say goodbye to the Jew in a moment. (*Launcelot and Old Gobbo depart*)

Bass. I pray you, good Leonardo, think over this matter. When you have bought those

things and packed them up properly, come back quickly, for I am giving a dinner

tonight to my most valued friend. Now go along.

Gra.

Leon. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

They part and walk away in opposite directions.

Leonardo meets Gratiano.

Gra. Where is your master?

Leon. Yonder, sir, he walks. (Exit.

Gra. Signior Bassanio!

Bass. Gratiano!

I have a suit¹ to you. Gra. Bass. You have obtain'd it.

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Gra. You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Why then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano;

Thou art too wild, too rude² and bold³ of voice:

Parts⁴ that become thee happily enough, And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;

But where thou art not known, why, there they show

Something too liberal⁵. Pray thee, take pain To allay with some cold drops of modesty

Thy skipping⁶ spirit, lest through thy wild behaviour

I be misconstrued in the place I go to

And lose my hopes.

Signior Bassanio, hear me:

If I do not put on a sober habit⁷,

Talk with respect⁸, and swear but now and then, Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely

Nay, more, while grace is saying, hood ¹⁰ mine eves

Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen',

Use all the observance of civility 11

Like one well studied¹² in a sad ostent¹³

To please his grandam¹⁴, never trust me more.

1. Suit: request. 2. Rude: rought in manner. 3. Bold: loud. 4. Parts: qualities. 5. Liberal: bold, free. 6. Skipping: lively, fully. 7. Sober habit : quieter manners. 8. With respect: heedfully. 9. Demurely: gravely. 10. Hood: cover. 11. The observance of civility: the manners of polite society. 12. Studied: practised. 13. Sad ostent: serious behaviours, solemn appearance. 14. Grandam: grandmother.

I shall do my very best in the matter. Leon.

(They leave, going in opposite directions Leonardo meets Gratiano)

Grat. Where is your master?

Leon. He is walking about, see, over there. (Leonardo goes) Grat. Signior Bassanio!

Bass. Gratiano!

Grat. I have a request to make. Bass. I grant it before you make it. Grat. You must not refuse me. I want to go with you to Belmont.

Bass. Then you shall go. But listen, Gratiano; you are too unruly, rough in manner and loud

of voice. These are things suiting you well enough here, and with friends like ourselves they do not seem faults. But in a place where people do not know you well, there they show themselves up rather too freely. I beg of you, take care to tone down your lively spirits by infusing a calm and modest temper, or else your wild behaviour may be

misunderstood in the place to which I am going, and my hopes may be shattered.

Grat. Signior Bassanio, hear me. If I do not put on a quiet dress (manner), talk with great politeness, swearing only occasionally, if I do not carry a prayer book in my pocket and look quiet of mood.—I shall go further, if while the prayer of thanks before a meal is being said, I do not close my eyes by placing my hat in front of them like this, and say, "Amen", using all the manners of polite society; doing all these things like one who has carefully studied to adopt a show of quietness to please his grand-mother,

then I say, never trust me in anything again.

Well, we shall see your bearing 1. Bass.

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Nay, but I bar² to-night: you shall not gauge³ me By what we do to-night. Gra.

No, that were⁴ pity: Bass.

I would entreat you rather to put on

Your boldest suit of mirth⁵, for we have friends

That purpose merriment.

But fare you well:

I have some business.

Gra. And I .must to Lorenzo and the rest:

But we will visit you at supper-time.

(Exeunt.

SCENE III.

The front door of SHYLOCK'S house opens and JESSICA and LAUNCELOT come out.

Jes. I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:

Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,

Didst rob it of some taste of '6' tediousness.

But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee: And Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see

Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest;

Give him this letter; do it secretly;

And so farewell.: I would not have my father

See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue.

Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! adieu: these foolish drops do

Somewhat drawn my manly spirit: adieu!

Farewell, good Launcelot. Jes.

(Exit Launcelot.

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Mack, what heinous⁸ sin is it in me

To be ashamed to be my father's child! But though I am a daughter to his blood,

1. Bearing: behaviour 2. Bar: make an exception. 3. Gauge: judge.

4. Were: would be. 5. Your boldest suit of mirth: (1) Your gayest dress.

(2) Your most mirthful mood. 6. Some taste of: a little of. 7. Exhibit:

mistake for "inhibit" (impede, check). 8. Heinous: deadly

Bass. Well, we shall see your behaviour.

Grat. No, but I make an exception tonight. You must not judge me by what we do tonight. Bass. No, it would be a pity to do that. I would rather ask you to assume your merriest

No, it would be a pity to do that. I would rather ask you to assume your merriest mood for we have friends who come here for merriment. But goodbye for the present.

I have some business.

Grat. And I must join Lorenzo and the others, but we shall visit you at supper time. (They

go out)

Laun.

SCENE III.

The front door of Shylock's house. The door opens, and JESSICA and LAUNCELOT come out.

Jessica. I am sorry you are leaving my father like this. Our house may be like hell, but you

have been an amusing devil while in it and helped to take away a good deal of the boredom. But goodbye! Here is a ducat for you. And, Launcelot, in a short time at supper you will see Lorenzo, who is your new master's guest tonight. Give him this

letter. Do it secretly. Now, farewell, I do not want my father to see me talking to you.

Goodbye! Tears impede my Speech. Most beautiful unbeliever, most sweet Jewess, goodbye! Those foolish tears rather damp my manly courage. Farewell! (*He goes*)

Jess. Goodbye, good Launcelot. Alas, what a deadly sin it is for me to be ashamed to be

the child of my father! though I am

I am not to his manners, O Lorenzo,

If thou keep promise, 'I shall end this strife¹,

Become a Christian and thy loving wife.

[Exit.

SCENE IV. A Street in Venice.

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO,

in lively conversation.

Lor. Nay, we will slink away² in supper-time,

Disguise us at my lodging, and return,

All in an hour.

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

Salar. We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

Salan. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order' d⁴, And better in my mind not undertook.

Lor. 'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours to furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter.

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Laun. An it shall please you to break up⁵ this, it shall seem to signify.

Lor. I know the hand⁶: in faith, 'tis a fair hand,

And whiter than the paper it writ on

Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou?

Laun. Marry, sir, to bid⁷ my old master the Jew to sup tonight with my new master the

Christian.

1. Strife: conflict (between loyalty to her father and love for Lorenzo).

2. Slink away: slip off. 3. Not spoke us yet of: not yet arranged for.

4. Quaintly order'd: prettily arranged. 5. Break up: break the seal of.

6. Hand: hand-writing. 7. Bid: invite.

his daughter by birth, I do not share in his customs. O, Lorenzo! If you keep your promise, I shall end this conflict within me, for I shall become a Christian and your loving wife.

SCENE IV. A Street in Venice. Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO, in lively talk

Lorenzo. No, we shall slip off at supper-time, disguise out-selves at my lodgings, and then

come back. It can all be done in an hour.

Grat. We have not made good arrangements. Satan We have not yet arranged for torch-

bearers.

Salan. It is a vile thing unless it can be done with a pretty arrangement, and in my opinion it

would be better not to attempt it.

Lor. It is now only four o'clock, and we have .two hours to equip ourselves.

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter.

Well, Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

Laun. If you will be pleased to break the seal of this, then it will let you know.

Lor. I know the handwriting, indeed it was done by a fair hand which is whiter than the

paper it wrote upon.

Grat. A love-letter, indeed; Laun. May I go now, sir? Lor. Where are you going?

Laun. By Mary, sir, I am going to invite my late master, the Jew, to dine tonight with my new

master, the Christian.

Lor. Hold here, take this: (gives Launcelot some money) tell gentle Jessica

I will not fail her; speak it privately;

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Go, Gentlemen, (Exit Launcelot)

Will you prepare you for this masque¹ to-night?

I am provided of² a torch-bearer.

Salar. Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight. Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence³.

Salar: 'Tis good we do so.

(Exeunt Salar and Salan)

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?
 Lor. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed⁴

How I shall take her from her father's house,

What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with, What page's suit she hath in readiness, If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven, It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:

And never dare misfortune cross her foot⁵,

Unless she do it under this excuse, That she is issue to a faithless⁶ Jew.

Come, go with me; peruse⁷ this as thou goest:

Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

(Exeunt.

SCENE V. The Street before SHYLOCK'S House. Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.

Shy. Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge, The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio—What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize⁸, As thou hast done with me:—What Jessica! And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out:

Why, Jessica, I say!

1. Masque: masquerade (a procession in which the performers wore masks). 2. Of: with. 3. Some hour hence: in about an hour from now. 4. Directed: advised. 5. Foot: path. 6. Faithless: unbelieving. 7. Peruse: read. 8. Gormandize: devour food greedily.

Lor. Stop a little. Take this, (Giving Launcelot money) tell the gentle Jessica that I shall

not fail her. Give her the message privately. (Launcelot goes out). Gentlemen, will

you prepare for this masque tonight? I am provided with a torch-bearer.

Salar. Yes, by Mary, I shall go to make ready at once. Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano at his lodgings in about an hour from now. Salar. It is well that we should do so. (Salar, and Salan, go out).

Grat. Was that letter from the fair Jessica?

Lor. I must tell you everything. She had advised me as to the way in which I may take her from her father's house, and the amount of gold and jewels with which she is supplied; also about the page-boy's uniform which she has in readiness. If ever the Jew, her father, is admitted to Heaven, it will be for the sake of his gentle daughter, and may misfortune never come to her unless it is for this same cause, namely, that she is the child of an unbelieving Jew. Come, go with me. Read this letter as you go along. The fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

SCENE V. The Street before Shylock's House. Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT.

Shy. Well, you shall see, and your own eyes shall judge the difference between old Shylock and Bassanio. (Are you there, Jessica) You will not fill yourself with food as you have done with me. (Hulloa, Jessica!) You will not sleep and snore and wear out your clothes. (Jessica, what is this?)

Shy.

Laun. (Shouts) Why, Jessica!

Shy. Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun. Your worship was wont to tell me I could do nothing without bidding.

Enter JESSICA.

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Jes. Call you? what is your will?

I am bid forth to supper, Jessica:

There are my keys.

But wherefore should I go?

I am not bid for love—they flatter me:
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house—I am right loth² to go:
There is some ill a-bewing³ towards my rest,

For I did dream of money-bags to-night⁴.

Laun. I beseech you, sir, go: my young master doth expect your reproach⁵.

Shy. So do I his.

Laun. And they have conspired together,—I will not say you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding⁶ on Black-Monday⁷ last at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in

the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:

Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum

And the vile squealing of the wryneck'd fife⁸

Clamber not you up to the casements then,

Nor thrust your head into the public street

To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd⁹ faces,

1. Bid forth: invited out. 2. Right loth: truly unwilling. 3. III a-brewing mischief in the air. 4. To-night: last night. 5. Reproach: blunder for "approach". 6. Fell a-bleeding: began to bleed. 7. Black-Monday: Easter Monday. 8. Wryneck'd fife: crooked-necked flute. 9. Varnish'd painted.

Laun. (Calling aloud) Hulloa, Jessica!

Shy. Why are you shouting? I did not ask you to call out.

Laun. Your Honour used to complain that I never did anything without being ordered.

Enter JESSICA.

Jess. Did you call me? What do you want?

Shy. I am invited out to dinner, Jessica. Here are my keys. But why should I go? I have not been asked because they like me, but only to flatter me. However, I shall go because of hatred, to eat the food of this open-handed Christian. Jessica, my girl, you will look after the house. I am indeed unwilling to go. There is some evil thing preparing to

attack my peace of mind, because I dreamed about money-bags last night.

Laun. I beg of you to come, sir. My young master expects you to come.

Shy. And I expect he will have cause to reproach me.

Laun. They have been planning together—I do not promise that you will see a masque, but if you do, then it was not a meaningless sign when my nose started to bleed last Easter Mondy at six o'clock in the morning. In that year; Easter fell on Ash Wednesday, just

four years ago.

Shy. What, are there masques? Do you hear, Jessica? Lock our doors, and when you hear

the drums, and the shrill notes of the twisted fife, do not climb up to see from the

window, nor stretch your neck out over the public street to gaze on Christian

	But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:	
	Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter	
	My sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear	
	I have no mind to feasting forth to-night	
	But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah:	
	Say I will come.	
Laun.	I will go before, sir. (Whispers aside to Jessica)	
	Mistress, look out at window, for all this;	41
	There will come a Christian by,	
	Will be worth a Jewess' eye ¹ .	(Exit)
Shy.	What says that fool of Hagar's offspring ² , ha?	
Jes.	His words were, 'Farewell, mistress'—nothing else.	
Shy.	The patch ³ is kind enough, but a huge feeder,	
	Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day	
	More than the wild-cat: drones ⁴ hive not with me:	
	Therefore I part with him, and part with him	
	To one that I would have him help to waste	51
	His borrow'd purseWell, Jessica, go in:	
	Perhaps I will return immediately:	
	Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:	
	Fast bind, fast find;	
	A proverb never stale ⁵ in thrifty mind.	(Exit)
Jes.	Farewell—and if my fortune be not crost ⁶ ,	, ,
	I have a father, you a daughter, lost.	(Exit)

SCENE VI. The Street before Shylock's House. Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued.

Gra. This is the pent-house⁷ under which Lorenzo.

Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

- 1. Worth a Jewess' eye: well worth being looked upon by a Jewess.
- 2. Offspring: descendants. 3. Patch: fellow. 4. Drones: idlers. 5. Stale: old-fashioned. 6. If my fortune be not crost: unless I have bad luck.
- 7. Pent-house: overhead shelter.

fools with painted faces. Rather close up all the openings of the house—I mean the windows. Do not let the sounds of foolish displays penetrate into my serious household. By the staff of the prophet Jacob I swear, I have no wish to go out to a feast to-night. But I shall go. You go on in front of me, sir. Tell them that I am coming.

Laun. I shall go before you sir. (Whispers aside to Jessica) "Look out of the window, in spite of what he has said. A Christian will pass by well worth being looked upon by a Jewess." (Then Launcelot goes out).

Shylock. What was it that descendant of Hagar said to you? Jess. He said, "Farewell, mistress," and nothing else.

Shy. The fool is a kind enough fellow, but a terrible eater of food. He is slow as a snail in any profitable work, and he sleeps by day more than does the wild cat. Idlers cannot be housed along with me, and so I part with him. He goes to one whom he will help to squander the money he borrows...Well, Jessica, go in. Perhaps I shall return very soon. Do as I have told you, and shut the doors after you. If you lock a thing up, you will find it safe; that is a proverb which is never too old-fashioned for a careful man. (Shylock goes).

Jess. Farewell, and, unless I have bad luck now, you have lost your daughter and I have lost my father.

SCENE VI. The Street before Shylock's House. Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, wearing masks.

Grat. This is the shelter-roof under which Lorenzo told us to stand.

Salar. It is almost past the appointed hour.

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Gra.	And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour ¹ ,	
<i>07α</i> .	For lovers even run before the clock ² .	
Salar.	O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly	
	To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont	
	To keep obliged faith ³ unforfeited ⁴ !	
Gra.	That ever holds ⁵ : who riseth from a feast	
	With that keen appetite that he sits down?]	10
	Where is the horse that cloth untread ⁶ again	
	His tedious measures with the unbated fire 8	
	That he did pace them first?	
	All things that are,	
	Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.	
	How like a younker ⁹ or a prodigal	
	The scarfed 10 bark puts from her native bay,	
	Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!	
	How like a prodigal cloth she return,	
	With over-weather'd ribs 12, and ragged sails,	
	Lean, rent, and beggared ¹³ by the strumpet wind!	20
Salar.	Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.	
	Enter LORENZO.	
Lor.	Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode ¹⁴ ;	
	Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:	
	When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,	
	I'll watch as long for you thenApproach;	
	Here dwells my father Jew	
	Ho! who's within?	
	A casement window opens above the door,	
	and Jessica leans out. She is in boy's dress.	
Jes.	Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,	
	Albeit 15 I'll swear that I do know your tongue 16.	30
	1. Out-dwells his hour: is later than the appointed time. 2. run before the	
	clock: come before time. 3. Obliged faith: faith solemnly pledged.	
	4. Unforfeited: unbroken. 5. Ever holds: is universally true. 6. Untread:	
	retrace his steps over. 7. Tedious measures: the ground over which he	
	has walked tediously. 8. Unbated fire: unimpaired energy. 9. Younker:	
	smart and gay young man. 10. Scarfed: decked with flags. 11. Strumpet	
	: wanton. 12. Over-weather'd ribs : weather-beaten boards or planks.	
	13. Beggared: rendered poor. 14. Abode: delay. 15. Albeit: although.	
	16. Tongue : voice.	

Grat. It is a strange thing that he should be later than the appointed time, for lovers always tend to come before it.

Salar: O, the doves of Venus, the Love Goddess, fly ten times faster when it is a case of sealing newly-pledged love than they do when it is a case of preventing old love obligations from being broken.

Grat. That is always the case. Who rises from a feast with the same hunger as when he sat down to table? Where is the horse that can cover again the distance that he has already done, with the unimpaired energy with which he galloped on the former journey? In all things, there is more pleasure in the pursuit than in the attainment. How like a youth or a spendthrift does a flag-bedecked ship sail out from her home port, but after being blown about and hugged by that harlot, the wind, she comes back just as a spendthrift does, with strained timbers and tattered sails. Like the returning prodigal, the ship too is lean, torn, and penniless, stripped by the harlot wind.

Salar. Here comes Lorenzo. We shall talk more of this afterwards.

Enter LORENZO.

Lor. My good friends, be patient and forgive my long delay. It is not I, but my business that has kept you waiting. When it is your turn to go stealing a wife, then I shall wait just as long for you. Come this way; here is the residence of my father-in-law, the Jew, Hulloa! is anybody in?

(An upper window is opend, and Jessica leans out.

She is dressed as a boy.)

Jess. Who is there? Tell me in order to be certain, though I can swear that I know your voice.

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Lor.	Lorenzo, and thy love.	
Jes.	Lorenzo, certain, and my love, indeed,	32
000.	For who love I so much? And now who knows	3 2
	But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?	
Lor.	Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.	
Jes.	Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.	
<i>5</i> C 5 .	(She lowers the casket)	
	I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,	
	For I am much ashamed of my exchange 1:	
	But love is blind, and lovers cannot see	
	The pretty follies that themselves commit;	40
	For if they could, Cupid ² himself would blush	10
	To see me thus transformed to a boy.	
Lor.	Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.	
Jes.	What, must I hold a candle to ³ my shames ⁴ ?	
000.	They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.	
	Why, 'tis an office .of discovery ⁵ , love;	
	And I should be obscured ⁶ .	
Lor.	So are you, sweet,	
	Even in the lovely garnish ⁷ of a boy.	
	But come at once;	50
	For the close ⁸ night doth play the runaway ⁹ ,	
	And we are stay'd for 10 at Bassanio's feast.	
Jes.	Will make fast the doors, and gild myself 11	
	With some more ducats, and be with you straight,	
	·	xit above.
Gra.	Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.	
Lor.	Beshrew me but I love ¹² her heartily:	
	1. Exchange: change of dress. 2. Cupid: the god of love. 3. Hold a	
	candle to: hold up a light to reveal. 4. Shames: shameful dress. 5. 'Tis	
	an office of discovery: it is a duty which reveals me. 6. Obscured:	
	hidden. 7. Garnish: dress. 8. Close: secret. 9. Doth play the runaway:	
	is already passing away. 10. Stay'd for: awaited. 11. Gild myself: load	
	myself. 12. Beshrew me but I love: curse me if I do not love.	

Lor. It is Lorenzo, who loves you.

Jess. Yes, it is certainly Lorenzo, and indeed my lover. There is no other that I love so much. But who knows, apart from you, Lorenzo, whether I am truly the object of

your love?

Lor. Heaven and your own understanding will tell you that you are.

Jess. Here, catch hold of this casket. It is worth taking trouble for.

(She lowers a casket)

I am glad that it is night and that you cannot see me, for I am much ashamed of this change of dress. But love is blind, and lovers cannot see little acts of foolishness that they themselves commit. If they could see, then even Cupid, the little god of love, would blush to see me dressed thus as a boy.

Lor. Come down, for you must act as my torch-bearer:

Jess. What, must I hold up a light to show my shameful dress? The dress, by itself, is already far too apparent. Why, that would be an act of revealing me, my love, and I

should rather be hidden.

Lor. You are hidden, my sweet one, even in this charming getup of a boy. But come down at once, for the secret night is already passing away, and they are awaiting us at

Bassanio's banquet.

Jess. I shall fasten the doors, and load myself with some more ducats. Then I shall join you

immediately. (She goes inside)

Grat. Now, I swear by my hood, she is Christian and not A Jew.

Lor. May, I accursed if I do not love her deeply! She is

For she is wise, if I can judge of her, And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true; And true she is, as she hath proved herself; And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,

Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

(JESSICA comes out)

What, art thou come?-0n, gentlemen; away! Our masquing mates² by this time for us stay

(Exit with Jessica and Salarino.

Enter ANTONIO

Ant. Who's there? Gra. Signior Antonio!

Ant. Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?

> 'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you. No masque to-night: the wind is come about³,

Bassanio presently will go aboard: I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

I am glad on't: I desire no more delight

Gra. Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

(Exeunt.

SCENE VII. Belmont. A hall in PORTIA'S House. Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, and their trains.

Por.

Go, draw aside the curtains, and discover⁵ The several⁶ caskets to this noble prince.— Now make your choice.

Servants draw back the curtains and reveal caskets.

Mor.

(Examines the caskets) The first, of gold,

Who this inscription bears.

'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire';

The second, silver, which this promise carries,

1. Constant soul: loyal heart. 2. Masquing mates: companions in the masque. 3. Is come about: has changed and become favourable. 4. Presently: soon. 5. Discover: reveal. 6. Several: different.

wise, if I have read her character correctly, and she is beautiful, if my eyes have told me the truth. She is honest, for she has proved herself to be so. Therefore just as the picture of her shows these three qualities, wisdom, beauty and honesty, so shall she be placed in my loyal heart. (*Jessica comes out*).

Well, so you have come! Now, gentlemen, let us go! Our companions in the masque are by this time waiting for us.

(He goes out, with Jessica and Salarino).

Enter ANTONIO.

Ant. Who is there? Grat. Signior Antonio?

Ant. For shame, Gratiano! where are all the others? It is nine o'clock, and our friends are all waiting for you. There will be no masque tonight, for the wind has changed (and become favourable for sailing). Bassanio will soon be going on board his ship. I have

sent twenty men out to look for you.

Grat. I am glad of it. I want no other pleasure than to be sailing along and gone from this place tonight.

(All go out.)

SCENE VII. Belmont. A hall in Portia's House. Sound of trumpets. Enter PORTIA and THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, with their respective followers.

Portia. Go, pull aside the curtains and reveal the different caskets to the noble prince. Now make your choice.

