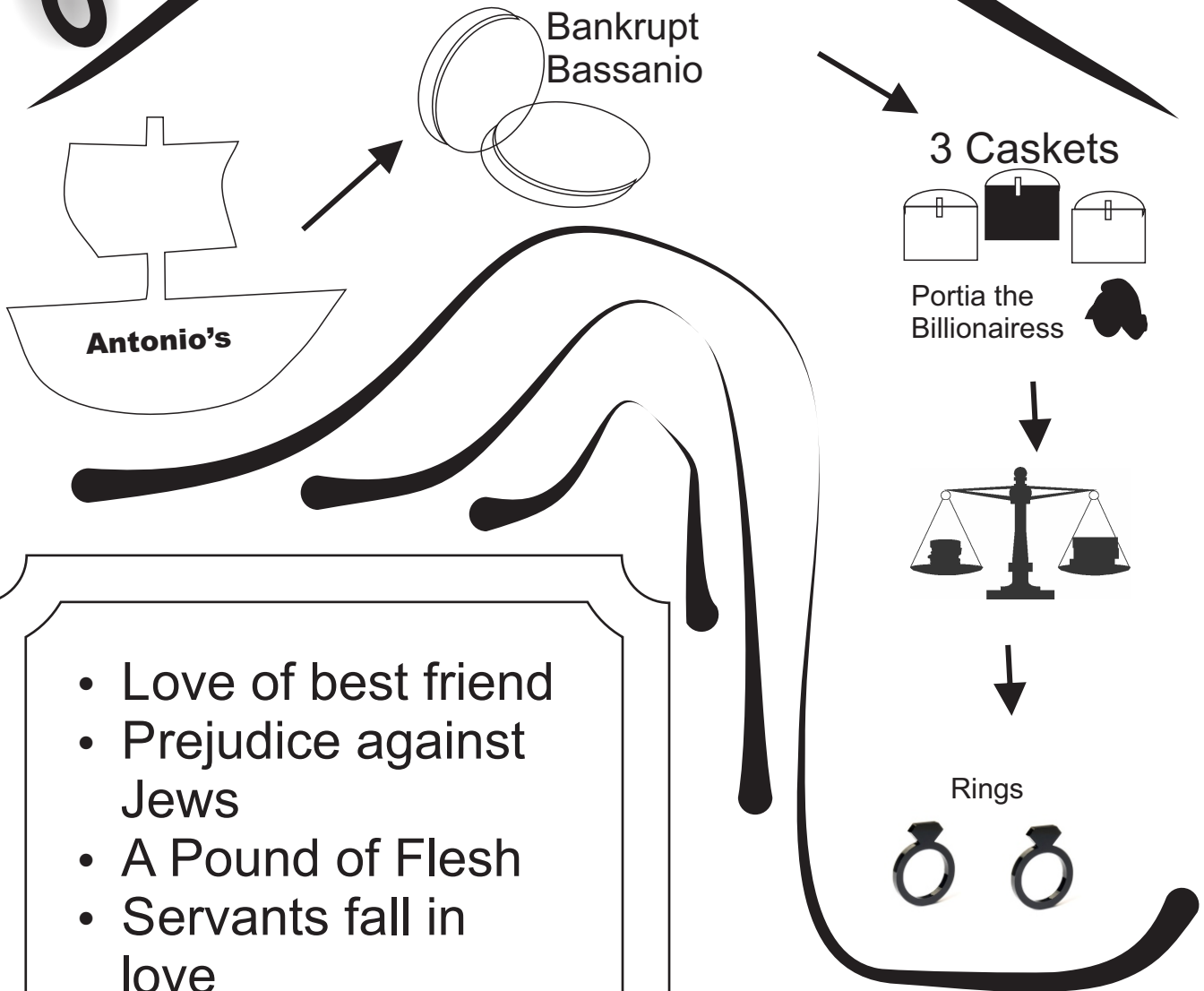




William Shakespeare's

The Merchant of Venice

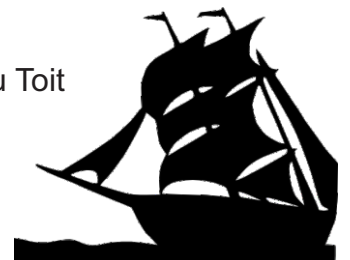


- Love of best friend
- Prejudice against Jews
- A Pound of Flesh
- Servants fall in love
- Children elope to get married
- The sin of Usury

Shakespeare English and
Modern Translation next to each
other.

Grade 10

By Carrol du Toit



William Shakespeare



William Shakespeare was born in 1564 and died in 1616. He is recognized in the world as the greatest dramatist.

Some of the 35 plays written by William Shakespeare: Romeo and Juliet

Macbeth

Othello

As you like it

The Merchant of Venice

Twelfth Night

King Lear

Hamlet

The Elizabethan World

Queen Elizabeth was the Queen of England I from 1558-1603.

Elizabethans had a very strong sense of social order: they believed that their queen was God's representative on Earth, and that God had created and blessed the ranks of society, from the

monarch down through the nobility, gentry, merchants, and labourers. The English Parliament even passed laws on the clothes people could wear: it would have been unthinkable for, for example, a merchant to imitate wealthier individuals, and against the social order. Elizabethans considered families to be a model for the rest of their society: ordered, standardized, and with a strict sense of hierarchy. The accepted norms for children's behaviour, for example, were based on passages in the Bible. Although Elizabeth's subjects were becoming more aware of comfort at home, life was still very hard for most, by modern standards. Average life expectancy was nearly 42 years of age, but the wealthy generally lived longer. Medical treatment was limited and unsystematic, and those who could afford doctors often had to tolerate painful treatments and ineffective or harmful drugs. Poorer groups relied more on traditional remedies and methods of healing based on superstition. Taverns, playhouses, and bowling alleys were all places in which townspeople could entertain themselves. Gambling with cards and dice, real tennis, and bowls were forbidden by law, but this did not limit their popularity.

Theatres, too, were popular, with standing room for poorer subjects and expensive seats for merchants and gentry. Elizabethan England saw the beginning of a golden age of theatre. Playwrights and actors such as William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and Ben Jonson wrote and acted histories, tragedies, and comedies for theatres such as the Globe Theatre in London,

Introduction to The Merchant of Venice

The Setting of the play

The play is set in Italy: in Venice and Belmont. Venice is a real place but Belmont is a place imagined by Shakespeare. The difference between Venice and Belmont is brought out clearly in the play.

Venice:

It was a city of great wealth and splendour. Its wealth came from trade and commerce. The merchants of Venice were the key figures in the city's commercial success.

Belmont:

It is not near Venice. It is like a fairytale place, and has a beautiful lady, Portia, ruling over it.

The Jews

Jews had been expelled from England for nearly three hundred years. In Shakespeare's time there was a great deal of fear, mistrust and ill-feeling against the Jews – there had even been anti-Jewish riots. Queen Elizabeth's personal doctor, Roderigo Lopez, a Portugese Jew, had been publicly executed for an alleged attempt to poison her and this incident added to the anti-Jewish feeling in Elizabethan England.

Usury:

The 'rights' and 'wrongs' of lending money in return for interest, i.e. an additional sum of money to be repaid with the original loan, were questions of crucial importance to the Elizabethans, and there were numerous articles and pamphlets written about usury. Today usury is such a common practise that we don't question it. Each bank does it.

In theory, most people agreed that usury was evil. It was natural to make a profit from trading but it was unnatural to make money from lending money to someone else. The Bible itself was the source of this Christian doctrine.

Friendship:

The bond of friendship between Bassanio and Antonio was seen as something natural and part of Renaissance life. It was considered the closest form of masculine friendship. This kind of friendship was a popular theme for plays.

Woman

Female roles in plays were played by boys dressed up as women. Basically, women had few privileges and almost no legal rights. In the play Portia is the head of her household and she has lots of money but the moment she gets married she must give everything over to her husband. Portia's character reveals how resourceful woman had to become to have a say in society those days.

The Shakespeare Play

A play written by William Shakespeare usually consists out of five acts. Each act is divided into different scenes.

Act I is usually the introduction of all the characters in the play.

Act II is the development of the story.

Act III is the development of a crisis.

Act IV reaches the crises.

Act V ends the play and ties all loose ends together.

A Shakespearian play usually has themes. The themes are the main ideas of the play. Theme is sometimes defined as "the living idea" which emerges from the plot.

Themes of The Merchant of Venice:

The 'bond', Justice and Mercy

Antonio enters into a bond with Shylock the Jew. A bond is like a contract/agreement you make with someone. You must keep it. The whole play centres on the bond and the repayment of this bond. Shylock expects justice. Many words are used in the play that has to do with justice, a bond, and mercy.

Appearance versus reality

A distinction is made in the play between how things appear and how they really are. You see the outside of the caskets but not the inside. Characters also appear to be what they are not.

Chance or Destiny versus Choice

Fortune is mentioned many times in the play. Things go well with some while others seems to struggle. Antonio takes a gamble when he sends his ships out to sea, but all merchants do that. Portia's future lies in the hands of a man who chooses a casket. Shakespeare however suggests that although chance may play a role in the affairs of men, the correct choice of conduct, i.e. honour, good sense and true love will finally prevail.

The 'Ring' theme

The exchanging of rings to prove love echoes the bond theme. It emphasizes the bond scene between Shylock and Antonio.

Glossary:

Aside – Words spoken by an actor (sometimes in a loud whisper) which are heard by the audience, but are not supposed to be heard by the other characters on the stage.

Soliloque – When a character speaks his deepest thoughts aloud to himself when he is alone, he speaks a soliloque or he soliloquizes. This dramatic technique enables the audience to know what is going on in the “privacy” of a character’s mind.

Act 1

Scene 1

Enter Antonio, Salerio, and Solanio

ANTONIO

To tell you the truth, I don't know why I am so sad. It makes me tired. You say it makes you tired? I don't know where I caught it or if I have found it or obtained it. I still have to find out. The sadness makes me so dull that I find it difficult to even understand myself.

SALERIO

You are thinking about the sea. Your mind is with your ships that are in full sail like rich important men. Your ships look very important on the ocean and they are so big they look down on the small ships that sail by. It seems as if the small ships bow them when your ships pass them as if they are flying.

SOLANIO

Believe me, sir, if I had so much merchandise at sea, all of my thoughts and emotions would have been with it constantly. I would sit somewhere outside and pluck grass just to see in which direction the wind is blowing.

I would be looking at maps of harbours and roads and any object that would remind me of the harm that could come to my ships, would make me sad.

SALERIO

My breath, cooling my soup, would upset me tremendously as it reminds me of what the harm the wind can do. When I look at the sand in the hourglass run freely, I think about sandbanks and shallow sea.

I would see my ship, Andrew, lodged in a sandbank slowly falling over so that you can see the inside that looks like ribs. If I go to church and see that holy building made of stone I immediately think of dangerous rocks at sea, which would destroy my vessel if her side should touch them.

All my spices would be floating in the ocean, and my silk would be covering the water. In one moment everything would be worth nothing.

And I would think that by thinking about this disaster it would be enough to make me sad. But don't tell me why Antonio is sad, I know, he is sad because he is thinking about his merchandise

ANTONIO

Believe me, no. I thank my good luck for it. All my merchandise is not in one ship, and the ships are not sailing to the same destination. If I have some bad luck at sea, I won't lose everything I have. I don't depend financially on the success of this trip. Therefore, my merchandise do not make me sad.

SALERIO

Well, the you must be in love.

ANTONIO

Nonsense, Nonsense!

SALERIO

Not in love either? Then let us say you are sad because you are not merry; and it would be as easy for you to laugh and jump and then say you are merry. Now I know that in life you find some strange people like the Roman god Janus who had two faces. You have some people who always squint

[Enter ANTONIO, Salerio, and SALANIO]

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.

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.

Salerio

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

Salerio

. . . Why, then you are in love.

Antonio

. . . Fie, fie!

Salerio

. . . Not in love neither? Then let us say you are
sad, 50
Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,

with their eyes and they laugh like a parrot at people who play the bagpipe. Other people are as sour as vinegar, they will never reveal their teeth with a smile even if a joke is so funny that the serious Greek hero, Nester, would laugh at it.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano

SALANIO

Here comes Bassanio, your relative Gratiano, and Lorenzo.
Good bye, we leave you in better company.

SALERIO

I would have stayed until I have made you happy but better friends arrived.

ANTONIO

You are also very dear to me. I believe you have some business to do, and you are just using the arrival of these men to give you a chance to leave.

SALERIO

Good morning, my good lords.

BASSANIO

Good men both, when will we have fun together? Say, when?
You are becoming strangers. Must it be like this?

SALERIO

We will take some time off so that we can spend time with you when it suits you.

Exit Salerio and Solanio.

LORENZO

My lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio, we will also leave you; but please remember that we must meet for dinner.

BASSANIO

I will not forget.

GRATIANO

You don't look well Mr Antonio. You take life too seriously. If you worry too much you will lose everything. Believe me, you look very different.

ANTONIO

I see the world for what it is, Gratiano. The world is like a stage where everyone must play a role. Mine is a sad one.

GRATIANO

Let me play the role of comedian. With joy and laughter let old wrinkles go away. I would rather drink to much wine and hurt my liver than I would worry and cool down my heart. Why should someone who has warm blood like I, look like a gravestone cut out of white alabaster stone?

Must I be asleep when I am awake? Must I make myself yellow with fever because I am bad tempered? I tell you what, Antonio – I love you, and it is my love that speaks to you – there are men who have faces like cream with fixed expressions on them like a still pond.

These men keep quiet on purpose because there silence is like wisdom. They are extremely serious and always seem to be in deep thought.

They would say, 'I am Sir Oracle (very wise), and when I open my lips, no dog may bark.' O Antonio, I know about these people who only seem to be wise because they say nothing.

I am sure that when they speak they would hurt the ears of surrounding people because they would actually be fools.

I will tell you more about this at another time. But don't try to catch something with this sadness because sadness is useless as bait. Come, good Lorenzo. Good bye you all, I will end my discussion after dinner.

Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus, Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
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]

Salanio

. . . 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 the 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 leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt Salerio and Salanio]

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 changed.

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 it is 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:

LORENZO

Well, we will leave you then till dinner time. I must be one of these quiet wise men Gratiano just talked about because he never allows me to say anything.

GRATIANO

If you stay with me for more than two years you won't even know the sound of your own voice.

ANTONIO

Good bye; I will develop into a talker if we keep on talking like this.

GRATIANO

Thank you, I hope so. Silence is only useful if your tongue has dried up, and if a woman is not suitable for marriage.

Exit Gratiano and Lorenzo

ANTONIO

Is there a point to his conversations?

BASSANIO

Gratiano speaks a lot of nothing, more than all the men in Venice. His reasoning is as important as two grains of corn hidden in a bucket of chaff: you look for it the whole day, and when you find them, they haven't been worth the search.

ANTONIO

Well, tell me about the lady that you went to visit in secret. You promised to tell me today.

BASSANIO

You are aware of the fact Antonio that I have used up all my money. I have been maintaining a more expensive lifestyle than I can afford.

I am not complaining because I cannot keep up my lifestyle anymore, but my greatest concern is to get rid of all the debt that is suffocating me.

To you, Antonio, I owe most of the money and a lot of love.

And because you love me I know I can tell you how I plan to get rid of all these debts.

ANTONIO

I beg you, good Bassanio, tell me. If your plan is as honourable as you are, be sure that my purse, me and everything at my disposal is available for you to use.

