

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

by William Shakespeare
adapted by Adrienne Sher

Characters in the Play

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice

BASSANIO, a Venetian gentleman, suitor to Portia

companions of Antonio and Bassanio

SELENIA

ANGELINA

GRATIANO

LORENZO

VALERIA, servant to Antonio

LEONORA, servant to Bassanio

PORTIA, an heiress of Belmont

NERISSA, her waiting-gentlewoman

servants to Portia

BALTHAZAR

STEPHANIE

suitors to Portia

Prince of MOROCCO

Prince of ARRAGON

SHYLOCK, a Jewish moneylender in Venice

JESSICA, his daughter

companions of Shylock

TUBAL, another Jewish moneylender (m/f)

CHUS (m/f)

BARUCH

RAIZEL

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, servant to Shylock and later to Bassanio (m/f)

OLD GOBBO, Lancelot's father (m/f)

DUKE of Venice (m/f)

CLERK of the Court (m/f)

24 Cast Members

9 male

9 female

6 m/f

ACT I

SCENE I. Venice Beach.

Enter ANTONIO, ANGELINA, and SELENIA

ANTONIO

In truth, 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've yet to learn.

ANGELINA

Your mind is tossing on the open sea;
There, where your ships fly with their woven wings.

SELENIA

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

ANGELINA

My breath cooling my broth
Would blow me to a fever, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I could not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I would think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy ship lock'd in the sand,
Low'ring her masthead lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the sea,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And, in a moment, even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

ANTONIO

Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one ship's hold trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

ANGELINA

Why, then you are in love.

ANTONIO

Fie, fie!

ANGELINA

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.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, and GRATIANO

SELENIA

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

ANGELINA

I would have stay'd till I had made you merry.
Good morrow, my good lords.

BASSANIO

Good ladies both, when shall we laugh? say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

ANGELINA

We'll make our leasures to attend on yours.

Exeunt ANGELINA and SELENIA

LORENZO

My Lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

BASSANIO

I will not fail you.

GRATIANO

You look not well, Signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care:
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

ANTONIO

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

GRATIANO

Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
There are a sort of men whose visages
Are set in alabaster like their grandsire;
They do a willful silence entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I'll tell you more of this another time:
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

LORENZO

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

GRATIANO

Well, keep me company but two years more,
You will not know the sound of your own voice.

Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO

BASSANIO

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more
than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two
grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff: you

shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

ANTONIO

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

BASSANIO

'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled my estate,
By living larger (and without restraint)
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now complain to be compelled
To tighten up my belt; but my chief care
Is to repay those debts I have incurred
By living well beyond my humble means
Without a care. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

ANTONIO

I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honor, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your most pressing needs.

BASSANIO

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

ANTONIO

You know me well, and herein spend but time
To wind about my love with circumstance;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have:
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore, speak.

BASSANIO

In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia, and the four wild winds
Do blow in noble suitors from each coast.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind that forecasts such success,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

ANTONIO

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

Exeunt

SCENE II. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are: and yet, for all I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much as they that starve with nothing.

PORTIA

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a rare priest that follows his own sermons: I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow my own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree. But this reasoning will not help me choose a husband. O me, the word 'choose!' I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

I pray you, over-name them; and as you name them, I will describe them; and, according to my description, level at my affection.

NERISSA

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

Then there is the County Palatine.

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; if a thrush should sing, he falls straight a capering: he will fence with his own shadow: if I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands. If he would despise me I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

NERISSA

What say you, then, to Falconbridge, the young baron of England?

PORTIA

You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he has neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and I have but a poor pennyworth of English. He is handsome enough, but, alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? And how oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round

hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behavior everywhere.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: if the worst should happen, I hope I'd find a way to go without him.

NERISSA

If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you would refuse to perform your father's will, if you refused to accept him.

PORTIA

Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray you, 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, before I will be married to a sponge.

NERISSA

You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is, indeed, to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's command depending on the caskets.

PORTIA

If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of your praise.

Enter Balthazar

How now! what news?

BALTHAZAR

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.

PORTIA

If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

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

Exeunt

SCENE III. Venice Beach.

Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats; well.

BASSANIO

Ay, sir, for three months.

SHYLOCK

For three months; well.

BASSANIO

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

SHYLOCK

Antonio shall become bound; well.

BASSANIO

May you stead me? will you pleasure me? shall I know your answer?

SHYLOCK

Three thousand ducats for three months and Antonio bound.

BASSANIO

Your answer to that.

SHYLOCK

Antonio is a good man.

BASSANIO

Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

SHYLOCK

Oh, no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition: he has an argosy bound to Tripoli, another to the Indies; I understand moreover, upon the Rialto, he has a third in Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he has, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats; I think I may take his bond.

BASSANIO

Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK

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

BASSANIO

If it please you to dine with us.

SHYLOCK

Yes, to smell pork! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so on, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto? Who is it that comes here?

Enter ANTONIO

BASSANIO

This is Signior Antonio.

SHYLOCK

[Aside] How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of interest here with us in Venice.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Cursed be my tribe, if ever I forgive him!

BASSANIO

Shylock, do you hear?

SHYLOCK

I am debating of my present stock,
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire?

To ANTONIO

Rest you fair, good signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTONIO

Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet appris'd
How much you need?

SHYLOCK

Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

ANTONIO

And for three months.

