

# ***The Merchant of Venice***

By William Shakespeare

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with Susan Ruddick - Sarah Blackstone - Charles Darlington

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## **Characters in the Play**

PORIA, an heiress of Belmont

NERISSA, her waiting-gentlewoman

Servants to Portia:

BALTHAZAR

STEPHANO

Suitors to Portia:

Prince of MOROCCO

Prince of ARRAGON

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice

BASSANIO, a Venetian gentleman, suitor to Portia

Companions of Antonio and Bassanio:

SOLANIO

SALARINO

GRATIANO

LORENZO

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio

SHYLOCK, a Jewish moneylender in Venice

JESSICA, his daughter

TUBAL, another Jewish moneylender

LANCELET GOBBO, servant to Shylock and later to Bassanio

OLD GOBBO, Lancelet's father

SALERIO, a messenger from Venice

Jailer

Duke of Venice

Magnificoes of Venice

Servants

Attendants and followers

Messenger

Musicians

## **ACT 1**

### Scene 1

*Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Solanio.*

ANTONIO

In sooth I know not why I am so sad.  
It wearies me, you say it wearies you.  
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,  
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,  
I am to learn.  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me  
That I have much ado to know myself.

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SALARINO

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.

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SOLANIO

Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,  
The better part of my affections would  
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind,  
Piring 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.

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SALARINO My wind cooling my broth  
Would blow me to an ague when I thought  
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.  
I should not see the sandy hourglass run  
But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
And see my wealthy *Andrew* docked 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.

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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.	45
SOLANIO	
Why then you are in love.	
ANTONIO	Fie, fie!
SOLANIO	
Not in love neither? Then let us say you are sad Because you are not merry; and 'twere as easy For you to laugh and leap, and say you are merry Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus, Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time: Some that will evermore peep through their eyes And laugh like parrots at a bagpiper, And other of such vinegar aspect That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.	50
	55
	<i>Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano.</i>
Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman, Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare you well.	60
We leave you now with better company.	
SALARINO	
I would have stayed till I had made you merry, If worthier friends had not prevented me.	
ANTONIO	
Your worth is very dear in my regard. I take it your own business calls on you, And you embrace th' occasion to depart.	65
SALARINO	
Good morrow, my good lords.	
BASSANIO	
Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? Say, when?	70
You grow exceeding strange. Must it be so?	
SALARINO	
We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.	
	<i>Salarino and Solanio exit.</i>
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.	75
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 marvelously changed.	80
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,
	85

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      90  
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio  
(I love thee, and 'tis my love that speaks):  
There are a sort of men whose visages  
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond  
And do a willful stillness entertain      95  
With purpose to be dressed 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      100  
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.      105  
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 you well a while.  
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.      110

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      115  
tongue.

ANTONIO  
Fare you well. I'll grow a talker for this gear.

GRATIANO  
Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable  
In a neat's tongue dried and a maid not vendible.  
*Gratiano and Lorenzo exit.*

ANTONIO Is that anything now?      120  
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.      125

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

BASSANIO  
'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate      130  
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.	135
<b>ANTONIO</b> I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it; And if it stand, as you yourself still do, Within the eye of honor, be assured My purse, my person, my extremest means Lie all unlocked to your occasions.	140
<b>BASSANIO</b> In my school days, when I had lost one shaft, I shot his fellow of the selfsame flight The selfsame way with more advisèd 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 willful 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.	145
<b>ANTONIO</b> You know me well, and herein spend but time To wind about my love with circumstance; And out of doubt you do me now more wrong In making question of my uttermost Than if you had made waste of all I have. Then do but say to me what I should do That in your knowledge may by me be done, And I am prest unto it. Therefore speak.	150
<b>BASSANIO</b> 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 Renownèd suitors, and her sunny locks Hang on her temples like a golden fleece, Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strond, And many Jasons come in quest of her. O my Antonio, had I but the means To hold a rival place with one of them, I have a mind presages me such thrift That I should questionless be fortunate!	155
<b>ANTONIO</b> Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea; Neither have I money nor commodity	160
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	180
	185

To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth:  
Try what my credit can in Venice do;  
That shall be racked 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.

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*They exit.*

Scene 2  
*Enter Portia with her waiting woman Nerissa.*

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

NERISSA You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries  
were in the same abundance as your good fortunes  
are. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that  
surfeit with too much as they that starve with  
nothing. It is no mean happiness, therefore, to be  
seated in the mean. Superfluity comes sooner by  
white hairs, but competency lives longer.

5

PORȚIA Good sentences, and well pronounced.

10

NERISSA They would be better if well followed.

PORȚIA If to do were as easy as to know what were  
good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor  
men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine  
that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach  
twenty what were good to be done than to be one of  
the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain  
may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper  
leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the  
youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the  
cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to  
choose me a husband. O, me, the word "choose"! I  
may neither choose who I would nor refuse who I  
dislike. So is the will of a living daughter curbed by  
the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that  
I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

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NERISSA Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men  
at their death have good inspirations. Therefore the  
lottery that he hath devised in these three chests of  
gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his  
meaning chooses you, will no doubt never be  
chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly  
love. But what warmth is there in your affection  
towards any of these princely suitors that are already  
come?

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PORȚIA I pray thee, overname 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.

PORȚIA 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.

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NERISSA	Then is there the County Palatine.	45
PORcia	He doth nothing but frown, as who should say “An you will not have me, choose.” He hears merry tales and smiles not. I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannly 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!	50
NERISSA	How say you by the French lord, Monsieur Le Bon?	55
PORcia	God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker, but he!—why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan’s, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine. He is every man in no man. If a throstle sing, he falls straight a-cap’ring. He will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands! If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.	60
NERISSA	What say you then to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?	65
PORcia	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 everywhere.	70
NERISSA	What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbor?	75
PORcia	That he hath a neighborly 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.	80
NERISSA	How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony’s nephew?	85
PORcia	Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk. When he is best he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst he is little better than a beast. An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.	90
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.	95
PORcia	Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.	100
NERISSA	You need not fear, lady, the having any of	

these lords. They have acquainted me with their determinations, which is indeed to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets. 105  
PORTIA If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence. And I pray God grant them a fair departure! 110  
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 Marquess of Montferrat?  
PORTIA Yes, yes, it was Bassanio—as I think so was he called. 115  
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. 120

*Enter a Servingman.*

How now, what news?  
SERVINGMAN The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave. And there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his master will be here tonight. 125  
PORTIA If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach. If he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrieve me than wive me.  
Come, Nerissa. *To Servingman.* Sirrah, go before.— Whilst we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

*They exit.*

Scene 3  
*Enter Bassanio with Shylock the Jew.*

SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats, well.  
BASSANIO Ay, sir, for three months.  
SHYLOCK For three months, well.  
BASSANIO For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound. 5  
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. 10  
BASSANIO Your answer to that?  
SHYLOCK Antonio is a good man.  
BASSANIO Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK Ho, no, no, no, no! My meaning in saying he  
is a good man is to have you understand me that he  
is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he  
hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the  
Indies. I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto,  
he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and  
other ventures he hath 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. 15  
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? 20  
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? 25

*Enter Antonio.*

BASSANIO This is Signior Antonio. 40  
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, 45  
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.” Cursèd be my tribe  
If I forgive him! 50  
BASSANIO Shylock, do you hear?  
SHYLOCK  
I am debating of my present store,  
And, by the near guess of my memory, 55  
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! 60  
Your Worship was the last man in our mouths.  
ANTONIO  
Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow  
By taking nor by giving of excess,

Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend, I'll break a custom. <i>To Bassanio.</i> Is he yet possessed	65
How much you would?	
SHYLOCK Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.	70
ANTONIO And for three months.	
SHYLOCK	
I had forgot—three months. <i>To Bassanio.</i>	
You told me so.—	
Well then, your bond. And let me see—but hear you:	75
Methoughts 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	80
(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.	85
When Laban and himself were compromised	
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied	
Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes being rank	
In end of autumn turnèd to the rams,	
And when the work of generation was	90
Between these woolly breeders in the act,	
The skillful shepherd pilled 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	95
Fall parti-colored lambs, and those were Jacob's.	
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;	
And thrift is blessing if men steal it not.	
ANTONIO	
This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for,	
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,	100
But swayed and fashioned 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—	105
ANTONIO, <i>aside to Bassanio</i>	
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.	110
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?	115
SHYLOCK	
Signior Antonio, many a time and oft In the Rialto you have rated me About my moneys and my usances. Still have I borne it with a patient shrug (For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe).	120
You call me misbeliever, cutthroat dog, And spet 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	125
"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	130
"Hath a dog money? Is it possible A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" Or Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key, With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness, Say this: "Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday	135
last; You spurned me such a day; another time You called me 'dog'; and for these courtesies I'll lend you thus much moneys"?	
ANTONIO	
I am as like to call thee so again, To spet 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,	140
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face Exact the penalty.	145
SHYLOCK Why, look you how you storm! I would be friends with you and have your love, Forget the shames that you have stained 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.	150
BASSANIO This were kindness!	
SHYLOCK This kindness will I show.	155
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 Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit	160
Be nominated for an equal pound Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken In what part of your body pleaseth me.	
ANTONIO	
Content, in faith. I'll seal to such a bond,	

And say there is much kindness in the Jew.	165
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	170
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	175
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 favor I extend this friendship.	180
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,	185
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,	
See to my house left in the fearful guard	
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently	
I'll be with you.	
ANTONIO Hie thee, gentle Jew.	190
	<i>Shylock exits.</i>
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.	
	<i>They exit.</i>

## ACT 2

### Scene 1

*Enter the Prince of Morocco, a tawny Moor all in white, and three or four followers accordingly, with Portia, Nerissa, and their train.*

MOROCCO

Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,  
To whom I am a neighbor and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles, 5  
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 feared the valiant; by my love I swear  
The best regarded virgins of our clime 10  
Have loved it too. I would not change this hue  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

PORȚIA

In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;  
Besides, the lott'ry of my destiny 15  
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, renownèd prince, then stood as fair 20  
As any comer I have looked on yet  
For my affection.

MOROCCO Even for that I thank you.

Therefore I pray you lead me to the caskets  
To try my fortune. By this scimitar 25  
That slew the Sophy and a Persian prince,  
That won three fields of Sultan Solyman,  
I would o'erstare the sternest eyes that look,  
Outbrave the heart most daring on the Earth,  
Pluck the young sucking cubs from the she-bear, 30  
Yea, mock the lion when he roars for prey,  
To win thee, lady. But, alas the while!  
If Hercules and Lychas play at dice  
Which is the better man, the greater throw  
May turn by fortune from the weaker hand; 35  
So is Alcides beaten by his page,  
And so may I, blind Fortune leading me,  
Miss that which one unworthier may attain,  
And die with grieving.

PORȚIA You must take your chance 40  
And either not attempt to choose at all  
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong  
Never to speak to lady afterward  
In way of marriage. Therefore be advised.

MOROCCO

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

45

PORTIA

First, forward to the temple. After dinner

Your hazard shall be made.

MOROCCO Good fortune then,

To make me blest—or cursed'st among men!

*They exit.*

Scene 2

*Enter Lancelet Gobbo the Clown, alone.*

LANCELET 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, Lancelet Gobbo, good Lancelet," or "good Gobbo," or "good Lancelet Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says "No. Take heed, honest Lancelet, take heed, honest Gobbo," or, as aforesaid, "honest Lancelet Gobbo, do not run; scorn running with thy heels." Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack. "Fia!" says the fiend. "Away!" says the fiend. "For the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run!" Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me "My honest friend Lancelet, being an honest man's son"—or rather, an honest woman's son, for indeed my father did something smack, something grow to—he had a kind of taste—well, my conscience says "Lancelet, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not," says my conscience. "Conscience," say I, "you counsel well." "Fiend," say I, "you counsel well." To be 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 fiend, who (saving your reverence) is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnation, and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel. I will run, fiend. My heels are at your commandment. I will run.

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*Enter old Gobbo with a basket.*

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

LANCELET, *aside* O heavens, this is my true begotten father, who being more than sandblind, high gravelblind, 35 knows me not. I will try confusions with him.

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

LANCELET 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,

40

	but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.	
GOBBO	Be God's sonies, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Lancelet, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?	45
LANCELET	Talk you of young Master Lancelet? <i>Aside</i> . Mark me now, now will I raise the waters.—Talk you of young Master Lancelet?	
GOBBO	No master, sir, but a poor man's son. His father, though I say 't, is an honest exceeding poor man and, God be thanked, well to live.	50
LANCELET	Well, let his father be what he will, we talk of young Master Lancelet.	
GOBBO	Your Worship's friend, and Lancelet, sir.	
LANCELET	But I pray you, <i>ergo</i> , old man, <i>ergo</i> , I beseech you, talk you of young Master Lancelet?	55
GOBBO	Of Lancelet, an 't please your mastership.	
LANCELET	<i>Ergo</i> , Master Lancelet. Talk not of Master Lancelet, 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.	60
GOBBO	Marry, God forbid! The boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.	65
LANCELET, <i>aside</i>	Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop?—Do you know me, father?	
GOBBO	Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman. But I pray you tell me, is my boy, God rest his soul, alive or dead?	70
LANCELET	Do you not know me, father?	
GOBBO	Alack, sir, I am sandblind. I know you not.	
LANCELET	Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me. It is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son. <i>He kneels</i> . Give me your blessing. Truth will come to light, murder cannot be hid long—a man's son may, but in the end, truth will out.	75
GOBBO	Pray you, sir, stand up! I am sure you are not Lancelet my boy.	80
LANCELET	Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing. I am Lancelet, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.	85
GOBBO	I cannot think you are my son.	
LANCELET	I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Lancelet, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother.	
GOBBO	Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn if thou be Lancelet, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshiped 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.	90
LANCELET, <i>standing up</i>	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	95

last saw him.  
GOBBO Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou  
and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. 100  
How 'gree you now?  
LANCELET 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 105  
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 110  
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 a follower or two.*

BASSANIO, *to an Attendant* You may do so, but let it be  
so hastened that supper be ready at the farthest by five  
of the clock. See these letters delivered, put the 115  
liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come  
anon to my lodging. *The Attendant exits.*

LANCELET To him, father.  
GOBBO, *to Bassanio* God bless your Worship.  
BASSANIO Gramercy. Wouldst thou aught with me? 120  
GOBBO Here's my son, sir, a poor boy—

LANCELET Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man,  
that would, sir, as my father shall specify—  
GOBBO He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say,  
to serve— 125

LANCELET Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the  
Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify—  
GOBBO His master and he (saving your Worship's  
reverence) are scarce cater-cousins—

LANCELET To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, 130  
having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my  
father being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto  
you—

GOBBO I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow  
upon your Worship, and my suit is— 135

LANCELET 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? 140

LANCELET Serve you, sir.

GOBBO That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

BASSANIO, *to Lancelet*

I know thee well. Thou hast obtained thy suit.  
Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,  
And hath preferred thee, if it be preferment 145  
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

LANCELET 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." 150

BASSANIO

Thou speak'st it well.—Go, father, with thy son.—  
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire  
My lodging out. *To an Attendant.* Give him a livery  
More guarded than his fellows'. See it done.

*Attendant exits. Bassanio and Leonardo talk apart.*

LANCELET Father, in. I cannot get a service, no! I have 155

ne'er a tongue in my head! Well, *studying his palm*  
if any man in Italy have a fairer table which doth  
offer to swear upon a book—I shall have good  
fortune, go to! Here's a simple line of life. Here's a  
small trifle of wives—alas, fifteen wives is nothing; 160  
eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in  
for one man—and then to 'scape drowning  
thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a  
featherbed! Here are simple 'scapes. Well, if Fortune  
be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear. 165  
Father, come. I'll take my leave of the Jew in the  
twinkling. *Lancelet and old Gobbo exit.*

BASSANIO

I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this.

