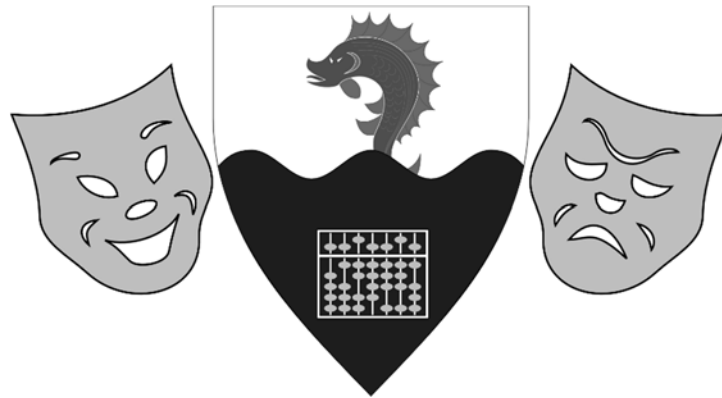


The Known World Players  
Present  
William Shakespeare's



"The Merchant of Venice"

Pennsic 44



## Cast

**Antonio (Player 1):** A Venetian merchant of considerable wealth, he makes his money from "ventures", or mercantile enterprises using his fleet of ships.

**Bassanio (Player 4):** The romantic lead of this play. He aims to successfully court the fair Portia.

**Shylock (Player 7):** A successful Jewish moneylender who is much maligned over his religion and the practice of moneylenders.

**Tubul (Player 10):** Friend of Shylock.

**Portia (Player 11):** The heroine of this play, Portia is a wealthy and beautiful woman who is desired by many.

**Nerissa (Player 12):** As Portia's waiting-maid.

**Gratiano (Player 6):** A good friend of Bassanio.

**The Prince of Morocco (Player 8):** This suitor is responsible for the expression "All that glitters is not gold; / Often have you heard that told:"

**The Prince of Arragon (Player 9):** This suitor also fails to win the fair Portia's hand in marriage.

**Lorenzo (Player 5):** A close friend of both Bassanio and Antonio.

**Jessica (Player 13):** The daughter of Shylock.

**Salarino (Player 2) and Salanio (Player 3):** Friends of Antonio.

**The Duke of Venice (Player 10):** Act as judge over the court case between Shylock and Antonio.

**Launcelot Gobbo (Player 9):** A clown and servant to Shylock

**Old Gobbo (Player 10):** Launcelot's father, who is blind.

**Balthazar (Player 2) and Stephano (Player 8):** Servants of Portia.

**Leonardo (Player 5):** Servant of Bassanio.

# The Merchant of Venice

## ACT I

### SCENE I. Venice, 1596. A street.

*Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO*

#### ANTONIO

In truth, I know not why I am so sad:  
It wearies me; you say it wearies you;  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

#### SALARINO

Your mind is tossing on the ocean;

#### SALANIO

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.

#### SALARINO

My wind cooling my broth  
Would blow me to an fever, when I thought  
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.

#### ANTONIO

Believe me, no.

#### SALARINO

Why, then you are in love. (Salanio laughs at this.)

#### ANTONIO

Fie, fie!

#### SALARINO

Not in love either? Then let us say you are sad,  
Because you are not merry:

*Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO*

#### SALARINO

Here comes my lord Bassanio.

#### SALANIO

Good morrow, my good lords.

# The Merchant of Venice

**BASSANIO**

Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? say, when?

**SALARINO**

We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

**ANTONIO**

Bassanio

**BASSANIO**

Antonio

*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio*

**LORENZO**

My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,

We two will leave 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:

**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.

There are a sort of men whose visages

Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,

And do a wilful stillness entertain,

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.

Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:

I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO*

# The Merchant of Venice

## BASSANIO

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice.

## ANTONIO

Well, tell me now what lady is the same  
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,  
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

## BASSANIO

'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate; but my chief care  
Is to come fairly off from the great debts  
Wherein my time something too prodigal  
Hath left me gaged. 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 assured,  
My purse, my person, my extremest means,  
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

## 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, no less a beauty  
Than 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;  
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,

# The Merchant of Venice

To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.

*Exeunt*

**SCENE II: Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.**

*Enter PORTIA and NERISSA*

**PORTIA**

By my troth, Nerissa, I am a weary 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 have it in excess  
as they that starve with nothing.