SHYLOCK

I had forgot; three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but wait;
Three thousand ducats; 'tis a good round sum.
Three months from twelve; then, let me see; the rate--

ANTONIO

Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?

SHYLOCK

Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my money and my "interests:"
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gabardine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have money:' you say so;
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And kick'd me as you'd spurn an unknown dog
Over your threshold: money is your suit
What should I say to you? Should I not say
'Has a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a servant's voice,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness, say this;
'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last;
You spurn'd me such a day; another time
You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you this much money'?

ANTONIO

I am as like to call you so again,
To spit on you again, to spurn you too.
If you will lend this money, lend it not
As to your friends; for when did friendship charge
An interest fee for loaning to his friend?
But lend it rather to your enemy,
Who, if he break, you may with better face
Exact the penalty.

SHYLOCK

Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me with,
Supply your present wants and take no jot
Of int'rest for my money, and you'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

BASSANIO

This were kindness.

SHYLOCK

This kindness will I show.
Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the agreement, let the forfeit
Be nominated for... an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleases me.

ANTONIO

Content, i' faith: I'll seal to such a bond
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

BASSANIO

You shall not seal to such a bond for me:
I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTONIO

Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHYLOCK

O father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this;
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttuns, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favor, I extend this friendship:

If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

ANTONIO

Yes Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

SHYLOCK

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

ANTONIO

Hie you, gentle Jew.

Exit Shylock

The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows kind.

BASSANIO

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

ANTONIO

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

Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE I. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter the PRINCE OF MOROCCO; PORTIA, NERISSA, BALTHAZAR and STEPHANIE

MOROCCO

Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbor in the south.
Bring me the palest creature from the north,
Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles,
And let us make incision for your love,
To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.
I tell you, lady, this visage of mine
Has scar'd the valiant: by my love I swear
The best-regarded virgins of our clime
Have loved it too: I would not change this hue,
Except to steal your heart, my gentle queen.

PORTIA

In terms of choice I am not solely led
By nice direction of a maiden's eyes;
Besides, the lottery of my destiny
Bars me the right of voluntary choosing:
But had my father not restricted me
And bound me by his wit, to yield myself
His wife who wins me by that means I told you,
Yourself, renowned prince, then stood as fair
As any comer I have look'd on yet
For my affection.

MOROCCO

Even for that I thank you:
Therefore, I pray you, lead me to the caskets
To try my fortune.

PORTIA

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

MOROCCO

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

PORTIA

First, forward to the temple: after dinner
Your hazard shall be made.

MOROCCO

Good fortune then!
To make me blest or curs'd'st among all men.
Exeunt

SCENE II. Venice Beach.

Enter LAUNCELOT

LAUNCELOT

Certainly my conscience will allow me to run from
this Jew my master. The fiend is at my elbow and
tempts me saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good
Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or good Launcelot
Gobbo, use your legs, make a 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 your heels.' Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack: 'Go!' says the fiend; 'away!' says the fiend; 'for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind,' says the fiend, 'and run.' Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me 'My honest friend Launcelot, being an honest man's son,' or rather an honest woman's son; for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says the fiend. 'Budge not,' says my conscience. 'Conscience,' say I, 'you counsel well;' 'Fiend,' say I, 'you counsel well:' to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew my master, who, God bless the mark, is a kind of devil; and, to run away from the Jew, I should be ruled by the fiend, who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly the Jew is the very devil incarnal; and, in my conscience, my conscience is but a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO, with a basket

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

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

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

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.

GOBBO

By all the saints, 'twill be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot, that dwells with him, dwell with him or no?

LAUNCELOT

Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

Aside

Mark me now; now I will bring him to tears. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?

GOBBO

No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say it myself, is an honest exceeding poor man.

LAUNCELOT

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

GOBBO

Of Launcelot, an't please your mastership.

LAUNCELOT

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.

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

Do I look like a staff or a post? Do you not know me, father?

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

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.

GOBBO

I cannot think you are my son.

LAUNCELOT

I know not what to think of that: but I am
Launcelot, the Jew's man, and I am sure Margery your
wife is my mother.

GOBBO

Her name is Margery, indeed: I'll be sworn, if you
be Launcelot, you are my own flesh and blood.
Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard you've
got! you have more hair on your chin than
Dobbin my old horse has on his tail.

LAUNCELOT

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.

GOBBO

Lord, how you are changed! How do you and your
master agree? I have brought him a present. How
'gree you now?

LAUNCELOT

Well, well: but, for my own part, as I have decided to run away.
My master's a very Jew: give him a present!?
give him a noose to hang himself! I am famished in
his service; you may count every finger I have with
my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me
your present to one Master Bassanio: if I serve not him, I
will run as far as God has any ground. O rare
fortune! here comes the man: to him, father; for I
am a Jew, if I serve the Jew any longer.

Enter BASSANIO, with LEONORA

LAUNCELOT

To him, father.

GOBBO

God bless your worship!

BASSANIO

Gramercy! What would you with me?

GOBBO

Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,--

LAUNCELOT

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

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

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

GOBBO

His master and he, saving your worship's reverence, are not the best of friends--

LAUNCELOT

To be brief, the very truth is that the Jew, having done me wrong, has caused me, as my father, being, I hope, an old man, shall frutify unto you--

GOBBO

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

LAUNCELOT

In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet poor man, my father.

BASSANIO

One speak for both. What would you?

LAUNCELOT

Serve you, sir.