*Handing him a paper.*

These things being bought and orderly bestowed,  
Return in haste, for I do feast tonight 170  
My best esteemed acquaintance. Hie thee, go.

LEONARDO

My best endeavors shall be done herein.

*Enter Gratiano.*

GRATIANO, *to Leonardo* Where's your master?

LEONARDO Yonder, sir, he walks. *Leonardo exits.*

GRATIANO Signior Bassanio! 175

BASSANIO Gratiano!

GRATIANO I have suit to you.

BASSANIO You have obtained it.

GRATIANO You must not deny me. I must go with you  
to Belmont. 180

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 185  
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 misconstered in the place I go to, 190  
And lose my hopes.

GRATIANO Signior Bassanio, hear me.

If I do not put on a sober habit,  
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,  
Wear prayer books in my pocket, look demurely,  
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes 195

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.	200
BASSANIO Well, we shall see your bearing.	
GRATIANO	
Nay, but I bar tonight. You shall not gauge me	
By what we do tonight.	
BASSANIO No, that were pity.	
I would entreat you rather to put on	205
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.	210
They exit.	

## Scene 3

*Enter Jessica and Lancelet Gobbo.*

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, Lancelet, 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.

LANCELET Adieu. Tears exhibit my tongue, most beautiful 10  
pagan, most sweet Jew. If a Christian do not  
play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived.  
But adieu. These foolish drops do something drown  
my manly spirit. Adieu.

JESSICA Farewell, good Lancelet. 15

*Lancelet exits.*

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.

*She exits.*

## Scene 4

*Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, 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.

SALARINO

We have not spoke us yet of torchbearers.

5

SOLANIO

'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered,  
And better in my mind not undertook.

LORENZO

'Tis now but four o'clock. We have two hours  
To furnish us.

*Enter Lancelet.*

Friend Lancelet, what's the news?

10

LANCELET An it shall please you to break up this, it  
shall seem to signify. *Handing him Jessica's letter.*

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.

15

GRATIANO Love news, in faith!

LANCELET By your leave, sir.

LORENZO Whither goest thou?

LANCELET Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew to  
sup tonight with my new master the Christian.

20

LORENZO

Hold here, take this. *Giving him money.* Tell gentle  
Jessica

I will not fail her. Speak it privately.

*Lancelet exits.*

Go, gentlemen,

Will you prepare you for this masque tonight?

25

I am provided of a torchbearer.

SALARINO

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

SOLANIO

And so will I.

LORENZO Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

30

SALARINO 'Tis good we do so.

*Salarino and Solanio exit.*

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 furnished with,

35

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,

40

That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

Come, go with me. Peruse this as thou goest;

*Handing him the letter.*

Fair Jessica shall be my torchbearer.

*They exit.*

Scene 5  
*Enter Shylock, the Jew, and Lancelet,  
his man that was, the Clown.*

SHYLOCK

Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,  
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio.—  
What, Jessica!—Thou shalt not gormandize  
As thou hast done with me—what, Jessica!—  
And sleep, and snore, and rend apparel out.—

5

Why, Jessica, I say!

LANCELET Why, Jessica!

SHYLOCK

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

LANCELET Your Worship was wont to tell me I could  
do nothing without bidding.

10

*Enter Jessica.*

JESSICA Call you? What is your will?

SHYLOCK

I am bid forth to supper, Jessica.  
There are my keys.—But wherefore should I go?  
I am not bid for love. They flatter me.  
But yet I'll go in hate, to feed upon  
The prodigal Christian.—Jessica, my girl,  
Look to my house.—I am right loath to go.  
There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,  
For I did dream of money bags tonight.

15

LANCELET I beseech you, sir, go. My young master  
doth expect your reproach.

20

SHYLOCK So do I his.

LANCELET And they have conspired together—I will  
not say you shall see a masque, but if you do, then it  
was not for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on  
Black Monday last, at six o'clock i' th' morning,  
falling out that year on Ash Wednesday was four  
year in th' afternoon.

25

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

30

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LANCELET I will go before, sir. *Aside to Jessica.* Mistress,  
look out at window for all this.

There will come a Christian by

Will be worth a Jewess' eye.

He exits.

40

SHYLOCK

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

45

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 wildcat. Drones hive not with me,  
Therefore I part with him, and part with him  
To one that I would have him help to waste  
His borrowed purse. Well, Jessica, go in.  
Perhaps I will return immediately.

Do as I bid you. Shut doors after you.

Fast bind, fast find—

55

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.

*He exits.*

JESSICA

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

*She exits.*

### Scene 6

*Enter the masquers, Gratiano and Salarino.*

GRATIANO

This is the penthouse under which Lorenzo  
Desired us to make stand.

SALARINO His hour is almost past.

GRATIANO

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

5

SALARINO

O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly  
To seal love's bonds new-made than they are wont  
To keep obligèd 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 chasèd than enjoyed.

10

How like a younger or a prodigal  
The scarfèd bark puts from her native bay,  
Hugged and embracèd by the strumpet wind;  
How like the prodigal doth she return  
With overweathered ribs and raggèd sails,  
Lean, rent, and beggared by the strumpet wind!

15

20

*Enter Lorenzo.*

SALARINO

Here comes Lorenzo. More of this hereafter.

LORENZO

Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode.  
Not I but my affairs have made you wait.  
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,

I'll watch as long for you then. Approach.  
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! Who's within?

25

*Enter Jessica above, dressed as a boy.*

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 transformèd to a boy.

30

35

40

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.

45

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 stayed for at Bassanio's feast.

50

JESSICA

I will make fast the doors and gild myself  
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

*Jessica exits, above.*

GRATIANO

Now, by my hood, a gentle and no Jew!

LORENZO

Beshrew me but I love her heartily,  
For she is wise, if I can judge of her,  
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true,  
And true she is, as she hath proved herself.  
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,  
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

55

*Enter Jessica, below.*

What, art thou come? On, gentleman, away!  
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

60

*All but Gratiano exit.*

*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. 65  
No masque tonight; the wind is come about;  
Bassanio presently will go aboard.  
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.  
GRATIANO  
I am glad on 't. I desire no more delight  
Than to be under sail and gone tonight. 70  
*They exit.*

Scene 7  
*Enter Portia with the Prince of Morocco and both  
their trains.*

PORȚIA  
Go, draw aside the curtains and discover  
The several caskets to this noble prince.  
*A curtain is drawn.*  
Now make your choice.  
MOROCCO  
This first, of gold, who this inscription bears,  
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men 5  
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 10  
hath."  
How shall I know if I do choose the right?  
PORȚIA  
The one of them contains my picture, prince.  
If you choose that, then I am yours withal. 15  
MOROCCO  
Some god direct my judgment! Let me see.  
I will survey th' inscriptions back again.  
What says this leaden casket?  
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he 20  
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. 25  
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. 30  
If thou beest rated by thy estimation,  
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough  
May not extend so far as to the lady.

And yet to be afeard of my deserving  
 Were but a weak disabling of myself. 35  
 As much as I deserve—why, that's the lady!  
 I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,  
 In graces, and in qualities of breeding,  
 But more than these, in love I do deserve.  
 What if I strayed no farther, but chose here? 40  
 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 45  
 To kiss this shrine, this mortal, breathing saint.  
 The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds  
 Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now  
 For princes to come view fair Portia.  
 The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head 50  
 Spets 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 55  
 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 60  
 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 insculped upon;  
 But here an angel in a golden bed  
 Lies all within.—Deliver me the key. 65  
 Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may.

#### PORTRIA

There, take it, prince. *Handing him the key.* And if  
     my form lie there,  
 Then I am yours.

*Morocco opens the gold casket.*

MOROCCO O hell! What have we here? 70  
 A carrion death within whose empty eye  
 There is a written scroll. I'll read the writing:  
     *All that glisters is not gold—*  
     *Often have you heard that told.*  
     *Many a man his life hath sold*  
     *But my outside to behold.*  
     *Gilded tombs do worms infold.*  
     *Had you been as wise as bold,*  
     *Young in limbs, in judgment old,*  
     *Your answer had not been encrossed.* 75  
     *Fare you well, your suit is cold.*  
 Cold indeed and labor lost!  
 Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost.  
 Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart  
 To take a tedious leave. Thus losers part. 80  
     *He exits, with his train.* 85

POR<sup>TIA</sup>

A gentle riddance! Draw the curtains, go.  
Let all of his complexion choose me so.

