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# The Tudor Shakespeare

EDITED BY

WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON

AND

ASHLEY HORACE THORNDIKE



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THE TUDOR

SHAKESPEARE

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**The Merchant of Venice**

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## Introduction

*Text.* — Two Quartos of *The Merchant of Venice* bear the date 1600. Roberts' copy, by modern editors generally called the First Quarto (Q<sub>1</sub>) because of the entry to him in the Stationers' Register on 22 July, 1598, of "The Marchaunt of Venyce or otherwise called the Jewe of Venyce," has the following title-page: "*The Excellent History of the Merchant of Venice.* With the extreme cruelty of Shylocke the Jew towards the saide Merchant, in cutting a just pound of his flesh. And the obtaining of Portia, by the choyse of three Caskets. Written by W. Shakespeare. [Device.] Printed by J. Roberts, 1600." Minute study of this title-page has recently yielded reasons for believing that it was actually set up in 1619, along with eight other title-pages of plays by or ascribed to Shakespeare.<sup>1</sup> This new evidence affords strong confirmation of the theory, already accepted by many scholars, that these nine Quartos, in three or four cases appearing bound up together, are throughout reprints of earlier editions put forth together in 1619, but with the various dates of original issue unchanged.<sup>2</sup> But though if this theory be sound, it will no longer be accurate to speak of the Roberts Quarto as the First, that edition will still remain of considerable importance in determining the text.

<sup>1</sup> W. J. Neidig, *Modern Philology*, VIII, 145 (1910).

<sup>2</sup> A. W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*, London, 1909.

The Heyes Quarto, generally called Q<sub>2</sub>, has the following title-page: "*The most excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice.* With the extreame crueltie of Shylocke the Jewe towards the sayd Merchant, in cutting a just pound of his flesh: and the obtayning of Portia by the choyse of three chests. As it hath beene divers times acted by the Lord Chamberlaine his Servants. Written by William Shakespeare. [Device.] At London, Printed by I. R. for Thomas Heyes, and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Greene Dragon. 1600."

The relative merits of these two Quartos, which after all show hardly more differences than would appear in two independent transcripts of the same original, have been considerably discussed; Q<sub>2</sub>, though more carelessly printed, seems to have been more closely connected with Shakespeare's company, and supplies on the whole the greater number of readings in the present text. The Third Quarto (1637) is a careless reprint of Q<sub>2</sub>; and the Fourth Quarto (1652) is asserted to be merely Q<sub>3</sub> with a new title-page; neither is textually of importance. The text of the First Folio (1623) is also based on Q<sub>2</sub>; it divides the play into acts, gives additional stage directions for music, and makes a few unimportant additions to the list of variant readings.

*Date of Composition.* — That *The Merchant of Venice* was already in existence early in 1598 is made certain by the entry in the Stationers' Register referred to above, and by its appearance as the last of the six comedies in the famous list of Shakespeare's plays given by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia*, published in that year. An earlier limit is not so easily discoverable. There is little likeli-



hood that the "Venesyon comodey" which Philip Henslowe records as acted in the years 1594 and 1595 was even a rough draught of Shakespeare's play. Of internal evidence, attempts to see in III. ii. 49, 50 a reference to the coronation of Henry of Navarre (1594), and in I. i. 44, to the financial troubles of 1597, are all but desperate. A passage in the comedy *Wily Beguiled* beginning, "In such a night did Paris win his love," remains inconclusive pending the establishment of the date of that play. If, finally, we could be sure that Shakespeare made use of Silvayn's *Orator* (see below), and in the English translation published in 1596, we could with confidence fix on a date shortly thereafter for *The Merchant of Venice*. Its deftness of plot and its mastery of characterization render any date much earlier than 1596 virtually impossible. Placed even as late as 1597, it is, with the exception of *Romeo and Juliet*, the earliest of Shakespeare's unquestioned masterpieces, and with the possible exception, again, of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, his first complete triumph in the comedy based on a story of romantic love, which has its faltering beginnings some four or five years before in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and rounds out the century in the rippling laughter of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Twelfth Night*.

*Sources of the Plot.*—The various stories which make up the plot of *The Merchant of Venice* are found widely scattered. The bare episode of the Pound of Flesh occurs in the Northern English poem *Cursor Mundi* (c. 1300), in the jiggling ballad of *Gernutus, a Jew*, of uncertain antiquity, and in several French and Oriental versions. The device

of a Choice of Caskets appears in the romance of *Barlaam and Josaphat*, in the *Speculum Historiale* of Vincent of Beauvais, in the *Golden Legend* of Jacobus de Voragine, in Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. Much nearer to Shakespeare stands the incident related in the *Gesta Romanorum*, a collection of stories compiled toward the end of the thirteenth century, and accessible to him in numerous English editions, in which a princess wins a prince for her husband by choosing successfully among three caskets, bearing inscriptions not unlike those in *The Merchant of Venice*. The Fourteenth Tale of Massuccio di Salerno (c. 1470) recounts the elopement of a young lady and the robbery of her miserly father's jewels, but the details are not such as inevitably to establish it as the original of the story of Jessica and Lorenzo.

Much more in the nature of a direct source is the First Novel of the Fourth Day of Ser Giovanni Fiorentino's *Il Pecorone*, which purports to have been written in 1378, but was not published till 1558. Here the bond is assumed by the merchant in order to enable the young gallant to win a widow of Belmont, who, won only after two disastrous attempts, rescues the merchant in her disguise as a lawyer from the grasping Jew, and plays a jest upon her unwitting husband by exacting from him her own ring. Either directly or through some intermediary this story must have been known to Shakespeare. A somewhat similar story is told in the *Gesta Romanorum*, but not in the editions current in the sixteenth century. One further source deserves mention. *The Orator*, a book of declamations Englished from the French of Alexander Silvayn in 1596, gives, after a brief

summary of the Bond story, the appeal of the Jew and the answer of the Christian merchant. Resemblances between the former and Shylock's argument in the Trial Scene seem to indicate that Shakespeare had glanced at it. None of these sources supply much more than the bare outlines of the story. It was left for Shakespeare to give it a measure of plausibility, to people it with living characters, and to lift it into the realm of poetry.

*Other Plays of "The Jew."* — Among the sources cited above, no combination of the Casket episode with the story of the Bond is anywhere found. But it is inferred that such a combination was made in the old play described by Stephen Gosson, in his *Schoole of Abuse* (1579), as "the Jew . . . showne at the Bull . . . representing the greedinesse of worldly chusers, and the bloody mindes of Userers." From what is known of Shakespeare's usual methods of work, it is generally assumed that his dependence on this play was considerable; while the play remains lost, therefore, it is impossible to say how far he is himself responsible for the subtle interweaving of the incidents of the plot.

A coarse comedy in German, *Der Jud von Venedig*, dating from the seventeenth century, has some relations with the Elizabethan stage, the precise nature of which is difficult to determine. There can be little doubt, on the other hand, that the situation between Barabas and his daughter Abigail, in Marlowe's popular *Jew of Malta* (c. 1590), and the Jew's outcry: "O girl! O gold! O beauty! O my bliss!" as well as his habit of self-justification and other details, were in Shakespeare's mind as he

wrote. So great was the popularity of Marlowe's play that the character of a Jewish usurer would instantly recall it to the Elizabethan mind; as inevitably as a play dealing with negro slavery would stir our recollections of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Barabas, to be sure, degenerates into a mere monster of unrelieved selfishness and cruelty, but, reading the two plays together, one cannot but feel that Shakespeare is throughout conscious that his usurer must pass muster before the same audience that had shuddered at the poisonings and stranglings of the Machiavellian villain, Barabas, and jeered with delight when the "subtle, bottle-nosed knave" was stupidly caught in his own trap.

*Jews in England*.—Barabas merely reflects the prejudices of Elizabethan England, inherited from the Middle Ages, against the Jews. As money-lenders they were hated in an age which regarded the taking of interest as immoral. As the traditional enemies of Christianity they were accused of atheism and child-murder. As members of a despised race, to convert them forcibly was a kindness; to spit upon them and despoil them, no less than they deserved. A remarkable illustration of this prejudice, first fully investigated by Mr. Sidney Lee,<sup>1</sup> is afforded by the popular and even judicial execration heaped upon a Jew, Roderigo Lopez, physician to the Queen, who in 1594 was tortured and executed for alleged complicity in a Spanish plot against Elizabeth. This incident may possibly have given renewed popularity to Marlowe's

<sup>1</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, February, 1880, or in Furness' *Variorum*, pp. 395-399.

*Jew of Malta*; and, while it can hardly be shown to be the occasion of Shakespeare's play, its attendant circumstances remind us that Shakespeare had ample opportunity for personal acquaintance with Jews, although they were not formally readmitted to England until the time of Cromwell, as well as occasion to observe the workings of the popular mind in regard to them.

*Stage History.* — Although the genuineness of the lines in the *Funeral Elegy* on Richard Burbage which mention his impersonation of the "red-hair'd Jew" is open to question, the testimony of Thomas Jordan's ballad (1664) points to a stage Shylock with red beard and hooked nose. Such he remained until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In 1701 the play received "considerable advantages" from the pen of George Granville, Viscount Lansdowne. These consist chiefly in omissions; Arragon, Morocco, the Gobbos, father and son, and others disappear, and many speeches are cut; but a surprisingly large amount of Shakespeare is retained, or but little altered. A banqueting scene is introduced, in which Shylock drinks a toast to Money, his mistress: "Here's to Interest upon Interest," and in a later aside his greed is emphasized. This version, in which the part of Shylock was first played by the comedian Thomas Doggett, held the stage for forty years. In 1741 the tragedian Macklin revived Shakespeare's play, one of the most notable revivals in Shakespearean stage history. He is said to have impersonated Shylock as a crafty and malicious old man; a "calm, determined villain" in the pursuit of his revenge, but tremendously moved by the flight of Jessica. In thus breaking finally with the

comic tradition which had persisted from the Restoration, Macklin placed Shylock at once among the great parts of the Shakespearean repertory, a position which time has only made more secure. Edmund Kean, in 1814, who created something of a sensation by appearing in a black wig, lifted the part still further into tragedy by dwelling with variety and imagination upon the human wrongs of Shylock. Macready is credited by Edwin Booth with being "the first to lift the uncanny Jew out of the darkness of his native element of revengeful selfishness into the light of the venerable Hebrew, the Martyr, the Avenger." So Sir Henry Irving played him, cynical in his assumed humility, tenderly pathetic in his reference to his wife, stern and implacable as he takes his stand upon the law, with his dignity and pride of race unbowed in defeat. Booth himself preferred the more grotesque and fierce impersonation of Macklin. In modern performances the text is usually cut to give prominence to the part of Shylock.

*The Character of Shylock.* — But what precisely was the attitude of Shakespeare toward Shylock has evoked widely contrasting opinions. To the humanitarian spirit of our own day it is all but inconceivable that his attitude was not wholly sympathetic; it sees in Shylock the tragic representative of an ancient race, embittered by age-long persecution, who pleads with pathetic dignity for his common humanity. A more rigorous historical scholarship insists that Shylock is the villain; even, it has been argued, a butt, whose speeches were intended to create laughter.<sup>1</sup> Both views cannot be wholly right: not the

<sup>1</sup> See an interesting discussion by Prof. E. E. Stoll, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, X, 2 (1911).

former, because the humanitarian ideal of toleration was not of Shakespeare's age, and because it is denied by every comment made upon Shylock by every other character in the play; not the latter, because Marlowe's Barabas, who is the mere stage butt and villain, is utterly incapable of provoking such a clash of opinion. It may be possible, however, to view Shakespeare in this instance in a middle ground between these extremes of special pleader and of caricaturist. Assuming that Shakespeare, in presenting to his audience a Jewish usurer following a murderous suit, was bound to provide them with a villain whose discomfiture they could enjoy, it is to be observed that Shakespeare accomplishes this end not in the sensational manner of Marlowe, but in a measure by means of suggestion, by playing into the preconceptions of his audience. Shylock's "confused passion" is not "uttered in the streets"; we only hear of it, just as we only hear that he has conspired "directly" against the life of Antonio. And the result surely justifies the further assumption that Shakespeare grew interested in the character of his creation, villain though he was; provided him with reasons for his desired vengeance; allowed him to plead his cause with more truth to nature than can be found in Barabas' gloating avowals of villainy; in short, contrived to endow him, as indeed he found it hard not to do with even the humblest children of his fancy, with "organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions." If there is in Shylock this authentic spark of poetic life, we cannot be surprised that one age echoed the jeers of Gratiano and the sarcasms of Portia, and another the cry of Heine's fair Briton, "The poor man is wronged."

*Relations to Contemporary Drama.* — Shakespeare's debt to Marlowe, estimated at its highest, does not extend, beyond the outline of a character and the hint of a situation, to the larger structural lines of his play. Nor can the superb dramatic technique of *Merchant of Venice* have been inherited from Gosson's *Jew*, however fully the outlines of the several stories may there have been developed. The steady swing of the pendulum from Venice to Belmont, and back to Venice, telling the relentless passage of time and the maturing of the bond, the intimate reaction of each group of characters on every other group, the steady unfolding of the story, never tedious and never huddled, to the last note of its lyrical close, these were things beyond the compass of the modern dramatist till Shakespeare showed the way. And they were things beyond the compass of Shakespeare himself till he had tried and failed in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and tried again, and, with the aid of Plautus, in a measure succeeded in *The Comedy of Errors*.

It is still less likely that Shakespeare is under any specific obligations for his characterization. The characters of the *novella* are hardly more differentiated than Salarino from Salarino, and, though a prolific novelist like Greene had paid some attention to love story on the stage, and created women who have something distantly suggestive of Shakespearean charm, Shakespeare had in comedy no such models as in the tragic heroes of Marlowe and the tragic situations of Kyd. But in this play his characterization is masterly; even Morocco and Arragon are themselves, and none other. And nowhere does his



idealization of woman find nobler expression than in Portia. Her matchless intellectuality joins with her equally matchless womanliness to make her, surrounded by all the luxury of the Renaissance, the mistress of the whole of life. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

*Style.* — In style the play is notable for simplicity and directness. Shakespeare's thought is not yet straining the power of words to express; and the conceits and artificialities which abound in his earlier plays, that experimentation with language in one form or another of which he never quite lost interest, are strikingly absent. Slight traces of Euphuism may be observed in the opening scene between Portia and Nerissa. Launcelot, of course, is professionally bound to play upon the word, but when Portia makes a pun it is with a certain ethical gravity that keeps it in harmony with the quiet tone and the sobriety in the use of poetic ornament that pervade the larger part of the play.

