



The Merchant of Venice

Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616

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1597

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

by William Shakespeare

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE DUKE OF VENICE THE PRINCE OF
MOROCCO, suitor to Portia THE PRINCE
OF ARRAGON, " " " ANTONIO, a
merchant of Venice BASSANIO, his friend,
suitor to Portia SOLANIO, friend to
Antonio and Bassanio SALERIO, " " "
" " GRATIANO, " " " " "
LORENZO, in love with Jessica SHYLOCK,
a rich Jew TUBAL, a Jew, his friend
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, a clown, servant to
Shylock OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot
LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio
BALTHASAR, servant to Portia
STEPHANO, " " "

PORTIA, a rich heiress NERISSA, her
waiting-maid JESSICA, daughter to
Shylock

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the

Court of Justice,
other

Gaoler, Servants, and
Attendants

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SCENE: Venice, and PORTIA'S house at Belmont

ACT I. SCENE I. Venice. A street

Enter ANTONIO, SALERIO, and SOLANIO

ANTONIO. In sooth, 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 by it, What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born, I am to learn; And such a want-wit sadness makes of me That I have much ado to know myself.

SALERIO. Your mind is tossing on the ocean; There where your argosies, with portly sail- Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood, Or as it were the pageants of the sea- Do overpeer the petty traffickers, That curtsy to them, do them reverence, As they fly by them

with their woven wings. SOLANIO.
Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still

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. SALERIO. My wind, cooling my

broth, Would blow me to an ague 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 dock'd in sand, Vailing
her high top lower than her ribs To kiss
her burial. Should I go to church 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 waters 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
bechanc'd would make me sad? But tell
not me; I know Antonio Is sad to think
upon his merchandise. ANTONIO. Believe
me, no; I thank my fortune for it, My
ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year;
Therefore my merchandise makes me not
sad. SOLANIO. Why then you are in love.

ANTONIO. Fie, fie! SOLANIO. Not in love
neither? Then let us say you are sad
Because you are not merry; and 'twere as
easy For you to laugh and leap and say
you are merry, Because you are not sad.
Now, by two-headed Janus, Nature hath
fram'd strange fellows in her time: Some
that will evermore peep through their

eyes, And laugh like parrots at a
bag-piper; 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

Here comes Bassanio, your most noble
kinsman, Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye
well; We leave you now with better
company. SALERIO. I would have stay'd
till I had made you merry, If worthier
friends had not prevented me. ANTONIO.
Your worth is very dear in my regard. I
take it your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.
SALERIO. Good morrow, my good lords.
BASSANIO. Good signiors both, when shall
we laugh? Say when. You grow
exceeding strange; must it be so?

SALERIO. We'll make our leisuress to attend
on yours. Exeunt

SALERIO and SOLANIO LORENZO. 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. BASSANIO. I will

not fail you. GRATIANO. 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 chang'd.

ANTONIO. I hold the world but as the
world, Gratiano- A stage, where every
man must play a part, And mine a sad
one. GRATIANO. 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 grandsire cut
in alabaster, Sleep when he wakes, and

creep into the jaundice By being
peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio- I love
thee, and 'tis my love that speaks- There
are a sort of men whose visages Do
cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain, With
purpose to be dress'd in an opinion Of
wisdom, gravity, profound conceit; 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 For this fool
gudgeon, this opinion. Come, good
Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile; I'll end my
exhortation after dinner. LORENZO. Well,
we will leave you then till dinner-time. I

must be one of these same dumb wise men, For Gratiano never lets me speak.

GRATIANO. Well, keep me company but two years more, Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue. ANTONIO.

Fare you well; I'll grow a talker for this gear. GRATIANO. Thanks, i' faith, for

silence is only commendable In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.

Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO ANTONIO. Is that anything now? BASSANIO. 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. ANTONIO. Well; tell

me now what lady is the same To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, That you to-day promis'd to tell me of? BASSANIO.

'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, How

much I have disabled mine estate By
something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant
continuance; Nor do I now make moan to
be abridg'd From such a noble rate; but
my chief care Is to come fairly off from
the great debts Wherein my time,
something too prodigal, Hath left me
gag'd. 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. ANTONIO. I pray
you, good Bassanio, let me know it; And
if it stand, as you yourself still do, Within
the eye of honour, be assur'd My purse,
my person, my extremest means, Lie all
unlock'd to your occasions. BASSANIO. In
my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,

I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised
watch, To find the other forth; and by

adventuring both I oft found both. I urge
this childhood proof, 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 back again And
thankfully rest debtor for the first.

ANTONIO. You know me well, and herein
spend but time To wind about my love
with circumstance; And out of doubt you
do me now more wrong In making
question of my uttermost Than if you had
made waste of all I have. Then do but
say to me what I should do That in your
knowledge may by me be done, And I
am prest unto it; therefore, speak.

BASSANIO. 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
messages. Her name is Portia- nothing
undervalu'd 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' strond, 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, I have a
mind presages me such thrift That I
should questionless be fortunate.

ANTONIO. 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 rack'd, 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 trust or for my sake.
Exeunt

SCENE II. Belmont. PORTIA'S house

Enter PORTIA with her waiting-woman,
NERISSA

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

NERISSA. You would be, sweet madam, if
your miseries were in the same
abundance as your good fortunes are; and
yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that
surfeit with too much as they that starve
with nothing. It is no mean happiness,
therefore, to be seated in the mean:
superfluity come sooner by white hairs,
but competency lives longer. PORTIA.
Good sentences, and well pronounc'd.

NERISSA. They would be better, if well
followed. PORTIA. 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 than to 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 who I
would nor refuse who I dislike; so is the
will of a living daughter curb'd by the
will of a dead father. Is it not hard,
Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor
refuse none? NERISSA. Your father was
ever virtuous, and holy men at their death

have good inspirations; therefore the
lott'ry 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 you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come? PORTIA. I pray thee over-name them; and as thou namest them, I will describe them; and according to my description, level at my affection. NERISSA. First, there is the Neapolitan prince. PORTIA. Ay, that's a colt 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 much afraid my lady his mother play'd false with a smith. NERISSA. Then is there the County Palatine. PORTIA. 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-head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two! NERISSA. How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon? PORTIA. 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 throstle sing he falls straight a-cap'ring; 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 requite him. NERISSA. What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England? PORTIA. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court

and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the 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 hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

NERISSA. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour? PORTIA. 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 seal'd under for another.

NERISSA. How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew? PORTIA. 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. An the worst fall that

ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him. NERISSA. 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.

PORTIA. 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 will be married to a sponge. NERISSA. 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, depending on the caskets.

PORTIA. 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 one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

NERISSA. 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? PORTIA.

Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he call'd. NERISSA. True, madam; he, of

all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady. PORTIA. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a SERVINGMAN

How now! what news? SERVINGMAN. The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his

master will be here to-night. PORTIA. 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 devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

Exeunt

SCENE III. Venice. A public place

Enter BASSANIO With SHYLOCK the Jew

SHYLOCK. Three thousand ducats- well.

BASSANIO. Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK. For three months- well.

BASSANIO. For the which, as I told you,
Antonio shall be bound. SHYLOCK.

Antonio shall become bound- well.

BASSANIO. May you stead me? Will you
pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

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

BASSANIO. Your answer to that.

SHYLOCK. Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO. Have you heard any imputation
to the contrary? SHYLOCK. Ho, no, no, no,

no; my meaning in saying he is a good
man is to have you understand me that
he is sufficient; yet his means are in
supposition: 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, squand'red 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. BASSANIO. Be assur'd you may. SHYLOCK. I will be assur'd I may; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio? BASSANIO. If it please you to dine with us. SHYLOCK. Yes, to smell pork, to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, 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. What news on the Rialto?
Who is he comes here?

Enter ANTONIO

BASSANIO. This is Signior Antonio.