*They exit.*

Scene 8  
*Enter Salarino and Solanio.*

SALARINO

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.

5

SALARINO

He came too late; the ship was under sail.  
But there the Duke was given to understand  
That in a gondola were seen together  
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.  
Besides, Antonio certified the Duke  
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

10

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 sealèd bag, two sealèd bags of ducats,  
Of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter,  
And jewels—two stones, two rich and precious  
stones—  
Stol'n by my daughter! Justice! Find the girl!  
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats."

15

SALARINO

Why, all the boys in Venice follow him,  
Crying "His stones, his daughter, and his ducats."

25

SOLANIO

Let good Antonio look he keep his day,  
Or he shall pay for this.

SALARINO Marry, well remembered.

I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday  
Who told me, in the Narrow Seas that part  
The French and English, there miscarrièd  
A vessel of our country richly fraught.  
I thought upon Antonio when he told me,  
And wished in silence that it were not his.

30

SOLANIO

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

35

SALARINO

A kinder gentleman treads not the Earth.  
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part.  
Bassanio told him he would make some speed  
Of his return. He answered "Do not so."

40

Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,  
But stay the very riping of the time;  
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,  
Let it not enter in your mind of love.  
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts  
To courtship and such fair ostents of love  
As shall conveniently become you there."  
And even there, his eye being big with tears,  
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,  
And with affection wondrous sensible  
He wrung Bassanio's hand—and so they parted.

45

50

SOLANIO

I think he only loves the world for him.  
I pray thee, let us go and find him out  
And quicken his embracèd heaviness  
With some delight or other.

55

SALARINO Do we so.

*They exit.*

Scene 9  
*Enter Nerissa and a Servitor.*

NERISSA

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

*Enter the Prince of Arragon, his train, and Portia.*

PORȚIA

Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince.  
If you choose that wherein I am contained,  
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemnized.  
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,  
You must be gone from hence immediately.

5

ARRAGON

I am enjoined by oath to observe three things:  
First, never to unfold to anyone  
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.

10

15

PORȚIA

To these injunctions everyone doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

ARRAGON

And so have I addressed me. Fortune now  
To my heart's hope! Gold, silver, and base lead.  
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he  
hath."

20

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."

25

What many men desire—that "many" may be

meant

By the fool multitude that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach,  
Which pries not to th' interior, but like the martlet  
Builds in the weather on the outward wall, 30  
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. 35  
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 40  
To cozen fortune and be honorable  
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume  
To wear an undeservèd dignity.  
O, that estates, degrees, and offices  
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honor 45  
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 gleaned  
From the true seed of honor? And how much honor 50  
Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times,  
To be new varnished? 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, 55

*He is given a key.*

And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

*He opens the silver casket.*

PORIA

Too long a pause for that which you find there.

ARRAGON

What's here? The portrait of a blinking idiot  
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.—  
How much unlike art thou to Portia! 60  
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? 65

PORIA

To offend and judge are distinct offices  
And of opposèd natures.

ARRAGON What is here?

*He reads.*

*The fire seven times tried this;  
Seven times tried that judgment is  
That did never choose amiss.  
Some there be that shadows kiss;  
Such have but a shadow's bliss.  
There be fools alive, iwis,  
Silvered o'er—and so was this.* 70  
75

<i>Take what wife you will to bed, I will ever be your head. So begone; you are sped.</i>	
Still more fool I shall appear By the time I linger here.	80
With one fool's head I came to woo, But I go away with two.	
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath, Patiently to bear my wroth.	<i>He exits with his train.</i>
PORȚIA	
Thus hath the candle singed the moth.	85
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.	
PORȚIA Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.	90
<i>Enter Messenger.</i>	
MESSENGER	
Where is my lady?	
PORȚIA Here. What would my lord?	
MESSENGER	
Madam, there is alighted at your gate A young Venetian, one that comes before	95
To signify th' 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.	100
A day in April never came so sweet, To show how costly summer was at hand,	
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord.	
PORȚIA	
No more, I pray thee. I am half afeard Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,	105
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!	
<i>They exit.</i>	

## ACT 3

### Scene 1 *Enter Solanio and Salarino.*

SOLANIO Now, what news on the Rialto?  
SALARINO Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio  
hath a ship of rich lading wracked 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. 5  
SOLANIO I would she were as lying a gossip in that as  
ever knapped ginger or made her neighbors believe  
she wept for the death of a third husband. But  
it is true, without any slips of prolixity or crossing  
the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio,  
the honest Antonio—O, that I had a title good  
enough to keep his name company!— 10  
SALARINO Come, the full stop.  
SOLANIO Ha, what sayest thou? Why, the end is, he  
hath lost a ship.  
SALARINO 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. 20

### *Enter Shylock.*

How now, Shylock, what news among the  
merchants?  
SHYLOCK You knew, none so well, none so well as you, 25  
of my daughter’s flight.  
SALARINO 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 fledge, and then it is the complexion of them  
all to leave the dam. 30  
SHYLOCK She is damned for it.  
SALARINO 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? 35  
SHYLOCK I say my daughter is my flesh and my blood.  
SALARINO 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? 40  
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 45

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 cur'sy; let  
him look to his bond.

SALARINO Why, I am sure if he forfeit, thou wilt not                   50  
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                   55  
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                   60  
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                   65  
we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will  
resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian,  
what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong  
a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian  
example? Why, revenge! The villainy you teach me I                   70  
will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the  
instruction.

*Enter a man from Antonio.*

SERVINGMAN Gentlemen, my master Antonio is at his  
house and desires to speak with you both.

SALARINO We have been up and down to seek him.                   75

*Enter Tubal.*

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

*Salarino, Solanio, and the Servingman exit.*

SHYLOCK How now, Tubal, what news from Genoa?  
Hast thou found my daughter?   80

TUBAL I often came where I did hear of her, but  
cannot find her.

SHYLOCK Why, there, there, there! A diamond  
gone cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt!  
The curse never fell upon our nation till now, I                   85  
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                   90  
loss upon loss! The thief gone with so much, and so  
much to find the thief, and no satisfaction, no  
revenge, nor no ill luck stirring but what lights a' my

shoulders, no sighs but a' my breathing, no tears but a' my shedding.	95
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.	100
SHYLOCK I thank God, I thank God! Is it true, is it true?	
TUBAL I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wrack.	
SHYLOCK I thank thee, good Tubal. Good news, good news! Ha, ha, heard in Genoa—	105
TUBAL Your daughter spent in Genoa, as I heard, one night fourscore ducats.	
SHYLOCK Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting, fourscore ducats!	110
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.	115
TUBAL One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.	
SHYLOCK Out upon her! Thou tortur'est 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.	120
TUBAL But Antonio is certainly undone.	
SHYLOCK Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer. Bespeak him a fortnight before. I will have the heart of him if he forfeit, for were he out of Venice I can make what merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue. Go, good Tubal, at our synagogue, Tubal.	125

*They exit.*

Scene 2  
*Enter Bassanio, Portia, and all their trains, Gratiano,  
Nerissa.*

PORIA	
I pray you tarry, pause a day or two Before you hazard, for in choosing wrong I lose your company; therefore forbear a while. There's something tells me (but it is not love) I would not lose you, and you know yourself Hate counsels not in such a quality. But lest you should not understand me well (And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought)	5
I would detain you here some month or two Before you venture for me. I could teach you How to choose right, but then I am forsworn. So will I never be. So may you miss me. But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin, That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,	10

They have o'erlooked me and divided me. 15  
One half of me is yours, the other half yours—  
Mine own, I would say—but if mine, then yours,  
And so all yours. O, these naughty times  
Puts bars between the owners and their rights!  
And so though yours, not yours. Prove it so, 20  
Let Fortune go to hell for it, not I.  
I speak too long, but 'tis to peize the time,  
To eche it, and to draw it out in length,  
To stay you from election.