(Servants draw back the curtains and show the caskets)

Morocco. (Examining the caskets) The first casket is made of gold, and bears the inscription, "Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire". The second is a silver casket, and on it is

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	'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt ¹ , 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard ² all he hath'.	10
	How shall I know if I do choose the right?	
Port.	The one of them contains my picture,	
	Prince: If you choose that, then I am yours withal ³ .	
Mor.	Some god direct my judgment!	
	Let me see: I will survey the inscriptions back again.	
	What says this leaden casket?	
	'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath'.	
	Must give! for what? for lead? hazard for lead?	
	This casket threatens. Men that hazard all	
	Do it in hope of fair advantages.	20
	A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross ⁴ ;	
	I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.	
	What says the silver with her virgin hue ⁵ ?	
	'Who chooseth me shall! get as much as he deserves'.	
	As much as he *deserves! Pause there, Morocco,	
	And weigh thy value with an even hand:	
	If thou best rated ⁷ by thy estimation,	
	Thou dost deserve enough—and yet enough	
	May not extend so far as to the lady:	
	And yet to be afeared of my deserving ⁸	30
	Were but a weak disabling of myself ⁹ .	
	As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:	
	I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,	
	In graces and in qualities of breeding;	
	But more than these, in love I do deserve.	
	What if I stray'd 10 no further, but choose here?	
	Let's see once more this saying graved ¹¹ in gold:	
	'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire',	
	Why, that's the lady; all the world desire her;	
	From the four corners of the earth they come,	40
	To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing ¹² saint:	
	The Hyrcanian ¹³ deserts and the vasty wilds ¹⁴	
	1. Blunt: plain. 2. Hazard: risk. 3. Withal: along with it. 4. Shows of dross: worthless shows. 5. Virgin hue: white colour. 6. Even: impartial. 7. Rated: judged. 8. Deserving: merits. 9. A weak disabling of myself: a weakness working against my chances. 10. Stray'd: wandered away. 11. Graved: inscribed. 12. Mortal-breathing: in human form.	

13. Hyrcanian: Persian. 14. Vasty wilds: vast wilderness.

this inscription, "Whoever chooses me shall gain as much as he deserves". The third is plain lead, and its inscription equally plain, "Whoever chooses me must give and risk all that he possesses". How shall I know whether I have chosen the right one?

Port. The right one contains my picture, Prince. If you choose that one, then I am yours along with it.Mor. May some god guide me in choosing! Let me see; I shall read the inscriptions in

May some god guide me in choosing! Let me see; I shall read the inscriptions in reverse order. What is on this leaden casket? "Whoever chooses me must give and risk all that he possesses." Give everything! And for what? For a casket of lead? Would anyone risk so much for the sake of lead? This casket gives a threat. Men who risk their all do so in hope of rich gain. A mind of gold never stoops low to cheap and rubbishy things. I shall not give nor risk anything for lead. Next, what says the silver casket, with her pale colour? "Whoever chooses me shall gain as much as he deserves". Stop there, Morocco, and analyse your own merits with impartial consideration. If you are judged by your own estimation, then you deserve plenty, and yet that may not be sufficient deserving to win this lady. Yet to be afraid of my merits is a weakness, and may work against my own chances. As much as I deserve! Well, that must be the lady herself. I deserve her because of my high birth, and my fortunes are equal to hers. I deserve her because of my natural virtues and qualities of good education. More than all of these, I deserve her because of my love for her. What if I hesitate no further, but decide on this casket? Let me see once more the inscription written on the golden casket; "He who chooses me shall gain what many men desire." Why, that is certainly Portia, for all the world desires her. From he four corners of the earth they come to pay devotions at this shrine, of this saint in human form. The Persian deserts and the vast barren plains of Por.

Mor.

Of wide Arabia are as throughfares 1 now For princes to come yiew fair Portia: The watery kingdom², whose ambitious head Spits in the face of heaven³, is no bar To, stop the foreign spirits⁴; but they come, As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia. One of these three contains her heavenly picture, Is't like⁵ that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation⁶ 50 To think so base a thought: it were too gross To rib⁷ her cerecloth⁸ in the obscure grave. Or shall I think in silver she's immured⁹, Being ten times undervalued 10 to tried gold? O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem Was set in worse than gold They have in England A coin that bears the figure of an angel Stamped in gold but that's insculp'd upon¹¹; But here an angel in a golden bed Lies all within. Deliver me the key: Here do I -choose, and thrive I as I may! There, take it, prince; and if my form lie there, Then I am yours. (He unlocks the golden casket. O hell! what have we here? A carrion Death¹², within whose empty eye There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing. (Reads. 'All that glisters is not gold; Often have you heard that told: Many a man his life hath sold 70 But my outside to behind: Gilded tombs do worms infold. Had you been as wise as bold, Young in limbs, in judgment old Your answer had not been inscroll'd¹³;

1. Throughfares: thoroughfares. 2. Watery kingdom: ocean. 3. Spits in the face of heaven: dashes the spray right to the sky. 4. Spirits: adventures. 5. Like: likely. 6. 'Twere damnation: it would be worthy of condemnation. 7. Rib: enclose. 8. Cerecloth: waxed cloth used as a shroud. 9. Immured: locked up. 10. Undervalued: inferior in value. 11. Insculp'd upon: stamped on the surface. 12. Carrion Death: a loathsome skull. 13. Had not been inscroll'd: would not have been written so on this scroll. 14. Your suit is cold: your quest of love has failed. 15. Heat: fervent love. 16. Frost: cold disappointment.

Fare you well; your suit is cold ¹⁴: Gold, indeed; and labour lost:

Then, farewell, heat 15; and welome, frost 16!

Arabia are crowded like streets with princes coming to see fair Portia. The ocean, whose ambitious waves throw drops up to the very heavens, is no barrier to stop those foreign adventurers, but they come as if merely stepping across a brook, to see fair Portia. One of these three contains her divine portrait. Is it likely that lead is worthy to contain it? It would be damnable to think so low a thought. It is too coarse a metal even to stiffen her winding sheet when she is put into the darkness of the grave. Or shall I think that she is contained in silver, which is only a tenth of the value of pure gold? A sinful thought! So rich a gem was never set in anything less than gold. They have in England a gold coin which has the figure of an angle stamped on it, but that angel is carved on the gold. But here an angle lies entirely enclosed in a golden bed. Give me the key; I choose this one, whatever my success may be.

Por. There, take it prince, If my likeness is inside, then I am yours, (*Morocco unlocks the golden casket*).

Mor. O Hell! What have we here? A dead skull, within whose hollow eye-socket there is a roll of paper with writing. I'll read the writing. (Reads).

"All that glitters is not gold; often have you heard that said.

Many a man has given his life only to see the gold which covers the 'outside of me. But gold-plated tombs have worms inside. If you had been as wise as you are brave, as sound in judgment as you are strong in body, then this would not have been the answer that appeared on the scroll for you. Your effort has failed."

Portia. adieu. I have too grieved a heart

To take a tedious leave: thus losers part².

(Exit with his train. Flourish of Cornets.

Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so.

(Exeunt.

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SCENE VIII. Venice. A street. Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:

With .him is Gratiano gone along;

And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

Salan. The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke:

Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salar. He came too late, the ship was under sail:

But there the duke was given to understand That in a gondola³ were seen together Lorenzo and his amorous⁴ Jessica Besides, Antonio certified the duke

They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

Salan. I never heard a passion⁵ so confused,

So strange, outrageous⁶ and so variable⁷, As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:

'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter! Fled with a Christian! O my Christian Ducats! Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter! A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,

Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter! And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,

Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;

She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats.'

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,

Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his ducats.

1. Tedious: formal. 2. Part: go, depart. 3. Gondola: a long narrow Venetian boat. 4. Amorous: loving. 5. Passion: frenzy of anger.

6. Outrageous: excessive. 7. Variable: changing in mood.

Portia, farewell! I am too sad at heart to speak a more formal farewell. A loser should depart thus,

(Leaves with his followers, as trumpets sound)

Por. We are rid of a gentle fellow, still he is a riddance. Draw the curtains and let us go. May all of his kind make a similar choice!

(They depart)

SCENE VIII. Venice. A Street. Enter SALARINO and SALANIO.

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio when he sailed. Gratiano has gone with him, but I am certain that Lorenzo was not on the ship.

Salan. That villain, the Jew, stirred up the Duke with his complaints, and the Duke went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salar. He came too late, for the ship had already sailed. There the Duke was told that Lorenzo and his loving Jessica had been seen sitting together in a gondola. Moreover Antonio assured the Duke that they were not with Bassanio on .his ship.

Salan. I have never seen such a mood of confusion and anger, so strange, excessive, and frequently changing, as the vile Jew gave expression to in the streets! "My daughter! My ducats! O, my daughter! Gone off with a Christian! O, my Christian ducats! I shall have justice from the law! my ducats and my daughter! A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats, of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter! I ask for justice, and for the girl to be found. She has the diamonds with her, and also the ducats."

Salar. Why, all the boys in Venice follow after him, crying about his diamonds, his ducats, and his daughter.

Salan.	Let good Antonio look he keep his day ¹ ,	
Salar.	Or he shall pay for this. Marry, well remember'd.	
saiar.	I reason'd ² with a Frenchman yesterday,	
	Who told me, in the narrow seas ³ that part	
	The French and English, there miscarried ⁴	30
	A vessel of our country richly fraught ⁵ .	30
	I thought upon Antonio when he told me,	
	And wish'd in silence that it were not his.	
Salan.	You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;	
saian.	•	
Salar.	Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.	
saiar.	I saw Bassanio and Antonio part :	
	Bassanio told him he would make some speed	
	Of his return: he answer'd, 'Do not so;	
	Slubber ⁶ not business for my sake, Bassanio,	40
	But stay the very riping of time ⁷ ,	40
	And for the Jew's bond which he bath of me,	
	Let it not enter in your mind of love:	
	Be merry; and employ your chiefest thoughts	
	To courtship and such fair ostents ⁸ of love	
	As shall conveniently become you there:	
	And even there, his eye being big with tears,	
	Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,	
	And with affection wondrous sensible	
	He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.	50
Salan.	I think he only loves the world for him.	50
зиши.	I pray thee, let us go and find him out,	
	And quicken ⁹ his embraced heaviness ¹⁰	
	With some delight or other.	
Salar.	Do we so.	(Exeunt.
зишт.		(Lieum.
	1. Keep his day: pay up on the day fixed. 2. Reason'd: had some talk.	
	3. Narrow seas: the English Channel. 4. Miscarried: was wrecked.	
	5. Fraught: laden. 6. Slubber: spoil. 7. The very riping of time: till the	
	time is rise for attaining your object. 8. Ostents: displays of affection.	
	9. Quicken: cheer up. 10. His embraced heaviness: this heaviness of	
	spirit which he has taken to himself.	

Salan. Good Antonio had better be careful that he can pay up on the day that the bond expires, otherwise he may have to pay for this.

Salar. By Mary, you remind me. I had some talk with a Frenchman yesterday, who told me that in the narrow sea-channel between England and France, there had been wrecked a vessel of our country, with rich cargo. I thought of Antonio when he told me; and wished in silence that it might not be one of his ships.

Salan. You had better tell Antonio whatever you hear. Do not tell him suddenly, for it may upset him.

Salar. There is not a kinder gentleman going on this earth. I saw Bassanio and Antonio part from each other. Bassanio told him that he would hurry on his return, but Antonio replied, "Do not do so. Do not spoil the business for my sake, Bassanio, but stay till the time is ripe for attaining your object, and, as concerns the bond which I have entered into with the Jew, do not let it interfere with your schemes of love. Be cheerful, and let your thoughts be mainly directed to your love suit and to making fair displays of your love, such as shall best further your purpose there." At that, his eyes being full of tears, he turned his face away and extended his hand behind him. Then wonderfully affected by his love, he shook hands with Bassanio, and so they parted.

Salan. I think he loves the world only because Bassanio is in it. Come, I beg of you, and let us seek him out and brighten up his heaviness of spirit with some pleasant diversion or other.

Solar. Yes, let us do so. (They go out together)

SCENE IX. Belmont. A hall in PORTIA'S house. Enter NERISSA with a Servitor¹, in haste.

Nerissa.

Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain straight:

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath, And comes to his election² presently.

(The curtains are drawn aside.

Flourish of Cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON PORTIA, and their trains.

Portia.

Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:

5

If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,

Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized: But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,

You must be gone from hence immediately.

Arragon.

I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:

First, never to unfold to any one

Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail

Of the right casket, never in my life

To woo a maid in way of marriage: Lastly,

15

If I do fail in fortune of my choice,

Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Portia. Arragon. To these injunctions every one doth swear that comes to hazard for my worthless self. And so have I address'd me³. Fortune now

And so have I address'd me³. Fortune now To my heart's hope! Gold, silver, and base lead.

'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath'.

You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.

What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:

'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire'.

25

What many men desire! that 'many' may be meant

By the fool multitude, that choose by show,

1. Servitor: servant. 2. Election: choice. 3. So have I address'd me: I have prepared myself accordingly.

SCENE IX. Belmont. A hall in Portia's House. Enter NERISSA and -a Servant, in haste.

Ner.

Quick, quick, I beg of you. Open the curtains at once. The Prince of Arragon has sworn the oath, and comes immediately to make the choice of the caskets.

(The curtains are opened)

Trumpets sound. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON, PORTIA, and their attendants.

Portia. See, the caskets are there, noble Prince. If you choose the one in which my portrait is contained, at once our marriage ceremonies shall be performed. But if you fail, my lord, then without further talk you must immediately go from here.

Arragon. I am bound by my oath to three things; first, I have never to reveal to anyone which casket I chose; second, if I fail to choose the right casket, I must never during the rest of my life propose marriage to any other lady; lastly, if I fail to make the lucky choice, I must at once leave you and depart.

Por. Everyone who comes to make the choice for my poor self swears to observe these conditions.

Arragon. And I also have agreed. May Fortune now favour the hopes of my heart! Gold, silver, and common lead. Now, "Who chooses me must give and risk all he possesses". Lead must be more attractive before it makes me give or risk anything. What does the golden casket say? Now, let me see! "Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire". It says, "What many men desire". By "many" we may understand the foolish majority who

Portia. Arragon.

Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;	
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet ² ,	
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,	30
Even in the force and road of casualty ³ .	
I will not choose what many men desire,	
Because I will not jump ⁴ with common spirits	
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.	
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;	35
Tell me once more what title ⁵ thou dost bear:	
'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves:	
And well said too; for who shall go about	
To cozen ⁶ fortune and be honourable	
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume	
To wear an undeserved dignity.	
O, that estates, degrees, and offices	
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour	
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!	
How many then should cover ⁷ that stand bare!	45
How many be commanded that command!	
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd	
From the true seed of honour ⁸ and how much honour	
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times ⁹	
To be new-varnish' d ^{10!} Well, but to my choice:	50
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."	
I will assume desert ¹¹ . Give me a key for this,	
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.	
(He opens the silver casket and stands as if paralysed)	
Too long a pause for that which you find there.	
What's here? the portrait of a blinking ¹² idiot.	55
Presenting me a schedule ¹³ ! I will read it.	
How much unlike art thou to Portia!	
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!	
"Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves".	
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?	60
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?	

^{1.} Fond: foolish. 2. Martlet: martin (a bird). 3. In the force and road of casualty: in the path of danger or accidents. 4. Jump: agree. 5. Title: message. 6. Cozen: cheat. 7. Cover: keep their heads covered. 8. True seed of honour: those who are truly honourable. 9. Chaff and ruin of the times: those who are outcast and ruined. 10. To be new-varnish'd: to be set up in fresh honour. 11. Desert: merit. 12. Blinking: dull-eyed, stupid. 13. Schedule: scroll.

choose only by outward show, not learning any more than the foolish eye can teach them, for it cannot penetrate beneath the surface of things, like the swallow, which builds its nest on the outer wall, exposed to the weather and to all risks of violence and accident. I shall not choose what the majority desire; because I shall not move according to the impulses of common men and rank myself as equal to the coarse mob. Then I turn to you, O silver treasure casket! Tell me once more what message is written on you. "Who chooses me will get as much as he deserves." That is a good saying, for who will go about trying to cheat Fortune and be honourable if he has no merit? Let no man aspire to wear a dignity which he does not deserve. I wish that property, promotions, and appointments were not obtained dishonestly, and that pure honour could only be got by a deserving man! How many men should keep the head covered, who now have to stand with their heads bared in respect? How many would have to obey orders who now are giving orders? How many who are only of peasant caste would then be separated out from the ranks who claim to be the truly honourable? How much true honour could be rescued from the debris and rubbish of life, to be given its original brightness? Well, as for my choice: "Who chooses me will get as much as he deserves". I shall take up that which I deserve. Give me the key for this one, and unlock it at once to let me see what my luck has here.

(He opens the silver casket, and stands as if paralysed)

Portia. You pause too long for one who has found good fortune.

Arragon. What is here? the portrait of a dull-eyed fool who offers me a written paper. I shall read it. O, how unlike Portia is this portrait! How very unlike to what I hoped for or what I deserve! "Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves." Do I, then deserve no more than the head of a fool?

Is that my prize? Do I deserve no more than this?

Portia.	To offend, and judge, are distinct offices ¹ .		
	And of opposed natures.		
Arragon.	What is here? (<i>Reads</i>) "The fire seven times tried this:		65
_	Seven' times tried that judgment is,		
	That did never choose amiss.		
	Some there be that shadows kiss;		
	Such have but a shadow's bliss.		
	There be fools alive, I. wis ²		70
	Silver'd o'er ³ ; and so was this.		
	Take what wife you will to bed,		
	I will ever be your head:		
	So be gone; you are sped ⁴ ."		
	Still more fool I shall appear		75
	By the time I linger here:		
	With one fool's head I came to woo,		
	But I go away with two.		
	Sweet, adieu, I'll keep my oath,		
	Patiently to bear my wroth ⁵ .		80
		(Exit Arragon a	ınd train.
Portia.	Thus hath the candle singed the moth.		
	O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,		
	They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.		
Nerissa.	The ancient saying is he heres y^7 .		
	Hanging and wiving goes by destiny		85
Portia.	Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.		
	Enter a Servant.		
Servant.	Where is my lady?		
Portia.	Here: what would my lord?		
	1. Offices: functions, duties. 2. Wis: know. 3. Silver foolishness is concealed by the silvery hair of age. 4. You venture is over. 5. Wroth: anger; possibly misfortune. calculating. 7. Heresy: false teaching.	are sped : your	

Portia. The one who has offended and the one who judges have different duties and different capacities.

Arragon. What is this?

(*Reads*) "This was tested seven times by fire.. A. judgment is similarly tested sevenfold if it never goes wrong. Some people become attached to shadows, and get only a shadowy happiness. There are some foolish people who are disguised by the silvery hair of old age; so was this casket disguised with a covering of silver. No matter what wife you may take, this fool's head will always be your head. Now go away, for your, quest is over."

If I stay longer here, I shall only look more of a fool. I came to woo Portia with one foolish head on my shoulders; I go after having gained another one. Farewell, sweet lady. I shall obey my oath, and patiently suffer my feelings of resentment.

(Arragon goes off with his followers)

Portia. One more moth has burned itself at the candle. O, those calculating fools! When they choose, they are just wise enough for their poor wits to make the wrong selection.

Nerrisa. The old proverb is not false philosophy, that being hanged and getting a wife are things settled by fate.

Portia. Come, draw the curtains, Nerissa.

Enter a Servant.

Servant. Where is my lady?

Portia. (Jesting) Here. What do you want, my lord?

Servant. Madam, there is alighted at your gate

A young Venetian, one that comes before

90

To signify¹ the approaching of his lord; From whom he bringeth sensible regrets²,

To wit, besides commends³ and courteous breath⁴.

Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen So likely⁵ an ambassador of love: A day in April never came so sweet,

95

100

To show how costly⁶ summer was at hand, At this fore-spurrer⁷ comes before his lord.

Portia. No more, I pray thee: I am half afeard

Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,

Thou spend'st such high-day⁸ wit in praising him. Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see

Quick Cupid's post⁹ that comes so mannerly ¹⁰.

Nerissa. Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

plain, direct speech.

(Exeunt.

ACT III.

SCENE I. Venice. A Street. Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

Salanio.

Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salarino. Why, yet it 11 lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading 12 wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcases 13 of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip

Report¹⁴ be an honest woman of her word.

Salanio.

I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped¹⁵ ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity¹⁶ or crossing the plain highway of talk¹⁷, that the good Anto-

1. Signify: announce. 2. Sensible regrets: tangible or sincere greetings. 3. Commends: compliments, salutations, 4. Breath: words. 5. Likely: of good promise. 6. Costly: rich, gorgeous. 7. Fore-spurrer: advance rider. 8. High-day: holiday. 9. Post: messenger. 10. Mannerly: in a courteous manner. 11. It: the rumour. 12. Of rich lading: with rich cargo. 11 Carcases: wrecks. 14. My gossip Report: Dame Rumour. 15. Knapped: nibbled. 16. Ships of prolixity: lapses into long-winded, tidious speeches. 17. Crossing the plain highway of talk: going outside

Serv. Madam, there has just come to your gate a young Venetian, sent in advance to

announce that his lord is arriving shortly. He brings from him substantial tokens of courtesy, namely, gifts of rich value, in addition to salutations and polite messages. So far I have not seen so promising an ambassador for a lover. A day in April never started so sweetly, showing that rich summer is very soon to follow, as this advance

horseman comes before his lord.

Por. Speak no more, I beg of you. I almost fear you will say he is some relation of your

own, since you expend your utmost intelligence in praising him. Come along. Nerissa, for I long to see the swift messenger of Cupid who has come in so fine a manner.

Nerissa. May it be Bassanio, O God of Love, if such is thy will! (They go out)

ACT III

SCENE I. Venice. A Street. Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

Salanio. What news today on the Shipping Exchange?

Salarino. Well, the rumour is still not contradicted that Antonio has had one of his ships with

rich cargo wrecked in the narrow sea-channel, the Goodwins, I think they call the place. It is an area shallow and dangerous, where the wrecks of many a fine ship lie

buried, as they say, if that well-known lady, Rumour, be true in this case.

Salan. I wish she were as lying a wench as ever chewed ginger or tried to make her neighbours

believe that she mourned sincerely the death of her third husband. But it is true,

without any long-winded sentences or going outside plain direct speech, that

nio, the ho	nest Antonio-O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company 1—
Salarino.	Come, the full stop. 14
Salanio.	Ha, what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he bath lost a ship.
Salarino.	I would it might prove the, end of his losses.
Salanio.	Let me say 'amen' betimes ² , lest the devil cross ³ my prayer, for here he comes in the
	likeness of a Jew. 19
	Enter, SHYLOCK.
	How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?
Shylock.	You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.
Salarino.	That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings ⁴ she flew withal.
Salanio.	And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged ⁵ ; and then it is the
	complexion ⁶ of them all to leave the dam 7 .
Shylock.	She is damned for it.
Salarino.	That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.
Shylock.	My own flesh and blood to rebel!
Salarino.	There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory ⁸ ;
	more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish ⁹ . But tell us,
	do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?
Shylock.	There I have another bad match ¹⁰ —a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show
	his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug ¹¹ upon the mart ¹² ;
	let him look to his bond! he was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond! he
	was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond! 40
	
	1. To keep his name company: to add to his name. 2. Betimes: in good
	time.3. Cross: frustrate. 4. Wings: her boy's dress. 5. Fledged: fully
	feathered. 6. Complexion: nature. 7. Dam: mother, bird. 8. Jet and
	ivory: black and white. 9. Rhenish: white wine (from the Rhine valley).
	10. Match: transaction. 11. Smug: try. 12. Mart: market.

the good, the honest Antonio,-O, I wish that I knew an adjective worthy of being added to his name!—

Salar. Come, put an end to this preliminary stalk.

Salan. What do you mean? O, the sum and substance is that he has indeed lost a ship.

Salar. I hope it may be the last of his losses.

Salan. Let me quickly say "Amen" to that prayer before the devil is able to frustrate it, for

here comes the devil in the form of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Hulloa, -Shylock! What news today among the merchants?

