



# Audition Script

All auditions take place in the West Wing Music Room.

Open Auditions

Wednesday, Dec 14, 2:45-5:30

Thursday, Dec 15, 2:45-5:30

Call Back Auditions

Friday, Dec 16, 2:45

Casting will be announced at the end of Call Backs.

Future Information can be found at:

[CWPerformingArts.info](http://CWPerformingArts.info)

and by emailing Mr. Phillips at:

[tphillips@cwls.us](mailto:tphillips@cwls.us)

# The Merchant of Venice

## Dramatis Personae

- Antonio:** a merchant of Venice, he agrees to vouch for a loan to Bassanio from Shylock by putting a pound of his flesh up as collateral.
- Bassanio:** the friend of Antonio who borrows three thousand ducats from him. He is also the suitor to Portia who chooses the correct casket and marries her.
- Lorenzo:** a friend of Bassanio and Antonio, the lover of Jessica.
- Gratiano:** a friend of Bassanio and Antonio, he accompanies Bassanio to Belmont and marries Nerissa.
- Salerio:** a friend of Bassanio and Antonio.
- Solanio:** a friend of Bassanio and Antonio.
- Shylock:** a moneylender in Venice. He demands a pound of flesh from Antonio. He loses his daughter Jessica and most of his wealth.
- Jessica:** Shylock's daughter who runs away with Lorenzo.
- Lancelot:** a clown, first Shylock's servant and later Bassanio's.
- Portia:** a wealthy heiress who must marry the man who chooses the correct casket with her picture in it. She later marries Bassanio and also plays the Doctor Balthasar who saves Antonio's life.
- Nerissa:** the attendant or waiting-gentlewoman to Portia who also plays the clerk at the court.
- Duke of Venice:** an upholder of the law.

# ACT I

## SCENE 1

*Venice. A street.*

[Enter Antonio, Salerio, and Salanio]

ANTONIO: In sooth, I know not why I am so sad. It wearies me and you say it wearies you, but how I caught it, found it, or came by it, I know not.

SALERIO: Your mind is tossing on the ocean where your fortunes lie at sail.

SALANIO: Believe me, sir, had I put such venture forth, I would be plucking the grass to know where sits the wind, peering into maps for ports and every object that might make me fear misfortune.

ANTONIO: My good masters, Salanio, Salerio...

SALANIO: Salerio, Salanio

ANTONIO: Believe me, no. My ventures are not in whole estate.

SALERIO: Why, then you are in love.

ANTONIO: Fie, fie!

SALANIO: Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad, because you are not merry.

SALERIO: 'Twere as easy for you to laugh and leap and say you are merry, because you are not sad.

ANTONIO: In faith, 'tis true.

[Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano]

SALANIO: Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman, with Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well. We leave you now with better company.

SALERIO: We would have stayed till we had made you merry, but worthier friends may now have the hand.

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 and SALANIO: Good morrow, my good lords.

BASSANIO: Good signors.

[Exeunt Salerio and Salanio]

LORENZO: My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Signor 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, Signor Antonio. You have too much respect upon the world.

ANTONIO: I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano. It is merely a stage where every man must play a part, and mine is a sad one.

GRATIANO: Let me play the fool with mirth and laughter. Let old wrinkles come. Why should a man, whose blood is warm within, sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster? I tell you what, Antonio-- I love you and it is my love that speaks. 'I am Sir

Oracle, and when I open my lips let no dog bark!' O, my Antonio, I do know of those that only are reputed to be wise for saying nothing. I'll tell you more of this another time. But fish not with this melancholy bait. Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile. I'll end my exhortation until 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 and you shall not know the sound of your own tongue.

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

GRATIANO: Thanks, in faith, for silence is only commendable in maids and in children.

[Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo]

BASSANIO: Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are like two grains of wheat hidden in two bushels of chaff. You shall seek all day and when you have them, you'll find they are not worth the having.

ANTONIO: Well, enough of that. Tell me which lady is the one to whom you've sworn a secret pilgrimage? You promised to tell me today.

BASSANIO: O, 'tis not unknown to you, Antonio, how much I have disabled mine estate. To you, Antonio, I owe the most in money, and in love. And for your love, I have a warranty to unburden myself to clear my soul of all the debts I owe.

ANTONIO: I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it. If it stands, as you yourself still do, be assured my purse, my person and my extremest means lie all unlocked to your occasions.

BASSANIO: In Belmont is a lady. She is fair, and, oh, fairer still than that word. She is of untold and wondrous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes I did receive speechless messages. Her name is Portia. The four winds blow in from every coast renowned suitors for the world is not ignorant of her worth. O, my Antonio, had I but the means to hold a rival place with one of these suitors.

ANTONIO: You know that all my fortunes are at sea. Neither have I money nor commodity to raise any present sum. Therefore, go forth and try what my credit can in Venice do to furnish you to Belmont and to your fair Portia. Go, presently inquire and so will I.

[Exeunt]

## **ACT I**

### **SCENE 2**

*Belmont. A room in Portia's house.*

[Enter Portia and Nerissa]

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

NERISSA: You should be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes.

PORTIA: If it were as easy as to know what is good, then chapels would be churches and poor men's cottages, princes' palaces. It is a divine one that follows his own instructions. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I want, nor refuse whom I dislike. So is the will of a living daughter cursed by the will of a dead father.

NERISSA: Your father was always virtuous and holy men at their death have good inspirations. Therefore the lottery he devised in these three chests, one of gold, one of silver and one of lead. Whoever chooses to correct chest, chooses you. It will, no doubt, never be chosen by anyone but he that rightly loves you. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

PORTIA: I pray you, name them and I will describe them, and, according to my description, level my affection at them.

NERISSA: First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA: Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he talks of nothing but his horse. I am much afeard his mother played false with a village smithy.

NERISSA: Then there is the Count of Palatine.

PORTIA: He does nothing but frown. He hears merry tales and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old. I had rather be married to a dog with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. God defend me from these two!

NERISSA: How say you to 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 is every man in no man. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty such husbands to make a complete man.

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

PORTIA: He is very vile in the morning, when he is sober, and more vile in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast.

NERISSA: What if he should wish to choose and therein choose the right chest, will you refuse to accept him?

PORTIA: If he wishes to choose, I pray you, set a glass of wine on the contrary chest, for I know he will choose it.