*Interpretation.* — Besides being interpreted as a plea for toleration, the play has been assumed to be intended as a glorification of friendship, as a lesson in the true relation of man to property, as a plea for the Christian spirit of mercy as opposed to Hebraic insistence on the letter of the law, and as a brilliant moment in the evolution of law and right, in which a higher conception of justice triumphs over a wrong which has on its side the seemingly resistless machinery of the law. It is safe to say that it is none of these things primarily, though much is excellently said in the play which may not be without its bearings on them. Shakespeare is, however, mightily concerned with the busi-

ness of making us believe several highly improbable, even childish, stories; to this task he bends his energies, and he achieves the interesting story of a merchant of Venice and his friends, full of suspense pleasantly relieved, of danger happily averted, with much wit and high spirits by the way, and ending in the restitution of his fortune to the merchant and of the lovers to each other. Amid the music and moonlight of Belmont, his art has rendered us "satisfied of these events at full."



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# The Merchant of Venice

[DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

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The DUKE OF VENICE.

The PRINCE OF MOROCCO, }  
The PRINCE OF ARRAGON, } suitors to Portia.

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his friend, suitor to Portia.

SALANIO, }  
SALARINO, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio.  
GRATIANO, }  
SALERIO, }

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew.

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, a clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.

LEONARDO, servant to BASSANIO.

BALTHASAR, }  
STEPHANO, } servants to Portia.

13 PORTIA, a rich heiress.

NERISSA, her waiting-gentlewoman.

JESSICA, daughter to Shylock.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and other attendants.

SCENE: *Partly at Venice and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia.*]

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## ACT FIRST

### SCENE I

[*Venice. A street.*]

*Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio.*

*Ant.* 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 ; 5  
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,  
That I have much ado to know myself.

*Salar.* Your mind is tossing on the ocean,  
There, where your argosies with portly sail,  
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood, 10  
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.

*Salan.* Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth, 15  
 The better part of my affections would  
 Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still  
 Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind,  
 Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads ;  
 And every object that might make me fear 20  
 Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt  
 Would make me sad.

*Salar.* My wind cooling my broth  
 Would blow me to an ague when I thought  
 What harm a wind too great at sea might do.  
 I should not see the sandy hour-glass run 25  
 But I should think of shallows and of flats,  
 And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,  
 Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs  
 To kiss her burial. Should I go to church  
 And see the holy edifice of stone, 30  
 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, 35  
 And now worth nothing? Shall I have the  
 thought  
 To think on this, and shall I lack the thought  
 That such a thing bechanc'd would make me sad?  
 But tell not me ; I know Antonio  
 Is sad to think upon his merchandise. 40

*Ant.* 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

*Salar.* Why, then you are in love.

*Ant.* Fie, fie !

*Salar.* 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, 50

Nature hath fram'd strange fellows in her time ;  
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes  
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,  
And other of such vinegar aspect  
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile, 55  
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

*Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano.*

*Salar.* Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kins-  
man,

Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare ye well ;  
We leave you now with better company.

*Salar.* I would have stay'd till I had made you  
merry, 60

If worthier friends had not prevented me.

*Ant.* Your worth is very dear in my regard.

I take it, your own business calls on you  
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

*Salar.* Good morrow, my good lords. 65

*Bass.* Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? Say,  
when?

You grow exceeding strange. Must it be so?

*Salar.* We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.

*Exeunt Salarino and Salanio.*

*Lor.* My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,  
We two will leave you; but at dinner-time, 70

I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

*Bass.* I will not fail you.

*Gra.* You look not well, Signior Antonio;

You have too much respect upon the world.

They lose it that do buy it with much care. 75

Believe me, you are marvellously chang'd.

*Ant.* I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano,

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

*Gra.* Let me play the fool!

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come, 80

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 85

By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio —



I love thee, and it is my love that speaks —  
There are a sort of men whose visages  
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,  
And do a wilful stillness entertain,      90  
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion  
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,  
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,  
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!"  
O my Antonio, I do know of those      95  
That therefore only are reputed wise  
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,  
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears  
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.  
I'll tell thee more of this another time;      100  
But fish not with this melancholy bait  
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.  
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile;  
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

*Lor.* Well, we will leave you then till dinner-time,      105  
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,  
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

*Gra.* Well, keep me company but two years moe,  
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own  
tongue.

*Ant.* Farewell! I'll grow a talker for this gear.      110

*Gra.* Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commendable  
In a neat's tongue dri'd and a maid not vendible.

*Exeunt [Gratiano and Lorenzo].*

*Ant.* Is that any thing now ?

*Bass.* Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing,  
more than any man in all Venice. His reasons 115  
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.

*Ant.* Well, tell me now what lady is the same  
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, 120  
That you to-day promis'd to tell me of ?

*Bass.* 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,  
How much I have disabled mine estate  
By something showing a more swelling port  
Than my faint means would grant continuance.  
Nor do I now make moan to be abridg'd 126  
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 gag'd. To you, Antonio, 130  
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.

*Ant.* I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it ; 135  
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,  
Within the eye of honour, be assur'd,  
My purse, my person, my extremest means,  
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

*Bass.* In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft, 140  
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight  
The self-same way with more advised watch  
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both  
I oft found both. I urge this childhood proof,  
Because what follows is pure innocence.      145  
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,  
That which I owe is lost ; but if you please  
To shoot another arrow that self way  
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,  
As I will watch the aim, or to find both      150  
Or bring your latter hazard back again  
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

*Ant.* 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      156  
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.      160

*Bass.* 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 undervalu'd      165  
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.  
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,

For the four winds blow in from every coast  
 Renowned suitors ; and her sunny locks  
 Hang on her temples like a golden fleece,           170  
 Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,  
 And many Jasons come in quest of her.  
 O my Antonio, had I but the means  
 To hold a rival place with one of them,  
 I have a mind presages me such thrift,           175  
 That I should questionless be fortunate !

*Ant.* Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;  
 Neither have I money nor commodity  
 To raise a present sum. Therefore go forth ;  
 Try what my credit can in Venice do.           180  
 That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,  
 To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.  
 Go, presently inquire, and so will I,  
 Where money is ; and I no question make  
 To have it of my trust or for my sake.           185

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II

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

*Enter Portia with her waiting-woman, Nerissa.*

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

*Ner.* You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries  
 were in the same abundance as your good for-

tunes are ; and yet, for aught I see, they are 5  
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. Super-  
fluity comes sooner by white hairs, but com-  
petency lives longer. 10

*Por.* Good sentences and well pronounc'd.

*Ner.* They would be better, if well followed.

*Por.* If to do were as easy as to know what were 15  
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 20  
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 25  
would nor refuse who I dislike ; so is the will  
of a living daughter curb'd by the will of a dead  
father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot  
choose one nor refuse none ?

*Ner.* Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men 30  
at their death have good inspirations ; there-  
fore 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 35  
who you shall rightly love. But what warmth  
is there in your affection towards any of these  
princely suitors that are already come?

*Por.* I pray thee, over-name them; and as thou  
namest them, I will describe them; and, ac- 40  
cording to my description, level at my affec-  
tion.

*Ner.* First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

*Por.* Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing  
but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great 45  
appropriation to his own good parts, that he  
can shoe him himself. I am much afraid my  
lady his mother played false with a smith.

*Ner.* Then there is the County Palatine.

*Por.* He doth nothing but frown, as who should 50  
say, "If you will not have me, choose." He  
hears merry tales and smiles not. I fear he  
will prove the weeping philosopher when he  
grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness  
in his youth. I had rather be married to a 55  
death's-head with a bone in his mouth than  
to either of these. God defend me from these  
two!

*Ner.* How say you by the French lord, Monsieur  
Le Bon?

- Por.* God made him, and therefore let him pass 60  
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 65  
falls straight a capering. He will fence with  
his own shadow. If I should marry him, I  
should marry twenty husbands. If he would  
despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love  
me to madness, I shall never requite him. 70
- Ner.* What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the  
young baron of England ?
- Por.* You know I say nothing to him, for he under-  
stands not me, nor I him. He hath neither 75  
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 80  
hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and  
his behaviour everywhere.
- Ner.* What think you of the Scottish lord, his  
neighbour ?
- Por.* That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, 85  
for he borrowed a box of the ear of the English-  
man and swore he would pay him again when

he was able. I think the Frenchman became his surety and seal'd under for another.

*Ner.* How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew? 90

*Por.* 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. 95

*Ner.* 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. 100

*Por.* 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'll be married to a sponge. 105

*Ner.* 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. 110 115



*Por.* 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. 120

*Ner.* Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat? 125

*Por.* Yes, yes, it was Bassanio, — as I think, he was so call'd.

*Ner.* True, madam. He, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes look'd upon, was the best deserving a fair lady. 130

*Por.* I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

*Enter a Serving-Man.*

How now! what news?

*Serv.* The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco, who brings word the Prince his master will be here to-night. 135

*Por.* If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I 140

should be glad of his approach. If he had the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

145

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

While we shut the gates upon one wooer, another  
knocks at the door. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE III

[*Venice. A public place.*]

*Enter Bassanio and Shylock the Jew.*

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats; well.

*Bass.* Ay, sir, for three months.

*Shy.* For three months; well.

*Bass.* For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall  
be bound.

5

*Shy.* Antonio shall become bound; well.

*Bass.* May you stead me? Will you pleasure me?  
Shall I know your answer?

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats for three months, and  
Antonio bound.

10

*Bass.* Your answer to that.

*Shy.* Antonio is a good man.

*Bass.* Have you heard any imputation to the con-  
trary?

*Shy.* Ho, no, no, no, no! My meaning in saying  
he is a good man is to have you understand

15

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, squand' red 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.

*Bass.* Be assured you may.

*Shy.* I will be assured I may ; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio ?

*Bass.* If it please you to dine with us.

*Shy.* Yes, to smell pork ; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following ; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto ? Who is he comes here ?

*Enter Antonio.*

*Bass.* This is Signior Antonio.

*Shy.* [*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 45  
 The rate of usance here with us in Venice.  
 If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
 I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.  
 He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,  
 Even there where merchants most do congregate, 50  
 On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,  
 Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,  
 If I forgive him !

*Bass.* Shylock, do you hear ?

*Shy.* 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 Ant.*] Rest you fair, good  
 signior ; 60

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

*Ant.* Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow  
 By taking nor by giving of excess,  
 Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,  
 I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd 65  
 How much ye would ?

*Shy.* Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

*Ant.* And for three months.

*Shy.* I had forgot ; three months ; you told me so.  
Well then, your bond ; and let me see ; — but  
hear you ;  
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow  
Upon advantage.

*Ant.* I do never use it. 71

*Shy.* When Jacob graz'd his uncle Laban's sheep —  
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,  
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,  
The third possessor ; ay, he was the third — 75

*Ant.* And what of him ? Did he take interest ?

*Shy.* No, not take interest, not, as you would say,  
Directly interest. Mark what Jacob did.  
When Laban and himself were compromis'd  
That all the eanlings which were 'streak'd and  
pied 80  
Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes, being  
rank,

In the end of autumn turned to the rams,  
And, when the work of generation was  
Between these woolly breeders in the act,  
The skilful shepherd pill'd me certain wands 85  
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,  
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,  
Who then conceiving did in eaning time  
Fall parti-colour'd lambs, and those were Jacob's.  
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest ; 90  
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

*Ant.* This was a venture, sir, that Jacob serv'd for ;  
 A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
 But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of Heaven.  
 Was this inserted to make interest good ? 95  
 Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams ?

*Shy.* I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast.  
 But note me, signior.

*Ant.* Mark you this, Bassanio,  
 The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.  
 An evil soul producing holy witness 100  
 Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,  
 A goodly apple rotten at the heart.  
 O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round sum.  
 Three months from twelve ; then, let me see ;  
 the rate — 105

*Ant.* Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

*Shy.* 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, 110  
 For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.  
 You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
 And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
 And all for use of that which is mine own.  
 Well then, it now appears you need my help. 115  
 Go to, then ! You come to me, and you say,  
 "Shylock, we would have moneys ;" you say so —

You, that did void your rheum upon my beard  
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur  
Over your threshold ; moneys is your suit.      120  
What should I say to you ? Should I not say,  
"Hath a dog money ? Is it possible  
A cur can lend three thousand ducats ?" Or  
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,  
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,  
Say this :      126

"Fair sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last ;  
You spurn'd me such a day ; another time  
You call'd me dog ; and for these courtesies  
I'll lend you thus much moneys " ?      130

*Ant.* I am as like to call thee so again,  
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
As to thy friends ; for when did friendship take  
A breed for barren metal of his friend ?      135  
But lend it rather to thine enemy,  
Who, if he break, thou mayst with better face  
Exact the penalty.

*Shy.*      Why, look you, how you storm !  
I would be friends with you and have your love,  
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,  
Supply your present wants, and take no doit      141  
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear me.  
This is kind I offer.

*Bass.* This were kindness.

- Shy.* This kindness will I show.  
 Go with me to a notary, seal me there 145  
 Your single bond ; and, in a merry sport,  
 If you repay me not on such a day,  
 In such a place, such sum or sums as are  
 Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit  
 Be nominated for an equal pound 150  
 Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
 In what part of your body pleaseth me.
- Ant.* Content, i' faith, I'll seal to such a bond,  
 And say there is much kindness in the Jew.
- Bass.* You shall not seal to such a bond for me ; 155  
 I'll rather dwell in my necessity.
- Ant.* Why, fear not, man ; I will not forfeit it.  
 Within these two months, that's a month before  
 This bond expires, I do expect return  
 Of thrice three times the value of this bond. 160
- Shy.* O father Abram, what these Christians are,  
 Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
 The thoughts of others ! Pray you, tell me this :  
 If he should break his day, what should I gain  
 By the exaction of the forfeiture ? 165  
 A pound of man's flesh taken from a man  
 Is not so estimable, profitable neither,  
 As flesh of muttens, beefs, or goats. I say,  
 To buy his favour, I extend this friendship.  
 If he will take it, so ; if not, adieu ; 170  
 And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.



*Ant.* Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

*Shy.* Then meet me forthwith at the notary's ;  
Give him direction for this merry bond,  
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,    175  
See to my house, left in the fearful guard  
Of an unthrifty knave, and presently  
I will be with you.

*Ant.*                                      Hie thee, gentle Jew.

*Exit [Shylock].*

The Hebrew will turn Christian ; he grows kind.

*Bass.* I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.    180

*Ant.* Come on ; in this there can be no dismay ;  
My ships come home a month before the day.

*Exeunt.*



## ACT SECOND

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### SCENE I

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

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

*Mor.* Mislike me not for my complexion,  
The shadowed livery of the burnish'd sun,  
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.  
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
Where Phœbus' 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 fear'd the valiant. By my love, I swear  
The best-regarded virgins of our clime 10  
Have lov'd it too. I would not change this hue,  
Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

*Por.* In terms of choice I am not solely led  
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes ;  
Besides, the lottery of my destiny 15  
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing.  
But if my father had not scanted me

And hedg'd me by his wit, to yield myself  
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,  
Yourself, renowned Prince, then stood as fair    20  
As any comer I have look'd on yet  
For my affection.