Shylock. You know quite well, none so well as you two, that my daughter has run away.

Salar. That is sure. I myself know the very tailor who made the suit of clothes in, which she

ran away.

Salan. And Shylock, for his part, knew that the young bird was fully fledged (ready to fly),

and then it is the nature of all young birds to leave the parent (dam).

Shylock. Well, she will be damned for doing so.

Salan. That is certain, if she is judged by the devil. Shy. For my own blood relation to turn against me!

Salar. There is more difference between your flesh and hers than there is between black and

white, more difference between your blood and hers than there is between cheap common wine and the best Rhine wine. But tell me, have you heard whether Antonio

has lost a ship at sea or not?

Shy. There I have another bad bargain—a bankrupt, a spendthrift, who dare hardly show

his face on the Exchange. A beggar, he who used to come smiling, so selfsatisfied, into the market. He had better see that he fulfils his bond. He used to call me usurer, and he used to lend money free of interest as an act of Christian kindness. Let him be

careful to redeem his bond in time.

Salarino. Shylock. Why I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh-what's that good for? To bait fish withal! If it will feed nothing else. It will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me. And hindered me half a million laughed at my losses mocked at my gains, scorned enemies: and what 's his reason? I am a jew. Hath not a jew eyes? Hath not a jew hands, organs dimensions², senses, affections³, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same disease healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility⁴? If a Christian revenge a Jew, what wrong should his sufferance be by the Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you⁵ teach me, I will execute and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter a servant

Servant. Salanio. Gentlemen my master Antonio is at his house, and desired to speak with you both.

We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter Tubal

Salanio.

Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched⁵, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

68

(Exeunt Salanio, Salarino and Servant)

Shylock. Tubal. How now, Tubal! What news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

1. Hindered me: caused me to lose. 2. Dimensions: limbs. 3. Affections: likes. 4 Humility: Patient submission or forbearance. 5. A third cannot be matched: a third cannot be found.

Salar: Well, I am sure that if he fails, you will never take his flesh. What good would that be to you?

To use as bait for fish. If it is good for nothing else, it will gratify my revenge. He has disgraced me and caused me losses equal to half a million ducats. He has laughed at my losses and mocked my gains, poured scorn on my nation, interfered to prevent my business deals, encouraged my enemies, and all for what reason? That I am a Jew. Has not a Jew eyes like other men? Has he not hands, physical organs, bodily form, the same senses, likes and passions? Is he not nourished with the same food as other men, hurt by the same weapons, affected by the same diseases, healed by the same medicines, warmed by summer and cooled by winter just as a Christian is? If you pierce a Jew's skin, does he not bleed? If you tickle him, does he not laugh? If you poison him, will he not die? And if you injure him, will he not have his revenge? If we are like you in all the other things we shall also be like you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, where do you see him submit patiently (as the Bible enjoins)? No he will take revenge. If a Christian wrongs a Jew, what should the Jew's reaction be, according to the Christian example? Why, it should be revenge! So the villainy that Christians teach me, I shall carry out, and it will be strange if I cannot even improve upon their example.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Gentlemen, my master, Antonio, is at his home and wishes to speak to you both.

Salan. We have been everywhere searching for him.

Enter TUBAL

Salan. Here comes another of the Jews. We could not find a third to match these two unless the devil himself were to make up the company. (Salarino, Salanio and servant go out)

Shylock. Well, what now, Tubal? What news from. Genoa? Have you found my daughter? Tubal. I went to several places where they gave me news about her, but I was not able to

find her.

Shy.

Shylock.

Why, there, there, there!—a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt!—The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now; two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed 1 at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: why, thou loss upon loss; the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing: no tears but of my shedding.

Tubal. Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,-

Shylock. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tubal. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis. Shylock. I thank God, I thank God. Is it true? Is it true?

Tubal. I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shylock. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa? Tubal. Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats. 90

Shylock. Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting²! four-score ducats.

Tubal. There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company in Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break³.

Shylock. I am very glad of it; I'll plague him; I'll torture him: I am glad of it. 96

Tubal. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shylock. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal—it was my turquoise⁴, I had of it Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tubal. But Antonio is certainly undone⁵.

1. Hearsed: "in her coffin." 2. At a sitting: In a single place of entertainment. 3. Break: go bankrupt. 4. Turquoise: a greenish-blue precious stone. 5. Undone: ruined.

Shy.

Well, there! A diamond lost that cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt! Our nation never suffered so heavily under our ancient curse until now; I never felt its effect till now. -Two thousand ducats in that alone, • and many other precious jewels. I wish that my daughter lay dead before me, as long as that diamond were in her ear. I wish that she were in her coffin before me, as long as my ducats were in her coffin! Have you no news of them? Why this loss for me, and so much spent in the search? O, what loss upon loss! The thief has stolen so much, and now so much has been spent in trying to find the thief; no satisfaction and no revenge. Every bit of ill-luck that is around seems to fall upon me. I am the only one who has to give out sighs of grief; I alone seem to have to shed tears.

Tubal. O, other men have also bad luck; Antonio, as I heard in Genoa—

Shy. What! Has he had bad luck?

Tubal. He has had one of his merchant ships wrecked while coming from Tripoli.

Shy. I thank you, good Tubal. Good news! That is good.

Tubal. I spoke with some of the sailors who were saved from the wreck.

Shy. I thank you, good Tubal. That is good news. Ha, ha! Where did you meet them? In Genoa?

Tubal. Yes. I heard that in one single night in Genoa, your daughter spent eighty ducats.

Shy, That news pierces me like a dagger. I shall never see my money again. Eighty ducats at one time! Eighty ducats!

Tubal. Several of Antonio's creditors travelled with *me* back to Venice, and they all said that he cannot avoid going bankrupt.

Shy. I am glad of it. I shall persecute him and torture him. O, I am glad of it!

Tubal. One of them showed me a ring which he got from your daughter, in exchange for a monkey.

Shy. Shame upon her! You torture me, Tubal. That was my torquoise ring. My wife Leah gave it to me before I married her. I would not have exchanged it for a regiment of monkeys.

Tubal. But Antonio is certainly ruined.

Shylock. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee¹ me an officer; bespeak him² a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit³; for, were he out of Venice, I can make what merchandise⁴ I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue⁵; so, good Tubal—at our synagogue, Tubal. (Exeunt.

SCENE. II. Belmont. A hall in Portia's House. The curtain is drawn back and the caskets are seen. In the gallery musicians are waiting. BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants.

Portia.

I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong, I lose your company: therefore, forbear awhile. There's something tells me (but it is not love) 5 I would not lose you; and, you know yourself, Hate counsels not in such a quality⁶. But lest you should not understand me well,— And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought.— I would detain you here some month or two 10 Before you venture for me. I could teach you How to choose right, but I am then forsworn'; So will I never be: so may you miss me;. But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin, That I had been forsworn. Beshrew⁸ your eyes, They have O'erlook'd me and divided me: 15 One half of me is yours, the other half yours, Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours, And so all yours! O, these naughty times Puts bars ¹⁰ between the owners and their rights! And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so 11 — 20 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I. I speak too long; but 'tis to peize 12 the time, To eke¹³ it and to draw it out in length, To stay you from election ¹⁴.

^{1.} Fee: engage. 2. Bespeak him: book his services. 3. If he forfeit: if he becomes liable for the penalty. 4. Merchandise: profit. 5. Synagogue: Jewish place of worship. 6. Quality: manner. 7. 1 am then forsworn: then I should have broken my oath. 8. Beshrew: curse (used playfully). 9. O'erlook'd: cast a spell on. 10. Bars: obstacles. 11. Prove it so: if it prove to be so. 12. Peize: retard (by putting weights). 13. Eke: prolong. 14. Election: choice.

Shy.

That's true, that's very true. Go ahead, Tubal, and engage a lawyer to handle the case for me. Engage him a fortnight beforehand. I shall cut Antonio's heart out if he fails to meet the bond, for, if once I could get rid of him out of Venice, I could make as much profit as I like. Go ahead and do it, Tubal, and then meet me at our church. (*They both depart*)

SCENE II. Belmont. A Room in Portia's house. Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, and their followers.

Por.

I beg of you delay; wait for a day or two before you make the choice. If you choose wrongly, I shall lose your company, so wait a while. Something, though it is not love, tells me not to lose you; and you know well that hate does not give such advice. But in case you misunderstood me, for, after all, a maiden has no other choice but to think things which may not be expressed, I should like to keep you here for a month or two before you make the venture for me. I could tell you which is the right casket to choose, but then I should have broken my oath, and that is a thing I shall never do. May your eyes be confounded! They have cast a spell on me and divided me. One half of me is yours, and the other half is yours. I should say "my own", but if mine, then it is yours, so all of me is yours. O, these bad times which place obstacles between owners and their belongings, so that, although all yours, I am not yet yours. If it prove that I cannot be yours, then may Fortune be damned for causing it, and not I. But I am speaking too much. I do so only to draw out the time, to spread it out and prolong it to the fullest extent, to hold you back from making the choice.

Bassanio.	Let me choose;	
-	For as I am, I live upon the rack.	25
Portia.	Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess	
	What treason there is mingled with your love.	
Bassanio.	None but that ugly treason of mistrust ² ,	
	Which makes me fearth' enjoying of my love:	
	There may as well be amity ³ and life	30
	'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.	
Portia.	Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,	
	When mean enforced ⁴ do speak anything.	
Bassanio.	Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.	
Portia.	Well then, confess and live.	
		35
Bassanio.	'Confess' and 'love'	
	Had been the very sum of my confession;	
	O happy torment, when my torturer	
	Doth teach me answers for deliverance!	
	But let me to my fortune and the caskets.	40
Portia.	Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:	
	If you do love me, you will find me out.	
	Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.	
	Let music sound while he doth make his choice;	
	Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,	45
	Fading in music: that the comparison	
	May stand more proper ⁵ , my eye shall be the stream	
	And watery death-bed for him	
	He may win;	
	And what is music then? Then music is	
	Even as the flourish ⁶ when true subjects bow	50
	To a new-crowned monarch: such it is	20
	As are those dulcet ⁷ sounds in break of day	
	That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear,	
	1. Upon the rack: in a state of torture. 2. Mistrust: doubt. 3. Amity:	
	friendship agreement. 4. Enforced: compelled. 5. Proper: complete.	
	6. Flourish: the sounding of trumpets. 7. Dulcet: sweet.	

Bass. Let me make the choice, for, as things are, I live in torment.

Por. If you are being tormented, Bassanio, then there must be some treacherous fault mingled with your love.

Bass. Nothing but that ugly feeling of doubt, which makes me dread that I may not enjoy my love. There could not be friendship and union between snow and fire any more than there could between treason and my love.

Por. Yes, but I fear. you are speaking compelled by torture, and men tortured to speak will confess anything.

Promise to spare me, and I shall confess the truth.Por.Well, then, confess and your life will be spared.

Bass. 'Confess' and `Love'—these words are the gist of my confession. O, happy torture, when my torturer teaches me the answers which are to liberate me! But let me go and have my fortune settled, by making the choice of the caskets.

Por. Come away, then! My portrait is locked up in one of them. If you truly love me, you will choose the right one. Nerissa and you others, all stand aside; then, should he fail, he will die as the swan is said to die, fading away in music. To make the comparison more complete, my eyes (full of tears) shall be his stream and watery death-bed (as the river is to the swan). He may succeed, and then, what is the music? Then it will be like the notes of trumpets, when loyal subjects bow down before a newly-crowned ruler; it will be like the sweet sounds which waken the dreaming bride-groom at daybreak, and tell him that his marriage.

	And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,	
	With no less presence ¹ , but with much more love,	55
	Than young Alcides, when he did redeem ²	
	The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy	
	To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice ³ ;	
	The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives ⁴ ,	
	With bleared visages ⁵ , come forth to view	60
	The issue ⁶ of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!	
	Live thou, I live: with much more dismay	
	I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.	
A so	ng whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself.	
	Tell me where is fancy bred, Or in the heart or in the hand? How	
	begot ⁸ , how nourished?	
	Reply, reply.	
	It is engender' d ⁹ in the eyes,	
	With gazing fed; and fancy dies	
	In the cradle where it lies.	70
	Let us all ring fancy's knell:	
	I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.	
All.	Ding, dong, bell.	
Bassanio.	So may the outward shows ¹⁰ be least themselves;	
	The world is still 11 deceived with ornament.	
	In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,	
	But, being seasoned with a gracious ¹² voice,	
	Obscures the show of evil? In religion,	
	What damned error, but some sober brow	80
	Will bless it and approve it with a text,	
	Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?	
	There is no vice so simply but assumes	
	Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:	
	How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false	85
	1. Presence: dignity. 2. Redeem: save. 3. Sacrifice: the one offered as	
	a sacrifice (Hesione). 4. Dardanian wives: Trojan women. 5. Bleared	

^{1.} Presence: dignity. 2. Redeem: save. 3. Sacrifice: the one offered as a sacrifice (Hesione). 4. Dardanian wives: Trojan women. 5. Bleared visages: tear-stained faces. 6. Issue: result. 7. Fancy: love. 8. Begot: begotten, born. 9. Engender'd: born. 10. Shows: appearances. 11. Still: always. 12. Gracious: fine, eloquent.

day has come. Now Bassanio goes, with as much dignity and with much more love than did the young Hercules, when he saved the virgin who was offered as a sacrifice by the weeping people of Troy to the sea-monster. I stand here like Hesione, who was offered up as the sacrifice. The rest of you who stand aside are like the Trojan women, with tear-stained faces, come out to witness the result of the affair. Go forward, my Hercules! If you live, I live. I watch the test much more anxiously than you, who have to perform it.

(A song is sung, while Bassanio studies the writings on the caskets)

Tell me, where is love born,

Is it in the heart or in the head?

How is it born and how is it nourished?

It originates in the eyes;

It is fed with loving glances;

It dies in the eyes, where it was born.

Let us all sound for love the funeral bell:

I shall begin it—Ding, Dong, bell.

All. Ding, Dong, bell.

Bassanio. Often outer appearances have no real truth. The world of men is always deceived by things ornamental. In the law courts, a case that is bad and dishonest may be pleaded in a fine eloquent voice which covers up the face of the evil. In religion, no sin is so bad but some one with grave face will support it and quote a text from scriptures to justify it, so hiding the badness with fair and coloured words. Even the most simple vice has some outward resemblance to virtue. How many cowards with hearts as

Portia.

Bassanio.

airs of sand, wear yet upon their chins, beards of Hercules and frowning Mars;	90
, inward searched, have livers white as milk ¹ ;	
these assume but valour's excrement ²	
nder them redoubted ³ ! Look on beauty,	
you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;	9:
ch therein works a miracle in nature,	
ing them lightest that wear most of it.	
e those crisped ⁴ snaky ⁵ golden locks	
ch make such wanton gambols with the wind,	
n supposed fairness, often known	
e the dowry of a second head,	
skull that bred them in the sepulchre.	
ornament is but the guiled ⁶ shore	100
most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf	
ng ⁷ an Indian beauty; in a word,	
seeming truth which cunning times put on	
ntrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy ⁸ gold,	
food for Midas, I will none of thee,	103
none of thee, thou pale and common drudge ⁹	
en man and man : but thou, thou meagre 10 lead,	
ch rather threatenest than dost promise aught,	
paleness moves me more than eloquence;	
here choose I: joy be the consequence!	110
Servitor gives the Key	
le) How all the other passions fleet to air,	
oubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,	
shudd'ring fear, and green-eyed jealousy!	
ve, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy 11	
easure ¹² rain thy joy; scant this excess!	
too much thy blessing; make it less,	
ear I surfeit!	115
t find I here?	
(Opening the leaden casket) Portia's counterfeit 13! What demi-god 14	
11/	

^{1.} White as milk: cowardly. 2. Excrement: outward show. 3. Redoubted formidable. 4. Crisped: curly. 5. Snaky: winding. 6, Guiled: treacherous. 7. Veiling: covering. 8. Gaudy: showy. 9. Drudge: slave. 10. Meagre: of little worh. I1. Ecstasy: great emotion, excessive joy. 12. Measure: moderation. 13. Counterfeit: likeness. 14. Demi-god: semi-divine artist.

unreliable as a stairway built of sand yet wear on their chins beards like those of the god Hercules or the steem-faced Mars? But examined inwardly their livers are cowardly, white as milk, and they assume only the outward show of valour to make themselves formidable. Consider beauty, and you will see that it can be bought by weight (in a chemist's shop), and that makes a seeming contradiction in Nature, for those who wear most of this purchased beauty are lightest (in character). It is the same with some curly, winding, golden hair (or wigs) which play so lively in the wind over a face supposed to be beautiful, but often we know that they have been taken from another head, and the skull on which they grew is lying in the tomb. So adornments may be looked upon as a treacherous shore bounding a dangerous sea; a lovely scarf covering a dusky face. In short, an appearance of truth which the crafty put on to deceive even the wisest. So, O showy gold, which King Midas could not eat, I shall have nothing to do with you. Nor with you, O silver, pale and ordinary slave, passing from man to man. But I choose you, O lead of little value, who seem .to threaten rather than to promise anything in your inscription. Your blunt message moves me more than any eloquent words could do, and I make you my choice. May the result be joyful!

Portia. (Aside) Now may all other emotions evaporate into the air, such as feelings of doubt, despair rashly conceived, trembling fear and the green-eyed fiend, jealousy! O, thou God of love, be calm and diminish this strong emotion! Reduce this excess of bliss, for I feel your gift too strongly. Make it less, lest I suffer from excess.

Bass. What is this that I find? (Opens the leaden casket) Fair Portia's portrait! What semi-divine artist has so closely

Portia.

Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes? Or whether, riding on the balls of mine, Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips, Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar	120
Should sunder ¹ such sweet friends. Here in her hairs The painter plays the spider and bath woven A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men, Faster than gnats ² in cobwebs—But her eyes! How could he see to do them? having made one,	125
Methinks it should have power to steal both his And leave itself unfurnish'd ³ . Yet look, how far The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow In underprizing it, so far this shadow Doth limp behind ^s the substance ⁶	130
Here's the scroll,	
The continent ⁷ and summary of my fortune	
(Reads) You that choose not by the view,	
Chance as fair ⁸ , and choose as true!	135
Since this fortune falls to you,	
Be content, and seek no new.	
If you be well please with this,	
And hold your fortune for your bliss,	
Turn you where your lady is,	140
And claim her with a loving kiss.	
A gentle scroll. (he turns to Portia)	
Fair lady, by your leave;	
I come by note ⁹ , to give and to receive.	
Like one of two contending in a prize,	
That thinks he hath done well in people's eye,	145
Hearing applause and universal shout,	
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt	
Whether those peals of praise be his or no,	
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so;	
As doubtful whether what I see be true,	150
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified 10 by you.	
You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,	
Such as I am; though for myself alone	
I would not be ambitious in my wish,	
To wish myself much better; yet for you	155
1. Sunder: separate. 2. Gnats: small flies. 3. Unfurnish'd: without a	

^{1.} Sunder: separate. 2. Gnats: small flies. 3. Unfurnish'd: without a neighbour. 4. Shadow: likeness. 5. Limp behind: fall short of. 6. Substance: original. 7. Continent: that which contains. 8. Chance as fair: may you be fortunate. 9. By note: as directed. 10. Ratified: approved.

approached God's work of creating? Do these eyes move, or is it that, moving in unison with my eyeballs, they seem in motion? Here are her lips slightly apart by the action of her sweet breath. The breath is a sweet partition to separate two such sweet friends. Here in her golden hair the painter has worked like a spider, making a golden web to capture the hearts of men, faster than gnats are trapped in cobwebs. But how was he able to see to paint her eyes? When he had painted one, it seems to me that it should have had power to steal both of his, leaving itself without a neighbour. Yet see to what an extent the words of my praise underestimate this likeness, for to that extent the portrait falls short of the original. Here is the writing which contains and summarises my destiny.

(*Reads*) "You who have not chosen by the eye alone, may you always be fortunate and choose as truly as here! Since this fortune has fallen to your lot, be satisfied and seek no other. If you are well pleased with this, and look on this fortune as your happiness, then turn to where your loved lady awaits you and bestow a loving kiss upon her."

A beautiful document, Fair lady, with your permission I come as directed, to give a kiss and receive one. I am like one of two competitors for a prize who thinks he has done well in the eyes of spectators, since he hears applause and a general shout. He is giddy with excitement, still looking around in some doubt as to whether those shouts of applause are for him or not. So, trebly fair lady, am I standing here, doubting whether what I say can be true until it is fully confirmed, vouched for and approved by you.

Por.

You see me as I stand here, Lord Bassanio. As far as my own desires are concerned, I would have no ambitious wishes that I might be better. But for your sake I wish that I might be

Bassanio.

Nerissa.

I would be trebled twenty times myself—	
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich:	
That only to stand high in your account ¹ ,	
I might in virtues, beauties, livings ² , friends ³ ,	160
Exceed account ³ ; but the full sum of me ⁴	160
Is sum of somethingwhich, to term in gross ⁵	
Is an unlesson'd ⁶ girl, unschool'd ⁷ unpractised ⁸	
Happy in this, she is not yet so old	
But she may learn; happier than this,	1.65
She is not bred so dull but she can learn;	165
Happiest of all in that her gentle spirit	
Commits itself to yours to be directed,	
As from her lord, her governor, her king	
Myself and what is mine to you and yours Is now converted ⁹ But now I was the lord	170
Is now converted'But now I was the lord	170
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,	
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,	
This house, these servants, and this same myself	
Are yours—my lord's—I give them with this ring;	155
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,	175
Let it presage ¹⁰ the ruin of your love And be my vantage ¹¹ to exclaim on ¹² you.	
And be my vantage 'to exclaim on' you.	
Madam, you have bereft me of all words,	
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;	400
And there is such confusion in my powers ¹³ ,	180
As, after some oration fairly spoke	
By a beloved prince, there doth appear	
Among the buzzing pleased multitude;	
Where every something, being blent together,	
Turns to a wild of nothing ¹⁴ , save of joy,	185
Express'd and not express'd	
But when this ring	
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence!	
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!	
My lord and lady, it is now our time,	
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper	190
To cry good joy; good joy, my lord and lady!	
1.4	-

^{1.} Account: estimation. 2. Livings: property. 3. Exceed account: defy description. 4. The full sum of me: the sum total of myself. 5. To term in gross: to express briefly. 6. Unlesson'd: untaught. 7. Unschool'd: untrained. 8. Unpractised: inexperienced. 9. Converted: transferred. 10. Presage: foretell. 11. Vantage: opportunity. 12. Exclaim on: cry against. 13. Powers: bodily faculties. 14. A wild of nothing: a wild confusion of sound, expressing nothing.

three times twenty what I am, a thousand times more beautiful, ten thousand times more rich, I wish that, only to stand high in your estimation, I might defy all description in virtues, in beauty, in property, and in friends. But the sum total of myself is the total of something which may be expressed in brief as an inexperienced girl, untrained, unaccustomed in life. I am happy in this point, that I am not yet too old to learn; even happier because I am not so slow of nature that I cannot learn; happiest of all because I have a gentle spirit which I entrust to your spirit to be guided as if by its lord, its governor, its king. Myself and all that is mine I now transfer to you. A moment ago I was the ruler of this fine mansion, mistress over all my servants, and monarch of my own body and soul; and now, even at this moment, the mansion, the servants, and myself are all yours, Lord Bassanio. I give them to you along with this ring. If you ever part with it or lose it or give it away, let that be a sign that your love for me is dead and I may then accuse you of that.