NERISSA: You need not fear, my lady. All these lords have acquainted me with their determinations, which is, indeed, to return to their homes and to trouble you no more.

PORTIA: Then I am glad this parcel of wooers is so reasonable. For there is not one amongst them that I dote on. I pray God grant them a quick 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 d'Montferrat?

PORTIA: Yes, yes, it was Bassanio, as I think, he was so called.

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

[Enter Audience Member]

PORTIA: I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of some praise. How now! what news?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Madam, the four strangers seek for you to take their leave.

PORTIA: If I could bid welcome to any more suitors with so light a heart as I can bid these four farewell, I would be glad of their approach. Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. We need shut the gates upon more of these wooers. If the sun shines on them, let foolish gnats make sport.

[Exeunt]

## ACT I

### SCENE 3

*Venice. A public place.*

[Enter Bassanio and Shylock]

SHYLOCK: Three thousand ducats, well.

BASSANIO: Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK: For three months.

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

SHYLOCK: Antonio shall become bound.

BASSANIO: Shall I know your answer?

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

BASSANIO: Yes, your answer to that?

SHYLOCK: Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO: Have you heard any 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 Tripoli, another to the Indies. He hath a third in Mexico, a fourth for England. And other ventures, he hath squandered abroad. Ships are but boards, sailors are but men. There may be pirates and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. Notwithstanding, the man is sufficient. Three thousand ducats, I think I may take his bond. May I speak with Antonio?

BASSANIO: If it pleases you, come dine with us.

SHYLOCK: 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. Let us find your Signor Antonio.

[Enter Antonio]

BASSANIO: He saves our labors and comes this way. Signor Antonio!

SHYLOCK: (*Aside*) See how like a fawning publican he looks! I hate him. He lends out money gratis and brings down the rate in Venice. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat to the ancient grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred nation, and he rails on my well won thrift. 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. But what of that? Tubal, a wealthy friend will furnish me. But soft! How many months do you desire?

ANTONIO: Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow by taking nor by giving of interest, yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend, I'll break a custom.

SHYLOCK: Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

ANTONIO: And for three months.

SHYLOCK: I had forgot, three months, so you told me, so you told me. But I thought you said you neither lend nor borrow upon interest.

ANTONIO: I do never use it.

SHYLOCK: Three thousand ducats, 'tis a good round sum. Three months from twelve, then, let me see, the rate--

ANTONIO: Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to you?

SHYLOCK: Signor Antonio, many a time and often on the Rialto, you have berated me about my money. Still have I borne it with a patient shrug, for sufferance is the badge of all our tribe. You call me a dog and spit upon me. Well then, it now appears you need my help. You come to me, and you say 'Shylock, we would have your moneys.' What should I say to you? Should I not say 'Have a dog's money? Is it possible a dog can lend three thousand ducats?' Or shall I bend low and with bated breath say, 'Fair sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last. You spurned me such another day. Another time you called me dog and for these courtesies I'll lend you these moneys?'

ANTONIO: I am like to call you so again, to spit on you again and to spurn you too. If you will lend this money then lend it rather to your enemy, who, if he breaks the bond, then you may exact the penalty.

SHYLOCK: Why, look at you, how you storm! I would be friends with you and have your love. Let us forget the shames that you have stained me with. This is kindness I offer.

BASSANIO: This is kindness?

SHYLOCK: This is kindness I will show. Go with me to a notary, seal me there your single bond, and, in a merry sport, if you do not repay me on such a day, in such a place, such sum or sums as are expressed in the condition, then let the forfeit be nominated for an equal pound of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken from what part of your body pleases me.

ANTONIO: In faith, I'll seal to such a bond and say there is much kindness in you, Shylock.

BASSANIO: Antonio, you shall not seal to such a bond for me. I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTONIO: Fear not, man, I will not forfeit. Within these two months, that's a month before this bond is due, I do expect return of thrice the value of this bond.

SHYLOCK: I pray you, tell me this. If he should break the bond, what would I gain by exacting the forfeiture? A pound of this man's flesh is not profitable, not as flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I extend this friendship to buy his favor, if he will take it, if not, then adieu. And, for my love, I pray you wrong me no longer.

ANTONIO: Shylock, I will seal to this bond.

SHYLOCK: Then meet me forthwith at the notary's. Give him direction of this merry bond and I will go and purse the ducats straight away. Make your way to my house and presently I will be with you.

ANTONIO: Hie you away, gentle Shylock.

[Exit Shylock]

BASSANIO: I like not his terms or his villain's mind.

ANTONIO: Come along, Bassanio, in this there can be no dismay. My ships come home a month before the day.

[Exeunt]

## *ACT II*

### *SCENE 1*

*Belmont*

[Enter Nerissa. Enter Portia and Audience Members on cues]

NERISSA: On this episode of the Bachlorette, Portia is the heiress to a fortune. She likes chocolate, long walks and romantic candle lit dinners. She has a perfect life except that her father died and left it in his will that any possible suitor must choose the correct chest from three possible options to be able to marry her.

PORTIA: I know that my father was a righteous and virtuous man. His challenge for my suitors was meant to protect me from a false lover, but as my picture is held in one of the chests, so is my heart locked away from the world.

NERISSA: The first bachelor was the Baron of Falconbridge.

PORTIA: I say nothing to him, for he understands me not, nor do I understand him. He speaks neither Latin, French, nor Italian. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: [ad Lib Mumblish]

NERISSA: The Prince of Morocco was the next to reach for Portia's hand.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: I tell thee, Lady, by my love for you, the best regarded women in my clime have loved me, but it is you that I seek.



PORTIA: If all the women of his homeland love him, then I feel no regret in refusing him.

NERISSA: Finally, the Prince of Arragon.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: I offer thee gifts of love so rich that a day in Spring never came so sweetly.

PORTIA: Spring days are known for their storms as well as their sunshine.

NERISSA: Now is the hour of decision. Whom shall she choose? Audience, please indicate with your applause which is the perfect bachelor for our fair Portia.

[Audience votes with applause] Baron Falconbridge? Prince of Morocco? Prince of Arragon?

[Portia presents a rose to the winner, other bachelors exit]

PORTIA: Come, [Winner's name], you must now choose a chest. Inside the winning chest you'll find portrait of me and my hand in marriage.

