THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

SHAKESPEARE
The Swan Theatre
SHAKESPEARE'S
THE MERCHANT
OF VENICE

EDITED BY
C. RALPH TAYLOR, A.B.
FORMERLY JUNIOR MASTER,
GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, BOSTON

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PREFACE

The edition aims to present the interesting backgrounds of the play, to interpret the text through annotations, and to supply the student with such suggestive questions as will stimulate thoughtful study and encourage mental reaction.

With these aims in mind, the editor has first shown how to understand a play, how to analyze the plots of this particular drama, and what there is of interest in the backgrounds of the play,—i.e. how the social life of the times is reflected in it. In interpreting the text, such notes are given as will afford a clear understanding of the context without presenting an exhaustive etymological disquisition. Finally, to stimulate profitable study and mental reaction, there has been added a series of lessons, with leading questions and suggested memory work. These are intended to give definiteness to the individual or class study and to provoke further discussion rather than to supplant the teacher’s and student’s questions.

In general, the text of the Globe Edition has been followed. However, in some instances the punctuation has been altered; and where the editor has felt that the weight of authority justified it, he has changed the wording of the text. Where the omission of lines has come under consideration, it has been deemed wiser to omit these passages rather than offer a lame substitute.
INTRODUCTION

THE LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, in April, 1564. The official record in the Parish Church of Stratford has this baptism entry, for the year 1564: *April 26th Gulielmus, filius, Johannes Shakespeare*. Since it was the custom to have children baptized on the third day after birth, it would seem that the date to be accepted as the poet’s birthday is April 23.

John Shakespeare, his father, lived in Henley Street. He was a glover and dealer in wool and other country produce. His mother, Mary Arden, came from an old Warwickshire family. William was the third child, and after his birth five other children were born.

The family lived in comfort when William was a child. His mother had possessed a considerable estate. His father, when the child was five years old, was elected to the office of High Bailiff, or Mayor. But this comfort was to last for but a short time. In 1578 the father became involved in debt and effected a mortgage of £40. upon his wife’s estate.

Very few facts are known about the boyhood of William. It is probable that he attended the Grammar School at Stratford. Ben Jonson speaks of the poet’s having acquired a “little Latin and less Greek”. From his writings we must conclude that he somewhere gained no inconsiderable classical education. He quoted from Virgil, Horace, Terence, and Seneca. One may see in the Museum at Stratford the desk that tradition says was occupied by the boy.

In 1582 the boy of eighteen married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years his senior. She lived in the little village of Shottery, a mile away from Stratford. Her home is to-day in the hands of descendants and is a shrine for many pilgrims. The long, two-storied house is approached by a paved path, bordered by flower beds. The latticed windows peep from beneath the overhanging thatch roof. Their first child, Susanna, was born in 1583, and the twins Judith and Hamnet in 1585.
There are several traditions regarding youthful escapades of Shakespeare, but little reliability can be placed upon their truth. Sir Thomas Lucy is said to have had him whipped on account of the boy’s stealing of venison and rabbits from his private park.

It would seem that the year after his marriage Shakespeare went to London, where he became an actor. Beginning in a very humble capacity, he worked his way upward. At once he began the writing of plays. It is agreed that his first play was Love's Labour Lost, which appeared about 1591. He was then twenty-seven. For nineteen years (1591-1610) he continued the writing of plays, the last being The Tempest.

That he was a good actor seems beyond doubt. An old stage tradition speaks of him as the original Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet. He became prosperous and was highly honored in London. This enabled him to help his father in a court action and also to recover some of the property that had formerly belonged to his mother, but which had become heavily mortgaged.

The poet spent his last days, after 1612, in his old home village of Stratford. Here he had left his family when he went away to the city. He purchased New Place, one of the largest houses in the town. Although he paid several visits to the city, he spent most of the time quietly at home.

Shakespeare died on April 23, 1616 and was buried in the Stratford church. His wife and two daughters, Susanna and Judith, were living at the time of his death.

**SHAKESPEARE’S PLAYS**

**A Chronological Arrangement**

1590-1611

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| II. Period of Attainment. 1594–1599    | Comedies of love.        |
| III. Period of Gloom. 1600–1608        | Gloomy tragedies.        |
| IV. Period of Quietude. 1609–1611      | Plays of quiet life.     |
THE THEATRE IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME

The early productions were given in the courtyards of inns. The balconies of these inns served well as galleries. Troupes of actors went from town to town, giving performances.

But the strong feeling of the Puritans against theatrical entertainments resulted in a law which prevented any theatre being built within the precincts of the city of London. James Burbage, who had successfully organized one of these traveling troupes of actors, decided, in 1574, to build a theatre on the banks of the Thames, just outside the city limits. He had given performances at Stratford, and undoubtedly the boy Shakespeare had witnessed some. The spot selected by Burbage was the site of a former monastery of the "Black Brothers," and the name given to the new playhouse was Blackfriars Theatre. When Shakespeare came to London as a young man, it was probably at this theatre that he secured employment. Other theatres followed this: The Curtain, The Globe, The Fortune, The Swan, and The Rose.

Burbage's theatre was round in shape; some of these buildings had the shape of a polygon. Only the stage and the boxes were covered; the poor people were not protected from the weather. The floor, now the location of the orchestra seats, was at that time called the "pit". It was occupied by the poor people, who paid a penny as their admission price. They sat on boxes or on the bare ground. Above them was the open sky. Shakespeare, in Hamlet, speaks of them as "groundlings". There were one or two balconies which ran around the walls, and over the stage was another balcony used by the wealthy people. It was also customary for those who paid the highest admission price (perhaps two shillings) to sit on the stage itself, and to feel free, at times, to promenade upon the stage. One of the balconies, near the stage, was used by the red-liveried members of the orchestra.

The conduct of the "groundlings" was far from commendable. They ate food, played cards, drank freely, and kept up a noisy disturbance which at times became boisterous. At times they would jeer at the actors, and they were known to vent their feelings by throwing food at the players.

Covered boxes near the stage were called the "lords' rooms".
Either here or on the stage sat the wealthy people. The "groundlings" often displayed their feeling toward them.

The stage was a platform which extended well out into the "pit". Back of it was a two-storied structure,—the first floor serving as a dressing-room, and the second floor as a part of the stage setting and also as a box for lords and ladies of the audience. Painted movable scenery was not known before 1600, and a change of scene was announced by a printed notice,—as, for example: *Venice; A Forest*. Black sky-hangings were used in tragedies and blue in comedies. Sometimes there was an inner stage setting, which would be revealed by the withdrawing of a curtain. It is doubtful, however, if there were any drop-curtain on the front of the stage. On account of this absence of a curtain, there was no such scene division as we are accustomed to have. You will find that the scene divisions are not to be seen in the early folios. This necessitated, at the end of a scene of tragedy the dragging off the stage of the bodies of the dead. There was a trap-door in the centre of the stage to be used when ghosts appeared. The floor was strewn with rushes, giving it the color of nature. The actors would bring on the stage the furniture needed, as chairs, tables, and trees. In a war scene a tent might be set up and given a label to indicate that it represented an encamped army. One device to indicate a change of location of a scene would be for one actor to invite another to walk with him to another town; in this way the audience became aware that the scene had shifted. Then again, the audience were accustomed to tell by the door through which an actor entered whether a scene had changed its setting.

The parts were all taken by men or boys with treble voices. Coarse as the plays were in Shakespeare's day, they lacked the greater coarseness of a later period when women began to take part in the performances of the degenerate nature of the Restoration plays. Probably few women were to be found in the audience. The costumes of the actors were gorgeous. It was the custom for each actor to secure his own costumes, and no effort was made to suit a costume to a part. Julius Caesar might appear in a robe that the actor had hired or bought from an English lord.

A weekly salary was paid the actors; the best actors, however, served as the managers of their own theatres.
Performances took place every day, including Sunday. The hour of commencement was announced by the blowing of a trumpet from the roof of the theatre. Posters were used to advertise the play, but no programs were printed. This is important to remember, for we depend, to-day, upon the program to learn the setting and characters of the play. In reading a Shakespeare play it is a good plan to study to see if you can find out in what way an audience in Shakespeare's days might determine these two things. As a further announcement of the commencement of the play, a flag was raised on the roof of the building. The performances came in the afternoon of necessity, since there was no means of lighting the theatre; and they lasted from two to two and a half hours.

When the play opened, there would first be a parade of all the actors on the stage. The prologue was then read by a person wearing a long black robe. Between the acts there were musical interludes, pantomimes, and the dancing of clowns. Although the Queen never went to the theatre, it was customary to have a prayer offered for her, during which all the actors knelt. Such plays as the Queen witnessed were given at the Castle. Shakespeare and his company frequently went to the Castle to present plays before Her Majesty.

HOW TO UNDERSTAND A PLAY

The technical study of a play is of secondary importance to the enjoyment of the play that is gained by each reader's perusing the story to gain his own impressions, regardless of technical laws. However, there are certain terms and rules of the game, as it were, that are valuable to the study of a play.

1. Tragedy.—A tragedy is a serious play, dealing with serious themes, especially with suffering. It must end unhappily to be a tragedy. For example, Macbeth deals with the murder of Duncan and the death of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Other tragedies also occur in the story.

2. Comedy.—A comedy is a play that deals with the follies and absurdities of life. It thus is in contrast to the tragedy, since it avoids the portrayal of suffering and ends happily. The under plot of a tragedy may introduce a comic situation. This, however, is not done as a major element in the play, but is put in
to relieve the tension of the tragic situation or to make more impressive the succeeding tragic action. Some of Shakespeare's plays are of such a character as to seem to intermingle the tragic and comic. *Measure for Measure*, for example, which was written at a time when the poet was experiencing unhappiness in his own life, has considerable of the dark and painful element in it.

Modern comedies are in most instances one of two kinds: (1) Farce, dealing with some absurdity of custom, (2) Burlesque, the ludicrous and exaggerated parody upon the more serious things of life.