Madam, you deprive me of all suitable words of reply. Only my blood, racing through Bass. my veins, tries to answer you. There is the same confusion in my physical senses as follows after the speech of a well-beloved prince, amid a murmuring and delighted audience. There the various feelings, all blended into one, produce an emotional state of pure joy, which is manifested by its very inability to express itself. But when this ring leaves my finger, may it be only because life has left me. Then you nay venture safely to say that Bassanio is dead.

Ner. My lord and lady, it is now time for those of us who have stood aside and seen our hopes fulfilled to wish you the greatest joy. Good happiness be yours, my lord and lady!

Gratiano. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,

I wish you all the joy that you can wish

For I am sure you can wish none from me: And when your honours mean to solemnize

The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,

Even at that time I may be married too,

Bassanio. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife. Gratiano. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.

(he takes Nerissa by the hand)

200

195

My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours;

You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;

You loved, I loved,—for intermission²,

No more pertains to me³, my lord, than you.

Your fortune stood upon the caskets there.

And so did mine too, as the matter falls⁴;

For wooing here until I sweat again.

And swearing till my very roof was dry

With oaths of love, at last—if promise last—

I got a promise of this fair one here.

To have her love, provided that your fortune 210

Achieved⁵ her mistress.

Portia. Is this true, Nerissa?

Nerissa. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal. Bassanio. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gratiano. Yes, faith, my lord.

Bassanio. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

Gratiano. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel⁶? What, and my old Venetian friend

Salerio?

^{1.} So: provided that. 2. Intermission: a period of waiting. 3. No more pertains to me: is no more welcome to me. 4. As the matter falls: as things turn out. 5. Achieved: won. 6. Infidel: the Jewess.

Grat. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady, I wish for you all the joy that you could ever wish for yourself, knowing that you could never wish any from me. But, when your honoured selves mean to celebrate this engagement into which you have entered, I request that you will allow me to be married at the same time.

Bass. Most certainly, provided that you are able to find a wife.

Grat. I may thank you, my lord, for having found one for me. My eyes, my lord, can be as swift to recognise beauty as your eyes. You saw the mistress and I looked upon the maid; just as you quickly loved, so did I. Now a period of waiting will be no more agreeable to me than to you. Your destiny depended on the choice you made among the caskets here, and so did mine, as things turned out. For, making love here with all my energies, and swearing vows till the very roof of my mouth was dry, at last, if her promise still holds good, I got the promise from the fair Nerissa here that she would love me, provided you had the good fortune to win her mistress.

Por. Is this true, Nerissa?

Nor. Madam, it is quite true, provided it is pleasing to you.

Bass. And do you, Gratiano, intend to marry this lady in good faith?

Grat. Yes, indeed, my lord.

Bass. Then our marriage feast shall be honoured by having your marriage also added.

Grat. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his Jewess! What, there comes also my old

Venetian friend, Salerio!

	Enter LORENZO, JESSICA and SALI	ERIO
Bassanio.	Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;	220
	If that the youth of my new interest here	
	Have power to bid you welcome. (to Portia) By you	ır leave,
	I bid my very friends and countrymen,	
	Sweet Portia, welcome.	
Portia.	So do I, my lord -	225
	They are entirely welcome.	
Lorenzo.	I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,	
	My purpose was not to have seen you here;	
	But meeting with Salerio by the way,	
	He did entreat me, past all saying nay ² ,	
	To come with him along.	230
Salerio.	I did, my lord;	
	And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio	
	Commends him ³ to you. (Gives Bassanio a letter.	
Bassanio.	Ere I ope ⁴ his letter,	235
	I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.	
Salerio.	Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;	
	Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there	
	Will show you his estate ⁵ .	(Bassanio opens the letter.
Gra.	Nerissa, cheer you stranger; bid her welcome.—	240
(NE)	R <i>ISSA greets</i> JESSICA : GRATIANO <i>salutes</i> SALEF	(OIS
	Your hand, Salerio: what's the news from Venice?	
	How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?	
	I know he will be glad of our success;	
	We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.	
Sal.	I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!	
		(they talk apart.

^{1.} The youth of my new interest: my newly acquired rights. 2. Past all saying nay: not taking any refused. 3. Commends him: sends his greetings. 4. Ope: open. 5. Estate: condition.

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA and SALERIO,

a messenger from Venice.

Bass. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome to this place, if indeed my newly-acquired rights here have the power to bid you welcome. With your permission, sweet Portia, I bid welcome to my close friends and countrymen.

Por. So do I, my lord. They are fully welcome.

Lor. I thank your honour. As far as I am concerned, my Lord, my intention was not to have seen you here, but I met Salerio by the way, and he begged of me, not taking any refusal, to come along with him.

Solar. I did so, my lord. I have reason for this. Signior Antonio sends you his greetings. (Gives Bassanio a letter).

Bass. Before I open his letter, please tell me how my good friend is.

Salar. Not sick, my lord, unless it is in his mind. But his letter there will inform you of his condition. (Bassanio opens the letter).

Grat. Nerissa, be courteous to this strange lady and bid her Welcome. Shake hands, Salerio. What news do you bring from Venice? How is that noble merchant, good Antonio? I know he will be glad to hear of our success. We are like modern Jasons, and we have won the Golden Fleece.

Saler. I wish that you could have won the gold that he has lost. (they talk apart)

There are shrewd¹ contents in you same paper, Portia.

That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek—

Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world

Could turn so much the constitution²

Of any constant³ man. What, worse and worse!

250

(She lays her hand on his shoulder.

With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself, And I must freely have the half of anything That this same paper brings you.

Bassanio. O sweet Portia,

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words

That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,

When I did first impart my love to you,

I freely told you, all the wealth I had

Ran in my veins—I was a gentleman—

And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,

260

Rating⁴ myself at nothing, you shall see

How much I was a braggart³. When I told you

My state was nothing, I should then have told you

That I was worse than nothing; for indeed,

I have engaged myself to a dear friend,

Engaged my friend to his mere⁶ enemy,

To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;

The paper as the body of my friend,

And every word in it a -gaping wound,

Issuing life-blood

But is it true, Salerio?

270

Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hif⁸?

From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,

From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?

And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch

Of merchant-marring rocks?

Salerio. Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had The present money¹⁰ to discharge the Jew.

1. Shrewd: sharp, bitter. 2. Constitution: normal condition. 3. Constant : of firm nerves. 4. Rating : valuing. 5. I was a braggart : I was actually boasting. 6. Mere: absolute. 7. Issuing: discharging. 8. Hit: attained its object. 9. Merchant-marring: which ruin merchants. 10. The present money: money available at once.

Por.

There are some sharp tidings in that letter which have made Bassanio's face turn pale. Some dear friend must have died, for nothing else in the world would so change the mood of any firm-minded man. What, he grows worse and worse! With your permission, Bassanio. You and I are now one, so I must freely have a share of anything that this letter has brought to you.

(She lays her hand on his shoulder.)

Bass.

O, sweet Portia! Here are some of the most unpleasant words that ever were written on paper! Gentle lady, when I first told you of my love, I freely told you that all the wealth I possessed consisted in my noble blood, since I was a gentleman. I was speaking truly then. Yet, dear lady, when I estimated my wealth at nothing, you will see that even then I was exaggerating. When I told you that I had nothing, I should have told you that I actually had less than nothing, for indeed. I have been obliged to borrow from a dear friend, and have made my friend pledge himself to his bitter enemy, in order to increase my resources. Here is a letter, lady. The paper may be compared to the body of my friend, and every word on it to an open wound from which life-blood is streaming. But is it true, Salerio? Have all his business undertakings failed? What, has not one attained its object? Coming from Tripolis, from Mexico, and from England, from Lisbon, Barbary, and India? Has not one ship escaped being wrecked on the dread rocks which so often ruin merchants?

Salar.

Not one, my lord. Besides it-turns out that even if he had money available at once to repay the Jew, he would not take

	He would not take it. Never did I know A creature, that did bear the shape of man. So keen and greedy to confound a man; He plies the duke at morning and at night, And doth impeach the freedom of the state, If they deny him justice; twenty merchants, The duke himself, and the magnificoes Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him; But none can drive him from the envious plea	280
_	Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.	
Jes.	When I was with him, I have heard him swear	
	To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen.	290
	That he would rather have Antonio's flesh	
	Than twenty times the value of the sum	
	That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,	
	If law, authority, and power deny not.	
D 41	It will go hard with poor Antonio.	
Portia.	Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?	
Bassanio.	The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,	
	The best conditioned ⁸ and unwearied spirit	
	In doing courtesies ⁹ , and one in whom	200
	The ancient Roman honour more appears There are that draws breath in Halve	300
Doutia	Than any that draws breath in Italy.	
Portia. Bass.	What sum owes he the Jew?	
ваss. Portia.	For me, three thousand ducats.	
rorna.	What, no more? Pay him six thousand, and deface ¹⁰ the bond;	
	-	
	Double six thousand, and then treble that, Refere a friend of this description	
	Before a friend of this description Shall lose a hair through Bassania's fault	
	Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault First go with me to church and call me wife,	
	And then away to Venice to your friend;	310
	For never shall you lie by Portia's side	310
	With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold	
	To pay the petty debt twenty times over:	
	1. Confound: destroy. 2. Plies: presses. 3. Doth impeach: threatens to take legal action. 4. Magnificoes noblemen. 5. Of greatest port: of the highest standing. 6. Persuaded: reasoned. 7. Envious plea: revengeful	
	alaire O Dont and ditioned the atmosphered O Countries and after a high	

claim. 8. Best conditioned: best natured, 9. Courtesies: acts of its object.

10. Deface: to destroy.

it. Never have I know a living being in the form of a man so keen and eager to destroy another man. He keeps applying to the Duke, morning and evening, and threatens to take legal, action against the city's prerogative of freedom if they refuse him justice. Twenty merchants, the Duke himself, and the noblemen of the highest standing, have all reasoned with him, but none can dissuade him from the revengeful claim for forfeiture of the bond, with fulfilment of justice.

Jess. When I was with him, I have heard him swear to Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen, that he would rather have Antonio's flesh than twenty times the value of the sum which Antonio owes him. And I know well, my lord, that unless the law and the higher powers refuse him, it will be a hard case for poor Antonio.

Por. Is it your dear friend who is in this trouble?

Bass. The dearest of all my friends, the kindest of men, the best-intentioned and most consistent in doing kindness to others, and one who displays the old Roman spirit of honour more than any other now living in Italy.

Por. How much money does he owe the Jew? Bass. On my behalf, three thousand ducats.

Bass. Three thousand ducats.

Por. What, no more than that? Pay him six thousand and tear up the bond. Double the six thousand, and then multiply that by three rather than allow a friend of this kind to lose a single hair through any fault of Bassanio. First come with me to church and have our marriage ceremony performed, and then set out for Venice to your friend. You must never lie by me as my husband while your mind is so distracted. You shall have gold to pay this

When it is paid, bring your true friend along.

My maid Nerissa and myself meantime

Will live as maids and widows...Come, away! For you shall hence upon your wedding-day

Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:

Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.

But let me hear the letter of your friend.

320

Bassanio.

Portia.

Shy.

(*Reads*) "Sweet, Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried², my creditors grow cruel, my estate³ is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure⁴—if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter."

O love, dispatch⁵ all business, and be gone!

Bassanio. Since I have your good leave to go away

I will make haste; but, till I come again, No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,

(Exeunt.

330

No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain⁶. (Exe.

SCENE III. Venice. A street before Shylock's House. Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and GAOLER.

Shylock. Gaoler, look at him⁷ tell not me of mercy;

This is the fool that lent out money gratis;

Gaoler, look to him.

Antonio. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond;

I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.

Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause;

But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:

The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,

Thou naughty⁸ gaoler, that thou art so fond⁹

To come abroad with him at his request.

10

5

^{1.} You shall hence: you shall for this reason. 2. Miscarried: met with disaster. 3. Estate: means. 4. Use your pleasure: please yourself. 5. Dispatch: finish, expedite. 6. Twain: too. 7. Look at him: keep him carefully in your charge. 8. Naughty unreliable. 9. Fond: foolish.

trifling debt twenty times over. When it is paid, bring your true friend back with you. My waiting maid, were spinsters or widows. Come now, for you shall go from here even on your weddingday. Now make your friends welcome and show a cheerful face. Since your friend has paid for you so dearly, I shall love you dearly. But let me hear what the letter of your friend says.

Bass. (Reads) "Dear Bassitno, my ships have all met with disaster, my creditors are growing cruel, my means have fallen very low and my bond to the Jew has been forfeited. Since in paying the penalty to him, it is impossible that I should survive, please regard all debts between you and me as settled, if I might only see you as I die, but in spite of my wish, please yourself. If your love for me does not impel you to come, pay no attention to this letter.

Por. O, my love, finish all your business here, and go!

Bass. Since I have your kind permission to go, I shall make haste. But till I come back, no sleep in bed shall lengthen my stay, and no rest shall keep me separated from you.

SCENE III. Venice. A street before Shylock's House. Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO and JAILER

Shylock. Jailer, keep him in your charge. Do not speak to me of mercy. This is the fool who gave loans without interest. Look after him.

Ant. But listen, good Shylock.

Shy. No, I must have my bond. Do not argue against my having my bond. I have sworn an

oath that I shall have my bond. You called me a dog when you had no reason to do so, so, since I am a dog, beware of my teeth. The Duke will let me have justice. I am surprised, you good-for-nothing jailer, that you dare to bring him outside the jail when

he asks you.

Antonio.	I pray thee, hear me speak.	
Shy.	I'll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak:	
	I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.	
	I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,	15
	To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield	
	To Christian intercessors. Follow not:	
	I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond.	(Exit.
Salarino.	It is the most impenetrable ² cur	
	That ever kept ³ with men.	20
Antonio.	Let him alone:	
	I'll follow him no more with bootless ⁴ prayers.	
	He seeks my life; his reason well I know:	
	I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures ⁵	
	Many that have at times made moan to me:	25
	Therefore he hates me	
Salarino.	I am sure the duke	
	Will never grant this forfeiture to hold ⁶ .	
Antonio.	The duke cannot deny the course of law:	
	For the commodity that strangers have	30
	With us in Venice, if it be denied,	
	Will much impeach ⁸ the justice of his state;	
	Since that the trade and profit of the city	
	Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go;	
	These griefs and losses have so bated me ⁹ ,	35
	That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh	
	To-morrow to my bloody creditor.	
	Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come	
	To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!	(Exeunt.

SCENE IV. Belmont. A hall in PORTIA'S House. Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHAZAR.

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,

1. Dull-eyed: stupid. 2. Impenetrable: that cannot be appeased. 3. Kept: lived. 4. Bootless: useless. 5. Forfeitures: penalties for non-payment. 6. To hold: to be exacted. 7. Commodity: privileges. 8. Will much impeach: will be a great accusation against. 9. Bated me: reduced me in body.

Ant. "I beg of you, hear me speak.

Shy. I shall have my bond; I will not hear you speak. I must have my bond, so speak no further. I shall not be turned into a soft fool, with eyes dimmed with tears, to shake my head and feel sorry, giving way to the Christians who plead with me. Do not follow

me; I shall have no talk with you. I must have my bond. (He goes out)

Salar. This • is the most cruel dog who ever lived among men.

Ant. Forget about him. I shall pursue him no more with useless appeals. He wants to take my life, and well I know his reasons. Often have I saved from his clutches many who have appealed to me, and therefore he hates me.

Salar. I am sure that the Duke will never allow this penalty to be enforced.

Ant. The Duke cannot refuse to let the law take its course. The rights which strangers have among us in Venice cannot be refused, or it will be a great accusation against the justice of our State, since the trade and business transactions here are among men of all nations. So you may go. These worries and losses have so reduced me in body that I shall hardly have a pound of flesh left tomorrow to pay my blood-thirsty creditor. Well, let us go, jailor. I pray to God that Bassanio may come to see me discharge his debt, and then I care for nothing else. (*They depart*).

SCENE IV. Belmont. A room in Portia's House. Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHAZAR.

Lor. Madam. although I say it openly before you, you have

	You have a noble and a true conceit 1	
	Of god-like amity ² ; which appears most strongly	
	In bearing thus the absence of your lord.	
	But if you knew to whom you show this honour,	5
	How true a gentleman you send relief,	
	How dear a lover of my lord your husband,	
	I know you would be prouder of the work	
	Than customary bounty ³ can enforce you.	
Portia.	I. never did repent for doing good,	10
	Nor shall not now: for in companions	
	That do converse and waste the time together,	
	Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,	
	There must be needs a like proportion	
	Of lineaments ⁴ , of manners and of spirit;	15
	Which makes me think that this Antonio,	
	Being the bosom ⁻ lover ⁵ of my lord,	
	Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,	
	How little is the cost I have bestow'd	
	In purchasing ⁶ the semblance of my soul ⁷	20
	From out the state of hellish cruelty!	
	This comes too near the praising of myself;	
	Therefore no more of it: hear other things.	
	Lorenzo, I commit into your hands	
	The husbandry and manage ⁸ of my house	25
	Until my lord's return: for mine own part,	
	I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow	
	To live in prayer and contemplation,	
	Only attended by Nerissa here,	
	Until her husband and my lord's return.	30
	There is a monastery two miles off;	
	And there will we abide. I do desire you	
	Not to deny this imposition ⁹ ,	
	The which my love and some necessity	
	Now lays upon you.	35
Lorenzo.	Madam, with all my heart:	
	1. Conceit: conception. 2. Amity: friendship. 3. Customary bounty:	
	your usual generosity. 4. Lineaments: features. 5. Bosom lover: dearest	
	friend 6 Purchasing redeeming 7 Semblance of my soul: likeness of	

^{1.} Conceit: conception. 2. Amity: friendship. 3. Customary bounty: your usual generosity. 4. Lineaments: features. 5. Bosom lover: dearest friend. 6. Purchasing: redeeming. 7. Semblance of my soul: likeness of my husband's soul. 8. Husbandry and manage: control and management. 9. Imposition: task.

a noble and true concept of divine friendship. It is shown most clearly in the way you endure the absence of your lord. But if you only knew the man to whom you have done this favour, if you knew how good a gentleman it is to whom you have sent help, how loving a friend he is of your husband, I know that you would be even more proud of what you have done than your customary generosity has already made you.

Por.

I have never regretted doing good, and shall not do so now. At any rate, when two friends have passed their time in intercourse together, bearing equal love for each other in their souls, there must be some similarity in face, in manners, and in disposition. This makes me think that Antonio, being the dearest friend of my husband, must therefore be like my husband. If such is the case, how very slight is the expense to which I have been put in redeeming the likeness of my husband's soul from a state of hellish misery! But my words sound too much like praise of myself, so I shall say no more on the subject. Lorenzo, I entrust to you the responsibility and management of my household till my husband returns. I myself have made a solemn vow to Heaven to live in prayer and meditation, with no other attendant except Nerissa, till her husband and mine return. There is a monastery two miles from here, and there we shall remain. I ask you not to decline this task, which my love and my present necessity make me place upon you.

Lor. Madam, with all my ability and zeal I shall obey you in your honoured commands.

	-0	
Portia.	My people 1 do already know my mind,	
	And will acknowledge you and Jessica	
	In place of Lord Bassanio and myself,	40
	And so farewell till we shall meet again.	
Lor.	Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!	
Jessica.	I wish your ladyship all heart's content.	
Por.	I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased	
	To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.	
	• •	(Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo.
	Now, Balthazar,	
	As I have ever found thee honest-true,	
	So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,	
	And use thou all the endeavour of a man	
	In speed to Padua: see thou render this	50
	Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;	
	And, look, what notes and garments he doth give t	hee.
	Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed ²	
	Unto the traject ³ , to the common ferry	
	Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,	
	But get thee gone: I shall be there before thee.	
Balthazar.	Madam, I go with all convenient speed.	
		(Exit.)
Portia.	Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand	
	That you yet know not of: we'll see our husbands	
	Before they think of us.	60
Nerissa.	Shall they see us?	
Portia.	They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit ⁴ ,	
	That they shall think we are accomplished ⁵	
	With that we lack hold thee any wager ⁶ ,	
	When we are both accoutred like young men,	
	I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,	
	And wear my dagger with the braver grace ⁸ ,	
	And speak between the change of man and boy	

^{1.} People: servants. 2. With imagined speed: with all conceivable speed.
3. Traject: ferry. 4. Habit: dress. 5. Accomplished: furnished. 6. Hold

thee any wager: bet with you any amount. 7. Accourred: equipped.

^{8.} With the braver grace: with a greater air of bravery.

Por. My servants already know my intentions, and will receive you and Jessica as master and mistress, in place of Lord Bassanio and myself. Till we meet again, goodbye!

Lor. May your thoughts be pleasant and your hours pass happily!

Jess. And I wish for you, my lady, the fulfilment of all the desires of your heart.

Por. I thank you for your wish, and it gives me pleasure to wish the same for you. Goodbye, Jessica.

(Jessica and Lorenzo go out).

Now, Balthazar, I have always found you honest and trustworthy in the past, and I hope I shall continue to do so in the future, take this letter, and make all the speed of which a man is capable in getting to Padua immediately. Give this letter into the hands of my cousin, Dr. Bellario. Whatever paper and robes he may give you, see that you bring them at once with all possible speed to the traject, as the public ferry is called, over which the trade route to Vienna passes. Waste no time in talking, but go at once. I shall be at the traject before you arrive.

Balth. Lady, I shall go-at once with all speed.

Por. Come, Nerissa! I have a plan ready for you that you do not know about as yet. We

shall see our husbands when they have no idea of seeing us.

Ner. Shall they see us at the same time?

Por. Yes, but in such dress that they shall think us to have the qualities of men. I am

prepared to wager any think you like that, when we are both dressed as young men, I shall be the finer youth of the two. I shall wear my dagger by my side with a greater air of boldness, and speak with just such a shrill voice as you hear when a boy's voice

is just passing into the deeper notes

With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps² Into a manly stride and speak of frays³ 70 Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint⁴ lies. How honourable ladies sought my love, Which I denying, they fell sick and died; I could not do withal⁵; then I'll repent, And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them; 75 And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell. That men shall swear I have discontinued school Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind A thousand raw⁷ tricks of these bragging Jacks, Which I will practise. 80 But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device When I am in my coach, which stays for us At the park-gate; and therefore haste away, For we must measure⁸ twenty miles to-day. (Exeunt.)

SCENE V. A garden leading up to Portia's House. Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.

Launcelot. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise you, I fear you⁹. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation¹⁰ of the matter: therefore be of good cheer, for, truly I think you are damped

Jessica. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

Launcelot. Truly, the more to blame he we were Christians enow¹¹ before; e'en as many as could well lived one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs ¹²: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher ¹³ on the coals for money.

Enter LORENZO.

Jessica. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

1. Reed: shrill. 2. Mincing steps: short quick steps. 3. Frays: fights. 4. Quaint: fanciful. 5. Could not do withal: could not help it. 6. Puny: petty. 7. Raw: childish. 8. Measure: travel. 9. 1 fear you: I fear for you. 10. Agitation: possibly, blunder for 'cogitation' (thought). 11. Enow: enough. 12. Hogs: pigs. 13. Rasher: a slice of bacon.

of a man. I shall take one manly stride for each two affected feminine steps that I take now, and I shall speak of fights like a fine boastful young man. I shall make up strange untruths of how honourable ladies made me offers of love, I shall say that I could not prevent them from doing this, but then I shall express sorrowful regrets, and wish nevertheless that I had not been the cause of their deaths. I shall repeat a score of such petty lies, and men will believe that I have left school no more than a year before. I have ready in my schemes a thousand of the boyish mannerisms which such boastful fools employ, and I shall display them. But come, and I shall unfold all my plan to you when we are in my carriage, which is now waiting for us at the park gate. Let us hasten off, for we have twenty miles to cover today.