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

*Por.*                            You must take your chance,  
And either not attempt to choose at all,  
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong 40  
Never to speak to lady afterward  
In way of marriage ; therefore be advis'd.

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

*Por.* First, forward to the temple. After dinner  
Your hazard shall be made.

*Mor.* Good fortune then ! 45  
To make me blest or curs'd 'st among men.

*Cornets, and exeunt.*

### SCENE II

[*Venice. A street.*]

*Enter the Clown [Launcelot] alone.*

*Laun.* Certainly my conscience will serve me to  
run from this Jew my master. The fiend is  
at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me,  
"Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,"  
or "good Gobbo," or "good Launcelot Gobbo, 5  
use your legs, take the start, run away." My  
conscience says, "No; take heed, honest  
Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo," or, as  
aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not  
run; scorn running with thy heels." Well, the 10  
most courageous fiend bids me pack. "Via!"  
says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend; "for  
the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the  
fiend, "and run." Well, my conscience, hang-  
ing about the neck of my heart, says very  
wisely to me, "My honest friend Launcelot, 15  
being an honest man's son," or rather an hon-

est woman's son ; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste, — well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not." "Budge," says the fiend. "Budge not," says my conscience. 20  
"Conscience," say I, "you counsel well ;" "Fiend," say I, "you counsel well." To be rul'd 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 rul'd by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. 25  
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. 30

*Enter Old Gobbo, with a basket.*

**Gob.** Master young man, you, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's? 35

**Laun.** [*Aside.*] O heavens ! this is my true begotten father, who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not. I will try confusions with him.

**Gob.** Master young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's? 40

*Laun.* Turn up on your right hand at the next turning, but at the next turning of all, on your left; marry at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house. 45

*Gob.* By God's sonnies, 'twill be a hard way to hit.  
Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

*Laun.* Talk you of young Master Launcelot?  
[*Aside.*] Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? 50

*Gob.* 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. 55

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

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

*Laun.* But I pray you, ergo, old man, ergo, I beseech you, talk you of young Master Launcelot. 60

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

*Laun.* Ergo, Master Launcelot. Talk not of Master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman, according to Fates and Destinies and such odd sayings, the Sisters Three and such branches of learning, is indeed deceased, or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven. 65

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

*Laun.* [*Aside.*] Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? Do you know me, father? 70

*Gob.* 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? 75

*Laun.* Do you not know me, father?

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

*Laun.* 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. 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. 80 85

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

*Laun.* Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing. I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be. 90

*Gob.* I cannot think you are my son.

*Laun.* I know not what I shall think of that; but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your wife is my mother! 95

*Gob.* Her name is Margery, indeed. I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh

and blood. 'Lord worshipp'd might he be!  
 what a beard hast thou got! Thou hast got  
 more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill- 100  
 horse has on his tail.

*Laun.* It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows  
 backward. I am sure he had more hair of his  
 tail than I have of my face when I last saw  
 him. 105

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

*Laun.* Well, well: but, for mine own part, as I  
 have set up my rest to run away, so I will not 110  
 rest till I have run some ground. My master's  
 a very Jew. Give him a present! give him  
 a halter. I am famish'd in his service; you  
 may tell every finger I have with my ribs.  
 Father, I am glad you are come; give me your 115  
 present to one Master Bassanio, who, indeed,  
 gives rare new liveries. If I serve not him, I  
 will run as far as God has any ground. O rare  
 fortune! here comes the man. To him, father;  
 for I am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer. 120

*Enter Bassanio, with [Leonardo and other] followers.*

*Bass.* You may do so; but let it be so hasted that  
 supper be ready at the farthest by five of the  
 clock. See these letters delivered; put the



liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. *Exit one of his men.* 125

*Laun.* To him, father.

*Gob.* God bless your worship!

*Bass.* Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

*Gob.* Here's my son, sir, a poor boy, —

*Laun.* Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; 130  
that would, sir, as my father shall specify —

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

*Laun.* Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the 135  
Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify —

*Gob.* His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are scarce cater-cousins —

*Laun.* To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, 140  
having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you —

*Gob.* I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship, and my suit is — 145

*Laun.* 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.

*Bass.* One speak for both. What would you? 150

*Laun.* Serve you, sir.

*Gob.* That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

*Bass.* I know thee well ; thou hast obtain'd thy suit.  
 Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,  
 And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment 155  
 To leave a rich Jew's service, to become  
 The follower of so poor a gentleman.

*Laun.* 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.

*Bass.* Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy  
 son, 161

Take leave of thy old master, and inquire  
 My lodging out. Give him a livery  
 More guarded than his fellows' ; see it done.

*Laun.* Father, in. I cannot get a service, no ; 165  
 I have ne'er a tongue in my head. [*Looks on  
 his palm.*] Well, 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 170  
 wives ! Alas, fifteen wives is nothing !  
 Eleven widows and nine maids is a simple com-  
 ing-in for one man. And then to escape drown-  
 ing thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the  
 edge of a feather-bed ; here are simple scapes.  
 Well, if Fortune be a woman, she's a good 175  
 wench for this gear. Father, come ; I'll take  
 my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an  
 eye.

*Exeunt Launcelot [and old Gobbo].*

*Bass.* I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this :  
    These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,  
    Return in haste, for I do feast to-night            180  
    My best esteem'd acquaintance.    Hie thee, go.

*Leon.* My best endeavours shall be done herein.

*Enter Gratiano.*

*Gra.* Where is your master ?

*Leon.*                                 Yonder, sir, he walks.

*Exit.*

*Gra.* Signior Bassanio !

*Bass.* Gratiano !                                 185

*Gra.* I have a suit to you.

*Bass.*                                         You have obtain'd it.

*Gra.* You must not deny me ; I must go with you  
    to Belmont.

*Bass.* Why, then you must.    But hear thee, Gratiano ;  
    Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice ; 190  
    Parts that become thee happily enough  
    And in such eyes as ours appear not faults ;  
    But where thou art not known, why, there they  
    show

    Something too liberal.    Pray thee, take pain  
    To allay with some cold drops of modesty     195  
    Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild be-  
    haviour

    I be misconstru'd in the place I go to,  
    And lose my hopes.

**D**

- Gra.* Signior Bassanio, hear me :  
 If I do not put on a sober habit,  
 Talk with respect and swear but now and then, 200  
 Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,  
 Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes  
 Thus with my hat, and sigh and say Amen,  
 Use all the observance of civility,  
 Like one well studied in a sad ostent 205  
 To please his grandam, never trust me more.
- Bass.* Well, we shall see your bearing.
- Gra.* Nay, but I bar to-night ; you shall not gauge me  
 By what we do to-night.
- Bass.* No, that were pity.  
 I would entreat you rather to put on 210  
 Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends  
 That purpose merriment. But fare you well !  
 I have some business.
- Gra.* And I must to Lorenzo and the rest ; 214  
 But we will visit you at supper-time. *Exeunt.*

## SCENE III

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

*Enter Jessica and the Clown [Launcelot].*

- Jes.* I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so.  
 Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,

Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.  
But fare thee well, there is a ducat for thee ;  
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see      5  
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.

*Laun.* Adieu ! tears exhibit my tongue. Most      10  
beautiful 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 ! *Exit.*

*Jes.* Farewell, good Launcelot.      15  
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me  
To be asham'd 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,      20  
Become a Christian and thy loving wife.      *Exit.*

## SCENE IV

[*The same. A street.*]

*Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Salanio.*

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

*Gra.* We have not made good preparation.

*Salar.* We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers. 5

*Salan.* 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,  
And better in my mind not undertook.

*Lor.* 'Tis now but four o'clock; we have two hours  
To furnish us.

*Enter Launcelot, with a letter.*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

*Laun.* An it shall please you to break up this, it 10  
shall seem to signify.

*Lor.* I know the hand; in faith, 'tis a fair hand,  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

*Gra.* Love-news, in faith.

*Laun.* By your leave, sir. 15

*Lor.* Whither goest thou?

*Laun.* Marry, sir, to bid my old master the Jew  
to sup to-night with my new master the Chris-  
tian.

*Lor.* Hold, here, take this. Tell gentle Jessica 20  
I will not fail her; speak it privately; go.

*Exit Launcelot.*

Gentlemen,

Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?

I am provided of a torch-bearer.

*Salar.* Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight. 25

*Salan.* And so will I.

*Lor.* Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

*Salar.* 'Tis good we do so.

*Exeunt* [*Salar. and Salan.*].

*Gra.* Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

*Lor.* I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed 30

How I shall take her from her father's house,

What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,

What page's suit she hath in readiness.

If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake; 35

And never dare misfortune cross her foot,

Unless she do it under this excuse,

That she is issue to a faithless Jew.

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

Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer. 40

*Exeunt.*

### SCENE V

[*The same. Before Shylock's house.*]

*Enter the Jew [Shylock] and Launcelot.*

*Shy.* Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy  
judge,

The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio. —

What, Jessica! — Thou shalt not gormandise,

As thou hast done with me, — What, Jessica! —  
 And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out; — 5  
 Why, Jessica, I say!

*Laun.* Why, Jessica!

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

*Laun.* Your worship was wont to tell me that I  
 could do nothing without bidding.

*Enter Jessica.*

*Jes.* Call you? What is your will? 10

*Shy.* 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, 15

Look to my house. I am right loath to go.

There is some ill a-brewing towards my rest,

For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

*Laun.* I beseech you, sir, go. My young master  
 doth expect your reproach. 20

*Shy.* So do I his.

*Laun.* 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 25  
 i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash  
 Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.



*Shy.* What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica.  
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum  
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife,      30  
Clamber not you up to the casements then,  
Nor thrust your head into the public street  
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces,  
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements.  
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter      35  
My sober house. By Jacob's staff I swear  
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night;  
But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah;  
Say I will come.

*Laun.* I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at      40  
a window, for all this;

There will come a Christian by,  
Will be worth a Jewess' eye.      [*Exit.*]

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

*Jes.* His words were "Farewell, mistress!" nothing  
else.      45

*Shy.* The patch is kind enough, but a huge feeder;  
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day  
More than the wild-cat. Drones hive not with  
me;  
Therefore I part with him, and part with him  
To one that I would have him help to waste      50  
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 ;

A proverb never stale in thrifty mind. *Exit.*

*Jes.* Farewell ; and if my fortune be not cross'd, 56

I have a father, you a daughter, lost. *Exit.*

SCENE VI

[*The same.*]

*Enter Gratiano and Salarino, masked.*

*Gra.* This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo  
Desir'd us to make stand.

*Salar.* His hour is almost past.

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

*Salar.* O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly 5  
To seal love's bonds new-made than they are wont  
To keep obliged faith unforfeited !

*Gra.* That ever holds. Who riseth from a feast  
With that keen appetite that he sits down ?  
Where is the horse that doth untread again 10  
His tedious measures with the unbated fire  
That he did pace them first ? All things that are,  
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.  
How like a younker or a prodigal  
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay, 15  
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind !

How like the prodigal doth she return,  
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,  
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind !  
*Salar.* Here comes Lorenzo; more of this hereafter. 20

*Enter Lorenzo.*

*Lor.* 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 [in boy's clothes].*

*Jes.* Who are you ? Tell me, for more certainty,  
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

*Lor.* Lorenzo, and thy love.

*Jes.* Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,  
For who love I so much ? And now who knows  
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours ? 31

*Lor.* Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou  
art.

*Jes.* Here, catch this casket ; it is worth the pains.  
I am glad 'tis night, you do not look on me,  
For I am much asham'd of my exchange. 35  
But love is blind and lovers cannot see  
The pretty follies that themselves commit ;

For if they could, Cupid himself would blush  
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

*Lor.* Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer. 40

*Jes.* 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 obscur'd.

*Lor.* So are you, sweet,  
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy. 45

But come at once;

For the close night doth play the runaway,  
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

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

[*Exit above.*]

*Gra.* Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew. 51

*Lor.* 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 prov'd herself, 55  
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,  
Shall she be placed in my constant soul.

*Enter Jessica [below].*

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

*Exit [with Jessica and Salarino].*

*Enter Antonio.*

*Ant.* Who's there? 60

*Gra.* Signior Antonio!

*Ant.* Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?

    'Tis nine o'clock; our friends all stay for you.

    No masque to-night; the wind is come about,

    Bassanio presently will go aboard. 65

    I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

*Gra.* I am glad on't. I desire no more delight

    Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

*Exeunt.*

### SCENE VII

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

*[Flourish of cornets.] Enter Portia with [the Prince of] Morocco, and their trains.*

*Por.* Go draw aside the curtains and discover

    The several caskets to this noble prince.

    Now make your choice.

*Mor.* The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,

    "Who chooseth me shall gain what many men  
    desire;" 5

    The second, silver, which this promise carries,

    "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he de-  
    serves;"

    This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,

"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."

How shall I know if I do choose the right? 10

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

*Mor.* Some god direct my judgement! Let me see ;  
I will survey the inscriptions back again.

What says this leaden casket? 15

"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."

Must give: for what? For lead? Hazard for lead?

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages ;

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross. 20

I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves."

As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,  
And weigh thy value with an even hand. 25

If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough ; and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady ;

And yet to be afraid of my deserving

Were but a weak disabling of myself. 30

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 stray'd no farther, but chose here? 35  
Let's see once more this saying grav'd in gold :  
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men  
desire."

Why, that's the lady ; all the world desires her.  
From the four corners of the earth they come  
To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint.

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds 41  
Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now  
For princes to come view fair Portia.

The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head  
Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar 45  
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 dam-  
nation

To think so base a thought. It were too gross 50  
To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.

Or shall I think in silver she's immur'd,  
Being ten times undervalu'd to tri'd gold ?

O sinful thought ! Never so rich a gem  
Was set in worse than gold. They have in Eng-  
land 55

A coin that bears the figure of an angel  
Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon ;

But here an angel in a golden bed  
Lies all within. Deliver me the key.

Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may ! 60

*Por.* There, take it, Prince; and if my form lie  
there,

Then I am yours.

*[He unlocks the golden casket.]*

*Mor.* O hell ! what have we here ?

A carrion Death within whose empty eye  
There is a written scroll ! I'll read the writing.

*[Reads.]* "All that glisters is not gold ; 65

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, 70

Young in limbs, in judgement old,

Your answer had not been inscroll'd.

Fare you well ; your suit is cold."

Cold, indeed ; and labour lost :

Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost ! 75

Portia, adieu. I have too griev'd a heart  
To take a tedious leave ; thus losers part.

*Exit. Flourish of cornets.*

*Por.* A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.

Let all of his complexion choose me so.