BASSANIO

In my schooldays, when I lost an arrow, I shot another arrow in the same direction and watched it more closely and most of the time I found the one I have lost. I use this childhood story show you what I am going to say now comes from my heart. I owe you a lot, but I have lost everything I owe you. I ask you to trust me. And like I used to shoot an arrow to find the lost one in my childhood, please help me and trust me again. This time I will be more careful with what you give me and I will return to you all the money I owe you plus the new money I borrow from you. I will remain in your debt forever, if you help me, as a friend.

ANTONIO

You know me very well, so stop wasting time by telling these stories, you just insult me, and tell me what I can do for you. Speak.

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

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

Gratiano

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

[Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO]

Antonio

. . . Is that any thing 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 promised 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 abridged
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 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 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:

BASSANIO

In Belmont a lady who inherited a lot of money. She is also very beautiful, more beautiful than words can describe. Sometimes I received hidden messages from her eyes. Her name is Portia, she is just like the daughter of Cato. She is honourable and correct in her behaviour. The world however is not ignorant of her wealth. From all four corners of the world, well know bachelors come to marry her. The flock to her like Jason, a Greek hero, chased after a golden fleece. Her house has become the beach where Jason found the Golden Fleece. All the men come to her house. But Antonio, if I only had the money to compete with one of them, my mind tells me that I would most definitely be successful.

ANTONIO

You know that all my money is at sea, I don't have any cash with me now, not anything that I can sell to make money. Therefore, go to Venice and try to borrow some money in my name. See will lend you the most money on my name. Use the money to go to Belmont, to beautiful Portia. Go to the city now, I will also go. I am sure there will be money.

SCENE 2 (Belmont. A room in Portia's house)

Enter Portia with her personal assistant, Nerissa.

PORTIA

To tell you the truth, Nerissa, my small body is tired of this world.

NERISSA

You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were as many as your money; but I see now that people who overeat can become as sick as those who have nothing to eat. To be as rich as you does not mean you are automatically happy: wealth can make you grow older more quickly, but moderation will lead to a longer life.

PORTIA

That is true, Nerissa, well said.

NERISSA

They would be better if they were acted upon.

PORTIA

If it was easy to know what the right thing to do is, small chapels would have been rich churches and poor men's house would have been palaces. It is only a good preacher who follows his own advice. I can easily teach twenty people what the right thing is to do but I could not be one of that twenty and follow my own advice. The brain may make laws for your emotions, but a hot temper can break any law. The madness of youth is like a rabbit that skips over the fences of good advice. But arguing like this will not find me a good husband. O my, the word "choice"! I cannot choose who I want to marry and I cannot refuse who I don't like: that is how my father's testament has taken away my right to choose. Is it not terrible, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one or refuse one?

NERISSA

Your father was a man with a lot of integrity, and often holy men have strange inspirations on their death beds. I believe the

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 undervalued
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 Colchus' strand,
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 2 (BELMONT - Portia's house)

[Enter PORTIA and NERISSA]

Portia

. . . By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is aware
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 comes sooner by white hairs, but
competency lives longer.

Portia

. . . Good sentences and well pronounced.

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 be one of the twenty
to follow mine own teaching. The brain may
devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps
o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the
youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the
cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me
a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may
neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I
dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed
by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard,
Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

Nerissa

man who loves you will be the one who chooses the right casket from the gold, silver and lead caskets that your father has set out in his will. But do you have any special feelings for any of these suitors that have already come?

PORTIA

Please, name them and as you name them I will describe them and according to my description you can decide how I feel.

NERISSA

The Prince from Naples is first.

PORTIA

Oh, he is like a horse, for he talks about nothing but his horse. He is also very proud of the fact that he can shoe his own horse. I am afraid my lady, but I think his mother had an affair with a blacksmith.

NERISSA

Then there is Count Palatine.

PORTIA

He does nothing but frown as if he is saying that if I won't marry him then I must do as I please. He hears jokes and does not even laugh. He will be a crying philosopher like Heraclites of Ephesus who always cried over the foolishness of mankind, when he grows old. I would rather be married to a skull with a bone in its mouth than to either of these. God save me from these two!

NERISSA

What do you say about the French Lord, Monsieur Le Bon?

PORTIA

God made him a man therefore he must be a man. To tell you the truth, I know it is a sin to make fun of someone, but he has a better horse than the Prince of Naples, a bigger frown than Count Palatine. He has all the qualities of a man, but no personality. If a bird sings, he begins dancing to its tune, he will have a sword fight with his own shadow. If I marry him it would be like marrying twenty husbands. If he despises me I would forgive him, for if he loves me to madness I will never be able to return his love.

NERISSA

What do you say about Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

PORTIA

He doesn't understand my language. He can't speak Latin, French or Italian. When I speak English to him it sounds as if I had no proper education in English because he does not understand me. He looks like the picture of a proper man, but he is not one. Look how strangely he is dressed! His jacket is bought in Italy, his trousers in France and his hat in Germany. He got his behaviour from everywhere else.

NERISSA

What do you think of his neighbour, the Scottish lord?

PORTIA

The Englishman has hit him on his ear and the Scot has promised to get him back. The French has agreed to help the Scot. Just like in politics the French are always

. 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

. 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 afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith.

Nerissa

. Then there is the County Palatine.

Portia

. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If 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 capering: 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 behavior every where.

Nerissa

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

Portia

helping the Scots against England.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Not a lot in the mornings when he is sober and even less in the afternoons when he is drunk. When he is at his best, he is at his worst, and when he is at his worst, he is just a little bit better than a beast. I really hope that I do not have to go with him, because it would be the worst.

NERISSA

If he wants to choose a casket, and he chooses the right casket, you will disobey your father's wishes if you choose not to go with him.

PORTIA

That is why, just to make sure he chooses wrong, we must place a glass of deep red wine on the wrong casket and I assure you he will choose that casket. I will do anything just so that I am not married to a man drinking alcohol like a sponge.

NERISSA

Don't fear my lady, they have all decided to leave without choosing a casket. They prefer to marry you by some other means.

PORTIA

I will live to be as old as Sybilla, who received the promise to grow as old as the grains of sand she can hold in her hands. She will also die childless unless she can marry someone the way her father said she should. I am glad these men are leaving because I did not like one of them.

NERISSA

Do you remember a young Venetian who visited you while your father was still alive? He came with the Marquis of Montferrat.

PORTIA

Yes, I do. It was Bassanio I think.

NERISSA

I think he would be someone nice to marry.

PORTIA

I remember him well. He was very attractive.

Enter a servant

Yes, do you have a message?

SERVANT

The men want to say goodbye. A fifth man's arrival has been announced by a messenger, the Prince of Morocco is on his way.

PORTIA

I wish I could welcome the fifth the same way as I say goodbye to the others. He may have the personality of a

. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under 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: and the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall 280 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 285 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 290 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. 295

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 300 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, he was so called. 305

Nerissa

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

Portia

. I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.
[Enter a Serving-man] 310
How now! what news?

Servant

. 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. 315

Portia

saint and look like a devil then it would be better that he kill me than marry me. Come Nerissa. Go ahead of us sir. While we close the gate on one, another knocks at the door.

SCENE 3

Enter BASSANIO with SHYLOCK, the Jew

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats - well

BASSANIO

Yes sir, for three months

SHYLOCK

For three months - well

BASSANIO

And I told you, Antonio will pay you back.

SHYLOCK

Antonio shall be responsible for the payment.

BASSANIO

Will you help me? Will you please me? May I know your answer?

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio will be responsible for the payment

BASSANIO

What is your answer to that?

SHYLOCK

Antonio is a good man

BASSANIO

Have you heard differently?

SHYLOCK

Oh no - when I say he is a good man I mean he has enough money to pay me back. But I have heard that he may have taken some investment risks. He has a ship going towards Tripolis, another to India - and I hear at the exchange he has a third one going to Mexico and a fourth one to England and some other deals abroad. But ships are only pieces of board, sailors are only men. You get rats on land, rats on water, thieves on water, and pirates. Then you get the dangers of the sea, wind and rocks... The man, has however, enough money. Three thousand ducats - I think I will sign this bond.

BASSANIO

You may sign it without any doubts.

SHYLOCK

I don't have doubts, but maybe I do, or not? Where is Antonio... may I speak with him?

BASSANIO

Please, come and have supper with us.

SHYLOCK

What, just so that I can smell pork, that animal in which Jesus chased all the demons? I don't think so. I will make deals with you but I will not drink and eat with you or pray with you... What news do you have from the exchange? Who is coming this way?

Enter ANTONIO

. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a 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, 320 Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

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

[Exeunt]

ACT 1 SCENE 3 A Street in Venice

[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 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

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

Bassanio

. Be assured you may.

Shylock

. I will be assured 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 Mr Antonio

SHYLOCK (*aside*)

How he looks like a tax collector! I hate him because he is a Christian. But I simply hate him because he lends out money without asking any interest and in that way I lose business. If I can just catch him in trouble I will take revenge and feel satisfied afterwards. He hates my nation, the Jews, and he speaks against me in the presence of all the merchants. He speaks against the way I make profit and how I put my deals together. My tribe may be cursed first before I forgive him.

BASSANIO

Shylock! Are you listening to me?

SHYLOCK

I am just thinking whether I really have 3000 ducats to lend you. I don't think I can raise up that amount of money. What now?

Tubal, however, a very wealthy Jew, will lend me the money. But how many months did you say again? [to Antonio] How do you do sir? Your were the last person we talked about.

ANTONIO

Shylock, you know that I don't lend or borrow money which I can't pay back. I am only doing this to help my friend. [to Bassanio] Does he know how much we want?

SHYLOCK

Yes I do. Three thousand ducats.

ANTONIO

For three months

SHYLOCK

I have forgotten. For three months yes. [to Bassanio] You have told me so. Well then, the agreement. But didn't you say you never lend or borrowed money?

ANTONIO

Usually, I never do.

SHYLOCK

When Jacob looked after Laban's sheep, this is Jacob in the Bible, whose father was Abraham and Isaac...

ANTONIO

What about Jacob? Did he ask interest?

SHYLOCK

No, Laban said he could have all the sheep with black spots on them. So Jacob put branches in the sheep's drinking water. The bark was stripped in stripes. When the sheep drank the water they gave birth to striped sheep. By being clever, Jacob had more sheep than Laban in the end. I'm trying to say cleverness can also make money.

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, although 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. 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; Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow Upon advantage.

Antonio

. . . I do never use it.

Shylock

. . . When Jacob grazed 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 interest: mark what Jacob did. When Laban and himself were compromised That all the eanlings which were streak'd and pied Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being rank, In the end of autumn turned to the rams, And, when the work of generation was Between these woolly breeders in the act, The skilful shepherd peel'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 had nothing to do with cleverness. God helped Jacob. Did you tell this story to tell us how you make your money?

SHYLOCK

All I can say is, I make money fast.

ANTONIO

Look Bassanio, the devil can quote from the Bible. The apple may look nice on the outside, but it could be rotten from the inside.

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats. It is a good sum. Let me work out the interest...

ANTONIO

Well Shylock - are you going to lend us the money!?

SHYLOCK

Mr Antonio, many times you have insulted me about my business. I have carried the insults with patience because I'm used to being insulted as a Jew. You have called me a misbeliever, a dog and you have spat on my Jewish robe. Why? Because I do business with my money. Now it appears to me you need my help? You come and ask money from me. You who have emptied your throat on my beard and you who have kicked me as if I am a dog. Now you want money from me. What do you expect me to say? Is it possible that this dog can lend you money? Or do you expect me to bend low and serve you and say dear sir, because you insult me and spit on me I will lend you this money?

ANTONIO

I will call you a dog again! I will spit on you and I will kick you again. Do not lend me this money because I am your friend, lend it to me as your enemy.

If I break the agreement as your enemy, then you don't have to feel sorry for me!

SHYLOCK

Oh, look how angry you are. I would have liked to be friends with you and have your acceptance. Forget about the things you have done to me. I will give you the money and I will ask no interest. Isn't this kind of me? There is just one thing...

BASSANIO

This is very kind of you.

SHYLOCK

I will be this nice to you. Go with me to a lawyer and sign the following contract. If you do not repay me on such

Antonio

. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served 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

. 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 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 bondman's key, With bated breath and whispering 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

and such a day, in such a place, the sum that we agree upon in the agreement, then I will have only the following condition that you will give me a pound of your flesh, which I may cut off and take from any part of your body that I please.

ANTONIO

I will definitely sign this agreement. You are very kind

Shylock.

BASSANIO

You will not sign this agreement. I will rather go without money.

ANTONIO

Don't fear man. I will have the money. My ships all come back a month before I have to pay him and I expect to make three times the amount of money.

SHYLOCK

Look how these Christians don't trust me. What will I be able to do with a pound of human flesh? It is useless to me. It is not as valuable as the flesh of goats or cattle or sheep. I am only doing this to extend a hand of friendship to Antonio. There is no harm in this deal. Take it or leave it, and don't accuse me of having false intentions.

ANTONIO

Shylock, I will sign the agreement.

SHYLOCK

Meet me at the lawyer. I will go get the money now. I must also quickly visit my house which is being looked after by and untrustworthy slave. I be with you soon.

ANTONIO

Bye gentle Jew. One of these days you will turn into a Christian, so kind are you.

BASSANIO

I don't like the terms of this agreement.

ANTONIO

Come on, stop worrying. My ships come home a whole month before I have to pay him!

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.

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 will 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.

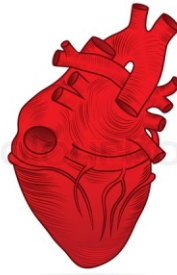
[Exeunt]

The Venice Tribune

News today, money tomorrow



Depression hits merchant of Venice.



Human flesh good enough to pay debt



Single daughter inherits Father's fortune

Depression strikes merchant

1. How does Antonio describe his sadness?
2. What reason does Solanio and Salerio give for Antonio's sadness?
3. What could happen to Antonio's ships at sea?
4. Say in your own words what Gratiano says when he sees Antonio for the first time.
5. How does Gratiano want to help Antonio?
6. What is Antonio's plan to make money?
7. How will Antonio help Bassanio?



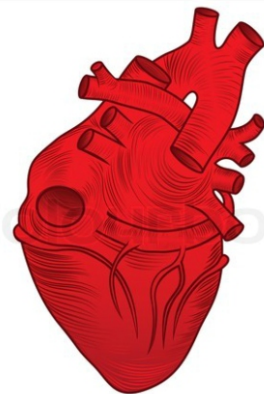
Female billionaire entertains strange suitors

1. Why is it strange that Portia should be troubled?
2. What predicament does Portia find herself in?
3. What did the will of Portia's father say?
4. Name the people who already came to see Portia?
5. Which suitor made an impression on Portia?
6. Who was announced at the door?
7. Why did Portia not like the Neapolitan Prince, the Scottish Lord or the County Palatine?



3000 Ducats for a pound of flesh

1. How much money did Bassanio want to borrow from Shylock?
2. What insurance did Bassanio give Shylock that he will be paid?
3. How do you know Antonio was very rich? Make a list of all the 'irons' he had in the fire?
4. Why would Shylock not eat with Bassanio and Antonio?
5. Why does Shylock hate Antonio?
6. Why will Antonio borrow money this time?
7. For which reason did Antonio say must Shylock lend him the money?
8. What contract will Shylock sign with Antonio?
9. Why is Antonio not worried about the terms of the contract?



ACT 2

SCENE 1

Belmont

The sound of trumpets. Enter the Prince of Morocco, three followers, with Portia, Nerissa and their followers.

MOROCCO

Don't dislike me because of my dark skin. I live in North-Africa, where it is very hot. It feels as if we are close to the sun and it is because of this that I am so dark. Bring the whitest person you can find in the cold north, put him next to me and let us cut ourselves. See for yourself whose blood is the reddest. Many brave men have feared me because of the way I look, and some of my country's best girls love me for the way I look. I would not change my looks, only if it would help me understand what you think.