GOBBO

That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

BASSANIO

I know you well; you have obtain'd your suit: Shylock your master spoke with me this day, And has preferr'd you, if it be preferment

To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

LAUNCELOT

I thank you sir.

BASSANIO

Go, father, with your son.
Take leave of your old master and inquire
My lodging out.

LAUNCELOT

Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.
Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo

BASSANIO

I pray you, good Leonora, think on this:
These things being bought and orderly bestow'd,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteem'd acquaintance: hie you, go.

LEONORA

My best endeavors shall be done herein.

Enter GRATIANO

GRATIANO

Where is your master?

LEONORA

Yonder, sir, he walks.
Exit

GRATIANO

Signior Bassanio!

BASSANIO

Gratiano!

GRATIANO

I have a suit to you.

BASSANIO

You have obtain'd it.

GRATIANO

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

BASSANIO

Why then you must. But hear me, Gratiano;
You are too wild, too rude and bold of voice;
Parts that become you happily enough
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where you are not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray you, take pain
To dilute with some cold drops of modesty
Your skipping spirit, lest through your wild behavior
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

GRATIANO

Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say 'amen,'
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied, with a serious face,
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

BASSANIO

Well, we shall see your bearing.

GRATIANO

Nay, but I bar tonight: you shall not judge me
By what we do tonight.

BASSANIO

No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.

GRATIANO

And I must to Lorenzo and the rest:
But we will visit you at supper-time.
Exeunt

SCENE III. The same. A room in SHYLOCK'S house.

Enter JESSICA and LAUNCELOT

JESSICA

I'm sorry you will leave my father so:
Our house is dull, and you, a merry devil,
Did rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare you well, here is a ducat for you:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper will you see
Lorenzo, who is your 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 you.

LAUNCELOT

Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful
pagan, most sweet Jew! if a Christian did not play
the knave and get you, I am much deceived. But,
adieu: these foolish drops do something drown my
manly spirit: adieu.

JESSICA

Farewell, good Launcelot.

Exit Launcelot

Alack, what heinous sin is it in me
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners. O Lorenzo,
If you keep promise, I will end this strife,
Become a Christian and your loving wife.
Exit

SCENE IV. The same. A street.

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, ANGELINA, and SELENIA

LORENZO

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

GRATIANO

We have not made good preparation.

ANGELINA

We have not spoke us yet of torchbearers.

SELENIA

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

LORENZO

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

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter

LORENZO

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

LAUNCELOT

And it shall please you to read this through,
it shall seem to signify.

LORENZO

I know the hand: in faith, it is a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it wrote on
Is the fair hand that writ it.

GRATIANO

Love-news, in faith.

LAUNCELOT

By your leave, sir.

LORENZO

Where are you going?

LAUNCELOT

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

LORENZO

Hold here, take this: tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her; speak it privately.
Go, friends,

Exit Launcelot

Will you prepare you for this masque tonight?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

ANGELINA

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

SELENIA

And so will I.

LORENZO

Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

ANGELINA

'Tis good we do so.

Exeunt ANGELINA and SELENIA

GRATIANO

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

LORENZO

I must needs tell you all. She has directed
How I shall take her from her father's house,
What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,
What page's suit she has in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,
Unless she do it under this excuse,
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; and read this as you go:
Fair Jessica will be my torch-bearer.

Exeunt

SCENE V. The same. Before SHYLOCK'S house.

Enter SHYLOCK and LAUNCELOT

SHYLOCK

Well, you will see, your eyes will be the judge,
The difference between Shylock and Bassanio:--
What, Jessica!--you will not stuff yourself,
As you have done with me:--What, Jessica!--
And sleep and snore, and wear out all your gear;--
Why, Jessica, I say!

LAUNCELOT

Why, Jessica!

SHYLOCK

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

Enter Jessica

JESSICA

You called? what is your will?

SHYLOCK

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

LAUNCELOT

I beseech you, sir, go: my young master is expecting
your reproach.

SHYLOCK

So do I his.

LAUNCELOT

And they have conspired together, I will not say you
will see a masque; but if you do, then it was not
for nothing that my nose fell a-bleeding on
Black-Monday last at six o'clock i' the morning.

SHYLOCK

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

LAUNCELOT

I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out at the
window, for all this, there will come a Christian
boy, will be worth a Jewess' eye.

Exit

SHYLOCK

What says that fool of Gentiles and of Jews?

JESSICA

His words were 'Farewell mistress;' nothing else.

SHYLOCK

The knave is kind enough, but a huge feeder;
Snail-slow in progress, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat: drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that would have him help to waste
His borrow'd purse. Well, Jessica, go in;
Perhaps I will return immediately:
Do as I bid you; shut doors after you:
Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.
Exit

JESSICA

Farewell; and if my fortune be not cross'd,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost.
Exit

SCENE VI. The same.

Enter GRATIANO and ANGELINA, masked

GRATIANO

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

ANGELINA

His hour is almost past.

GRATIANO

And it's a wonder he misses the hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

ANGELINA

O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep the marriage vows unforfeited!

GRATIANO

That ever holds: who rises from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that does retrace his steps,
His tedious rounds with the unbridled fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are,
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy'd.

ANGELINA

Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.
Enter LORENZO

LORENZO

Sweet friends, your patience for my long delay;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for mates,
I'll watch as long for you with no ill will.
Here dwells my father Jew. Ho! who's within?