NERISSA: But choose you wisely, sir, for if you err, you must leave here hence and never seek the company of any woman for the rest of your life. You must choose the correct chest from these three made of gold, silver and lead. What do you think audience? Which should he choose? The gold chest? The silver chest? The lead chest? [Encourage Audience to help choose. Bachelor picks the gold chest] This one? Are you sure? Final answer? Alright, he chooses the gold chest. Do we have a winner? Does Lady Portia finally have a Lord? If you're right we'll find a picture of the fair Portia inside. [Open gold chest and show empty contents] No, I'm sorry that's not the correct chest, so you do not win the hand of our fair Portia. But as you leave remember these words. All that glitters is not gold, often have you heard that told. Many a man his life hath sold but gilded tombs do worms enfold. Had you been as wise as bold, young in limbs, in judgment old. Your answer had not been inscrolled, so fare you well, your suit is cold. [Portia gives bachelor a kiss on the cheek, he returns to seat] Will the next suitor be successful? We'll find out soon. Join us next time on, The Bachlorette.

[Exeunt]

## ACT II

### SCENE 2

*Venice. A street.*

[Enter Lancelot, Shylock and Jessica]

[Shylock beats Lancelot]

[Exit Shylock and Jessica]

LANCELOT: Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from Shylock, my master. The Fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me saying to me 'Lancelot, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My Conscience says 'No, take heed, honest Lancelot, take heed, do not run.' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well.' If I were be ruled by my Conscience, I would stay with my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of

devil. Certainly my master, Shylock is the very Satan incarnate. But my Conscience is a kind of hard conscience, it counsels me to stay with my master Shylock. The Fiend gives the more friendly counsel. I will run, Fiend, my heels are at your command. I will run.

[Enter Bassanio with Audience Member]

BASSANIO: You may do so, but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. Go now and see these letters delivered.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (*ad Lib*)

[Enter Gratiano]

GRATIANO: Where is your master?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yonder, sir, he walks.

[Exit Audience Member]

GRATIANO: Signor Bassanio!

BASSANIO: Signor Gratiano!

GRATIANO: I have a suit to you.

BASSANIO: You have obtained it.

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

BASSANIO: Why then you must. But hear me, Gratiano. You art too wild, too rude and bold of voice. Parts that become you happily enough and in such eyes as ours, appear not as faults, but where you are not known, they show something too liberal. I pray you, take pains to allay your skipping spirit. Lest through your wild behavior, I be misconstrued in the place I go and therefore lose my hopes.

GRATIANO: Signor Bassanio, if I do not put on a sober habit, talk with respect and swear but just now and then, carry prayer-books in my pockets, look demurely, nay even more, while grace is said, hood mine eyes and sigh and say 'amen' and use all the observance of civility, then never trust me more.

BASSANIO: Well, we shall see your bearing.

GRATIANO: Nay, but you shall not gauge me by what we do tonight.

BASSANIO: You are an index and prologue to history of lust and foul thoughts, my friend.

LANCELOT: God bless your worship!

BASSANIO: Gramercy! What would a poor boy want with such poorer gentleman?

LANCELOT: Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich man's servant. Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the moneylender, Shylock. To be brief, the very truth is that Shylock, having done me wrong, does cause me,---

BASSANIO: What would you want?

LANCELOT: To serve you, sir.

BASSANIO: I know you. Shylock, your master spoke with me this very day. Why should you leave his rich service to become the follower of so poor a gentleman?

LANCELOT: The old proverb is very well parted between my master, Shylock and you, sir. You have the grace of God and he, sir, has none.

BASSANIO: You speak it well. Go, take leave of your old master and seek out my lodgings.

LANCELOT: If fortune be a woman, she's a good wench. I'll take my leave of the moneylender in the twinkling of an eye.

[Exit Lancelot]

GRATIANO: I think much fool you'll find in him, even to the world's pleasure.

BASSANIO: In truth, he draws out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. But fare you well. I have some business.

GRATIANO: And I must to Lorenzo, but we will visit you at suppertime.

[Exeunt]

## ACT II

### SCENE 3

*The same. A room in Shylock's house.*

[Enter Jessica and Lancelot]

JESSICA: I am sorry you will leave my father. Our house is hell, and you are a merry devil. But fare you well. Here is a ducat for you. And, Lancelot, soon at supper you shall see Lorenzo, who is your new master's guest. Give him this letter, but do so in secret. Farewell. I would not have my father see me in talk with you.

LANCELOT: Adieu! Tears exhibit my tongue. Adieu. These foolish drops do drown my manly spirit. Adieu.

[Exit Lancelot]

JESSICA: Farewell, good Lancelot. 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 you keep your promise, I shall end this strife and become your loving wife.

[Exit]

## ACT II

### SCENE 4

*The same. A street.*

[Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salerio, and Salanio]

LORENZO: Hear me, we will slink away at suppertime, disguise ourselves at my lodgings and return, all in an hour.

GRATIANO: We have not made good preparations.

SALERIO: We have not spoken yet of torchbearers.

SALANIO: Unless they may be quaintly ordered, it would be better in my mind that it should not be undertaken.

[Enter Lancelot with a letter]

LORENZO: 'Tis now but four o'clock. We have two hours to furnish us. Lancelot, what's the news?

LANCELOT: Signor Lorenzo, I've come as Cupid's messenger.

LORENZO: I know the hand. In faith, 'tis a fair hand and whiter than the paper it writ upon.

GRATIANO: Love news, in faith.

LANCELOT: By your leave, sir.

LORENZO: Whither go you?

LANCELOT: Marry, sir, to bid my old master, Shylock, to sup tonight with my new master, Bassanio.

LORENZO: Hold a moment, take this with you. Tell the gentle Jessica I will not fail her, but speak it so privately. Go, gentlemen, let us prepare for some merry sport tonight.

[Exit Lancelot]

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

SALANIO: And so will I.

LORENZO: Meet me and Gratiano at Gratiano's lodgings some one hour hence.

SALERIO: 'Tis good we do so.

[Exeunt Salerio and Salanio]

GRATIANO: Was that letter from fair Jessica?

LORENZO: I must tell you all. She has directed how I shall take her from her father's house and what gold and jewels she is furnished with. If ever her father comes to heaven, it will be for his gentle daughter's sake. Come, go with me, peruse this as we go. Fair Jessica shall be my wife.

[Exeunt]

## ACT II

### SCENE 5

*The same. Before Shylock's house.*

[Enter Shylock]

SHYLOCK: Well, you shall see, your eyes shall be your judge, the difference of old Shylock and Bassanio.-- What, Jessica!--you shall not gormandize, as you have done with me.--What, Jessica!-- And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out,-- Why, Jessica, I say!