3. The Title.—The title of a play should be fitting. Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* is well named, for the plot centres about the stooping of Kate Hardcastle to the position of barmaid, a position she assumes for the purpose of spying upon the actions of others, and as a result of which she conquers a lover. Is *The Merchant of Venice* well named? Is Antonio the central figure? What character do the great actors choose?

4. The Unities.—The idea of the *unities* is traced to the writings of Aristotle. It was claimed that there should be three unities in a drama: (1) of Place, (2) of Time, (3) of Action. The first unity requires that there shall be no extensive change of scene; the second unity requires that the entire action occur within 24 hours; and the third unity requires that all the incidents of the drama centre about a single plot. Aristotle insisted that only one of these unities is necessary,—that of action. Shakespeare also observed but this one. How far are the unities observed in *The Merchant of Venice*?

5. The Exposition.—By exposition is meant the necessary information regarding the actions of the characters prior to the time when the play opens, also the plans or intentions they have in mind. We must know this in order to follow the action of the play. In the plays of Shakespeare the Prologue served this purpose in part. In the prologue we learn what has preceded the action at the beginning of the first scene. In other plays we learn these facts from the speeches in the first act. Sometimes one character talks to another and tells him incidents that he already knows, but which the audience need to know. Thus Bassanio tells Antonio of his needs of money and of his plan to win it. This comes in the first act.
6. The Struggle.—The basis of the plot of a drama lies in the fact that there are two opposing forces or desires that come in conflict. One character has a desire for something, but there are obstacles that come in the way to prevent the fulfilment of this desire. This obstacle may be something within him, something without him, or the opposing will of another character. Without this struggle the drama would be lifeless and uninteresting. We enjoy watching this struggle and we become interested to see how it is coming out. In a tragedy, the battle is lost; in a comedy there are none the less obstacles, but they are not of the tragic kind.

7. Climax.—Not only the play as a whole, but each act should have a climax. In a plot there are different incidents, all leading up to one of greatest importance, which is called the climax. It is this arrangement of the incidents that gives the play its compelling interest.

8. The Denouement.—The climax is the high water mark of the plot. Following this there may be a few incidents that serve to unravel the tangle into which the action has come. This letting down of the action is called the denouement. Shakespeare is careful not to have the action stop abruptly at the climax; he follows it by a bit of action or speaking that softens the sharp tone of the climax. Otherwise we should be stirred to deep emotion and left there with nothing to quiet the feeling. It is interesting to observe the invariable use he makes of this device.

9. The Mystery.—In a novel we are kept until the end to learn the solution of the mystery. The suspense is sustained until a final climax is reached. This cannot be done in a play. Very early we learn what is likely to be the fate of the characters. Our pleasure comes in observing the way in which the characters, who do not know what we of the audience do know, struggle and are in perplexity over the situations in which they are placed.

10. Character Portrayal.—To live permanently, a play must have strong character portrayal. We get great enjoyment from the plot, especially if it has a good deal of movement; but in the last analysis, it is the living, vital, natural characterizations that make the play one of lasting importance. It is this that makes the dramas of Shakespeare so great and permanent.
a play like The Merchant of Venice there are several most improbable situations as far as the action goes. The choosing of the caskets and the legal phases of the court scene present many improbabilities, but these are of secondary importance in the face of the wonderful portrayal of Shylock's character. It is this character portrayal that forms the basis of our deepest study. Shakespeare wrote of types of life that people of his day would know and appreciate, but he had the genius as did none of his contemporaries to so weave his picture of the characters that they seem to belong to any age.

THE DATE AND THE SOURCES OF THE PLOT

1. The Date.—The Merchant of Venice was probably written in 1598, as witnessed by the appearance of the name of the play on a list of plays which appeared that year, and as further evidenced by the entry on the Register of the Stationers' Company. It was published two years later, 1600, in two Quartos. The title of one of these Quartos reads: "The most excellent Historie of the Merchant of Venice. With the extreame crueltie of Shylocke the Iewe towards the sayd Merchant, in cutting a just pound of his flesh: and the obtayning of Portia by the choyse of three chests. As it hath beene divers times acted by the Lord Chamberlaine his Servants. Written by William Shakespeare At London, Printed by I. R., for Thomas Heyes, and are to be sold in Paules Church-yard, at the signe of the Greene Dragon. 1600."

2. Sources of the Plot.—The probability is that the story of the play was patterned from a tale in Il Perorone, a collection of short stories by Giovanni Florentino, which had been published some forty years before the play appeared. This tale relates how a wealthy merchant befriends a young kinsman, who is seeking the hand of a rich lady in Belmont and who, in order to win her, must pass a certain test. The merchant engages with a wealthy Jew to secure the money needed by the kinsman, the bond becomes forfeit after the loss of the merchant's ships, and the death of the unfortunate merchant at the hands of the cruel Jew seems imminent. The lady assumes the garments of a lawyer, enters the court, and turns the scales in favor of the merchant in the same way as in the play. The incidents following closely resemble the story of the play. Shakespeare, how-
ever, introduced the idea of the caskets into the original story. This may have come from a similar idea in one of the stories in the *Gesta Romanorum*, a Latin compilation of stories of the Middle Ages.

THE METRE

I. Metre in General

Metre is the rhythmic arrangement of syllables in poetry. The rhythm depends upon the accent which comes at regular intervals, just as in music.

Every line, or verse, of poetry is made up of groups of syllables, each group having an accented syllable and either one or two unaccented syllables. The group itself is called a foot. We may represent the accented syllable of the foot by a mark (—) and the unaccented syllable by another mark (—). The end of the foot may be indicated by what in music would be called a bar (|).

Notice the markings of this familiar line:

```
— — | — — |   — |   — |
Tell me not in mournful numbers
```

A verse of one foot is called monometer; of two feet, dimeter; of three feet, trimeter; of four feet, tetrameter; of five feet, pentameter; of six feet, hexameter.* What would you call the line given above?

The ancient Greeks gave us the names we use for the different kinds of feet as well as for the different kinds of metre. Thus, a trochaic foot is a foot having an accented and an unaccented syllable (— —); an iambic foot is one having an unaccented and an accented syllable (— —); a dactylic foot is one having an accented and two unaccented syllables (— — —); an anapaestic foot is one having two unaccented and an accented syllable (— — —); and a spondaic foot is one having two accented syllables (— —). The first line of *The Merchant of Venice* is thus marked:

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— — |   — |   — |   — |   — |
In sooth I know not why I am so sad;
```

The line is called iambic pentameter,—each foot being iambic and the line having five feet. What would you call the line quoted before this?

The standard line in Shakespeare’s plays is iambic pentameter. It is called heroic verse.
Blank verse is unrhymed verse. Most of Shakespeare's lines are unrhymed, although you will occasionally find near the end of a scene a few that are rhymed. For example, in The Merchant of Venice, notice the last lines of Act II, Scene 5:

Skylock. Fast bind, fast find,—
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.
Jessica. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost.

II. The Metre of the Merchant of Venice

1. Use of Prose.—Abbott, in A Shakespearean Grammar, says: "Prose is not only used in comic scenes; it is adopted for letters (Merchant of Venice IV. 1. 149–164), and on other occasions where it is desirable to lower the dramatic pitch. . . . It is also used to express frenzy, . . . and madness, . . . and the higher flights of the imagination."

Poetry is better suited than is prose to express the lighter moods of love and joy, as in the love scene in Act V. It gives life and vivacity to a scene where much action is needed, as in the court scene. Prose, on the contrary, better expresses the calmer mood of contemplation, and it is suited to a scene where the speakers are quietly discussing a general question, as in the scene where Portia and Nerissa are talking over the suitors. An unemotional character may well reveal his lack of sensibility by using prose, as does Launcelot throughout the play. Prose, then, may show the mood either of a situation or of a character. This play affords opportunity for a considerable use of it.

2. Use of Rhyme.—Abbott says: "Rhyme was often used as an effective termination at the end of a scene. When the scenery was not changed, or the arrangements were so defective that the change was not easily perceptible, it was, perhaps, additionally desirable to mark that a scene was finished. . . . Rhyme was also sometimes used in the same conventional way, to mark an aside, which otherwise the audience might have great difficulty in knowing to be an aside."

The earliest plays of Shakespeare, like Love's Labour Lost, make a very considerable use of rhymed verse. In this early period, besides producing plays he was writing a good many poems; and the influence of this is found in the appearance of
so much rhymed verse in the early plays. Gradually there came to be a diminished use of rhyme.

In this play we find rhymed couplets used either at the end of a scene or when an actor is making his exit. It is apparent that Shakespeare has in mind the intention of expressing a change of mood or an intensifying of mood in this variation from blank verse. For example, at the end of Act II, Portia has just bid farewell to Arragon, after the moments of considerable tension; and she is told of Bassanio’s approach. The rhymed lines well express the awakening of happier emotion. Nerissa, in a similar mood, echoes the sentiment by adding a rhymed line.

3. Varied Forms of Verse.—The normal verse, in Shakespeare’s plays, as we know, is iambic pentameter,—heroic verse.

There are a good many variations, however, from this standard.

(1) One or two syllables are sometimes added at the end of the line.

And the same prayer doth teach us all to rend er

(2) Some lines are incomplete.

At times, however, the next speaker completes the metrical line:

Bas. For me, three thou sand duc ats.

Port.

(3) At times a trochaic foot appears to vary the metre.

Rating my self at noth ing, you shall see.

(4) Where there is a pause within the line, there may appear an added syllable.

I lose your com pany: therefore forbear a while.

(5) Occasionally the Alexandrine is used. This line has six accents. One form is the trimeter couplet.

Who choos eth me shall gain what ma ny men desire.
BACKGROUNDS OF THE PLAY

1. The Attitude Toward the Jews

In the time in which the play was written, there was a most unfair and cruel treatment of the Jews in England. In 1594, which was about the time the play was written, Dr. Lopez, who had been at one time court physician to Queen Elizabeth, was hanged under the false suspicion of having attempted to poison the queen. Frequently there had been severe persecutions of these people. Way back in 1290, Edward I had issued an edict, driving them from England, and leaving in the hands of the king all their property. This edict had been in force throughout the three hundred years up to Elizabeth’s day. They had continued to live secretly in England, but it was not until the eighteenth century that they were privileged to enjoy civil rights in England. In Italy, however, the treatment had been much more charitable; and they were to be found in all the cities, living in comparative peace.

We must remember that the play was written by an English writer who lived in the age of intolerance toward these people. There would be little sympathy for Shylock among the people in the audiences that listened to Shakespeare’s plays.

At the time that this play was being produced, there was being acted a new play, The Jew of Malta, written by Marlowe. This was most unfair to the Jews, but it received a popular verdict of approval. Then again, in 1701, Lord Lansdowne wrote a new version of The Merchant of Venice, in which Shylock was made to be a comic character of the coarsest kind. This won much approval in its day, but it was a false perversion of the interpretation of Shylock’s character as Shakespeare intended it to be.

In 1814, the great Shakespearean actor, Kean, ventured to give a new interpretation of the play. He maintained that Shylock had been misunderstood, and he represented him as a man who had the wrongs of his people at heart and whose embitterment was justified by the treatment he received from the other characters in the play. This interpretation has been imitated by most of the great actors since the time of Kean. To-day it is this attitude that is generally taken toward Shy-
lock and toward the play. Interpreting it in this light, the play is raised far above the coarse burlesque nature that it had in the intolerant days of old.

2. The Italian Setting

a. Venice.—We should keep in mind the ideas which prevailed in England in the time of Shakespeare of the magnificence of Venice. In the age of the poet, Venice was gazed on with admiration by the people of every country, and by none with more devotion than those of England. Her merchants were princes, her palaces were adorned with the works of Titian, and she was the seat of all pleasant delights, “the pleasure-place of all festivity, the revel of the world, the masque of Italy.” Coryat, an English traveler, speaks of the palazzos of the merchants in the vicinity of the city, of the Rialto, and of the Ghetto, one of the islands on which the Jews lived, who were in number five or six thousand. He describes their dress: those born in Italy wearing red hats, while the Eastern Jews wore yellow turbans.—Hunter: New Illustrations.

b. Padua.—Elze, in his Shakespeare Jahrbuch, describes the University of Padua at the close of the sixteenth century, when so great was the university’s reputation everywhere that there were at one time representatives of twenty-three nations among its students. From the lists of these students it appears “that not a few Englishmen took up their abode in Padua for a longer or shorter time for the purpose of study, and all of whom must have visited Venice also; and it is to be inferred that the number of English travelers who visited the city of the Doges must have been much larger than is commonly supposed. Hereby is disclosed another source, not hitherto noticed, whence a knowledge of Venetian customs and manners reached England. Shakespeare, if he did not visit Italy, may have obtained his knowledge from those who pursued their studies in Padua.” Padua is twenty-two miles from Venice in a south-westerly direction. It has many notable palaces. In one of its houses Dante lived for a time. Livy was born in this city. The University of Padua, founded in 1222, was famous throughout the Middle Ages. At first law was the principal study. This fact must have influenced Shakespeare in the choice of this city for this play.
c. Belmont.—Belmont, the home of Portia, was probably selected as being at a convenient distance from Padua.

d. The Italian Dress.—The merchant wore a doublet and hose. He had a gown which was long and dark, the skirt open at the sides. This was bound by a silk sash. In addition, he wore a cape, ruffs, a merchant's flat cap, and gloves. The lover, like Bassanio, wore a doublet and silk or satin breeches, lace ruff, a silk bonnet, a silk cloak, silk stockings, Spanish morocco shoes, gloves, and a handkerchief. The lady of means, like Portia, wore a robe of cloth of gold, a silk veil, a jewelled chain, and strings of beads in the hair. The Jew wore a gaberdine, which was a loose cloak of dark color. The turban has been mentioned. The Jewish maiden wore, according to the interpretation of the actor Booth, a yellow sash or veil of orange color. As a lawyer, Portia wore silk or velvet robes, black in color. Nerissa, as the lawyer's clerk, wore no gown like Portia's, but had a doublet and hose.

3. Ideas of Medicine

The time of Elizabeth marks the beginning of what might be called modern study of medicine. This study dates from the remarkable discovery made by Harvey, of the circulation of the blood. There were physicians of eminence in Shakespeare's day, but they had not gotten away from the ancient ideas of alchemy and astrology. Look up these words and read something about them. The physicians were well educated and generally studied abroad, at Padua, Heidelberg, and at other university cities. It was just a few days before Shakespeare's death that Harvey delivered a course of lectures in which he presented the idea of the circulation of the blood. This was destined to revolutionize the science of medicine. Twice in the play we find references to the blood in the body. Gratiano says (Act I. Sc. 1. Line 81):

And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.

This illustrates the strange belief of Shakespeare's time that every time one sighs or groans one loses a drop of blood.

Again, Bassanio says (Act III. Sc. 2. Line 86):

Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;
The liver of a coward was believed to be bloodless, an idea based upon the theory of Hippocrates.

This crude belief, together with the theories regarding what were called *humours*, led to the practice of cupping. There were said to be four of these humours, or fluids, in the body: blood, phlegm, choler, and melancholy. As they individually prevailed, a person would be sanguine, or phlegmatic, or choleric, or melancholy. Cupping was the process of removing the blood, to diminish the surplus of fluid that occasioned one or another of these temperaments. The cupping was done by a barber, who also acted as the dentist of these days. Occasionally the blacksmith was called upon to extract teeth; and he served as a bone-setter for the physicians. When you realize that no antiseptics were used, you will imagine what the people suffered from the treatment.

Most peculiar ideas prevailed regarding medicine. Pills were known to be made of the skull of a man who had been hanged. Chips from the hangman's tree were used as a remedy for the ague. To cure a child of the rickets, he was passed, head downwards, through a tree that was split open and then tied up. As the tree healed, the child was supposed to recover. Several references are made in Shakespeare's plays to the cure by means of the royal touch. Jaundice was thought to have a mental cause. Thus, Gratiano says (Act I. Sc. 1. Line 85):

> Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
> By being peevish?

Again, stones were thought to have healing powers. Sapphire was said to give courage, topaz to cure madness (Remember Sir Topaz. In what play?), coral to preserve one from enchantment. Shylock was in agony when he learned of the loss of his turquoise (Act III. Sc. 1. Line 100). It was believed that the color of the turquoise would change with the health of the one who wore it, and that the stone was a trustworthy sentinel to forewarn one of impending peril.

### 4. The Laws Regarding Interest

Both Churchmen and laymen of the Middle Ages interpreted the law of Moses to forbid the taking of interest for the use of money. Any interest was regarded as usury. From the
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reign of King Alfred to that of Henry VIII all interest was legally forbidden in England. This prohibition led to many evasions of the law and to an emphasis upon what were called “damages”. When money was loaned, a contract was drawn up, which required that damages be paid in case the borrower should default. This is the basis of the bond arrangement of this play. A statute in the reign of Henry VIII allowed interest to the amount of 10 per cent to be charged. This maximum was reduced in the reign of Queen Anne, to 5 per cent.

5. The Italian Duke

In the early part of the second century, the title of duke was used in the Roman empire to signify a general. In the fourth century there was a separation of the civil and military duties. The dukes became judges in military trials. In Italy, however, they soon centralized in their own hands both the civil and military powers. Dukes, in this older European sense, did not appear in early England. From the first, the title as used in England signified a mere honorary distinction. When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, she found only one duke, the Duke of Norfolk. In more recent times, a considerable number of peers of the first rank have been given this title of duke. We see the title used in this play in the old European sense, including legal and military authority.

6. Masques

Shyl. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
And the vile squeaking of the wry-neck’d fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish’d faces.

It is fitting that Shakespeare should have introduced such a masque, or masquerade, as we should call it, into this play, which has an Italian setting, for the use of masks at costume balls originated in Italy, where the domino, or half mask, worn by the ladies, became especially popular. Then, too, it was the time when the formal masque, or masked performance, a type of play which Shakespeare’s contemporary Ben Jonson wrote,
was very popular. In Jonson’s *Tale of a Tub* (V. 2) are these lines:

*Pan.* A masque, what’s that?
*Scri.* A mumming or a shew,
With vizards and fine clothes.
*Clench.* A disguise, neighbor,
Is the true word.

Elze, as quoted by Furness, says: “To him who is unacquainted with the old customs of the Venetians, it must seem to be a very extraordinary, nay, almost fantastic, invention of the Poet to represent Lorenzo as slinking away with his friends from a supper whereon they had been invited by Bassanio, to go to a masquerade, when it was not even carnival time. Such an idea could be conceived of in no other country, not even in any other state of Italy, except in Venice, although the custom of wearing masks was at that time very common; but here in Venice it was practiced universally, and at all seasons of the year. It was thus that the Doge, who appeared in public only on state occasions, visited the Opera, attended by only a single servant; he was then incognito. The Officers of State and the Magnificoes appeared in masks, on the evenings when new Ambassadors were received. Thus, the dignitaries of the Church and State wore at least half-masks, whereby all formal ceremonies were avoided, and a freer intercourse took place instead. Thus a Venetian lady had her mask at hand, just like her fan and her handkerchief, as Shakespeare has intimated, in *Othello* (IV. 2). And thus, then, among the gay and livelier young people, a play with masks was not unusual. That torch-bearers were also needed arose from the fact that the streets were a tangle and the street-lighting deficient.”