BASSANIO Let me choose, 25  
For as I am, I live upon the rack.

PORcia  
Upon the rack, Bassanio? Then confess  
What treason there is mingled with your love.

BASSANIO  
None but that ugly treason of mistrust,  
Which makes me fear th' enjoying of my love. 30  
There may as well be amity and life  
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

PORcia  
Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack  
Where men enforcèd do speak anything.

BASSANIO  
Promise me life and I'll confess the truth. 35

PORcia  
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! 40  
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

PORcia  
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 doth make his choice. 45  
Then if he lose he makes a swanlike end,  
Fading in music. That the comparison  
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream  
And wat'ry deathbed for him. He may win,  
And what is music then? Then music is 50  
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow  
To a new-crownèd 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, 55  
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, 60  
With blearèd visages, come forth to view  
The issue of th' exploit. Go, Hercules!  
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay  
I view the fight than thou that mak'st the fray.

*A song the whilst Bassanio comments on  
the caskets to himself.*

<i>Tell me where is fancy bred, Or in the heart, or in the head? How begot, how nourishèd? Reply, reply. It is engendered in the eye, With gazing fed, and fancy dies In the cradle where it lies. Let us all ring fancy's knell. I'll begin it.—Ding, dong, bell.</i>	65
ALL <i>Ding, dong, bell.</i>	
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 damnèd 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 searched have livers white as milk, And these assume but valor'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 crispèd snaky golden locks, Which maketh such wanton gambols with the wind Upon supposèd fairness, often known To be the dowry of a second head, The skull that bred them in the sepulcher. Thus ornament is but the guilèd 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, then, thou gaudy gold, Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.	75
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge 'Tween man and man. But thou, thou meager lead, Which rather threaten'st than dost promise aught, Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence, And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!	80
	85
	90
	95
	100
	105
	110

*Bassanio is given a key.*

PORȚIA, *aside*

How all the other passions fleet to air,  
As doubtful thoughts and rash embraced despair,

And shudd'ring fear, and green-eyed jealousy!  
O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy,  
In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess!                          115  
I feel too much thy blessing. Make it less,  
For fear I surfeit.

*Bassanio opens the lead casket.*

BASSANIO What find I here?  
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demigod  
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?                          120  
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
Seem they in motion? Here are severed 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                          125  
A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men  
Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes!  
How could he see to do them? Having made one,  
Methinks it should have power to steal both his  
And leave itself unfurnished. Yet look how far                          130  
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.  
*He reads the scroll.*

*You that choose not by the view*                          135  
*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,*                          140  
*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                          145  
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
Hearing applause and universal shout,  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no,  
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I even so,                          150  
As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.

PORIA  
You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,  
Such as I am. Though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish                          155  
To wish myself much better, yet for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself,  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times  
More rich, that only to stand high in your account  
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,                          160  
Exceed account. But the full sum of me  
Is sum of something, which, to term in gross,  
Is an unlessoned girl, unschooled, unpracticed;  
Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
But she may learn; happier than this,                          165

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      170  
Is now converted. But now I was the lord  
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,  
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,  
This house, these servants, and this same myself  
Are yours, my lord's. I give them with this ring,      175  
*Handing him a 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,      180  
And there is such confusion in my powers  
As after some oration fairly spoke  
By a belovèd prince there doth appear  
Among the buzzing pleasèd multitude,  
Where every something being blent together      185  
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy  
Expressed and not expressed. 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,      190  
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,      195  
For I am sure you can wish none from me.  
And when your honors 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.      200  
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 caskets there,      205  
And so did mine, too, as the matter falls.  
For wooing here until I sweat again,  
And swearing till my very roof was dry  
With oaths of love, at last (if promise last)  
I got a promise of this fair one here      210  
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? 215

GRATIANO Yes, faith, my lord.

BASSANIO

Our feast shall be much honored in your marriage.

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

NERISSA What, and stake down? 220

GRATIANO No, we shall ne'er win at that sport and stake down.

*Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salerio, a messenger from Venice.*

But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?

What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

BASSANIO

Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither— 225

If that the youth of my new int'rest here

Have power to bid you welcome. *To Portia.* By your leave,

I bid my very friends and countrymen,

Sweet Portia, welcome. 230

PORȚIA

So do I, my lord. They are entirely welcome.

LORENZO, *to Bassanio*

I thank your Honor. 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 235

To come with him along.

SALERIO I did, my lord,

And I have reason for it. *Handing him a paper.*

Signior Antonio

Commands him to you. 240

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. 245

*Bassanio opens the letter.*

GRATIANO

Nerissa, cheer yond stranger, bid her welcome.—

Your hand, Salerio. What's the news from Venice?

How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?

I know he will be glad of our success.

We are the Jasons, we have won the Fleece. 250

SALERIO

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

PORȚIA

There are some shrewd contents in yond same  
paper

That steals the color from Bassanio's cheek.

Some dear friend dead, else nothing in the world 255

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.	260
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	265
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	270
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,	275
And every word in it a gaping wound	
Issuing life blood.—But is it true, Salerio?	
Hath all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?	
From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,	
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India,	280
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch	
Of merchant-marrying rocks?	
SALERIO Not one, my lord.	
Besides, it should appear that if he had	
The present money to discharge the Jew,	285
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	290
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.	295
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,	300
If law, authority, and power deny not,	
It will go hard with poor Antonio.	
PORIA	
Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?	
BASSANIO	
The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,	
The best conditioned and unwearied spirit	305
In doing courtesies, and one in whom	
The ancient Roman honor more appears	
Than any that draws breath in Italy.	
PORIA What sum owes he the Jew?	

BASSANIO

For me, three thousand ducats.

310

PORIA What, no more?

Pay him six thousand and deface the bond.

Double six thousand and then treble that,

Before a friend of this description

Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.

315

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.

320

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;

325

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.*

330

PORIA

O love, dispatch all business and begone!

335

BASSANIO

Since I have your good leave to go away,

I will make haste. But till I come again,

No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,

Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

*They exit.*

### Scene 3

*Enter Shylock, the Jew, and Solanio, and Antonio,  
and the Jailer.*

SHYLOCK

Jailer, look to him. Tell not me of mercy.

This is the fool that lent out money gratis.

Jailer, look to him.

ANTONIO Hear me yet, good Shylock—

SHYLOCK

I'll have my bond. Speak not against my bond.

5

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 jailer, that thou art so fond

10

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,	15
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield	
To Christian intercessors. Follow not!	
I'll have no speaking. I will have my bond.	He exits.
SOLANIO	
It is the most impenetrable cur	
That ever kept with men.	20
ANTONIO Let him alone.	
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.	
He seeks my life. His reason well I know:	
I oft delivered from his forfeitures	
Many that have at times made moan to me.	25
Therefore he hates me.	
SOLANIO I am sure the Duke	
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.	
ANTONIO	
The Duke cannot deny the course of law,	
For the commodity that strangers have	30
With us in Venice, if it be denied,	
Will much impeach the justice of the state,	
Since that the trade and profit of the city	
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore go.	
These griefs and losses have so bated me	35
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh	
Tomorrow to my bloody creditor.—	
Well, jailer, on.—Pray God Bassanio come	
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not.	

*They exit.*

Scene 4  
*Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and Balthazar,  
a man of Portia's.*

LORENZO	<p>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 honor,      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.</p>
PORTIA	<p>I never did repent for doing good,      Nor shall not now; for in companions      That do converse and waste the time together,      Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,      There must be needs a like proportion      Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;      Which makes me think that this Antonio,      Being the bosom lover of my lord,      Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,      How little is the cost I have bestowed      In purchasing the semblance of my soul</p>
	10 15 20

From out the state of hellish cruelty!  
This comes too near the praising of myself;  
Therefore no more of it. Hear other things:  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house                          25  
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.                          30  
There is a monastery two miles off,  
And there we will abide. I do desire you  
Not to deny this imposition,  
The which my love and some necessity  
Now lays upon you.    35

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

PORȚIA

My people do already know my mind  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.                          40  
So fare you well till we shall meet again.

