

# The Jew of Malta

Christopher Marlowe



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

FERNEZE, governor of Malta.

LODOWICK, his son.

SELIM CALYMATH, son to the Grand Seignior.

MARTIN DEL BOSCO, vice-admiral of Spain.

MATHIAS, a gentleman.

JACOMO,                                 }  
BARNARDINE,                         }   friars.

BARABAS, a wealthy Jew.

ITHAMORE, a slave.

PILIA-BORZA, a bully, attendant to BELLAMIRA.

Two Merchants.

Three Jews.

Knights, Bassoos, Officers, Guard, Slaves, Messenger, and Carpenters

KATHARINE, mother to MATHIAS.

ABIGAIL, daughter to BARABAS.

BELLAMIRA, a courtesan.

ABBESS.

NUN.



## PROLOGUE

*Enter MACHIAVEL.*

MACHIAVEL

Albeit the world think Machiavel is dead,  
Yet was his soul but flown beyond the Alps;  
And, now the Guise is dead, is come from France,  
To view this land, and frolic with his friends.  
To some perhaps my name is odious; 5  
But such as love me, guard me from their tongues,  
And let them know that I am Machiavel,  
And weigh not men, and therefore not men's words.  
Admir'd I am of those that hate me most:  
Though some speak openly against my books, 10  
Yet will they read me, and thereby attain  
To Peter's chair; and, when they cast me off,  
Are poison'd by my climbing followers.  
I count religion but a childish toy,  
And hold there is no sin but ignorance. 15  
Birds of the air will tell of murders past!  
I am asham'd to hear such fooleries.  
Many will talk of title to a crown:  
What right had Caesar to the empery?  
Might first made kings, and laws were then most sure 20  
When, like the Draco's, they were writ in blood.  
Hence comes it that a strong-built citadel  
Commands much more than letters can import:  
Which maxim had Phalaris observ'd,  
H'ad never bellow'd, in a brazen bull, 25  
Of great ones' envy: o' the poor petty wights  
Let me be envied and not pitied.  
But whither am I bound? I come not, I,  
To read a lecture here in Britain,  
But to present the tragedy of a Jew, 30  
Who smiles to see how full his bags are cramm'd;  
Which money was not got without my means.  
I crave but this,—grace him as he deserves,  
And let him not be entertain'd the worse  
Because he favours me. 35  
(*Exit.*)





## ACT I<sup>1</sup>

BARABAS *discovered in his counting-house, with heaps of gold before him.*

BARABAS

So that of thus much that return was made;  
And of the third part of the Persian ships  
There was the venture summ'd and satisfied.  
As for those Samnites, and the men of Uz, 40  
That bought my Spanish oils and wines of Greece,  
Here have I purs'd their paltry silverlings.  
Fie, what a trouble 'tis to count this trash!  
Well fare the Arabians, who so richly pay  
The things they traffic for with wedge of gold, 45  
Whereof a man may easily in a day  
Tell that which may maintain him all his life.  
The needy groom, that never finger'd groat,  
Would make a miracle of thus much coin;  
But he whose steel-barr'd coffers are cramm'd full, 50  
And all his life-time hath been tired,  
Wearying his fingers' ends with telling it,  
Would in his age be loath to labour so,  
And for a pound to sweat himself to death.  
Give me the merchants of the Indian mines, 55  
That trade in metal of the purest mould;  
The wealthy Moor, that in the eastern rocks  
Without control can pick his riches up,  
And in his house heap pearl like pebble-stones,  
Receive them free, and sell them by the weight; 60  
Bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts,  
Jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds,  
Beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds,  
And seld-seen costly stones of so great price,  
As one of them, indifferently rated, 65  
And of a carat of this quantity,  
May serve, in peril of calamity,  
To ransom great kings from captivity.  
This is the ware wherein consists my wealth;  
And thus methinks should men of judgment frame 70

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<sup>1</sup>This is the first act.

Their means of traffic from the vulgar trade,  
 And, as their wealth increaseth, so inclose  
 Infinite riches in a little room.  
 But now how stands the wind?  
 Into what corner peers my halcyon's bill? 75  
 Ha! to the east? yes. See how stand the vanes—  
 East and by south: why, then, I hope my ships  
 I sent for Egypt and the bordering isles  
 Are gotten up by Nilus' winding banks;  
 Mine argosy from Alexandria, 80  
 Loaden with spice and silks, now under sail,  
 Are smoothly gliding down by Candy-shore  
 To Malta, through our Mediterranean sea.—  
 But who comes here?  
 (*Enter a MERCHANT.*)  
 How now! 85

MERCHANT  
 Barabas, thy ships are safe,  
 Riding in Malta-road; and all the merchants  
 With other merchandise are safe arriv'd,  
 And have sent me to know whether yourself  
 Will come and custom them. 90

BARABAS  
 The ships are safe thou say'st, and richly fraught?

MERCHANT  
 They are.

BARABAS  
 Why, then, go bid them come ashore,  
 And bring with them their bills of entry:  
 I hope our credit in the custom-house 95  
 Will serve as well as I were present there.  
 Go send 'em threescore camels, thirty mules,  
 And twenty waggons, to bring up the ware.  
 But art thou master in a ship of mine,  
 And is thy credit not enough for that? 100

[...]

*Enter FERNEZE, governor of Malta, KNIGHTS, and OFFICERS; met by CALYMATH, and BASSOES of the Turk.*

FERNEZE

Now, bassoes, what demand you at our hands?

FIRST BASSO

Know, knights of Malta, that we came from Rhodes,  
From Cyprus, Candy, and those other isles  
That lie betwixt the Mediterranean seas.

FERNEZE

What's Cyprus, Candy, and those other isles 105  
To us or Malta? what at our hands demand ye?

CALYMATH

The ten years' tribute that remains unpaid.

FERNEZE

Alas, my lord, the sum is over-great!  
I hope your highness will consider us.

CALYMATH

I wish, grave governor, 'twere in my power 110  
To favour you; but 'tis my father's cause,  
Wherein I may not, nay, I dare not dally.

[...]



## ACT II

*Enter BARABAS with a light.*

BARABAS

Thus, like the sad-presaging raven, that tolls  
The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,  
And in the shadow of the silent night 115  
Doth shake contagion from her sable wings,  
Vex'd and tormented runs poor Barabas  
With fatal curses towards these Christians.  
The incertain pleasures of swift-footed time  
Have ta'en their flight, and left me in despair; 120  
And of my former riches rests no more  
But bare remembrance; like a soldier's scar,  
That has no further comfort for his maim.—  
O Thou, that with a fiery pillar ledd'st  
The sons of Israel through the dismal shades, 125  
Light Abraham's offspring; and direct the hand  
Of Abigail this night! or let the day  
Turn to eternal darkness after this!—  
No sleep can fasten on my watchful eyes,  
Nor quiet enter my distemper'd thoughts, 130  
Till I have answer of my Abigail.

*Enter ABIGAIL above.*

ABIGAIL

Now have I happily espied a time  
To search the plank my father did appoint;  
And here, behold, unseen, where I have found  
The gold, the pearls, and jewels, which he hid. 135

BARABAS

Now I remember those old women's words,  
Who in my wealth would tell me winter's tales,  
And speak of spirits and ghosts that glide by night  
About the place where treasure hath been hid:  
And now methinks that I am one of those; 140  
For, whilst I live, here lives my soul's sole hope,  
And, when I die, here shall my spirit walk.

[...]