Taine says: “From the accession of Henry VIII to the death of James I we find nothing but tournaments, processions, public entries, masquerades. First came the royal banquets, coronation displays, large and noisy pleasures of Henry VIII.” Taine goes on to quote from Holinshed: “‘(At Wolsey’s banquet) there wanted no dames or damosels, meet or apt to danse with the maskers, or to garnish the place for the time: then was there all kind of musike and harmonie, with fine voices both of men and children. On a time the king came suddenlie thither in a maske with a dozen maskers all in garments like sheepheards, made of
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fine cloth of gold and crimosin sattin paned, . . . having six-
teene torch-bearers. . . . In came a new bancket before the
king wherein were served two hundred diverse dishes, of costlie
devises and subtilities. Thus passed they foorth the night
with banketting, dansing, and other triumphs, to the great com-
fort of the king, and pleasant regard of the nobilitie there as-
sembled.’

ANALYSIS OF THE PLOTS

A study of the play reveals five distinct plots:

I. The story of the bond.
II. The story of the caskets.
III. The story of Launcelot and his father.
IV. The story of Lorenzo and Jessica.
V. The story of the two rings.

One of these plots must be called the main plot; which one?
In analyzing these different plots, two things should be looked
for: (1) The names of the characters in each; (2) A brief synop-
sis of each story. Such an outline as the following might be
put in your note-book. It is suggested that the first reading of
the play be for the purpose of getting an outline of the various
stories, and that an outline of the following nature be used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>II</th>
<th>III</th>
<th>IV</th>
<th>V</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bond</td>
<td>Caskets</td>
<td>Launcelot-</td>
<td>Lorenzo-</td>
<td>Two Rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Story</td>
<td>Father Story</td>
<td>Jessica Story</td>
<td>Story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Characters: (make a list under each plot heading)

Act I

Scene I (Story) — — —
Scene II (Story) — — —

etc.

Another way of analyzing the play is to go through the story
and note in each scene the following points:

I. The Setting.

By setting is meant the time and place of the
scene. The place is usually given, so that it is
not hard to determine this; but the time is usu-
ally to be determined from the text, and this requires some thought to find out.

II. The Characters.
The names of those that appear in the scene.

III. The Plot.
A very brief synopsis of the story. This might also include the purpose the writer had in the scene. To determine this, ask the question: What does the scene accomplish?

COMMENTS ON THE CHARACTERS

1. The Different Interpretations of Shylock's Character

The character of Shylock is the key-note of the play. Modern actors put such a different interpretation on the character than did those of Shakespeare's times that before approaching a serious study of the play it becomes necessary to decide at the outset what interpretation you are to put on Shylock's character.

In the main, there are two interpretations:

1. Shylock is, as Gratiano calls him (Act IV. 1, 127), an "inexorable dog", and as the Duke says, (Act IV. 1. 4–5) "an inhuman wretch uncapable of pity".

2. Shylock is, as Hazlitt says, "the depositary of the vengeance of the race",—that is, his seeming cruelty is only the voice that speaks for a people that have for generations suffered untold persecution. This is well shown in his own words (Act III. Sc. 1. line 63–72): "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."
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We must approach the character of Shylock by one or the other of these two roads, and our decision in this will determine our attitude in general toward the whole play. Although there is considerable discussion as to the interpretation that was given by the audience in Shakespeare's time, and as to the attitude taken by Shakespeare himself, there is no doubt, from what has been shown regarding the attitude of the people of Elizabeth's day toward the Jews that there was little real sympathy for Shylock. On the other hand, there is a great difference in the treatment Shakespeare gives toward the Jew and in that given by Marlowe in a contemporary play, The Jew of Malta. Marlowe makes the Jew a brutal fiend, and his play met with great approval from the audiences of the day. Shylock is called "an inexorable dog", but it is by one of the other characters in the play,—one who is naturally prejudiced against him.

In 1701, Lord Lansdowne produced a comic version of the play. This coarse interpretation of the character of Shylock met with great approval, but it misrepresents the original version. The age was still intolerant of the Jew.

Early in the nineteenth century, the actor Kean rejected the former interpretation of the character of Shylock and introduced the new interpretation, that of making him "the depositary of the vengeance of the race". This version was retained by later actors, Macready, Henry Irving, and Lawrence Barrett. The great American actor, Edwin Booth, however, took the earlier version, feeling that Shylock was a cruel father and a wolfish usurer.

Now how are we to approach the play? If we are to be true to Shakespeare, we must regard Shylock as did the other characters in the play and not be influenced by the sympathetic and tolerant spirit of our own age. On the other hand, if we allow the spirit of our times to dominate, we shall pity Shylock and sympathize with him.

2. Portia

"I think of her as the cherished child of a noble father,—a father proud of his child's beauty, and of the promise which he sees in her of rare gifts. These gifts he spares no pains to foster. He is himself no ordinary man. He anticipates the danger to
which the beautiful and wealthy heiress may be exposed; and it was by one of those 'good inspirations' which, as Nerissa says, 'holy men have at their death', (I. 2. 27) that he fixed upon the device of the three caskets, 'whereof who chooses his meaning chooses' his beloved daughter. From the first his aim has been to train her to succeed him in his high position. With this view he has surrounded her with all that is beautiful in art and ennobling in study, and placed her in the society of scholars, poets, soldiers, statesmen, the picked and noblest minds of her own and other lands.

"Among this throng of honoured guests, not the least honoured was the 'learned cousin, Dr. Bellario'. This cousin of hers we may suppose to have been a constant visitor at princely Belmont, and, indeed, to have been her instructor in jurisprudence. . . . Perhaps they have, even in these early days, 'turned over many books together' (IV. 1. 155). Her father may have seen with pleased surprise the bias of her mind toward such studies; and this, as well as her affection for her learned teacher, may have led him to take her to some of the famous trials of the day, so that when her own hour of trial comes, when heart and head must alike be strong, and her self-possession is taxed to the uttermost, she knows at least the forms of the court, and through no technical ignorance would be likely to betray herself."—Lady Martin, Shakespeare's Female Characters.

"Portia, Isabella, Beatrice, and Rosalind may be classed together, as characters of intellect, because when compared with others, they are at once distinguished by their mental superiority. In Portia it is intellect kindled into romance by a poetical imagination; in Isabel, it is intellect elevated by religious principle; in Beatrice, intellect animated by spirit; in Rosalind, intellect softened by sensibility. The wit which is lavished on each is profound, or pointed, or sparkling, or playful—but always feminine; . . . the wit of Portia is like ottar of roses, rich and concentrated; that of Rosalind, like cotton dipped in aromatic vinegar; the wit of Beatrice is like sal volatile; and that of Isabel, like the incense wafted to heaven. . . . If considered as women and individuals, as breathing realities, clothed in flesh and blood, I believe we must assign the first rank to Portia, as uniting in herself, in a more eminent degree than the
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others, all the noblest and most lovable qualities that ever met together in woman.

"Portia is endued with her own share of those delightful qualities which Shakespeare has lavished on many of his female characters; but, besides the dignity, the sweetness, and tenderness which should distinguish her sex generally, she is individualized, by qualities peculiar to herself; by her high mental powers, her enthusiasm of temperament, her decision of purpose, and her buoyancy of spirit.

"The sudden plan which she forms for the release of her husband's friend, her disguise, and her deportment as the young and learned doctor, would appear forced and improbable in any other woman, but in Portia are the simple and natural result of her character. The quickness with which she perceives the legal advantage which may be taken of the circumstances, the spirit of adventure with which she engages in the masquerading, and the decision, firmness, and intelligence with which she executes her generous purpose, are all in perfect keeping, and nothing appears forced—nothing as introduced merely for theatrical effect.

"But all the finest parts of Portia's character are brought to bear in the trial scene. There she shines forth, all her divine self. Her intellectual powers, her elevated sense of religion, her high honourable principles, her best feelings as a woman, are all displayed. She maintains at first a calm self-command, as one sure of carrying her point in the end; yet the painful heart-thrilling uncertainty in which she keeps the whole court, until suspense verges upon agony, is not contrived for effect merely; it is necessary and inevitable. She has two objects in view: to deliver her husband's friend, and to maintain her husband's honour by the discharge of his just debt, though paid out of her own wealth ten times over. It is evident that she would rather owe the safety of Antonio to anything rather than the legal quibble with which her cousin Bellario has armed her, and which she reserves as a last resource. Thus all the speeches addressed to Shylock in the first instance are either direct or indirect experiments on his temper and feelings. . . . She begins with an appeal to his mercy . . . but in vain. . . . Then she appeals both to his avarice and his pity. . . . So unwilling is her sanguine and generous spirit to resign all hope,
or to believe that humanity is absolutely extinct in the bosom of the Jew, that she calls on Antonio, as a last resource, to speak for himself. . . .

"At last the crisis arrives, for patience and womanhood can endure no longer; and when Shylock . . . springs on his victim—'A sentence! come, prepare!'—then the smothered scorn, indignation, and disgust burst forth with an impetuosity which interferes with the judicial solemnity she has at first affected. . . . But she afterwards recovers her propriety, and triumphs with a cooler scorn and a more self-possessed exultation.

"A prominent feature in Portia's character is that confiding, buoyant spirit, which mingles with all her thoughts and affections. And here let me observe, that I never yet met in real life, nor ever read in tale or history, of any woman, distinguished for intellect of the highest order, who was not also remarkable for this trusting spirit, this hopefulness and cheerfulness of temper, which is compatible with the most serious habits of thought, and the most profound sensibility. . . . Portia's strength of intellect takes a natural tinge from the flush and bloom of her young and prosperous existence, and from her fervent imagination. In the casket scene, she fears indeed the issue of the trial, on which more than her life is hazarded; but while she trembles, her hope is stronger than her fear. . . .

"Her subsequent surrender of herself in heart and soul, of her maiden freedom, and her vast possessions, can never be read without deep emotions; for not only all the tenderness and delicacy of devoted woman are here blended with all the dignity which becomes the princely heiress of Belmont, but the serious, measured self-possession of her address to her lover, when all suspense is over, and all concealment superfluous, is most beautifully consistent with the character. . . . In Portia's confession—'You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,' etc.—which is not breathed from a moonlit balcony, but spoken openly in the presence of her attendants and vassals, there is nothing of the passionate self-abandonment of Juliet, nor of the artless simplicity of Miranda, but a consciousness and a tender seriousness, approaching to solemnity, which are not less touching. . . .

"In the last act, Shylock and his machinations being dismissed from our thoughts and the rest of the dramatis personae assembled together at Belmont, all our interest and all our at-
tention are riveted on Portia, and the conclusion leaves the most delightful impression on the fancy. The playful equivocate of the rings, the sportive trick she puts on her husband, and her thorough enjoyment of the jest, which she checks just as it is proceeding beyond the bounds of propriety, show how little she was displeased by the sacrifice of her gift, and are all consistent with her bright and buoyant spirit.”—

Mrs. Jameson, Characteristics of Women.

3. Antonio

Magnanimity, big-heartedness, self-abnegation, stand out as the crowning qualities of Antonio. Absolutely forgetful of himself he trusts his friends implicitly; generously and seemingly with imprudence loans money to Bassanio, not as a business investment but for his personal use; and when facing financial ruin is deeply concerned lest his friend suffer embarrassment.

He naturally is grave and at times subject to melancholy, but underneath it all is a gentleness of manner and depth of tenderness that ennobles this sombre spirit. When facing death, this spirit brings self-restraint and calmness. This fortitude of mind, however, is not the stolid, unfeeling stoicism that Brutus shows, but is the tender resignation of one whose feelings, however deep, are yet in restraint.

It is a seeming paradox to find Antonio, with the nature just described, given to so caustic and insulting language toward Shylock. Knight, in his Pictorial Shakespeare, says: “Was it without an object that Shakespeare made this man, so entitled to command our affections and our sympathy, act so unworthy a part, and not be ashamed of the act? Most assuredly the poet did not intend to justify the indignities which were heaped upon Shylock; for in the very strongest way he has made the Jew remember the insult in the progress of his wild revenge:

Thou called'st me a dog before thou hadst a cause:
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs.

Here, to our minds, is the first of the lessons of charity which this play teaches. Antonio is as much to be pitied for his prejudices as the Jew for his. They had both been nurtured in evil opinions. . . . The habitual contempt with which he (Shylock) is treated by men who in every other respect are gentle
and good-humoured and benevolent is a proof to us that Shake-
speare meant to represent the struggle that must inevitably
ensue, in a condition of society where the innate sense of justice
is deadened in the powerful by those hereditary prejudices
which make cruelty virtuous; and where the powerless, invested
by accident with the means of revenge, say with Shylock, ‘The
villainy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I
will better the instruction.’”

4. Bassanio

In some ways Bassanio’s character stands as an inverted re-
fection of Antonio. The response to his benefactor’s sacrifices
must in some measure determine our estimation of Bassanio.
Now in all his relations with Antonio, Bassanio is absolutely
open and candid. There is no hesitancy or concealment in his
presentation of his case to his friend; he very evidently has no
false motive. And it is this very ingenuousness that makes his
appeal telling and occasions in us less surprise at Antonio’s
readiness to do whatever is in his power to aid Bassanio. How-
ever, one must call upon one’s imagination to endorse this en-
couragement of such seeming prodigality as Bassanio shows.