LORENZO

Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

JESSICA

I wish your Ladyship all heart's content.

PORȚIA

I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased  
To wish it back on you. Fare you well, Jessica.                          45

*Lorenzo and Jessica exit.*

Now, Balthazar,  
As I have ever found thee honest true,  
So let me find thee still: take this same letter,  
And use thou all th' endeavor of a man  
In speed to Padua. See thou render this                          50  
Into my cousin's hands, Doctor Bellario.

*She gives him a paper.*

And look what notes and garments he doth give  
thee,  
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed  
Unto the traject, to the common ferry                                  55  
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,  
But get thee gone. I shall be there before thee.

BALTHAZAR

Madam, I go with all convenient speed.                                  He exits.

PORȚIA

Come on, Nerissa, I have work in hand  
That you yet know not of. We'll see our husbands                          60  
Before they think of us.

NERISSA Shall they see us?

PORȚIA

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,                          65  
When we are both accoutered 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                          70  
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays  
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies  
How honorable ladies sought my love,  
Which I denying, they fell sick and died—  
I could not do withal!—then I'll repent,                          75  
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                          80  
Which I will practice.

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                          85  
When I am in my coach, which stays for us  
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,  
For we must measure twenty miles today.

*They exit.*

Scene 5  
*Enter Lancelet, the Clown, and Jessica.*

LANCELET Yes, truly, for look you, the sins of the father  
are to be laid upon the children. Therefore I  
promise you I fear you. I was always plain with you,  
and so now I speak my agitation of the matter.  
Therefore be o' good cheer, for truly I think you                          5  
are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do  
you any good, and that is but a kind of bastard hope  
neither.

JESSICA And what hope is that, I pray thee?

LANCELET Marry, you may partly hope that your father                          10  
got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.

JESSICA That were a kind of bastard hope indeed; so  
the sins of my mother should be visited upon me!

LANCELET Truly, then, I fear you are damned both by  
father and mother; thus when I shun Scylla your                          15  
father, I fall into Charybdis your mother. Well, you  
are gone both ways.

JESSICA I shall be saved by my husband. He hath made  
me a Christian.

LANCELET Truly the more to blame he! We were Christians 20  
enow before, e'en as many as could well live  
one by another. This making of Christians will  
raise the price of hogs. If we grow all to be pork  
eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the  
coals for money.    25

*Enter Lorenzo.*

JESSICA I'll tell my husband, Lancelet, what you say.  
Here he comes.

LORENZO I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Lancelet,  
if you thus get my wife into corners!

JESSICA Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo. Lancelet      30  
and I are out. He tells me flatly there's no mercy for  
me in heaven because I am a Jew's daughter; and  
he says you are no good member of the commonwealth,  
for in converting Jews to Christians you  
raise the price of pork.      35

LORENZO I shall answer that better to the commonwealth  
than you can the getting up of the Negro's  
belly! The Moor is with child by you, Lancelet.

LANCELET It is much that the Moor should be more  
than reason; but if she be less than an honest      40  
woman, she is indeed more than I took her for.

LORENZO How every fool can play upon the word! I  
think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into  
silence, and discourse grow commendable in none  
only but parrots. Go in, sirrah, bid them prepare for  
dinner.      45

LANCELET That is done, sir. They have all stomachs.

LORENZO Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you!  
Then bid them prepare dinner.

LANCELET That is done too, sir, only "cover" is the      50  
word.

LORENZO Will you cover, then, sir?

LANCELET Not so, sir, neither! I know my duty.

LORENZO Yet more quarreling with occasion! Wilt  
thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an      55  
instant? I pray thee understand a plain man in his  
plain meaning: go to thy fellows, bid them cover the  
table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to  
dinner.

LANCELET For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for  
the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in  
to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humors and conceits  
shall govern.      60  
*Lancelet exits.*

LORENZO  
O dear discretion, how his words are suited!  
The fool hath planted in his memory      65  
An army of good words, and I do know  
A many fools that stand in better place,  
Garnished like him, that for a tricksy word  
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?  
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion  
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?      70

JESSICA  
Past all expressing. It is very meet  
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life,  
For having such a blessing in his lady  
He finds the joys of heaven here on Earth,      75  
And if on Earth he do not merit it,  
In reason he should never come to heaven.  
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match,  
And on the wager lay two earthly women,  
And Portia one, there must be something else  
Pawned with the other, for the poor rude world      80

Hath not her fellow.

LORENZO Even such a husband  
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

JESSICA

Nay, but ask my opinion too of that!

85

LORENZO

I will anon. First let us go to dinner.

JESSICA

Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach!

LORENZO

No, pray thee, let it serve for table talk.

Then howsome'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things

I shall digest it.

90

JESSICA Well, I'll set you forth.

*They exit.*

## **ACT 4**

### Scene 1

*Enter the Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio,  
Salerio, and Gratiano, with Attendants.*

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.

5

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 armed  
To suffer with a quietness of spirit  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

10

DUKE

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

15

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 leadest this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act, and then, 'tis thought,  
Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;  
And where thou now exacts the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touched with humane gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moi'ty 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 trained  
To offices of tender courtesy.  
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

20

25

30

35

SHYLOCK

I have possessed 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!	40
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 humor. Is it answered?	
What if my house be troubled with a rat,	45
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats	
To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?	
Some men there are love not a gaping pig,	
Some that are mad if they behold a cat,	
And others, when the bagpipe sings i' th' nose,	50
Cannot contain their urine; for affection	
Masters oft passion, sways it to the mood	
Of what it likes or loathes. Now for your answer:	
As there is no firm reason to be rendered	
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig,	55
Why he a harmless necessary cat,	
Why he a woolen 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,	60
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing	
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus	
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?	
BASSANIO	
This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,	
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.	65
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?	70
ANTONIO, <i>to Bassanio</i>	
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;	75
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?—	80
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.	85
SHYLOCK	
If every ducat in six thousand ducats	



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 damned, inexorable dog,	130
And for thy life let justice be accused;	
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,	
To hold opinion with Pythagoras	
That souls of animals infuse themselves	
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit	135
Governed a wolf who, hanged for human slaughter,	
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,	
And whilst thou layest in thy unhallowed dam,	
Infused itself in thee, for thy desires	
Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous.	140
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 command	145
A young and learnèd doctor to our court.	
Where is he?	
NERISSA, as Clerk	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	150
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.	
	<i>Attendants exit.</i>
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.	
He reads.	
<i>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</i>	155
<i>young doctor of Rome. His name is Balthazar. 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</i>	160
<i>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</i>	165
<i>leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.</i>	
You hear the learnèd Bellario what he writes.	
Enter Portia for Balthazar, disguised as a doctor of laws, with Attendants.	
And here I take it is the doctor come.—	
Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?	170

PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
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?		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
I am informèd throughly of the cause.	175	
Which is the merchant here? And which the Jew?		
DUKE		
Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
Is your name Shylock?		
SHYLOCK Shylock is my name.		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
Of a strange nature is the suit you follow,	180	
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law		
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.		
To Antonio. You stand within his danger, do you		
not?		
ANTONIO		
Ay, so he says.	185	
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i> Do you confess the bond?		
ANTONIO		
I do.		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i> Then must the Jew be merciful.		
SHYLOCK		
On what compulsion must I? Tell me that.		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
The quality of mercy is not strained.	190	
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 thronèd monarch better than his crown.	195	
His scepter 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 sceptered sway.		
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings;	200	
It is an attribute to God Himself;		
And earthly power doth then show likkest God's		
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,		
Though justice be thy plea, consider this:		
That in the course of justice none of us	205	
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	210	
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.		
PORȚIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
Is he not able to discharge the money?	215	

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. *To the Duke.* 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.

220

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

It must not be. There is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree establishèd;  
'Twill be recorded for a precedent  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

225

SHYLOCK

A Daniel come to judgment! Yea, a Daniel.  
O wise young judge, how I do honor thee!