LANCELOT: Why, Jessica!

SHYLOCK: Who bids you call? I do not bid you call.

LANCELOT: 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 why should I go? I am not bid for love, they only flatter me. So, I'll go in hate. Jessica, my

girl, look to my house. I am right loath to go. There is some ill a brewing towards my rest, for I did dream of moneybags last night.

LANCELOT: I beseech you, sir, go. My young master does expect your reproach. We mustn't tarry, for there is a masque tonight.

SHYLOCK: A masque, hear you that, Jessica. Lock up my doors and when you hear the drum and the vile squealing of the wry-necked fife, clamber not to the casements, nor thrust your head into the public street to gaze on these fools. Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter my sober house. By Jacob's staff, I swear, I have no mind of feasting tonight, but I will go. Go you before me, sirrah, say I will come.

LANCELOT: I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at window, for there will come a boy that will be worth your eye.

[Exit Lancelot]

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

JESSICA: His words were 'Farewell mistress,' nothing else.

SHYLOCK: Well, Jessica, go in. Perhaps I will return immediately. Do as I bid and shut doors after you. Fast bind, fast find, a proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

[Exit Shylock]

JESSICA: Farewell, and if my fortune be not crossed, I have a father and you a daughter, lost.

[Exit Jessica]

## *ACT II*

### *SCENE 6*

*The same.*

[Enter Gratiano, Salerio, Salanio and Audience Members]

GRATIANO: This is the penthouse 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.

[Enter Antonio]

ANTONIO: Who's there?

GRATIANO: Signor Antonio!

ANTONIO: Fie, Gratiano! Why stay you here in the street? 'Tis nine o'clock. Our friends all wait for you.

GRATIANO: We've come to meet Lorenzo and join in some merry sport.

SALANIO: Here comes Lorenzo.

[Enter Lorenzo]

LORENZO: Sweet friends, I beg your patience for my long delay. Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait. When you shall play the thieves for wives, then I'll watch as long for you. Approach, here dwells my new father. Ho! who's within?

[Enter Jessica]

JESSICA: Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty, albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

LORENZO: Lorenzo, and your love.

JESSICA: Lorenzo, for certain, and my love indeed.

LORENZO: Heaven and your thoughts are witness that.

JESSICA: Let us away, but here are but a few things worth the pains.

LORENZO: Come my friends.

GRATIANO: I follow your lead for you are thought to be the most senseless and fit for the job.

LORENZO: Come at once we are due for at Bassanio's feast.

JESSICA: I must make fast the doors, but first join me and we'll gild ourselves with more treasures.

[Exit Lorenzo, Jessica and Audience Members]

GRATIANO: Well, God grants them wisdom those that have it and those that are fools, let them use their talents.

SALERIO: Be shrew me, but he loves her heartily. She is wise, if I can judge her.

SALANIO: And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true.

SALERIO: And true she is, as she hath proved herself.

[Enter Jessica, Lorenzo and Audience Members]

SALANIO: What, art you come? On, gentlemen, away!

[Exeunt]

## *ACT III*

### *SCENE 1*

*Venice. A street.*

[Enter Salanio and Salerio]

SALANIO: Now, what news on the Rialto?

SALERIO: Why, man, I saw Bassanio set sail to Belmont and his fair Portia and with him is Gratiano gone along.

SALANIO: The villain Shylock's outcries for his daughter raised the Duke, who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

SALERIO: But he came too late, the ship was under sail. The Duke was given to understand that in a gondola, Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica were seen together. Besides, Antonio certified the Duke they were not with Bassanio in his ship.

SALANIO: I never heard a passion so confused, so strange and so outrageous, as the old dog, Shylock, did utter in the streets. 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my

daughter! O my ducats! Justice! The law! My ducats and my daughter! Find the girl, she hath the stones upon her and the ducats.'

SALERIO: Why, all the boys in Venice follow him, crying, 'My stones! My daughter! And my ducats!'

SALANIO: Let good Antonio keep his day or he shall pay for this.

SALERIO: A kinder gentleman treads not the earth. I saw Bassanio and Antonio part. Bassanio told him he would make some speed of his return. He answered, 'Do not so, hurry not your business for my sake. Be merry, and employ your thoughts to courtship.' And even there, his eye being big with tears and affection, he embraced Bassanio as they parted.

SALANIO: I think he only loves the world for him. I pray you, let us go and find him out and quicken his embraced heaviness with some delight or other.

SALERIO: Marry, for if my gossip report be a woman of truth, Antonio has a richly laden ship wrecked on the narrow seas, the Goodwins, I think they call the place, a very dangerous place, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried.

SALANIO: I would she were a lying gossip. The end is, he hath lost a ship.

SALERIO: I would it might prove the end of his losses.

[Enter Shylock]

SALANIO: Let me say amen, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of Shylock. How now, Shylock! What news among the merchants?

SHYLOCK: You know none so well of my daughter's flight.

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

SHYLOCK: She is damned for it.

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

SHYLOCK: My own flesh and blood to rebel!

SALERIO: There is more difference between your flesh and hers than between jet and ivory, more difference between your bloods than there is between red wine and white. But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio has had any loss at sea or no?

SHYLOCK: There I have another bad match. A beggar, that was to come so smugly upon the mart. Let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me a dog. Let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for a courtesy. Let him look to his bond.

SALERIO: Why, I am sure, if he forfeits, you will not take his flesh. What's that good for?

SHYLOCK: To bait fish. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He has disgraced me, 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? For who I am. Have I not hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Am I not 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 he 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 not like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. So why, revenge? It's the villainy you taught me. I will execute my bond and it shall go hard. But I will make better the instruction.

SALERIO: Come, let's leave this devil and find Antonio.

SALANIO: Away then. Would you were but clean enough to spit upon.

[Exeunt Salanio, Salerio]

SHYLOCK: There will be little learning die the day you are hanged. There is no news of my daughter and my ducats. A diamond, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now. I would my daughter were dead at my foot. I know not what's being spent in the search for them. Loss upon loss! The thief gone with so much and so much to find the thief. Still no satisfaction and no revenge.

[Enter Audience Member with letter]

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (*ad Lib*)

SHYLOCK: (*ad Lib*) It is news for Tripoli. I thank God, I thank God. It's true, it's true. Antonio's ship is lost. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit, I can make what merchandise I will.