PORTIA

When it comes to choosing a husband, I don't look at appearances. Besides, in this case I can't choose even if I want to. The lottery of the chests prevents me. As I told you, and as I am ordered by my father's will, I will have no choice but to marry you if you choose the right casket, no matter what you look like.

MOROCCO

I thank you for your honesty. Lead me to the caskets so that I may choose one. I will ask my faithful knife, to help me make the right decision. Knife, you who has helped me kill many brave men and kings, please guide me as I choose the right casket.

PORTIA

If you take your chance to choose, you must swear before you choose that if you choose wrong, you will never talk to me again or try to marry me again.

MOROCCO

I swear. Take me to the caskets

PORTIA

First, let's go to the temple and sign the oath you made, then let us have lunch, and after that you can choose.

MOROCCO

My future will then be decided. May I be lucky or a loser.

SCENE 2

Venice. A street.

Enter Launcelot Gobbo (the clown) alone.

LAUNCELOT

Surely my common sense tells me to run away from my employer, the Jew. One part of me says I must run away and the other part says I must not. Which is the good part? Both gives good advice. By not running I will prove that I am trustworthy. On the other hand staying with the Jew is like working for the devil, and as a Christian I can't serve the devil. I think I will run away.

Enter Old Gobbo with a basket.

ACT II

SCENE 1 Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house

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

Prince of 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 scanted 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.

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 outstare the sternest eyes that look, Outbrave the heart most daring on the earth,

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.

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 curs'd 'st among men.

[Cornets, and exeunt]

ACT II SCENE 2

Venice. A street.

[Enter LAUNCELOT]

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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: 'Vial!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:' to be ruled 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

GOBBO

Young man, could you please tell me where the Jew lives?

LAUNCELOT

(*Aside*) Oh my word! This is my long lost father, he is as blind as a bat and therefore does not recognise me. I will play trick on him.

GOBBO

Young man, could you please tell me where the Jew lives?

LAUNCELOT

Turn right at the next turn, then at the next turn left; at the very next turn, I don't know which side, turn again and you will turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

GOBBO

That will be very difficult to find. Can you tell me if Launcelot lives with the Jew?

LAUNCELOT

Are you talking about young Master Launcelot? (*Aside*)

Watch me now! I will now make him cry.

Are you talking about young master Launcelot?

GOBBO

He is not a "master", he is just a poor man's son. His father is very honest but extremely poor.

LAUNCELOT

Well, let his father be who he is. Here we talk about "master" Launcelot.

GOBBO

He may be your friend, but only Launcelot, Sir.

LAUNCELOT

I am drawing the conclusion that you must be talking about young Master Launcelot, old man.

GOBBO

No, only ordinary Launcelot.

LAUNCELOT

Dear old man, don't talk about master Launcelot anymore, for the young gentleman you are referring to is indeed dead.

GOBBO

What? The boy was the very person I depended on in my old age. He was like a staff that an old person can lean on.

LAUNCELOT

(*Aside*) Do I look like something that you can lean on? Don't you know me Father?

GOBBO

Goodness me! I do not know you young gentleman, but I plead with you, please tell me if my son is alive or dead?

LAUNCELOT

fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; 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 command; I will run.

[Enter Old GOBBO, with a basket]

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. . . [*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.

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. . . 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.

Old Gobbo

. . . By 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 Gobbo

. . . Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

[*Aside*]

Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

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

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

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

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. . . 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.

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

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

Old 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 Gobbo

. . . Do you not know me, father?

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. . . Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his

Don't you know me father?

GOBBO

No sir, I am as blind as sand. I don't know who you are.

LAUNCELOT

I can see that. If you had your eyes you might have recognised me immediately. Only a wise father will be able to recognise his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you about your son. (*Kneels with his back to his son*) Give me your blessing old man. The truth will be told, a murder will always be solved - where a man's son is may be a mystery, but the truth will come out in the end.

GOBBO

I beg you sir, please stand up. I am very sure that you are not my son, Launcelot.

LAUNCELOT

I beg you. Stop fooling around and give me your blessing, for I am your son Launcelot. The boy that was a baby, is still alive, and will grow old.

GOBBO

I don't think that you are my son.

LAUNCELOT

I don't know what to think of that but I am definitely your son, the Jew's servant. I am as sure of that as I am of the fact that your wife, and my mother's name is Margery.

GOBBO

Her name is definitely Margery. Let me feel if you are Launcelot my son. My, what a beard you have grown. You have more hair on your chin than Dobbin, my horse, has hair in his tail.

LAUNCELOT

It seems to me that Dobbin's tail is growing on backwards. I am sure Dobbin had more hair in his tail than I on my face, the last time I saw him.

GOBBO

My word, much you have changed! How does Shylock, your master, treat you? I have brought him a present. How is he?

LAUNCELOT

Well all I can say is, I have decided to run away, and I will not rest till I have run further. My master acts exactly like a Jew. Give him a present? I don't think so. I am starving in his service. You can see every rib in my body. Feel with your fingers. Father, I am so glad you have come. Take this present you brought to Master Bassanio, who is hiring new servants and giving them new clothes. If I cannot serve him, I will run away until I run out of earth under my feet. Oh, look how lucky we are, here he comes. Go to him father for if I serve the Jew any longer I will become one myself.

Enter Bassanio with Leonardo and a follower or two.

BASSANIO

You can do that, but tell them to hurry up for supper is at five o'clock and not five thirty. See also that these letters are delivered, order the new clothes to be made, and tell Gratiano to come immediately to my house.

One of his men off.

LAUNCELOT

Go to him father.

GOBBO

God bless you Sir.

BASSANIO

Great mercy. What do you want from me?

GOBBO

Here is my son, sir, a very poor boy-

LAUNCELOT

Not a poor boy, but the servant of the rich Jew, as my father would soon tell you.

GOBBO

He has a great desire to serve you-

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 at the length truth will out.

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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.

Old Gobbo

. I cannot think you are my son.

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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.

Old Gobbo

. Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped 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 Gobbo

. 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.

Old Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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 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. 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 and other followers]

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 Gobbo

. To him, father.

Old Gobbo

. God bless your worship!

Bassanio

. Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Old Gobbo

. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

Launcelot Gobbo

. Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify—

Old Gobbo

. He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve—

Launcelot Gobbo

. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—

Old Gobbo

. His master and he, saving your worship's reverence,

LAUNCELOT

To make a long story short, I am the servant of the Jew, but I have a desire, like my father said-

GOBBO

He does not get along with the Jew, because he is starving-

LAUNCELOT

To be very short, the real truth is that the Jew is not treating me well, and has cause me to look for employment elsewhere-

GOBBO

I have a dish of doves here that I would like to give you as a gift, and my question is-

LAUNCELOT

The request comes from this old man, who is my father, on my behalf.

BASSANIO

Speak only one at a time. What do you want?

LAUNCELOT

I want to serve you.

GOBBO

That is it.

BASSANIO

I know you. You may work for me. Shylock, your master, just talked to me today. You really prefer to leave the servant of a rich Jew to become the servant of somebody as poor as me?

LAUNCELOT

Like the old proverb says, you seem to have the grace of God, and Shylock only seems to have enough. It means the grace of God is much more than money.

BASSANIO

You are a smooth talker. Go with your son old man, and say goodbye to each other. Then go to my house. *(To a follower)* Get him some new clothes that look better than these.

LAUNCELOT

Come on father. I just have to go and tell the Jew.
Off, with Old Gobbo

BASSANIO

Think about this Leonardo: If you do good to somebody else something good will happen to you. Tonight I am going to celebrate with my closest friend.

LEONARDO

I will try my best to make it a great feast.

(He leaves Bassanio)

Enter Gratiano

GRATIANO

Where is Bassanio?

LEONARDO

He is walking over there

(Leonardo off)

GRATIANO

Mr Bassanio!

BASSANIO

Gratiano!

GRATIANO

I have organised an appointment with Portia for you.

BASSANIO

You succeeded!

GRATIANO

Please Bassanio, you must not refuse. I want to go to Belmont with you.

BASSANIO

Since you ask so nicely, you may. But listen to me clearly, you are too wild, rude and has a very loud voice. In

are scarce cater-cousins—

Launcelot 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—

Old Gobbo

. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is—

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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 Gobbo

. Serve you, sir.

Old 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 Gobbo

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo]

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]

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 allay with some cold drops of modesty Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior I be misconstrued in the place I go to, And lose my hopes.

Gratiano

. Signior Bassanio, hear me: If I do not put on

Venice it is okay to be like that, but in Belmont where they don't know you, you may upset people with your behaviour. Please try to behave yourself when we are there. I don't want to be thrown out because of the way you behave.

GRATIANO

Bassanio, I will not drink, I will talk respectfully, and swear only now and then. I will carry Bibles in my pockets, look humble, cover my eyes with my hat when we say grace at dinner, sigh and say Amen. I will use only good manners, I will look like somebody who learned manners from his grandmother.

BASSANIO

Well, we will see what happens.

GRATIANO

Ok, but we don't begin tonight. Tonight I will still be wild.

BASSANIO

I expect you to be wild tonight, for we are entertaining our friends. But see you later, I have some business to attend to.

GRATIANO

And I must go to Lorenzo and the rest. We will visit you at suppertime.

Off

SCENE 3

Enter Jessica and Launcelot the clown

JESSICA

I am so sorry that you have to leave my father in this way. This house is hell, and you did make it a bit better for me. But, may it go well with you. Here is a ducat for your troubles.

And Launcelot, remember at supper you will see Lorenzo, who is Bassanio's guest. Please give him this letter secretly. So, farewell to you. I don't want my father to see me talking to you.

LAUNCELOT

Good bye. The tears show how sad I am to leave, most beautiful unbeliever. If I am not mistaken a Christian will definitely want to marry you. Goodbye. These tears does not make me look like a man.

Off

JESSICA

Farewell Good Launcelot. My goodness, how terribly bad and sinful I must be to be ashamed of being Shylock's daughter. Although I am a daughter by blood, I certainly do not behave like him. O Lorenzo, I hope you keep your promise and so I can end this conflict in me, become a Christian and marry you.

Off

SCENE IV

The same. A street.

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALERIO, AND SOLARIO.

LORENZO

We will sneak away at suppertime. We will disguise ourselves at my house and return, all within one hour.

GRATIANO

We haven't made good enough preparations.

SALERIO

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 3 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 Gobbo

. . . Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most
beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian did 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 ashamed 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 in Venice)

[Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, Salerio, and Solanio]

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.

Salerio

. . . We have not spoke us yet of torchbearers.

Solanio

. . . 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
805
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?

We haven't spoken about torchbearers.

SOLANIO

This is an ugly business. Unless we can arrange something quickly it is better that we not do it at all.

LORENZO

It is now only four o'clock. We have two hours to prepare.

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter

Launcelot, what news do you have?

LAUNCELOT

If you open this letter, you will see.

LORENZO

I know this handwriting, it was written by a beautiful hand.
The hand is whiter than the paper on which the letter is written.

GRATIANO

News about love?

LAUNCELOT

May I go sir?

LORENZO

Where are you going?

LAUNCELOT

I am going to invite my old master, Shylock, to go and have dinner with my new Christian master.

LORENZO

Take these coins: tell gentle Jessica that I will not disappoint her. Say it to her privately. Go, gentlemen,

Exit Launcelot

Will you go and prepare for the masks tonight? I have a torch bearer.

SOLANIO

I am going right away.

SALERIO

So am I.

LORENZO

Meet me at Gratiano's place, an hour from now.

SALERIO

It sounds good. We will.

[Exeunt SALERIO and SOLANIO]

GRATIANO

Wasn't that letter from Jessica?

LORENZO

I must tell you everything. She has told me how I must take her from her father's house. What gold and jewels she will take with her and which men's clothing she would be wearing. If the Jew ever goes to heaven it will be for his daughter's sake. May she never do anything terribly wrong. If she does may it be because she is the daughter of a Jew who doesn't believe. Come with me, and read this as you go. Fair Jessica will carry my torch tonight.

Exeunt

SCENE 5 (Venice. Before Shylock's house)

Enter Shylock the Jew and Launcelot, his man that was, the Clown.

SHYLOCK

Well, you will see, your own eyes will tell you the difference between Bassanio and me. Jessica! You will not be able to stuff yourself with food as you have done here. Jessica! You won't sleep and snore and wear your clothes out. Jessica, I call!

LAUNCELOT

Jessica, I call!

SHYLOCK

Who asked you to call her? I did not ask you to call.

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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 Gobbo

. By your leave, sir.

Lorenzo

. Whither goest thou?

Launcelot Gobbo

. 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.

Solanio

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

Salerio

. And so will I.

Lorenzo

. Meet me and Gratiano At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salerio

. 'Tis good we do so.

[Exeunt Salerio and Solanio]

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: 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 IV (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 gormandise, As thou hast done with me:—What, Jessica!— And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;— Why, Jessica, I say!

Launcelot Gobbo

. Why, Jessica!

Shylock

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

Launcelot Gobbo

. Your worship was wont to tell me that 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:

LAUNCELOT

You once told me I could do nothing without being asked by others to do it.

Enter Jessica

JESSICA

Did you call? What is your request?

SHYLOCK

I am invited to supper, Jessica. Here are my keys. But why should I go? They did not invite me because they love me, they only flatter me. I will go in hate, and eat the food at the expense of the Christian. Jessica, my daughter, look after my house. I really do not feel like going: there is something troubling me for I dreamt of moneybags last night.

LAUNCELOT

I beg of you sir, my young master expects your resentment, I mean presence.

SHYLOCK

So do I his.

LAUNCELOT

They have also whispered together. I don't say that you will not see a mask, but if you do then it is because my nose started to bleed for nothing on Black Monday at six in the morning.

SHYLOCK

What, are there masks? Listen to me Jessica, lock the doors, and when you hear the drums, and the whistles playing, don't go out to the balcony, and don't look down at the decorated faces of the Christians. Close the windows, don't let the sound of silly foolishness enter my house. By Jacob's staff, I swear I do not want to go out and feast, but I will. Go ahead of me servant, say I am coming.

LAUNCELOT

I will go sir. Miss, look out of the window for a Christian will come, attractive enough for your Jewish eyes.

Exit

SHYLOCK

What does that fool say? He is a part of Hagar's offspring, he is non-Jewish.

JESSICA

He only said goodbye, nothing more.

SHYLOCK

He is kind enough, but he does eat a lot. He is very slow and he sleeps the whole day. He is not a hard worker, so I am gladly letting him go. He can go to one and he can help spend the money I lend Bassanio. Well, Jessica, go into the house. Maybe I will come back immediately. Do as I tell you, lock the doors. Things locked up are never lost; this proverb will never become old.

Exit

JESSICA

Goodbye, and if I am not unfortunate, I will have a father, but you will have lost your daughter.

Exit

SCENE 6

Enter the people with masks, Gratiano and Salerio.

GRATIANO

This is the balcony where Lorenzo wants us to wait.

SALERIO

He is late.

GRATIANO

It is strange that he is late, lovers are always early.

SALERIO

There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest, For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Launcelot Gobbo

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

Shylock

. . . So do I his.

Launcelot Gobbo

. . . 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, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year, in the 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 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 Gobbo

. . . 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?

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 would have him help to waste

His borrow'd 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 6

[Enter GRATIANO and Salerio, masqued]

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 enjoy'd. How like a younger or a prodigal The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,

Yes, they are ten times faster than pigeons that fly with messages of love reminding lovers of the promises they have made to keep them true to each other.

GRATIANO

It is always the case. Who stands up from a feast with the same appetite he had when he sat down? Where is the horse that runs as fast the first time before it was tamed? All things are chased more energetically than they are enjoyed. A ship leaves the harbour looking beautiful but when it returns it is used and old.