But why should there not be a resort to imagination if so good a
plot result?

Besides this frankness we see in Bassanio a deep genuineness
of character, as shown in the way he spurns the gold and silver
caskets and chooses that which stands not for “ornament”,
which “is but the guiled shore to a most dangerous sea”, but for
“paleness”, which “moves” him “more than eloquence”.

5. Jessica

If Shylock may be viewed in two contrary lights, even so may
Jessica. Here are the two views:

(1) She was disloyal to her father and to her religion, was
frivolous and lacking in moral poise, and lacked womanliness.
Here is what Giles, in Human Life in Shakespeare, says: “In
his (Shakespeare’s) less serious plays all the characters whom he
intends for lovable have not only graces and charms, but natural
femininely sensibilities. One exception there is,—which not
even Shakespeare can make me like,—and that is the pert, dis-
obedient Jessica. Her conduct I regard as in a high degree reprehensible. . . . She selfishly forgot the duty of a daughter when she should have remembered it. Why should she, a maiden of Israel, leave her poor old father, Shylock, alone in the midst of his Christian enemies? What if he was wrong? The more need he had of her. What if most wrong? Even then, even in the madness of defeated vengeance, in the misery of humbled pride, when regarded as most guilty, when there was nothing in the world for him but contempt without pity, the child of his home—his only child—should have had in her woman’s heart a shelter for her scorned father. . . . Besides, she turned Christian for a husband. Changes of religion for husbands, or with them, may do for the children of kings; it is not to be commended in the children of the people.”

(2) Winsome, innocent of any evil intent, she is excusable of all she did on the ground that she was brought up under cruel restraint by a father who could say of her, in the moment when she sought her rightful freedom, “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!”

Perhaps we may take an intermediate ground in estimating her, as does Hudson: “Jessica’s elopement, in itself, and its circumstances, puts us to the alternative that either she is a bad child or Shylock is a bad father. And there is enough to persuade us of the latter; though not in such sort but that some share of the reproach falls to her. For if a young woman have so bad a home as to justify her in thus deserting and robbing it, the atmosphere of the place can hardly fail to leave some traces in her temper and character.”

6. Gratiano

In Pilgrim’s Progress, when Faithful approached Talkative with the question, “Well, then, what is that one thing that we shall at this time found our discourse upon?” the reply of Talkative was, “What you will. I will talk of things heavenly, or things earthly; things moral, or things evangelical; things sacred, or things profane; things past or things to come; things foreign, or things at home; things more essential, or things circumstantial: provided that all be done to our profit.” But
how uninteresting is the Talkative of this story in comparison to Gratiano, of whom Bassanio said he "speaks an infinite deal of nothing"! To be sure, a good deal of Gratiano's talk is seemingly mere trifling, but he is vivacious, witty, the life of the party. Charles Cowden-Clarke says of him: "He is one of those useful men in society who will keep up the ball of mirth and good-humour, simply by his own mercurial temperament and agreeable rattle; for he is like a babbling woodside brook, seen through at once, and presenting every ripple of its surface to the sunbeams of good-fellowship. . . . He would no doubt talk a man off his legs; and, therefore, Shakespeare brings him as a relief against the grave men, Antonio and Bassanio, who, being anxious about worldly cares, resent his vivacity, and they are at all events as peevish as he is flippant and inconsiderate."

But there is a deeper side to the nature of Gratiano, and his character cannot be read simply on the surface. He is deeply concerned at Antonio's misfortune, he does his best to cheer him up, and the whole aim of all his garrulousness is to raise the spirits of those who are despondent. Unselfishness is written into his every word and act.

7. Nerissa

Nerissa is admirably suited to be the companion of Gratiano. She is playful, attractive, lively; and she, too, shows in her conversation with Portia that she is given to generalities in talking, and would easily maintain her part in any conversation. She does not lack will, in which she imitates Portia, as we see when they berate their husbands for seeming faithlessness in the loss of the rings.

STAGE COSTUMES

1. Shylock.—Edwin Booth interpreted the part in the following costume: "A long, dark-green gown, trimmed at the edge of the skirt with an irregular device of brown colour. A dark-brown gaberdine, with flowing sleeves and hood, lined with green and trimmed as the gown. A variegated scarf about the waist, from which depends a leather pouch. Head grey and pretty bald; beard of same colour and quite long. Ear-rings and several finger-rings, one on the thumb and one on forefinger;
a long knotted staff. Complexion swarthy, age about sixty. Red leather pointed shoes, and hat of orange-tawny colour, shaped somewhat like the Phrygian cap, but with a rim of about two inches, turned up.”

Henry Irving wore “an iron-gray wisp of beard, a sober brown gaberdine, an Oriental shawl girdle, and a close-fitting black cap with a yellow line across it.”

2. Portia.—Godwin, as quoted by Furness, speaks of the Paduan ladies as wearing “high-necked bodies, with fine cambric ruffs.” Speaking of the hair, he says, “In some cases it was crimped, parted in the middle, brought round to the back over the ears, and rolled up à la grec; in others it fell loosely down the back au naturel, confined, however, at the poll by a delicately-wrought band or tiara of goldsmith’s work; but the more usual plan was to arrange the front hair in massive curls, assuming somewhat the form of a couple of low horns, and carried down each side in smaller curls to the ears, the hair behind being strained and fastened up into a plait, with strings of pearls interwoven. From this plait depended a veil, which sometimes also appears to have covered the head up to a point between the horned curls or rolls, over which it could be raised like a double hood.” Continuing, he says: “The gown was cut like the Venetian dress, and was made of silk, brocade, gold cloth, or costly velvet. Over the shoulders was worn a chain, usually of gold set with jewels, and suspending a large jewel or cross. . . . Rings were worn on the first, third, and fourth fingers. Earrings of pearls and jewels appear. . . . Portia’s stockings would be of silk or the finest thread worked with clocks and even open seams. Her shoes, of slipper form, would be of morocco, or of velvet embroidered with gold, cork being used for the soles.”

As a civil doctor, she would wear, according to Godwin, “a tight doublet, silk belt, trunk hose, and stockings, all of black; velvet in winter, silk in summer. Over these, the official robe or gown, ungirdled, having an upright collar and long, capacious open sleeves reaching nearly to the ground. This was made of velvet, silk, or damask, covered with rich pattern, cut, embroidered, or woven, according to the nature of the material. . . . On her head she would wear a tolerably high cap, made with narrow brim and a flat top, and on her feet the usual slipper
The clerk would wear a black cloth doublet, trunk, stockings, and ruffs, but no robe or gown.”

3. **Antonio.**—Godwin says that there would be no difference between the costumes of Antonio and Shylock other than in the color of their caps,—Shylock being obliged to wear his cap “made of a tawny-yellow material”.

4. **Nerissa.**—Godwin says she must be dressed, as a maid who acts as a “confidential servant of a noble and wealthy lady”, with “the ruffs at neck and wrists, but of less delicate material than those of Portia; the skirt of her gown will be shorter than her ladyship’s, and there will be an absence of ornament, except, perhaps, as a border to the dress. She must wear a ring or two, and from her girdle would hang a pouch and huswife. She would also have a short veil of plain lawn or cambric, which she might use as a hood, pinned under the chin.”

5. **Jessica.**—Edwin Booth says: “Jessica should wear a yellow sash or veil, of the same colour as Shylock’s cap.”

6. **Bassanio, and the other nobles.**—Knight says: “Young lovers wear generally a doublet and breeches of satin, cut or slashed in the form of crosses or stars, through which slashing is seen the lining of coloured taffeta; gold buttons, a lace ruff, a bonnet of rich velvet or silk with an ornamental band, a silk cloak, and silk stockings, Spanish morocco shoes, a flower in one hand and their gloves and handkerchief in the other.”

**General Comment.**—Richard Grant White says: “*The Merchant of Venice* has never been put on the stage in the costume of the time at which it was written. . . . It is to be feared that the splendour and faithfulness of the scene would be forgotten in its absurdity. . . . Any Italian costume . . . sufficiently antique to remove the action out of the range of present probabilities, will meet the dramatic requirements of the play; but the orange-tawny bonnet . . . ought not to be missed from the brow of Shylock.”
DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

The Duke of Venice

The Prince of Morocco

The Prince of Arragon

Antonio, a merchant of Venice.

Bassanio, friend to Antonio, suitor likewise to Portia.

Salanio

Salarino

Gratiano

Lorenzo, in love with Jessica.

Shylock, a rich Jew.

Tubal, a Jew, friend to Shylock.

Launcelot Gobbo, a Clown, servant to Shylock.

Old Gobbo, father to Launcelot.

Leonardo, servant to Bassanio.

Balthazar

Stephano

Portia, a rich heiress.

Nerissa, waiting-maid to Portia.

Jessica, daughter to Shylock.

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

SCENE—Partly at Venice; and partly at Belmont, the seat of Portia, on the Continent.
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

ACT I

Scene I. Venice. A street

Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio

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

Salar. Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

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

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

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

_Salar._ Why, then you are in love.

_Ant._ Fie, fie!

_Salar._ Not in love neither? Then let us say you  
are sad,
Because you are not merry: and ’twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed
Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh, like parrots, at a bag-piper;
And other ’of such vinegar aspect
That they’ll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano

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

Salar. I would have stay’d till I had made you
merry,
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant. Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it, your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th’ occasion to depart.

Salar. Good morrow, my good lords.

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

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

Salar. We’ll make our leisures to attend on yours.

[Exeunt Salario and Salanio

Lor. 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.

_Bass._ I will not fail you.

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

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

_Gra._ Let me play the fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"
O my Antonio, I do know of 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 thee more of this another time: But fish not, with this melancholy bait, For this fool-gudgeon, this opinion. Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well a while: I’ll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor. Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-

I must be one of these same dumb wise men, For Gratiano never lets me speak.

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

Ant. Farewell: I’ll grow a talker for this gear, 110

Gra. Thanks, i’ faith, for silence is only com-
mendable
In a neat’s tongue dried.

[Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo]

Ant. Is that any thing now?

Bass. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of noth-
ing, 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.

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

Bass. ’Tis not unknown to you, Antonio, How much I have disabled mine estate, By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warrant
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

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

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

Ant. You know me well; and herein spend but
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.

_Bass._ In Belmont is a lady richly left;
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues: sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages.
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors; and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand,
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate!

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

Scene II. Belmont. A room in Portia's house

Enter Portia and Nerissa

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

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

Por. Good sentences and well pronounced.

Ner. They would be better, if well followed.

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

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

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

Ner. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por. Ay, that's a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

Ner. Then is there the County Palatine.

Por. He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, "An' you will not have me, choose"; he hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of 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!

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

Por. 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 Neapolițan's; a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine: he is every man in no man: if a thrrostle 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.

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

Por. You know I say nothing to him; for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture; but alas, who can converse with a dumb-show? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany, and his behaviour everywhere.

Ner. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

Por. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him; for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman, and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety, and sealed under for another.

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

Por. Very vilely in the morning, when he is
sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best, he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst, he is little better than a beast: an' the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

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

Por. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket: for, if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge.

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

Por. If I live to be as old as Sibylia, 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 wish them a fair departure.

Ner. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?
Por. Yes, yes, it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

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

Por. I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

Enter a Serving-man

How now! what news?

Serv. The four strangers seek 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.

Por. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me. Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. While we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

Scene III. Venice. A public place

Enter Bassanio and Shylock

Shy. Three thousand ducats; well.