[Exeunt]

## ***ACT III***

### ***SCENE 2***

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

[Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa]

PORTIA: I pray you, tarry. Pause a day or two before you hazard. For if you choose wrong, I lose your company.

BASSANIO: No, let me choose, for as I am, I live upon the rack. Let me to the chests and my fortune.

PORTIA: Away, then! I am locked 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 makes his choice.

(*SONG*)

BASSANIO: The world is deceived with ornament. Therefore, you gaudy gold, hard food for Midas, I will none of you. Nor none of you silver. But you, you meager lead, your paleness moves me more than their eloquence, and so here I choose. Joy be the consequence!

PORTIA: (*Aside*) How all the other passions fleet to air, be moderate, allay your ecstasy. In measure rein your joy, scant this excess.

BASSANIO: What find I here? (*Opening the leaden casket*) Fair Portia's picture! What demi-god hath come so near creation? (*Reads*) *You choose not by the view, but*



*you do choose true! Since this fortune falls to you, be content and seek no new. If you be well pleased with this, hold your fortune for your bliss, turn you where your lady is and claim her with a loving kiss. A gentle scroll, fair lady.*

PORTIA: You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand as I am. Myself and what is mine is now converted to you. I was the lord of this fair mansion, master of my servants and queen over myself. But now this house, these servants and myself are yours, my lord. I give them with this ring, which when you part from, lose, or give away, let it foretell the ruin of our love.

BASSANIO: Madam, you have bereft me of all words, only my blood speaks to you in my veins. But know when this ring parts from this finger, then also parts life from me hence. O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

NERISSA: My lord and my lady, it is now our time to cry great joy.

GRATIANO: My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady, I wish you all the joy that you can wish. And when your bond is solemnized, even at that time, may I be married as well.

BASSANIO: With all my heart, I wish you can get a wife.

GRATIANO: I thank your lordship, for you have got me one already. 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 chest there and so did mine. I have 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.

BASSANIO: And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

GRATIANO: Yes, faith, my lord.

BASSANIO: Our feast shall be much honored with your marriage.

GRATIANO: We'll play with them the first boy for a thousand ducats.

[Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salanio]

LORENZO: My Lord!

GRATIANO: Who comes here? Lorenzo and his Jessica? What, and my old Venetian friend .....?

SALANIO: Salanio.

GRATIANO: Salanio.

BASSANIO: Lorenzo and Salanio, welcome hither. By your leave, Sweet Portia, I bid my friends and countrymen, welcome.

PORTIA: Then so do I, my lord. They are entirely welcome.

LORENZO: I thank you. For my part, my lord, my purpose was not to have seen you here, but meeting with Salanio along the way, he did entreat me to come along with him .

SALANIO: I did, my lord, and I have reason for it. Signor Antonio commends me to you.

[Gives Bassanio a letter]

BASSANIO: Ere I open his letter, I pray you, tell me how my good friend is.

SALANIO: 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, Salanio. What's the news from Venice? How is that royal merchant, good Antonio? I know he will be glad of our success. We are the Jasons. We have won the fleece.

SALANIO: I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost.

PORTIA: There are some contents in the paper that steals the color 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? Bassanio. I am half yourself, and I must freely have the half of anything that this paper brings you.

BASSANIO: O sweet Portia, gentle lady, when I did first impart my love to you, I freely told you, all the wealth I had ran in my veins. Now you shall see how much I was a braggart. When I told you my state was nothing, I should then have told you that it was worse than nothing. Indeed, I have engaged myself to a dear friend and therein engaged my friend to his worst enemy to feed my means. Here is a letter, dear lady. Every word in it a gaping wound. But is it true, Salanio? Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit? From Tripoli, from Mexico and England, from Lisbon, Barbary and India? Not one vessel escaped the dreadful touch of merchant-marring rocks?

SALANIO: Not a one, my lord. Besides, it should appear, that if he had the present money to discharge Shylock, the devil would not take it.

JESSICA: When I was with him, I have heard him swear that he would rather have Antonio's flesh than twenty times the value of the sum that he did owe him. My lord, if the law, or some authority or power cannot deny him, it will go hard with poor Antonio.

PORTIA: Is it your dear friend that is so in trouble?

BASSANIO: Aye, the dearest friend to me.

PORTIA: Let me see the letter. *(Reads)* Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried and my creditors grow cruel. My estate is very low and my bond to Shylock is now forfeit. Since in paying it, it is impossible that I should live, all debts between you and I are cleared. I should go easy if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure. If your love does not persuade you to come, then let not this letter.

PORTIA: What is the sum he owes to Shylock?

BASSANIO: Three thousand ducats.

PORTIA: What, no more? We'll pay him six thousand, double six thousand, and then triple that, before a friend shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault. First go with me to church and call me wife. Then away to Venice to your friend, for never shall you lie by Portia's side with an unquiet soul. You shall have the 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! O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

BASSANIO: Since I have your good will to go, we will make haste.

[Exeunt]

## *ACT III*

### *SCENE 3*

*Venice. A street.*

[Enter Shylock, Salerio, Antonio, and Audience Member as Gaoler]

SHYLOCK: Gaoler, look to him. This is the fool that lent out money gratis. Gaoler, look to him.

ANTONIO: Good Shylock, hear me.

SHYLOCK: I'll have my bond, speak not against my bond. I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond. You called me a dog before you had a cause, but, since I am a dog, beware my fangs. The Duke shall grant me justice.

ANTONIO: I pray you, hear me speak.

SHYLOCK: I'll have my bond, I will not hear you speak. I'll have my bond, and therefore speak no more. I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool. I'll not shake the head, relent, sigh, and yield to you. Follow me not, I'll have none of your speaking. I will have my bond.

[Exit Shylock]

SALERIO: I think he is a general offence and every man should beat him.

ANTONIO: Leave him be. I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers. He seeks my life and I know his reasons well. I have often delivered many of his forfeitures from his hands. Therefore, he hates me.

SALERIO: I am sure the Duke will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

ANTONIO: The Duke cannot deny the course of law. If it be denied, it will impeach the justice of her state. Therefore, let us go. I pray God, Bassanio comes to see me pay his debt and then, I care not!