*Exeunt.*



## SCENE VIII

[*Venice. A street.*]*www.libtool.com.cn*  
*Enter Salarino and Salanio.**Salar.* Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail.

With him is Gratiano gone along,

And in their ship I'm sure Lorenzo is not.

*Salan.* The villain Jew with outcries rais'd the Duke.

Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship. 5

*Salar.* 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 10

They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

*Salan.* I never heard a passion so confus'd,

So strange, outrageous, and so variable,

As the dog Jew did utter in the streets.

"My daughter ! O my ducats ! O my daughter ! 15

Fled with a Christian ! O my Christian ducats !

Justice ! the law ! my ducats, and my daughter !

A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,

Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter !

And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious

stones, 20

Stolen by my daughter ! Justice ! find the girl ;

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

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

*Salan.* Let good Antonio look he keep his day, 25  
Or he shall pay for this.

*Salar.* Marry, well rememb' red.

I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday,  
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part  
The French and English, there miscarried  
A vessel of our country richly fraught. 30

I thought upon Antonio when he told me ;  
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

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

*Salar.* A kinder gentleman treads not the earth: 35

I saw Bassanio and Antonio part ;  
Bassanio told him he would make some speed  
Of his return ; he answer'd, "Do not so ;  
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,  
But stay the very riping of the time ; 40

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." 45

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.

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*Salan.* I think he only loves the world for him.      50  
I pray thee, let us go and find him out  
And quicken his embraced heaviness  
With some delight or other.

*Salar.*      Do we so.      *Exeunt.*

**SCENE IX**

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

*Enter Nerissa with a Servitor.*

*Ner.* Quick, quick, I pray thee; draw the curtain  
straight.

The Prince of Arragon hath ta'en his oath,  
And comes to his election presently.

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the Prince of Arragon, Portia,  
and their trains.*

*Por.* Behold, there stand the caskets, noble Prince.  
If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,      5  
Straight shall our nuptial rites be solemniz'd;  
But if you fail, without more speech, my lord,  
You must be gone from hence immediately.

*Ar.* I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:      10  
First, never to unfold to any one  
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail  
Of the right casket, never in my life  
To woo a maid in way of marriage;

Lastly,

If I do fail in fortune of my choice, 15  
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

*Por.* To these injunctions every one doth swear  
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

*Ar.* And so have I address'd me. Fortune now  
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base  
lead. 20

"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he  
hath."

You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.

What says the golden chest? Ha! let me see:  
"Who chooseth me shall gain what many men  
desire."

What many men desire! That many may be  
meant 25

By the fool multitude, that choose by show,  
Not learning more than the fond eye doth  
teach;

Which pries not to the interior, but, like the  
martlet,

Builds in the weather on the outward wall,  
Even in the force and road of casualty. 30

I will not choose what many men desire,  
Because I will not jump with common spirits  
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.  
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;  
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear: 35

“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves;”

And well said too; for who shall go about  
To cozen fortune and be honourable  
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume  
To wear an undeserved dignity.      40  
O, that estates, degrees, and offices  
Were not deriv'd corruptly, and that clear  
honour

Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!  
How many then should cover that stand bare!  
How many be commanded that command!      45  
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd  
From the true seed of honour! and how much  
honour

Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times  
To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:  
“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.”      50

I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,  
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.

*[He opens the silver casket.]*

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

*Ar.* What's here? The portrait of a blinking idiot,  
Presenting me a schedule! I will read it.      55  
How much unlike art thou to Portia!  
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!

“Who chooseth me shall have as much as he  
deserves.”

Did I deserve no more than a fool’s head?

Is that my prize? Are my deserts no better? 60

*Por.* To offend and judge are distinct offices

And of opposed natures.

*Ar.*

What is here?

[*Reads.*] “The fire seven times tried this;  
Seven times tried that judgement is,  
That did never choose amiss. 65

Some there be that shadows kiss,

Such have but a shadow’s bliss.

There be fools alive, I wis,

Silver’d o’er; and so was this.

Take what wife you will to bed, 70

I will ever be your head.

So be gone; you are sped.”

Still more fool I shall appear

By the time I linger here.

With one fool’s head I came to woo, 75

But I go away with two.

Sweet, adieu. I’ll keep my oath,

Patiently to bear my wroth.

[*Exeunt Arragon and train.*]

*Por.* Thus hath the candle sing’d the moth.

O, these deliberate fools! When they do choose, 80

They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

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

*Por.* Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mess.* Where is my lady ?

*Por.* Here ; what would my lord ? 85

*Mess.* Madam, there is alighted at your gate  
A young Venetian, one that comes before  
To signify the approaching of his lord ;  
From whom he bringeth sensible regrets,  
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,  
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen 91  
So likely an ambassador of love.

A day in April never came so sweet,  
To show how costly summer was at hand,  
As this fore-spurrer comes before his lord. 95

*Por.* No more, I pray thee. I am half afraid  
Thou wilt say anon he is some kin to thee,  
Thou spend'st such high-day wit in praising him.  
Come, come, Nerissa, for I long to see  
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly. 100

*Ner.* Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be ! *Exeunt.*

ACT THIRD

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SCENE I

[*Venice. A street.*]

*Enter Salanio and Salarino.*

*Salan.* Now, what news on the Rialto?

*Salar.* Why, yet it lives there uncheck'd that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wreck'd on the narrow seas; the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, 5  
where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

*Salan.* I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapp'd ginger or made her neighbours 10  
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 15  
name company! —

*Salar.* Come, the full stop.

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



*Salar.* I would it might prove the end of his 20  
losses.

*Salan.* Let me say Amen betimes, lest the devil  
cross my prayer, for here he comes in the like-  
ness of a Jew. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

*Enter Shylock.*

How now, Shylock! what news among the 25  
merchants?

*Shy.* You knew, none so well, none so well as you,  
of my daughter's flight.

*Salar.* That's certain. I, for my part, knew the  
tailor that made the wings she flew withal. 30

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

*Shy.* She is damn'd for it.

*Salar.* That's certain, if the devil may be her 35  
judge.

*Shy.* My own flesh and blood to rebel!

*Salan.* Out upon it, old carrion! Rebels it at  
these years?

*Shy.* I say, my daughter is my flesh and blood. 40

*Salar.* 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? 45

*Shy.* There I have another bad match. A bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was us'd to come so smug upon the mart; let him look to his bond. He was wont to call me usurer; let him look to his bond. He was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him look to his bond. 50

*Salar.* Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh. What's that good for?

*Shy.* To bait withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgrac'd me, and hind'ed me half a million; laugh'd at my losses, mock'd at my gains, scorn'd my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what 70

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 will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction. 75

*Enter a [Servant].*

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

*Salar.* We have been up and down to seek him.

*Enter Tubal.*

*Salan.* Here comes another of the tribe; a third cannot be match'd, unless the devil himself turn Jew. 80

*Exeunt [Salan., Salar., and Servant].*

*Shy.* How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

*Tub.* I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her. 85

*Shy.* Why, there, there, there, there! A diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now. I never felt it till now. Two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! Would she were hears'd at my foot, and the ducats 90

in her coffin! No news of them? Why so? 95  
And I know not what's spent in the search.  
Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with  
so much, and so much to find the thief; and no  
satisfaction, no revenge, nor no ill luck stirring  
but what lights on my shoulders, no sighs but 100  
of my breathing, no tears but of my shedding.

*Tub.* Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio,  
as I heard in Genoa, —

*Shy.* What, what, what? Ill luck, ill luck?

*Tub.* Hath an argosy cast away, coming from 105  
Tripolis.

*Shy.* I thank God, I thank God. Is't true, is't  
true?

*Tub.* I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped  
the wreck. 110

*Shy.* I thank thee, good Tubal; good news, good  
news! Ha, ha! Here in Genoa!

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

*Shy.* Thou stick'st a dagger in me. I shall never 115  
see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a  
sitting! Fourscore ducats!

*Tub.* There came divers of Antonio's creditors  
in my company to Venice, that swear he can-  
not choose but break. 120

*Shy.* I am very glad of it. I'll plague him; I'll  
torture him. I am glad of it.

*Tub.* One of them showed me a ring that he had  
of your daughter for a monkey.

*Shy.* Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal. 125  
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.

*Tub.* But Antonio is certainly undone.

*Shy.* Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, 130  
Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fort-  
night before. I will have the heart of him, if  
he forfeit; for, were he out of Venice, I can  
make what merchandise I will. Go, go, Tu-  
bal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good 135  
Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal.      *Exeunt.*

## SCENE II

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

*Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, [Nerissa,] and all  
their train.*

*Por.* I pray you, tarry. Pause a day or two  
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,  
I lose your company; therefore forbear awhile.  
There's something tells me, but it is not love,  
I would not lose you; and you know yourself 5  
Hate counsels not in such a quality.  
But lest you should not understand me well, —

And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—  
 I would detain you here some month or two  
 Before you venture for me. I could teach you 10  
 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,  
 They have o'erlook'd 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,  
 Let fortune go to hell for it, not I. 21  
 I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,  
 To eke it and to draw it out in length,  
 To stay you from election.

*Bass.* Let me choose;  
 For as I am, I live upon the rack. 25

*Por.* Upon the rack, Bassanio! Then confess  
 What treason there is mingled with your love.

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

*Por.* Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,  
 Where men enforced do speak anything.

**Bass.** Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

**Por.** Well then, confess and live.

**Bass.** "Confess and love"

Had been the very sum of my confession. 36

O happy torment, when my torturer

Doth teach me answers for deliverance !

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

**Por.** Away, then ! I am lock'd in one of them ; 40

If you do love me, you will find me out.

Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.

Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;

Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,

Fading in music. That the comparison 45

May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream

And watery death-bed for him. He may win ;

And what is music then ? Then music is

Even as the flourish when true subjects bow

To a new-crowned monarch ; such it is 50

As are those dulcet sounds in break of day

That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear

And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,

With no less presence, but with much more love,

Than young Alcides, when he did redeem 55

The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy

To the sea-monster. I stand for sacrifice ;

The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,

With bleared visages, come forth to view

The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules ! 60

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.*

Tell me where is fancy bred,  
Or in the heart or in the head?  
How begot, how nourished? 65

Reply, reply.

It is engend'ed in the eyes,  
With gazing fed; and fancy dies  
In the cradle where it lies.  
Let us all ring fancy's knell; 70

I'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.

*All.* Ding, dong, bell.

*Bass.* So may the outward shows be least themselves;  
The world is still deceiv'd with ornament.  
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt 75  
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,  
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,  
What damned error but some sober brow  
Will bless it and approve it with a text,  
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament? 80  
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,      85  
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk ;  
And these assume but valour's excrement  
To render them redoubted ! Look on beauty,  
And you shall see 'tis purchas'd by the weight ;  
Which therein works a miracle in nature,      90  
Making them lightest that wear most of it.  
So are those crisped snaky golden locks,  
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind  
Upon supposed fairness, often known  
To be the dowry of a second head,      95  
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.  
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore  
To a most dangerous sea ; the beauteous scarf  
Veiling an Indian beauty ; in a word,  
The seeming truth which cunning times put on  
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy  
gold,      101  
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee ;  
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge  
'Tween man and man ; but thou, thou meagre  
lead,  
Which rather threat'nest than dost promise  
aught,      105  
Thy plainness moves me more than eloquence ;  
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence !

*Por. [Aside.]* How all the other passions fleet to air,  
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embrac'd despair,

And shuddering fear, and green-ey'd jealousy !  
 O love, 111  
 Be moderate ; allay thy ecstasy ;  
 In measure rein thy joy ; scant this excess !  
 I feel too much thy blessing ; make it less,  
 For fear I surfeit.

*Bass.* What find I here ? 115  
*[Opening the leaden casket.]*

Fair Portia's counterfeit ! What demi-god  
 Hath come so near creation ? Move these eyes ?  
 Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,  
 Seem they in motion ? Here are sever'd lips,  
 Parted with sugar breath ; so sweet a bar 120  
 Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her  
 hairs

The painter plays the spider, and hath woven  
 A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men  
 Faster than gnats in cobwebs. But her eyes, —  
 How could he see to do them ? Having made  
 one, 125

Methinks it should have power to steal both his  
 And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far  
 The substance of my praise doth wrong this  
 shadow

In underprizing it, so far this shadow  
 Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the  
 scroll, 130

The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads.*] "You that choose not by the view,  
Chance as fair and choose as true !  
Since this fortune falls to you,  
Be content and seek no new.      138  
If you be well pleas'd with this  
And hold your fortune for your bliss,  
Turn you where your lady is  
And claim her with a loving kiss."

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave ;      140  
I come by note, to give and to receive.  
Like one of two contending in a prize,  
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,  
Hearing applause and universal shout,  
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt      145  
Whether those peals of praise be his or no ;  
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so,  
As doubtful whether what I see be true,  
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

*Por.* You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,      150  
Such as I am. Though for myself alone  
I would not be ambitious in my wish,  
To wish myself much better ; yet, for you  
I would be trebled twenty times myself,  
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times 155  
More rich ;  
That only to stand high in your account,  
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,

Exceed account. But the full sum of me  
 Is sum of — something, which, to term in gross,  
 Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractis'd; 161  
 Happy in this, she is not yet so old  
 But she may learn; happier than this,  
 She is not bred so dull but she can learn;  
 Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit 165  
 Commits itself to yours to be directed,  
 As from her lord, her governor, her king.  
 Myself and what is mine to you and yours  
 Is now converted. But now I was the lord  
 Of this fair mansion, master of my servants, 170  
 Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,  
 This house, these servants, and this same myself  
 Are yours, my lord; I give them with this ring;  
 Which when you part from, lose, or give away,  
 Let it presage the ruin of your love 175  
 And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

*Bass.* Madam, you have bereft me of all words,  
 Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;  
 And there is such confusion in my powers,  
 As, after some oration fairly spoke 180  
 By a beloved prince, there doth appear  
 Among the buzzing pleased multitude;  
 Where every something, being blent together,  
 Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy  
 Express'd and not express'd. But when this  
 ring 185

Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence ;  
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead !

*Ner.* My lord and lady, it is now our time,  
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,  
To cry good joy. Good joy, my lord and  
lady ! 190

*Gra.* My Lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,  
I wish you all the joy that you can wish,  
For I am sure you can wish none from me ;  
And when your honours mean to solemnize  
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you, 195  
Even at that time I may be married too.

*Bass.* With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

*Gra.* I thank your lordship, you have got me one.  
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours.  
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid ; ✓ 200  
You lov'd, I lov'd ; for intermission  
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.  
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,  
And so did mine too, as the matter falls ;  
For, wooing here until I sweat again, 205  
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  
To have her love, provided that your fortune  
Achiev'd her mistress.

*Por.* Is this true, Nerissa ? 210

*Ner.* Madam, it is, so you stand pleas'd withal.

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

*Gra.* Yes, faith, my lord.