**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. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to  
choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may  
neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I  
dislike; so is the will of a living daughter ruled  
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 lottery,  
that he hath devised in these three chests of gold,  
silver and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning  
chooses you, will, no doubt, never be chosen by any  
rightly but one who shall rightly love. But what  
warmth is there in your affection towards any of  
these princely suitors that are already come?

**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**

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!

# The Merchant of Venice

**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. How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behavior every where.

**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.

**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 any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll 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.

*Enter a Serving-man*

How now! what news?

**SERVANT**

There is a forerunner come from the Prince of Morocco,



# The Merchant of Venice

who brings word the prince his master  
will be here to-night.

## **PORTIA**

If I could bid him welcome with so good a  
heart as I can bid the others 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 gates  
upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE III. Venice. A public place.**

*Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK*

## **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 be 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**

Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a  
good man is to have you understand me that he is

# The Merchant of Venice

of good credit. 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, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, of good credit. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

**BASSANIO**

Be assured you may.

**SHYLOCK**

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, nor 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,  
He lends out money gratis and  
he hates our sacred nation. He rails,  
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,  
Which he calls interest.

**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,

# The Merchant of Venice

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**

Is he 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.  
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow  
Upon advantage.

**ANTONIO**

I do never use it.

**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 reviled me  
About my moneys and my usances:  
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,  
For sufferance 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 slavish voice,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness, Say this;

# The Merchant of Venice

'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.

## ANTONIO

No.

## 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, i' 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.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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.

*(Note – end act here? Could be interesting or continue as indicated)*

## 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.

## 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*

# The Merchant of Venice

## ACT II

### SCENE I. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO and his train; PORTIA, NERISSA, and others attending*

#### MOROCCO

Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadow'd 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 loved 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 lottery of my destiny  
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:  
But if my father had not restrained me  
And hedged me by his wit, to yield myself  
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,  
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair  
As any comer I have look'd on yet  
For my affection.

#### MOROCCO

Even for that I thank you:  
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets  
To try my fortune.

#### 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 advised.

#### MOROCCO

Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

# The Merchant of Venice

## PORTIA

First, forward to the temple: after dinner  
Your hazard shall be made.

## MOROCCO

Good fortune then!  
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

*Cornets, and exeunt*

## SCENE II. Venice. A street.

*Enter LAUNCELOT*

## LAUNCELOT

Certainly my conscience would forbid 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,' use your legs, take the start, run away. My  
conscience says 'No; take heed,' honest Launcelot;  
take heed, honest Gobbo, do not run; scorn running with thy  
heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me  
pack: '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 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the  
fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience.  
'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' 'Fiend,'  
say I, 'you counsel well.' The fiend gives the more  
friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are  
at your command; I will run.

*Enter Old GOBBO, with a basket*

## GOBBO

I pray you, which is the way  
to master Jew's?

## 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.

# The Merchant of Venice

**GOBBO**

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

**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:  
Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy  
master agree? I have brought him a present.

**LAUNCELOT**

I am famished 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.

*Enter BASSANIO, LEONARDO and SERVANT*

**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**

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--



# The Merchant of Venice

## 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--

## LAUNCELOT (*Cutting of Gobbo*)

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

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.

*(To Leonardo)*

Give him a livery  
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.

*Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo*

# The Merchant of Venice

**BASSANIO**

I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this:  
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,  
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 is your master?

**LEONARDO**

Yonder, sir, he walks.

*Exit LEONARDO*

**GRATIANO**

Signior Bassanio!

**BASSANIO**

Gratiano!

**GRATIANO**

I have a 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 dillute with some cold drops of modesty  
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior  
I be misconstrued in the place I go.  
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

# The Merchant of Venice

Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen,'  
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. (*Pulls revel mask over his head.*)

*Exeunt*

**SCENE III. The same. A room in 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!

**JESSICA**

Farewell, good Launcelot.

*Exit Launcelot*

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me  
To be ashamed to be my father's child!  
O Lorenzo, If thou keep promise,  
I shall end this strife,  
Become a Christian and thy loving wife.

*Exit*

**SCENE IV. The same. A street.**

*Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO*

# The Merchant of Venice

**LORENZO**

Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,  
Disguise us at my lodging and return,  
All in an hour.

**GRATIANO**

We have not made good preparation.

**SALARINO**

We have not spoke us yet of torchbearers.