[Exeunt]

## *ACT III*

### *SCENE 4*

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

[Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica]

LORENZO: Madam, you show bearing in the absence of your lord. But it is Antonio to whom you show this honor. If you knew what a true gentleman he is, I know you would be prouder of the work than your customary bounty will allow.

PORTIA: I never did repent for doing good, nor shall I now. But this comes too near the praising of myself, therefore no more of it. Hear other things, Lorenzo. I commit into your hands management of my house until my lord's return. For mine own part, I have breathed a secret vow to live in prayer and contemplation, attended only by Nerissa until her husband and my lord's return. There is a monastery two miles off and there will we abide.

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

PORTIA: My people do already know my mind and will acknowledge you and Jessica in place of Lord Bassanio and myself. So, farewell, till we shall meet again.

LORENZO: Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

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

PORTIA: I thank you for your wish and I am well pleased to wish it back on you. Fare you well Jessica. [Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo] Now, come on, Nerissa, I have work in hand that you yet know not of. I have sent a letter to my cousin, Doctor Bellario, and with my plan 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 what we lack. I'll hold you any wager, when we are both accounted like young men, I'll prove the prettier fellow.

NERISSA: What? Shall we turn to men?

PORTIA: Fie, what a question is that. But come, I'll tell you all my whole device when I am in my coach, which stays for us at the park gate. Therefore, haste away.

[Exeunt]

## *ACT IV*

### *SCENE 1*

*Venice. A court of justice.*

[Enter the Duke, Antonio, Bassanio,  
Gratiano, Salanio, and Audience Members]

DUKE: Is Antonio here?

ANTONIO: Ready, so please your grace.

DUKE: I am sorry for you. You have come to answer a stony adversary, an inhuman wretch incapable of pity and empty of any dram of mercy.

ANTONIO: I have heard your grace hath taken great pains to qualify his rigorous course, but since no lawful means can carry me out of his reach, I am prepared to suffer his tyranny and rage with a quietness of spirit.

DUKE: Go one, and call Shylock into the court.

SALANIO: He is ready at the door, my lord.

[Enter Shylock]

DUKE: Make room, and let him stand before us. Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too, that you have but left this fashion of your malice to the last hour. 'Tis thought then you will show mercy. You say you have come here to exact the penalty which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh. Forgive the forfeiture and the principal. Glance an eye of pity on his losses that have of late so huddled on his back. We all expect a gentle answer, Shylock.

SHYLOCK: I have informed your grace of what I purpose, and by our holy Sabbath, have I sworn to have the due and forfeit of my bond. You ask me, why I rather choose to have a weight of flesh than to receive three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that. But to say, it is my humor. Is that an answer? What if my house be troubled with a rat and I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats to have it removed? What, are you answered yet?

BASSANIO: That is no answer to excuse the current of your cruelty, you unfeeling man.

SHYLOCK: I am not bound to please you 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, would you have a serpent sting you twice?

ANTONIO: I pray you, do not question him. You may as well go stand upon the beach and bid the tide forego it's usual height. I do beseech you, make no more offers, use no farther means. Let me have the judgment and Shylock have his will.

BASSANIO: For your three thousand ducats here is six.

SHYLOCK: Were each in six parts and every part a ducat, I would not have them. I would have my bond.

DUKE: How shall you ever hope for mercy, rendering none?

SHYLOCK: What judgment shall I dread? I have done no wrong. You have among you many a purchased slave, which, you use like your dogs and mules, because you bought them. Shall I say to you, let them be free, marry them to your heirs? Why sweat they under your large burdens? Let their beds be made as soft as yours. You will answer 'The slaves are ours.' And so 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 me now, shall I have it?

DUKE: Upon my power, I may dismiss this court. Bellario, a learned doctor, whom I have sent for to determine this comes here today.

SALANIO: My lord, there is a messenger with letters from the doctor, newly come from Padua.

DUKE: Bring us the letters. Call the messenger.

BASSANIO: Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, have courage! Shylock shall have my flesh, blood, bones and all before you shall lose for me one drop of blood.

ANTONIO: I am soon for death. The weakest kind of fruit drops earliest to the ground and so let me. You cannot better be employed, Bassanio, than to live still and write my epitaph.

[Enter Nerissa, dressed like a lawyer's clerk]

DUKE: Came you from Padua, from the good Doctor Bellario?

NERISSA: From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace. *(Presenting a letter)*

BASSANIO: Why do you whet your knife so earnestly?

SHYLOCK: To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

GRATIANO: Not on your sole, but on your soul. Can no prayers pierce you?

SHYLOCK: No, none. None that you have wit enough to make.

GRATIANO: O, be you damned, you hallowed hearted dog!

SHYLOCK: Till you can rail the seal from off my bond, you merely offend your lungs to speak so loudly. Repair your 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 attends here hard by, to know 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.

NERISSA: *(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 of the controversy between Shylock, the money lender and Antonio, the merchant. We turned over many books together. He comes furnished with my opinion and bettered with his own learning, to fill your grace's request in my place. I beseech you, let not his lack of years be an impediment to him, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance.

[Enter Portia, dressed like a doctor of laws]

DUKE: You hear what the learned Bellario writes. And here, I take it, is the doctor come. Give me your hand. Come you from old Doctor Bellario?

PORTIA: I did, my lord.

DUKE: You are welcome here. Take your place. Are you acquainted with the present question in the court?

PORTIA: I am informed thoroughly of the case. Which is the merchant and which the money lender?

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 Venetian law cannot stop 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 Shylock be merciful.

SHYLOCK: On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.

PORTIA: The quality of mercy is not strained. It drops as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blest. It blesses him that gives and him that receives. It is enthroned in the hearts of kings. It is an attribute of God himself. Therefore, though justice be your 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 mercy. I have spoken this to mitigate the justice of your plea, which if you follow, this strict court of Venice must give sentence against the merchant there.

SHYLOCK: My deeds are 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. And I beseech you, curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA: It must not be, there is no power in Venice that can alter a decree thus established. 'Twill be recorded as a precedent and many in error by the same example, will rush to the state. It cannot be.

SHYLOCK: O, wise young judge, how I do honor you!

PORTIA: I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK: Here 'tis, most reverend doctor. Here it is.

PORTIA: Shylock, there's thrice your money offered you.

SHYLOCK: An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven. Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? No, not for Venice.

PORTIA: Then this bond is forfeit and lawfully, Shylock may claim a pound of flesh to be cut off nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful. Take thrice your 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, 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 yourself for his knife.