Enter JESSICA, above, in boy's clothes

JESSICA

Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Although I'll swear that I do know your voice.

LORENZO

Lorenzo, and your love.

JESSICA

Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.
I am glad it's night, you do not look on me,
For I am much ashamed of my attire:
But love is blind and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies they themselves commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

LORENZO

Descend, for you must be my torchbearer.

JESSICA

What, must I hold a candle to my shame?
It in itself, good-sooth, is too too light.
Why, it's a labor of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.

LORENZO

So are you, sweet,
E'en in the lowly disguise of a boy.
But come at once;
For this dark night does play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

JESSICA

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

GRATIANO

Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

LORENZO

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

Enter JESSICA, below

What, are you come? On, gentle friends; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

Exit with JESSICA and ANGELINA

Enter ANTONIO

ANTONIO

Who's there?

GRATIANO

Signior Antonio!

ANTONIO

Fie, fie, Gratiano! where are all the rest?
It's nine o'clock: our friends all stay for you.
No masque tonight: the wind is come about;
Bassanio presently will go aboard:
I have sent twenty out to seek for you.

GRATIANO

I am glad of it: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

Exeunt

SCENE VII. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter PORTIA, with the PRINCE OF MOROCCO, NERISSA, BALTHAZAR and STEPHANIE

PORTIA

Go draw aside the curtains and reveal
The several caskets to this noble prince.
Now make your choice.

MOROCCO

The first, of gold, who this inscription bears,
'Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire;'
The second, silver, which this promise carries,
'Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves;'
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
'Who chooses me must give and hazard all he has.'
How will I know if I have chosen right?

PORTIA

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

MOROCCO

Some god direct my judgment! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?
'Who chooses 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 dull display;
I'll neither give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?
'Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.'
As much as he deserves! Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh your value with an even hand:
If you are rated by your reputation,
You do deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afraid of my deserving
Were but an undermining of myself.

As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
I do by birth deserve her, and by fortune,
By graces and by quality of breeding;
But more than these, in *love* I do deserve.
What if I look'd no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold
'Who chooses 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:
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation
To think so base a thought.
Or shall I think in silver she's confined,
Being ten times undervalued to true gold?
O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem
Was set in worse than gold. Give me the key:
Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

PORTIA

There, take it, prince; and if my form lies there,
Then I am yours.

He unlocks the golden casket

MOROCCO

O hell! what have we here?
Reads the paper within
All that glitters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my richness to behold:
Fare you well; your suit is cold.
Cold, indeed; and labor lost:
Then, farewell, heat, and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu. I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.
Exit.

PORTIA

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

SCENE VIII. Venice. A street.

Enter ANGELINA and SELENIA

ANGELINA

I say, I saw Bassanio under sail:
With him is Gratiano gone along;
Lorenzo was not with them on the ship.

SELENIA

The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

ANGELINA

He came too late, the ship was under sail.

SELENIA

I never heard an outpouring so strange,
So vile, disgusting, and out of control,
As the dog Jew was yelling in the streets:
'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl;
She has the stones upon her, and the ducats.'

ANGELINA

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

SELENIA

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

ANGELINA

I just remember'd.
I happened on a Frenchman yesterday,
Who told me, in the narrow seas that part
The French and English, there miscarried
A vessel of our country richly fraught:
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

SELENIA

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

ANGELINA

A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, 'Do not so;
Rush not your business for my sake, Bassanio
But stay as long as head and heart demand;
And for the Jew's bond which he has of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love:
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair displays of love
As shall conveniently become you there.'
And even there, his eye being full 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.

SELENIA

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

ANGELINA

Do we so.
Exeunt

SCENE IX. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON, PORTIA, NERISSA, and BALTHAZAR

PORTIA

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

ARRAGON

I am constrain'd by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 'twas I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage: Lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

PORTIA

To these injunctions every one must swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

ARRAGON

And so am I prepared. Good fortune now
To my heart's hope! Gold; silver; and base lead.
'Who chooses me must give and hazard all he has.'
You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:
'Who chooses me shall gain what many men desire.'
What many men desire! that 'many' may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye should teach.
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 you, you silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title you do bear:
'Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.'
And well said too; for who shall go about
To win a fortune and be honorable
Without the stamp of merit? But to my choice:
'Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves.'
I will assume desert. Give me a key for this,
And instantly unlock my fortunes here.
He opens the silver casket

PORTIA

Too long a pause for that which you find there.

ARRAGON

What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot,
Presenting me a letter! I will read it.
How much unlike you are to Portia!
How much unlike my hopes and my deservings!
'Who chooses me shall have as much as he deserves.'
Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

PORTIA

To offend, and judge, are distinct offices
And of opposed natures.

ARRAGON

What is here?

Reads

The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgment is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head.
Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here
With one fool's head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
And sadly go away with both.

Exit Arragon

PORTIA

Thus has the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter Stephanie

STEPHANIE

Where is my lady?

PORTIA

Here: what is the news?

STEPHANIE

Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord;
From whom he brings most generous offering,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath,
Gifts of rich value. Yet I have not seen
So likely an ambassador of love:
A day in April never came so sweet,
To show how costly summer was at hand,
As this forerunner comes before his lord.

PORTIA

No more, I pray you: I am half afraid
That you will say he is some kin to you,
You spend such precious breath in praising him.
Come, come, Nerissa; for I long to see
Quick Cupid's post that comes so mannerly.