SCENE V. In the Garden by PORTIA'S House. Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA..

Laun. Yes, it is indeed the case that children are punished for the sins of their fathers, and so I tell you I am afraid what may happen to you. I always speak to you plainly, so now I tell you about my anxiety on this point. Cheer up, for indeed I think you are fated to meet damnation after death.

Jess. But my husband's acts will save me, for he has made me into a Christian.

Laun. Then all the more blame will fall on him personally, for there are enough Christians already without making any more. If new Christians are produced in this manner, it will raise the price of pigs, for if we all become eaters of pork, we shall soon be unable to get for any money a slice of bacon to cook over the fire.

Enter LORENZO

Jess. I shall tell my husband what you say, Launcelot. Here he comes.

I shall grow jealous of you shortly. Lorenzo.

15 Launcelot.

Jessica.

Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out ¹. He tells me flatly ², there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork. 20

Lorenzo.

How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable³ in none only but parrots. Go in. sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

Launcelot. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper⁴ are you! then bid them prepare dinner. Lorenzo.

Launcelot. That is done too, sir; only-'cover', is the word.

Will you cover, then, sir? Lorenzo.

Launcelot. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

30

Lorenzo.

Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Launcelot. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits⁶ shall govern. (Exit. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

Lorenzo.

The fool hath planted in his memory An army of good words; and I do know A many fools, that stand in better place, Garnish'd like him, that for a tricksy word⁸

43

1. Are out: have guarrelled. 2. Flatly: directly, plainly. 3. Commendable : praiseworthy. 4. Wit-snapper: a witty person. 5. Cover: (pun) (1) to put the dishes on the table (2) to put the hat on the head. 6. Humours and conceits: inclinations and fanciful ideas. 7. Stand in better place: are of higher social rank. 8. Tricksy word: a tricky word, with a double meaning.

Lor. I shall soon become jealous of you, Launcelot, if I come upon you talking to my wife in quite places like this.

Jess. O, there is nothing for you to fear, Lorenzo. Launcelot and I have quarreled. He tells me plainly that I have no chance of salvation in Heaven because I am a Jew's daughter, and he says that you are not a good member of the Christian community since you increase the price of pork by converting Jews to Christianity.

Lor. How every foolish fellow seems to attempt foolish play upon words! I think the best type of wit will soon be to keep silence, and speech will be praiseworthy in none but parrots. Go, Launcelot, tell them to prepare for dinner.

Laun. They are already prepared for their dinner, sir, because they all possess stomachs.

Lor. What a witty fellow you are! Then tell them to prepare dinner.

Laun. That has also been done. It is only necessary for you to order it to be placed on the table.

Lor. Will you cover, then, sir? (Order the table to be covered with the dishes, etc.)

Laun. No sir, I shall not. I am too respectful to put my hat on in the presence of my superior. (Cover his head with his hat.)

Lor. What! Still more argument about niceties of language! Now will you try to display all your intelligence in one moment? Try to understand a plain man who speaks plain language; go to your fellow servants; tell them to spread the table and carry in the meat, and we shall come in to dinner.

Laun. Yes sir: the table shall be carried in and the meat shall be spread; as for your coming in to dinner sir, let that be guided by your own inclinations and ideas. (He goes out).

Lor. What discretion! How splendidly he chooses his words! The fool has assembled an army of good words in his memory, and I know of many fools who occupy higher positions than he does who are supplied with a similar stock, who will ignore the sense of a speech just because of some tricky double meaning which they can place on a word. How are you, Jessica? And now,

	Defy the matter.—How cheer'st thou, Jessica?	
	And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,	
	How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?	
Jessica.	Past all expressing ¹ . It is very meet ²	
	The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;	48
	For having such a blessing in his lady,	
	He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;	
	And if on earth he do not merit it,	
	In reason ³ he should never come to heaven.	
	Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match	53
	And on the wager lay ⁴ two earthly women,	
	And Portia one, there must be something else	
	Pawn'd ⁵ with the other, for the poor rude world	
	Hath not her fellow ⁶ .	
Lorenzo.	Even such a husband	58
	Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.	
Jessica.	Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.	
Lorenzo.	I will anon ⁷ : first, let us go to dinner.	
Jes.	Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach ⁸ .	
Lorenzo.	No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;	
	Then howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things	64
	I shall digets it.	
Jessica.	Well, I'll set you forth ⁹ .	(Exeunt.
	ACT IV	

ACT-IV

SCENE I. Venice. A Court of Justice; on a platform, there is a great chair of state with three lower chairs on either side; before there are tables for clerks, and lawyers etc.

Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO (guarded) BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO and others.

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

1. Past all expressing: more than words can express. 2. Meet: proper.

^{3.} In reason: one might reasonably expect. 4. Lay: stake. 5. Pawn'd: pledged. 6. Fellow: equal. 7. Anon: presently. 8. Stomach: inclination.

^{9.} Set you forth: set forth your qualities.

my dear, give me your opinion; how do you like Lord Bassanio's wife?

More than words can express! It will be necessary for Lord Bassanio to live an upright life, since he has such a blessing in his wife. He is experiencing the joys of heaven while he is still on the earth here, and if he does not merit them while on earth, he could never reasonably expect to get to heaven. If two heavenly gods were to play some game of skill, the wager staked on the result might be imagined to be two earthly women. Then if Portia were one of the two, there would have to be some additional stake of value added to the other woman, for this rough world could not produce Portia's equal.

Lor. And you possess a husband who has all the good qualities in him which you have described in her.

Jes. Indeed I should be consulted as to the truth of that remark.

Lor. I shall consult you presently; let us go in to dinner in the first place.

Jes. You may as well let me praise you while I have the inclination.

Lor. No, keep it to serve us entertaining talk while at the dinner table. Then it matters not what you say, for I shall digest it with the rest of my dinner.

Jes. Well, I shall set forth your various qualities.

ACT IV.

SCENE I. A Court of Justice in Venice. Enter The DUKE, The Nobles of Venice, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others

Duke. Is Antonio here?

Ant. Antonio. Duke.	Yes, Your Grace; I am ready. Ready, so please your grace. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to answer A stony ² adversary, an inhuman wretch Uncapable of pity, void and empty From any dram of mercy.	5
Antonio.	I have heard Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify ³	
	His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate ⁴ , And that no lawful means can carry me	10
	Out of his envy's ⁵ reach, I do oppose	10
	My patience to his fury, and am arm'd	
	To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,	
	The very, tyranny and rage of his.	
Duke.	Go one, and call the Jew into the court.	
Salerio.	He's ready at the door: he comes, my lord.	16
	Enter SHYLOCK.	
Duke.	Make room, and let him stand before our face.	
	Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,	
	That thou but leads't this fashion of thy malice ⁶	
	To the last hour of act ⁷ , and then 'tis thought	
	Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange	21.
	Than is thy strange apparent ⁸ cruelty;	
	And where thou now exact'st the penalty,	
	Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,	
	Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture ⁹ ,	2
	But touch'd with human gentleness and love,	26
	Forgive a moiety ¹⁰ of the principal;	
	Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,	
	That have of late so huddled on his back ¹¹ ,	
	Enow to press a royal merchant down	21
	And pluck ¹² commiseration ¹³ of his state From brassy bosoms ¹⁴ and rough hearts of flint ¹⁵ ,	31
	rioin brassy bosoms—and rough nearts of finit—,	_

^{1.} Answer: defend yourself against. 2. Stony: hard-hearted. 3. Qualify: soften. 4. Obdurate: obstinate. 5. Envy's: of malice. 6. Leads't this fashion of thy malice: keep on in this revengeful spirit. 7. To the last hour of act: up to the last moment. 8. Apparent: seeming, not real. 9. Loose the forfeiture: not claim the penalty. 10. Moiety: part. 11. Huddled on his back: heaped on him so plentifully. 12. Pluck: draw. 13. Commiseration: pity. 14. Brassy bosoms: bosoms hard as brass. 15. Hearts of flint: stony hearts.

Ant. Yes, Your Grace; I am ready.

Duke. I am sorry for you. You have come to defend yourself against an adversary with a

heart of stone, an inhuman wretch who does not know what pity is, quite lacking in

the slightest quality of mercy.

Ant. I have heard that Your Grace has taken great pains to soften the severity of the

proceedings but since he remains obstinate and there are no lawful means of rescuing me from his malice, I shall meet his spite with a spirit of patience. I have braced myself

to suffer with a quiet spirit the utmost that his tyranny and rage can do.

Duke. Go somebody, and summon the Jew into the court.

Salerio. He is already waiting at the door; here he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

Duke. Make room and let him stand before me. Shylock, every one thinks— and I also

think myself—that you only keep on in this revengeful spirit till the case is in its last stages, and then it is thought that you will suddenly show mercy and repentance in a way even more unexpected and strange than this strange cruelty. They say that, whereas you now insist on claiming the penalty, namely, a pound of this poor merchant's flesh, you will not only agree to abandon this claim, but will act according to human gentleness and love. Thus they expect that you will even forgive him payment of some proportion of the original sum of three thousand ducats, when you look sympathetically at the losses which have lately heaped on him so plentifully. They have been so severe as to ruin a merchant prince, and draw pity for his condition from bosoms hard as brass, and rough stony hearts, from uncultured Turks and Tartars who have never been

schooled

	From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd	
	To offices of tender courtesy ²	
	We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.	
Shy.	I have possess' d ³ your grace of what	
,-	I purpose;	36
	And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn	20
	To have the due and forfeit ⁴ of my bond.	
	If you deny it, let the danger light ⁵	
	Upon your charter and your city's freedom!	41
	You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have	
	A weight of carrion flesh ⁶ than to receive	
	Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that!	
	But, say, it is my humour ⁷ : is it answered?	46
	What if my house be troubled with a rat,	10
	And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats	
	To have it baned ⁸ ! What, are you answer'd yet?	
	Some men there are love not a gaping pig;	
	Some, that are mad if they behold a cat;	
	Some, when they hear the bagpipe: for affection 10,	
	Master of passion, sways 1 it to the mood	
	Of what it likes or loathes 12.	
	Now, for your answer:	
	As there is no firm reason to be render'd	55
	Why he cannot abide a gaping pig	33
	Why he, a harmless necessary cat;	
	Why he, a woollen bag-pipe; but of force	
	Must yield to such inevitable shame	
	As to offend, himself being offended;	60
	So can I give no reason, nor I will not,	00
	More than a lodged 13 hate and a certain loathing	
	I bear Antonio, that I follow thus	
	Alosing 14 suit against him. Are you answer'd?	
Bassanio.		
bassanio.	This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,	
Class	To excuse the current of thy cruelty Lam not bound to places they with my enguers	65
Shy.	I am not bound to please thee with my answers.	03
	1. Offices: acts. 2. Tender courtesy: human kindness. 3. Possess'd:	
	informed. 4. The due and forfeit: penalty incurred by non-payment.	
	5. Light: fall upon. 6. Carrion flesh: dead flesh, unfit for food. 7. Humour	

^{1.} Offices: acts. 2. Tender courtesy: human kindness. 3. Possess'd: informed. 4. The due and forfeit: penalty incurred by non-payment. 5. Light: fall upon. 6. Carrion flesh: dead flesh, unfit for food. 7. Humour: inclination, pleasure. 8. Baned: poisoned. 9. Gaping: with the mouth open. 10. Affection: personal inclination. 11. Sways: inclines. 12. Loathes: hates, detests. 13. Lodged: rooted, deeply fixed. 14. Losing: unprofitable.

in the feelings of human kindness. Now Jew, we all expect a gentle answer from you!

Shy. I have informed your Grace of my intentions, and I have sworn an oath by the Sabbath, the Holy Festival of the Jews, that I will have the full penalty which is incurred by the failure to keep the contract. If you refuse me this, you will endanger the municipal charter and freedom of your city. You ask me why I prefer to receive a quantity of dead flesh, rather than three thousand ducats. I will give no other answer to that except that I please to do so; is that sufficient answer for you? What does it matter to any other person if my house is troubled by a rat, and I choose to spend three thousand ducats to have it poisoned? Is that answer satisfactory? There are certain men who have an aversion to a gaping pig, and others who fly into a passion at the sight of a cat. Other people cannot maintain their usual balance of conduct when they hear the shrill notes of the bagpipe. Personal inclination is the ruler of passion, and inclines it towards liking or disliking. Now this is my answer to you: just as there is no definite reason to be rendered why one man cannot endure a gaping pig, why another man is enraged by a harmless domestic cat and another by the sounds of a wool-covered bagpipe, so I can give no definite reason, and I will not try to give any more than this, that I have a deeply rooted hatred and a definite loathing of Antonio, and therefore I pursue this unprofitable suit against him. Now is that sufficient answer?

Bass. This is not a satisfactory answer at all, you unfeeling man, to excuse the cruelty of your actions.

Shy. I am under no obligation to make my answers please you.

Bass.	Do all men kill the things they do not love?	
Shylock.	Hates any man the thing he would not kill?	
Bassanio.	Every offence is not a hate at first.	
Shylock.	What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?	
Ant.	I pray you, think you question with the Jew.	
	You may as well go stand upon the beach	
	And bid the main flood bate his usual height;	
	You may as well use question with the wolf	
	Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb:	75
	You may as well forbid the mountain pines	
	To wag their high tops and to make no noise,	
	When they are fretten ³ with the gusts of heaven;	
	You may as well do anything most hard,	
	As seek to soften that—than which what's harder?	
	His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,	81
	Make no more offers, use no further means,	
	But with all brief and plain conveniency ⁴	
	Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will!	
Bassanio.	For thy three thousand ducats here is six.	
Shylock.	If every ducat in six thousand ducats	86
	Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,	
	I would not draw ⁵ them; I would have my bond.	
Duke.	How shall thou hope for mercy, rendering none?	
Shy.	What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?	
	You have among you many a purchased slave,	91
	Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,	
	You use in abject ⁶ and in slavish ⁷ parts,	
	Because you bought them—shall I say to you,	
	Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?	
	Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds	96
	Be made as soft as yours and let their palates ⁸	
	1 Main florad allowed and a dide 2 December 2 For the second	
	1. Main flood: the ocean, the tide. 2. Bate: reduce. 3. Fretten: agitated,	

^{1.} Main flood: the ocean, the tide. 2. Bate: reduce. 3. Fretten: agitated, disturbed. 4. With all brief and plain conveniency: briefly, without ceremony, as is here convenient. 5. Draw: accept. 6. Abject: mean, degrading. 7. Slavish (parts): servile (duties). 8. Palates: appetite.

Bass. Does it follow that a man has to kill anything that he does not like?Shy. Is there any man who will not kill the thing that he truly, hates?Bass. Every fault need not be turned at once into cause for hatred.

Shy. What, would you give an enemy the chance to hurt you a second time?

Ant. Please do not try to argue with this man. You might as well stand on the sea-shore and ask the tide not to rise so high as usual. You might as well ask the wolf why he made the mother sheep mourn for the lamb he devoured. You might as well forbid the pine trees on the mountains to wave their high tops and to make a noise when disturbed by the winds of heaven. You might as well attempt the hardest thing in the world, rather than attempt a thing still harder,—to soften the heart of a Jew. So I beg of you, make him no more offers and try no further steps, but with all due speed put the judgment into execution on me by letting the Jew have his wish.

Bass. I shall give you six thousand ducats, instead of your three thousand.

Shy. If each one of your six thousand ducats were divided into six, and each part was a ducat, still I should not accept them. I insist on the fulfilment of my bond.

Duke. How can you hope for God's mercy if you show no mercy to others?

Shy. What judgment can be passed against me, when I have done no wrong? You Christian people have many slaves which you have purchased, and, like your asses, your dogs and your mules, you employ them in degrading the servile tasks, on no other grounds than that you have bought them. If I say to you, "Give them their freedom and marry them to your own children; why have they to sweat in carrying heavy loads? Let them sleep on beds as comfortable as your own beds, and give them as rich

Bass.

Ner.

Be season'd¹ with such viands²? You will answer

'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you: The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,

Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it,

If you deny me, fie upon your law!

There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgment: answer—shall I have it?

Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,

Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,

Whom I have sent for to determine³ this,

Come here today.

Salerio. My lord, here stays without

A messenger with letters from the doctor,

New come⁴ from Padua.

Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet! The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,

Ere thou shall lose for me one drop of blood.

(Shylock takes out a knife from his girdle and beings to whet it)

Antonio. I am a tainted wether⁵ of the flock,

Meetest⁶ for death: the weakest kind of fruit Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:

You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio, Than to live still, and write mine epitaph⁷.

Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

(Bows) From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.

(Presenting a letter.

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1. Season'd: gratified. 2. Viands: rich food. 3. Determine: decide.

^{4.} New come: lately arrived. 5. Tainted wether: diseased sheep.

^{6.} Meetest: fittest. 7. Epitaph: inscription on a tombstone.

food to eat," you will reply, "The slaves are our property!"- That is just what I reply to you. This pound of flesh which I claim from Antonio has been bought by me at a high price. It is my own, and I insist on having it. If you refuse me, then may your laws be help up to shame! I ask for the judgment of the court; now give me your reply, whether I shall have it or not.

Duke. On the strength of my authority, I may adjourn the Court, unless Bellario, a learned doctor of law whom I have sent for to settle the question, arrive here today.

Salar. My lord, a messenger from the doctor is standing outside with letters, having just arrived from Padua.

Duke. Bring me the letters and call the messenger.

Bass. Cheer up, Antonio. Be brave still! I shall let the Jew have all my blood, flesh and bones also, before I shall allow you to lose one drop of blood on my account.

Ant. I am like a sick sheep in the herd, more liable to death than the others. The weakest fruit falls soonest from the tree, and let that by my fate. It is a better employment for you Bassanio to continue to live that you may write the inscription on my tombstone.

Enter NERRISA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke Have you come from Doctor Bellario at Padua?

Ner. Yes, from Padua and from Bellario, my lord. Bellario sends his greeting to your grace. (She gives a letter to the Duke.)

Bassanio. Shylock. Gra.	Why dost thou whet ¹ thy knife so earnestly? To cut the forfeiture ² from that bankrupt there. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew, Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can, No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness	127
CI.	Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?	
Shy.	No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.	
Gratiano.	O, be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!	
	And for thy life let justice be accused. Thou almost makest me waver in my faith	
	To hold opinion with Pythagoras,	
	That souls of animals infuse themselves	
	Into the trunks of men: thy currish ⁴ spirit	
	Govern'd ⁵ a wolf, who hang'd for human slaughter,	
	Even from .the gallows did his fell ⁶ soul fleet ⁷	138
	And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam ⁸	150
	Infused itself ⁹ in thee; for thy desires	
	Are wolfish, bloody, starved and ravenous.	
Shy.	Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,	
J	Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:	143
	Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall	
	To cureless 10 ruin	
	I stand here for law.	
Duke.	This letter from Bellario doth commend ¹¹	
	A young and learned doctor to our court.	
	Where is he?	
Nerissa.	He attendeth ¹² here hard by ¹³ ,	
	To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.	
Duke.	With all my heart. Some three or four of you	
	Go give him courteous conduct to this place.	4 = -
	Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.	153
	(Attendants bow and depart)	

^{1.} Whet: sharpen. 2. Forfeiture: the forfeited pound of flesh. 3. Inexorable: not moved by prayer. 4. Currish: vile spiteful. 5. Govem'd: inhabited the body of. 6. Fell: fierce. 7. Fleet: speed away. 8. Dam: mother. 9. Infused itself: poured itself. 10. Cureless: without remedy. 11. Commend: recommend. 12. Attendeth: is present. 13. Hard by: close at hand.

Bass. Why do you sharpen your knife so keenly, Shylock?

Shy. To cut off the pound of flesh which has been forfeited by this bankrupt.

Gra. It is on the sole of your shoe, but on your immortal soul that you are sharpening your knife, you cruel Jew. But no metal, not even the knife of the hangman, could ever become so sharp as your malice. Can no prayers penetrate your heart?

Shy. No, none that you are clever enough to make.

Gra. Oh, may you be accursed, obstinate dog! Justice is to be blamed for the fact that it allows you to live. You almost make me doubtful of the Christian faith, and inclined to believe in the theory of Pythagoras, that the souls of animals may sometimes enter the bodies of men. Your vile spirit once inhabited the body of a wolf who was hanged for killing men. Even as he was hanged on the gallows, his savage soul sped away from his to where you were still unborn in the body of your vile mother and entered into you, for all your inclinations are wolf-like, bloody, starved, and ravenous.

Shy. Until you can speak words of abuse which will actually remove the legal seal from my agreement, you are only putting your lungs to useless labour in speaking like this. Try to cultivate a more finished sense of humour, or it will break down altogether. I am here to claim the judgment of the law.

Duke. This letter from Bellario recommends a young and learned lawyer to our court. Where is he?

Ner. He is here at present, just close by. He is waiting for your answer, to hear whether you will admit him.

Duke. With the utmost willingness. Three or four of you, go and bring him here with ceremony and politeness. In the meantime, I shall have Bellario's letter read to the court.

Clerk.

(*Reads*) 'Your grace shall understand, that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion: which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity³, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

Duke.

You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes;

And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

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Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws.

Give me your hand.

Come you from old Bellario?

Portia.

I did, my lord.

Duke.

You are welcome: take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference⁸

That holds this present question in the court?

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Portia.

I am informed throughly of the cause

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth. Portia. Is your name Shylock?

Shylock.

Shylock is my name.

Portia.

Of a strange nature is the suit you follow:

Yet in such rule 10, that the Venetian law, Cannot impugn 11 you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger' 12, do you not?

^{1.} In loving visitation: on a friendly visit. 2. Controversy: dispute. 3. Importunity: request. 4. lack of years: youthfulness. 5. Impediment: obstacle. 6. Reverend: respectful. 7. Commendation: praise. 8. Difference: nature of dispute. 9. Throughly: thoroughly. 10. In such rule: in accordance with the rules. 11. Impugn: attack. 12. You stand within his danger: you admit having incurred this dangerous liability.

Clerk.

(Reading) I wish your Grace to understand that I am very ill at the time of receiving your letter, but at the moment your messenger arrived, there chanced to be with me on a friendly visit a young doctor of Rome called Balthasar. I discussed the nature of the case with him, and the dispute between the Jew and the merchant, Antonio. We consulted many law books together, and he is acquainted with my opinions on the case. This is strengthened by his own learning, the extent of which I cannot praise too highly, and he brings it all with him, at my request, to carry out Your Grace's commission instead of me. I beg that his youthfulness should not be considered a reason for withholding your highest esteem from him; for I have never known so young a man with such mature judgement. I leave him in the hope that you will receive him graciously, and, if you give him a chance, this will show up his praises even better."

Duke.

You hear what the learned Bellario has written. And here, I think, comes the doctor himself.

Enter Portia, In the robes of a doctor of law.

Shake hands, sir. Do you come from Bellario?

Por. Yes, my Lord.

Duke. You are welcome; take your place. Are you acquainted with the nature of the dispute

involved in the present case before the Court?

Por. I have had the fullest information about the case. Which of these men is the merchant,

and which is the Jew?

Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both come forward.