Bass. Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy. For three months; well.

Bass. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.
Shy. Antonio shall become bound; well.

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

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

Bass. Your answer to that.

Shy. Antonio is a good man.

Bass. Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

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

Bass. Be assured you may.

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

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

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

Enter Antonio

Bass. This is Signior Antonio.

Shy. [Aside] How like a fawning publican he looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian; But more for that in low simplicity He lends out money gratis and brings down The rate of usance here with us in Venice. If I can catch him once upon the hip, I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him. He hates our sacred nation; and he rails, Even there where merchants most do congregate, On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift, Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe If I forgive him!

Bass. Shylock, do you hear?

Shy. I am debating of my present store; And, by the near guess of my memory, I cannot instantly raise up the gross Of full three thousand ducats. What of that? Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe, Will furnish me. But soft! how many months Do you desire? [To Ant.] Rest you fair, good signior:

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Ant. Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd
How much you would?
   Shy. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.
   Ant. And for three months.
   Shy. I had forgot, three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and, let me see; but hear you;
Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.
   Ant. I do never use it.
   Shy. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's
        sheep—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—
   Ant. And what of him? did he take interest?
   Shy. No, not take interest, not, as you would
        say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised,
That all the canlings which were streak'd and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire,
The skilful shepherd pilled me certain wands
And stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning time
Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.
   Ant. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway’d and fashion’d by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

*Shy.* I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.

But note me, signior.

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

*Shy.* Three thousand ducats, ’tis a good round sum.

Three months from twelve, then, let me see; the rate—

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

*Shy.* Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug;
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat-dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaderdine,
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 foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold: moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
"Hath a dog money? Is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" Or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this:
"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 thus much moneys?"

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

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

Bass. This were kindness.

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

*Ant.* Content, ’t faith; I’ll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

*Bass.* You shall not seal to such a bond for me;
I’ll rather dwell in my necessity.

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

*Shy.* O Father Abram, what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others!—Pray you, tell me this:
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man’s flesh taken from a man
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttions, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship;
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

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

*Shy.* Then meet me forthwith at the notary’s:
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight,
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Scene III]  THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Of an unthrifty knave, and presently
I will be with you.

Ant.  Hie thee, gentle Jew.  [Exit Shylock
The Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

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

Ant.  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

Flourish of cornets.  Enter the Prince of Morocco,
and his train; Portia, Nerissa, and others
attending

Mor.  Mislike me not for my complexion,
The shadow'd livery of the burnish'd sun,
To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.
Bring me the fairest creature northward born,
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 thee, lady, this aspect of mine
Hath fear'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 thoughts, my gentle queen.

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

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

Por. You must take your chance;
And either not attempt to choose at all,
Or, swear before you choose, if you choose wrong
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage; therefore be advised.
Mor. Nor will not. Come, bring me unto my chance.

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

Mor. Good fortune then!
To make me blest or cursed'st among men.

[Cornets and exeunt]

Scene II. Venice. A street

Enter Launcelot

Laun. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me, saying to me, "Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot," or "good Gobbo," or "good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says, "No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo," or, as aforesaid, "honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels."

Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack:

"Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend;
"for the heavens, rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run." Well, my conscience, 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 commandment; I will run.

Enter Old Gobbo, with a basket

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

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

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

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

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

Laun. Talk you of young Master Launcelot?
Launcelot and Gobbo
Mark me now; now will I raise the waters. Talk you of young Master Launcelot? 

Gob. No master, sir, but a poor man’s son: his father, though I say it, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, God be thanked, well to live.

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

Gob. Your worship’s friend and Launcelot, sir.

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

Gob. Of Launcelot, an’t please your mastership.

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

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

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

Gob. Alack the day, I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy—God rest his soul!—alive or dead?

Laun. Do you not know me, father?

Gob. Alack, sir, Iam sand-blind, I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will
tell you news of your son: give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man’s son may; but, in the end, truth will out.

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

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

Gob. I cannot think you are my son.

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

Gob. Her name is Margery, indeed: I’ll be sworn if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin my fill-horse has on his tail.

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

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

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

Enter Bassanio, with Leonardo and other followers

Bass. You may do so; but let it be so hasted that supper be ready at the farthest by five of the clock. See these letters delivered; put the liveries to making; and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging. [Exit a Servant

Laun. To him, father.

Gob. God bless your worship!

Bass. Gramercy! Wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob. Here's my son, sir, a poor boy,—

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

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

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

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

Laun. To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew, having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you—
Gob. I have here a dish of doves that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is—

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

Bass. One speak for both. What would you?

Laun. Serve you, sir.

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

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

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted be- between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass. Thou speak’st it well. Go, father, with thy son.

Take leave of thy old master, and inquire My lodging out. [to his followers] Give him a livery More guarded than his fellows’: see it done.

Laun. Father, in,—I cannot get a service, no; I have ne’er a tongue in my head!—Well, if any man in Italy have a fairer table which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune! Go to; here’s a simple line of life: here’s a small trifle of wives: alas, fifteen wives is nothing! eleven widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man; and then to ’scape drowning thrice, and
Scene II]  THE MERCHANT OF VENICE  65

to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes. Well, if fortune be a woman, she's a good wench for this gear.—Father, come; I'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.  [Exeunt LAUNCELOT and old GOBBO  170

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

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

*Enter Gratiano*

**Gra.** Where is your master?

**Leon.** Yonder, sir, he walks.  [Exit

**Gra.** Signior Bassanio!

**Bass.** Gratiano!

**Gra.** I have a suit to you.

**Bass.** You have obtain'd it.

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

**Bass.** Why, then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano:

Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice; Parts that become thee happily enough And in such eyes as ours appear not faults; But where thou art not known, why, there they show Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain To allay with some cold drops of modesty Thy skipping spirit, lest, through thy wild beha-viour,
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

   Gra.    Signior Bassanio, hear me: 190
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 in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

   Bass.    Well, we shall see your bearing.
   Gra.    Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not
gauge me
By what we do to-night.

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

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

Scene III.  Venice.  A room in Shylock's house

Enter Jessica and Launcelot

   Jes.    I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so:
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well; there is a ducat for thee.
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see Lorenzo, who is thy new master’s guest: Give him this letter; do it secretly; And so farewell; I would not have my father See me in talk with thee.

Laun. Adieu! tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful pagan, most sweet Jew! But adieu: these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit: adieu!

Jes. 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 thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, Become a Christian and thy loving wife. [Exit

Scene IV. Venice. A street

Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Salanio

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

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

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

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

Lor. ’Tis now but four o’clock; we have two hours To furnish us,
Enter Launcelot with a letter

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

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

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

Gra. Love-news, in faith.

Laun. By your leave, sir.

Lor. Whither goest thou?

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

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

Go.—Gentlemen, [Exit Launcelot

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

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

Salan. And so will I.

Lor. Meet me and Gratiano

At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salar. 'Tis good we do so.

[Exeunt Salarino and Salanio

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

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

Scene V. The same. Before Shylock’s house

Enter Shylock and Launcelot

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

Laun. Why, Jessica!


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

Enter Jessica

Jes. Call you? What is your will?

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

_Laun._ I beseech you, sir, go; my young master  
doth expect your reproach.  

_Shy._ So do I his.  

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

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

_Laun._ I will go before, sir.  
Mistress, look out at window, for all this;  
There will come a Christian by,  
Will be worth a Jewess’ eye.  

_Shy._ What says that fool of Hagar’s offspring;  
ha?
Jes. His words were "Farewell, mistress"; nothing else.

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

Jes. Farewell; and if my fortune be not crost,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [Exit

Scene VI. The same

Enter Gratiano and Salarino masqued

Gra. This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salar. His hour is almost past.

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

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

Gra. That ever holds: who riseth from a feast
With that keen appetite that he sits down?
Where is the horse that doth untread again
His tedious measures with the unbated fire
That he did pace them first? All things that are
Are with more spirit chased than enjoy’d.
How like a younker or a prodigal
The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg’d and embraced by the wanton wind!
How like a prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather’d ribs, and ragged sails,
Lean, rent, and beggar’d by the wanton wind!

_Salar._ Here comes Lorenzo; more of this here-
after.

_Enter Lorenzo_  

_Lor._ Sweet friends, your patience for my long
abode;
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait:
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I’ll watch as long for you then. Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew.—Ho! who’s within?

_Enter Jessica, above, in boy’s clothes_  

_Jes._ Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I’ll swear that I do know your tongue.

_Lor._ Lorenzo, and thy love.

_Jes._ Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;
For who love I so much? and now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

_Lor._ Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that
thou art.

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

_Lor._ Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer.

_Jes._ What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery, love;
And I should be obscured.