Enter Lorenzo

SALERIO

Here comes Lorenzo, we will continue this later.

LORENZO

Dear friends, thank you for waiting so patiently. My business has kept you waiting. When you also want steal wives I will wait patiently for you. Come, here lives my father, the Jew. Hey, who is in there?

Enter Jessica above, in boy's clothes

JESSICA

Who are you? I am sure I have heard you somewhere before.

LORENZO

Your love, Lorenzo

JESSICA

Lorenzo, I love you very much but only you know how much you want me to love you?

LORENZO

You are my love. I want you.

JESSICA

Here, catch this casket, it is worth all our trouble. I am glad you can't see me in this darkness for I am ashamed of the way I look. But, love is blind, and lovers cannot see the small mistakes they make. If they could see their mistakes, Cupid would blush himself, for I have changed into boy's clothes tonight.

LORENZO

Climb down, you must carry my torch.

JESSICA

What, must I show everybody what I look like? The torch is too bright and being your torchbearer will reveal my looks to everybody. I should be in darkness.

LORENZO

You are so beautiful, even dressed as a boy. Come, quickly. The darkness gives us cover and Bassanio waits for us at his feast.

JESSICA

I will lock the doors and fill my pockets with more money. I will be there in a moment.

Exit

GRATIANO

My goodness! She is Christian, not a Jew.

LORENZO

They may curse me that is how much I love her. She is wise. If my eyes don't lie she is also beautiful. She is sincere. In my heart I will place her as being wise, beautiful and sincere.

Enter Jessica below

You are here? Come gentlemen, let's go! Our masking friends are waiting for us.

Exit with Jessica and Salerio

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!

Salerio

. . . Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

[Enter LORENZO]

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 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.

[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 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

Enter Antonio

ANTONIO

Who is there?

GRATIANO

Mr Antonio

ANTONIO

My goodness Gratiano, where is everybody? It is nine o'clock; all our friends are waiting for you. There will be no masks tonight, the wind has come up. Bassanio's ship is going to sail. I have sent twenty people to look for you.

GRATIANO

I am glad. I want nothing more than to be sailing tonight.

Exit

SCENE 7 (Belmont. A room in Portia's house)

Trumpet. Enter Portia with Morocco and both their servants.

PORTIA

Go, pull away the curtains, you will find the caskets and make your choice, noble Prince.

MOROCCO

The first one is gold, with something written on it:

Who chooses me shall get what all men desire.

The second, the silver says:

Who chooses me shall get as much as they deserve.

The third, boring lead, warns all clearly:

Who chooses me must give and hazard all he hath.

How shall I know which casket is the right one?

PORTIA

One of them has my picture in them, Prince. If you choose that one, I will be yours.

MOROCCO

Some god help me choose! Let me see: I will look at the inscriptions again. What is written on the casket made from lead?

Who chooses me must give and risk all he has.

Must give, what? For lead? Risk for lead? This casket is a threat. Men that risk all do it for excellent rewards. Lead is not excellent.

I have a golden mind and will not stoop so low as to risk something for lead. What does the silver casket say with its pure colour?

Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.

As much as he deserves? Wait Morocco, think over this carefully. If you are rated by yourself, you deserve enough but maybe the lady needs more. I definitely deserve the lady, I am of the right birth, I have enough money, I have good manners and great qualities. I also deserve her in love. Let me just look at the last casket again:

Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire.

This must be the lady. The whole world desires her. From the four corners of the world they come to pick a casket here. Princes come from everywhere to look at beautiful Portia in this land of water. The Hyrcanian deserts, found in ancient Persia with fierce tigers in them, and the open spaces of Arabia have become like a main road that all the princes use to come and look at beautiful Portia. The dangerous waves of this land filled with water does not keep the foreigners away. They come as if they are only crossing a small stream, to see Portia.

One of these three chests contains a picture of her. Is her picture in the lead casket? It is foolishness to think she would be in such a dull chest. It is so ugly you won't even use it as a coffin for her burial clothes. Or must I think her face is in the silver casket although silver is ten times less valuable than pure gold. It's a sinful thought. The picture of this lovely woman would be in nothing else but gold. The have a coin in England that has the picture of an angel on it, the picture is engraved on the coin. But here, the picture of the angel lies on a bed of gold, it is inside the casket. Give me the key, I choose the golden casket. Let me see what my fortune is.

. I am glad on't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

[Exeunt]

SCENE 7 (BELMONT. A room in 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 the inscriptions back again. What says this
lead 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 be'st 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. 1020
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more 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:
The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds
Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares 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 immured,
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
Stamped 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 unlocks the golden casket]

Prince of Morocco

. O hell! what have we here?
A carrion Death, within whose empty eye

PORTIA

Here, take it Prince, and if my picture is in there, I am yours.
He opens the golden casket.

MOROCCO

O hell!!! What on earth is this? A skull, with a note in one of its eyes. Let me read it:
*Everything that is shiny is not gold
You have heard this often
Many men have sold their lives to look at gold –
Golden graves have worms on the inside
You seem to have courage but you are not wise. You also look young but you make serious decisions. Your answer however is not written here – you cannot marry Portia, leave.*
Gold, I have really lost all to gold. Goodbye my hope, hello cold disappointment. Portia, I greet you. I am so sad in my heart to say goodbye properly. A loser leaves like this.
Exit with his followers. Sound of trumpets.

PORTIA

Good riddance. Close the curtains and let us go. May everybody that looks like him make the wrong choice.

Scene 8 (A street in Venice)

Enter Salerio and Solanio

SALERIO

I saw Bassanio sail away and with him was Gratiano. I am sure Lorenzo was not on their ship.

SOLANIO

The evil Jew woke up the Governor, and they both searched the ship.

SALERIO

He came too late, the sails of the ship was open already. They told the Governor that Lorenzo and Jessica left in a gondola. Anyway, Antonio assured the Governor that they were not on the ship with Bassanio.

SOLANIO

I never heard someone so confused about what was more important to him. The Jew screamed in the streets: "My daughter! My money! O my daughter! She ran away with a Christian! O my Christian money! Justice! The law! My money and my daughter! A sealed bag, two sealed bags of money, of double money, stolen from me by my daughter! And jewels, gemstones, two rich and precious stones, stolen by my own daughter! Justice! Find the girl! She has the stones on her, and the money!"

SALERIO

All the boys in Venice following him and cried out about his stones, his daughter and his money!

SOLANIO

Let us hope Antonio pays his debt on time or he will surely pay for this.

SALERIO

Well, I remember now, I talked with a Frenchman yesterday who said that one of our ships, a big one, sank in the English Channel. I immediately thought of Antonio when he told me and quietly hoped it wasn't his.

There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.

[Reads]

All that glitters 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 enfold.

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 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.

Let all of his complexion choose me so.

[Exeunt]

Scene 8 (A street in Venice)

[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 raised 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 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,

Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!

And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,

Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;

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

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 remember'd.

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;

1105

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 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

SOLANIO

You better tell Antonio what you heard, but be gentle or you may upset him.

SALERIO

There is nobody more kind than Antonio on this earth. I saw Antonio and Bassanio say goodbye to each other. Bassanio said he would be return quickly but Antonio said he did not have to. He said Bassanio should not mess up his business by hurrying. Bassanio must stay there as long as he needs to. He also said Bassanio must not even think about the contract between him and the Jew. He said Bassanio must enjoy himself and focus on marrying Portia. He must show Portia all the love he could. And with that he turned his face away. There was a tear in his eye. He shook Bassanio's hand, and they parted.

SOLANIO

I think Antonio only loves the world because of Bassanio. Come, let us go and find Antonio and cheer him up with some fun.

SALERIO

Let's go.
Exit.

Scene 9 (A room in Portia's house)

Enter Nerissa and a servant

NERISSA

Quickly, open the curtains. The Prince of Arragon has made his promise and he is coming to choose a casket.

Sound of trumpets. Enter Arragon and his followers and Portia

PORTIA

Look, there stands the caskets Prince. If you choose the casket with my picture in it, we will be married immediately. If you don't, you must leave immediately without saying anything.

ARRAGON

I have made a promise to do three things: I may never tell anyone which casket I chose. If I choose incorrectly I may never ask another woman to marry me. And lastly if I choose wrong, I must leave you immediately.

PORTIA

Everybody makes these promises when they take the chance to choose a casket.

ARRAGON

And so have I. May I be lucky. Gold, silver and dull lead.

Who chooses me must give and risk all he has.

You will have to look much better before I risk all I have for you. What does the golden chest say?

Who chooses me shall get what many men desire.

What many men desire; that many may refer to the group of men who chooses something because it looks beautiful.

They don't know anything more than what their eyes can see. They don't look at the inside of things, but like a swallow they build their nest on the outside of a wall so that it is exposed to bad weather. Even by accident I will not choose what many men desire. I will not be like everybody else and say I am the same as those barbaric men. Well then, let me look at the silver casket. Let me read the note:

Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.

This is very well said, who goes around and desires a fortune that does not belong to him? Can he call himself

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 9 (A room in Portia's house)

[Enter NERISSA with 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 solemnized: But if you fail, without more speech, my lord, You must be gone from hence immediately.

Prince of 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.

Prince of 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 the 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 derived corruptly, and that clear honour Were purchased 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 glean'd 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

honourable? Let no one assume to be what he is not. Let no one pretend to be the owner of an estate, or the bearer of a title if they did not get it honestly. How many men must wear hats because they have no hair. How many must take orders when themselves give orders. How many people of low rank would you find among the offspring of highly ranked people.

You don't get something if you don't work for it, you only get what you deserve. Let me choose.

Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.

I think I deserve Portia. Give me the key for this casket and let me unlock my fortunes.

He opens the silver casket.

PORTIA

Why do you wait so long before you tell us what is in the casket?

ARRAGON

What is this? A picture of a clown with one eye shut. There is a note also. I will read it. How much you differ from Portia, how much you differ from my dreams and expectations.

Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.

Don't I deserve anything more than the head of a fool? Is this my prize? Don't I have any luck?

PORTIA

You cannot be your own judge when you are judged by someone else.

ARRAGON

What is written here:

This casket was purified seven times with fire. Those who choose incorrectly will be judged seven times. If you chase after an illusion you will never be happy.

There are fools everywhere, even fools with silver hair.

Take any wife you want to bed, but you will always be a fool. Leave, you are dismissed.

I will become a bigger fool if I stay here longer.

With one fool's head I came, I leave now with two.

Goodbye, I will keep my promise and bear my misery.

Exit with his followers.

PORTIA

So has the candle killed the moth. O these fools. When they do choose they lose because they use logic.

NERISSA

The old saying of that getting hanged and getting a wife is your destiny, is not wrong.

PORTIA

Come, close the curtain Nerissa.

Enter Messenger

MESSENGER

Where is lady Portia?

PORTIA

Here. What do you want?

MESSENGER

Madam, at your gate stopped a young Venetian. He was here once before. To show that he is coming he sent people ahead with rich gifts. I have not seen someone as in love as he is. He is like a cool summer's day in April. He shows you summer is near. Bassanio is summer.

PORTIA

Don't say any more. I am afraid you will say next that he is related to me. You spend so much time singing his praises. Come Nerissa, I want to see this messenger of love who comes in this polite way.

NERISSA

Please Cupid, let it be Bassanio.

Exit

. . . Too long a pause for that which you find there.

Prince of 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.

Prince of 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.

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 wrath.

[Exeunt Arragon and 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 the approaching of his lord;

From whom he bringeth sensible regrets,

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]

Venice Gossip



Monthly social page of Venice and Belmont

Act 2 Scene 1

1. Why must Portia not like the way the slave looks?
2. How must Portia test whether the Prince is the same as any other man?
3. Why does Portia not care about the Prince's looks?

Act 2 Scene 7

4. What does the Prince of Morocco think the lead, silver and gold casket mean?
5. Why does he choose the golden casket?
6. What does he find in the casket?

Act 2, Scene 9

7. What oath must all the suitors make before they choose a casket?
8. Why does the Prince of Arragon choose the casket he does?
9. What does he find in the casket?



The Prince of Morocco ready to choose one of the three caskets

Left: Prince of Arragon

Slave demands more or...

Act 2, Scene 2

1. Describe the struggle Launcelot has with his conscience.
2. Why is it a good thing that Launcelot meets Gobbo?
3. Who does Launcelot want to work for?
4. Why doesn't Bassanio want Gratiano to go to Belmont?



Right: Launcelot and Gobbo

Act 2 Scene 8

1. What did Shylock do when he discovered Jessica was gone?
2. Why did he suspect Antonio and Bassanio to be involved in Jessica's elopement?
3. What last message did Antonio give Bassanio when he left?
4. Do you think Shylock hates Antonio more? Give a reason for your answer.

Daughter disgraces father with marriage

Act 2 Scene 3

1. How does Jessica feel about her father and about living in his house?
2. Who is Jessica in love with?
3. Why does her father not approve?

Act 2 Scene 4

4. What message does Lorenzo receive from Jessica?

Act 2 Scene 5

5. Where is Shylock going for the evening?
6. List the things Shylock trusts his daughter with.
7. Why does Launcelot mention his nose bled?

Act 2 Scene 6

8. Why is it strange that Lorenzo should be late?
9. What does Jessica take with her?
10. How will she leave without being recognised?
11. What news does Antonio bring Gratiano?

Jessica leaving her father's house for her Christian husband, Lorenzo, on the night of masks.



ACT 3
SCENE 1
Venice. A street
Enter Solanio and Salerio

SOLANIO

What news is there from the Stock Exchange?

SALERIO

There are unconfirmed reports that Antonio has lost a ship at Kent, England. There is a lot of sandbanks there. You can also see many shipwrecks there. This is only a rumour.

SOLANIO

I hoped it was only a rumour but it is true. The good and honest Antonio who I am privileged to know....

SALERIO

Come to the point!

SOLANIO

What? The point is, he has lost a ship.

SALERIO

I hope that is all he has lost.

SOLANIO

Let me say Amen a few times before the devil takes my prayer for here the devil comes and he looks like Shylock, the Jew.

Enter Shylock

Hey tell us Shylock, what do the merchants talk about?

SHYLOCK

You knew, you knew everything about my daughter's disappearance!

SALERIO

That is for sure. I even knew the tailor who made the wings she flew away with.

SOLANIO

Shylock, you knew your bird had enough feathers to fly on her own. It is in the nature of birds to leave the dam when they are ready to fly.

SHYLOCK

I curse her for it.

SOLANIO

For sure, if the devil judges her.

SHYLOCK

To think my own flesh and blood rebelled against me!

SOLANIO

What? Is your body rebelling against you?

SHYLOCK

No, my daughter is my flesh and blood.

SALERIO

There is more difference between your flesh and her flesh than there is between black marble and white ivory, than there is between red wine and white wine. But tell us, have you heard whether Antonio has had any bad luck at sea?

ACT III

SCENE 1

Venice. A street

[Enter Solanio and Salerio]

Solanio

. Now, what news on the Rialto?

Salerio

. Why, yet it lives there unchecked 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.

Solanio

. I would she were as lying a gossip but it is true, 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 know, 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 fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shylock

. She is damned for it.

Solanio

. 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 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

That is another bad deal I made. He is a bankrupt. He can't even show his face at the Stock Exchange. He is a beggar and usually he was so proud and smart. He must just remember our contract. He wanted to call me a moneylender. Let him remember our contract. He wanted to lend out money out of Christian generosity. Let him remember our contract now.

SALERIO

Why, I am sure if he is late to pay you that you will not take his flesh? What is it good for?