Por. Is your name Shylock? Shy. Shylock is my name.

Por. The suit which you have brought here is strange in nature and yet is such that the law

of Venice cannot take steps against you for the course you follow. You, Antonio, are

liable to his penalties, are you not?

Antonio.	Ay, so he says.	
Portia.	Do you confess the bond?	
Antonio.	I do.	
Portia.	Then must the Jew be merciful.	186
Shylock.	On what compulsion 1 must I? tell me that.	
Portia.	The quality of mercy is not strained ²	
	It droppeth as: the gentle rain from heaven	
	Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;	
	It blesseth him that gives and him that takes:	191
	'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes ³	
	The throned monarch better than his crown; -	
	His sceptre shows the force of temporal ⁴ power,	
	The attribute ⁵ to awe and majesty,	
	Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;	196
	But mercy is above this sceptred sway ⁶ ;	
	It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,	
	It is an attribute to God himself;	
	And earthly power doth then show likest God's	
	When mercy seasons ⁷ justice. Therefore, Jew,	201
	Though justice be thy plea, consider this,	
	That, in the course of justice, none of us	
	Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;	
	And that same prayer doth teach us all to render	
	The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much	206
	To mitigate ⁸ the justice of thy plea ⁹ ;	
	Which if you follow, this court of Venice	
	Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.	
Shylock.	My deeds upon my head ¹⁰ ! I crave ¹¹ the law,	
3.17.10 3.11	The penalty and forfeit of my bond	211
Portia.	Is he not able to discharge the money?	
Bassanio.	Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;	
Bussenio	Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,	
	I will be bound ¹² to pay it ten times o'er,	
	1. Compulsion: pressure. 2. Strained: forced. 3. Becomes: suits, adorns.	
	4. Temporal: earthly. 5. Attribute: emblem. 6. Sceptred sway: wordly	
	and an about 1 and a second 7 Community of McControl of McControl	

^{1.} Compulsion: pressure. 2. Strained: forced. 3. Becomes: suits, adorns. 4. Temporal: earthly. 5. Attribute: emblem. 6. Sceptred sway: wordly rule, symbolised by the sceptre. 7. Seasons: tempers. 8. Mitigate: soften. 9. Plea: claim. 10. My deeds upon my head: I take the full responsibility for my deeds. 11. Crave: ask for. 12. I will be bound: I undertake.

Ant. Yes, so he says.

Por. Do you admit having made this agreement?

Ant. I do.

Por.

Por. Then the Jew must show mercy.

Shy. What is there to compel me? Tell me that.

Mercy is a blessing which cannot be compelled. It must come as freely as the gentle rain from Heaven which falls upon the earth beneath. It is doubly blessed; it blesses the person who shows mercy, and also him who receives it. It is the greatest quality even in the most powerful men. It is a nobler quality in a royal king than the crown which he wears. His sceptre is the emblem of his worldly power, reminding men of the respect due to law and majesty. But mercy is something far above this earthly power; it is a noble quality coming from the very heart of a king. It is a tribute to Almighty God, and the power of kings is most divine in its working when justice is mingled with mercy. So, Jew, although you demand this in the name of justice, remember that we were all judged with strict justice by God, none of us would be spared. We all pray to God for mercy, and that same prayer which we make should teach us to show mercy to others. I have said all this in order to soften the severe justness of your claim for if you continue to follow it, this strict court of justice will be compelled to pass sentence against the merchant there.

Shy. I take the responsibility for my own act. I ask for the penalty allowed by the law, which has become due owing to the breach of our agreement.

Por. Is Antonio not able to pay the money?

Bass. Yes, here in the court I offer it on his behalf. I will pay twice the sum, and if that is not sufficient, I shall undertake to

	On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart;	216
	If this will not suffice, it must appear	
	That malice bears down truth 1. And I beseech you,	
	Wrest once the law ² to your authority ³ :	
	To do a great right, do a little wrong,	
	And curb this cruel devil of his will.	221
Portia.	It must not be; there is no power in Venice	
	Can alter a decree established:	
	'Twill be recorded for a precedent ⁴ .	
	And many an error, by the same example,	
	Will rush into the state; it cannot be.	226
Shylock.	A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!	
•	O wise young judge, how I do honour thee!	
Portia.	I pray you, let me look upon the bond.	
Shylock.	Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.	230
Portia.	Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee	
Shylock.	An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven ⁵ :	
,	Shall I lay perjury ⁶ upon my soul?	
	No, not for Venice.	
Portia.	Why, this bond is forfeit;	
	And lawfully by this the Jew may claim	
	A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off	237
	Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:	_5.
	Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.	
Shylock.	When it is paid according to the tenour ⁷	
Brigio em	It doth appear you are a worthy judge_:	
	You know the law, your exposition	242
	Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,	2.2
	Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar ⁸ ,	
	Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear	
	There is no power in the tongue of man	
	To alter me: I stay 9' here on my bond.	247
		<i>2</i> 4 /
	1. Bears down truth: crushes honesty. 2. Wrest once the law: divert the	
	course of the law. 3. To your authority: by using your authority. 4.	
	Precedent example 5 In heaven in the sight of God 6 Periury	

^{1.} Bears down truth: crushes honesty. 2. Wrest once the law: divert the course of the law. 3. To your authority: by using your authority. 4. Precedent: example. 5. In heaven: in the sight of God. 6. Perjury: breaking an oath. 7. Tenour: the strict wording and meaning of the terms of the bond. 8. Pillar: supporter. 9. Stay: insist.

pay it ten times over. If I fail to do so, may I forfeit my hands, my head and my heart. If this offer is not accepted, then it is clear that a spirit of malice is working against the truth. So I request you to use your power on this one occasion to change the strict course of the law. To do a notable act of justice, commit this slight irregularity, and deprive this cruel devil of his desire.

Por. It is not possible. There is no power in Venice that can alter the working of a fixed law. It would be quoted as a case in point by others in the future, and from this, many errors might come into the affairs of the State. It cannot be.

Shy. Why, this judge is a second Daniel of the Jews! A second Daniel! O, wise young judge, how much I respect you!

Por. Let me see the agreement, please.

Shy. Here it is, most worshipful doctor. Here it is.

Por. Shylock, a sum equal to three times the amount due has been offered you.

Shy. I have sworn an oath before God to have nothing but my bond. Shall I commit the sin of oath-breaking? No, not for the whole city of Venice.

Por. Then the penalty mentioned in this bond has been incurred, and the Jew can lawfully claim a pound of flesh, to be cut from the side nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful, Shylock. Take three times the amount, and let me tear up this agreement.

Shy. When it is paid according to the terms of the bond. Indeed you seem to be a very worthy judge, knowing the law and administering it most soundly. I direct you, in the name of the law, of which you are so worthy a member, proceed to execute the judgement. I swear by my soul that nothing that man can say will alter my purpose. I insist on the strict terms of the bond.

Antonio.	Most heartily I do beseech the court	
7 0 . 1	To give the judgment.	
Portia.	Why then, thus it is:	
al 1 1	You must prepare your bosom for his knife.	
Shylock.	O noble judge! O excellent young man!	252
Portia.	For the intent and purpose of the law	253
	Hath full relation to ² the penalty	
GL L -1	Which here appeareth due upon the bond.	
Shylock.	'Tis very true : O wise and upright judge!	
D. die	How much more elder art thou than thy looks!	
Portia.	Therefore lay bare your bosom.	250
Shylock.	Ay, his breast:	259
	So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?	
D =4!	'Nearest his heart': those are the very words.	
Portia.	It is so. Are there balance ³ here to weigh the flesh?	
Shylock.	I have them ready.	
Portia.	(he opens his cloak, takes the	em oui. 265
rorua.	Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge ⁴ ,	203
Chuloak	To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death. Is it so nominated ⁵ in the bond?	
Shylock. Portia.		
rorna.	It is not so expressed: but what of that?	
Claulaal	'Twere good you do so much for charity. I cannot find it: 'tis not in the bond.	270
Shylock. Portia.		270
Antonio.	You, merchant, have you any thing to say? But little: I am arm'd ⁶ and well prepared.	
Antonio.		
	Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!	
	Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you:	275
	For herein Fortune shows herself more kind Than is her custom: it is still her use ⁷	213
	To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,	
	To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow	
	1. Intent and purpose: meaning and scope. 2. Hath full relation to: fully	
	applies to. 3. Balance: scales. 4. On your charge: at your own expense.	
	5. Nominated: laid down. 6. Arm'd: that is, with spiritual strength.	
	7. Use: custom.	

Ant.	With all my heart I request the court to give its decision.	

Por. Well, then, it is this. You must prepare to have your bosom cut by the knife.

Shy. O, noble judge! What an excellent young man!

Por. For indeed the meaning and scope of this particular law cover such a penalty as is incurred by this agreement.

Shy. That is indeed true. O, wise and upright judge! Your wisdom is greater than one would expect from your youth.

Por. Therefore, Antonio, uncover your bosom.

Shy. Yes, it must be his breast. That is what the bond says, does it not, noble judge? "Nearest his heart," are the exact words.

Por. It is so. Is there a weighing-machine here to weigh the flesh?

Shy. Yes, I have it ready.

Por. Arrange for a doctor to be here, at your own expense, Shylock, to stop the flow of blood from his wounds, lest he bleed to death.

Shy. It is laid down in the bond that I must do so?

Por. No such condition is laid down, but what about that? It is good that you should do such an act of kindness.

Shy. I refuse. I can find no such condition in our agreement.

Por. Have you anything to say, Antonio?

Ant. Very little, I am armed with spiritual strength and prepared this. Give me your hand, Bassanio. Farewell! Do not grieve that I have incurred this for your sake, for in this instance Fortune is treating me more kindly than she usually does to men.

	An age of poverty; from which ling'ring penance 1	
	Of such misery doth she cut me off.	
	Commend me to your honourable wife;	
	Tell her the process ² of Antonio's end;	
	Say how I love you, speak me fair ³ in death;	
	And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge	
	Whether Bassanio had not once a love ⁴	285
	Repent ⁵ but you that you shall lose your friend,	
	And he repents not that he pays your debt;	
	For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,	
	I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.	
Bassanio.	Antonio, I am married to a wife	290
	Which is as dear to me as life itself;	
	But life itself, my wife, and all the world	
	Are not with me esteem' d ⁶ above thy life;	
	I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all	
	Here to this devil, to deliver you.	295
Portia.	Your wife would give you little thanks for that,	
	If she were by, to hear you make the offer.	
Gratiano.	I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:	
	I would she were in heaven, so she could	
	Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.	300
Nerissa.	'Tis well you offer it behind her back;	
	The wish would make else an unquiet house.	
Shylock.	(Aside) These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;	
•	Would any of the stock ⁷ of Barrabas	
	Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!	
	(Aloud) We trifle ⁸ time: I pray thee, pursue ⁹ sentence	307
Portia.	A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:	
	The court awards it, and the law doth give it.	
	1. Lingering penance: prolonged suffering. 2. Process: manner. 3. Speak	
	me fair: speak well of me. 4. Love: a truly loving friend. 5. Repent:	
	regret. 6. Esteem'd: valued. 7. Stock: race. 8. Trifle: waste. 9. Pursue	

: get on with.

It is often her custom to let the wretched man live on after his wealth has been lost, so that his hollow eyes and wrinkled face show forth his poverty-stricken condition. From such a prolonged misery, she mercifully cuts me off. Convey my respects to your honourable wife, and tell her the manner of Antonio's death. Tell her how greatly I loved you, and speak well of me after I am gone. When you have told her everything, ask her to say whether Bassanio had not a truly loving friend. Let your only regret be the loss of a friend, for I have no regrets in making this sacrifice for you. If the Jew only cuts deep enough, it will be quite true to say that I have paid with all my heart.

- Bass. Antonio, I am married to a wife whom I prize as highly as I do my own life. But my life, my wife, and the whole world are not of greater value in my eyes than your life. I would lose them all, sacrifice every one of them, to deliver you from the clutches of this fiend.
- *Por.* I doubt whether your wife would thank you for that offer, if she were present to hear you.
- Gra. I too have a wife, whom I swear I love. But I wish that she were dead and in heaven, in order that she could persuade some heavenly power to change this vile Jew.
- *Ner. It* is as well that you make this offer when your wife is not present, otherwise the wish might lead to strife in your household.
- Shy. That shows how Christian husbands regard their wives. I have a daughter. Would that she had married one of the family of Barrabas, the murderer, rather than a Christian! But we are wasting time. Please get on with the sentence.
- *Por.* You have a lawful claim to a pound of this merchant's flesh. The court awards it to you, and the law justifies the award.

Shylock. Portia.	Most rightful judge! And you must cut this flesh from off his breast: The law allows it, and the court awards it.	311
Shylock.	Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!	
Portia.	Tarry ¹ a little; there is something else. This bond doth give thee here no jot ² of blood;	
	The words expressly are "a pound of flesh",	316
	Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;	
	But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed	
	On drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods	
	Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate ³	
	Unto the state of Venice.	321
Gra.	O upright judge!—Mark, Jew : O lamed Judge	
Shylock.	Is that the law?	
Portia.	Thyself shalt see the act:	
	For, as thou urgest justice, be assured	
	Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.	
Gra.	O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!	327
Shylock.	I take this offer, then; pay the bond thrice,	
	And let the Christian go.	
Bassanio.	Here is the money.	
Portia.	Soft ⁴ !	
	The Jew shall have all justice—soft! no haste—	
	He shall have nothing but the penalty.	333
Gra.	O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!	
Portia.	Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.	
	Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more	
	But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more	
	Or less than a just a pound, be it but so much	338
	As makes it light or heavy in the substance,	
	Or the division of the twentieth partjudge!	
	1. Tarry: wait. 2. Jot: the smallest particle. 3. Confiscate: confiscated,	
	forfeited. 4. Soft : stop.	

Shy. Most just judge!

Por. And you have to cut this flesh from his breast, the law allows this, and the award of the court sanctions it.

Shy. You are a learned judge! It is a good sentence. Come, prepare yourself, Antonio!

Por. Wait a moment; there is another point. The bond does not permit you to take the smallest atom of blood. The words definitely say "a pound of flesh." So take the forfeit due in your agreement, which is just a pound of flesh. In cutting it, if you shed one drop of Christian blood, then by the laws of Venice all your lands and property will be forfeited to the State.

Gra. O, upright judge! Do you hear that, Jew? Is he not a learned judge?

Shy. Is that the law?

Por. You shall see it in operation. You have demanded strict justice; depend on it that you will now receive more justice than you desire.

Gra. Again I say, "An upright judge?" Pay attention, Jew. A learned judge!

Shy. Then I accept the previous offer. Pay three times the amount of the debt, and let the Christian go free.

Bass. Here is the money.

Por. Stop! The Jew must have full justice. Do not be in such a hurry. He can have nothing now, except his pound of flesh.

Gra. Jew, is he not a upright and learned judge?

Por. So now make ready to cut off the flesh. Do not shed any blood, and be careful to cut neither more nor less than an exact pound. If you cut more or less, if only enough to make it light or heavy by the twentieth part of a scruple,—nay, if the

	Of one poor scruple ¹ , nay, if the scale do turn	
	But in the estimation of a hair ²	
	Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.	343
Gratiano.	A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!	
	Now, infidel, I have you on the hip 3 .	
Portia.	Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.	
Shylock.	Give me my principal, and let me go.	
Bassanio.	I have it ready for thee; here it is.	348
Portia.	He hath refused it in the open court:	
	He shall have merely justice and his bond.	
Gratiano.	A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!	
	I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.	
Shylock.	Shall I not have barely my principal ⁴ ?	353
Portia.	Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,	
	To be so taken at -thy peril ⁵ , Jew.	
Shylock.	Why, then the devil give him good of it ⁶ !	
-	I'll stay no longer question ⁷ .	(he turns to go.
Portia.	Tarry ⁸ , Jew:	
	The law hath yet another hold on you,	
	•	(She reads from a book)

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien⁹
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party, 'gainst the which he doth contrive¹⁰
Shall seize one half his goods: the other half
Comes to the privy coffer¹¹ of the state:
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice¹².

(She closes the book)

1. Scruple: a very small unit of weight. 2. But in the estimation of a hair: by so much as a hair's breath. 3. I have you on the hip: I have a firm hold on you. 4. Barely my principal: my principal alone, without alone, without any interest. 5. Peril: risk. 6. The devil give him good of it: may the devil take him. 7. Question: discussion. 8. Tarry: wait. 9. Alien: foreigner. 10. Contrive: plot. 11. Privy coffer: private treasury. 12. 'Gainst all other voice: no other person being allowed to intervene.

scales differ by a hair's breath from exact weight, you will suffer death and all your possessions will be confiscated.

Gra. Here is truly a judge as wise as Daniel! a second Daniel, Jew! Now, unbeliever, I have a firm hold on you!

Por. Why do you delay, Jew? Take your pound of flesh!

Shy. Give me my own three thousand ducats, and let me go.

Bass. I have it ready for you. Here is the sum.

Por. He has already refused it publicly in the court. He shall have nothing but strict justice, according to the terms of the bond.

Gra. Once more I exclaim "A judge as wise as Daniel; a second Daniel." I thank you Jew, for suggesting that comparison to me.

Shy. Shall I not receive back my original sum?

Por. No, you shall have nothing but the forfeited pound of flesh, and you shall take it at your own risk.

Shy. Then may the devil take him! I shall not stay here to discuss it any longer.

Por: Wait, Jew! The law has still a claim on you. It is laid down in the laws of Venice that if it be proved against a foreigner that, directly or indirectly, he has plotted against the life of any citizen of Venice, then that citizen against whom he plotted may seize one half of the foreigner's property. The other half shall be paid into the private treasury of the State, and the offender may only retain his own life by the exercise of mercy by the Duke, no

In which predicament \(^1\), I say, thou stand \(^2\)st: \(^1\) That indirectly and directly too \(^1\) Thou hast contrived against the very life \(^1\) Of the defendant: and thou hast incurr \(^1\) d \(^1\) The danger formerly by me rehearsed \(^3\), \(^1\) Down \(^4\), therefore, and beg mercy of the duke. Gratiano. Beg that thou mayest have leave to hang thyself: \(^1\) And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state. \(^1\) Therefore thou must be hang \(^1\) at the state's charge. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit \(^5\). I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it: \(^1\) For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's: \(^1\) The other half comes to the general state. Which humbleness \(^6\) may drive unto a fine. Portia. Ay, for \(^7\) the state, not for Antonio. Shylock. Nay, take my life and all: pardon not that: \(^1\) You take my house when you do take the prop \(^8\) That doth sustain my house: you take my life \(^1\) When you do take the means whereby I live. Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio? Gratiano. A halter gratis \(^7\): nothing else, for God's sake. Antonio. So please my lord the duke and all the court \(^1\) To quit \(^{10}\) the fine for one half of his goods, \(^1\) I am content; so \(^{11}\) he will let me have \(^1\) So please the form one half of his goods, \(^1\) I am content; so \(^{11}\) he will let me have \(^1\) The other half in use \(^{12}\), to render it, \(^1\) Upon his death, unto the gentleman \(^1\) That lately stole his daughter: \(^1\) Two things provided more, that, for this favour, \(^1\) He presently \(^1^3\) become a Christian; \(^1\) agift, Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
That indirectly and directly too Thou hast contrived against the very life Of the defendant: and thou hast incurr'd The danger formerly by me rehearsed ³ , Down ⁴ , therefore, and beg mercy of the duke. Gratiano. Beg that thou mayest have leave to hang thyself: And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state. Thou hast not left the value of a cord; Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge. 379 Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit ⁵ . I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it: For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's: The other half comes to the general state. Which humbleness ⁶ may drive unto a fine. 384 Portia. Ay, for ⁷ the state, not for Antonio. Shylock. Nay, take my life and all: pardon not that: You take my house when you do take the prop ⁸ That doth sustain my house: you take my life When you do take the means whereby I live. 389 Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio? Gratiano. Ahalter gratis ⁹ ; nothing else, for God's sake. So please my lord the duke and all the court To quit the fine for one half of his goods, I am content; so ¹¹ he will let me have The other half in use the former half of his favour, He presently the former a Christian; That lately stole his daughter: Two things provided more, that, for this favour, He presently that he do record the gift, Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Thou hast contrived against the very life Of the defendant: and thou hast incurr'd The danger formerly by me rehearsed ³ , Down ⁴ , therefore, and beg mercy of the duke. Gratiano. Beg that thou mayest have leave to hang thyself: And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state. Thou hast not left the value of a cord; Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge. 379 Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit ⁵ . I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it: For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's: The other half comes to the general state. Which humbleness ⁶ may drive unto a fine. 384 Portia. Ay, for ⁷ the state, not for Antonio. Shylock. Nay, take my life and all: pardon not that: You take my house when you do take the prop ⁸ That doth sustain my house: you take my life When you do take the means whereby I live. 389 Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio? Gratiano. Ahalter gratis ⁹ ; nothing else, for God's sake. So please my lord the duke and all the court To quit ¹⁰ the fine for one half of his goods, I am content; so ¹¹ he will let me have The other half in use ¹² , to render it, Upon his death, unto the gentleman That lately stole his daughter: Two things provided more, that, for this favour, He presently ¹³ become a Christian; The other, that he do record ¹⁴ a gift, Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
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Duke. That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit ⁵ . I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it: For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's: The other half comes to the general state. Which humbleness ⁶ may drive unto a fine. 84 Portia. Ay, for ⁷ the state, not for Antonio. Shylock. Nay, take my life and all: pardon not that: You take my house when you do take the prop ⁸ That doth sustain my house: you take my life When you do take the means whereby I live. 85 Portia. What mercy can you render him, Antonio? Gratiano. A halter gratis ⁹ ; nothing else, for God's sake. Antonio. So please my lord the duke and all the court To quit ¹⁰ the fine for one half of his goods, I am content; so ¹¹ he will let me have The other half in use ¹² , to render it, Upon his death, unto the gentleman That lately stole his daughter: Two things provided more, that, for this favour, He presently ¹³ become a Christian; The other, that he do record ¹⁴ a gift, Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
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Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Llate his oan Language and his day alsten
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.
1. Duadicoment scituation 2. Manifest much adding solven avidance

^{1.} Predicament : situation. 2. Manifest proceeding : clear evidence.

^{3.} Rehearsed : described. 4. Down : kneel down. 5. Spirit : nature.

^{6.} Humbleness: humility, humbly begging for mercy. 7. For: as far as concerns. 8. Prop: pillar, support. 9. Halter gratis: a robe free of charge for hanging. 10. Quit: remit. 11. So: provided. 12. In use: to employ in business or perhaps here in trust. 13. Presently: at once. 14. Record: set down in writing.

other person being allowed to intervene. I say that this charge is now applicable to you, for it appears with manifest clearness that you have conspired against the very life of Antonio, the defendant, both directly and indirectly. You have become liable to the penalty which I have just mentioned, so I advise you to kneel to the Duke at once, and ask for mercy.

Gra. Ask that you may be allowed to hang yourself; but yet, since all your wealth has been forfeited to the State, you have not enough money left to buy a rope, so you must be hanged at the expense of the State.

Duke. In order that you may see the difference between your nature and that of a Christian, I grant you your life before you ask for it. Half your wealth, that now belongs to Antonio, and the other half belongs to the public treasury, but you may be let off with a fine instead if you humbly beg for mercy.

Por. Yes, as far as it concerns the State's half, but not Antonio's.

Shy. No, you may as well take my life also; do not restore that to me. You take my house when you pull away the pillars which support my house. You take my life when you take away my livehood.