**LORENZO**

'Tis now but four o'clock: we have two hours  
To finish up.

*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 fair hand;  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

**GRATIANO**

Love-news, in faith.

**LAUNCELOT**

By your leave, sir.

**LORENZO**

Whither goest thou?

**LAUNCELOT**

Marry, sir, to bid my old master the  
Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

**LORENZO**

Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica  
I will not fail her; speak it privately.  
Go, gentlemen,

*Exit Launcelot*

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

**SALARINO**

Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

# The Merchant of Venice

**SALANIO**

And so will I.

**LORENZO**

Meet me at Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

**SALARINO**

'Tis good we do so.

*Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO*

**GRATIANO**

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

**LORENZO**

I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed  
How I shall take her from her father's house,  
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,  
What page's suit she hath in readiness.  
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,  
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:  
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:  
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

*Exeunt*

**SCENE V. The same. 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 gormandise,  
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 that  
I could do nothing without bidding.

*Enter Jessica*

# The Merchant of Venice

**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 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**

An 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' the morning.

**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.

Let not the sound of shallow foppery 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  
boy, will be worth a Jewess' eye.

*Exit*

**SHYLOCK**

What says that fool of Hagar's offspring, ha?

# The Merchant of Venice

**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: Therefore I part with him.  
Well, Jessica, go in;  
Perhaps I will return immediately:  
Do as I bid you.

*Exit Shylock*

**JESSICA**

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

*Exit*

**SCENE VI. The same.**

*Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued*

**GRATIANO**

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

**SALARINO**

His hour is almost past.

**GRATIANO**

And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,  
For lovers ever run before the clock.

**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 enjoy'd.

**SALARINO**

Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

*Enter LORENZO*

# The Merchant of Venice

**LORENZO**

Sweet friends, your patience for my long delay;  
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 ashamed 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 torchbearer.

**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 obscured.

**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 more ducats, and be with you straight.



# The Merchant of Venice

*Exit above*

**GRATIANO**

Now, by my hood, a Gentile 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 proved 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 Salarino*

*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. A room in PORTIA'S house.**

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

**MOROCCO**

How shall I know if I do choose the right?

# The Merchant of Venice

## PORTIA

The one of them contains my picture, prince:  
If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

## MOROCCO

Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;  
I will survey the inscriptions back again.  
What says this leaden casket?  
'Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.'  
Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?  
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all  
Do it in hope of fair advantages:  
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:  
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 further, but chose here?  
Let's see this saying graved 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:  
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 unlocks the golden casket*

## MOROCCO

O hell! what have we here?  
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye  
There is a scroll!

*Reads*

All that glitters is not gold;  
Often have you heard that told:  
Gilded tombs do worms enfold.

# The Merchant of Venice

Fare you well; your suit is cold.  
Cold, indeed; and labour lost:  
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!  
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved 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.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE VIII. Venice. A street.**

*Enter SALARINO and SALANIO*

### **SALARINO**

Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail:  
With him is Gratiano gone along;  
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

### **SALANIO**

The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke,  
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

### **SALARINO**

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.

### **SALANIO**

I never heard a passion so confused,  
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,  
Let good Antonio look he keep his day,  
Or he shall pay for this.

### **SALARINO**

Marry, well remember'd.  
I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,  
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part

# The Merchant of Venice

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.

## **SALANIO**

You were best to tell Antonio what you hear;  
Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

## **SALARINO**

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 answer'd, '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 so they parted.

## **SALANIO**

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.

## **SALARINO**

Do we so.

*Exeunt*

## **SCENE IX. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.**

*Enter NERISSA with a Servitor*

## **NERISSA**

Quick, quick, I pray thee;  
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 solemnized:

# The Merchant of Venice

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.'  
I will not choose what many men desire,  
(*Moves to stand before silver chest.*)  
'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?  
How many then should cover that stand bare!  
How many be commanded that command!  
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

Too long a pause for that which you find there.

## ARRAGON

What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,  
Presenting me a schedule!  
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.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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, I wis,  
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.  
*(Raises fools head to eye level looking directly at it)*  
With one fool's head I came to woo,  
But I go away with two. *(To Portia)*  
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,  
Patiently to bear my wroth.

*Exeunt Arragon and train*

## PORTIA

Thus hath the candle singed the moth.  
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,  
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

## NERISSA

The ancient saying is no heresy,  
Hanging and wiving goes by destiny.