SHYLOCK. [Aside] How like a fawning
publican he looks! I hate him for he is a
Christian; But more for that in low
simplicity He lends out money gratis,
and brings down The rate of usance here
with us in Venice. If I can catch him once
upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient
grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred
nation; and he rails, Even there where
merchants most do congregate, On me,
my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my
tribe If I forgive him! BASSANIO.
Shylock, do you hear? SHYLOCK. I am
debating of my present store, And, by
the near guess of my memory, I cannot

instantly raise up the gross Of full three
thousand ducats. What of that? Tubal, a
wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, Will furnish
me. But soft! how many months Do you
desire? [To ANTONIO] Rest you fair, good
signior; Your worship was the last man in
our mouths. ANTONIO. Shylock, albeit I
neither lend nor borrow By taking nor
by giving of excess, Yet, to supply the
ripe wants of my friend, I'll break a
custom. [To BASSANIO] Is he yet
possess'd How much ye would?
SHYLOCK. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.
ANTONIO. And for three months.
SHYLOCK. I had forgot- three months; you
told me so. Well then, your bond; and,
let me see- but hear you, Methoughts
you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage. ANTONIO. I do never
use it. SHYLOCK. When Jacob graz'd his
uncle Laban's sheep- This Jacob from our
holy Abram was, As his wise mother

wrought in his behalf, The third
possessor; ay, he was the third-
ANTONIO. And what of him? Did he take
interest? SHYLOCK. No, not take interest;
not, as you would say, Directly int'rest;
mark what Jacob did: When Laban and
himself were compromis'd That all the
eanlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being
rank, In end of autumn turned to the
rams; And when the work of generation
was Between these woolly breeders in
the act, The skilful shepherd pill'd me
certain wands, And, in the doing of the
deed of kind, He stuck them up before
the fulsome ewes, Who, then conceiving,
did in eaning time Fall parti-colour'd
lambs, and those were Jacob's. This was
a way to thrive, and he was blest; And
thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
ANTONIO. This was a venture, sir, that
Jacob serv'd for; A thing not in his power

to bring to pass, 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? SHYLOCK. I
cannot tell; I make it breed as fast. But
note me, signior. ANTONIO. [Aside]
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. O, what a
goodly outside falsehood hath! SHYLOCK.
Three thousand ducats- 'tis a good round
sum. Three months from twelve; then let
me see, the rate- ANTONIO. Well,
Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?
SHYLOCK. Signior Antonio, many a time
and oft In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances; Still
have I borne it with a patient shrug, For
suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe;
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,

And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,
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 upon my beard And foot me
as you spurn a stranger cur Over your
threshold; moneys is your suit. What
should I say to you? Should I not say
'Hath a dog money? Is it possible A cur
can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and, in a bondman's key,
 With bated breath and whisp'ring
humbleness, 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 thus much moneys'? ANTONIO. I am
as like to call thee so again, To spit on
thee again, to spurn thee too. If thou wilt
lend this money, lend it not As to thy

friends- for when did friendship take A
breed for barren metal of his friend?- But
lend it rather to thine enemy, Who if he
break thou mayst with better face Exact
the penalty. SHYLOCK. 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 Of usance for my moneys, and you'll
not hear me. This is kind I offer.
BASSANIO. This were kindness.
SHYLOCK. 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 condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound Of
your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken In
what part of your body pleaseth me.
ANTONIO. Content, in faith; I'll seal to such

a bond, And say there is much kindness
in the Jew. BASSANIO. You shall not seal
to such a bond for me; I'll rather dwell in
my necessity. ANTONIO. Why, fear not,
man; 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.

SHYLOCK. O father Abram, 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 forfeiture?
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.

ANTONIO. Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto
this bond. SHYLOCK. Then meet me

forthwith at the notary's; Give him
direction for this merry bond, And I will
go and purse the ducats straight, See to
my house, left in the fearful guard Of an
unthrifty knave, and presently I'll be with
you. ANTONIO. Hie thee, gentle Jew.

 Exit SHYLOCK The Hebrew will
turn Christian: he grows kind. BASSANIO.
I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.
ANTONIO. Come on; in this there can be
no dismay; My ships come home a
month before the day. Exeunt

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ACT II. SCENE I. Belmont. PORTIA'S house

Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE of MOROCCO, a tawny Moor all in white, and three or four FOLLOWERS accordingly, with PORTIA, NERISSA, and train

PRINCE OF Morocco. Mislike me not for my complexion, The shadowed livery of the burnish'd 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 for your love To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.

I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine Hath fear'd the valiant; by my love, I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime Have lov'd it too. I would not change this hue, Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen. PORTIA. In terms of choice I am not solely led By nice direction of a

maiden's eyes; Besides, the lott'ry of my
destiny Bars me the right of voluntary
choosing. But, if my father had not
scanted me, And hedg'd 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 comer I have look'd on yet For my
affection. PRINCE OF MOROCCO. Even
for that I thank you. Therefore, I pray
you, lead me to the caskets To try my
fortune. By this scimitar, That slew the
Sophy and a Persian prince, That won
three fields of Sultan Solyman, I would
o'erstare the sternest eyes that look,
Outbrave the heart most daring on the
earth, Pluck the young sucking cubs
from the she-bear, Yea, mock the lion
when 'a roars for prey, To win thee, 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 band. 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. PORTIA. You must take
your chance, And either not attempt to
choose at all, Or swear before you
choose, if you choose wrong, Never to
speak to lady afterward In way of
marriage; therefore be advis'd. PRINCE
OF MOROCCO. Nor will not; come, bring
me unto my chance. PORTIA. First,
forward to the temple. After dinner Your
hazard shall be made. PRINCE OF
MOROCCO. Good fortune then, To make
me blest or cursed'st among men!

[Cornets, and exeunt]

SCENE II. Venice. A street

Enter LAUNCELOT GOBBO

LAUNCELOT. 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 heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack. 'Via!' 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 to, he had a kind of taste- well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, (you counsel well.' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well.' To be rul'd by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who- God bless the mark!- is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who- saving your reverence!- is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation; 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.

Enter OLD GOBBO, with a
basket

GOBBO. Master young man, you, I pray
you, which is the way to master Jew's?

LAUNCELOT. [Aside] O heavens! This is
my true-begotten father, who, being
more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind,
knows me not. I will try confusions with

him. GOBBO. Master young gentleman, I
pray you, which is the way to master

Jew's? LAUNCELOT. Turn up on your right
hand at the next turning, but, at the next
turning of all, on your left; marry, at the
very next turning, turn of no hand, but
turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

GOBBO. Be God's sonties, 'twill be a hard
way to hit! Can you tell me whether one
Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with
him or no? LAUNCELOT. Talk you of

young Master Launcelot? [Aside] Mark
me now; now will I raise the waters.-

Talk you of young Master Launcelot?
GOBBO. No master, sir, but a poor man's son; his father, though I say't, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live. LAUNCELOT. Well, let his father be what 'a will, we talk of young Master Launcelot. GOBBO. Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir. LAUNCELOT. But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot? GOBBO. Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership. LAUNCELOT. 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 and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven. GOBBO. Marry, God forbid! The boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop. LAUNCELOT. Do I look like a

cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop?
Do you know me, father? GOBBO. Alack
the day, I know you not, young gentleman;
but I pray you tell me, is my boy- God
rest his soul!- alive or dead?

LAUNCELOT. Do you not know me, father?

GOBBO. Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I
know you not. LAUNCELOT. Nay, indeed,
if you had your eyes, you might fail of the
knowing me: it is a wise father that knows
his own child. 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. GOBBO. Pray

you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not
Launcelot my boy. LAUNCELOT. 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. GOBBO. I cannot think
you are my son. LAUNCELOT. I know not

what I shall think of that; but I am
Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure
Margery your wife is my mother.
GOBBO. Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll
be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art
mine own flesh and blood. Lord
worshipp'd might he be, what a beard
hast thou got! Thou hast got more hair on
thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on
his tail. LAUNCELOT. 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.
GOBBO. Lord, how art thou chang'd! How
dost thou and thy master agree? I have
brought him a present. How 'gree you
now? LAUNCELOT. Well, well; but, for
mine own part, as I have set up my rest
to run away, so I will not rest till I have run
some ground. My master's a very Jew.
Give him a present! Give him a halter. I
am famish'd in his service; you may tell

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.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONARDO, with a FOLLOWER or two

BASSANIO. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered, put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. Exit a

SERVANT LAUNCELOT. To him, father.

GOBBO. God bless your worship!

BASSANIO. Gramercy; wouldst thou aught with me? GOBBO. Here's my son, sir, a

poor boy- LAUNCELOT. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man, that would, sir, as my father shall specify- GOBBO. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve- LAUNCELOT. Indeed the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify- GOBBO. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins- LAUNCELOT. 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 frutify unto you- GOBBO. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is- LAUNCELOT. 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. BASSANIO. One speak for both. What would you? LAUNCELOT. Serve you, sir.

GOBBO. That is the very defect of the matter, sir. BASSANIO. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit. Shylock thy master spoke with me this day, And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment To leave a rich Jew's service to become The follower of so poor a gentleman.

LAUNCELOT. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough. BASSANIO. Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son.

Take leave of thy old master, and inquire My lodging out. [To a SERVANT] Give him a livery More guarded than his fellows'; see it done. LAUNCELOT. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no! I have ne'er a

tongue in my head! [Looking on his palm] Well; 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; a'leven 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-bed—here are simple scapes. Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling.