Por. What-mercy can you suggest for him Antonio?

Gra. Give him a rope, free of charge, to hang himself. Nothing more, for God's sake.

Ant. If you, my lord Duke, and this Court, remit the fine of one half of his goods, I will be pleased, I am content, on the condition that he will let me have the other half in trust so that I may give it, on Shylock's death, to the gentleman who so lately carried off his daughter. Two other conditions I suggest, that in return for this favour he must at once embrace the Christian religion, and secondly, that he draw up his will here in the court, leaving all he possesses at death to his son-in-law, Lorenzo, and his daughter.

Duke.	He shall do this, or else I do recant ¹	40.4
	The pardon that I late pronounced here.	404
Portia.	Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?	
Shylock.	I am content.	
Portia.	(To Nerissa) Clerk, draw a deed of gift.	
Shylock.	I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;	
	I am not well: send the deed after me.	
	And I will sign it.	
Duke.	Get thee gone, but do it.	411
Gratiano.	In christening shalt thou have two god-fathers:	
	Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more ²	
	To bring thee to the gallows, not the font,	
	To coming the to the guine we, not the rond,	(Exit Shylock.
Duke.	(Rising) Sir, I entreat ³ you home with me to dinner.	(Esse Suytoess
Portia,	I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:	416
1 Ortiu.	I must away this night toward Padua,	410
D 1.	And it is meet I presently set forth.	
Duke.	I am sorry that your leisure serves you not ⁴ .	
	Antonio gratify ⁵ this gentleman,	421
	For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.	421
_		(Exeunt Duke, and his train.)
Bassanio.	Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend	
	Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted	
	Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof	
	Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,	
	We freely cope ⁸ your courteous pains withal.	426
Antonio.	And stand indebted, over and above,	
	In love and service to you evermore.	
Portia.	He is well paid that is well satisfied;	
- 0.7		<u> </u>
	1. Recant: cancel, withdraw. 2. Ten more: a jury of	twelve. 3. Entreat:
	invite. 4. Your leisure serves you not: you don't h	
	come. 5. Gratify: reward. 6. Bound: obliged. 7. A	
	from. 8. Cope: remunerate, reward.	equition of through
	nom. o. cope . remunerate, reward.	

Duke. He shall do this, or else I shall cancel the pardon which I granted him here just now.

Por. Are you contented, Jew? What do you say?

Shy. I am content..

Por. Clerk, draw up a legal document for the transfer of property.

Shy. I beg that you will allow me to go from here. I am ill. Send the document after me, and I shall sign it.

Duke. You may go, but do not neglect to sign it.

Gra. When you undergo the ceremony of Christian baptism, you shall have two sponsors to vouch for you. Had I been judge, you should have had a jury of twelve, to send you to be hanged on the gallows, instead of being baptised in the sacred out. (Shylock departs).

Duke. Sir, I invite you to come and dine with me.

Por. I humbly ask Your Grace to excuse me. I must leave for Padua to-night, and it is important that I start soon.

Duke. I am sorry that you have not the leisure to accept. Antonio, thank this gentleman deeply, for I think that you are under a great obligation to him. (The DUKE and his followers leave.)

Bass. Most worthy sir, I and my friend have, thanks to your skill, been freed from heavy legal penalties today. As a fee for this, we offer in payment for your courteous services the three thousand ducats which we owed to the Jew.

Ant. And, over and above this, we shall always consider ourselves in debt to you for love and service.

Por. He who is well satisfied is well paid, and I am well

	And I, delivering you, am satisfied,	
	And therein do account myself well paid:	431
	My mind was never yet more mercenary ¹	
	I pray you, know me when we meet again:	
	I wish you well, and so I take my leave.	
Bassanio.	Dear Sir, of force I must attempt you further:	435
	Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute ² ,	
	Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you.	
	Not to deny me, and to pardon me.	
Portia.	You press me far, and therefore I will yield.	
	(To Antonio) Give me you gloves, I'll wear them for your sake	
	(<i>To Bassanio</i>) And, for your love ³ , I'll take this ring from you—	441
	Do not draw back your hand—I'll take no more:	
	And you in love shall not deny me this.	
Bassanio.	This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!	
	I will not shame myself to give you this.	
Portia.	I will have nothing else but only this;	446
	And now methinks I have a mind to ⁴ it.	
Bass.	There's more depends on this than on the value.	
	The dearest ⁵ ring in Venice will I give you,	
	And find it out by proclamation:	
	Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.	451
Portia.	I see, sir, you are liberal in offers.	
	You taught me first to beg; and now methinks	
	You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.	
Bass.	Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;	
	And when she put it on, she made me vow	455
	That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.	
Portia.	That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.	
	An ⁶ if your wife be not a mad-woman,	
	1. My mind was never get more mercenary: my mind was never desirous	
	of greater reward than this. 2. Tribute: souvenir. 3. For your love: as a	
	souvenir of your friendship. 4. I have a mind to: I want to have.	
	5. Dearest: costliest. 6. An: it.	

satisfied in having been able to free you, so I feel well paid. My mind was never set upon any greater reward than this. I hope that you will not forget me when we meet again. So I give you my best wishes, and take leave of. you.

Bass. My dear sir, I feel compelled to make a further attempt. Accept something from us as a souvenir or keepsake, not as a payment. Do me two favours: first, do not refuse this request, and second, forgive me for making it.

Por. You are very pressing, so I shall give way. (To Ant.) Give me your gloves; I shall wear them in remembrance of you. (To Bass.) And as a memento of our friendship I shall take this ring which you are wearing. Do not draw your hand away, for I ask no more than this, and you are too kindly a friend to think of refusing it.

Bass. The ring, good sir! Why, that is but a trifle. I would be ashamed to. offer you such a trifling thing.

Por. I shall take nothing else but this. And now I begin to feel a desire to have it.

Bass. The ring means more to me than its actual value. I shall give you the most expensive_ring in Venice, and send round a man to proclaim that I want such a ring. But as regards this particular ring, I ask you to forgive me for refusing it.

Por. I see, sir, that you are liberal in making promises but not in keeping them. You encourage me to beg, and then refuse me as a beggar is refused.

Bass. Good sir, this ring was given to me by my wife. When she placed it on my finger, she made me swear that I would never sell it, give it away, or lose it.

Por. Such an excuse makes it possible for many to avoid giving away. If your wife is not a mad woman, and if she knew

She would not hold out enemy for ever,

For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you

460 (Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.

Antonio. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:

Let his deserving and my love withal

Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bassanio. Go; Gratiano, run and overtake him;

464

(Exit Gratiano.

Give him the ring; and bring him, it thou const,

Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.

Come, you and I will thither presently; And in the morning early will we both

Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.

469

(Exeunt.

SCENE H. A Street in Venice outside the Court of Justice. Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed².

And let him sign it: we'll away tonight, And be a day before our husbands home: This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO.

Gratiano. Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en:

ou are well o'erta'en:

My Lord Bassanio, upon more advice³ Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat

Your company at dinner.

Portia. That cannot be:

His ring I do accept most thankfully; And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore.

I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

12

Gra. That will I do.

Nerissa. Sir, I would speak with you.

(Aside to Portia) I'll see if I can get my husband's ring, Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

- 1. Would not hold out enemy: would not be angry. 2. Deed: document.
- 3. Upon more advice: on further consideration, on second thoughts.

how well I have earned this ring, she would not be angry for long with you for giving it to me. Well, I wish you a peaceful goodbye. (*Portia and Nerissa leave*),

Ant. My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring. Let his great service and your love for me combine to influence you more than your wife's command.

Bass. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him. Give him the ring, and try to persuade him to come with you to Antonio's house. Make haste! (Gratiano goes.) Come, you and I will go to your house presently, and early tomorrow morning we shall both travel swiftly to Belmont. Come, Antonio (They go out.)

SCENE II. A Street in Venice Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

Por. Find out where the Jew's house is; give him this document, and get him to sign it. We shall leave here tonight and be home a day before our husbands. This document will be welcome as a present to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO

Gra. Dear Sir, I am fortunate to have overtaken you. On second thoughts, my Lord Bassanio has sent you this ring and invites you to dine with him.

Por. I cannot come to dinner. I accept this ring with grateful thanks, but please tell him this from me. Will you also point out to this youth where old Shylock's house is?

Gra. Yes, I shall do that.

Ner. Sir, may I have a word with you? (Aside to Portia) I shall try to persuade my husband to give me his ring, which I made him promise to keep always.

294]	English–XII
Por.	(Aside to Nerissa) Thou mayst, I warrant We shall have old ² swearing
	That there did give the rings execute man

That they did give the rings away to men; But we'll outface³ them, and outswear them⁴ too.

But we'll outface them, and outswear them too (Aloud) Away! make haste: thou know's where

I will tarry.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

(Exeunt.)

5

12

18

18

ACT-V

SCENE I. Belmont Avenue to PORTIA'S House, Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.

Lor. The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees, And they did make no noise, in such a night Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls And sigh'd his soul⁵ toward the Grecian tents,

Where Cressid lay that night

Jessica. In such a right

Did This be fearfully o'ertrip the dew⁶, And saw the Lion's shadow ere himself,

And ran dismay'd away.

Lorenzo. In such a night

Stood Dido with a willow in her hand.

Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love⁷

To come again to Carthage.

Jessica. In such a night

Medea gather'd the enchanted⁸ herbs

That did renew⁹ old *AEson*.

Lorenzo. In such a night

Did Jessica steal ¹⁰ from the wealthy Jew

And with an unthrift love 11 'did run from' Venice

As far as Belmont.

1. I warrant: I assure you. 2. Old: hard. 3. Outface: Confront. 4. Outswear them: swear more loudly that they did not. 5. Sigh'd his soul: sent forth sights of love 6. O'ertrip the dew: walk across the dewy grass. 7. Waft her love: made sighs to her lover (Aeneas). 8. Enchanted: magic. 9. Renew: make young again 10. Steal: run away. 11. Unthrift love: unthrifty lover.

Por. (Aside to Nerissa) I am sure you will be able to do so. Then they will be kept busy swearing that they gave the rings away to men. But we will oppose them and swear more loudly that they did not.

(Aloud) Go, clerk make haste! You know where I shall be waiting for you.

Ner. Come, good sir, will you show me the house? (NERISSA and GRATIANO leave together)

ACT-V

SCENE I The private road before Portia's house in Belmont. Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.

- Lor. The moon is very bright! It was on a night just like this, when sweet wind breathed so, gently on the trees that they made no sound, that Troilus climbed on the walls of Troy and sent forth signs of love towards the tents of the Greeks, where his beloved Cressida was sleeping that night.
- Jes. It was on a night like this that Thisbe walked timidly across the dewy grass. But she saw the shadow of a lion before she met her lover, and ran away in terror.
- Lor. On a night just like this did Queen Dido stand on the wild sea shore, carrying a willow in her hand as a sign of sorrow, praying that her lover Aeneas might come back to Carthage.
- Jes. On a night just like this did the magic-worker, Medea, gather the magic herbs which made the aged Aeson young again.
- Lor. And on just such a night did Jessica run away from the rich Jew, and elope with her thriftless lover, from Venice to Belmont.

Jessica.	In such a night	
	Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,	
	Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,	
	And ne'er a true one.	24
Lorenzo.	In such a night	
	Did pretty Jessica, like little shrew ¹	
	Slander her love, and he forgave it her.	
Jessica.	I would out-night ² you, did no body come;	
	But, hark, I hear the footing ³ of a man.	
	Enter STEPHANO.	
Lorenzo.	Who comes so fast in silence of the night?	30
Stephano.	A friend.	
Lorenzo.	A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?	
Stephano.	Stephano is my name; and I bring word	
	My mistress will before the break of day	
	Be here at Belmont; she doth stray about	36
	By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays	
	For happy wedlock hours. ⁴	
Lorenzo.	Who comes with her?	
Stephano.	None but a holy hermit and her maid.	
	I pray you, is my master yet return' d?	
Lorenzo.	He is not, nor we have not heard from him.	
	But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,	
	And ceremoniously let us prepare	
	Some welcome for the mistress of the house.	
	1. Shrew: a scolding or abusive woman. 2. Out-night: beat you in this	
	game of making speeches about nights. 3. Footing: footsteps. 4. Wedlock	

game of making speeches about n hours: married life

Jes. Yes, and on the same kind of night did Lorenzo declare that he loved her dearly, He stole away her affection with many declarations of love, none of them true.

Lor. And on this same night did pretty Jessica, like a bad tempered woman slander her lover, and he forgave her.

Jes. I could tire you out in the competition of "night" speeches, if no one interrupted us. But listen! hear the footsteps of a man.

Enter STEPHANO

Lor. Who is it who comes here so fast, through the silence of the night?

Steph. A friend.

Lor. A friend! Give your name friend. Speak out your name, please, my friend.

Steph. My name is Stephano, and I bring the news that my mistress will arrive here before daybreak. She is at present wandering among the holy crosses in the church, where she kneels and prays for happiness in her married life.

Lor. Who is coming with her?

Steph. No one except a holy priest, and her maid, Nerissa. But tell me, please, has my master Bassanio returned yet?

Lor. No, and we have not heard from him. But let us go inside, please, Jessica, and make ready a formal welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter Launcelot

Launcelot. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lorenzo. Who calls?

Launcelot. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo?

Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lorenzo. Leave hollaing, man—here!

Launcelot. Sola! where? where?

Lorenzo. Here. 52

Launcelot. Tell him. there's a post² come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my

master will be here ere³ morning. (Exit).

Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in? 57

My friend Stephano, signify⁴, I pray you, Within the house, your mistress is at hand;

And bring your music forth into the air. (Exit Stephano.)

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music 62

Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night Become⁵ the touches of sweet harmony⁶ Sit, Jessica. Look, how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines⁷ of bright gold:

There's not the smallest orb⁸ which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angle sings⁹,

Still quiring ¹⁰ to the young-eyed ¹¹ cherubins ¹²;

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay 13

Doth grossly ¹⁴ close us in, we cannot hear it.

1. Hollaing: shouting. 2. Post: messenger. 3. Ere: before. 4. Signify: announce. 5. Become: suit. 6. Touches of sweet harmony: notes of sweet music. 7. Patines: plates. 8. Orb: star. 9. But.... sings: that does not produce sweet music. 10. Quiring: singing as in a choir. 11. Youngeyed: bright-eyed. 12. Cherubins: angels. 13. Muddy vesture of decay: body of perishable flesh. 14. Grossly: so as to make our souls gross or dull.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

Laun. Hulloa! hulloa! Lor. Who is calling?

Laun. Hulloa! Has anybody seen Master Lorenzo? Hulloa! Where are you, Lorenzo?

Lor. Stop shouting, man. I am here Laun. Hulloa! Where are you?

Lor. Here!

Laun. Tell him that a messenger has just arrived from my master with a budget full of good

news. My master will be here before morning.

(Launcelot departs.)

Lor.

Sweet Jessica, let us go inside and wait for them there. But it does not matter; there is no need for us to go in: Friend Stephano, please tell everyone in the house that your mistress will arrive shortly. Then come back here and play some music in the open air. (Stephano goes inside) How sweetly the moonlight falls on this mound! Let us sit here while the strains of music fall gently on our ears. Peaceful silence and the quietness of night form an appropriate setting for sweet music. See, how the skies above us resemble -a gorgeous floor, decorated with plates of bright gold! There is not the smallest star among all that you see now that does not produce music sweet as an angel's song, as it travels through the sky. They are always singing to the bright-eyed angels. A similar harmony exists in the human soul, which is also immortal. But while this coarse body of perishable flesh contains it, we cannot hear that harmony.

Enter Musicians.

	Emer Wusicians.	
	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 ¹ :	77
	For do but note a wild and wanton ² herd,	
	Or race ³ of youthful and unhandled colts ⁴ ,	
	Fetching mad bounds ⁵ . bellowing and neighing loud—	
	Which is the hot condition of their blood ⁶ -	
	If they but hear perchance ⁷ a trumpet sound,	82
	Or any air of music touch their ears,	
	You shall perceive them make a mutual stand ⁸ ,	
	Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest ⁹ gaze	
	By the sweet power of music; therefore the poet	
	Did feign ¹⁰ that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;	87
	Since nought ¹¹ so stockish ¹² , hard and full of rage,	
	But music for the time doth change this nature.	
	The man that hath no music in himself,	•
	Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds ¹³ ,	
	Is fit for treasons, stratagems ¹⁴ and spoils ¹⁵ ;	92
	The motions of his spirit ¹⁶ are dull as night	
	And his affections dark as Erebus:	
	Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.	
	Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.	
Portia.	That light we see is burning in my hall.	
	How far that little candle throws his beams!-	100
	So shines a good deed in a naughty ¹⁷ world.	

Nerissa.

When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

1. Attentive: rapt in attention. 2. Wanton: mischievous. 3. Race: breed. 4. Unhandled colts: young horses not broken in. 5. Fetching mad bounds : bounding madly. 6. Hot condition of their blood: their own natural wild condition. 7. Perchance: by chance. 8. Make a mutual stand: come to a standstill together. 9. Modest: mild. 10. Feign: imagine. 11. Nought: nothing. 12 Stockish: unfeeling. 13. Concord of sweet sounds: sweet melody. 14. Stratagems: plots. 15. Spoils: thefts. 16. Motions of his spirits: his thoughts and feelings. 17. Naughty: wicked.

Enter Musicians.

Come, now, and sing a song to awaken Diana, the Goddess of the moon! Let the sweetest strains carry to the distant ears of your mistress Portia, so that they may guide her home.

(The musicians play)

Jes. I am never lively when I hear sweet music.

Lor.

That is because your senses are so attentive. You may have seen a wild and mischievous herd or group of young and untrained horses, jumping madly about and neighing loudly, for this is natural behaviour of horses in high spirits. But if they should happen by any chance to hear the sound of a trumpet, or if any notes of music fall on their ears, you will perceive them come to a standstill together. Their eyes become quiet and modest, influenced by the sweet music. It was this which made the poet Ovid imagine the musician, Orpheus, to have had the power to move trees, stones, and rivers by the influence of his music. For nothing is so material, unyielding, or fierce that music will not change its nature, at least for a time. The man who has no love for music in himself, or who is not affected by sweet melody, is capable of treachery, intrigue, and dishonesty. The soul within him is black as night, and his inclinations as dark as Hell. Never trust such a man. Listen to the music.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

Por. The light we see is burning in my own hall. How far the light from a little candle can travel; equally far reaching is the influence of a good deed in this sinful world.

Ner. But when the moon was shining we did not see the light of the candle.

Portia.	So doth the greater glory dim the less:	
	A substitute shines brightly as a king	
	Until a king be by, and then his state	103
	Empties itself, as doth an inland brook	
	Into the main of waters ¹ . Music! hark!	
Nerissa.	It is your music, madam, of the house.	
Portia.	Nothing is good, I see, without respect ² :	
	Methinks ³ it sounds much sweeter than by day.	108
Nerissa.	Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.	
Portia.	The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark.	
	When neither is attended ⁴ , and I think	
	The nightingale, if she should sing by day,	
	When every goose ⁵ is cackling ⁶ would be thought	113
	No better a musician than the wren.	
	How many things by season ⁷ season'd ⁸ are	
	To their right praise and true prefection!	
	Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion	
	And would not be awaked.	(Music ceases.
Lorenzo.	That is the voice,	119
	Or I am much deceived, of Portia.	
Por.	He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo,	
	By the bad voice.	
Lorenzo,	Dear lady, welcome home.	
Portia.	We have been praying for our husbands' healths,	
	Which speed ⁹ , we hope, the better for our words.	125
	Are they return'd?	
Lorenzo.	Madam, they are not yet;	
	But there is come a messenger before,	
	To signify their coming.	
Portia.	Go in, Nerissa;	
	Give order to my servants that they take	
	No note at all of our being absent hence;	132
	Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.	(A tucket 10 sounds.
	1. Main of waters: ocean. 2. Without respect: without	ut reference to
	circumstance, 3, Methinks; I think, 4, Attended; accomp	anied (by other

^{1.} Main of waters: ocean. 2. Without respect: without reference to circumstance. 3. Methinks: I think. 4. Attended: accompanied (by other sounds). 5. Every goose: every common bird. 6. Cackling: uttering harsh notes. 7. Season: suitable time. 8. Season'd: improved. 9. Speed: prosper. 10. Tucket: a series of notes in a trumpet.

Por. That is because great things overshadow small things. One who acts in the place of a king may for a time look as royal as the king himself. When the actual king appears, the glory of the substitute vanishes, as the waters of a small stream are swallowed up in the volume of the great ocean. Hark! I hear music!

Ner. It is your own musicians playing in your house.

Por. I realise that nothing is good except when it is felt in certain conditions or in comparison. For the music sounds to much sweeter than it ever does by daylight.

Nor. Silence makes it so sweet, madam.

Por. The crow can sing as sweetly as the lark, when neither is accompanied by other sounds. As regards that sweet singer the nightingale, if she were to.sing by daylight when every common bird is giving forth its notes, then she would be esteemed no better a singer than the wren. So many things are improved by being done at the right time, and so gain deserved praise for their high perfection. But quiet! Come, musician, stop playing. The moon is asleep by her lover, Endymion, and does not wish to be aroused.

Lor. Unless I err, that is the voice of Portia.

Por. He knows me by my unmusical voice, just as a blind man knows the call of the cuckoo.

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home!

Por. We have been praying for the welfare of our husbands and we hope that they are all the better for our prayers. Have they returned yet?

Lor. No, madam, they have not. But a messenger has come on ahead of them to announce they are coming.

Por. Go indoors, Nerissa! Give a warning to all the servants that they must not show that they know that you and I have been away from here. This applies to you also, Lorenzo and to Jessica. (A trumpet is sounded outside).

Lor.	Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:	
	We are no tell-tales ¹ , madam; fear you not.	
Portia.	This night methinks is but the daylight sick ²	137
	It looks a little paler; 'tis a day,	
	Such as the day is when the sun is hid.	
	Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO	
	and their Followrs.	
Bassanio.	We should hold day ³ with the Antipodes ⁴ ,	
	If you would walk in absence of the sun.	
Portia.	Let me give light, but let me not be light ⁵ ;	142
	For a light wife doth make a heavy ⁶ husband,	
	And never be Bassanio so for me:	
	But God sort ⁷ all! You are welome home, my lord.	
Bassanio.	I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.	
	This is the man, this is Antonio,	
	To whom I am so infinitely bound.	147
Portia.	You should in all sense be much bound ⁸ to him,	
	For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.	
Antonio.	No more than I am well acquitted of ¹⁰ .	
Portia.	Sir, you are very welcome to our house:	
	It must appear in other ways than words,	152
	Therefore I scant ¹¹ this breathing courtesy ¹² .	
Gratiano.	(To Nerissa) By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;	
	In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk:	
	Would he were dead that had it, for my part,	
	Since you do take it, love, so much to heart.	158
	1. Tell-tales: informers. 2. Sick: feeble. 3. Hold day: have daylight.	
	4 Antipodes: those who are on the opposite side of the globe to ourselves.	
	5. Light: immoral. 6. heavy: sad. 7. Sort: dispose of. 8. Much bound:	
	greatly obliged. 9. He was much bound : he signed a terrible bond.	
	10. Am well acquitted of: have been completely freed from it. I 1. Scant	
	: cease expressing. 12. Breathing courtesy: mere polite words.	

Lor. Your husband is near by; I hear his trumpet. We shall give away no secrets, madam; you need not be afraid.

Por. I think the night is so gone that it is now a feeble kind of daylight. It looks a little paler, just as on a day when the sun is clouded over.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO,

and their attendants.