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

I pray you let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK

Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

*Handing Portia a paper.*

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.

235

SHYLOCK

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

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar* 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.

240

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.

245

ANTONIO

Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgment.

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar* Why, then, thus it is:

You must prepare your bosom for his knife—

255

SHYLOCK

O noble judge! O excellent young man!

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

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!	260	
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar, to Antonio</i>		
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.	265	
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
It is so. Are there balance here to weigh the flesh?		
SHYLOCK	I have them ready.	
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge, To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.	270	
SHYLOCK		
Is it so nominated in the bond?		
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
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, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
You, merchant, have you anything to say?	275	
ANTONIO		
But little. I am armed and well prepared.— Give me your hand, Bassanio. Fare you well. Grieve not that I am fall'n to this for you, For herein Fortune shows herself more kind Than is her custom: it is still her use	280	
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth, To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow An age of poverty, from which ling'ring penance Of such misery doth she cut me off.		
Command me to your honorable 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.	285	
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend And he repents not that he pays your debt. For if the Jew do cut but deep enough, I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.	290	
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 esteemed above thy life. I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all Here to this devil, to deliver you.	295	
PORTIA, <i>aside</i>		
Your wife would give you little thanks for that If she were by to hear you make the offer.	300	
GRATIANO		
I have a wife who I protest I love. I would she were in heaven, so she could		

- Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.
- NERISSA, *aside***  
 'Tis well you offer it behind her back. 305  
 The wish would make else an unquiet house.
- SHYLOCK**  
 These be the Christian husbands! I have a  
 daughter—  
 Would any of the stock of Barabbas  
 Had been her husband, rather than a Christian! 310  
 We trifle time. I pray thee, pursue sentence.
- PORTIA, *as Balthazar***  
 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, *as Balthazar***  
 And you must cut this flesh from off his breast: 315  
 The law allows it, and the court awards it.
- SHYLOCK**  
 Most learnèd judge! A sentence!—Come, prepare.
- PORTIA, *as Balthazar***  
 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." 320  
 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. 325
- GRATIANO**  
 O upright judge!—Mark, Jew.—O learnèd judge!
- SHYLOCK**  
 Is that the law?
- PORTIA, *as Balthazar*** Thyself shalt see the act.  
 For, as thou urgest justice, be assured  
 Thou shalt have justice more than thou desir'st. 330
- GRATIANO**  
 O learnèd judge!—Mark, Jew, a learnèd judge!
- SHYLOCK**  
 I take this offer then. Pay the bond thrice  
 And let the Christian go.
- BASSANIO** Here is the money.
- PORTIA, *as Balthazar***  
 Soft! The Jew shall have all justice. Soft, no haste! 335  
 He shall have nothing but the penalty.
- GRATIANO**  
 O Jew, an upright judge, a learnèd judge!
- PORTIA, *as Balthazar***  
 Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh.  
 Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more  
 But just a pound of flesh. If thou tak'st more 340  
 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, 345  
 Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRATIANO

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

PORTIA, *as Balthazar*

Why doth the Jew pause? Take thy forfeiture.

SHYLOCK

Give me my principal and let me go.

350

BASSANIO

I have it ready for thee. Here it is.

PORTIA, *as Balthazar*

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.

355

SHYLOCK

Shall I not have barely my principal?

PORTIA, *as Balthazar*

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. *He begins to exit.* 360

PORTIA, *as Balthazar* 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

365

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

370

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

375

Of the defendant, and thou hast incurred

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,

380

Thou hast not left the value of a cord;

Therefore thou must be hanged at the state's

charge.

DUKE

That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,

I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.

385

For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;

The other half comes to the general state,

Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

PORTIA, *as Balthazar*

Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

SHYLOCK		
Nay, take my life and all. Pardon not that.		390
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, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
What mercy can you render him, Antonio?		
GRATIANO		
A halter gratis, nothing else, for God's sake!		395
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		400
That lately stole his daughter.		
Two things provided more: that for this favor		
He presently become a Christian;		
The other, that he do record a gift,		
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed		405
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.		
DUKE		
He shall do this, or else I do recant		
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.		
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?		
SHYLOCK		
I am content.		410
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>	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.	415
GRATIANO		
In christ'ning shalt thou have two godfathers.		
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,		
To bring thee to the gallows, not to the font.		
	<i>Shylock exits.</i>	
DUKE, <i>to Portia as Balthazar</i>		
Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.		
PORTIA, <i>as Balthazar</i>		
I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon.		420
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.		425
	<i>The Duke and his train exit.</i>	
BASSANIO, <i>to Portia as Balthazar</i>		
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.		430

ANTONIO

And stand indebted, over and above,  
In love and service to you evermore.

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

He is well paid that is well satisfied,  
And I, delivering you, am satisfied,  
And therein do account myself well paid.                          435  
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.

*She begins to exit.*

BASSANIO

Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further.  
Take some remembrance of us as a tribute,                          440  
Not as fee. Grant me two things, I pray you:  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

You press me far, and therefore I will yield.  
Give me your gloves; I'll wear them for your sake—  
And for your love I'll take this ring from you.                          445  
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.

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

I will have nothing else but only this.                          450  
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.                          455

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

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 answered.

BASSANIO

Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife,  
And when she put it on, she made me vow                          460  
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

PORȚIA, as *Balthazar*

That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.  
And if your wife be not a madwoman,  
And know how well I have deserved this ring,  
She would not hold out enemy forever                          465  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you.

*Portia and Nerissa exit.*

ANTONIO

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

BASSANIO

Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him.                          470  
Give him the ring, and bring him if thou canst  
Unto Antonio's house. Away, make haste.

*Gratiano exits.*

Come, you and I will thither presently,  
And in the morning early will we both  
Fly toward Belmont.—Come, Antonio.

475

*They exit.*

Scene 2  
*Enter Portia and Nerissa, still in disguise.*

PORȚIA

Inquire the Jew's house out; give him this deed  
And let him sign it. *She gives Nerissa a paper.* We'll  
away tonight,  
And be a day before our husbands home.  
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

5

*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. *He gives her a ring.*

PORȚIA, as Balthazar That cannot be.

10

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, as Clerk Sir, I would speak with you.

15

*Aside to Portia.* I'll see if I can get my husband's  
ring,

Which I did make him swear to keep forever.

PORȚIA, 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.—  
Away, make haste! Thou know'st where I will tarry.

20

*She exits.*

NERISSA, as Clerk

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

*They exit.*

## **ACT 5**

Scene 1  
*Enter Lorenzo and Jessica.*

LORENZO

The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,  
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees  
And they did make no noise, in such a night  
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls  
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents  
Where Cressid lay that night.

5

JESSICA In such a night

Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew  
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself  
And ran dismayed away.

10

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

15

Medea gathered the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Aeson.

LORENZO In such a night

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

20

JESSICA In such a night

Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,  
And ne'er a true one.

25

LORENZO In such a night

Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

JESSICA

I would out-night you did nobody come,  
But hark, I hear the footing of a man.

30

*Enter Stephano, a Messenger.*

LORENZO

Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

STEPHANO A friend.

LORENZO

A friend? What friend? Your name, I pray you,  
friend.

STEPHANO

Stephano is my name, and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont. She doth stray about  
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays  
For happy wedlock hours.

35

LORENZO Who comes with her?

40

STEPHANO

None but a holy hermit and her maid.

I pray you, is my master yet returned?

LORENZO

He is not, nor we have not heard from him.—

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,

And ceremoniously let us prepare

45

Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter Lancelet, the Clown.*

LANCELET Sola, sola! Wo ha, ho! Sola, sola!

LORENZO Who calls?

LANCELET Sola! Did you see Master Lorenzo? Master  
Lorenzo, sola, sola!

50

LORENZO Leave holloaing, man! Here.

LANCELET Sola! Where, where?

LORENZO Here!

LANCELET Tell him there's a post come from my master  
with his horn full of good news. My master will  
be here ere morning, sweet soul.