Exeunt LAUNCELOT and
OLD GOBBO BASSANIO. I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this. These things being bought and orderly bestowed, Return in haste, for I do feast to-night My best esteem'd acquaintance; hie thee, go. LEONARDO. My best endeavours shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO

GRATIANO. Where's your master?
LEONARDO. Yonder, sir, he walks.

Exit GRATIANO. Signior Bassanio!

BASSANIO. Gratiano! GRATIANO. I have
suit to you. BASSANIO. You have obtain'd

it. GRATIANO. You must not deny me: I
must go with you to Belmont. BASSANIO.

Why, then you must. But hear thee,
Gratiano: Thou art too wild, too rude,

and bold of voice- Parts 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 liberal. Pray thee, take pain

To allay with some cold drops of
modesty Thy skipping spirit; lest

through thy wild behaviour I be
misconst'red in the place I go to And

lose my hopes. GRATIANO. Signior
Bassanio, hear me: If I do not put on a

sober habit, Talk with respect, and
swear but now and then, Wear

prayer-books in my pocket, look
demurely, Nay more, while grace is

saying hood mine eyes Thus with my
hat, and sigh, and say amen, Use all the
observance of civility Like one well
studied in a sad ostent To please his
grandam, never trust me more.

BASSANIO. Well, we shall see your
bearing. GRATIANO. Nay, but I bar
to-night; you shall not gauge me By what
we do to-night. BASSANIO. No, that were
pity; I would entreat you rather to put on

Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have
friends That purpose merriment. But fare
you well; I have some business.

GRATIANO. And I must to Lorenzo and the
rest; But we will visit you at supper-time.

Exeunt

SCENE III. Venice. SHYLOCK'S house

Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT

JESSICA. 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 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. LAUNCELOT. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan,

most sweet Jew! If a Christian do not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu! these foolish drops do something drown my manly spirit; adieu!

JESSICA. Farewell, good

Launcelot. Exit LAUNCELOT

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me To be

asham'd to be my father's child! But
though I am a daughter to his blood, I am
not to his manners. O Lorenzo, If thou
keep promise, I shall end this strife,
Become a Christian and thy loving wife.

Exit

SCENE IV. Venice. A street

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALERIO,
and SOLANIO

LORENZO. Nay, we will slink away in
suppertime, Disguise us at my lodging,
and return All in an hour. GRATIANO.
We have not made good preparation.
SALERIO. We have not spoke us yet of
torch-bearers. SOLANIO. 'Tis vile, unless
it may be quaintly ordered; And better
in my mind not undertook. LORENZO. 'Tis
now but four o'clock; we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT, With a letter

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?
LAUNCELOT. An it shall please you to
break up this, it shall seem to signify.
LORENZO. I know the hand; in faith, 'tis a

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 foot, Unless she do
it under this excuse, That she is issue to
a faithless Jew. Come, go with me,
peruse this as thou goest; Fair Jessica
shall be my torch-bearer. Exeunt

SCENE V. Venice. Before SHYLOCK'S
house

Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT

SHYLOCK. Well, thou shalt see; thy eyes
shall be thy judge, The difference of old
Shylock and Bassanio.- What, Jessica!-
Thou shalt not gormandize As thou hast
done with me- What, Jessica!- And sleep
and snore, and rend apparel out- Why,
Jessica, I say! LAUNCELOT. Why, Jessica!

SHYLOCK. Who bids thee call? I do not
bid thee call. LAUNCELOT. Your worship
was wont to tell me I could do nothing
without bidding.

Enter JESSICA

JESSICA. Call you? What is your will?
SHYLOCK. 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 loath to go; There is
some ill a-brewing towards my rest, For
I did dream of money-bags to-night.

LAUNCELOT. I beseech you, sir, go; my
young master doth expect your
reproach. SHYLOCK. So do I his.

LAUNCELOT. 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-bleeding on
Black Monday last at six o'clock i' th'
morning, falling out that year on Ash
Wednesday was four year, in th'
afternoon. SHYLOCK. What, are there

masques? Hear you me, Jessica: Lock up
my doors, and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd
fife, Clamber not you up to the

casements then, Nor thrust your head
into the public street To gaze on
Christian fools with varnish'd faces; But
stop my house's ears- I mean my
casements; Let not the sound of shallow
fopp'ry enter My sober house. By Jacob's
staff, I swear I have no mind of feasting
forth to-night; But I will go. Go you
before me, sirrah; Say I will come.

LAUNCELOT. I will go before, sir. Mistress,
look out at window for all this. There
will come a Christian by Will be worth
a Jewess' eye. Exit SHYLOCK.

What says that fool of Hagar's offspring,
ha? JESSICA. His words were 'Farewell,
mistress'; nothing else. SHYLOCK. The
patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder,
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat; drones hive not
with me, Therefore I part with him; and
part with him To one that I would have
him help to waste His borrowed purse.

Well, 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 in thrifty mind.

Exit JESSICA. Farewell; and if my
fortune be not crost, I have a father, you
a daughter, lost. Exit

SCENE VI. Venice. Before SHYLOCK'S house

Enter the maskers, GRATIANO and SALERIO

GRATIANO. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo Desired us to make stand.

SALERIO. His hour is almost past.

GRATIANO. And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour, For lovers ever run before the clock. SALERIO. O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly To seal love's bonds new made than they are wont To keep obliged faith unforfeited! GRATIANO.

That ever holds: who riseth from a feast With that keen appetite that he sits down?

Where is the horse that doth untread again His tedious measures with the unbated fire That he did pace them first? All things that are Are with more spirit chased than enjoyed. How like a

younger or a prodigal The scarfed bark
puts from her native bay, Hugg'd and
embraced by the strumpet wind; How
like the prodigal doth she return, With
over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar'd by the strumpet
wind!

Enter LORENZO

SALERIO. Here comes Lorenzo; more of
this hereafter. LORENZO. Sweet friends,
your patience for my long abode! 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 then.
Approach; Here dwells my father Jew.
Ho! who's within?

Enter JESSICA, above, in boy's
clothes

JESSICA. Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty, Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue. LORENZO. Lorenzo, and thy love. JESSICA. Lorenzo, certain; and my love indeed; For who love I so much? And now who knows But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours? LORENZO. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art. JESSICA. Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains. I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me, For I am much asham'd of my exchange; But love is blind, and lovers cannot see The pretty follies that themselves commit, For, if they could, Cupid himself would blush To see me thus transformed to a boy. LORENZO. Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer. JESSICA. What! must I hold a candle to my shames? They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light. Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love, And I should be obscur'd. LORENZO. So

are you, sweet, Even in the lovely
garnish of a boy. But come at once,
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.
JESSICA. I will make fast the doors, and
gild myself With some moe ducats, and
be with you straight.

Exit above

GRATIANO. Now, by my hood, a gentle,
and no Jew. LORENZO. Beshrew me, but I
love her heartily, 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
prov'd herself; And therefore, like
herself, wise, fair, and true, Shall she be
placed in my constant soul.

Enter JESSICA, below

What, art thou come? On, gentlemen,
away; Our masquing mates by this time

for us stay.

Exit with

JESSICA and SALERIO

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO. Who's there? GRATIANO.
Signior Antonio? ANTONIO. 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 about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard; I
have sent twenty out to seek for you.
GRATIANO. I am glad on't; I desire no
more delight Than to be under sail and
gone to-night. Exeunt

SCENE VII. Belmont. PORTIA's house

Flourish of cornets. Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, and their trains

PORTIA. Go draw aside the curtains and discover The several caskets to this noble Prince. Now make your choice.

PRINCE OF MOROCCO. The first, of gold, who this inscription bears: 'Who

chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.' The second, silver, which this

promise carries: 'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.' This third,

dull lead, with warning all as blunt: 'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he

hath.' How shall I know if I do choose the right? PORTIA. The one of them contains

my picture, Prince; If you choose that, then I am yours withal. PRINCE OF

MOROCCO. Some god direct my judgment! Let me see; I will survey th'

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. A golden
mind stoops not to shows of dross; I'll
then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
'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 beest
rated by thy estimation, Thou dost
deserve enough, and yet enough May
not extend so far as to the lady; And yet
to be afeard of my deserving Were but a
weak disabling of myself. 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 no farther, but chose here?

Let's see once more this saying grav'd in gold:
'Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.' Why, that's the lady!
All the world desires her; From the four corners of the earth they come To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint.

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds

Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now
For princes to come view fair Portia. The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar To stop the foreign spirits, but they come As o'er a brook to see fair Portia. One of these three contains her heavenly picture.

Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation To think so base a thought; it were too gross To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave. Or shall I think in silver she's immur'd, Being ten times undervalued 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
Stamp'd in gold; but that's insculp'd upon.

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! PORTIA.
There, take it, Prince, and if my form lie
there, Then I am yours. [He

opens the golden casket] PRINCE OF
MOROCCO. O hell! what have we here?