- Bass. We should have daylight at the same time as people on the opposite side of the world, my Portia, if you moved about in the sun's absence (shedding your brightness).
- Por. May I always give forth light and yet never become a light (unchaste) wife! For a light wife makes a husband sorrowful, and I hope that you, Bassanio, will never be sorrowful on my account. But may God arrange all things! You are welcome home, my lord.
- Bass. I thank you, madam. Please welcome my friend too. This is the man, Antonio, to whom I owe such obligations.
- *Por.* You should be bound to him in every way in ties of gratitude, for I hear that he undertook a terrible bond on your behalf.
- Ant. Not so terrible but that I am now free of it.
- *Por.* Sir, you are welcome to our house. But I must show our welcome by deeds, and not words. So I shall make an end of speeches of polite courtesy.
- Gra. (To Ner.) By the moon above us, I swear that you misjudge me! Indeed I gave it to the judge's clerk. I don't care if he were dead. Since my dear you take the matter to your heart.

Portia.	A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?	
Gratiano.	About a hoop ¹ of gold, a paltry ring	
	That she did give me, whose posy ² was	
	For all the world like cutler's poetry ³	
	Upon a knife, "Love me, and leave me not."	163
Nerissa.	What talk you of the posy or the value?	
	You swore to me, when I did give it you,	
	That you would wear it till your hour of death	
	And that it should lie with you in your grave:	
	Though not for me, yet for your vehement- oaths,	168
	You should have been respective ⁴ and have kept it.	
	Gave it a judge's clerk! no God's my judge,	
	The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.	
Gratiano.	He will, an if he live to be a man.	
Nerissa.	Ay, if a woman live to be a man.	173
Gratiano.	Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,	
	A kind of boy, a little scrubbed ⁵ boy,	
	No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,	
	A prating ⁶ boy, that begg'd' it as a fee:	
	I could not for my heart deny it him.	178
Portia.	You were to blame, I must be plain with you,	
	To part so slightly with your wife's first gift;	
	A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger	
	And so riveted ⁸ with faith unto your flesh.	
	I gave my love a ring and made him swear	183
	Never to part with it; and here he stands;	
	I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it	
	Nor pluck it from his finger for the wealth	
	That the world masters ⁹ . Now, in faith, Gratiano,	
	You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief:	188
	An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.	

^{1.} Hoop: circle, ring. 2. Posy: a short verse of poetry. 3. Cutler's poetry: verses or mottos engraved on knife-blades. 4. Respective: scrupulous, careful. 5. Scrubbed: small-sized 6. Prating: talkative. 7. Slightly: carelessly. 8. Riveted: fastened. 9. Masters: possesses.

Por. What! Are you two quarrelling already? What is the matter?

Gra. About a circlet of gold, a mere trifling ring that she gave me. The inscription inside was just as if some maker of knives had been composing a motto to engrave on a blade, "love me, and leave me not."

Ner. What does it matter about the actual value of the ring, or the words written inside it? You swore to me when I gave it to you that you would wear it as long as you lived, and that it should then be buried in the grave with you. If not for my sake, then out of respect for the vows you swore so strongly, you should have felt it your duty to keep it. You say you gave it to a judge's clerk. I call God to witness that .the clerk to whom you gave that ring will never wear beard.

Gra. Indeed he will, if he live to a man.

Ner. Yes, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra. Now I swear by this hand of mine that I gave it to a young fellow, or rather to a boy—a little, under-sized boy no bigger than yourself, who was the judge's clerk. He was a little talkative boy who begged it from me as a reward for his services, and I could not make my heart so hard as to refuse him.

Por. I must speak plain words to you, Gratiano. You are to blame for having so lightly given away your wife's first gift to you. It was placed on your finger to the accompaniment of solemn vows, and the good faith of your promises should have made it remain there. I gave my beloved husband a ring, and made him swear that he would never part with it. Here he is; on his behalf, I can express confidence that he would not part with it nor take it from his finger for all the wealth in the world. Now, truly Gratiano, you have given your wife a heavy cause for grief. Had this been done to me, 1 should be very angry about it.

Bass.	(Aside) Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,	
Gratiano.	And swear I lost the ring defending it. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away	
Granano.	Unto the judge that begg'd it, and indeed	193
	Deserved it too: and then the boy, his clerk,	173
	That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;	
	And neither man nor master would take aught 1	
	But the two rings.	
Portia.	What rings gave you, my lord?	
roma.		100
Dagagnia	Not that, I hope, which you received of me.	199
Bassanio.	If I could add a lie unto a fault,	
	I would deny it; but you see my finger	
D	Hath not the ring upon it: it is gone.	
Portia.	Even so void ² is your false heart of truth.	204
	By heaven, I will never be your wife	204
3 7 ·	Until I see the ring.	
Nerissa.	Nor I be yours	
D :	Till I again see mine.	
Bassanio.	Sweet Portia,	
	If you did know to whom I gave the ring,	
	If you did know for whom I gave the ring, -	211
	And would conceive for what I gave the ring,	211
	And how unwillingly I left the ring,	
	When nought ³ would be accepted but the ring,	
	You would abate ⁴ the strength of your displeasure.	
Portia.	If you had known the virtue of the ring,	
	Or half her worthiness ⁵ that gave the ring,	216
	Or your own honour ⁶ to contain ⁷ the ring,	
	You would not then have parted with the ring.	
	What man is there so much unreasonable,	
	If you had pleased to have defended it	
	With any terms of zeal, wanted ⁸ the modesty	221
	To urge the thing held as a ceremony'?	
	1. Aught: anything. 2. Void: empty. 3. Nought: nothing. 4. Abate: lessen.	
	5. Worthiness: ment. 6. Your own honour: your duty as an honourable	
	man. 7. Contain: preserve. 8. Wanted: lacked. 9. Ceremony: a sacred	
	pledge.	

Bass. (Aside) Now I think the best thing I can do, is to cut off ray left hand, and swear that I lost the ring while defending it (since the ring was on my left hand).

Gra. My lord Bassanio also gave his ring to the judge, who had asked for it. Indeed that judge had fully earned it. Then the boy, acting as his clerk, who had taken great care in writing out the proceedings of the case, begged for my ring; and the judge and his clerk alike would accept nothing in payment but the two rings.

Por. What ring was it you gave away, my lord? I hope it was not that ring which you got from me?

Bass. If I were inclined to hide my fault with a lie, I might deny having done it. But you see that the ring is no longer on my finger. It is gone.

Por. Just as there is not ring on your finger, so there is no truth in your false heart. I swear I shall never be a wife to you until I see that ring again.

Ner. Nor shall I be a wife to you, Gratiano, till I see my ring.

Bass. Sweet Portia! If you knew the person to whom I gave the ring; if you knew on whose behalf I gave it; if you could understand the reasons I had for giving the ring; if you knew how unwillingly I gave it when nothing else was acceptable, then you would lessen the force of your anger.

Por. If you had properly realised the sacred value of the ring, or the merit of your wife who gave it to you, or your duty as an honourable man to retain it, you would never have parted with it, how could any man have been so unreasonable, if you had cared to show him how important the ring was to you,- what man would have been so impertinent as to ask for a thing which you held as

	Nerissa teaches me what to believe: I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.	
Bassanio.	No, but mine honour, madam, by my soul,	
	No woman had it, but a civil doctor ¹ ,	.225
	Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me	
	And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him	
	And suffer'd him to go displeased away;	
	Even he that had held up ² the very life	
	Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?	230
	I was enforced to send it after him:	
	I was beset with ³ shame and courtesy;	
	My honour would not let ingratitude	
	So much besmear ⁴ it. Pardon me, good lady;	
	For, by these blessed candles of the night ⁵ ,	235
	Had you been there, I think, you would have beggd'	
	the ring of me to give the worthy doctor.	
Portia.	Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:	
	Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,	
	And that which you did swear to keep for me,	240
	I will become as liberal as you;	
	I'll not deny him any thing I have.	
Nerissa.	Nor I his clerk; therefore be well advised ⁶	
	How you do leave me to mine own protection.	
Antonio.	I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.	245
Portia.	Sir, grieve not you: you are welcome not- withstanding.	
Bassanio.	Portia, forgive me this enforced ⁷ wrong;	
	And, in the hearing of these many friends,	
	I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,	250
	Wherein I see myself—	
Portia.	Mark you but that!	
	In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;	
	In each eye, one: swear by you double self ⁸ ,	
	And there's an oath of credit ⁹ .	
	1. Civil doctor: doctor of civil law, lawyer. 2. Held up: saved. 3. Beset with: prompted by. 4. Besmear: stain, disgrace. 5. Candles of the night: stars. 6. Be well advised: consider well 7. Enforced: which I was forced to inflict op you. 8. double self: false nature. 9. of credit: worthy to be believed.	

a sacred pledge? But Nerissa's words show me the truth! I am certain that you gave the ring to some woman!

Bass. No, I swear by my honour, I swear by my very soul I gave it to no woman, but to a doctor of civil law. he refused to accept three thousand ducats, and asked for the ring instead. I refused it to him, and allowed him to go away angry with me, even though he had just saved the life of my dear friend, Antonio. What could I possibly say to him, sweet lady? I felt compelled to send it after him, I was so impelled by feelings of shame and the natural promptings of courtesy. My sense of honour could never have submitted to be stained by such ingratitude. Pardon me, my good wife. I swear by the blessed stars above us that, if you had been present, you would have asked for the ring in order to give it to this worthy doctor.

Por. You had better not bring that doctor to my house at any time, since he has the diamond which I loved so well, which you promised to keep for me. If he does, then I will imitate your ill-judged generosity, and will not refuse him anything I possess.

Ner. Nor shall I refuse anything to his clerk; therefore beware how you leave me alone, all by myself.

Ant. It is my ill-fortune to have been the cause of this quarrel.

Por. Sir, do not indulge in sorrow; you are welcome in spite of that fact.

Bass. Portia, forgive me for this unavoidable wrong which I have done to you. Here in the presence of all our friends I swear an oath,—I swear by your own beautiful eyes in which I see my own reflection.

Por. Do you all hear that! He sees himself mirrored in both my eyes, one image of himself in each eye. So he swears by a double or false nature. Is that an oath to believe?

Bassonio.	Nay, but hear me:	256
	Pardon this fault, and by my sould I swear	
	I never more will break an oath with thee.	
Antonio.	I once did lend ¹ my body for his wealth ² ;	
	Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,	
	Had quite miscarried ³ : I dare be bound again,	261
	My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord.	
	Will never more break faith advisedly ⁴ .	
Portia.	Then you shall be his surety.	
	Give him this	
	And bid him keep it better than the other.	
Ant.	Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.	266
Bass.	By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!	
Portia.	I had it of him. You're all amazed:	
	Here is a letter, read it at your leisure:	
	It comes from Padua, from Bellario:	
	There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,	271
	Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here	
	Shall witness I set forth as soon as you,	
	And even but now return'd: I have not yet	
	Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome	
	And I have better news in store for you	276
	Than you expect: unseal ⁵ this letter soon;	
	There you shall find three of your argosies	
	Are richly come to harbour suddenly;	
	You shall not know by what strange accident	
	I chanced on 6 this letter.	
Antonio.	I am dumb.	282
Bassanio.	Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?	
Gratiano.	Were you the clerk and yet I knew you not?	
	1 Landardada 2 Wastel and I hair a malfan 2 Hadanita missamiad	
	- L. L. and Lindada, O. Waaldh Linnall, baling annaldana, O. Had anita milaaamiad	

1. Lend: pledge. 2. Wealth: well-being. walfare. 3. Had quite miscarried: would have been completely lost. 4. Advisedly: deliberately. 5. Unseal: open. 6. Chanced on: happened to get.

But hear me! Pardon this fault which I have committed, and I swear by my very soul that I shall never break a promise to you again.

Ant. I once pledged my body for his welfare and but for the man who got your husband's ring, that body would have perished. I dare, however, pledge myself again, and make my very soul the forfeit, that your husband will never again deliberately break such a promise.

Por. Then you will become his security. Give him this ring and tell him to take better care of it than he did before.

Ant. Here, Bassanio! Promise to keep this ring always.

Bass. By Heaven, it is the very same ring which I gave to the lawyer in Venice!

Por. Yes, I got it from him. You are all amazed. Here is a letter for you to read, when, you have leisture. I got if from Bellario in Padua, and from this letter you will learn that Portia was the doctor of law and Nerissa was her clerk. Lorenzo here will attest that I set off as soon as you did, and have returned only just now. I have not even entered my house yet. Antonio, you are welcome; and I have better news for you than you were anticipating. Open this letter at once, and you will find that three of your trading ships with valuable cargoes have arrived unexpectedly in harbour. You will never know by what a strange chance I came to get this letter.

Ant. I am too surprised to speak.

Bass. Were you actually the lawyer? And I did not recognize you!

Gra. You were the clerk, and I failed to know you?

Ant.	Sweet lady, you have given me life and living; For here I read for certain that my ships	286
	Are safely come to road ¹	
Portia.	How, now, Lorenzo!	
	My clerk hath some good comforts ² too for you	
Nerissa.	Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.	
	There do I give to you and Jessica,	
	From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,	292
	After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.	
Lorenzo.	Fair ladies, you drop manna ³ in the way	
	Of starved people.	
Portia.	It is almost morning;	
	And yet I am sure you are not satisfied	
	Of these events at full. Let us go in	298
	And Charge us thee upon inter' gatories ⁴ ,	
	And we will answer all things faithfully.	
Gratiano.	Let it be so.	
	Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing	
	So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.	(Exeunt)
Gratiano.	And we will answer all things faithfully. Let it be so. Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing	(Exeunt)

THE END

1. Are safely come to road: have arrived safely in harbour. 2. Comforts: news.3. Manna: divine food sent from heaven to the Jews wandering in the desert. 4. Charge us thee upon inter' gatories: put all your questions to us, there on oath.

Ant. Sweet lady, your skill gained new life for me, and now you restore to me new means of livelihood. In this letter I read the certain news that my ships have arrived safely in harbour.

Por. Now, about you, Lorenzo; my clerk has certain good news for you too.

Ner. Yes, and I shall not charge him any fee for my services in bringing them. Here I bring to you and Jessica from the rich Jew a special legal agreement, in which he undertakes to leave you all the property which he possesses when he dies.

Lor. Fair ladies, you drop food from heaven before hungry people.

Por. It is almost morning, and yet I am sure that you are not satisfied fully as to how all those strange events happened. Let us go inside the house, and you may put all your questions to us, and we will return faithful answers to them.

Gra. Let it be so. Well, while I am alive I shall never be so intent on anything else as I shall be to keep Nerissa's ring in safety.

(They all depart)



Appendix

Suggestive Exercises and Questions

- I. Memories the following lines of the original drama, which you will find in the exact or a modified form in the prose text that you are reading.
 - 1. You have too much respect upon the world They lose it that do buy it with much care (Act I, Sc. 1.)
 - I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano; A stage where every man must play a part, And mine a sad one. (Act I, Sc. 1.)
 - 2. If I catch him once upon the lip. I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. (Act I, Sc. 3.)
 - 3. For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe. (Act I, Sc. 3.)
 - 4. I like not fair terms and a villain's mind. (Act I, Sc. 3.)
 - 5. It is a wise father that knows his own child. (Act II, Sc. 3.)
 - 6. As you are dearly bought, I will love you dear. (Act III, Sc. 2.)
 - 7. I never knew so young a body with so old a head. (Act, IV, Sc. 1.)
 - 8. And I beseach you. Wrest once the law to your authority. To do a great right, do a little wrong. (Act. IV, Sc 1.)
 - 9. The quality of mercy is not strain'd, It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven. Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives and him that takes. (Act IV, Sc. 1.)
 - 10. He is well paid who is well satisfied. (Act IV, Sc. 1.)
 - 11. You taught me first, to beg, and now methinks, You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd (Act IV, Sc. 1.)
 - 12. I am never merry when I hear sweet music. (Act V, Sc. 1.)
- ▶ II. Short Answer Type Questions Based on Quotations
 - 1. You take the world more seriously than it is worth.
 - 2. I hold the world but as the world.
 - 3. Endurance of wrongs is the characteristics of the whole Jewish race.

- 4. I mistrust smooth words in a villain's mouth.
- 5. I have never known so young a body with so old a head.

➡ III. Give the meanings in your own words of :

- 1. As you are dearly bought, I love you dear.
- 2. I have never known so young a body with so old a head.
- 3. He is well paid who is fully satisfied.
- 4. You taught me first to beg, and now you teach me how a beggar should be answered.
- 5. All that glisters is not gold, Many a man his life has sold But my outside to behold.
- 6. Fair ladies, you bring food for the starving people.

→ IV. Write short notes on :

Sibyll; Daniel; Abraham; Freedom of the state; Troilus; Thisbe.

➤ V. Long Answer Type Questions (To be answered in about 150 words each)

- 1. Name the sources of the Play The Merchant of Venice.
- 2. What are Dramatic Unities? How far does Shakespeare observe them?
- 3. What are the four stories which form the basis of the Play, and how are they dependent on one another?
- 4. It has been said that the stories of the casket and the bond are strikingly absurd and extravagant. Justify or criticise this statement.
- 5. Comment on the procedure of Antonio's trial.

Or

How does the trial of Antonio become the trial of Shylock?

Or

Describe the trial of Antonio in the Duke's court.

- 6. What is your opinion of Portia's argument that Shylock could not shed a drop of Antonio's blood cutting off a pound of his flesh?
- 7. What is the main reason of the popularity of the Play?
- 8. What do you think of Portia's decision to conduct Antonio's defence in the guise of a lawyer?
- 9. How does Shakespeare portray Shylock's character? What is the diversity in it due to?

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Draw a character sketch of skylock.

10. How do you justify the fate that Shakespeare has assigned to Shylock?

- 11. In what respect does Antonio show a weakness in his character?
- 12. Comment on Antonio's treatment of Shylock before the execution of the bond and at the end of his trial?
- 13. Has Shakespeare succeeded in reconciling Bassanio, the fortune hunter, and Bassanio the ardent lover of Portia?
- 14. How is Jessica's elopement connected with the plot of the Play?
- 15. What was Shakespeare's object in inserting the romantic scene at the end of the Play? Do you think it is dramatically proper?
- 16. How is the story of the rings connected with the plot of the play?
- 17. Give your opinion of the characters of the Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Arragon.
- 18. Bassanio had already borrowed money from Antonio several times and had not paid back. Even then Antonio borrowed loan from Shylock for him. Why?
- 19. What was the reason of Antonio's sadness?
- 20. What does Portia's maid, Nerissa, say about the caskets left by Portia's father?
- 21. Bring out the dramatic significance of the opening scene of the Merchant of Venice.
- 22. What conditions had Portia's father imposed on her in respect of her marriage? What purpose had he in doing so?
- 23. What was Shylock's reply for Antonio's request for a money loan?
- 24. Discuss the three conflicting motives and passions of shylock.
- 25. What wrongs and insults had Antonio inflicted on Shylock?
- 26. How does Portia describe the Neapolitan Prince?
- 27. What is the dramatic importance of Lorenzo Jessica episode?
- 28. How does Portia show her affection for Bassanio before he makes his choice of the caskets?
- 29. Describe the circumstances of the giving of the ring to Bassanio by Portia.
- 30. Give a brief account of the casket story.
- 31. Which casket does the Prince of Arragon choose? What light does his choice throw on his character?
- 32. How does Portia manage to reach the court of the Duke of Venice?
- 33. Give the substance of the Duke's address to Shylock on his first appearance in the court.
- 34. Give the substance of Portia's speech on mercy in the court.
- 35. Discuss the 'trial scene', in 'The Merchant of Venice'.
- 36. What is the dramatic importance of the ring episode?

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- Describe "The Ring Episode" as portrayed by Shakespeare.
- 37. Which scene do you like most in the play "The Merchant of Venice"?
- 38. What is the moral purpose of the play 'The Merchant of Venice'?

- 39. What impression do you get about Shylock's personality in the play, 'The Merchant of Venice'?
- 40. How do you feel about the procedure of Antonio's trial?
- 41. How does 'The Merchant of Venice' highlight the use and abuse of wealth?
- 42. Write a brief note on the resourcefulness of Portia.
- 43. What is your opinion of Portia's character?
- 44. "The Merchant of Venice" highlights the use and abuse of wealth! Do you agree? Illustrate your answer with examples.
- 45. Does the character of skylock reflect hatred? Give reasons to support your answer.

VI. Important/Memorable Questions

- 1. "Shylock is more sinned against than sinning." Comment the words of Hazlitt.
- 2. Compare Portia and Jessica as female characters.
- 3. Give the character sketch of Antonio on the basis of the text.

Or

Draw the character sketch of Antonio on the basis of the play 'The Merchant of Venice'.

- 4. Mention some qualities of Bassanio that attracted Portia most.
- 5. Describe Portia as a heroine of 'The Merchant of Venice' according to the views of Shakespeare.

Or

Give a character sketch of Portia as depicted in the play 'The Merchant of Venice'.

Or

Draw a character-sketch of Portia.

Оr

Give a character sketch of Portia on the basis of the play 'The Merchant of Venice'.

6. Compare and contrast the character of Antonio and Bassanio on the basis of the text.

Or

Give a character sketch of Portia on the basis of the play, 'The Merchant of Venice.'.

7. How did Portia describe the quality of 'Mercy' in the court to change the mind of Shylock and what was it's effect on Shylock's mind?

Or

"It blesseth him that gives and that takes". What does Portia mean to speak this about mercy?

- 8. Did Shylock really love Jessica? What was the reason of Jessica's elopement Lorenzo?
- 9. Describe 'The Merchant of Venice' a comedy of Shakespeare.

Or

The Merchant of Venice is a comedy for all other characters, but a tragedy for Shylock. Comment on it.

- 10. What was the reason why Antonio signed the fatal bond of Shylock?
- 11. Give the character sketch of Shylock.

Or

Is Shylock a weak or a strong character? Discuss.

12. Describe the mental position of Shylock after the Judgement of the Duke of Venice.

Or

"I pray you, give me leave to go from hence; I am not well; send the deed after me, and I will sign it", what do you mean by Shylock's statement?

13. Is Portia a powerful character? Prove it on the basis of the play.

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"Portia is the mixture of masculine and feminine qualities." Comment on it.

- 14. What forced Antonio to help Bassanio?
- 15. Describe 'The Merchant of Venice' as a romantic comedy.
- 16. Give a character sketch of Bassanio as portrayed in the play 'The Merchant of Venice'.
- 17. What are the three parts that Portia plays in 'The Merchant of Venice'? Illustrate your answer with examples.
- 18. Describe the three conflicting motives and passions of Shylock.
- 19. Shylock represents the feelings of the people of Shakespeare's times against Jews. Do you agree? Illustrate your answer with examples.
- 20. Was it a business rivalry between the two communities—Christian and Jew—that brought about the humiliation of Shylock? Comment.
- 21. How do you justify the fate that Shakespeare has assigned to Shylock?
- 22. Describe Portia's role as a lawyer.
- 23. "In Portia's personality, we find a blend of beauty and brain." Comment.

Or

'Portia is the blend of beauty and wisdom.'

- 24. Why did Shylock hate Antonio? Give reasons.
- 25. Discuss the trial scene in "The Merchant of Venice".
- 26. How did Portia save Antonio's life?
- 27. Why did Bassanio reject the golden and silver casket? Why did he choose the lead casket?
- 28. Who do you think is the hero of the play "The Merchant of Venice"?

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