NERISSA

Bassanio, lord Love, if thy will it be!
Exeunt

ACT III

SCENE I. Venice. A street.

Enter SELENIA and ANGELINA

SELENIA

Now, what news on the Rialto?

ANGELINA

It is reported that Antonio has a ship of rich lading
wrecked in the English Channel; the Goodwin Sands, I think
they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where
the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried.

SELENIA

Oh, good Antonio! Honest Antonio!—
Oh that I had a title good enough to
keep his name company!-- Come, tell me all.

ANGELINA

Ha! what say you? Why, the end is, he has
lost a ship. I would it might prove the end
of his losses.

SELENIA

Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my
prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.
Enter SHYLOCK
How now, Shylock! what news among the merchants?

SHYLOCK

You know, none so well, none so well as you, of my
daughter's flight.

ANGELINA

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

SELENIA

And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was
fledged; and therefore in her nature to fly from home..

SHYLOCK

My own flesh and blood to rebel!

ANGELINA

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

SHYLOCK

There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a
prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the
Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon
the mart; let him look to his bond: he was wont to
call me usurer; let him look to his bond: he was
wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; let him
look to his bond.

ANGELINA

Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, you will not take
his flesh: what's that good for?

SHYLOCK

To bait fish withal: if it will feed nothing else,
it will feed my revenge. He has disgraced me, and
hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses,
mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my
bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine
enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Has
not a Jew eyes? has not a Jew hands, organs,
dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with
the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject
to the same diseases, healed by the same means,
warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as
a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed?
if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison
us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not

revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me, I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Enter VALERIA

VALERIA

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

ANGELINA

We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL

SELENIA

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

Exeunt SELENIA, ANGELINA, and VALERIA

SHYLOCK

How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa? have you found my daughter?

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now: two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels. I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them? Why, so: and I know not what's spent in the search: oh, great 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 of my breathing; no tears but of my shedding.

TUBAL

Yes, other men have ill luck too: Antonio, as I heard in Genoa,--

SHYLOCK

What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

TUBAL

Has an argosy cast away, coming from Tripoli.

SHYLOCK

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

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

I thank you, good Tubal: good news, good news!
Ha, ha! Heard in Genoa?

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

You stick a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again: fourscore ducats at a sitting!
fourscore ducats!

TUBAL

There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

SHYLOCK

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

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

Out upon her! You torture me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

TUBAL

But Antonio is certainly undone.

SHYLOCK

Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, hire
me an officer. I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit!

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

Exeunt

SCENE II. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, BALTHAZAR and STEPHANIE

PORTIA

I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company: therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,--
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,--
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours.
I speak too long; but 'tis to slow the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

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

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

Well then, confess and live.

BASSANIO

'Confess' and 'love'

Had been the very sum of my confession:

O happy torment, when my torturer

Doth teach me answers for deliverance!

But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

PORTIA

Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:

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

Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.

Let music sound while he does make his choice;

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

Fading in music: that the comparison

May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream

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

And what is music then? Then music is

Even as the flourish when true subjects bow

To a new-crowned monarch: Go, my love!

Live you, I live: with much, much more dismay

I view the choice than you that make assay.

Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets to himself

BASSANIO

So may the outward shows be least themselves:

The world is still deceived with ornament.

In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,

But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,

Obscures the show of evil? In religion,

What damned error, but some sober brow

Will bless it and approve it with a text,

Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

There is no vice so simple but assumes

Some mark of virtue on his outward parts.

Thus ornament is but the unsafe 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, you gaudy gold,

Hard food for Midas, I will none of you;

Nor none of you, you pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but you, you meagre lead,
Which seems to threaten, rather than seduce,
Your paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I; joy be the consequence!

PORTIA

[Aside] O love,
Be moderate; allay your ecstasy,
In measure rein your joy; scant this excess.
I feel too much your blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit.

BASSANIO

What find I here?
Opening the leaden casket
Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Did come so near creation? Here's the scroll,
The contents and the summary of my fortune.

Reads

You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true!
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new,
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.
A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he has done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether these pearls of praise be his or no;
So, thrice fair lady, stand I, even so;
As doubtful whether what I see is true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.

PORTIA

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;

That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtue, beauties, fortunes, friends,
Exceed account. Myself and what is mine
Is now all yours: but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself: and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord: I give them with this ring;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And give me reason to exclaim on you.

BASSANIO

Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead!

NERISSA

My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy: good joy, my lord and lady!

GRATIANO

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

BASSANIO

With all my heart, so you can get a wife.

GRATIANO

I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here with oaths of love, at last
I got a promise of this fair one here

To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

PORTIA

Is this true, Nerissa?

NERISSA

Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

BASSANIO

And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

GRATIANO

Yes, faith, my lord.

BASSANIO

Our feast shall be much honor'd in your marriage.
But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Valeria?
Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and VALERIA

BASSANIO

Lorenzo and Valeria, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

PORTIA

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

LORENZO

I thank your honor. For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Valeria by the way,
She did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with her along.

VALERIA

I did, my lord;
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you.
Gives Bassanio a letter

BASSANIO

Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend fares.