A carrion Death, within whose empty eye
There is a written scroll! I'll read the
writing. 'All that glisters is not gold,

Often have you heard that told;
Many a man his life hath sold But my
outside to behold. Gilded tombs do
worms infold. Had you been as wise
as bold, Young in limbs, in judgment
old, Your answer had not been
inscroll'd. Fare you well, your suit is
cold.' Cold indeed, and labour lost,
Then farewell, heat, and welcome, frost.

Portia, adieu! I have too griev'd a heart
To take a tedious leave; thus losers part.

Exit with his train. Flourish of
cornets PORTIA. A gentle riddance. Draw
the curtains, go. Let all of his complexion
choose me so. Exeunt

SCENE VIII. Venice. A street

Enter SALERIO and SOLANIO

SALERIO. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail; With him is Gratiano gone along; And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not. SOLANIO. The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the Duke, Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

SALERIO. He came too late, the ship was under sail; But there the Duke was given to understand That in a gondola were seen together Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica; Besides, Antonio certified the Duke They were not with Bassanio in his ship. SOLANIO. I never heard a passion so confus'd, So strange, outrageous, and so variable, 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, stol'n from me by my daughter!

And jewels- two stones, two rich and
precious stones, Stol'n by my daughter!

Justice! Find the girl; She hath the stones
upon her and the ducats.' SALERIO. Why,
all the boys in Venice follow him,

Crying, his stones, his daughter, and his
ducats. SOLANIO. Let good Antonio look
he keep his day, Or he shall pay for this.

SALERIO. Marry, well rememb'red; I
reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried

A vessel of our country richly fraught. I
thought upon Antonio when he told me,
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

SOLANIO. You were best to tell Antonio
what you hear; Yet do not suddenly, for
it may grieve him. SALERIO. A kinder
gentleman treads not the earth. I saw

Bassanio and Antonio part. Bassanio told him he would make some speed Of his return. He answered 'Do not so; Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio, But stay the very riping of the time; And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me, Let it not enter in your mind of love; Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts To courtship, and such fair ostents 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. SOLANIO. I think he only loves the world for him. I pray thee, let us go and find him out, And quicken his embraced heaviness With some delight or other. SALERIO. Do we so. Exeunt

SCENE IX. Belmont. PORTIA'S house

Enter NERISSA, and a SERVITOR

NERISSA. Quick, quick, I pray thee, draw
the curtain straight; The Prince of
Arragon hath ta'en his oath, And comes
to his election presently.

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

PORTIA. Behold, there stand the caskets,
noble Prince. If you choose that wherein
I am contain'd, Straight shall our nuptial
rites be solemniz'd; 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, If I do fail in fortune
of my choice, Immediately to leave you
and be gone. PORTIA. To these
injunctions every one doth swear That
comes to hazard for my worthless self.
ARRAGON. And so have I address'd me.
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.' What many men
desire- that 'many' may be meant By the
fool multitude, that choose by show, Not
learning more than the fond eye doth
teach; Which pries not to th' interior, but,
like the martlet, Builds in the weather on
the outward wall, Even in the force and
road of casualty. I will not choose what

many men desire, Because I will not
jump with common spirits And rank me
with the barbarous multitudes. Why,
then to thee, thou silver treasure-house!
Tell me once more what title thou dost
bear. 'Who chooseth me shall get as
much as he deserves.' And well said too;
for who shall go about To cozen 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 deriv'd
corruptly, and that clear honour Were
purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand
bare! How many be commanded that
command! How much low peasantry
would then be gleaned From the true
seed of honour! and how much honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new varnish'd! Well, but to my
choice. 'Who chooseth me shall get as

much as he deserves.' I will assume
desert. Give me a key for this, And
instantly unlock my fortunes here.

[He opens the silver casket]
PORTIA. [Aside] Too long a pause for that
which you find there. ARRAGON. What's
here? The portrait of a blinking idiot
Presenting me a schedule! 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? Is that my prize? Are
my deserts no better? PORTIA. To offend
and judge are distinct offices And of
opposed natures. ARRAGON. What is
here? [Reads]

"The fire seven times tried this;
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 iwis Silver'd o'er, and so was
this. Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head. So be
gone; you are sped.'

Still more fool I shall appear 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.
Exit with his train

PORTIA. Thus hath the candle sing'd the
moth. O, these deliberate fools! When
they do choose, They have the wisdom
by their wit to lose. NERISSA. The ancient
saying is no heresy: Hanging and wiving
goes by destiny. PORTIA. Come, draw
the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a SERVANT

SERVANT. Where is my lady? PORTIA.
Here; what would my lord? SERVANT.
Madam, there is alighted at your gate A
young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify th' approaching of his lord,
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets;
To wit, besides commends and
courteous breath, Gifts of rich value. Yet
I have not seen So likely an ambassador
of love. A day in April never came so
sweet To show how costly summer was
at hand As this fore-spurrer 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-day wit in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa, for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so
mannerly. NERISSA. Bassanio, Lord Love,
if thy will it be! Exeunt

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ACT III. SCENE I. Venice. A street

Enter SOLANIO and SALERIO

SOLANIO. Now, what news on the Rialto?

SALERIO. Why, yet it lives there uncheck'd
that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading
wreck'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins
I think they call the place, a very
dangerous flat and fatal, where the
carcases of many a tall ship lie buried, as
they say, if my gossip Report be an
honest woman of her word.

SOLANIO. I
would she were as lying a gossip in that as
ever knapp'd ginger or made her
neighbours believe she wept for the death
of a third husband. But it is true, without
any slips of prolixity or crossing the
plain highway of talk, that the good
Antonio, the honest Antonio- O that I had
a title good enough to keep his name
company!- SALERIO. Come, the full stop.

SOLANIO. Ha! What sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship. SALERIO. I would it might prove the end of his losses. SOLANIO. Let me say amen betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

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. SALERIO. That's certain; I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal. SOLANIO. And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was flidge; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam. SHYLOCK. She is damn'd for it. SALERIO. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge. SHYLOCK. My own flesh and blood to rebel! SOLANIO. Out upon it, old carrion!

Rebels it at these years? SHYLOCK. I say my daughter is my flesh and my blood.

SALERIO. There is more difference between thy flesh and hers than between jet and ivory; more between your bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no? SHYLOCK. There I have

another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was us'd to come so smug upon the mart. 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. SALERIO. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh. What's that good for? SHYLOCK. To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgrac'd me and hind'ed me half a

million; laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies. And what's his reason? I am a Jew. 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, 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 humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will

better the instruction.

Enter a MAN from ANTONIO

MAN. Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his house, and desires to speak with you both. SALERIO. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL

SOLANIO. Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

Exeunt SOLANIO, SALERIO, and MAN
SHYLOCK. How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter? TUBAL. I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.
SHYLOCK. Why there, there, there, there! A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! 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 hears'd 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 o' my shoulders; no sighs but o' my breathing; no tears but o' 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!- heard in
Genoa. TUBAL. Your daughter spent in
Genoa, as I heard, one night, fourscore
ducats. SHYLOCK. Thou stick'st a dagger
in me- I shall never see my gold again.
Fourscore ducats at a sitting! Fourscore
ducats! TUBAL. There came divers of
Antonio's creditors in my company to
Venice that swear he cannot choose but
break. SHYLOCK. I am very glad of it; I'll
plague him, I'll torture him; I am glad of
it. 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 turquoise;
I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor; I
would not have given it for a wilderness
of monkeys. TUBAL. But Antonio is
certainly undone. SHYLOCK. Nay, that's
true; that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an
officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I
will have the heart of him, if he forfeit;

for, were he out of Venice, I can make what
merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet
me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at
our synagogue, Tubal. Exeunt

SCENE II. Belmont. PORTIA'S house

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO,
NERISSA, and all their trains

PORTIA. I pray you tarry; pause a day or
two Before you hazard; for, in choosing
wrong, I lose your company; therefore
forbear a while. There's something tells
me- but it is not love- I would not lose
you; and you know yourself Hate
counsels not in such a quality. 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 Before you venture for me. I could
teach you How to choose right, but then I
am 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.
Beshrew your eyes! They have
o'erlook'd me and divided me; 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 between the owners and their
rights; And so, though yours, not yours.
Prove it so, Let fortune go to hell for it,
not I. I speak too long, but 'tis to peize
the time, To eke it, and to draw it out in
length, To stay you from election.

BASSANIO. Let me choose; For as I am, I
live upon the rack. PORTIA. Upon the
rack, Bassanio? Then confess What
treason there is mingled with your love.