*Bass.* Our feast shall be much honour'd in your  
marriage. 215

*Gra.* We'll play with them the first boy for a thou-  
sand ducats.

*Ner.* What, and stake down?

*Gra.* No; we shall ne'er win at that sport and  
stake down. 220

But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?  
What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

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

*Bass.* Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither,  
If that the youth of my new interest here  
Have power to bid you welcome. By your  
leave, 225

I bid my very friends and countrymen,  
Sweet Portia, welcome.

*Por.* So do I, my lord:

They are entirely welcome.

*Lor.* I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,  
My purpose was not to have seen you here; 230  
But meeting with Salerio by the way,  
He did intreat me, past all saying nay,  
To come with him along.

*Saler.* I did, my lord ;  
 And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio  
 Commends him to you.

*[Gives Bassanio a letter.]*  
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*Bass.* Ere I ope his letter,  
 I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth. 236

*Saler.* Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind,  
 Nor well, unless in mind. His letter there  
 Will show you his estate.

*Bass. opens the letter.*

*Gra.* Nerissa, cheer yon stranger ; bid her wel-  
 come. 240

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.

*Saler.* I would you had won the fleece that he hath  
 lost. 245

*Por.* There are some shrewd contents in yon same  
 paper,

That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek.

Some dear friend dead ; else nothing in the world  
 Could turn so much the constitution

Of any constant man. What, worse and worse !

With leave, Bassanio ; I am half yourself, 251

And I must freely have the half of anything

That this same paper brings you.

*Bass.*

O sweet Portia,

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words  
 That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady, 255  
 When I did first impart my love to you,  
 I freely told you, all the wealth I had  
 Ran in my veins; I was a gentleman.  
 And then I told you true; and yet, dear lady,  
 Rating myself at nothing, you shall see 260  
 How much I was a braggart. When I told you  
 My state was nothing, I should then have told you  
 That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,  
 I have engag'd myself to a dear friend,  
 Engag'd my friend to his mere enemy, 265  
 To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;  
 The paper as the body of my friend,  
 And every word in it a gaping wound,  
 Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?  
 Hath all his ventures fail'd? What? not one  
 hit? 270

From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,  
 From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?  
 And not one vessel scape the dreadful touch  
 Of merchant-marring rocks?

*Salero.*

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had 275  
 The present money to discharge the Jew,  
 He would not take it. Never did I know  
 A creature that did bear the shape of man



- So keen and greedy to confound a man.  
He plies the Duke at morning and at night, 280  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice. Twenty merchants,  
The Duke himself, and the magnificoes  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him ;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond. 286
- Jes.* 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 290  
That he did owe him ; and I know, my lord,  
If law, authority, and power deny not,  
It will go hard with poor Antonio.
- Por.* Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble ?
- Bass.* The dearest friend to me, the kindest man, 295  
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit  
In doing courtesies, and one in whom  
The ancient Roman honour more appears  
Than any that draws breath in Italy.
- Por.* What sum owes he the Jew ? 300
- Bass.* For me, three thousand ducats.
- Por.* 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. 305

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. 310  
 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 ; 315  
 Since you are dear bought, I will love you  
 dear.

But let me hear the letter of your friend.

*[Bass. Reads.]* "Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all  
 miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my es-  
 tate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit ;  
 and since in paying it, it is impossible I should 320  
 live, all debts are cleared between you and I,  
 if I might but see you at my death. Not-  
 withstanding, use your pleasure ; if your love  
 do not persuade you to come, let not my  
 letter." 325

*Por.* O love, dispatch all business, and be gone !

*Bass.* Since I have your good leave to go away,  
 I will make haste ; but, till I come again,  
 No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,  
 No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. 330

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE III

[*Venice. A street.*]

*Enter the Jew [Shylock], Salarino, Antonio, and Gaoler.*

*Shy.* Gaoler, look to him ; tell not me of mercy.  
This is the fool that lent out money gratis !  
Gaoler, look to him.

*Ant.* Hear me yet, good Shylock.

*Shy.* I'll have my bond ; speak not against my bond.  
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond. 5  
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause ;  
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.  
The Duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,  
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond  
To come abroad with him at his request. 10

*Ant.* I pray thee, hear me speak.

*Shy.* 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-ey'd fool,  
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield 15  
To Christian intercessors. Follow not ;  
I'll have no speaking ; I will have my bond.

*Exit.*

*Salar.* It is the most impenetrable cur  
That ever kept with men.

*Ant.* Let him alone ;  
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.

He seeks my life ; his reason well I know : 21  
 I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures  
 Many that have at times made moan to me ;  
 Therefore he hates me.

*Salar.* I am sure the Duke  
 Will never grant this forfeiture to hold. 25

*Ant.* The Duke cannot deny the course of law ;  
 For the commodity that strangers have  
 With us in Venice, if it be denied,  
 Will much impeach the justice of the state,  
 Since that the trade and profit of the city 30  
 Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go.

These griefs and losses have so bated me,  
 That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh  
 To-morrow to my bloody creditor.  
 Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come 35  
 To see me pay his debt, and then I care not !

*Exeunt.*

#### SCENE IV

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

*Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and [Balthasar,]  
 a man of Portia's.*

*Lor.* Madam, although I speak it in your presence,  
 You have a noble and a true conceit  
 Of god-like amity, which appears most strongly  
 In bearing thus the absence of your lord.

But if you knew to whom you show this honour, 5  
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.

*Por.* I never did repent for doing good, 10  
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; 15  
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 20  
From out the state of hellish misery!  
This comes too near the praising of myself,  
Therefore no more of it. Hear other things.  
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands  
The husbandry and manage of my house 25  
Until my lord's return. For mine own part,  
I have toward heaven breath'd 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 will we abide. I do desire you

Not to deny this imposition,  
The which my love and some necessity  
Now lays upon you.

*Lor.* Madam, with all my heart  
I shall obey you in all fair commands. 36

*Por.* My people do already know my mind,  
And will acknowledge you and Jessica  
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.  
And so farewell till we shall meet again. 40

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

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

*Por.* I thank you for your wish, and am well pleas'd  
To wish it back on you. Fare you well, Jessica.

*Exeunt [Jessica and Lorenzo].*

Now, Balthasar, 45

As I have ever found thee honest-true,  
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,  
And use thou all the endeavour of a man  
In speed to [Padua]. See thou render this  
Into my cousin's hands, Doctor Bellario ; 50  
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give  
thee,

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagin'd speed  
Unto the trajet, to the common ferry  
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,  
But get thee gone. I shall be there before  
thee. 55

*Balth.* Madam, I go with all convenient speed. *Exit.*



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

*Exeunt.*

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SCENE V

[*The same. A garden.*]

*Enter Clown [Launcelot] and Jessica.*

*Laun.* Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the  
 father are to be laid upon the children; there-  
 fore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always  
 plain with you, and so now I speak my agita-  
 tion of the matter; therefore be o' good cheer, 5  
 for truly I think you are damn'd. There is  
 but one hope in it that can do you any good;  
 and that is but a kind of bastard hope  
 neither.

*Jes.* And what hope is that, I pray thee? 10

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

*Jes.* That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed.  
 So the sins of my mother should be visited 15  
 upon me.

*Laun.* Truly then I fear you are damn'd both by  
 father and mother; thus when I shun Scylla,



your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother. Well, you are gone both ways. 20

*Jes.* I shall be sav'd by my husband. He hath made me a Christian.

*Laun.* Truly, the more to blame he; we were Christians 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.*

*Jes.* I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say. Here he comes. 30

*Lor.* I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

*Jes.* Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo; Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly there is 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

*Lor.* 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, Launcelot. 40

*Laun.* It is much that the Moor should be more

than reason ; but if she be less than an honest 45  
woman, she is indeed more than I took  
her for.

*Lor.* How every fool can play upon the word !  
I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn 50  
into silence, and discourse grow commendable  
in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah ; bid  
them prepare for dinner.

*Laun.* That is done, sir ; they have all stomachs.

*Lor.* Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you !  
Then bid them prepare dinner. 55

*Laun.* That is done too, sir ; only cover is the  
word.

*Lor.* Will you cover then, sir ?

*Laun.* Not so, sir, neither ; I know my duty.

*Lor.* Yet more quarrelling with occasion ! Wilt 60  
thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an  
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. 65

*Laun.* For the table, sir, it shall be serv'd in ; for  
the meat, sir, it shall be cover'd ; for your  
coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as  
humours and conceits shall govern. *Exit.*

*Lor.* O dear discretion, how his words are suited ! 70  
The fool hath planted in his memory  
An army of good words ; and I do know

A many fools, that stand in better place,  
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word  
Defy the matter. How far'st thou, Jessica? 75  
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,  
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

*Jes.* Past all expressing. It is very meet  
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life ;  
For, having such a blessing in his lady, 80  
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth ;  
And if on earth he do not mean it, then  
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, 85  
And Portia one, there must be something' else  
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world  
Hath not her fellow.

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

*Jes.* Nay, but ask my opinion too of that. 90

*Lor.* I will anon ; first, let us go to dinner.

*Jes.* Nay, let me praise you while I have a stomach.

*Lor.* No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk ;  
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things  
I shall digest it.

*Jes.* Well, I'll set you forth. 95

*Exeunt.*

ACT FOURTH

SCENE I

[*Venice. A court of justice.*]

*Enter the Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano [Salerio, and others].*

*Duke.* What, is Antonio here?

*Ant.* 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 5  
From any dram of mercy.

*Ant.* 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 10  
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd  
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,  
The very tyranny and rage of his.

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

*Saler.* He is ready at the door. He comes, my lord. 15

*Enter Shylock.*

*Duke.* Make room, and let him stand before our  
face. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,  
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice  
To the last hour of act ; and then 'tis thought  
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange  
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty ; 21  
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,  
But, touch'd with humane gentleness and love,  
Forgive a moiety of the principal ; 26  
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 30  
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,  
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd  
To offices of tender courtesy.  
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shy.* I have possess'd your Grace of what I purpose ; 35  
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn  
To have the due and forfeit of my bond.  
If you deny it, let the danger light  
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.  
You'll ask me why I rather choose to have 40

A weight of carrion flesh than to receive  
 Three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that ;  
 But say it is my humour. Is it answer'd ?  
 What if my house be troubled with a rat  
 And I be pleas'd to give ten thousand ducats 45  
 To have it ban'd ? What, are you answer'd yet ?  
 Some men there are love not a gaping pig ;  
 Some, that are mad if they behold a cat ;  
 And others, when the bagpipe sings i' the nose,  
 Cannot contain their urine : for affection, 50  
 Master of passion, sways it to the mood  
 Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer :  
 As there is no firm reason to be rend'red  
 Why he cannot abide a gaping pig ;  
 Why he, a harmless necessary cat ; 55  
 Why he, a woollen bagpipe ; but of force  
 Must yield to such inevitable shame  
 As to offend, himself being offended ;  
 So can I give no reason, nor I will not,  
 More than a lodg'd hate and a certain loathing  
 I bear Antonio, that I follow thus 61  
 A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd ?

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

*Shy.* I am not bound to please thee with my answer. 65

*Bass.* Do all men kill the things they do not love ?

*Shy.* Hates any man the thing he would not kill ?

*Bass.* Every offence is not a hate at first.

*Shy.* What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee  
twice?

*Ant.* I pray you, think, you question with the Jew. 70  
You may as well go stand upon the beach  
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;  
You may as well use question with the wolf  
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;  
You may as well forbid the mountain pines 75  
To wag their high tops and to make no noise  
When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;  
You may as well do any thing most hard,  
As seek to soften that — than which what's  
harder? —

His Jewish heart. Therefore, I do beseech you,  
Make no more offers, use no farther means, 81  
But with all brief and plain conveniency  
Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

*Bass.* For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

*Shy.* If every ducat in six thousand ducats 85  
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,  
I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

*Duke.* How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering  
none?

*Shy.* What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?  
You have among you many a purchas'd slave, 90  
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,  
You use in abject and in slavish parts,  
Because you bought them. Shall I say to you,

“Let them be free ! Marry them to your heirs !  
 Why sweat they under burdens ? Let their  
 beds 95

Be made as soft as yours and let their palates  
 Be season'd with such viands” ? You will an-  
 swer,

“The slaves are ours.” So do I answer you.  
 The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,  
 Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine and I will have it.  
 If you deny me, fie upon your law ! 101  
 There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgement ! Answer : shall I have it ?

*Duke.* Upon my power I may dismiss this court,  
 Unless Bellario, a learned doctor, 105  
 Whom I have sent for to determine this,  
 Come here to-day.

*Saler.* My lord, here stays without  
 A messenger with letters from the doctor,  
 New come from Padua.

*Duke.* Bring us the letters ; call the messenger. 110

*Bass.* Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage yet !  
 The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,  
 Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

*Ant.* I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
 Meetest for death. The weakest kind of fruit  
 Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me. 116  
 You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,  
 Than to live still and write mine epitaph.



*Enter Nerissa [dressed like a lawyer's clerk].*

*Duke.* Came you from Padua, from Bellario ?

*Ner.* From both, my lord! Bellario greets your Grace.  
[Presenting a letter.]

*Bass.* Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ? 121

*Shy.* To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

*Gra.* Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,  
Thou mak'st thy knife keen ; but no metal can,  
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keen-  
ness 125

Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee ?

*Shy.* No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

*Gra.* O, be thou damn'd, execrable dog !  
And for thy life let justice be accus'd.  
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith 130  
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,  
That souls of animals infuse themselves  
Into the trunks of men. Thy currish spirit  
Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human slaughter,  
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet, 135  
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallowed dam,  
Infus'd itself in thee ; for thy desires  
Are wolfish, bloody, starv'd, and ravenous.

*Shy.* Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,  
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud. 140  
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall  
To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

*Duke.* This letter from Bellario doth commend  
A young and learned doctor to our court.  
Where is he?

*Ner.* He attendeth here hard by, 145  
To know your answer, whether you'll admit  
him.

*Duke.* With all my heart. Some three or four of you  
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.  
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

[*Clerk. Reads.*] "Your Grace shall understand that 150  
at the receipt of your letter I am very sick;  
but in the instant that your messenger came,  
in loving visitation was with me a young doctor  
of Rome. His name is Balthazar. I ac-  
quainted him with the cause in controversy  
between the Jew and Antonio the merchant. 155  
We turned o'er many books together. He is  
furnished with my opinion; which, bett'ed  
with his own learning, the greatness whereof I  
cannot enough commend, comes with him, at  
my importunity, to fill up your Grace's re- 160  
quest in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack  
of years be no impediment to let him lack a  
reverend estimation; for I never knew so  
young a body with so old a head. I leave him  
to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall 165  
better publish his commendation."

*Enter Portia for Balthazar.*

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

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario ?