_Lor._ So you are, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stay'd for at Bassanio's feast.

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

[Exit above]

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

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

_Enter Jessica, below

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

[Exit, with Jessica and Salarino]
Enter Antonio

Ant. Who's there?

Gra. Signior Antonio!

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

Gra. I am glad on't; I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night. [Exeunt

Scene VII. Belmont. A room in Portia's house

Flourish of cornets. Enter Portia, with the
Prince of Morocco, and both their trains

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

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

*Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.*
The second, silver, which this promise carries:

*Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.*
This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt:

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

How shall I know if I do choose the right?

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

Mor. Some god direct my judgement! Let me see;
I will survey the inscriptions back again.
What says this leaden casket?

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

Must give—for what? for lead? hazard for lead? This casket threatens: men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:
A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross;
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.
What says the silver with her virgin hue?

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

As much as he deserves?—Pause there, Morocco,
And weigh thy value with an even hand:
If thou be'st rated by thy estimation,
Thou dost deserve enough; and yet enough
May not extend so far as to the lady:
And yet to be afeard of my deserving
Were but a weak disabling of myself.
As much as I deserve! Why, that's the lady:
I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,
In graces, and in qualities of breeding;
But more than these, in love I do deserve.
What if I stray'd no further, but chose here?
Let's see once more this saying graved in gold:

*Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.*
Why, that's the lady; all the world desires her: From the four corners of the earth they come To kiss this shrine, this mortal-breathing saint. The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds Of wide Arabia are as throughfares now For princes to come view fair Portia! The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar To stop the foreign spirits; but they come, As o'er a brook, to see fair Portia. One of these three contains her heavenly picture. Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation To think so base a thought: it were too gross To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave. Or shall I think in silver she's immured, Being ten times undervalued to tried gold? O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem Was set in worse than gold. They have in Eng- land A coin that bears the figure of an angel Stamped in gold, but that's insculped upon; But here an angel in a golden bed Lies all within. Deliver me the key; Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

Por. There, take it, prince; and, if my form lie there, Then I am yours. [He unlocks the golden casket

Mor. O hell! what have we here? A carrion death, within whose empty eye There is a written scroll! I'll read the writing.
[Reads]  All that glisters is not gold;
    Often have you heard that told:
    Many a man his life hath sold
    But my outside to behold:
    Gilded tombs do worms infold.
 Had you been as wise as bold,
    Young in limbs, in judgement old,
    Your answer had not been inscroll’d:
    Fare you well; your suit is cold.

Cold, indeed; and labour lost:
Then, farewell, heat; and welcome, frost!
Portia, adieu! I have too grieved a heart
To take a tedious leave: thus losers part.

[Exit, with his train. Flourish of cornets.
Por. A gentle riddance. Draw the curtains, go.
Let all of his complexion choose me so. [Exeunt

Scene VIII. Venice. A street

Enter Salario and Salanio

Salar. Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship I am sure Lorenzo is not.

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

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

_Salan._ I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
"My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian! O my Christian ducats!
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
A sealed bag, two sealed bags of ducats,
Of double ducats, stolen from me by my daughter!
And jewels, two stones, two rich and precious stones,
Stolen by my daughter! Justice! find the girl!
She hath the stones upon her, and the ducats."

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

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

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

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

_Salar._ A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part:
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return: he answer'd, "Do not so;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time;
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love;
Be merry; and employ your chiepest thoughts
To courtship, and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there:'"
And even there, his eye being big with tears,
Turning his face, he put his hand behind him,
And with affection wondrous sensible
He wrung Bassanio's hand; and so they parted.

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

Salar. Do we so. [Exeunt

Scene IX. Belmont. A room in Portia's house

Enter Nerissa with a Servitor

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

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

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

Ar. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three things:
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.

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

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

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

You shall look fairer, ere I give or hazard.
What says the golden chest? ha! let me see:

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.

What many men desire! That "many" may be meant
By the fool multitude, that choose by show,
Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach,
Which pries not to the interior, but, like the martlet,
Builds in the weather on the outward wall,
Even in the force and road of casualty.
I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:

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

And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity.
O, that estates, degrees, and offices
Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
How much low peasantry would then be glean'd
From the true seed of honour! and how much
honour
Pick'd from the chaff and ruin of the times
To be new-varnish'd! Well, but to my choice:

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

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

[He opens the silver casket

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

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

*Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.*
Did I deserve no more than a fool’s head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

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

Ar. What is here?

[Reads] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow’s bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver’d o’er; and so was this.
I will ever be your head:
So be gone: you are sped.

Still more fool I shall appear
By the time I linger here:
With one fool’s head I came to woo,
But I go away with two.
Sweet, adieu! I’ll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wroth.

[Exeunt Arragon and train

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

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

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.
Enter a Servant

Serv. Where is my lady?

Por. Here: what would my lord?

Serv. Madam, there is alighted at your gate
A young Venetian, one that comes before
To signify the approaching of his lord,
From whom he bringeth sensible regreets,
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 fore-spurrrer comes before his lord.

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

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

[Exeunt

ACT III

Scene I. Venice. A street

Enter Salanio and Salarino

Salan. Now, what news on the Rialto?

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

_Salan._ I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true, without any slips of prolixity, or crossing the plain highway of talk, that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!—

_Salar._ Come, the full stop.

_Salan._ Ha! what say’st thou? Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

_Salar._ I would it might prove the end of his losses.

_Salan._ 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?

_Shy._ You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter’s flight.

_Salar._ That’s certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

_Salan._ And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

_Shy._ She is damned for it.
Salar. That's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salar. Out upon it, old carrion! rebels it at these years?

Shy. I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.

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

Shy. 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.

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

Shy. To bait fish withal; if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the
same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge. The villany you teach me, I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

\[Enter a Servant\]

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

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

\[Enter Tubal\]

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

Exeunt Salanio, Salarino, and Servant

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

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

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

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

_Shy._ What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

_Tub._ Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

_Shy._ I thank God, I thank God! Is it true, is it true?

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

_Shy._ I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! Where? in Genoa?

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

_Shy._ Thou stick'st a dagger in me: I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

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

_Shy._ I am very glad of it: I'll plague him; I'll torture him; I am glad of it.
Tub. One of them showed me a ring that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy. Out upon her! Thou torturest me, 120
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.

Tub. But Antonio is certainly undone.

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

[Exeunt

Scene II. Belmont. A room in Portia's house
Enter Bassanio, Portia, Gratiano, Nerissa, and Attendants

Por I pray you, tarry: pause a day or two
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself
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 140
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me; 
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin, 
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes, 
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me; 
One half of me is yours, the other half yours, 
Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours, 
And so all yours. O, these naughty times 
Put bars between the owners and their rights! 
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so, 
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.

I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time, 
To eke it and to draw it out in length, 
To stay you from election.

Bass. Let me choose;

For, as I am, I live upon the rack.

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

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

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

Bass. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth, 
Por. Well, then, confess and live.

Bass. Confess and love 

Had been the very sum of my confession: 
O happy torment, when my torturer 
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.
Por. Away, then! I am lock’d in one of them: If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream
And watery death-bed for him. He may win;
And what is music then? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch: such it is,
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom’s ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no more presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live. With much much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that mak’st the fray.

Music, whilst Bassanio comments on the caskets to himself

SONG

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?
    Reply, reply.
Scene II] THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.
Let us all ring fancy's knell;
I'll begin it, — Ding, dong, bell.

All. Ding, dong, bell.

Bass. 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 season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;
And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the Beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!

Por. [Aside] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts and rash-embraced despair
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;
In measure rain thy joy; scant this excess.
I feel too much thy blessing: make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass. What find I here?

[Opening the leaden casket

Fair Portia's counterfeit! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation? Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar breath: so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hairs
The painter plays the spider and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs: but her eyes!—
Bassanio's Choice
How could he see to do them? having made one, 
Methinks it should have power to steal both his, 
And leave itself unfurnish’d. Yet look, how far 
The substance of my praise doth wrong this shadow 
In underprizing it, so far this shadow 
Doth limp behind the substance.—Here’s the scroll, 
The continent and summary of my fortune.  

[Reads] You that choose not by the view,  
Chance as fair, and choose as true! 
Since this fortune falls to you, 
Be content, and seek no new. 
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 hath done well in people’s eyes, 
Hearing applause and universal shout, 
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt 
Whether those peals of praise be his or no; 
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so; 
As doubtful whether what I see be true, 
Until confirm’d, sign’d, ratified by you. 

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

_Bass._ Madam, you have bereft me of all words;
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:
And there is such confusion in my powers
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing, pleased multitude;
Where every something, being blent together,
Scene II]  THE MERCHANT OF VENICE  

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!

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

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

_Bass._ With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

_Gra._ I thank your lordship; you have got me one.

My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved; for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

_Por._ Is this true, Nerissa?

_Ner._ Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.  

_Bass._ And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?
Gra. Yes, faith, my lord.
Bass. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.
Gra. But who comes here? Lorenzo, and his infidel?