BASSANIO. None but that ugly treason of
mistrust Which makes me fear th'
enjoying of my love; There may as well
be amity and life 'Tween snow and fire
as treason and my love. PORTIA. Ay, but I
fear you speak upon the rack, Where
men enforced do speak anything.

BASSANIO. Promise me life, and I'll
confess the truth. PORTIA. Well then,

confess and live. 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. 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,
Fading in music. That the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be
the stream And wat'ry death-bed for
him. He may win; And what is music
then? Then music is Even as the flourish
when true subjects bow To a
new-crowned monarch; such it is As are
those dulcet sounds in break of day That
creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he
goes, With no less presence, but with

lies. Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I'll begin it- Ding, dong, bell.
ALL. Ding, dong, bell.

BASSANIO. So may the outward shows be
least themselves; The world is still
deceiv'd with ornament. In law, what
plea so tainted and corrupt But, being
season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

How many cowards, whose hearts are all
as false As stairs of sand, wear yet upon
their chins The beards of Hercules and
frowning Mars; Who, inward search'd,
have livers white as milk! And these
assume but valour's excrement To
render them redoubted. Look on beauty

And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the
weight, Which therein works a miracle
in nature, Making them lightest that wear
most of it; So are those crisped snaky
golden locks Which make such wanton
gambols with the wind Upon supposed
fairness often known To be the dowry of
a second head- The skull that bred them
in the sepulchre. Thus ornament is but
the guiled shore To a most dangerous
sea; the beauteous scarf Veiling an
Indian beauty; in a word, The seeming
truth which cunning times put on To
entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy
gold, Hard food for Midas, I will none of
thee; Nor none of thee, thou pale and
common drudge 'Tween man and man;
but thou, thou meagre lead, Which
rather threaten'st than dost promise aught,
Thy plainness moves me more than
eloquence, And here choose I. Joy be
the consequence! PORTIA. [Aside] How

all the other passions fleet to air, As
doubtful thoughts, and rash-embrac'd
despair, And shudd'ring fear, and
green-ey'd jealousy! O love, be
moderate, allay thy ecstasy, In measure
rain thy joy, scant this excess! I feel too
much thy blessing. Make it less, For fear
I surfeit. BASSANIO. [Opening the leaden
casket] What find I here? Fair Portia's
counterfeit! What demi-god 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 Should sunder such sweet friends.
Here in her hairs The painter plays the
spider, and hath woven A golden mesh t'
entrap the hearts of men Faster than
gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes- How
could he see to do them? Having made
one, Methinks it should have power to
steal both his, And leave itself

unfurnish'd. Yet look how far The
substance of my praise doth wrong this
shadow In underprizing it, so far this
shadow Doth limp behind the substance.
Here's the scroll, The continent and
summary of my fortune. 'You that
choose not by the view, Chance as
fair and choose as true! Since this
fortune falls to you, Be content and
seek no new. If you be well pleas'd
with this, And hold your fortune for
your bliss, Turn to where your lady is
 And claim her with a loving kiss.' A
gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave; I
come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's
eyes, 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, Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified
by you. PORTIA. 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 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 I might in virtues, beauties,
livings, friends, Exceed account. But the
full sum of me Is sum of something
which, to term in gross, Is an unlesson'd
girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd; Happy in
this, she is not yet so old But she may
learn; happier than this, She is not bred
so dull but she can learn; Happiest of all
is 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. But now I was the lord 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, Which when you
part from, lose, or give away, Let it
presage the ruin of your love, And be
my vantage to exclaim on you.

BASSANIO. Madam, you have bereft me of
all words; Only my blood speaks to you
in my veins; And there is such confusion
in my powers 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, save of joy 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!

NERISSA. My lord and lady, it is now our
time That have stood by and seen our

wishes prosper To cry 'Good joy.' Good
joy, 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. My eyes, my lord, can
look as swift as yours: You saw the
mistress, I beheld the maid; You lov'd, I
lov'd; for intermission No more pertains
to me, my lord, than you. Your fortune
stood upon the caskets there, And so did
mine too, as the matter falls; 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
Achiev'd her mistress. PORTIA. Is this
true, Nerissa? NERISSA. Madam, it is, so
you stand pleas'd withal. BASSANIO. And
do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?
GRATIANO. Yes, faith, my lord.
BASSANIO. Our feast shall be much
honoured in your marriage. GRATIANO.
We'll play with them: the first boy for a
thousand ducats. NERISSA. What, and
stake down? GRATIANO. No; we shall
ne'er win at that sport, and stake down-
But who comes here? Lorenzo and his
infidel? What, and my old Venetian
friend, Salerio!

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and
SALERIO, a messenger from
Venice

BASSANIO. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome
hither, If that the youth of my new int'rest

here Have power to bid you welcome.
By your leave, I bid my very friends and
countrymen, Sweet Portia, welcome.

PORTIA. So do I, my lord; 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, To
come with him along. SALERIO. I did, my
lord, And I have reason for it. Signior
Antonio Commends him to you.

[Gives BASSANIO a letter] BASSANIO. Ere
I ope his letter, 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. [BASSANIO opens the
letter] GRATIANO. Nerissa, cheer yond
stranger; bid her welcome. 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. SALERIO. I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost. PORTIA. There are some shrewd contents in yond same paper That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek: Some dear friend dead, else nothing in the world Could turn so much the constitution Of any constant man. What, worse and worse! 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, Rating myself at nothing, you shall see How much I was a braggart. When I told you My state was

nothing, I should then have told you That
I was worse than nothing; for indeed I
have engag'd myself to a dear friend,
Engag'd my friend to his mere 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? Hath all
his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
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
money to discharge the Jew, 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 Of forfeiture, of justice, and
his bond. JESSICA. 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 That he did
owe him; and I know, my lord, If law,
authority, and power, deny not, 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 condition'd and
unwearied spirit In doing courtesies;
and one in whom The ancient Roman
honour more appears Than any that
draws breath in Italy. PORTIA. What sum
owes he the Jew? BASSANIO. For me,
three thousand ducats. PORTIA. What! no
more? Pay him six thousand, and deface

the bond; Double six thousand, and then
treble that, Before a friend of this
description 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; For never shall
you lie by Portia's side With an unquiet
soul. You shall have gold To pay the
petty debt twenty times over. 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. BASSANIO. [Reads]
'Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all
miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my
estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is
forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is
impossible I should live, all debts are

clear'd between you and I, if I might but
see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use
your pleasure; if your love do not
persuade you to come, let not my letter.'

PORTIA. O love, dispatch 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, Nor rest be
interposer 'twixt us twain. Exeunt

SCENE III. Venice. A street

Enter SHYLOCK, SOLANIO, ANTONIO, and
GAOLER

SHYLOCK. Gaoler, look to him. Tell not
me of mercy- This is the fool that lent out
money gratis. Gaoler, look to him.

ANTONIO. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

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 naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

ANTONIO. I pray thee hear me speak.

SHYLOCK. 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-ey'd fool, 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 SOLANIO. It is the most
impenetrable cur That ever kept with
men. ANTONIO. Let him alone; I'll
follow him no more with bootless prayers.

He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures Many
that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me. SOLANIO. I am
sure the Duke Will never grant this
forfeiture to hold. ANTONIO. The Duke
cannot deny the course of law; For the
commodity that strangers have With us
in Venice, if it be denied, Will much
impeach the justice of the state, Since
that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go;
These griefs and losses have so bated me
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. PORTIA'S house

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO,
JESSICA, and BALTHASAR

LORENZO. Madam, although I speak it in
your presence, You have a noble and a
true conceit Of godlike amity, which
appears most strongly In bearing thus
the absence of your lord. But if you knew
to whom you show this honour, 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 can enforce you.

PORTIA. I never did repent for doing
good, 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, of
manners, and of spirit, Which makes me

think that this Antonio, Being the bosom
lover of my lord, Must needs be like my
lord. If it be so, How little is the cost I
have bestowed In purchasing the
semblance of my soul 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 of my house Until my lord's
return; for mine own part, I have toward
heaven breath'd a secret vow To live in
prayer and contemplation, Only
attended by Nerissa here, Until her
husband and my lord's return. There is a
monastery two miles off, And there we
will abide. I do desire you Not to deny
this imposition, The which my love and
some necessity Now lays upon you.

LORENZO. Madam, with all my heart I
shall obey you in an fair commands.

PORTIA. My people do already know my

mind, And will acknowledge you and
Jessica In place of Lord Bassanio and
myself. So fare you well till we shall
meet again. LORENZO. Fair thoughts and
happy hours attend on you! JESSICA. I
wish your ladyship all heart's content.
PORTIA. I thank you for your wish, and am
well pleas'd To wish it back on you. Fare
you well, Jessica.

Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO Now,
Balthasar, As I have ever found thee
honest-true, So let me find thee still.
Take this same letter, And use thou all th'
endeavour of a man In speed to Padua;
see thou render this Into my cousin's
hands, Doctor Bellario; And look what
notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd
speed Unto the traject, to the common
ferry Which trades to Venice. Waste no
time in words, But get thee gone; I shall
be there before thee. BALTHASAR.

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. 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. I'll hold thee any wager, 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, And speak between the change of man and boy

With a reed voice; and turn two mincing steps Into a manly stride; and speak of frays Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies, How honourable ladies sought my love, Which I denying, they fell sick and died- I could not do withal. Then I'll repent, And wish for all that, that I had not kill'd them. And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell, That men shall swear I

have discontinued school About a
twelvemonth. I have within my mind A
thousand raw tricks of these bragging
Jacks, Which I will practise. NERISSA.
Why, shall we turn to men? PORTIA. Fie,
what a question's that, If thou wert near a
lewd interpreter! 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 measure twenty miles to-day.
Exeunt

SCENE V. Belmont. The garden

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 you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter; therefore be o' good cheer, for truly I think you are damn'd. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good, and that is but a kind of bastard hope, neither.

JESSICA. And what hope is that, I pray thee? LAUNCELOT. Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not—that you are not the Jew's daughter.

JESSICA. That were a kind of bastard hope indeed; so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me. LAUNCELOT. Truly then I fear you are damn'd both by father and mother; thus when I shun Scylla,

your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother; well, you are gone both ways.

JESSICA. I shall be sav'd by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

LAUNCELOT. Truly, the more to blame he; we were Christians enow

before, e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter LORENZO

JESSICA. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes.

LORENZO. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners. JESSICA. Nay, you need nor fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot and I are

out; he tells me flatly there's 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. LORENZO. I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can the getting up of the negro's belly; the Moor is with child by you, Launcelot. LAUNCELOT. It is much that the Moor should be more than reason; but if she be less than an honest woman, she is indeed more than I took her for. LORENZO. How every fool can play upon the word! I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner. LAUNCELOT. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs. LORENZO. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! Then bid them prepare dinner.

LAUNCELOT. That is done too, sir, only 'cover' is the word. LORENZO. Will you cover, then, sir? LAUNCELOT. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty. 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 serv'd in; for the meat, sir, it shall be cover'd; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern. Exit LORENZO. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!

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 tricky word

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. It is very meet The Lord
Bassanio live an upright life, 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 he
should never come to heaven. Why, if
two gods should play some heavenly
match, And on the wager lay two earthly
women, And Portia one, there must be
something else Pawn'd with the other;
for the poor rude world Hath not her
fellow. LORENZO. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.
JESSICA. Nay, but ask my opinion too of
that. LORENZO. I will anon; first let us go
to dinner. JESSICA. Nay, let me praise
you while I have a stomach. LORENZO.
No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk;
Then howsome'er thou speak'st, 'mong
other things I shall digest it. JESSICA.

Well, I'll set you forth.

Exeunt

ACT IV. SCENE I. Venice. The court of justice

Enter the DUKE, the MAGNIFICOES, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and OTHERS

DUKE OF VENICE. What, is Antonio here?

ANTONIO. Ready, so please your Grace.

DUKE OF VENICE. I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer A stony adversary,
an inhuman wretch, Uncapable of pity,
void and empty From any dram of
mercy. ANTONIO. I have heard Your
Grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify

His rigorous course; but since he stands
obdurate, And that no lawful means can
carry me Out of his envy's reach, I do
oppose My patience to his fury, and am
arm'd To suffer with a quietness of spirit

The very tyranny and rage of his. DUKE
OF VENICE. Go one, and call the Jew into

the court. SALERIO. He is ready at the door; he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK

DUKE OF VENICE. Make room, and let him stand before our face. Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too, That thou but ledest this fashion of thy malice

To the last hour of act; and then, 'tis thought, Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange Than is thy strange apparent cruelty; And where thou now exacts the penalty, Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh, Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture, But, touch'd with human gentleness and love, Forgive a moiety of the principal, Glancing an eye of pity on his losses, That have of late so huddled on his back-Enow to press a royal merchant down, And pluck commiseration of his state

From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of
flint, From stubborn Turks and Tartars,
never train'd To offices of tender
courtesy. We all expect a gentle answer,
Jew. SHYLOCK. I have possess'd your
Grace of what I purpose, And by our
holy Sabbath have I sworn To have the
due and forfeit of my bond. If you deny
it, let the danger light Upon your charter
and your city's freedom. You'll ask me
why I rather choose to have A weight of
carrion flesh than to receive Three
thousand ducats. I'll not answer that, But
say it is my humour- is it answer'd? What
if my house be troubled with a rat, And I
be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats
To have it ban'd? What, are you answer'd
yet? Some men there are love not a
gaping pig; Some that are mad if they
behold a cat; And others, when the
bagpipe sings i' th' nose, Cannot contain
their urine; for affection, Mistress of

passion, sways it to the mood Of what it
likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be rend'ed
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig; Why
he, a harmless necessary cat; Why he, a
woollen bagpipe, but of force Must yield
to such inevitable shame As to offend,
himself being offended; So can I give no
reason, nor I will not, More than a lodg'd
hate and a certain loathing I bear
Antonio, that I follow thus A losing suit
against him. Are you answered?

BASSANIO. This is no answer, thou
unfeeling man, To excuse the current of
thy cruelty. SHYLOCK. I am not bound to
please thee with my answers. BASSANIO.
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? ANTONIO. 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; You may as well forbid the
mountain pines To wag their high tops
and to make no noise When they are
fretten 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, Make no more offers,
use no farther means, But with all brief
and plain conveniency 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 Were in six parts,
and every part a ducat, I would not draw
them; I would have my bond. DUKE OF
VENICE. How shalt thou hope for mercy,

rend'ring none? SHYLOCK. What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong? You have among you many a purchas'd slave, Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules, You use in abject and in slavish parts, Because you bought them; shall I say to you 'Let them be free, marry them to your heirs- Why sweat they under burdens?- let their beds Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates

Be season'd with such viands'? 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 OF VENICE. Upon my power I may dismiss this court, Unless Bellario, a learned doctor, Whom I have sent for to determine this, Come here to-day.

SALERIO. My lord, here stays without A messenger with letters from the doctor, New come from Padua. DUKE OF VENICE. Bring us the letters; call the messenger. BASSANIO. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet! The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all, Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood. ANTONIO. I am a tainted wether of the flock, Meetest 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 epitaph.

Enter NERISSA dressed like a lawyer's clerk

DUKE OF VENICE. Came you from Padua, from Bellario? NERISSA. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your Grace.

[Presents a letter]

BASSANIO. Why dost thou whet thy knife
so earnestly? SHYLOCK. To cut the
forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

GRATIANO. Not on thy sole, but on thy
soul, harsh Jew, Thou mak'st thy knife
keen; but no metal can, No, not the
hangman's axe, bear half the keenness

Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce
thee? SHYLOCK. No, none that thou hast
wit enough to make. GRATIANO. O, be

thou damn'd, execrable dog! And for
thy life let justice be accus'd. Thou

almost mak'st me waver in my faith, To
hold opinion with Pythagoras That souls
of animals infuse themselves Into the

trunks of men. Thy currish spirit

Govern'd a wolf who, hang'd for human
slaughter, Even from the gallows did his
fell soul fleet, And, whilst thou layest in

thy unhallowed dam, Infus'd itself in
thee; for thy desires Are wolfish, bloody,
starv'd and ravenous. SHYLOCK. Till thou

canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so
loud; Repair thy wit, good youth, or it
will fall To cureless ruin. I stand here for
law. DUKE OF VENICE. This letter from
Bellario doth commend A young and
learned doctor to our court. Where is
he? NERISSA. He attendeth here hard by

To know your answer, whether you'll
admit him. DUKE OF VENICE. With all my
heart. Some three or four of you Go give
him courteous conduct to this place.

Meantime, the court shall hear Bellario's
letter. 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 turn'd 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
importunity 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.'