**Por.** I did, my lord.

**Duke.** You are welcome ; take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference      171

That holds this present question in the court ?

**Por.** I am informed throughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew ?

**Duke.** Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth. 175

**Por.** Is your name Shylock ?

**Shy.** Shylock is my name.

**Por.** Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ;

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law

Cannot impugn you as you do proceed. —

You stand within his danger, do you not ?      180

**Ant.** Ay, so he says.

**Por.** Do you confess the bond ?

**Ant.** I do.

**Por.** Then must the Jew be merciful.

**Shy.** On what compulsion must I ? Tell me that.

**Por.** The quality of mercy is not strain'd.

It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven      185

Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest :

It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

'Tis mightiest in the mightiest ; it becomes

The throned monarch better than his crown.  
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
 The attribute to awe and majesty, 191  
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;  
 But mercy is above the sceptred sway ;  
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings ;  
 It is an attribute to God himself ; 195  
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
 That, in the course of justice, none of us  
 Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy, 200  
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
 The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much  
 To mitigate the justice of thy plea,  
 Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice  
 Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant  
 there. 205

*Shy.* My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,  
 The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

*Por.* Is he not able to discharge the money ?

*Bass.* Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;  
 Yea, twice the sum. If that will not suffice, 210  
 I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,  
 On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart.  
 If this will not suffice, it must appear  
 That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,  
 Wrest once the law to your authority ; 215

To do a great right, do a little wrong,  
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

*Por.* It must not be ; there is no power in Venice  
Can alter a decree established.

'Twill be recorded for a precedent, 220  
And many an error by the same example  
Will rush into the state. It cannot be.

*Shy.* A Daniel come to judgement ! yea, a Daniel !  
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee !

*Por.* I pray you, let me look upon the bond. 225

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

*Por.* Shylock, there's thrice thy money off'red thee.

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

*Por.* Why, this bond is forfeit ; 230

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.

*Shy.* When it is paid according to the tenour. 235

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 judgement. By my soul I swear 240  
There is no power in the tongue of man  
To alter me. I stay here on my bond.

*Ant.* Most heartily I do beseech the court  
To give the judgement.

*Por.* Why then, thus it is :  
You must prepare your bosom for his knife, — 245

*Shy.* O noble judge ! O excellent young man !

*Por.* For the intent and purpose of the law  
Hath full relation to the penalty,  
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

*Shy.* 'Tis very true. O wise and upright judge ! 250  
How much more elder art thou than thy looks !

*Por.* Therefore lay bare your bosom.

*Shy.* Ay, his breast ;  
So says the bond ; doth it not, noble judge ?  
"Nearest his heart ;" those are the very words.

*Por.* It is so. Are there balance here to weigh 255  
The flesh ?

*Shy.* I have them ready.

*Por.* Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,  
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

*Shy.* Is it so nominated in the bond ? 260

*Por.* It is not so express'd ; but what of that ?  
'Twere good you do so much for charity.

*Shy.* I cannot find it ; 'tis not in the bond.

*Por.* You, merchant, have you anything to say ?

*Ant.* But little ; I am arm'd and well prepar'd.  
Give me your hand, Bassanio ; fare you well ! 265  
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you ;  
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind

Than is her custom. It is still her use  
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,  
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow 270  
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance  
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.

Commend me to your honourable wife.  
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;  
Say how I lov'd you, speak me fair in death, 275  
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge  
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.  
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,  
And he repents not that he pays your debt;  
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough, 280  
I'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

*Bass.* Antonio, I am married to a wife  
Which is as dear to me as life itself;  
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,  
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life. 285  
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all  
Here to this devil, to deliver you.

*Por.* Your wife would give you little thanks for  
that,

If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

*Gra.* I have a wife, who, I protest, I love; 290  
I would she were in heaven, so she could  
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

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

*Shy.* These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter ; 295

Would any of the stock of Barrabas  
Had been her husband rather than a Christian !

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We trifle time. I pray thee, pursue sentence.

*Por.* A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine.  
The court awards it, and the law doth give it. 300

*Shy.* Most rightful judge !

*Por.* And you must cut this flesh from off his breast.  
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

*Shy.* Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come, prepare !

*Por.* Tarry a little ; there is something else. 305

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;

The words expressly are "a pound of flesh."

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of  
flesh ;

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate 311

Unto the state of Venice.

*Gra.* O upright judge ! Mark, Jew : O learned judge !

*Shy.* Is that the law ?

*Por.* Thyself shall see the act ;

For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd 315

Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st.

*Gra.* O learned judge ! Mark, Jew : a learned judge !



*Shy.* I take this offer, then ; pay the bond thrice  
And let the Christian go.

*Bass.* Here is the money.

*Por.* Soft ! 320

The Jew shall have all justice. Soft ! no haste.  
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

*Gra.* O Jew ! an upright judge, a learned judge !

*Por.* Therefore prepare thee to cut off the flesh. 324

Shed thou no blood, nor cut thou less nor more  
But just a pound of flesh. If thou tak'st more  
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much  
As makes it light or heavy in the substance  
Or the division of the twentieth part  
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn 330  
But in the estimation of a hair,  
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

*Gra.* A second Daniel ! A Daniel, Jew !

Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

*Por.* Why doth the Jew pause ? Take thy forfeiture.

*Shy.* Give me my principal, and let me go. 336

*Bass.* I have it ready for thee ; here it is.

*Por.* He hath refus'd it in the open court.

He shall have merely justice and his bond.

*Gra.* A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel ! 340

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

*Shy.* Shall I not have barely my principal ?

*Por.* Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,  
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

*Shy.* Why, then the devil give him good of it! 345  
I'll stay no longer question.

*Por.*

Tarry, Jew :

The law hath yet another hold on you.  
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
If it be prov'd against an alien  
That by direct or indirect attempts 350  
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 355  
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 contriv'd against the very life 360  
Of the defendant ; and thou hast incurr'd  
The danger formerly by me rehears'd.  
Down therefore and beg mercy of the Duke.

*Gra.* Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang thyself ;  
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state, 365  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord ;  
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's  
charge.

*Duke.* That thou shalt see the difference of our spirits,  
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it.  
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's ; 370

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

*Por.* Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

*Shy.* Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that. 374

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.

*Por.* What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

*Gra.* A halter gratis; nothing else, for God's sake.

*Ant.* So please my lord the Duke and all the court 380

To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
I am content; so he will let me have

The other half in use, to render it,  
Upon his death, unto the gentleman

That lately stole his daughter: 385

Two things provided more, that, for this favour,  
He presently become a Christian;

The other, that he do record a gift,

Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,

Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter. 390

*Duke.* He shall do this, or else I do recant

The pardon that I late pronounced here.

*Por.* Art thou contented, Jew? What dost thou say?

*Shy.* I am content.

*Por.* Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

*Shy.* I pray you, give me leave to go from hence. 395

I am not well. Send the deed after me,

And I will sign it.

*Duke.*

Get thee gone, but do it.

*Gra.* In christening shalt thou have two godfathers :  
 Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten  
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 To bring thee to the gallows, not the font. 400

*Exit [Shylock].*

*Duke.* Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

*Por.* I humbly do desire your Grace of pardon.

I must away this night toward Padua,  
 And it is meet I presently set forth.

*Duke.* I am sorry that your leisure serves you  
 not. 405

Antonio, gratify this gentleman ;

For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

*Exeunt Duke and his train.*

*Bass.* Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend  
 Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted  
 Of grievous penalties ; in lieu whereof 410  
 Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,  
 We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

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

*Por.* He is well paid that is well satisfied ; 415  
 And I, delivering you, am satisfied  
 And therein do account myself well paid.  
 My mind was never yet more mercenary.  
 I pray you, know me when we meet again.  
 I wish you well, and so I take my leave. 420

*Bass.* Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further.

Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,  
Not as a fee. Grant me two things, I pray you,  
Not to deny me, and to pardon me.

*Por.* You press me far, and therefore I will yield. 425

[*To Ant.*] Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your  
sake ;

[*To Bass.*] And, for your love, I'll take this ring from  
you.

Do not draw back your hand ; I'll take no more ;  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

*Bass.* This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle ! 430

I will not shame myself to give you this.

*Por.* I will have nothing else but only this ;

And now methinks I have a mind to it.

*Bass.* There's more depends on this than on the value.

The dearest ring in Venice will I give you, 435  
And find it out by proclamation ;

Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

*Por.* I see, sir, you are liberal in offers.

You taught me first to beg ; and now methinks  
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd. 440

*Bass.* Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife ;

And when she put it on, she made me vow  
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

*Por.* That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.

An if your wife be not a mad-woman, 445  
And know how well I have deserv'd the ring,

She would not hold out enemy for ever,  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

*Exeunt [Portia and Nerissa].*

*Ant.* My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring.  
Let his deservings and my love withal 450  
Be valued against your wife's commandment.

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

*Exit Gratiano.*

Come, you and I will thither presently; 455  
And in the morning early will we both  
Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio.

*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II

*[The same. A street.]*

*Enter Portia and Nerissa.*

*Por.* Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed  
And let him sign it. We'll away to-night,  
And be a day before our husbands home.  
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

*Enter Gratiano.*

*Gra.* Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en. 5  
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice  
Hath sent you here this ring, and doth entreat  
Your company at dinner.



## ACT FIFTH

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### SCENE I

[Belmont. Avenue to Portia's house.]

*Enter Lorenzo and Jessica.*

*Lor.* 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 Troyan walls,  
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents, 5  
Where Cressid lay that night.

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

*Lor.* In such a night  
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand 10  
Upon the wild sea banks, and waft her love  
To come again to Carthage.

*Jes.* In such a night  
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs  
That did renew old Æson.

*Lor.* In such a night  
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew, 15



And with an unthrift love did run from Venice  
As far as Belmont.

*Jes.*                                In such a night  
Did young Lorenzo swear he lov'd her well,  
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith  
And ne'er a true one.

*Lor.*                                In such a night                                20  
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,  
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

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

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Lor.* Who comes so fast in silence of the night ?                                25

*Mess.* A friend.

*Lor.* A friend ! what friend ? Your name, I pray you,  
friend ?

*Mess.* Stephano is my name ; and I bring word  
My mistress will before the break of day  
Be here at Belmont. She doth stray about                                30  
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays  
For happy wedlock hours.

*Lor.*                                Who comes with her ?

*Mess.* None but a holy hermit and her maid.

I pray you, is my master yet return'd ?

*Lor.* He is not, nor we have not heard from him.                                35  
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,

And ceremoniously let us prepare  
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

*Enter Clown [Launcelot].*

*Laun.* Sola, sola ! wo ha, ho ! sola, sola !

*Lor.* Who calls ? 40

*Laun.* Sola ! did you see Master Lorenzo ? Master  
Lorenzo, sola, sola !

*Lor.* Leave hollaing, man ; here.

*Laun.* Sola ! where ? where ?

*Lor.* Here. 45

*Laun.* Tell him there's a post come from my mas-  
ter, with his horn full of good news. My mas-  
ter will be here ere morning. *[Exit.]*

*Lor.* Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.

And yet no matter ; why should we go in ? 50

My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,  
Within the house, your mistress is at hand ;  
And bring your music forth into the air.

*[Exit Mess.]*

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music 55

Creep in our ears. Soft stillness and the night

Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven

Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.

There's not the smallest orb which thou be-  
hold'st 60

But in his motion like an angel sings,  
 Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins ;  
 Such harmony is in immortal souls ;  
 But whilst this muddy vesture of decay  
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it. 65

[Enter Musicians.]

Come, ho ! and wake Diana with a hymn ;  
 With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear  
 And draw her home with music. *Music.*

*Jes.* I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

*Lor.* The reason is, your spirits are attentive ; 70

For do but note a wild and wanton herd,  
 Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,  
 Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing  
 loud,

Which is the hot condition of their blood,  
 If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound, 75

Or any air of music touch their ears,  
 You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,  
 Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze  
 By the sweet power of music ; therefore the poet  
 Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and  
 floods ; 80

Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,  
 But music for the time doth change his nature.  
 The man that hath no music in himself,  
 Nor is not mov'd with concord of sweet sounds,

Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils. 85  
 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.*

*Por.* That light we see is burning in my hall.  
 How far that little candle throws his beams ! 90  
 So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

*Ner.* When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

*Por.* So doth the greater glory dim the less.  
 A substitute shines brightly as a king  
 Until a king be by ; and then his state 95  
 Empties itself, as doth an inland brook  
 Into the main of waters. Music ! Hark !

*Ner.* It is your music, madam, of the house.

*Por.* Nothing is good, I see, without respect ;  
 Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day. 100

*Ner.* Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

*Por.* 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. 106

How many things by season season'd are  
 To their right praise and true perfection !

Peace, ho ! the moon sleeps with Endymion

And would not be awak'd. *Music ceases.*

*Lor.* That is the voice,  
Or I am much deceiv'd, of Portia. 111

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

*Lor.* Dear lady, welcome home!

*Por.* We have been praying for our husbands' welfare,  
114

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.  
Are they return'd?

*Lor.* Madam, they are not yet;  
But there is come a messenger before,  
To signify their coming.

*Por.* Go in, Nerissa;  
Give order to my servants that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence; 120  
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.

*A tucket sounds.*

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

*Por.* This night methinks is but the daylight sick;  
It looks a little paler. 'Tis a day, 125  
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and their followers.*

*Bass.* We should hold day with the Antipodes,  
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

*Por.* Let me give light, but let me not be light;  
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband, 130

And never be Bassanio so for me.

But God sort all! You're welcome home, my lord.

*Bass.* I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.

This is the man, this is Antonio.

To whom I am so infinitely bound. 135

*Por.* You should in all sense be much bound to him,  
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

*Ant.* No more than I am well acquitted of.

*Por.* Sir, you are very welcome to our house.  
It must appear in other ways than words, 140  
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

*Gra.* [*To Ner.*] 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. 145

*Por.* A quarrel, ho, already! What's the matter?

*Gra.* 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." 150

*Ner.* What talk you of the posy or the value?  
You swore to me, when I did give it you,  
That you would wear it till your hour of death,  
And that it should lie with you in your grave.  
Though not for me, yet for your vehement  
oaths, 155

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.

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

*Ner.* Ay, if a woman live to be a man.      160

*Gra.* Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,  
A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,  
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,  
A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee.  
I could not for my heart deny it him.      165

*Por.* 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      170  
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.      176

*Bass.* [*Aside.*] Why, I were best to cut my left hand  
off

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

*Gra.* My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away  
Unto the judge that begg'd it, and indeed      180  
Deserv'd it too; and then the boy, his clerk,

That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine ;  
 And neither man nor master would take aught  
 But the two rings.

*Por.* What ring gave you, my lord ?  
 Not that, I hope, which you receiv'd of me. 185

*Bass.* 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. }

*Por.* Even so void is your false heart of truth.  
 By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed 190  
 Until I see the ring.