VALERIA

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

GRATIANO

Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Valeria: what's the news from Venice?
How does that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

VALERIA

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

PORTIA

There's some unwelcome news in yon same paper,
That steals the color from Bassanio's cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse!
With leave, Bassanio: I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

BASSANIO

O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his sworn enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,

Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Valeria?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?
From Tripoli, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

VALERIA

Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear, that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to destroy a man:
He plies the duke at morning and at night.
Twenty merchants and magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from his carping plea
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

JESSICA

When I was with him I have heard him swear
To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him: and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

PORTIA

Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

BASSANIO

The dearest friend and one in whom
The ancient Roman honor more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

PORTIA

What sum owes he the Jew?

BASSANIO

For me three thousand ducats.

PORTIA

What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and erase the bond;

Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over:
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away!
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day:
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer:
Since you are dearly bought, I'll love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

BASSANIO

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

Exeunt

SCENE III. Venice. A street.

Enter SHYLOCK, ANGELINA and ANTONIO

ANTONIO

Hear me yet, good Shylock.

SHYLOCK

I'll have my bond; speak not against my bond:
I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.

You called me dog before you had a cause;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs:
The duke shall grant me justice.

ANTONIO

Hear me speak!

SHYLOCK

I'll have my bond; I will not hear you speak:
I'll have my bond; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,
To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not;
I'll have no speaking: I will have my bond.

Exit

ANGELINA

He is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

ANTONIO

Let him alone:
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life; his reason well I know:
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me;
Therefore he hates me.

ANGELINA

I am sure the duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

ANTONIO

The duke cannot deny the course of law.
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Come, Angelina. Pray Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, then I care not!

Exeunt

SCENE IV. Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO, JESSICA, and BALTHAZAR

LORENZO

Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true regard
For perfect friendship; which appears most strong
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honor,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

PORTIA

I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the close companion of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off;
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition;
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

LORENZO

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

PORTIA

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

LORENZO

Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

JESSICA

I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

PORTIA

I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well Jessica.
Exeunt JESSICA and LORENZO
Now, Balthazar,
As I have ever found you honest-true,
So let me find you still. Take this same letter,
And use you all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua: see you render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he does give you,
Bring them, I pray you, with imagined speed
Unto the harbor, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get you gone: I shall be there before you.

BALTHAZAR

Madam, I go with all convenient speed.
Exit

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

Shall they see us?

PORTIA

They shall, Nerissa; but in such attire,
That they shall think we are full well endowed
With that we lack. I'll hold you any wager,
When we are both disguised like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,

And wear my dagger with the braver grace.

NERISSA

Why, shall we turn to men?

PORTIA

Fie, what a question's that,
If you were near a lewd interpreter!
But come, I'll tell you all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must travel twenty miles to-day.
Exeunt

SCENE V. The same. A garden.

Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA

LAUNCELOT

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

JESSICA

And what hope is that, I pray you?

LAUNCELOT

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

JESSICA

That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed: so the
sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

LAUNCELOT

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

JESSICA

I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

LAUNCELOT

Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enough before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making 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.

Enter LORENZO

JESSICA

I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

LORENZO

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

JESSICA

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.

LORENZO

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

LAUNCELOT

That is done, sir. They all have stomachs.

LORENZO

Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper you are! Then bid them *prepare* dinner. Serve in the meat and we will come
Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. Venice. A court of justice.

Enter ANTONIO, BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SELENIA and ANGELINA

Enter the DUKE, and the Magnificoes and a Clerk

DUKE

What, is Antonio here?

ANTONIO

Ready, so please your grace.

DUKE

I am sorry for you: you are come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
incapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

ANTONIO

I have heard
Your grace has ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

DUKE

Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Clerk

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

Enter SHYLOCK, TUBAL, CHUS, BARUCH and RAIZEL

DUKE

Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That you but lead this fashion of your malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
You'll show your mercy and remorse more strange
Than is this strange apparent cruelty;
And where you now exact the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
You will not only free him from his bond,
But, touch'd with human gentleness and love,

Forgive a portion of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

SHYLOCK

I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humor: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it killed? 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 they hear a bagpipe sing,
Cannot contain their anger: for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
Why he, a woollen bagpipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
I cannot give no reason, nor will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

BASSANIO

This is no answer, you unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of this cruelty.

SHYLOCK

I am not bound to please you with my answers.

BASSANIO

Do all men kill the things they do not love?

SHYLOCK

Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

BASSANIO

Every offence is not a hate at first.

SHYLOCK

What, would you have a serpent sting you twice?

ANTONIO

Remember that you argue with a Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach
And bid the main flood bate its usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf
Why he has made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops and to make no noise,
When they are blasted with the gusts of heaven;
You may as well do anything most hard,
As seek to soften that--than which what's harder?--
A Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no farther means,
But with all brief and plain conveniency
Let me have judgment and the Jew his will.

BASSANIO

For your three thousand ducats here is six.

SHYLOCK

If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts and every part a ducat,
I would not take them; I will have my bond.

DUKE

How shall you hope for mercy, rendering none?

SHYLOCK

What judgment should I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish ways,
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
Be made as soft as yours and let their palates
Be season'd with such meats? You will answer
'The slaves are ours:' so do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; it's mine and I will have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgment: answer; shall I have it?

DUKE

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

Clerk

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

DUKE

Bring us the letter; call the messenger.

BASSANIO

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

ANTONIO

I am a ruined member of the flock,
Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still and write my epitaph.
Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk

DUKE

Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

NERISSA

From both, my lord. Bellario greets your grace.
Presenting a letter

BASSANIO

Why dot you whet your knife so earnestly?

SHYLOCK

To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

GRATIANO

Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
You make your knife so keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of your sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce you?