*Enter a Messenger*

## MESSENGER

Madam, there is alighted at your gate  
A young Venetian, one that comes before  
To signify the approaching of his lord;  
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-runner 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.

# The Merchant of Venice

**NERISSA**

Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!

*Exeunt*

## ACT III

### SCENE I. Venice. A street.

*Enter SALANIO and SALARINO*

**SALANIO**

Now, what news on the Rialto?

**SALARINO**

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

**SALANIO**

Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he hath  
lost a ship.

**SALARINO**

I would it might prove the end of his losses.

**SALANIO**

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 of my daughters flight,  
none so well as you.

**SALARINO**

That's certain: I, for my part, knew the tailor  
that made the wings she flew withal.

**SALANIO**

And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was  
fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all  
to leave the dam.

# The Merchant of Venice

**SHYLOCK**

She is damned for it.

**SALANIO**

That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

**SALARINO**

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;  
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.

**SALARINO**

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 disgraced me, and  
hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses,  
mocked 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 villany you  
teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I  
will better the instruction.

**SALARINO**

Antonio is at his house, let us seek him.



# The Merchant of Venice

*Enter TUBAL*

**SALANIO**

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

*Exeunt SALANIO, SALARINO*

**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. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! No news of them? Why, so: loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no in luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

**TUBAL**

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

**SHYLOCK**

What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

**TUBAL**

Hath a ship wrecked, coming from Tripolis.

**SHYLOCK**

I thank God, I thank God.

*(Looks at Tubal who is now avoiding his eyes)*

Heard you in Genoa, what?

**TUBAL**

Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, in one night fourscore ducats.

# The Merchant of Venice

## SHYLOCK

Thou stickest a dagger in me: I shall never see my  
gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting!  
fourscore ducats!

## TUBAL

There came various 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! Tubal, you torture me: it was my  
turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor:  
I would not have given it away for a wilderness of monkeys.

## TUBAL

But Antonio is certainly undone.

## SHYLOCK

That's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, find  
me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I  
will have Antonio's heart if he forfeit. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our  
synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

*Exeunt*

## SCENE II. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

*Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, and Attendants*

## PORTIA

I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two  
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.  
There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,  
Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
But lest you should not understand me well,--  
I would detain you here some month or two  
Before you venture for me. I could teach you  
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;  
So will I never be: so may you miss me;  
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,  
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,

# The Merchant of Venice

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.

**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 the enjoying of 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:  
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.

*(Music. He moves to caskets and begins close examination while moving between them. He comments on the caskets to himself. )*

**SONG.**

Tell me where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart, or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished?  
Reply, reply.  
It is engender'd in the eyes,

# The Merchant of Venice

With gazing fed; and fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.  
Let us all ring fancy's knell

## BASSANIO

So may the outward shows be least themselves:  
The world is still deceived with ornament.  
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,  
But, being seasoned 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?  
Look on beauty, And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;  
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 threatenest than dost promise aught,  
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;  
(*To all*) And here choose I; joy be the consequence!

## PORTIA

[*Aside*] O love, Be moderate; allay thy ecstasy,  
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,  
For fear I surfeit.

## BASSANIO

What find I here?

### *Opening the leaden casket*

Fair Portia's counterfeit! (*All others cheer*) What demi-god  
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?  
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? but her eyes,--  
How could he see to do them?  
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.

### *Reads*

You that choose not by the view,  
Chance as fair and choose as true!  
Since this fortune falls to you,

# The Merchant of Venice

Be content and seek no new,  
If you be well pleased with this  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn you 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 (*he kisses Portia*) and to receive. (*Portia kisses him*)  
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  
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 virtue, 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, unpractised;  
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: This house, these servants and  
this same myself Are yours, my lord:  
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.  
But when this ring Parts from this finger,

# The Merchant of Venice

then parts life from hence:  
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

*(General applause. Bassanio and Portia start to kiss but are interrupted by Gratiano.)*

## GRATIANO

My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,  
I wish you all the joy that you can wish;  
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, if you 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;

## PORTIA

Is this true, Nerissa?

## NERISSA

Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

## BASSANIO

And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

## GRATIANO

Yes, faith, my lord.

## BASSANIO

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

*(Both couples kiss.)*

## 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*

# The Merchant of Venice

## BASSANIO

Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;  
If that the youth of my new interest here  
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,  
I bid my very friends and countrymen,  
Sweet Portia, welcome.