Enter PORTIA for BALTHAZAR, dressed
like a Doctor of Laws

DUKE OF VENICE. YOU hear the learn'd
Bellario, what he writes; And here, I take
it, is the doctor come. Give me your
hand; come you from old Bellario?
PORTIA. I did, my lord. DUKE OF
VENICE. You are welcome; take your

place. Are you acquainted with the
difference That holds this present
question in the court? PORTIA. I am
informed throughly of the cause. Which
is the merchant here, and which the Jew?
DUKE OF VENICE. 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 that the
Venetian law Cannot impugn you as you
do proceed. You stand within his
danger, do you not? ANTONIO. Ay, so he
says. PORTIA. Do you confess the bond?
ANTONIO. I do. PORTIA. Then must the
Jew be merciful. SHYLOCK. On what
compulsion must I? Tell me that. PORTIA.
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. 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it

becomes The throned monarch better
than his crown; His sceptre shows the
force of temporal power, The attribute to
awe and majesty, Wherein doth sit the
dread and fear of kings; But mercy is
above this sceptred sway, 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 justice. Therefore, Jew,
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 To mitigate the
justice of thy plea, Which if thou follow,
this strict court of Venice Must needs
give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.
SHYLOCK. My deeds upon my head! I
crave the law, The penalty and forfeit of
my bond. BASSANIO. Yes; here I tender it

for him in the court; Yea, twice the sum;
if that will not suffice, I will be bound to
pay it ten times o'er On forfeit of my
hands, my head, my heart; If this will not
suffice, it must appear That malice bears
down truth. And, I beseech you, Wrest
once the law to your authority; To do a
great right do a little wrong, And curb
this cruel devil of his will. PORTIA. It must
not be; there is no power in Venice Can
alter a decree established; 'Twill be
recorded for a precedent, And many an
error, by the same example, Will rush
into the state; it cannot be. 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. PORTIA. Shylock,
there's thrice thy money off'red thee.

SHYLOCK. An oath, an oath! I have an oath
in heaven. Shall I lay perjury 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 Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful. Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond. SHYLOCK. When it is paid according to the tenour. It doth appear you are a worthy judge; You know the law; your exposition Hath been most sound; I charge you by the law, Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar, Proceed to judgment. By my soul I swear There is no power in the tongue of man To alter me. I stay here on my bond. ANTONIO. Most heartily I do beseech the court To give the judgment. PORTIA. Why then, thus it is: You must prepare your bosom for his knife. SHYLOCK. O noble judge! O excellent young man! PORTIA. For the intent and purpose of the law Hath full relation to the penalty, Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK. 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge, How much more elder art thou than thy looks! PORTIA. Therefore, lay bare your bosom. SHYLOCK. Ay, his breast- So says the bond; doth it not, noble judge? 'Nearest his heart,' those are the very words. PORTIA. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh The flesh? SHYLOCK. I have them ready. PORTIA. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death. SHYLOCK. Is it so nominated in the bond? PORTIA. It is not so express'd, but what of that? 'Twere good you do so much for charity. SHYLOCK. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond. PORTIA. You, merchant, have you anything to say? ANTONIO. But little: I am arm'd and well prepar'd. Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well. Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you, For herein Fortune shows herself more kind Than is

her custom. It is still her use To let the
wretched man outlive his wealth, To
view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which ling'ring
penance Of such misery doth she cut me
off. Commend me to your honourable
wife; Tell her the process of Antonio's
end; Say how I lov'd you; speak me fair
in death; And, when the tale is told, bid
her be judge Whether Bassanio had not
once a love. Repent 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 Which is
as dear to me as life itself; But life itself,
my wife, and all the world, Are not with
me esteem'd above thy life; I would lose
all, ay, sacrifice them all Here to this
devil, to deliver you. 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 who I protest I love; I would she were in heaven, so she could Entreat some power to change this currish Jew. 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 of Barrabas Had been her husband, rather than a Christian!- We trifle time; I pray thee pursue sentence. PORTIA. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.

The court awards it and the law doth give it. SHYLOCK. Most rightful judge!

PORTIA. And you must cut this flesh from off his breast. The law allows it and the court awards it. SHYLOCK. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare.

PORTIA. Tarry a little; there is something else. This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood: The words expressly are 'a

pound of flesh.' Take then thy bond, take
thou thy pound of flesh; But, in the
cutting it, if thou dost shed One drop of
Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice. GRATIANO. O
upright judge! Mark, Jew. O learned
judge! SHYLOCK. Is that the law?
PORTIA. Thyself shalt see the act; For, as
thou urgest justice, be assur'd Thou shalt
have justice, more than thou desir'st.
GRATIANO. O learned judge! Mark, Jew. A
learned judge! SHYLOCK. I take this offer
then: pay the bond thrice, And let the
Christian go. BASSANIO. Here is the
money. PORTIA. Soft! The Jew shall
have all justice. Soft! No haste. He shall
have nothing but the penalty. GRATIANO.
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 tak'st more Or less than a
just pound- be it but so much As makes it
light or heavy in the substance, Or the
division of the twentieth part Of one
poor scruple; nay, if the scale do turn But
in the estimation of a hair- Thou diest,
and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRATIANO. A second Daniel, a Daniel,
Jew! Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

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. PORTIA.

He hath refus'd 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? PORTIA. Thou shalt

have nothing but the forfeiture To be so
taken at thy peril, Jew. SHYLOCK. Why,

then the devil give him good of it! I'll

stay no longer question. PORTIA. Tarry,
Jew. The law hath yet another hold on
you. It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against an alien That by
direct or indirect attempts He seek the
life of any citizen, The party 'gainst the
which he doth contrive Shall seize one
half his goods; the other half Comes to
the privy coffer of the state; And the
offender's life lies in the mercy Of the
Duke only, 'gainst all other voice. In
which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;
For it appears by manifest proceeding
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 rehears'd. Down,
therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke.
GRATIANO. Beg that thou mayst 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. DUKE OF VENICE. That
thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,
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 may drive unto a fine.
PORTIA. Ay, for 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 That doth
sustain my house; you take my life When
you do take the means whereby I live.
PORTIA. What mercy can you render him,
Antonio? GRATIANO. A halter gratis;
nothing else, for God's sake! ANTONIO.
So please my lord the Duke and all the
court To quit the fine for one half of his
goods; I am content, so he will let me
have The other half in use, to render it
Upon his death unto the gentleman That
lately stole his daughter- Two things

provided more; that, for this favour, He
presently become a Christian; The
other, that he do record a gift, Here in
the court, of all he dies possess'd Unto
his son Lorenzo and his daughter. DUKE
OF VENICE. He shall do this, or else I do
recant The pardon that I late pronounced
here. PORTIA. Art thou contented, Jew?
What dost thou say? SHYLOCK. I am
content. PORTIA. 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
OF VENICE. Get thee gone, but do it.
GRATIANO. In christ'ning shalt thou have
two god-fathers; Had I been judge, thou
shouldst have had ten more, To bring
thee to the gallows, not to the font.

Exit SHYLOCK DUKE
OF VENICE. Sir, I entreat you home with
me to dinner. PORTIA. I humbly do desire
your Grace of pardon; I must away this

night toward Padua, And it is meet I
presently set forth. DUKE OF VENICE. I
am sorry that your leisure serves you not.

Antonio, gratify this gentleman, For in
my mind you are much bound to him.

Exeunt DUKE, MAGNIFICOS,
and 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 your courteous pains
withal. ANTONIO. And stand indebted,
over and above, In love and service to
you evermore. PORTIA. He is well paid
that is well satisfied, And I, delivering
you, am satisfied, And therein do
account myself well paid. My mind was
never yet more mercenary. 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; Take some
remembrance of us, as a tribute, Not as
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 your
gloves, I'll wear them for your sake. [To
BASSANIO] And, for your love, I'll take this
ring from you. 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; And
now, methinks, I have a mind to it.
BASSANIO.. There's more depends on this
than on the value. The dearest ring in
Venice will I give you, And find it out by
proclamation; Only for this, I pray you,
pardon me. 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.

BASSANIO. Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife; And, when she put it on, she made me vow That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it. PORTIA. That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.

And if your wife be not a mad woman, And know how well I have deserv'd this ring, She would not hold out enemy for ever For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you! Exeunt

PORTIA and NERISSA ANTONIO. My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring. Let his deservings, and my love withal, Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

BASSANIO. Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him; Give him the ring, and bring him, if thou canst, Unto Antonio's house. Away, make haste. Exit GRATIANO Come, you and I will thither presently; And in the morning early will we both Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio.

Exeunt

SCENE II. Venice. A street

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

PORTIA. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed, 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. My Lord Bassanio, upon more advice, 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.

GRATIANO. 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. PORTIA. [To NERISSA]
Thou Mayst, I warrant. We shall have old
swearing That they did give the rings
away to men; But we'll outface them, and
outswear them too. [Aloud] Away, make
haste, thou know'st where I will tarry.
NERISSA. Come, good sir, will you show
me to this house?