SHYLOCK

No, none that you have wit enough to make.

DUKE

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

NERISSA

He attends here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

DUKE

With all my heart.
Go give him courteous conduct to this place.
Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

Clerk

[Reads]

Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of
your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that
your messenger came, in loving visitation was with
me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar. I
acquainted him with the cause in controversy between
the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er
many books together: he is furnished with my
opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the
greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes
with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's
request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of
years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend
estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so
old a head. I leave him to your gracious
acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his
commendation.

DUKE

You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:
And here, I take it, is the doctor come.
Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

PORTIA

I do, my lord.

DUKE

You are welcome: take your place.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

PORTIA

I am informed thoroughly of the case.
Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?

DUKE

Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

PORTIA

Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK

Shylock is my name.

PORTIA

Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.
You stand within his danger, do you not?

ANTONIO

Ay, so he says.

PORTIA

Do you confess the bond?

ANTONIO

I do.

PORTIA

Then must the Jew be merciful.

SHYLOCK

On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

PORTIA

The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It drops down as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest;
It blesses him that gives and him that takes:
It's mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptred sway;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power does then show like God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be your plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;
And that same prayer does teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke this much
To mitigate the justice of your plea;
Which if you follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

SHYLOCK

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

PORTIA

Is he not able to discharge the money?

BASSANIO

Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

PORTIA

It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,

And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state: it cannot be.

SHYLOCK

A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how I do honor you!

PORTIA

I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHYLOCK

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

PORTIA

Shylock, there's thrice the money offer'd you.

SHYLOCK

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

PORTIA

Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful:
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

SHYLOCK

When it is paid according to the tenor.
It does appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law, your exposition
Has been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

ANTONIO

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

PORTIA

Why then, here it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

SHYLOCK

O noble judge! O excellent young man!

PORTIA

For the intent and purpose of the law
Has full relation to the penalty,
Which here it appears due upon the bond.

SHYLOCK

'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art you than thy looks!

PORTIA

Therefore lay bare your bosom.

SHYLOCK

Ay, his breast:
So says the bond: does it not, noble judge?
'Nearest his heart:' those are the very words.

PORTIA

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

SHYLOCK

I have them ready.

PORTIA

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

SHYLOCK

Is it so nominated in the bond?

PORTIA

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

SHYLOCK

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

PORTIA

You, merchant, have you anything to say?

ANTONIO

But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery does she cut me off.
Commend me to your honorable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

Your wife would give you little thanks for that,
If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

GRATIANO

I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love:
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

NERISSA

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

SHYLOCK

These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!

Aside

We trifle time: I pray you, pursue sentence.

PORTIA

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine:
The court awards it, and the law does give it.

SHYLOCK

Most rightful judge!

PORTIA

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

SHYLOCK

Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare!

PORTIA

Tarry a little; there is something else.
This bond does give you here no jot of blood;
The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh:'
Take then your bond, take you your pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if you do shed
One drop of Christian blood, your lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.

GRATIANO

O upright judge! Mark, Jew: O learned judge!

SHYLOCK

Is that the law?

PORTIA

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

GRATIANO

O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned judge!

SHYLOCK

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

BASSANIO

Here is the money.

PORTIA

Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice; soft! no haste:
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

GRATIANO

O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

PORTIA

Therefore prepare you to cut off the flesh.
Shed you no blood, nor cut you less nor more
But just a pound of flesh: if you cut more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
You die and all your goods are confiscate.

GRATIANO

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

PORTIA

Why does the Jew pause? take your forfeiture.

SHYLOCK

Give me my principal, and let me go.

BASSANIO

I have it ready for you; here it is.

PORTIA

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

GRATIANO

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

SHYLOCK

Shall I not have barely my principal?

PORTIA

You shall have nothing but the forfeiture,
To be so taken at your peril, Jew.

SHYLOCK

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

PORTIA

Tarry, Jew:

The law has yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,
If it be proved against any man
That by direct or indirect attempts
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he does contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, you stand;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
You have contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and you have incurr'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

GRATIANO

Beg that you may have leave to hang yourself:
And yet, your wealth being forfeit to the state,
You have not left the value of a cord;
Therefore you must be hang'd at the state's charge.

DUKE

That you shall see the difference of our spirits,
I pardon you your life before you ask it:
For half your wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

PORTIA

Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

SHYLOCK

Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house when you do take the prop
That does sustain my house; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

PORTIA

What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

GRATIANO

A rope for free; nothing else, for God's sake.

ANTONIO

So please my lord the duke and all the court
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content; so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter:
Two things provided more, that, for this favor,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess'd,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

DUKE

He shall do this, or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

PORTIA

Are you contented, Jew? what do you say?

SHYLOCK

I am content.

PORTIA

Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

SHYLOCK

I pray you, give me leave to go from hence;
I am not well: send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

DUKE

Get you gone, but do it.

GRATIANO

In christening shall you have two god-fathers:
Had I been judge, you should have had ten more,
To bring you to the gallows, not the font.

Exit SHYLOCK

DUKE

Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

PORTIA

I humbly do desire your grace of pardon:
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

DUKE

I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.
Exeunt Duke and his clerk

BASSANIO

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

ANTONIO

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

PORTIA

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

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
To ANTONIO
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake;
To BASSANIO

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

BASSANIO

This ring, good sir, alas, it is a trifle!
I will not shame myself to give you this.