## PORTIA

As do I, my lord:  
They are welcome.

## LORENZO

My purpose was not to have seen you here;  
But meeting with Salerio,  
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,  
To come with him along.

## SALERIO

I did, my lord;  
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 starts to read.)*

## GRATIANO

Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.  
Your hand, Salerio: what's the news from Venice?

*(Bassanio looks very disturbed, the content of the letter visibly upsetting him.)*

## PORTIA

There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,  
That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek:  
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world  
Could turn 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 letter brings you.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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 engaged myself to a dear friend,  
Engaged 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?  
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England?

## 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.  
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 (*pronounce as Cuss*), 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 Merchant of Venice

**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.

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 cleared 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!

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.

*Exeunt*

**SCENE III. Venice. A street.**

*Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Jailer*

**SHYLOCK**

Jailer, look to him: tell not me of mercy;

This is the fool that lent out money gratis:

Jailer, look to him.

**ANTONIO**

Hear me yet, good Shylock.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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 wicked jailer, 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-eyed fool,  
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield  
To Christian intercessors.  
I'll have no speaking: Follow not! (*Starts to exist. Turns back to Antonio.*)  
I will have my bond.

*Exit*

## SALARINO

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.

## SALARINO

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 his state;  
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.  
Pray God, Bassanio come  
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!

*Exeunt*

# The Merchant of Venice

## SCENE IV. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

*Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHASAR (a servant) 2 Extras carry a large chest.)*

### LORENZO

Madam, 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,  
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 bestow'd  
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 breathed 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 will we abide

### LORENZO

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

### PORTIA

Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

*Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO*

Now, Balthazar,  
As I have ever found thee honest-true,  
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,  
In speed to Padua: render this

# The Merchant of Venice

Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;  
Waste no time in words,  
But get thee gone.

*Exit Balthasar*

## **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,  
telling quaint lies, How honourable ladies sought my love,  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died.

## **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*

## **ACT IV**

### **SCENE I. Venice. A court of justice.**

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others*

## **DUKE**

Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

## **SALERIO**

He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

# The Merchant of Venice

## DUKE

Make room, and let him stand before our face.

*Enter SHYLOCK*

## DUKE

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st 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;  
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 pleased to give ten thousand ducats  
To have it baned? 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' the 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 render'd,  
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 lodged hate and a certain loathing  
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus  
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

## BASSANIO

This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,  
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

# The Merchant of Venice

**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 question with the wolf  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
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 ducate  
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

**DUKE**

How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

**SHYLOCK**

What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?  
You have among you many a purchased 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 burthens? let their beds  
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates  
Be season'd with your foods? 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, time mine, tis mine and I will have it.

# The Merchant of Venice

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?

*(General hue and cry from those in the courtroom.)*

## **DUKE**

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**

Bring us the letter; call the messenger.

*Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk*

## **DUKE**

Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

## **NERISSA**

From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.

*Presenting a letter*

## **BASSANIO**

Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

## **SHYLOCK**

To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

## **GRATIANO**

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 accused.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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

This letter 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

Go give him courteous conduct to this place.  
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

*(Nerissa exits to get Portia.)*

## 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, there was with  
me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar.  
I acquainted him with the cause in controversy.  
He is furnished with my opinion;  
which, bettered with his own learning, 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 for I never knew so young a body with so  
old a head. I leave him to your gracious  
acceptance.

## DUKE

You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:  
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

*Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws*

## DUKE

You are welcome: take your place.  
Are you acquainted with the difference  
That holds this present question in the court?

## PORTIA

I am informed thoroughly of the cause.  
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?



# The Merchant of Venice

**DUKE**

Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

**PORTIA**

Is your name Shylock?

**SHYLOCK**

Shylock is my name.

**PORTIA**

Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;  
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law  
Cannot deny 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;

# The Merchant of Venice

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.

**PORTIA**

Is he not able to discharge the money?

**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**

Most reverend doctor, here it is.

**PORTIA**

Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd 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.

# The Merchant of Venice

**SHYLOCK**

When it is paid according to the tems.

**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 any thing to say?

# The Merchant of Venice

## ANTONIO

But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.  
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!  
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;  
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind  
Than is her custom:  
Commend me to your honourable wife:  
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;  
Say how I loved 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.