SHYLOCK

I'll use it to catch fish with. If it feeds nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He has disgraced me, and cost me millions, he laughed at my losses and he made fun of my profit, he cursed my nation, spoiled my deals, chased my friends away and made my enemies more angry at me – for what reason? I am a Jew. Do I not have eyes? Don't I have hands, organs, a body, senses, feelings, desires? – Am I not fed with the same food as you, hurt with the same weapons? Don't I suffer from the same diseases and am I not healed the same as you? I am warmed by the same summer and cooled by the same winter as Christians are. If you prick my finger, will I not bleed? If you tickle me, won't I laugh? If you poison me, won't I die? If you do something wrong to me, shall I not take revenge? If I am like you in everything else then I will be like you when it comes to revenge. If a Jew does something wrong to a Christian, how will the Christian act? Revenge! If a Christian does something wrong to a Jew, what should a Jew do according to Christian example? Revenge! The bad behaviour you teach me, I will do. It will be difficult but I will do it better than you taught me.

Enter a servant from Antonio

SERVANT

Gentleman, my master Antonio is at his house and he wishes to speak with both of you.

SALERIO

We have been looking for him everywhere.

Tubal comes closer

SOLANIO

Here comes another Jew. There can not be a third one like them unless the devil turns into a Jew.

Solanio, Salerio and servant off.

SHYLOCK

What now, Tubal! What is the news from Genoa? Have you found my daughter?

TUBAL

I visited many places where they talked about her, but I could not find her.

SHYLOCK

Why there, there, there, there! I have lost a diamond that cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! Only now does the curse fall on our nation; I haven't felt it until now. Two thousand ducats for that one jewel, and there are more precious jewels. I would rather have my daughter dead at my feet and the jewels in her ear! At least she would be buried beneath my feet and the jewels would be in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so! And I don't even know how much money I have spend searching for them. This is just loss upon loss – the thief left with so much and I must spend as much to find the thief! There is no satisfaction and I can take

Shylock

. There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used 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 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.

[Enter a Servant]

Servant

. 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 matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[Exeunt Solanio, Salerio, and Servant]

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 hearsed 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 in luck stirring but what lights on my shoulders; no sighs but of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

no revenge. I have all the bad. It sits on my shoulder. No one feels bad about this but me, I sigh and I cry.

TUBAL

Other people also have bad luck. In Genoa I heard that Antonio...

SHYLOCK

What, what, what? Bad luck, bad luck?

TUBAL

That Antonio has lost a ship returning from Tripolis.

SHYLOCK

I thank God, I thank God! It is true, is it true?

TUBAL

I talked with some of the sailors that escaped from the wrecked ship.

SHYLOCK

I thank you good Tubal. Good news, good news! Ha, ha! You heard it in Genoa?

TUBAL

I heard Jessica spent 80 ducats in one night in Genoa.

SHYLOCK

You are sticking me with a knife. I shall never see my gold again. Eighty ducats in one night, eighty ducats!

TUBAL

Many of the people that Antonio owes money returned with me to Venice. They say Antonio has no choice but to become bankrupt.

SHYLOCK

I am very glad. I will persecute him, I will torture him. I am very glad.

TUBAL

One of them showed me a ring that he got from your daughter. He gave her a monkey for it.

SHYLOCK

No! You torture me Tubal. It was my engagement ring; I had it made for Leah before we were married. I would not have given it away for as many monkeys as you can find in the wild.

TUBAL

But Antonio is definitely bankrupt.

SHYLOCK

No, that is true, that is very true. Go, Tubal, pay an officer of the court and book him for two weeks from now. I will have Antonio's heart if he does not pay. If he is not in Venice anymore then I can make as much profit as I want with my business. Go Tubal, I will meet you at the synagogue, go Tubal, at our synagogue we will meet.

Off

Scene 2

Belmont. Portia's house

Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa and all their followers.

PORTIA

Please, I beg you, wait for a day or two before you choose, for if you choose wrong I will lose your company. Therefore control yourself and wait. Something in me tells me that I will not lose you (it is not love); and it is not hate for hate never gives good advice. But in case you don't understand myself, and since a girl can't explain things well she only has thoughts — I want to keep you here for two months before

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't true, is't true?

Tubal

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

Shylock

. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news!
ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

Tubal

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

Shylock

. Thou stickest 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, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.

[Exeunt]

Scene 2

Belmont. 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,— 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

you choose. I could teach you which casket you must choose, but I have sworn not to do it. I will never break my oath. You may lose me – and if you do choose wrong I may wish I had committed the sin and told you which casket to choose. I curse your eyes, I have looked into them and they have made me fall in love with you. Half of me belongs to you, the other half also. Everything that is my own is actually yours.

Oh these terrible times, that my father's will should prevent me from loving you. I am yours but not yours. If I lose you, should you choose the wrong casket, may the goddess of good luck go to hell, and not me. I talk too much, but I only do it to spend more time with you and to prevent you from choosing a casket.

BASSANIO

Let me choose, I am a nervous wreck. You torture me by making me wait.

PORTIA

I torture you, Bassanio? Then confess what other secret is hidden under your love.

BASSANIO

There is no secret, only uncertainty. I am afraid I will not be able to enjoy your love. There is as much friendship between snow and fire as there is secrets in my love.

PORTIA

You speak under torture and men who are tortured will say anything.

BASSANIO

If you promise that I will live then I will tell you everything.

PORTIA

Well then, tell everything and live.

BASSANIO

Tell everything and love. I love you, this is the truth. I hope this answer will satisfy my torturer. Take me to the caskets that I may choose my fortune.

PORTIA

Go then, I am locked in one of them. If you really love me, you will find me. Nerissa, all of you, stand a distance away. Let music play while he makes his choice, if he chooses wrong he can die like a swan. To make this image more proper, Bassanio will be the swan, my tears will be the river. He will drown and die in my tears.

If he wins, what will the music do then? The music will then play as if a new king is being crowned. The music will then play like the music that is played under a bridegroom's window on the morning of the wedding.

Look, there he goes. He seems so calm. He seems to have much more love than Hercules who only rescued the Princess of Troy, that was tied to a rock under water, because he would receive horses as a gift. I am like the princess tied to the rock. The other people are spectators. They only cry because of what they see.

Go Bassanio, you are like Hercules. If you live, then I live. I am much more upset than you who have to make the choice.

Portia sings a song while Bassanio makes his choice

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,
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
Put 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 prize 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 the 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 watery 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 much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much, much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.
[Music, whilst BASSANIO 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,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Tell me where love comes from, the heart or the head? How is it born, how is it fed? Answer, answer. You can see it in the eyes. Love only exists as long as it can see the object it loves. Let us all ring the funeral bell for love. I will begin – ding, dong, bell.

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 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?
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 purchased 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 threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness 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-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy! O love,
Be moderate; allay thy ecstasy,
In measure rein thy joy; scant this excess.
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! 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 to 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.
[Reads]
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 pleased with this And hold your fortune for
your bliss,

ALL

Ding, dong, bell

BASSANIO

What we see on the outside is not what we must expect to find on the inside – the world is still fooled with outward appearances.

In the court someone will plead for their lives with beautiful words and a beautiful voice, but on the inside they are corrupt.

In church a person with a serious face will seem perfect if he uses Bible verses as well but in the end he only covers up the ugliness on the inside.

There is no greater crime than to look like something that you are not. There are many cowards who have false hearts. If you cut open the bodies of Hercules en Mars you will find they had white livers. They were cowards. Cowards grow beards to make them look brave, those with the most make up on the outside are the greater cowards.

Many brides seem to have beautiful blonde hair, but after closer inspection it is not their own hair but wigs that they are wearing. When you remove the wigs they have ugly, dark hair.

Sometimes what seems to be the best is only a trick. Therefore, I will not choose gold, it may only be a cover for something bad. I will also not pick silver, the colour of a sword. You represent the fight between men, you threaten more than what you promise. But lead, your plain colour draws me to you. It makes my heart sing. I choose lead, may joy follow!

PORTIA

(Aside) How all emotions vanish into the air: doubt, fear, and jealousy. O love, be patient. Don't show how happy you are. Please make my joy and excitement less, I fear I may become ill.

BASSANIO (Opening the leaden casket)

What have I here?

A picture of Portia! The artist must have been some god to paint her so beautiful. Is her eyes moving? Do they only appear to be moving because my eyes are reflected in them? Here is her parted lips, her breath like sugar; like a sweet. Here in her hair the painter has placed a web of gold. This web traps the hearts of men tighter than insects in a web. But her eyes, how could he paint them like that? Having painted one of her eyes, I would have thought that that eye would have cast such a spell over both the painter's eyes, that he would have been unable to then paint her other eye. I am unable to describe this portrait and this portrait does not show how beautiful the real Portia is. Here's the note which contains and sums up my fortune:

(Reads)

You that don't choose by what you see, may you always be so lucky and make the right choice. Since you got this, be happy and don't look for another. If you are satisfied with this, and wants this to be your joy, turn to the lady and claim

her with a kiss.

Oh, nice note. Beautiful Lady, with your permission, I come by note, to give and receive. I am like one who has won a prize. I hear applause but I am not sure if that is for me or not. I am glad I have won you, but I am not sure if you will have me.

PORTIA

Bassanio, what you see is what you get. I don't wish to get anything better than you. I wish however that I can be twenty times better for you, no a thousand times better, ten thousand times more rich, just so that you will appreciate me. I may have good manners, beauty, and enough friends, but if you add everything together then I am just an unpractised girl. I am not old yet, and I can learn new things. I am happy to give to you my gentle spirit to be ordered by you. You may order me like a governor, king or lord.

I once was the master of this big house, all these servants, Queen of myself but now this house, these servants, and myself belongs to you. I give them to you with this ring. If you lose, take off or give this ring away it will be a sign that our love is over.

BASSANIO

Madam, you have taken away my words. My blood is rushing through my veins expressing my love for you. I am like a crowd that heard a lovely speech from their prince and now there is excitement in the crowd. The ring will only leave my finger when I am dead.

NERISSA

My lord and lady we are so happy for you.

GRATIANO

Bassanio and Lady Portia, I wish you all the joy. I only ask permission to get married when you get married.

BASSANIO

Honestly Gratiano, where will you get a wife?

GRATIANO

You got me one Bassanio. I can find a wife as easily as you. You saw Portia, I saw her servant. You loved Portia, I love

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 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 these pearls 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 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: 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: 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 loved, I loved for intermission.
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,

the maid. It was just as difficult for me to wait as it was for you. Your fortune were determined by the caskets and so did mine. I did my best to make Nerissa fall in love with me and she said she would marry me only if you chose the right casket.

PORTIA

Is this true Nerissa?

NERISSA

It is Madam, if it pleases you.

BASSANIO

And you Gratiano, are you sincere?

GRATIANO

Yes

BASSANIO

Our feast will also be in honour of your marriage.

GRATIANO

We'll bet a thousand ducats on who will have the first son!

NERISSA

What, make a bet?

GRATIANO

No, we will never do that. Who comes here? It is Lorenzo and Jessica and Salerio, our old friend.

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salerio, a messenger from Venice)

BASSANIO

Welcome Lorenzo and Salerio. If my newly acquired status does not have power yet, with your permission Portia, I welcome them.

PORTIA

I also welcome them.

LORENZO

Thank you. It was not my purpose to see you, but I met Salerio on the way and he convinced me to come along.

SALERIO

I did, and I have a reason. Mr Antonio has written a letter to you.

(He gives Bassanio a letter)

BASSANIO

Before I open this letter, please tell me how Antonio is.

SALERIO

Not sick, unless the illness is in his mind. His letter will show you how he is.

(Bassanio opens the letter)

GRATIANO

Nerissa, greet Jessica over there. She is so alone. Let us shake hands Salerio. What is the news from Venice? How is Antonio? I know he will be glad to hear about our success. We have hit the jackpot.

SALERIO

I hope you won the jackpot he lost.

And sweating until 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
Achieved her mistress.

Portia

. . . Is this true, Nerissa?

Nerissa

. . . Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bassanio

. . . And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gratiano

. . . Yes, faith, my lord.

Bassanio

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

Gratiano

. . . 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 interest 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.

Gratiano

. . . Nerissa, cheer yon 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 must be some terrible news in that letter. Bassanio is white in his face. Some dear friend must be dead, nothing else in the world can make you face lose colour that fast. With permission Bassanio, I am half of you and I must see what is written in that letter.

BASSANIO

Oh Portia, in this letter is the most unpleasant news that was ever written on paper. When I first met you, I told you all my wealth ran in my veins. I was actually bragging when I told you I had no money, I have less than no money. I borrowed money from a friend to come here, and this friend endangered his life to lend me the money. This paper is the body of my friend, and every word in the letter is a gaping wound from which blood flows. But is it true Salerio? Has all his ships sunk? Did not one reach its destination? From Tripolis, Mexico, England, Lisbon, Barbary and India, not one ship escaped the dangerous rocks?

SALERIO

Not one, my lord. Besides it seems that even if he has the money to pay the Jew, the Jew would not take the money. I never knew a man as greedy as that Jew. He bothers the Governor morning, noon and night that he wants justice or the freedom of Venice will be lost. Twenty merchants, the governor and the most important men in Venice have tried to convince him not to take Antonio's flesh but they did not succeed. The Jew wants the flesh like the contract states.

JESSICA

When I was still living there, I heard him swear to Tubal and Chus, that he would rather have Antonio's flesh than twenty times the sum he lend him. And I know, if the law does not stop him, Antonio will have a difficult time.

PORTIA

Is it your close friend who is in this trouble?

BASSANIO

He is my dearest friend, the kindest, best-natured, well-mannered man you will ever find. The spirit of honour which characterised the ancient Romans, is more evident in Antonio than in any man living in Italy today.

PORTIA

How much does he owe the Jew?

BASSANIO

Three thousand ducats on my behalf.

PORTIA

What, no more? Pay him six thousand ducats and destroy the bond. Double six thousand and then three times that, before your friend should lose a hair on your behalf. First go with me

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 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 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,
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,

to church so that we can be married. Then go to Venice to your friend. You will not sleep with me while you are so worried about your friend. In the meantime, Nerissa and I will live like widows. Come, let's go for you will leave on your wedding day. Let's welcome your friends, show some happy faces. Since you have overcome great difficulties to get me, I will love you dearly. Tell me what is written in your friend's letter.

BASSANIO

(Reads)

Dear Bassanio

All my ships have wrecked, my creditors demand payment and I have almost no money. I could not pay the Jew in time. I must now pay it with my flesh and since I will not survive the cutting of flesh I clear all debts between you and me. I only have one wish and that is that I may see you at my death. Only if you can come. If your love for me does not persuade you to come, don't come because of the letter.

PORTIA

O love, quickly finish all your business and go.

BASSANIO

I will not sleep or rest until I have returned to you. I will do anything I can to save Antonio.

Exit all

Scene 3 (A street in Venice)

Enter Shylock the Jew and Solanio, Antonio and the jailer.

SHYLOCK

Jailer, guard him well. Don't ask me for mercy. This is the fool who lends out money without asking interest. Lock him up

ANTONIO

Listen to me Shylock.

SHYLOCK

I will have what the contract say. Don't say anything about the contract. I have sworn an oath that I will have this contract fulfilled. You called me dog without reason. Since I am a dog, beware of my teeth. The Governor will give me justice. You good for nothing jailer, did you bring him to me for this?

ANTONIO

Please, listen to me.

SHYLOCK

The contract. I will not listen to you. I will have the contract, so don't speak anymore. You will not make a fool of me to shake my head and say shame. I will not listen to you Christians. Don't follow me. No more speaking. I will have the contract.

Exit

SOLANIO

He is the most pitiless dog that has ever lived among men.