55

*Lancelet exits.*

LORENZO, to Jessica

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,

60

And bring your music forth into the air.

*Stephano exits.*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank.

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music

Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

65

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold.

There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st

But in his motion like an angel sings,

Still choiring to the young-eyed cherubins.

70

Such harmony is in immortal souls,

But whilst this muddy vesture of decay

Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

*Enter Stephano and musicians.*

Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn.

With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,

75

And draw her home with music.

*Music plays.*

JESSICA

I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LORENZO

The reason is, your spirits are attentive.

For do but note a wild and wanton herd

Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,

80

Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,

Which is the hot condition of their blood,

If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,

Or any air of music touch their ears,  
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
Their savage eyes turned to a modest gaze  
By the sweet power of music. Therefore the poet  
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and  
floods,  
Since naught 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,  
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus.  
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

*Enter Portia and Nerissa.*

## PORTIA

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

NFRISSA

When the moon shone we did not see the candle.

## WITH PORTIA

So doth the greater glory dim the less.  
A substitute shines brightly as a king  
Until a king be by, and then his state  
Empties itself as doth an inland brook  
Into the main of waters. Music, bark!

INTO THE  
NERISSA

It is your music, madam, of the house

It is yo  
PORTIA

Nothing is good, I see, without respect.  
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day

MOTRIM  
NERISSA

Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

CHIC  
PORTIA

The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark  
When neither is attended, and I think  
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 seasoned are  
To their right praise and true perfection!  
Peace—how the moon sleeps with Endymion  
And would not be awaked!

### *Music ceases*

LORENZO That is the voice,  
Or I am much deceived of Portia

CHIAR  
PORTIA

He knows me as the blind man knows the cuckoo,  
By the bad voice.

LORENZO Dear lady, welcome home.

## ESTATE PORTIA

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

	Are they returned?	
LORENZO	Madam, they are not yet, But there is come a messenger before To signify their coming.	130
PORȚIA	Go in, Nerissa. Give order to my servants that they take No note at all of our being absent hence— Nor you, Lorenzo—Jessica, nor you.	
	<i>A trumpet sounds.</i>	
LORENZO	Your husband is at hand. I hear his trumpet.	135
	We are no tell-tales, madam, fear you not.	
PORȚIA	This night methinks is but the daylight sick; It looks a little paler. 'Tis a day Such as the day is when the sun is hid.	
	<i>Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and their followers.</i>	
BASSANIO	We should hold day with the Antipodes If you would walk in absence of the sun.	140
PORȚIA	Let me give light, but let me not be light, For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, And never be Bassanio so for me. But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord.	145
	<i>Gratiano and Nerissa talk aside.</i>	
BASSANIO	I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend. This is the man, this is Antonio, To whom I am so infinitely bound.	
PORȚIA	You should in all sense be much bound to him, For as I hear he was much bound for you.	150
ANTONIO	No more than I am well acquitted of.	
PORȚIA	Sir, you are very welcome to our house. It must appear in other ways than words; Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.	
GRATIANO, to Nerissa	By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong! In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk. Would he were gelt that had it, for my part, Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.	155
PORȚIA	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."	160
NERISSA	What talk you of the posy or the value? You swore to me when I did give it you	165

That you would wear it till your hour of death,  
And that it should lie with you in your grave.  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,  
You should have been respective and have kept it.  
Gave it a judge's clerk! No, God's my judge,  
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on 's face that had it.

170

GRATIANO

He will, an if he live to be a man.

NERISSA

Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

GRATIANO

Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy, a little scrubbèd 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 it him.

175

PORȚIA

You were to blame, I must be plain with you,  
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift,  
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,  
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.  
I gave my love a ring and made him swear  
Never to part with it, and here he stands.  
I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it  
Nor pluck it from his finger for the wealth  
That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano,  
You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief.  
An 'twere to me I should be mad at it.

180

BASSANIO, *aside*

Why, I were best to cut my left hand off  
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

185

GRATIANO

My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed  
Deserved it, too. And then the boy, his clerk,  
That took some pains in writing, he begged mine,  
And neither man nor master would take aught  
But the two rings.

195

PORȚIA What ring gave you, my lord?

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.

200

PORȚIA

Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed  
Until I see the ring!

205

NERISSA, *to Gratiano* Nor I in yours

Till I again see mine!

BASSANIO Sweet Portia,

If you did know to whom I gave the ring,  
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,  
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,  
And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
When naught would be accepted but the ring,

210

You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

PORȚIA

If you had known the virtue of the ring, 215  
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,  
Or your own honor to contain the ring,  
You would not then have parted with the ring.  
What man is there so much unreasonable,  
If you had pleased to have defended it 220  
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty  
To urge the thing held as a ceremony?  
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:  
I'll die for 't but some woman had the ring!

BASSANIO

No, by my honor, madam, by my soul, 225  
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,  
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me  
And begged the ring, the which I did deny him  
And suffered him to go displeased away,  
Even he that had held up the very life 230  
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.  
My honor would not let ingratitude  
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady, 235  
For by these blessed candles of the night,  
Had you been there, I think you would have begged  
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

PORȚIA

Let not that doctor e'er come near my house!  
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved, 240  
And that which you did swear to keep for me,  
I will become as liberal as you:  
I'll not deny him anything I have,  
No, not my body, nor my husband's bed.  
Know him I shall, I am well sure of it. 245  
Lie not a night from home. Watch me like Argus.  
If you do not, if I be left alone,  
Now by mine honor, which is yet mine own,  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

NERISSA

And I his clerk. Therefore be well advised 250  
How you do leave me to mine own protection.

GRATIANO

Well, do you so. Let not me take him, then,  
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

ANTONIO

I am th' unhappy subject of these quarrels.

PORȚIA

Sir, grieve not you. You are welcome 255  
notwithstanding.

BASSANIO

Portia, forgive me this enforcèd wrong,  
And in the hearing of these many friends  
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself— 260

PORȚIA Mark you but that!

In both my eyes he doubly sees himself,  
In each eye one. Swear by your double self,  
And there's an oath of credit.

BASSANIO Nay, but hear me. 265  
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear  
I never more will break an oath with thee.

ANTONIO  
I once did lend my body for his wealth,  
Which but for him that had your husband's ring  
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again, 270  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

PORȚIA  
Then you shall be his surety. Give him this,  
*Giving Antonio a ring.*  
And bid him keep it better than the other.

ANTONIO  
Here, Lord Bassanio, swear to keep this ring. 275

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

PORȚIA  
I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio,  
For by this ring, the doctor lay with me.

NERISSA  
And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano,  
For that same scrubbèd boy, the doctor's clerk, 280  
In lieu of this, last night did lie with me.  
*She shows a ring.*

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?

PORȚIA  
Speak not so grossly.—You are all amazed. 285  
*She hands a paper to Bassanio.*  
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure.  
It comes from Padua from Bellario.  
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,  
Nerissa there, her clerk. Lorenzo here  
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you, 290  
And even but now returned. I have not yet  
Entered my house.—Antonio, you are welcome,  
And I have better news in store for you  
Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon.  
*Handing him a paper.*

There you shall find three of your argosies  
Are richly come to harbor suddenly. 295  
You shall not know by what strange accident  
I chancèd on this letter.

ANTONIO I am dumb.

BASSANIO  
Were you the doctor and I knew you not? 300

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, *to Portia*  
Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow.  
When I am absent, then lie with my wife. 305
- ANTONIO  
Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;  
For here I read for certain that my ships  
Are safely come to road.
- PORȚIA How now, Lorenzo?  
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you. 310
- NERISSA  
Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.  
*Handing him a paper.*
- There do I give to you and Jessica,  
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,  
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.
- LORENZO  
Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way 315  
Of starvèd people.
- PORȚIA It is almost morning,  
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied  
Of these events at full. Let us go in,  
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,  
And we will answer all things faithfully. 320
- GRATIANO  
Let it be so. The first inter'gatory  
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is  
Whether till the next night she had rather stay  
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day. 325  
But were the day come, I should wish it dark  
Till 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.

*They exit.*