SHYLOCK: O noble judge! O excellent young man!

PORTIA: For the intent and purpose of the law hath full relation to the penalty, which here appears due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK: 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge! How much more elder you are than your 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.

PORTIA: Have you some surgeon as well, Shylock, to stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

SHYLOCK: Is it so stated in the bond?

PORTIA: It is not so expressed, but what of that? 'Twere good you do so much for charity.

SHYLOCK: I cannot find it. 'Tis not in the bond.

PORTIA: You, merchant, have you anything to say?

ANTONIO: But little. I am armed and well prepared. Give me your hand, Bassanio.

Fare you well! Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you, for fortune shows herself more kind than is her custom. Commend me to your honorable wife. Tell her the process of Antonio's end. Say how I loved you, speak of me fair in death.

Repent only you that you shall lose your friend and I'll not repent that I pay your debt. And if he cuts deeply 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 all the world is not esteemed above your life. I would lose all, ay, sacrifice all here to this devil, to deliver you from him.

PORTIA: Your wife would give you little thanks for that if she were here to hear you make the offer.

GRATIANO: I have a wife whom I love. I would she were in heaven, so she could entreat some power to change this currish, pale, hard-hearted wretch.

NERISSA: 'Tis well you offer it behind her back, the wish would make an unquiet house.

SHYLOCK: We trifle time. I pray you, pursue sentence.

PORTIA: A pound of the merchant's flesh is yours. 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 you here no jot of blood. The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh.' Take then your bond. Take your pound of flesh, but, in the cutting it, if you shed one drop of Antonio's blood, your lands and goods are, by the laws of Venice, confiscated unto the state of Venice.

GRATIANO: O upright judge! Mark him, Shylock. O learned judge!

SHYLOCK: Is that the law?



PORTIA: Yourself shall see the act. For, as you urge justice, be assured you shall have justice and more than you desire.

SHYLOCK: I take his offer then, pay the bond thrice over and let Antonio go free.

BASSANIO: Here is the money.

PORTIA: Soft! Shylock shall have all justice. He shall have nothing but the penalty.

GRATIANO: O upright judge, a learned judge!

PORTIA: Therefore prepare you to cut off the flesh. Shed you no blood, nor cut you less nor more but just a pound of flesh. If you cut more or less than just a pound, be it but so much as division of the twentieth part of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn but in the estimation of a hair, you'll die and all your goods are confiscated. Why do you pause? Go then, take your forfeiture.

SHYLOCK: Give me my principal and let me go.

BASSANIO: I have it ready for you. Here it is.

PORTIA: No, he hath refused it in the open court. He shall have merely his justice and his bond.

SHYLOCK: Shall I not have my principal?

PORTIA: You shall have nothing but the forfeiture, to be taken at your peril, Shylock.

SHYLOCK: Why, then the devil give him good of it! I'll stay no longer.

PORTIA: Tarry. The law hath yet another hold on you. It is enacted in the laws of Venice, if it be proven against an alien that by direct or indirect attempts he seeks the life of any citizen, the party which he does contrive against shall seize one half his goods and the other half comes to the privy coffer of the state. And the offender's life lies at the mercy of the Duke. In which predicament, I say, you stand. For it appears by the proceedings, you have contrived against the very life of the defendant, Antonio. Down therefore and beg mercy of the Duke.

GRATIANO: Beg that you may have leave to hang yourself. And yet, your wealth being forfeit to the state, you are not left the value of a rope. Therefore you must be hanged at the state's expense.

DUKE: You shall see the difference of our spirits, Shylock, I pardon your life before you ask it. For half your wealth, it is Antonio's. The other half comes to the general state.

SHYLOCK: Nay, take my life and all, pardon not that. You take my house when you do take the prop that sustains it. You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live.

PORTIA: What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATIANO: A halter gratis, nothing else, for God's sake.

ANTONIO: So please my lord, the Duke and all the court, I am content. I'll have but one quarter of his total goods. He may have the other half to use, but upon his death, it shall be rendered unto Lorenzo, the gentleman that lately stole his daughter.

DUKE: He shall do this, or else I do recant the pardon that I pronounced here.

PORTIA: Are you contented, Shylock, what do you 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 you gone, but do it. [Exit Shylock] Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

PORTIA: I humbly do beg your grace for pardon. I must be away this night to Padua.

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 her train]

BASSANIO: Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend have by your wisdom been this day acquitted of grievous penalties. For you then, the three thousand ducats, due to Shylock.

ANTONIO: We stand indebted, over and above in love and service to you evermore.

PORTIA: He is well paid that is well satisfied, and I, by delivering you, am satisfied.

So therein I account myself paid in full. I wish you well and so I take my leave.

BASSANIO: Dear sir, I must attempt you further. Take some as a tribute, not as a fee.

PORTIA: You press me, so 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 your love for Antonio 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 that ring.

BASSANIO: There's more that depends on this than on it's value. The dearest ring in Venice will I give you. But not this, I pray you. Pardon me, good sir.

PORTIA: I see, sir, you are liberal in offers. You taught me first to beg and now I think you teach me how a beggar should be answered.

BASSANIO: Good sir, this ring was given to 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 excuse serves many men to save their gifts. If your wife be not a mad woman and if she knew how well I have deserved the ring, she would not hold you an enemy for giving it to me. No then? Well, peace be with you!

[Exeunt Portia and Nerissa]

ANTONIO: My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring. Let his deservings and my love be valued against your wife's commandment.

BASSANIO: Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him. Give him the ring and bring him, if you can, to Antonio's house. Away! Make haste. Come, in the morning will we fly to Belmont. Come, Antonio.

[Exeunt]

# ACT IV

## SCENE 2

*The same. A street.*

[Enter Portia and Nerissa]

PORTIA: Inquire which is Shylock's house. Give him this deed and let him sign it. We'll away tonight and be a day before our husbands. This deed will be welcome to Lorenzo.

[Enter Gratiano]

GRATIANO: Fair sir, you are well overtaken. My Lord Bassanio, upon more advice has sent you here this ring and does entreat your company at dinner.

PORTIA: Alas, dinner cannot be. Though 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)* You may, I'll warrant. We shall have swearing that they did give the rings away to men, but we'll outface them, and outwear them too. *(Aloud)* Away! Make haste. You know where I will tarry.