ANTONIO

Leave him alone. I will not follow him anymore with my useless prayers. He wants to kill me. I know why: I have often paid the debts of people that could not pay him and he lost a lot of profit. He hates me.

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 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!

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, No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

[Exeunt]

Scene 3 (A street in Venice)

[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-eyed 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;

SOLANIO

I am sure the governor will never let his contract stand up in court.

ANTONIO

The governor can not stop the law from taking its course. If this contract is not allowed in court, it will influence the whole law of Venice as well as the trading going on here. There are so many countries doing business in Venice, the law has to be strong. Don't worry, these things have tired me out so much that I don't think I will have a pound of flesh that the Jew can cut off. Come Jailer, to jail. I pray God, please let Bassanio come to see me pay his debt. I don't care for the rest.

Scene 4 (Portia's house, Belmont)

Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica and Balthazar, a male servant to Portia

LORENZO

Madam, you have a good understanding of the godly friendship that exists between men and that is why you allowed Bassanio to go. If you knew what kind of man Antonio was and how much Antonio and Bassanio loved each other, you would be very proud of what you have done.

PORTIA

I never ever felt bad about doing something good and I won't start now. If two people love each other equally they must be alike in appearance, manners or beliefs. It makes me think that since Bassanio loves Antonio so much, Antonio must be almost like Bassanio. If it is so, then I haven't spend a lot of money to help Antonio. It almost sounds as if I am praising myself but it is not so. Please listen to this, I leave my household and animals in your hands, manage it for me please while I am away. I have made a promise to God that I will live in prayer until Bassanio returns therefore Nerissa and I are leaving for a monastery two miles from here. Please say that you will look after my house.

LORENZO

Madam, I will gladly do it.

PORTIA

My people know already where I am going and they also know that you and Jessica will be in charge. May all go well with

you until we return.

LORENZO

May you be happy there where you are going to be.

JESSICA

Therefore he hates me.

Solanio

. . . I am sure the duke 1735
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; 1740
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. 1745
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not!

[Exeunt]

Scene 4 (Portia's house, Belmont)

[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 bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery!
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. 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 all fair commands.

Portia

. . . My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.

Lorenzo

. . . Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on
you!

Jessica

I wish your Ladyship well.

PORTIA

Thank you for all your wishes and I return the same wishes to you. Good bye Jessica.

Exit Jessica and Lorenzo

Now Balthazar,

You have always been honest and trustworthy. I hope you are still like that. Take this letter and travel very quickly to Padua. Give this letter in the hands of my cousin, Doctor Bellario, and take whatever notes and clothes he gives you. Bring them with unimagined speed to the passenger boat that travels between Belmont and Venice. Don't waste any time by speaking but go or I will be there before you.

BALTHAZAR

Madam I will go quickly.

Exit

PORTIA

Come on Nerissa, I have work to. You don't know anything about it yet. We will see our husbands before they think they see us.

NERISSA

Will they see us?

PORTIA

They will Nerissa, be we will be wearing such strange clothes that they will think we are who we are not. I bet you that when we are dressed like men I will be the best looking one, I will wear my knife like a brave man and use a tone of voice that is between that of a man and a boy. I will take a few steps in a manly way, and speak a few words as if I am bragging and I will tell small lies of how young ladies ran after me. I would say I could not return the love of these ladies and they all died. I will then pretend I feel sorry that I have killed them. I will tell twenty lies and all the men will swear that I did not go school for more than twelve years. I have in my mind a thousand tricks that I can play on bragging men, and I will get a chance to practise them.

NERISSA

Are we going to turn into men?

PORTIA

What a question? I will tell all my plans to you as we travel. The coach waits for us at the gate. We must hurry because we must travel more than twenty miles today.

Exit

Scene 5 (The same)

Enter Launcelot the Clown and Jessica

LAUNCELOT

I fear you Jessica. You are going to pay for the sins that your father commit. I have always be straight forward with you, and I am again. Although I think you are doomed, cheer up! You have some hope.

JESSICA

And what is that hope?

LAUNCELOT

You may hope that Shylock is not your real father.

JESSICA

. . . I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Portia

. . . I thank you for your wish, and am well

pleased

To wish it back on you: fare you well Jessica.

[Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO]

Now, Balthazar,

As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the tranect, 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 killed them;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand 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]

What kind of hope is that? If Shylock is not my father then I will pay for the sins of my mother.

LAUNCELOT

True. You are doomed by your mother and your father. You cannot escape.

JESSICA

I will be saved by my husband. He has made me a Christian.

LAUNCELOT

Well then he is to blame. There are enough Christians in the world. If he goes around and make more Christians the price of pork will go up and one of these days there won't be any bacon to buy. Everybody will be eating pork.

Enter Lorenzo

JESSICA

I will tell my husband what you said Launcelot.

LORENZO

I will become jealous if you talk to my wife so much Launcelot.

JESSICA

Don't worry Lorenzo, we just had a quarrel. Launcelot and I are out. He tells me there is no forgiveness for me in heaven because I am a Jew's daughter. He also says you are not a good member of the Chamber of Business because you raise the price of pork by converting people to become Christians.

LORENZO

It would be better if people tried to be quiet than to sound witty. Only parrots should be praised for talking. Go in servant and tell them to prepare for dinner.

LAUNCELOT

They are ready sir. They all have stomachs..

LORENZO

How funny you are. Tell them to prepare dinner.

LAUNCELOT

That has also been done. They must just 'cover' the table.

LORENZO

Will you do it?

LAUNCELOT

No sir, not me. I know what I may do and what not.

LORENZO

More jokes. In plain English, go to the servants, tell them to cover the table, serve the meat and we will come and eat.

LAUNCELOT

The table will be served, the meat shall be covered and for you to come to dinner, do as you please.

Exit Launcelot

LORENZO

How Launcelot plays around with words. There are many men of superior rank who should know better but they also play with words like Launcelot.

But how are you Jessica? How do you like Bassanio's new wife?

JESSICA

It is very fitting that Bassanio lift such a good life. He is now rewarded with Portia and she is excellent. By marrying Portia he has found heaven on earth. If two gods took a bet on a game, and one of them chose Portia as his stake, the bet would be unfair because it would be impossible for the other to find another woman equal to Portia to stake against her.

LORENZO

What Portia is to Bassanio, that is what I am to you.

JESSICA

Why don't you ask my opinion about that?

LORENZO

I will soon. But let's go to dinner first.

JESSICA

No, let me praise you while I am still hungry.

LORENZO

No please. Let us talk about it at the table. Then I will be able to digest whatever you say.

JESSICA

I will praise you greatly.

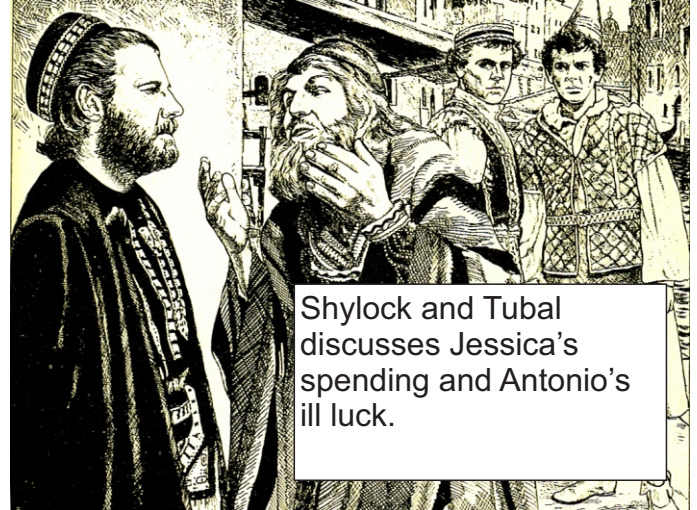
Exit



Rumours of tremendous shipwrecks

Act 3 Scene 1

1. What news has Salerio heard on the Rialto?
2. What is the Rialto?
3. What does Shylock accuse Salerio and Solanio of?
4. What does Shylock want to do with Antonio's flesh?
5. Why is Shylock also human?
6. What news did Tubal bring of Jessica?
7. Why is it terrible for Shylock to hear what Jessica did with a ring?
8. What news comforts Shylock?



Portia does not want Bassanio to choose a casket

Act 3 Scene 2

1. Why does Portia want Bassanio to wait before he chooses a casket?
2. What does Bassanio mean when he says he lives upon the rack?
3. Why does Bassanio want music to play when Bassanio is making his choice?
4. Why did Bassanio choose the lead casket?
5. How did Bassanio have to claim Portia?
6. What was Gratiano doing while Bassanio was wooing Portia?
7. What news does Bassanio receive from Venice?
8. What truth does Bassanio reveal to Portia?
9. How much money does Portia give Bassanio to pay Shylock?
10. Portia gave Bassanio a ring. What did he have to do with that ring?



This is how you are tortured if you are "upon" the rack. An expression Bassanio used to describe how he feels if he cannot choose.

Portia enters monastery

Antonio jailed

Act 3 Scene 3

1. What is Antonio trying to tell Shylock?
2. Why will Shylock not listen to Antonio?
3. Why does Shylock hate Antonio?
4. Why will the Duke not let Antonio go free?

Act 3 Scene 4

1. What does Portia tell Lorenzo about where she is going?
2. What letter does Portia send to Dr. Bellario?
3. Why would Portia's and Nerissa's husbands not recognise them?



ACT IV

Venice, A court of Justice

Enter the Duke, Antonio, Bassanio, Salerio, Gratiano and others.

DUKE

Is Antonio here?

ANTONIO

I am here your Honour.

DUKE

I am very sorry for you Antonio. You have to defend yourself against a person who is as hard a stone. He is inhuman, unable to show any pity, and he does not have a drop of pity or forgiveness in him.

ANTONIO

I heard that your honour has gone through a lot of trouble to make sure what he asks of me is legal. But, since he is very stubborn and there is no way that the law can help I am ready to face his anger with calmness. I will suffer whatever he has in store for me with quietness.

DUKE

Go, call the Jew into the courtroom.

SALERIO

He is already at the door your Honour. He is coming.
Enter Shylock.

DUKE

Make room for the man. Let him come and stand in front of us. Shylock, everybody thinks, me included, that you are just pretending that you are going to take Antonio's flesh, because you want to stress him. At the last minute you will show mercy and forgive Antonio his debt. Where you now want to take the man's flesh, you will later say you don't want the flesh, and you will also say that you don't even want to take the money. You will feel sorry for Antonio because he experienced so much trouble lately. Is this what you are going to do. Answer me Jew!

SHYLOCK

I have told your Honour what I want. I have sworn on the Holy Sabbath that I will have the flesh as it is written in the bond. If you don't want to give it to me, may your city be in danger of losing its freedom because you are unfair. You may wonder why I want the flesh rather than the 3000 ducats. I will not answer you. I say I want the flesh because I feel like it. If there is a rat in my house and I want to pay 10 000 ducats to have it removed. Who can stop me? Does that answer your question? There are some men who don't like pigs, there are some men who get angry when they see a cat, other men can't hold their urine when they hear bagpipes play. We have strange moods and they like strange things. Now to answer your question: As there is no reason why men hate pigs and cats. why some men can't stand to listen to bagpipes, so I can give you no reason why I want the flesh. All I know is that I hate Antonio and because I have him, I want the flesh, which is worth nothing instead of the money. Is that enough of an answer for you?

ACT IV

Venice. A court of Justice

[Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others]

Duke

. . . What, is Antonio here?

Antonio

. . . Ready, so please your grace.

Duke

. . . 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

. . . Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Salerio

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

[Enter SHYLOCK]

Duke

. . . Make room, and let him stand before our
face.
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;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
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 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;

BASSANIO

That is not an answer! You have no feelings, there is no reason to excuse your cruelty.

SHYLOCK

I am nor here to answer you nicely.

BASSANIO

Do all men kill the things they love?

SHYLOCK

Do men hate the things they don't kill?

BASSANIO

Someone should not be hated for his first offence.

SHYLOCK

Would you let a snake bite you twice?

ANTONIO

Please Bassanio, don't argue with the Jew. You might as well stand on the beach and tell the waves no to be that high. You might as well ask a wolf why he killed a little lamb or you might as well forbid the pine trees in the mountain to move when the wind blows. You will never be able to get through to his hard Jewish heart. Nothing can change his mind. I beg you, don't argue anymore, don't offer him anything. Let the court make a decision and let the Jew have his wish. Let us get this over with.

BASSANIO

Shylock I will give you 6000 ducats instead of 3000.

SHYLOCK

If you take 6000 ducats and multiply each of the 6000 ducats with six, then I won't take the money. I want my bond.

DUKE

How can you hope for mercy and forgiveness if you don't give any?

SHYLOCK

Who must I be afraid of, I am not doing anything wrong. Many of you have slaves that you have bought, and you let them live like your donkeys and your dogs, because they are slaves and belong to you. Should I tell you to set your slaves free and let them marry your daughters. Why do they have to work so hard. Let them sleep in your won beds, and give them the same food to eat that you eat. You will tell me that the slaves belong to you and you can do with them what you want. I am telling you now: The pound of flesh which I ask of Antonio is mine. I will have it! I bought it with my own money. If you don't give it to me, may your law be cursed. There is no law in Venice that says I am wrong. I want what is legally mine. Threat me according to the law. Tell me: Shall I have the flesh?

DUKE

I have the power to give sentence. I am however waiting for Bellario. He is a well educated lawyer. I have sent for him to come and try this case, and he is supposed to come today.

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.

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

. What judgment shall I dread, doing
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

Duke

. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering
none? 2020

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 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

. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,

SALERIO

Your honour, there is a young man outside, a messenger who says he is here with letters from Bellario. He has just come from Padua.

DUKE

Bring me the letters. Call the messenger.

BASSANIO

Cheer up Antonio. There still is some hope. The Jew can have my flesh, bones, blood and everything before I will allow him to spill one drop of your blood.

ANTONIO

I have been chosed to die. I am like a spoiled fruit, falling from a tree. My time has come to die. The only thing you will be useful for now Bassanio is to write a message for my gravestone.

Enter Nerissa, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

DUKE

Do you come from Bellario in Padua?

NERISSA

I do your Honour. He sends you his greetings. She gives him a letter.

BASSANIO (to Shylock)

Why are you sharpening your knife so keenly?

SHYLOCK

To cut the flesh from that bankrupt over there.

GRATIANO

You are not sharpening your knife on the sole of your shoe, but on your soul, Jew! You are sharpening that knife, but no metal can ever be as sharp as your hatred for Antonio. Can no prayers reach your heart?

SHYLOCK

No prayers that you are clever enough to pray.

GRATIANO

Damn you, you hateful dog, it's unfair that you should be alive. You make me doubt my own religion. You almost make me believe what Pythagoras says: that the souls of animals live in men. You have the same attitude as a wolf that was killed for killing humans. Your desires are wolfish, bloody and without any human kindness.

SHYLOCK

You can say whatever you want to say but you cannot change what is written in this bond. You are just hurting your lungs when you scream like this. It is better to say nothing. I stand here within the law. It is on my side.

DUKE

This letter is from Bellario. He recommends a young lawyer that he has sent here. Where is the young man?

NERISSA

He is waiting outside for your answer on whether you would admit him.

DUKE

Let him come in by all means. Three or four of you, go fetch him and lead him into the courtroom. In the meantime the clerk will read you Bellario's letter.

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.

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

. 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

. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
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, inexecrable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost makest me waver in my faith
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved 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

. 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

. 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

Your Honour

I write this letter to tell you that I am very ill. When your messenger arrived with your request there was a young lawyer here, visiting from Rome. His name is Balthazar. I told him about the case and the argument between the Jew and Antonio the merchant. We studied many books for an answer. I have given him my opinion of the case, and he will add his won cleverness to it. He is very good, and he has agreed to come to you and do the case for you. Don't let his young age fool you. I have never known such a young person with so much knowledge. I know you will accept him and your trial will prove how bright he is.