*Ner.* Nor I in yours  
 Till I again see mine.

*Bass.* 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, 195  
 And how unwillingly I left the ring,  
 When nought would be accepted but the ring,  
 You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

*Por.* If you had known the virtue of the ring,  
 Or half her worthiness that gave the ring, 200  
 Or your own honour to contain the ring,  
 You would not then have parted with the ring.  
 What man is there so much unreasonable,  
 If you had pleas'd to have defended it  
 With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty 205  
 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.

*Bass.* No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,

No woman had it, but a civil doctor,      210

Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me

And begg'd the ring ; the which I did deny him

And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away ;

Even he that did uphold the very life

Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet  
lady ?      215

I was enforc'd to send it after him ;

I was beset with shame and courtesy ;

My honour would not let ingratitude

So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady ;

For, by these blessed candles of the night,      220

Had you been there, I think you would have  
begg'd

The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

*Por.* Let not that doctor e'er come near my house.

Since he hath got the jewel that I lov'd,

And that which you did swear to keep for me,

I will become as liberal as you.      226

I'll not deny him any thing I have,

No, not my body nor my husband's bed.

Know him I shall, I am well sure of it.

Lie not a night from home. Watch me like Ar-  
gus.      230

If you do not, if I be left alone,

Now, by mine honour, which is yet mine own,  
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

*Ner.* And I his clerk ; therefore be well advis'd  
How you do leave me to mine own protection. 235

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

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

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

*Bass.* Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong ; 240  
And in the hearing of these many friends  
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,  
Wherein I see myself —

*Por.* Mark you but that !  
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself,  
In each eye, one. Swear by your double self, 245  
And there's an oath of credit.

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

*Ant.* I once did lend my body for his wealth,  
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring, 250  
Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,  
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord  
Will never more break faith advisedly.

*Por.* Then you shall be his surety. Give him this  
And bid him keep it better than the other. 255

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

*Bass.* By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor !

*Por.* I had it of him. Pardon me, Bassanio ;

For, by this ring, the doctor lay with me.

*Ner.* And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano ; 260

For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,

In lieu of this last night did lie with me.

*Gra.* Why, this is like the mending of highways

In summer, where the ways are fair enough. 264

What, are we cuckolds ere we have deserv'd it ?

*Por.* Speak not so grossly. You are all amaz'd.

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 270

Shall witness I set forth as soon as you

And even but now return'd ; I have not yet

Ent'red my house. Antonio, you are welcome ;

And I have better news in store for you

Than you expect. Unseal this letter soon ; 275

There you shall find three of your argosies

Are richly come to harbour suddenly.

You shall not know by what strange accident

I chanced on this letter.

*Ant.* I am dumb.

*Bass.* Were you the doctor and I knew you not ? 280

*Gra.* Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold ?

*Ner.* Ay, but the clerk that never means to do it,

Unless he live until he be a man.

*Bass.* Sweet doctor, you shall be my bedfellow.

When I am absent, then lie with my wife. 285

*Ant.* Sweet lady, you have given me life and living ;  
For here I read for certain that my ships  
Are safely come to road.

*Por.* How now, Lorenzo !  
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

*Ner.* Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee. 290  
There do I give to you and Jessica,  
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,  
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

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

*Por.* It is almost morning, 295  
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.

*Gra.* Let it be so. The first inter'gatory 300  
That my Nerissa shall be sworn on is,  
Whether till the next night she had rather stay,  
Or go to bed now, being two hours to day.  
But were the day come, I should wish it dark,  
That I were couching with the doctor's clerk. 305  
Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing  
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

*Exeunt.*

## Notes

**Act First.** The Qq make no divisions of act and scene; the Ff mark acts only.

I. i. 67. You're getting to be perfect strangers. Must you go?

I. i. 81, 82. According to the older physiology, the liver, the seat of the emotions, was heated by wine; and the blood was actually diminished by a sigh.

I. i. 90. Cultivate a deliberate taciturnity.

I. i. 98, 99. If these men should speak, their hearers would incur the risk of damnation by calling them fools. Cf. *Matthew*, v. 22.

I. i. 101, 102. Do not use the bait of melancholy in order to catch so foolish and so easily acquired a reputation.

I. i. 113. now. Johnson and some later editors change to *new*.

I. i. 126, 127. I am not now complaining because I must practise economy.

I. i. 166. Cato's daughter. See Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*.

I. i. 171, 172. Cf. III. ii. 244. The story of the Argonauts Shakespeare could have found conveniently in Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, vii.

Scene ii. Shakespeare has experimented with this scene in two earlier plays: *Love's Labour's Lost*, II. i. and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. ii.

I. ii. 51. choose. Do as you please.

I. ii. 53. the weeping philosopher. Heraclitus.

I. ii. 59. *by*. Concerning.

I. ii. 83. Scottish lord. Changed in  $F_1$  (1623) to *other lord*, presumably out of deference to King James.

I. ii. 88. The French were frequently allied with the Scotch against the English.

I. ii. 135. The four strangers. Six have been described. Perhaps, as has been suggested, this indicates revision in the play as it stands. It may be that the actors felt free to give only so many "characters" as the audience seemed to relish.

I. iii. 21. Mexico. Venice is said never to have had trade relations with the American continents.

I. iii. 42. fawning publican. A reminiscence of the contempt in which the publicans were held by the Jews in the New Testament. Cf. "as an heathen man and a publican," *Matthew*, xviii. 17; cf. also *Matthew*, v. 46; ix. 11; xi. 19; etc.

I. iii. 99. Cf. Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, I. ii: "What, bring you Scripture to confirm your wrongs?"

I. iii. 135. A breed for barren metal. Increase, *i.e.* interest, in return for the use of money, which is itself unproductive. Cf. Shylock's "I make it breed as fast," I. 97.  $F_1$  has *of* instead of *for*.

I. iii. 146. single bond. A simple bond, one without any conditions, Shylock pretending to regard the pound of flesh as "a merry sport"; or, a bond with no second name "sealed under" as surety.

I. iii. 162. teaches. Instances of a singular verb with a plural subject are frequent in Shakespeare. Cf. III. ii. 19.

II. i. 32-35. A hypothetical case. It was Lichas who brought to Alcides (Hercules) the shirt poisoned with the

blood of Nessus, the centaur, and was kicked sky-high into the sea. The change from *rage* to *page* is Theobald's.

II. ii. 17. **my father**, etc. Launcelot hints darkly.

II. ii. 28. **incarnation**. For incarnate. Launcelot's vocabulary is a little unmanageable, a trait which he shares with his father. Cf. *confusions* for conclusions, l. 39; *infection* for affection, l. 132; *frutify* for certify, l. 142; *impertinent*, l. 146; *defect*, l. 152, and *reproach*, II. v. 20.

II. ii. 59, 60. You yourself address me as Sir; therefore (*ergo*) be logical and speak of me as Master Launcelot.

II. ii. 110. **set up my rest**. A phrase from the game of primero, used by the player who "stood pat" and bet on his hand; equivalent to "to make up one's mind," be determined; here used punningly. Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. v. 6; *Lear*, I. i. 125; etc.

II. ii. 158. The old proverb. "God's grace is gear enough."

II. ii. 167. Launcelot doubts if any one in Italy has a more auspicious palm; this hand of his is ready to swear on a book that good fortune is in store for him.

II. iii. 10. My tears speak for me.

II. v. 30. **wry-neck'd fife**. A flute with a bent mouth-piece. But "fife" may mean "fifer"; cf. Rich's *Aphorisms* (1618): "A fife is a wry neck't musician, for he always looks away from his instrument."

II. vi. 43, 44. The business of a torch-bearer is to reveal things, and I ought to remain hid.

II. vi. 51. **by my hood**. Of uncertain origin; perhaps merely a jesting reference to his disguise.

II. vii. 4. **who**. The modern distinction between *who* and *which* had not become hard and fast in Shakespeare's time.

II. vii. 50, 51. Lead is too coarse a metal even to enclose her shroud.

II. vii. 53. At the close of the sixteenth century the ratio of gold to silver was 10 to 1.

II. viii. 15. Cf. Marlowe, *Jew of Malta*, II. i. "O girl! O gold! O beauty! O my bliss!"

II. viii. 42. mind of love. Loving mind.

II. ix. 26. By. For, concerning. Cf. I. ii. 59.

II. ix. 85. my lord. Pleasantly mocking the abrupt courtesy of the messenger.

III. i. 4. narrow seas. The English Channel. Cf. II. viii. 28.

III. i. 72. humility. Kindness, benevolence, humanity (Schmidt).

III. ii. 20. Prove it so, etc. If a wrong choice of the caskets puts bars between us, let the blame fall on Fortune; let none light on me for forswearing myself by teaching you to choose aright.

III. ii. 55-60. Hercules, in return for the horses of Laomedon, King of Troy, rescued his daughter from sacrifice to a sea monster. See Golding's *Ovid*, xi.

III. ii. 63. fancy. Light love. The thought of this song is not uncommon in Elizabethan literature. If a hint to Bassanio, it is not a very broad one.

III. ii. 99. Veiling an Indian beauty. This is the most discussed passage in the play. Accenting "Indian," the sense is: ornament is a beautiful scarf hiding the native ugliness of a savage. Indian beauty, "black and swarthy, with blabbered thick lips, with a broad and flat nose," as Montaigne describes it (Florio's translation, 1603), would represent the extreme of ugliness from the English point of view.



III. ii. 102. **Hard food for Midas.** Having obtained his prayer for the golden touch, King Midas found to his dismay that even his food turned to gold. See Golding's *Ovid*, xi.

III. ii. 106. **plainness.** Warburton's change from the *paleness* of Ff and Qq is a great improvement.

III. ii. 113. **rein.** This is the one lucky hit of Q<sub>3</sub>. But the *rain(e)* of Q<sub>2</sub> F<sub>1</sub> makes excellent sense, likewise.

III. ii. 127. **leave itself unfurnish'd.** The eye already portrayed might well have robbed the painter of his sight, thus leaving itself unprovided with a mate.

III. ii. 160. **sum of something.** Some editors prefer the F<sub>1</sub> reading: *sum of nothing*, as more in keeping with Portia's exuberant mood.

III. ii. 222. **Salerio.** This name is often regarded as but one of the numerous ways of spelling Salanio or Salarino.

III. ii. 242. **royal merchant.** Perhaps no more than noble, splendid.

III. iii. 26-31. The Duke must allow the law to take its course, for any interference with the trade privileges (*the commodity . . . if it be denied*) enjoyed by foreigners in Venice will discredit public justice in their eyes; and this is a serious matter, since the commercial prosperity of the city rests on these very foreigners.

III. iv. 3. **Of god-like amity.** Of the all but divine friendship between Antonio and Bassanio.

III. iv. 12. **waste the time.** Pass the time.

III. iv. 53. **traject.** Rowe's change from *tranect*, an otherwise unknown word. Coryat (1611) says the numerous ferries in Venice were called "traghetti." It is hardly neces-

sary to suppose that Shakespeare must have visited Venice in person, in order to explain this bit of local color.

III. iv. 72. I could not do withal. I could not help it.

III. v. 4. agitation. Launcelot's attempt at "cogitation," perhaps. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

III. v. 70. In the name of common sense, how ill matched his words are to the matter!

III. v. 82. if on earth he do not mean it. Capell's interpretation of *mean it* as observe the mean, enjoy blessings moderately, is emphatically endorsed by Furness. Aim at it, *i.e.* heaven, and intend it, *i.e.* an upright life, have also been suggested.

IV. i. 50, 51. affection master of passion. Natural instinct which governs the emotions or feelings.

IV. i. 131-137. Shakespeare elsewhere alludes laughingly to the doctrine of metempsychosis: *Twelfth Night*, IV. ii. 54 f. and *As You Like It*, III. ii. 186 f. In the Middle Ages offending animals were sometimes formally tried and executed. Cf. *Henry V*, III. vi. 44. There seems to be no reference here to the were-wolf.

IV. i. 184. The quality of mercy, etc. The essential characteristic of mercy is that it will not operate under compulsion.

IV. i. 255. balance. Often felt as a plural in Elizabethan English.

IV. i. 278. Repent but you, etc. Feel regret only at the loss of your friend.

IV. i. 223. A Daniel. Probably referring to Daniel's wisdom. Cf. also the Apocryphal story of Susannah, in which Daniel, "a young youth," convicts the Elders of false witness.

IV. i. 328-330. To the amount of a twentieth part of a scruple or less.

V. i. 4. *Troilus*. Shakespeare has in mind Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*, V. 645-79, where Troilus, forsaken by his lady,

stood the brighte mone to beholde . . .  
 Upon the walles faste eek wolde he walke,  
 And on the Grekes ost he wolde see  
 And to him-self right thus he wolde talke,  
 "Lo, yonder is myn owene lady free."

V. i. 7. *Thisbe*. Cf. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. Shakespeare has both Chaucer and Ovid in mind.

V. i. 10. *Dido*. In addition to Vergil, Shakespeare seems here to have in mind Chaucer's *Dido* and perhaps his *Ariadne* in the *Legend of Good Women*.

V. i. 13. *Medea*. Cf. Golding's *Ovid*, vii.

V. i. 59. *patines of bright gold*. The comparison is usually held to be between the stars and small disks of bright gold. Furness thinks the *patines* are "broken clouds, like flaky disks of curdled gold."

V. i. 60-65. According to the old astronomy, the concentric spheres, in which the planets and stars were fixed, gave forth each its own note. This harmony is not audible to earthly ears. A similar harmony, says Lorenzo, following an idea in the *Timæus* of Plato, is in the human soul, but while this harmony is cloaked by the enclosing flesh, it cannot be heard, either.

V. i. 66. *wake Diana*. We are to suppose that the moon has become overcast.

V. i. 79. *the poet*. Presumably Ovid, who in *Metamor-*

*phoses*, x, xi, tells the story of Orpheus, the miraculous minstrel of the Grecian poets.

V. i. 99. **without respect.** Without relation to its surroundings, or, as it is sometimes taken, when no attention is paid to it. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)

V. i. 141. **breathing courtesy.** Courteous words, which are composed of breath.

V. i. 210. **civil doctor.** A doctor of civil law.



## Textual Variants

The text in the present edition is based upon the so-called first Quarto (Roberts's) and second Quarto (Heyes's), and the following list records the more important variations from those versions.