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

[Exeunt]

# ACT V

## SCENE 1

*Belmont*

[Enter Lorenzo and Jessica, Playing Rock-Paper-Scissors]

JESSICA: You win again. Mmm, here.

[They kiss]

LORENZO: The moon shines bright in such a night as this.

JESSICA: In such a night did Thisbe fearfully overtrip the dew and saw the lion's shadow and ran dismayed away.

LORENZO: In such a night stood Dido with a willow in her hand upon the wild sea banks and waft her love to come again to Carthage.

JESSICA: In such a night, Medea gathered the enchanted herbs that did renew old AEson.

LORENZO: In such a night did Jessica steal away from her father and with an unthrift love ran far from Venice.

JESSICA: In such a night did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well. Stealing her soul with many vows of faith.

[Enter Lancelot and others with cloth, wood, art, etc.]

LANCELOT: Master Lorenzo, ho!

LORENZO: Who calls?

LANCELOT: *(To random Audience Members)* Did you see Master Lorenzo? Master Lorenzo, ho!

LORENZO: Leave your hollering, man. Here.

LANCELOT: Ho! Where? Where?

LORENZO: Here.

LANCELOT: There's a post come from my master. Lord Bassanio will be here ere morning.

LORENZO: Let us pray his quest was successful.

[Lancelot and others redecorate during the remaining of the scene.]

[Enter Portia and Nerissa]

PORTIA: That light we see is burning in my hall, Nerissa. How far that little candle throws his beams! So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

LORENZO: That is the voice, or I am much deceived, of Portia.

PORTIA: He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo, by the bad voice.

LORENZO: Dear lady, welcome home.

PORTIA: We have been praying for our husbands' healths, which speed, we hope, the better for our words. Are they returned?

LORENZO: Madam, they are not yet, but there's been a messenger to signify their coming.

PORTIA: Lorenzo, Jessica, take no note at all of our being absent hence.

[A trumpet sounds]

LORENZO: Your husband is at hand, I hear his trumpet. We are no tell-tales, madam, fear you not.

[Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano]

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 makes a heavy husband and never be Bassanio so for me. You are welcome home, my lord.

BASSANIO: I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend. This is the man. This is the Antonio to whom I am so infinitely bound.

PORTIA: You should in all 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.

GRATIANO: *(To Nerissa)* No, by yonder moon, I swear you do me wrong. In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk.

PORTIA: A quarrel, already! What's the matter?

GRATIANO: About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring that she did give me, whose poetry was 'Love me and leave me not.'

NERISSA: What talk you of the poetry or the value? You swore to me, when I did give it you, that you would wear it till your hour of death and that it should lie with you in your grave. Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths, you should have been respective and have kept it. Gave it a judge's clerk!

GRATIANO: 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 begged it as a fee. I could not for my heart deny him.

PORTIA: I must be plain with you. You are to blame for parting so slightly with your wife's first gift. A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger and so riveted with faith unto your flesh. I gave my love a ring and made him swear never to part with it, and here he stands.

BASSANIO: Ooo, cake! [Bassanio plunges hand into cake]

PORTIA: I dare be sworn, my Lord Bassanio would not leave it nor pluck it from his finger, for all the wealth that the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano, you give your wife a cause of grief. 'Twere given by me, I should be mad at it.

GRATIANO: [Bassanio shoves cake into Gratiano's mouth] My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away to the judge that begged it. Then the boy, his clerk, begged mine. Neither man nor master would take anything but the two rings.

PORTIA: What ring gave you my lord? Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

BASSANIO: If I could add a lie to a fault, I would deny it, but you see my finger has not the ring upon it. It is gone.

PORTIA: Even so void is your false heart of truth. By heaven, I will never come in your bed until I see the ring.

NERISSA: Nor I in yours till I see mine again.

BASSANIO: Sweet Portia, if you did know to whom I gave the ring. If you would know for whom I gave the ring and understand for what I gave it. How unwillingly I left the ring. When nothing 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 you the ring, or your own honor to contain the ring, you would not then have parted with the ring. Nerissa teaches me what to believe. I'll die for it but some woman has the ring.

BASSANIO: No, by my honor, madam, by my soul no woman has it, no one but a civil doctor. He did refuse three thousand ducats from me and begged the ring. I did deny him and suffered 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 forced to send it after him. I was beset with shame. My honor 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 begged me give the ring to the worthy doctor.

PORTIA: Let not that doctor ever come near my house. Since he has the jewel which you did swear to keep, I will become as liberal as you. I'll not deny him anything I have. Know him I shall, I am well sure of it. Watch me like Argus. If you do not, if I be left alone, by mine honor, I'll have that doctor.

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.

ANTONIO: I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

PORTIA: Sir, grieve not. You are welcome notwithstanding.

BASSANIO: Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong. Pardon this fault and by my soul, I swear I'll never more will break an oath with you.

ANTONIO: Good lady, I once did lend my body for his stead. I'll dare be bound again. I pledge my soul that your lord will never more break faith.

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

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

BASSANIO: By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor!

PORTIA: 'Tis true. I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio, for, by this ring, the doctor was with me.

NERISSA: And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano, for that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk, last night was with me.

GRATIANO: Why, this is like the mending of highways in summer, where the ways are fair enough. What, are we cuckolds though we have deserved it?

PORTIA: Speak not so grossly. You are all amazed. Here is a letter, read it at your leisure. It comes from Padua, from Doctor Bellario. There you shall find that Portia was the doctor and Nerissa there her clerk. Lorenzo here shall witness that I set forth as soon as you and even now have just returned. Antonio, you are welcome and I have better news in store for you than you expect. Unseal this letter soon, there you shall find three of your argosies are richly come to harbor. You shall not know by what strange accident I chanced on this letter.

ANTONIO: I am dumb.

BASSANIO: Were you the doctor and I knew you not?

GRATIANO: Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold?

BASSANIO: Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow. When I am absent, then lie with my wife.

ANTONIO: Sweet lady, you have given me life and living, for here I read for certain that my ships are safely come home.

PORTIA: How now, Lorenzo! My clerk hath some good comforts for you as well.

NERISSA: Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee. There I give to youyou're your Jessica from Shylock, your father, a special deed of gift, after his death, of all he dies possessed of.

LORENZO: Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way of starving people.

PORTIA: It is almost morning and yet I am sure you are not satisfied of these events at full. Let us go in and we will answer all things faithfully.

GRATIANO: Let it be so. Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing so sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

[Exeunt]