Enter Portia, dressed as a Lawyer

DUKE

You heard what Bellario wrote. Here is the lawyer. Give me your hand. Do you come from Bellario?

PORTIA

I do your Honour.

DUKE

You are welcome. Take your place. Are you familiar with the contents of the case that you have to argue?

PORTIA

I am thoroughly informed about the situation. Who is the merchant and who is the Jew?

DUKE

Antonio and old Shylock, stand forward.

PORTIA

Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK

Yes, it is my name.

PORTIA

This is a very strange bond that you made with Antonio. Yet, in all the laws of Venice, there is not one that says you may not ask for it. The Venetian law cannot stop you and therefore we must go on.

(To Antonio) You are the one that Shylock will hurt?

ANTONIO

Yes, so he says

PORTIA

Did you sign this bond?

ANTONIO

I did.

PORTIA

Then you must show him mercy.

SHYLOCK

Why must I show him mercy? Tell me?

PORTIA

Mercy does not have to be forced from you. Mercy is as gentle as rain that falls from heaven. Mercy is twice blessed. It is good for the person who gives mercy and it is good for the person who receives mercy. Mercy is an example of strength and might. A king that shows mercy is more important than one who can't show mercy. Mercy is a quality that comes directly from God. Jew, I want you to think about this. If you decide to cut Antonio's flesh, not one of us will be saved because we all allowed Antonio to die. If you show mercy to Antonio, and don't kill him, you are actually saving us all. Please you have to show mercy, if you don't the court

Clerk

. [Reads]

Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my 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.

Duke

. You hear the learned Bellario, what he writes: And here, I take it, is the doctor come.
[Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws]
Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

Portia

. I did, my lord.

Duke

. You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the 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?

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 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,

of Venice can do nothing else but to give you a pound of Anotio's flesh.

SHYLOCK

I have made a promise to heaven. I want justice. I want the penalty he has to pay for not paying me back. I want the pound of flesh.

PORTIA

Is he not able to pay back the money?

BASSANIO

Yes, he can pay it back. Here, I give him the money even twice the amount. If that is not enough, I will pay it ten times over. I will give him my hands, my head, my heart. if that is not enough then it is clear that Shylock does not want justice, he wants to hurt Antonio. I plead with you, find some law that will stop that devil from hurting this innocent man.

PORTIA

I cannot help you. There is no law in Venice that can change that bond. If we change this bond then every other bond will be changed and everything will be in chaos. I cannot change the law.

SHYLOCK

This lawyer is like a second Daniel. He is as young and as wise as Daniel.

PORTIA

Please, let me look at the bond.

SHYLOCK

Her it is, most excellent lawyer.

PORTIA

Shylock, they offer you three times the money.

SHYLOCK

A promise is a promise. I have made a promise in heaven. Shall I defy my religion and harm my soul? No, not even for Venice.

PORTIA

Well then, this bond is forfeit. It was not paid in time. The Jew may claim his pound of flesh, to be cut off nearest the Merchant's heart. Be merciful Shylock, take three times the money. Order me to tear up the bond.

SHYLOCK

You can tear it after I have my pound of flesh. You seem to know the law. I order you, give me the flesh. There is not a man in this courtroom that can change my mind. I stand here on my bond.

ANTONIO

Please, I beg you. Give him what he want.

PORTIA

Well then, so it must be. You must prepare your chest for his knife...

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.

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

. . . Here 'tis, 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.

Shylock

. . . When it is paid according to the tenor.
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

Oh noble judge! Oh excellent young man!

PORTIA

It seems as if this bond is legal. He has right to take the pound of flesh. It is legal.

SHYLOCK

Wonderful. I knew it. You are very wise. You are much wiser than you look.

PORTIA

Unbutton your shirt Antonio

SHYLOCK

Yes, his chest. The bond says so, does it not judge? "Nearest his heart" are the words.

PORTIA

It is like you say. Is there a scale here to weigh the flesh?

SHYLOCK

I have them ready.

PORTIA

Shylock, pay a surgeon to be near when you cut the flesh so that he can stop Antonio from bleeding to death when you cut the flesh.

SHYLOCK

Does the bond say I must have a surgeon here?

PORTIA

It does not say so, so what? Do it for charity.

SHYLOCK

I cannot find it anywhere in the bond.

PORTIA

You Merchant, do you have anything to say?

ANTONIO

Very little. I am well prepared for this moment. Bassanio, give me your hand. Good bye, don't cry because this is happening to me because of you. I am actually fortunate to die. I have no money left so I might as well die. I don't have to grow old poor now. Tell your wife about me. Tell her how I died. Tell her how much I loved you. When you tell her the story let her decide whether I have loved you or not. All you must be sorry about is the fact that you are losing a friend. If the Jew cuts too deep, I will die.

BASSANIO

Antonio, I am married to a lovely wife. I love her like I love life. You are more important to me than life or my wife. I would sacrifice everything to deliver you from Shylock.

PORTIA

I am sure that if your wife hears this she will not be impressed.

GRATIANO

I also have a wife whom I love very much. I would rather see her dead in heaven so that she can speak to some angel to

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?

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: 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 lingering 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 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 presently 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, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this curish Jew.

change Antonio's fate, than to see Antonio hurt.

NERISSA

It is a good thing you say this behind her back because she would definitely not like what you say.

SHYLOCK

This is what Christian husbands are like. I have a daughter. I would rather have her marry on of Barrabas's children than to see her marry a Christian. Please, we are wasting time. The sentence.

PORTIA

A pound of that Merchant's flesh is yours. The court gives it to you.

SHYLOCK

Most honourable judge

PORTIA

You must cut the flesh from his chest. The law allows it and the court gives it to you.

SHYLOCK

Excellent! A sentence! Come, prepare yourself Antonio

Shylock comes closer to cut the flesh

PORTIA

Before you cut, there is something else. This bond gives you now blood. The words are clearly a pound of flesh. Take your bond, take your pound of flesh, but if you shed one drop of Christian blood when you cut the flesh, your land and possessions will be confiscated according to the laws of Venice. The state will take all.

GRATIANO

A great lawyer! Look Jew, a smart lawyer!

SHYLOCK

Is that a law?

PORTIA

Yes. Since you want justice you will get all justice.

GRATIANO

A great lawyer! Look Jew, a smart lawyer!

SHYLOCK

I will take the money. Pay the bond three times and the Christian can go.

BASSANIO

Here is the money.

PORTIA

Wait! The Jew shall have all justice. Wait, he shall have nothing but the flesh.

GRATIANO

A great lawyer!! Look Jew, a smart lawyer!

PORTIA

Therefore, Shylock, prepare to cut off the flesh. But don't shed any blood. Also, don't cut more or less than a pound of flesh. If you take more than a pound or less than a pound, if it differs in the smallest degree, you will die and your possessions will be confiscated.

Nerissa

. . . 'Tis well you offer it behind her back;
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

Shylock

. . . These be the Christian husbands. 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.

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 assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

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 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
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 great lawyer! Look Jew, a smart lawyer! A second Daniel. Thank you for teaching me that word. Now look who is in trouble.

PORTIA

Why do you wait Jew? Take the flesh.

SHYLOCK

Give me my three thousand ducats and let me go.

BASSANIO

Here it is. I have it ready.

PORTIA

He has refused the money in front of everybody. He will have nothing but justice and his bond.

GRATIANO

A great lawyer! Look Jew, a smart lawyer. A second Daniel. Thank you for teaching me that word. Now look who is in trouble.

SHYLOCK

Can't I even have my money?

PORTIA

You will have nothing but the flesh. You can take it and destroy yourself in the process, Jew.

SHYLOCK

Why then, let him enjoy it with the devil. I will not stay here any longer.

PORTIA

Wait Jew! The law has something else against you. It is written in the laws of Venice that if it can be proved that a foreigner tried to take the life of a Venetian, directly or indirectly, that the Venetian can have half his goods and the state the other half. The offender must then beg for his own life from the Duke, because the Duke has the right to kill him. I say that you tried to kill Antonio and that you have broken this law. I have proven it through the proceedings in this court that indirectly and directly you have planned to kill Antonio therefore your possessions will be confiscated. Kneel before the Duke and beg for your life.

GRATIANO

Beg that you may have permission to hang yourself. And yet, since all your money is going to the state you won't have any left to buy a rope to hang yourself with therefore the state must even pay for you hanging.

DUKE

To show you how different we are in character, I give you your life before you ask for it. Half of your wealth will go to Antonio the other half will come to the state. If you are very humble, the state may not take your half but only give you a fine.

PORTIA

The state may ask for a fine, but Antonio must get half of Shylock's possessions.

SHYLOCK

No, take my life and everything! Don't forgive me! If you take my wealth, the place where I live, then you take the very things that are keeping me alive. You are taking my life if you are taking my money.

PORTIA

What mercy can you show him Antonio?

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 refused it in the open court:
He shall have merely justice and his bond.

Gratiano

. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shylock

. Shall I not have barely my principal?

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 rehearsed.
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

. 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 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.

GRATIANO

A free rope around his neck, nothing else, I beg you.

ANTONIO

If the Duke agrees, please don't give Shylock a fine for half of his possessions. I am satisfied, if you would let me use half of Shylock's possessions. When Shylock dies, I will give it to the man who married his daughter. I also want two more things. He must become a Christian. He must also write out a contract in which he states that Lorenzo and Jessica inherit all his possessions when he dies.

DUKE

He will do this, if he does not, I will take back all my mercy and he will be killed.

PORTIA

Are you satisfied, Jew?

SHYLOCK

I am satisfied.

PORTIA

Clerk, let us draw up the agreement.

SHYLOCK

Please, give me permission to go home. I don't feel well. Send the documents after me, and I will sign it.

DUKE

You may leave, but remember to sign the documents.

GRATIANO

When we baptise you as a Christian, you must have two witnesses. Had I been the judge, I would have asked for ten more, that will make them twelve.

Twelve people are needed in the jury for a murder trial. I would have tried you for murder before I baptised you, then I would have taken you to be hanged.

Shylock off

DUKE

Sire, please come home with me for dinner.

PORTIA

Please forgive me, but I must refuse the invitation. I must go to Padua tonight, and I have to leave right now.

DUKE

I am sorry that you are not free to stay. Antonio, thank this gentleman properly for in my mind you owe him your life.

The Duke and followers off

BASSANIO

Most worthy gentleman, my friend and I have been saved from a terrible problem by your wisdom. I had to give the Jew 3000 ducats. I now give the 3000 ducats to you.

ANTONIO

We will be in your debt forever, we offer you our love and service forever.

PORTIA

He that is satisfied with what he has done is well paid. I, in setting you free, am very satisfied and therefore I consider myself well paid. I did not do this to receive any money. I do ask you however that you will know me when you see me again.

BASSANIO

Dear sir, I must force you to take at least something from us that will remind you of us, not as payment. Just do me two favours, don't refuse my request and forgive me for forcing you.

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.

[Exit SHYLOCK]

Duke

. . . 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

. . . 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 and his train]

Bassanio

. . . Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope 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 a fee: grant me two things, I pray you,
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

PORTIA

You are very persistent therefore I will accept. Give me your gloves; I will wear them and think of you.

Bassanio takes off his gloves

And to prove that you love me, I will take this ring from you. Don't pull away your hand, I will take nothing more and if you love me you will not refuse me the ring.

BASSANIO

This ring, dear sir, is nothing, it is worthless and unimportant. I will not degrade myself by giving it to you.

PORTIA

I will have nothing else but the ring and now I think I am even beginning to like the ring.

BASSANIO

This ring is more important to me than it is valuable. I will find you the most exclusive ring in Venice. I will buy you the most expensive ring in Venice, please, don't ask me for this ring.

PORTIA

I see you are very quick to make offers. First you teach me to beg for something and now I think you are teaching me how a beggar should be answered.

BASSANIO

Dear Sir. My wife gave me this ring and she made me promise to always keep it on my finger. I may not sell or lose it.

PORTIA

That excuse has helped many men to keep the gifts they have promised others. If your wife is not crazy, she will know that I deserve this ring with what I have done. She would not hate you forever. Well, peace be with you.

Portia and Nerissa off.

ANTONIO

Bassanio, give him the ring. I will explain to your wife what has done to deserve it and it will be enough to free you from that promise you made.

BASSANIO

Go Gratiano, run after the man and give him the ring. Bring him to Antonio's house for dinner.

The two of us will have dinner and tomorrow morning we will return as fast as we can, to Belmont. Come Antonio.

SCENE 2 (A street in Venice)

Enter Portia and Nerissa, disguised as before.

PORTIA

find out where the house of the Jew is and give him this contract. Let him sign it. We will leave tonight. We will be home a day before our husbands Lorenzo will be very happy about this contract.

Enter Gratiano

GRATIANO

Good sir, I have found you. My lord Bassanio has been advised to send you this ring. He also asks you to join him for

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.

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. 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 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] ---.

Act IV, Scene 2

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:

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

dinner tonight.

PORTIA

I cannot join him for dinner. I accept this ring very gladly. Please tell him so. Please show my clerk where Shylock's house is.

GRATIANO

I will do so.

NERISSA

Sir, may I speak privately with you. (*Aside to Portia*) I am going to see if I can get my husband's ring. I also made him swear to keep it forever.

PORTIA

(*Aside to Nerissa*) You may. We will complain loudly when they say that they gave the rings to men. We will say they are lying. Go, be quick. You know where I will wait for you.

NERISSA

Come sir, please show me where the house is.
Exeunt

. 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

. *[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 knowist where I will tarry.