Exeunt

ACT V. SCENE I. Belmont. The garden
before PORTIA'S house

Enter LORENZO and JESSICA

LORENZO. 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 Trojan
walls, And sigh'd his soul toward the
Grecian tents, Where Cressid lay that
night. JESSICA. In such a night Did
Thisby fearfully o'ertrip the dew, And
saw the lion's shadow ere himself, And
ran dismayed away. LORENZO. In such a
night Stood Dido with a willow in her
hand Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft
her love To come again to Carthage.
JESSICA. In such a night Medea
gathered the enchanted herbs That did
renew old AEson. LORENZO. In such a

night Did Jessica steal from the wealthy
Jew, And with an unthrift love did run
from Venice As far as Belmont.

JESSICA. In such a night Did young
Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well, Stealing
her soul with many vows of faith, And
ne'er a true one. LORENZO. In such a
night Did pretty Jessica, like a little
shrew, Slander her love, and he forgave
it her. JESSICA. I would out-night you, did
no body come; But, hark, I hear the
footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO

LORENZO. Who comes so fast in silence
of the night? 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

By holy crosses, where she kneels and
prays For happy wedlock hours.

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.

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 holloaing, man. Here!

LAUNCELOT. Sola! Where, where?

LORENZO. Here! LAUNCELOT. Tell him
there's a post come from my master with
his horn full of good news; my master

will be here ere morning. Exit LORENZO.
Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their
coming. And yet no matter- why should
we go in? My friend Stephano, signify, 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 Creep in our ears; soft
stillness and the night Become the
touches of sweet harmony. Sit, Jessica.
Look how the floor of heaven Is thick
inlaid with patines of bright gold;
There's not the smallest orb which thou
behold'st But in his motion like an angel
sings, Still quiring to the young-ey'd
cherubins; Such harmony is in immortal
souls, But whilst this muddy vesture of
decay Doth grossly close it in, we cannot
hear it.

Enter MUSICIANS

Come, ho, and wake Diana with a hymn;

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear. And draw her home with music.

[Music] JESSICA. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LORENZO. The reason is your spirits are attentive;

For do but note a wild and wanton herd,

Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,

Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,

Which is the hot condition of their blood- If they

but hear perchance a trumpet sound, Or any air of music touch their ears,

You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,

Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze

By the sweet power of music. Therefore the poet Did feign that Orpheus drew

trees, stones, and floods; Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,

But music for the time doth change his nature.

The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet
sounds, Is fit for treasons, stratagems,
and spoils; The motions of his spirit are
dull:as night, And his affections dark as
Erebus. Let no such man be trusted.
Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

PORTIA. That light we see is burning in
my hall. How far that little candle throws
his beams! So shines a good deed in a
naughty world. NERISSA. When the moon
shone, we did not see 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 Empties itself, as doth an inland
brook Into the main of waters. Music!
hark! NERISSA. It is your music, madam,
of the house. PORTIA. Nothing is good, I

see, without respect; Methinks it sounds
much sweeter than by day. NERISSA.
Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

PORTIA. The crow doth sing as sweetly as
the lark When neither is attended; and I
think ne nightingale, if she should sing
by day, When every goose is cackling,
would be thought No better a musician
than the wren. How many things by
season season'd are To their right praise
and true perfection! Peace, ho! The
moon sleeps with Endymion, And would
not be awak'd. [Music ceases]

LORENZO. That is the voice, Or I am
much deceiv'd, of Portia. PORTIA. 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'
welfare, Which speed, we hope, the
better for our words. 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; Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica,
nor you. [A tucket sounds] LORENZO.
Your husband is at hand; I hear his
trumpet. We are no tell-tales, madam,
fear you not. PORTIA. This night methinks
is but the daylight sick; It looks a little
paler; 'tis a day Such as the day is when
the sun is hid.

Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO,
GRATIANO, and their followers

BASSANIO. We should hold day with the
Antipodes, If you would walk in absence
of the sun. PORTIA. Let me give light, but
let me not be light, For a light wife doth
make a heavy husband, And never be
Bassanio so for me; But God sort all! You

are welcome 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. PORTIA. You should in all sense be much bound to him, For, as I hear, he was much bound for you. ANTONIO. No more than I am well acquitted of. PORTIA. Sir, you are very welcome to our house. It must appear in other ways than words, Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy. 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 gelt that had it, for my part, Since you do take it, love, so much at heart. PORTIA. A quarrel, ho, already! What's the matter? GRATIANO. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring That she did give me, whose posy was For all the world like cutler's poetry Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.' 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, You should have been respective
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. GRATIANO. Now by this hand I gave
it to a youth, A kind of boy, a little
scrubbed boy No higher than thyself,
the judge's clerk; A prating boy that
begg'd it as a fee; I could not for my
heart deny it him. 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 with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him

swear 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.
Now, in faith, Gratiano, You give your
wife too unkind a cause of grief; An
'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

BASSANIO. [Aside] Why, I were best to
cut my left hand off, And swear I lost the
ring defending it. GRATIANO. My Lord
Bassanio gave his ring away Unto the
judge that begg'd it, and indeed

Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he
begg'd mine; And neither man nor
master would take aught But the two
rings. PORTIA. What ring gave you, my
lord? Not that, I hope, which you receiv'd
of me. BASSANIO. If I could add a lie unto
a fault, I would deny it; but you see my
finger Hath not the ring upon it; it is
gone. PORTIA. Even so void is your false

heart of truth; By heaven, I will ne'er
come in your bed Until I see the ring.

NERISSA. Nor I in yours 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, And
would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the
ring, You would abate the strength of
your displeasure. PORTIA. If you had
known the virtue of the ring, Or half her
worthiness that gave the ring, Or your
own honour to contain the ring, You
would not then have parted with the ring.

What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleas'd to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the
modesty To urge the thing held as a
ceremony? Nerissa teaches me what to
believe: I'll die for't but some woman
had the ring. BASSANIO. No, by my

honour, madam, by my soul, No woman
had it, but a civil doctor, 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 displeas'd away-
Even he that had held up the very life Of
my dear friend. What should I say, sweet
lady? I was enforc'd to send it after him;

I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honour would not let ingratitude So
much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For by these blessed candles of the night,

Had you been there, I think you would
have begg'd 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,
I will become as liberal as you; I'll not
deny him anything I have, No, not my
body, nor my husband's bed. Know him I
shall, I am well sure of it. Lie not a night

from home; watch me like Argus; If you
do not, if I be left alone, Now, by mine
honour which is yet mine own, I'll have
that doctor for mine bedfellow. NERISSA.
And I his clerk; therefore be well advis'd
How you do leave me to mine own
protection. GRATIANO. Well, do you so,
let not me take him then; For, if I do, I'll
mar the young clerk's pen. ANTONIO. I
am th' unhappy subject of these quarrels.
PORTIA. Sir, grieve not you; you are
welcome not withstanding. BASSANIO.
Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong;
And in the hearing of these many friends
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair
eyes, Wherein I see myself- PORTIA.
Mark you but that! In both my eyes he
doubly sees himself, In each eye one;
swear by your double self, And there's
an oath of credit. BASSANIO. Nay, but
hear me. Pardon this fault, and by my
soul I swear I never more will break an

oath with thee. ANTONIO. I once did lend
my body for his wealth, Which, but for
him that had your husband's ring, Had
quite miscarried; I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

PORTIA. Then you shall be his surety. Give
him this, And bid him keep it better than
the other.

ANTONIO. Here, Lord
Bassanio, swear to keep this ring.

BASSANIO. By heaven, it is the same I gave
the doctor! PORTIA. I had it of him.

Pardon me, Bassanio, For, by this ring,
the doctor lay with me.

NERISSA. And
pardon me, my gentle Gratiano, For that
same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this, last night did lie with me.

GRATIANO. Why, this is like the mending
of highways In summer, where the ways
are fair enough. What, are we cuckolds
ere we have deserv'd it? PORTIA. Speak
not so grossly. You are all amaz'd. Here

is a letter; read it at your leisure; It
comes from Padua, from Bellario; There
you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
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 Than you expect. Unseal
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
this letter. ANTONIO. I am dumb.

BASSANIO. Were you the doctor, and I
knew you not? GRATIANO. Were you the
clerk that is to make me cuckold?

NERISSA. Ay, but the clerk that never
means to do it, Unless he live until he be
a man. BASSANIO. Sweet doctor, you
shall be my bedfellow; When I am
absent, then lie with my wife. ANTONIO.

Sweet lady, you have given me life and living; For here I read for certain that my ships Are safely come to road. PORTIA. How now, Lorenzo! My clerk hath some good comforts 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, After his death, of all he dies possess'd of. LORENZO. Fair ladies, you drop manna 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, And charge us there upon inter'gatories, And we will answer all things faithfully. GRATIANO. Let it be so. The first inter'gatory That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is, Whether till the next night she had rather stay, Or go to bed now, being two hours to day. But were the day come, I should wish it dark, Till I were couching with the doctor's

clerk.
thing
ring.

Well, while I live, I'll fear no other
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's
Exeunt

THE

END

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