## GRATIANO

I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:  
I would she were in heaven, so she could  
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

## SHYLOCK

I have a daughter;  
Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!

*Aside*

We trifle time: I pray thee, pursue sentence.

## DUKE

You my proceed.

## 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!

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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!

*(Shylock prepares to cut into Antonio, but before he does so Portia interrupts him.)*

## PORTIA

*(Sharply)* 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: *(hands him an open book.)*  
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured  
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

## 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.

## PORTIA

Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.  
Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more  
But just a pound of flesh: if thou cut'st more  
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,  
Or the division of the twentieth part

# The Merchant of Venice

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!  
Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

**PORTIA**

Why doth the Jew pause?

**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;  
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

*(Shylock kneels before the Duke)*

**GRATIANO**

Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself.

**DUKE**

That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;

# The Merchant of Venice

The other half comes to the general state,  
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

## 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

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

Get thee gone, but do it.

## GRATIANO

In christening shalt thou have two god-fathers:  
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,  
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

# The Merchant of Venice

*Exit SHYLOCK*

**DUKE**

Court dismissed.

*Exeunt Duke and his train*

**BASSANIO**

Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend  
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted  
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,  
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,  
We freely pay your courteous pains withal.

**ANTONIO**

And stand  
He is well paid that is well satisfied;  
And I, delivering you, am satisfied  
And therein do account myself well paid:  
I wish you well, and so I take my leave. *(Starts to exit)*

**BASSANIO**

Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further:  
Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,  
Not as a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

**PORTIA**

You press me far, and therefore I will yield.

*To ANTONIO*

Give me 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.



# The Merchant of Venice

## **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.  
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,  
And know how well I have deserved the ring,  
She would not hold out enemy for ever,  
For giving it to me.

*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa*

## **ANTONIO**

My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:  
Let his deservings and my love withal  
Be valued against 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*

# The Merchant of Venice

**SCENE II. The same. 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 to-night  
And be a day before our husbands home:

*Enter GRATIANO*

**GRATIANO**

Ho!  
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.

*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**

[*Aside 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 knowest where I will tarry.

**NERISSA**

Come, good sir, will you show me to this house?

*Exeunt*

# The Merchant of Venice

## ACT V

### SCENE I. Belmont. Avenue to PORTIA'S house.

*Enter LORENZO and JESSICA*

**LORENZO**

The moon shines bright: in such a night as this,  
When the sweet wind does gently kiss the trees  
And they make no noise.

**JESSICA**

In such a night  
Did Thisbe fearfully see the lion's shadow  
And run dismay'd 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 gather'd 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 loved 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?

# The Merchant of Venice

**STEPHANO**

Stephano is my name; and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont.

**LORENZO**

Who comes with her?

**STEPHANO**

None but her maid.  
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

**LORENZO**

He is not, nor have we heard from him.  
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,  
And 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 hollaing, 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.

# The Merchant of Venice

*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.

*Enter Musicians*

Come, 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,  
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,  
Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand.  
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:  
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.

# The Merchant of Venice

**NERISSA**

Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

**PORTIA**

The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,  
When neither is attended.

**LORENZO**

That is the voice,  
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.  
Dear lady, welcome home.

**PORTIA**

We have been praying for our husbands' healths,  
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.

**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 - Music ceases*

**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*

**PORTIA**

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.

# The Merchant of Venice

**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,  
So I can cut short 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 motto was  
For all the world like cutler's poetry  
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

**NERISSA**

What talk you of the motto 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!

**GRATIANO**

I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,  
No higher than thyself; the judge's clerk,

**PORTIA**

You were to blame, I must be plain with you,  
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift.  
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 lose it  
Nor pluck it from his finger, for all the wealth  
That the world masters.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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  
Deserved 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.

## 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.  
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 refuse him  
And suffer'd him to go displeased away;  
Even he that did uphold the very life  
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?



# The Merchant of Venice

I was enforced to send it after him;

## 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 any thing 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;  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

## 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,  
I never more will break an oath with thee.

## ANTONIO

I once did lend my body for his wealth;  
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 deserved it?

## PORTIA

Speak not so grossly. You are all amazed:  
Bassanio, here is a letter;

# The Merchant of Venice

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 only just 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.

## 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 bed-fellow:  
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 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 starving 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 we will answer all things faithfully.

# The Merchant of Venice

## 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,  
That I were couching with the doctor's clerk.  
Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing  
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

*Exeunt*