Nerissa

. Come, good sir, will you show me to this
house?
[Exeunt]

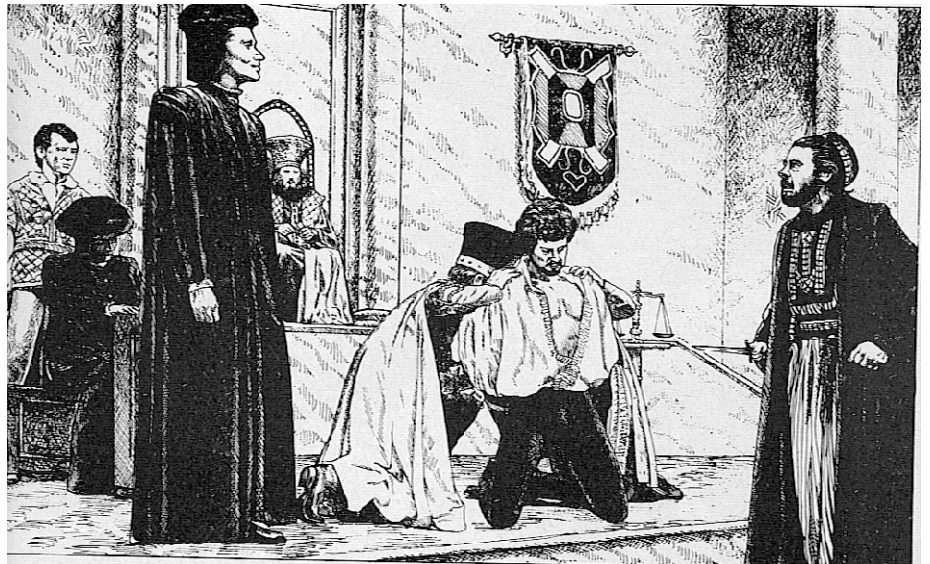
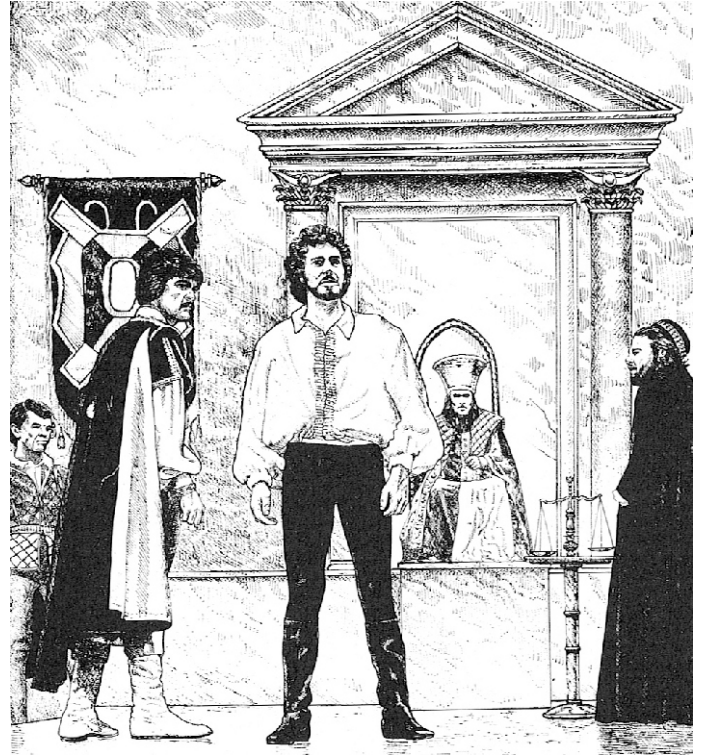
Court News

Shylock wants Antonio's heart

1. Why is the Duke sorry for Antonio?
 2. What has the Duke been trying to do for Antonio?
 3. Why does the Duke think Shylock is so cruel?
 4. Why does Shylock insist on having the flesh?
 5. With what does Shylock threaten the Duke if his bond is not honoured?
 6. Why is it useless to argue with the Jew, according to Antonio?
 7. Why does Shylock think he is right when he insists on having the flesh rather than the money?
 8. Who is the Duke waiting for before he gives his decision?
 9. How does Gratiano react when he sees Shylock sharpening his knife?
 10. Why is Shylock not bothered by Gratiano's tirade?
 11. Who is the young lawyer that arrives at the court?
 12. Why must Shylock show Antonio some mercy, according to Portia?
- Why does Shylock call Portia a second Daniel?

Young lawyer says Shylock must cut

14. How many chances does Portia give Shylock to take the money?
15. Why doesn't Shylock want a doctor present when he cuts Antonio?
16. Why must Shylock wait before he cuts?
17. What will Bassanio sacrifice to save Antonio's life?
18. Why does Gratiano wish his wife is dead?
19. Why does Shylock decide to take the money?
20. Why won't Portia give him the money?
21. Why does Portia insist that Shylock may only have the flesh?
22. Why can't Shylock leave without taking the flesh or the money?
23. How does the Duke show his character differs from Shylock's?
24. How does Antonio react to the turn of events?
25. Why does Bassanio refuse to give the young lawyer his ring?
26. Why does Bassanio give the young lawyer his ring in the end?
27. What is Nerissa going to try and get from Gratiano?



Top: Antonio appears in court with Shylock to his right.

Bottom: Antonio prepares his bosom so that the Jew may cut the flesh from near his heart. Note the scales in the background ready to weigh the flesh.

Act V, Scene 1

Belmont. Avenue to PORTIA'S house.

[Enter LORENZO and JESSICA]

Lorenzo

· · The moon shines bright: on a night like this when
the wind gently breezed through the trees, on a night like
this, Troilus climbed the Troyan walls. He gave his heart
to Cressid.

Jessica

· · On a night like this, Thisbe ran across the dew. She
saw the shadow of a lion and ran away disappointed.

Lorenzo

· · On a night like this, did Dido waited for her
lover to return to the beach of Carthage

Jessica

· · On a night like this Medea gathered the magical
herbs that made old Aeson younger.

Lorenzo

· · On a night like this, Jessica stole a lot of money
from the wealthy Jew, and ran away with a poor love as
far as Belmont.

Jessica

· · On a night like this, Lorenzo swore he loved
Jessica. He stole her soul with many promises of
faithfulness of which none might be true.

Lorenzo

· · On a night like this, did Jessica say
something false about her lover but he forgave her for it.

Jessica

· · I can say "on a night like this" longer than
you but listen, somebody is coming.

[Enter STEPHANO]

Lorenzo

· · Who is there?

Stephano

· · A friend.

Lorenzo

· · A friend! what friend? your name, I ask
you, friend?

Stephano

· · My name is Stephano. I bring the news that Portia
will be here before daybreak. She does stop and every
holy cross to kneel and pray for her happy marriage.

Lorenzo

· · Who comes with her?

Stephano

· · Nobody, only her maid and an old man.
Has my master not returned yet?

Act V, Scene 1

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 did gently kiss the trees 2445
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jessica

· · In such a night 2450
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.

Lorenzo

· · In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand 2455
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. 2460

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 2465
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, 2470
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?
2475

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 2480
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? 2485

Lorenzo

Lorenzo

· · He is not back yet. Let us go in. Let us prepare to receive the owner of the house properly.

[Enter LAUNCELOT]

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lorenzo

· · Who calls?

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo?
Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lorenzo

· · .Stop calling man, here!!

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Sola! where? where?

Lorenzo

· · Here.

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Please tell him a message came from my master Bassanio. It is full of good news and Bassanio will be here early in the morning.

[Exit]

Lorenzo

· · Let's go in and wait for them.

And yet, why should we go in. Please Stephano, give us a signal when your mistress is close. Make some music as well.

[Exit Stephano]

The moon looks beautiful from here. We will sit here and listen to the beautiful music. Sit Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven is decorated with gold. Every star in the sky sings like an angel. There is harmony in the universe and in immortal souls. But when decay covers everything, we can't hear the beauty of the music it tries to make.

[Enter Musicians]

Come, wake Diana up with a psalm. Let the music reach Portia's ear and lead her home.

[Music]

Jessica

· · I am never happy when I hear nice music.

Lorenzo

· · It is because your spirit is not listening to the music. Look at a herd of untrained horses. The jump and bolt in madness but when they hear a trumpet or any music they suddenly stand still. The madness in their eyes disappear for a while. The poets also claim that music changed the nature of Orpheus. He drew pictures of trees and stones and floods but he was more calm after he heard music. A man that cannot listen to music is only fit for treason, sly plans.

Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

[Enter PORTIA and NERISSA]

· · 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 Gobbo

· · Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

Lorenzo

· · Who calls?

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo?
Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!

Lorenzo

· · Leave hollaing, man: here. 2495

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Sola! where? where?

Lorenzo

· · Here.

Launcelot Gobbo

· · Tell him there's a post come from my master,
with
his horn full of good news: my master will be here
ere morning. 2500

[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; 2505

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 2510

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, 2515

Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins;

Such harmony is in immortal souls;

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

[Enter Musicians] 2520

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.
2525

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; 2530

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 2535

Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and floods;

Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,

But music for the time doth change his nature.

The man that hath no music in himself,

Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, 2540

Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils;

Portia

- · That light we see if from my house. It is amazing how far you can see a little light like that. That candle is like a good deed that makes a difference in a terrible world.

Nerissa

- · When the moon was shining we did not see the candle.

Portia

- · That is how a lot of good make a little good disappear. A substitute me be as important as a king but when the real king returns the substitute is forgotten. The real king is like a river that is formed by little streams. Listen! Music!

Nerissa

- · The music comes from your house.

Portia

- · Nothing is ever good. I think the music sounds much better now than by day.

Nerissa

- · It is because it is so quiet at night.

Portia

- · A crow can sing as beautiful as a lark when it is alone. A nightingale will not sound beautiful by day because its singing will be spoiled by the cackling of geese. Every thing has its place and is then perfect. The moon has gone down.

[Music ceases]

Lorenzo

- · That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia. 2570

Portia

- · He recognises me by my bad voice.

Lorenzo

- · Dear lady, welcome home.

Portia

- · We have been away praying for our husbands and their speedy return. Are they back yet?

Lorenzo

- · Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before,
To announce their arrival.

Portia

- · Go in Nerissa and tell everybody that they must say absolutely nothing about us being away. Not even you Lorenzo or you Jessica.

[A tucket sounds]

Lorenzo

- · Your husband is near. That is his trumpet. We won't tell madam, don't worry.

Portia

- The night is over. The day looks like a pale, sick person.

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: 2550
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Unto the 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. 2555

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 2560
The 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! 2565
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion
And would not be awaked.

[Music ceases]

Lorenzo

- · That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia. 2570

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' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words. 2575
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; 2580
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: 2585
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

Portia

- · This night methinks is but the daylight sick;

The day looks pale. This is what a day looks like when the sun is not out yet.

[Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and]
their followers]

Bassanio

· · We should live in darkness if we live without the sun.

Portia

· · Let me be like light, but I don't want to be light for a light wife makes a serious husband. Bassanio must always be happy. God will sort it out. Welcome home.

Bassanio

· · Thank you. Meet my friend Antonio.

I owe him very very much.

Portia

· · I do think you owe him a lot. I heard about the stories.

Antonio

· He doesn't owe me anything anymore. I am free.

Portia

· · You are very welcome with us. We will show us with out deeds how welcome you are and not just words.

Gratiano

· · [To NERISSA] I swear by the moon, you are wrong. I gave it to a boy, the judge's clerk. I wish he had taken money. You seem very attach to the ring.

Portia

· · Are you already arguing? What is wrong?

Gratiano

· We are arguing about a ring that she gave me. The ring said I must love her and not leave her. I do love her.

Nerissa

· · You can't take those words lightly. You swore you would wear it until your death when I gave it to you. You would lie with it in your grave. You should have kept it. You gave it away just like that. I don't think you gave it to a boy but a woman!

Gratiano

· · It was a young boy.

Nerissa

· · A woman that looked like a boy.

Gratiano

· · I gave it to a scrubbed boy, he is not taller than you. He begged me to give it to him as payment. I did not have the heart to say no.

Portia

· · You were wrong to give the ring away. You don't give your wife's first gift away like that. She made a promise and you made a promise when you took it. I gave love a ring and I made him swear never to take it of. He would not dare to take it off his finger . There he stands and I promise you, he will still have the ring I gave him.

It looks a little paler: 'tis a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

[Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and] 2590
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, 2595
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. 2600

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, 2605
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. 2610

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.' 2615

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, 2620
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. 2625

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. 2630

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 2635
Never to part with it; and here he stands;
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it

He would not take it from his finger for anything. Gratiano
you were wrong to give away the ring. If it was me, I
would be furious with you.

Bassanio

. . . [Aside] I think it would be best if I cut my
left hand off and swear that I lost the ring while I was
defending it.

Gratiano

. . . My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away to a lawyer.
The lawyer and the boy would have nothing else but the
rings. He was very deserving of the ring.

Portia

. . . Which ring did you give? Not the one I gave you?

Bassanio

. . . I can't tell a lie as well. Look - the finger is empty. It
is gone.

Portia

. . . Your finger is as empty as your promises. You will
not sleep in my bed until I see that ring again.

Nerissa

. . . And I will not sleep in your bed till I see my
ring.

Bassanio

. . . Sweet Portia, 2660
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. 2670
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased 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: 2675
I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

Bassanio

. . . I promise you. A man has the ring. A
lawyer who begged it from me. I offered him 3000 ducats
but he wanted the ring. After the huge favour he did me I
did not want him to go away empty handed or unhappy. I
had to give him the ring. I'm sure if you were there, you
would have begged me to him the ring. You would
understand.

Portia

. . . Let's hope that doctor never comes near
this house. Since he has my ring, I am sure that I will
sleep with him. I will become as liberal as you are with
your promises. Be sure that you are not one day away
from home because I will give whoever has the ring my
body and my husband's bed.
Know him I shall, I am well sure of 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: 2640
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 2645
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.

Portia

. . . What ring gave you my lord? 2650
Not that, I hope, which you received 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, 2660
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, 2665
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. 2670
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased 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: 2675
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 2680
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?
I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy; 2685
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. 2690

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, 2695
No, not my body nor my husband's bed:

If you dare to leave me alone, I will sleep with that lawyer that has the ring.

Nerissa

. . . And I will sleep with his helper, you better not leave me either.

Gratiano

. . . Well if you do that, I will get him and make sure he is useless.

Antonio

. . . I am the reason you are all fighting.

Portia

. . . Don't feel guilty. You are welcome despite these events.

Bassanio

. . . Portia, forgive me this time for what I have done wrong. In the presence of all these friends -

Portia

. . . Listen to that. He wants to make another promise after he could not keep the first promise that he made.

Bassanio

. . . No, please listen to me. Forgive me this and I will never break another promise to you, ever.

Antonio

. . . I once placed my body on the line for him. I will do it again if you will only forgive him. This time I am prepared to lose my soul if he breaks his promise to you.

Portia

. . . Then you will be his guarantee. Please give him this and ask him to keep it better than the other one.

Antonio

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

Bassanio

. . . By heaven, it is the same I gave the lawyer!

Portia

. . . The lawyer gave me the ring when I slept with him.

Nerissa

. . . And forgive me Gratiano. I slept last night with the lawyer's helper.

Gratiano

. . . This is like fixing roads in the rainy season. Are we stupid? Do we deserve this? Have we been tricked?

Portia

. . . Don't get so upset. You are all surprised? Here is a letter, read it when you have time. It comes from Padua and will explain that Portia was the lawyer and Nerissa his helper. Lorenzo shall testify that we left the same time that you left. We returned just before you. I haven't even entered my house yet. Antonio you are really welcome. I also have better news for you, more than you expect. You can read this letter later.

You will read that three of your ships returned with great profit.

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, 2700
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

Nerissa

. . . And I his clerk; therefore be well advised
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. 2705

Antonio

. . . I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Portia

. . . Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

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, 2710
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. 2715

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, 2720
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. 2725

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; 2730
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? 2735

Portia

. . . Speak not so grossly. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here 2740
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; 2745

You will not believe how I got a hold of this letter.

Antonio

. . . I am speechless

Bassanio

. . . Were you the lawyer and I knew you not?

Gratiano

. . . Were you the helper that made a fool out of me?

Nerissa

. . . Ay, but the helper never means to do it, Unless he live until he be a man.

Bassanio

. . . Sweet lawyer, will you share a bed with me and when I am absent you can sleep 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

. . . Lorenzo I have some good news for you as well.

Nerissa

. . . Yes, I'll give it to you for free. Here is a promise from the Jew that you will inherit everything he has after his death.

Lorenzo

. . . Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way Of starved people.

Portia

. . . It is almost morning and I am sure you still have many questions. Let us go in and there you can interrogate us to your heart's content.

Gratiano

. Yes, let it be so. The only question I have to ask Nerissa is if she wants to go to bed now or wait till tonight or stay in bed today and tonight then we only get up tomorrow? One thing is sure, I will never fear anything more than keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

[Exeunt]

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. 2750

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! 2760
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. 2765

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; 2770
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, 2775
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. 2780

[Exeunt]

The Belmont Tribune



There are rumours that the newly wed Portia already kicked her husband out.

Husbands betrayed their wives

1. Why is Nerissa quarreling with Gratiano?
2. Who did Bassanio give his ring to?
3. How will Nerissa and Portia punish Gratiano and Bassanio?
4. What does Antonio offer to restore the peace?
5. What does Portia give Antonio to give Bassanio?
6. Where does Portia say she got the ring from?
7. What good news does Jessica and Lorenzo get?
8. What good news does Antonio get?
9. Is this a truly happy ending? Give a reason for your answer.