- I. i. 27. dock'd] Rowe; dockes Q<sub>1</sub>; docks Q<sub>2</sub>.  
46. Why] Q<sub>2</sub>; Q<sub>1</sub> *omits*.  
78. man] Q<sub>2</sub>; one Q<sub>1</sub>.  
89. cream] Q<sub>2</sub>; dreame Q<sub>1</sub>.  
113. Is that] Rowe; It is that Qq Ff.
- ii. 36. who you] Q<sub>2</sub>; who Q<sub>1</sub>.  
65. throstle] Pope; Trassell Qq F<sub>1</sub>.  
83. Scottish] Qq; other Ff.
- iii. 65-6. Is . . . would] Q<sub>2</sub>; Are you resolv'd, How  
much he would have Q<sub>1</sub>.  
120. moneys] Q<sub>2</sub>; money Q<sub>1</sub>.
- II. i. 35. page] Theobald; rage Qq.
- ii. 11. Via] Rowe; fia Qq Ff.  
23. well] Q<sub>2</sub>; ill Q<sub>1</sub>.  
28. incarnation] Q<sub>2</sub>; incarnall Q<sub>1</sub>.  
33. commandment] Q<sub>2</sub>; command Q<sub>1</sub>.  
39. confusions] Q<sub>2</sub>; conclusions Q<sub>1</sub>.  
85. in the end] Q<sub>2</sub>; at the length Q<sub>1</sub>.  
177. of an eye] Q<sub>1</sub>; Q<sub>2</sub> *omits*.
- vi. 14. younker] Rowe; younger Qq Ff.  
51. Gentile] Q<sub>1</sub>; gentle Q<sub>2</sub>.  
66. I have . . . you] Q<sub>1</sub>; Q<sub>2</sub> *omits*.

- vii. 69. tombs] Johnson *conj.*; timber Qq.
- viii. 39. Slubber] Q<sub>1</sub>; Slumber Q<sub>2</sub>.
- ix. 6. rites] Pope; rights Qq Ff.
- III. i. 46. bankrupt] bankrout Qq Ff.  
126. turquoise] Turkeys Qq Ff.
- ii. 106. plainness] Theobald; paleness Qq Ff.  
201. lov'd; for] lov'd for Qq Ff.
- iii. 1. *Enter the Jew [Shylock], Salarino] Enter the Jew, and Salarino* Q<sub>1</sub> (Salerio Q<sub>2</sub>; Solanio Ff).
- iv. 21. misery] Q<sub>1</sub>; cruelty Q<sub>2</sub>.  
23. Hear] heere Qq.  
49. [Padua] Mantua Qq.  
53. traject] Rowe; tranect Qq Ff.  
63. accoutred] Q<sub>2</sub>; apparreld Q<sub>1</sub>.
- v. 75. far'st] Q<sub>1</sub>; cherst Q<sub>2</sub>.  
82-3. mean it, then In] Q<sub>1</sub>; mean it, it In, Q<sub>2</sub>.
- IV. i. 50-1. urine: for affection, Master] urine for affection. Masters Q<sub>1</sub> Ff (Maisters Q<sub>2</sub>).  
272. a] F<sub>2</sub>; Qq F<sub>1</sub> *omit*.  
281. instantly] Q<sub>2</sub>; presently Q<sub>1</sub>.  
326. tak'st] Q<sub>2</sub>; cutst Q<sub>1</sub>.  
434. depends . . . on] Q<sub>2</sub>; then this depends upon Q<sub>1</sub>.
- V. i. 59. patines] Malone; pattents Q<sub>1</sub>; pattens Q<sub>2</sub> F<sub>1</sub>; patterns F<sub>2</sub>.  
114. husbands' welfare] Q<sub>2</sub>; husband health Q<sub>1</sub>.

## Glossary

- 'A, he; II. ii. 56. [www.libtool.com.cn](http://www.libtool.com.cn)  
address'd, made ready; II. ix. 19.  
**Æson**, the father of Jason, magically rejuvenated by Medea;  
V. i. 14.  
affection, disposition, inclination; I. ii. 37: feeling; II.  
viii. 48: instinct, natural propensity; IV. i. 50.  
an, if; V. i. 176.  
**Andrew**, "wealthy A," a valuable ship named A; I. i. 27.  
appropriation, addition, peculiar excellence; I. ii. 46.  
approve, justify; III. ii. 79.  
argosy, large merchant ship; I. i. 9; iii. 18.  
**Argus**, the hundred-eyed guardian placed over Io by  
Juno; V. i. 230.  
assume, take to one's self; II. ix. 51; III. ii. 87.  
attempt, tempt; IV. i. 421.
- ban'd, poisoned; IV. i. 46.  
**Barrabas**, Barabbas, the notable prisoner released instead  
of Jesus; IV. i. 296.  
bated, weakened; III. iii. 32.  
beholding, beholden, obliged; I. iii. 106.  
beshrew, curse: used as a mild oath; II. vi. 52; III. ii. 14.  
**Black Monday**, Easter Monday; II. v. 24.  
breed, offspring: interest (figuratively); I. iii. 135.  
burial, grave; I. i. 29.  
by, concerning; I. ii. 59: for; II. ix. 26.
- cater-cousins, remote relatives; "are scarce c.-c.," are  
not on intimate terms; II. ii. 139.  
**cerecloth**, waxed cloth used as a shroud; II. vii. 51.

- ceremony**, anything held sacred (Schmidt); V. i. 206.  
**certified**, convinced; II. viii. 10.  
**circumstance**, ceremonious details, beating about the bush;  
 I. i. 154.  
**commodity**, merchandise; I. i. 178: convenience, privi-  
 leges; III. iii. 27.  
**complexion**, outward appearance; I. ii. 143: natural disposi-  
 tion; III. i. 32.  
**compromis'd**, agreed; I. iii. 79.  
**conceit**, intellect; I. i. 92: conception; III. iv. 2.  
**condition**, temper, behavior; I. ii. 143.  
**contain**, keep, retain; V. i. 201.  
**continent**, inventory, abstract; III. ii. 131.  
**contrive**, plot; IV. i. 352.  
**cope**, recompense; IV. i. 412.  
**counterfeit**, portrait; III. ii. 116.  
**County**, count; I. ii. 49.  
**cover**, spread the cloth; III. v. 56: put on one's hat; III.  
 v. 58; II. ix. 44.  
**cozen**, cheat; II. ix. 38.  
**cream**, overspread with scum; I. i. 89.  
  
**danger**, peril; IV. i. 38: absolute power to harm; IV. i.  
 180.  
**Dardanian**, Trojan; III. ii. 58.  
**deface**, blot, cancel; III. ii. 302.  
**deny**, forbid; III. ii. 292: refuse to accept; III. iv.  
 33.  
**disabling**, disparagement; II. vii. 30.  
**doit**, a coin of very small value; I. iii. 141.  
**double**, deceitful; V. i. 245.  
**ducat**, the silver ducat was about equivalent to our dollar  
 in value; I. iii. 1.  
**dumb-show**, pantomime; I. ii. 79.



- eanlings**, new-born lambs; I. iii. 80.  
**election**, choice; II. ix. 3.  
**Endymion**, shepherd of Latmos, beloved of Diana; V. i. 109.  
**envious**, malicious; III. ii. 285.  
**equal**, exact; I. iii. 150.  
**Erebus**, a dark region of the lower world; V. i. 87.  
**estimation**, weight, value; IV. i. 331.  
**excrement**, beard; III. ii. 87.
- fear'd**, frightened; II. i. 9.  
**fearful**, causing apprehension, untrustworthy; I. iii. 176.  
**fill-horse**, shaft-horse; II. ii. 100.  
**fond**, foolish; II. ix. 27; III. iii. 9.  
**fretten**, shaken; IV. i. 77.
- gaberdine**, long, loose cloak; I. iii. 113.  
**gag'd**, pledged; I. i. 130.  
**garnish**, dress; II. vi. 45.  
**gear**, matter, stuff; I. i. 110; II. ii. 176.  
**gelt**, castrated, mutilated; V. i. 144.  
**Goodwins**, sandy shoal near the mouth of the Thames; III. i. 4.  
**gratify**, give a gratuity; IV. i. 406.  
**gross**, whole; I. iii. 56: coarse; II. vii. 50: "to term in g." to sum up; III. ii. 160.  
**guarded**, trimmed, ornamented; II. ii. 164.  
**gudgeon**, a fish easily caught; I. i. 102.  
**guiled**, full of guile, treacherous; III. ii. 97.
- habit**, behavior; II. ii. 199.  
**hangman**, executioner; IV. i. 125.  
**heaviness**, sadness; II. viii. 52.

- high-day**, holiday; II. ix. 98.  
**his** (the old genitive of it), its; I. i. 141.  
**hovel-post**, support of a shed; II. ii. 70.  
**humility**, kindness, benevolence; III. i. 72.  
**Hyrcanian deserts**, a vague region south of the Caspian;  
 II. vii. 41.  
**imagin'd**, imaginable; III. iv. 52.  
**impeach**, expose to reproach, discredit; III. ii. 281; III.  
 iii. 29.  
**imposition**, condition; I. ii. 114; task; III. iv. 33.  
**in**, at, during; II. iv. 1; V. i. 1.  
**inexecrable**, not to be sufficiently execrated; IV. i. 128.  
**innocence**, foolishness; I. i. 145.  
**insculp'd**, engraved; II. vii. 57.  
**intermission**, inaction; III. ii. 201.  
**Jacks**, young fellows (contemptuously); III. iv. 77.  
**Janus**, the Roman god of portals, represented with two  
 faces; I. i. 50.  
**jump**, agree; II. ix. 32.  
**kind**, nature; I. iii. 86.  
**knapp'd**, nibbled; III. i. 10.  
**level**, aim at; I. ii. 41.  
**liberal**, free and easy; II. ii. 194.  
**Lichas**, see note, II. i. 32.  
**manage**, management; III. iv. 25.  
**martlet**, swift; II. ix. 28. Cf. *Macbeth*, I. vi. 4 f.  
**mean**, see note, III. v. 82.  
**mere**, absolute; III. ii. 265.  
**moe**, more; I. i. 108; II. vi. 50.

- mortifying, causing death; I. i. 82.  
 motions, emotions, operations of the mind; V. i. 86.
- naughty, wicked; III. ii. 18; III. iii. 9; V. i. 91.  
 Nazarite, Nazarene; I. iii. 35.  
 neat's tongue, ox-tongue; I. i. 112.  
 Nestor, the oldest and sagest of the Greeks before Troy;  
 I. i. 56.
- obliged, pledged; II. vi. 7.  
 occasion, "quarrelling with o.," taking exception to matters  
 as presented; III. v. 60.  
 o'erlook'd, bewitched; III. ii. 15.  
 opinion, reputation; I. i. 91, 102.  
 ostent, "sad o.," grave appearance; II. ii. 205: "—s,"  
 manifestations; II. viii. 44.  
 out-dwells, overstays; II. vi. 3.
- pageants, large cars or floats drawn in procession; I. i. 11.  
 patch, fool, clown; II. v. 46.  
 patines, small flat plates used in the celebration of the  
 Eucharist; see note, V. i. 59.  
 peize, weigh down, retard; III. ii. 22.  
 pent-house, a sloping roof projecting from a wall; II. vi. 1.  
 pied, spotted; I. iii. 80.  
 pill'd, peeled; I. iii. 85.  
 port, mode of life, station, social position; I. i. 124; III.  
 ii. 284.  
 possess'd, informed; I. iii. 65; IV. i. 35.  
 posy, motto; V. i. 148.  
 presently, immediately; I. i. 183; II. vi. 65; II. ix. 3.  
 prest, ready; I. i. 160.  
 prevented, anticipated; I. i. 61.  
 proper, handsome; I. ii. 77.

- quaint, ingenious; III. iv. 69.  
 quaintly, ingeniously, tastefully; II. iv. 6.  
 quality, manner; III. ii. 6: characteristic; IV. i. 184.  
 question, argue; IV. i. 70.  
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- reason'd, talked; II. viii. 27.  
 regreets, salutations; II. ix. 89.  
 respect, regard; I. i. 74: relation; see note, V. i. 99.  
 respective, mindful; V. i. 156.  
 rest, "set up my r.," am fully determined; see note, II. ii. 110.  
 Rialto, an island on which was situated the Exchange; I. iii. 20.  
 rib, enclose; II. vii. 51.  
 roads, roadsteads, harbors; I. i. 19.  
 round hose, short breeches, excessively padded; I. ii. 80.
- sad, serious, grave; I. i. 79; II. ii. 205.  
 sand-blind, half-blind; II. ii. 37.  
 scanted, limited; II. i. 17.  
 scarfed, decorated with flags; II. vi. 15.  
 scrubbed, scrubby, stunted; V. i. 162.  
 sensible, full of feeling; II. viii. 48: substantial; II. ix. 89.  
 sentences, maxims; I. ii. 11.  
 shows, external appearances; II. vii. 20.  
 shrewd, wicked, mischievous; III. ii. 246.  
 Sibylla, the Cumæan sibyl, whose years were as the grains in a handful of sand; I. ii. 116.  
 single, simple; see note, I. iii. 146.  
 slubber, perform carelessly and hastily; II. viii. 39.  
 sonties, "by God's s." An oath, variously explained as a corruption of *santé*, of *Sancti*, and of a diminutive of "saints"; II. ii. 46.

- Sophy**, the Shah of Persia; II. i. 25.  
**sped**, done for; II. ix. 72.  
**squand'red**, scattered; I. iii. 22.  
**stead**, aid, help; I. iii. 7.  
**still**, always, ever; I. i. 17, 136; etc.  
**stillness**, silence, taciturnity; I. i. 90.  
**stomach**, appetite, inclination; III. v. 53; 92.  
**suit**, dressed; I. ii. 79.  
**Sultan Solyman**, Solyman the Magnificent, 1520-1566; II. i. 26.  
**supposition**, "in s.," conjectural; I. iii. 18.  
**swan-like**, an allusion to the belief that the swan sings but once, on the point of death; III. ii. 44.
- table**, palm; II. ii. 168.  
**thought**, anxiety, melancholy; I. i. 36.  
**thrift**, profit, gain; I. i. 175; iii. 51.  
**throstle**, thrush; I. ii. 65.  
**to-night**, last night; II, v. 18.  
**traject**, ferry, see note, III. iv. 53.  
**tricksy**, artful, cunning; III. v. 74.  
**tucket**, flourish on the trumpet; V. i. 121.
- untread**, retrace; II. vi. 10.  
**usance**, interest; I. iii. 46.  
**use**, "in u." in trust (apparently); IV. i. 383.
- vailing**, lowering; I. i. 28.  
**very**, true, real; II. ii. 112; III. ii. 226.  
*via*, Italian, away; II. ii. 11.
- waft**, beckoned; V. i. 11.  
**wild**, wilderness; II. vii. 41; III. ii. 184.  
**wis**, "I w.," historically the Old English "gewis," certainly;

often felt as a present of the verb "wot, wist," know; II. ix. 68.

withal, with; III. iv. 72: with it; II. vii. 12.

wroth, affliction, misfortune; II. ix. 78.

wry-neck'd, see note; II. v. 30.

younger, an inexperienced youth; II. vi. 14.



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