PORTIA

I will have nothing else but only this;
And now I think I have a mind to it.

BASSANIO

There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you,
And find it out by proclamation:
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

PORTIA

I see, sir, you are liberal in offers
You taught me first to beg; and now I think
You teach me how a beggar should be answer'd.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not hold out enemy forever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!
Exeunt Portia and Nerissa

ANTONIO

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

BASSANIO

Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring, and bring him, if you can,
Unto Antonio's house: away! make haste.
Exit Gratiano

Come, you and I will go there presently;
And in the morning early will we both
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.

Exeunt

SCENE II. The same. A street.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

PORTIA

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

Enter GRATIANO

GRATIANO

Fair sir, you are well o'erta'en
My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
Has sent you here this ring, and does entreat
Your company at dinner.

PORTIA

That cannot be:
His ring I do accept most thankfully:
And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

GRATIANO

That will I do.

NERISSA

Sir, I would speak with you.
Aside to PORTIA
I'll see if I can get my husband's ring,
Which I did make him swear to keep forever.

PORTIA

[*Aside to NERISSA*] You may, I warrant.
We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.
Aloud
Away! make haste: you know where I will tarry.

NERISSA

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

Exeunt

ACT V

SCENE I. Belmont. Avenue to PORTIA'S house.

Enter LORENZO and JESSICA

LORENZO

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

JESSICA

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

LORENZO

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

JESSICA

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

LORENZO

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

JESSICA

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

Enter BALTHAZAR

LORENZO

Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

BALTHAZAR

A friend.

LORENZO

A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?

BALTHAZAR

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

LORENZO

Who comes with her?

BALTHAZAR

None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return'd?

LORENZO

He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray you, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.
Enter LAUNCELOT

LAUNCELOT

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

LORENZO

Who calls?

LAUNCELOT

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

LORENZO

Leave hollaing, man: here.

LAUNCELOT

Sola! where? where?

LORENZO

Here.

LAUNCELOT

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

Exit

LORENZO

Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in?
My friend Balthazar, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.

Exit BALTHAZAR

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!

Music off

Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears: soft stillness and the night
Enhance the hearing of sweet melodies.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patches of bright gold:
There's not the smallest orb which you behold
But in its motion like an angel hums,
Still singing to the young-eyed cherubins;
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But while this muddy vesture of decay
Does grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

So does the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until the king be by, and then his state

Empties itself, as does an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

NERISSA

It is your music, madam, of the house.

PORTIA

I think it sounds much sweeter than by day.

NERISSA

Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

PORTIA

The crow does sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended, and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.

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

Music ceases

LORENZO

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

PORTIA

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

LORENZO

Dear lady, welcome home.

PORTIA

We have been praying for our husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they return'd?

LORENZO

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

PORTIA

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

A trumpet sounds

LORENZO

Your husband is at hand; I hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.
Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their followers

PORTIA

You are welcome home, my lord.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

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

ANTONIO

No more than I am well acquitted of.

PORTIA

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

GRATIANO

[To NERISSA] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk!

PORTIA

A quarrel, ho, already! what's the matter?

GRATIANO

About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give to me, whose sentiment
Was nothing better than a cutler's ode
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

NERISSA

What talk you of the sentiment or value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death
And that it should lie with you in your grave:
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

GRATIANO

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

NERISSA

Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

GRATIANO

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

PORTIA

You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift:
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring and made him swear
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.

BASSANIO

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

GRATIANO

My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine;

And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

PORTIA

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

BASSANIO

If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Has not the ring upon it; it is gone.

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

Nor I in yours
Till I again see mine.

BASSANIO

Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring
And would conceive for what I gave the ring
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

PORTIA

If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honor to retain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for't but some woman has the ring.

BASSANIO

No, by my honor, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me
And begg'd the ring; the which I did deny him
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?

I was enforced to send it after him;
I was beset with shame and courtesy;
My honor would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady;
For, by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begg'd
The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

PORTIA

Let not that doctor e'er come near my house:
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you;
I'll not deny him anything I have,
No, not my body nor my husband's bed:
Now, by mine honor, which is yet mine own,
I'll have that doctor for my bedfellow.

NERISSA

And I his clerk; therefore be well advised
How you do leave me to my own protection.

GRATIANO

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

ANTONIO

I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

PORTIA

Sir, grieve not you; you are welcome notwithstanding.

BASSANIO

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

ANTONIO

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

PORTIA

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

ANTONIO

Here, Lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

BASSANIO

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

PORTIA

I had it of him: pardon me, Bassanio;
For, by this ring, the doctor lay with me.

NERISSA

And pardon me, my gentle Gratiano;
For that same scrubbed boy, the doctor's clerk,
In lieu of this last night did lie with me.

GRATIANO

What, are we cuckolds ere we have deserved it?

PORTIA

Speak not so grossly. You are all amazed:
Here is a letter; read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk: Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you
And even but now return'd; I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect: unseal this letter soon;
There you will find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbor suddenly.

BASSANIO

Were you the doctor and I knew you not?

GRATIANO

Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold?

NERISSA

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

BASSANIO

Sweet doctor, you shall be my bed-fellow:
When I am absent, then lie with my wife.

ANTONIO

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

PORTIA

How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk has some good comforts too for you.

NERISSA

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

LORENZO

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

PORTIA

'Tis almost morning,
And yet I'm sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
There ask us any questions you may have,
And we will answer all things faithfully.

GRATIANO

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