What, and my old Venetian friend Salanio?

Enter Lorenzo, Jessica, and Salanio

Bass. Lorenzo and Salanio, 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.
Por. So do I, my lord; They are entirely welcome.
Lor. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord, My purpose was not to have seen you here; But meeting with Salanio by the way, He did entreat me, past all saying nay, To come with him along.
Salan. I did, my lord; And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio Commends him to you. [Gives Bassanio a letter
Bass. Ere I ope his letter, I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.
Salan. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind; Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there Will show you his estate.
Gra. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salanio. What’s the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

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

Por. There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper,
That steal the colour from Bassanio’s cheek:
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse?
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.

Bass. O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant’est 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 mere 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, Salanio?  
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one hit?  
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,  
From Lisbon, Barbary, and India?  
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch  
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Salan. 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 confound a man:  
He plies the duke at morning and at night,  
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,  
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,  
The duke himself, and the magnificoes  
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;  
But none can drive him from the envious plea  
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.  

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

Por. Is it your dear friend that is thus in  
trouble?
Bass. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best condition’d and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.
Por. What sum owes he the Jew?
Bass. For me three thousand ducats.
Por. What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio’s fault.
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 dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [reads] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my 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.

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

Bass. Since I have your good leave to go away, I will make haste: but, till I come again, No bed shall e’er be guilty of my stay, Nor rest be interposer ’twixt us twain. [Exeunt

Scene III. Venice. A street

Enter Shylock, Salarino, Antonio, and Gaoler

Shy. Gaoler, look to him: tell not me of mercy: This is the fool that lends out money gratis: Gaoler, look to him.

Ant. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

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

Ant. I pray thee, hear me speak.

Shy. I’ll have my bond; I will not hear thee speak: I’ll have my bond; and therefore speak no more. I’ll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool, To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
I'll have my Bond.
To Christian intercessors. Follow not; I’ll have no speaking; I will have my bond. [Exit Salar. It is the most impenetrable cur That ever kept with men.

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

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

Ant. The duke cannot deny the course of law; For the commodity that strangers have With us in Venice, if it be denied, Will much impeach the justice of the state, Since that the trade and profit of the city Consisteth of all nations. Therefore, go: These griefs and losses have so ’bated me That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh To-morrow to my bloody creditor. Well, gaoler, on. — Pray God, Bassanio come To see me pay his debt, and then I care not! [Exeunt

Scene IV. Belmont. A room in Portia’s house

Enter Portia, Nerissa, Lorenzo, Jessica, and Balthasar

Lor. Madam, although I speak it in your presence, You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now: for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners, and of spirit;
Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish cruelty!
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
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 we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

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

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

_Lor._ Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!
_Jes._ I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

_Por._ I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.

_[Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo_

Now, Balthasar,
As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua; see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;

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

_Balth._ Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

_[Exit_

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

Por. They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit that they shall think we are accomplished with that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager, when we are both accoutred like young men, I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two, and wear my dagger with the braver grace; and speak, between the change of man and boy with a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps into a manly stride; and speak of frays, like a fine-bragging youth, and tell quaint lies, how honourable ladies sought my love, which I denying, they fell sick and died; I could not do withal: then I'll repent, and wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them; and twenty of these puny lies I'll tell, that men shall swear I've discontinued school above a twelvemonth: I have within my mind a thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks, which I will practice. But come, I'll tell thee 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 measure twenty miles to-day. [Exeunt

Scene V. The same. A garden

Enter Launcelot and Jessica

Laun. 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.

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

Laun. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e’en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter Lorenzo

Jes. I’ll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say; here he comes.

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

Jes. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo. Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew’s daughter: and he says you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

Lor. 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.

Laun. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.
Lor. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you! then bid them prepare dinner.

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

Lor. Will you cover, then, sir?

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

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

Laun. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern.

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

Jes. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The lord Bassanio live an upright life;
For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly match
And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other; for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

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

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

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

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

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

Jes. Well, I'll set you forth. [Exeunt

ACT IV

SCENE I. Venice. A court of justice

Enter the Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio,
Gratiano, Salarino, Salerio, and others

Duke. What, is Antonio here?

Ant. Ready, so please your grace.

Duke. I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.
Ant. I have heard
Your grace hath ta’en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy’s reach, I do oppose
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.
Salerio. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter Shylock

Duke. Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead’st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then ’tis thought
Thou’lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact’st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant’s flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch’d with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal,
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enough to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train’d
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

_Shy._ I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats: I'll not answer that:
But say it is my humour: is it answer'd?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? 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, at the bagpipe: 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 wauling bagpipe; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended;
So can I give no reason, nor will I 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?
Bass. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man, To excuse the current of thy cruelty.
Shy. I am not bound to please thee with my answers.
Bass. Do all men kill the things they do not love?
Shy. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?
Bass. Every offence is not a hate at first.
Shy. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant. I pray you, think you question with the Jew: You may as well go stand upon the beach And bid the main flood bate his usual height; You may as well use question with the wolf Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb; You may as well forbid the mountain pines To wag their high tops, and to make no noise When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven; You may as well do any thing most hard, As seek to soften that—than which what’s harder?— His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you, Make no more offers, use no further means, But with all brief and plain conveniency Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

Bass. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.
Shy. If every ducat in six thousand ducats Were in six parts and every part a ducat, I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

Duke. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
Shy. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong? You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? Let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands? You will answer,
"The slaves are ours": so do I answer you:
The pound of flesh which I demand of him
Is dearly bought; 'tis mine, and I will have it:
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice.
I stand for judgement: answer, shall I have it?
   Duke. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,
   Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,
   Whom I have sent for to determine this,
   Come here to-day.
   Salerio. My lord, here stays without
   A messenger with letters from the doctor,
   New come from Padua.
   Duke. Bring us the letters; call the messenger.
   Bass. Good cheer, Antonio! What, man, courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.
   Ant. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
   Meetest for death: the weakest kind of fruit
   Drops earliest to the ground; and so let me:
   You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
   Than to live still and write mine epitaph.
Enter Nerissa, dressed like a lawyer's clerk

Duke. Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner. From both, my lord: Bellario greets your grace.

[Presenting a letter

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly? 120

Shy. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.

Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee?

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

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

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

Duke. This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learned doctor to our court.
Where is he?
Ner. He attendeth here hard by, To know your answer, whether you'll admit him. 

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

Clerk [reads].

Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick; but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turn'd 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?

Por. I did, my lord.
Duke. You are welcome: take your place. Are you acquainted with the difference That holds this present question in the court?  
Por. I am informed thoroughly of the cause. Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew?  
Duke. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.  
Por. Is your name Shylock?  
Shy. Shylock is my name.  
Por. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow; Yet in such rule that the Venetian law Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.—  
[To Antonio] You stand within his danger, do you not?  
Ant. Ay, so he says.  
Por. Do you confess the bond?  
Ant. I do.  
Por. Then must the Jew be merciful.  
Shy. On what compulsion must I? tell me that.  
Por. The quality of mercy is not strain’d; It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest; It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes: 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest: it becomes The throned monarch better than his crown; His sceptre shows the force of temporal power, The attribute to awe and majesty, 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 doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,—
That in the course of justice none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy,
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much 200
To mitigate the justice of thy plea,
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

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

Por. Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, twice the sum: if that will not suffice,
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.

Por. 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.

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

Por. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.
Shy. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.
Por. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offer'd thee.
Shy. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven: Shall I lay perjury upon my soul? No, not for Venice.
Por. Why, this bond is forfeit; And lawfully by this the Jew may claim A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful; Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.
Shy. When it is paid according to the tenour. It doth appear you are a worthy judge; You know the law, your exposition Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law, Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar, Proceed to judgement. By my soul I swear There is no power in the tongue of man To alter me: I stay here on my bond.
Ant. Most heartily I do beseech the court To give the judgement.
Por. Why, then, thus it is: You must prepare your bosom for his knife.
Shy. O noble judge! O excellent young man!
Por. For the intent and purpose of the law Hath full relation to the penalty Which here appeareth due upon the bond.
Shy. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge! How much more elder art thou than thy looks!
Por. Therefore lay bare your bosom.
Scene I] THE MERCHANT OF VENICE 117

Shy. Ay, his breast: 250
So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?
"Nearest his heart": those are the very words.
Por. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
the flesh?
Shy. I have them ready.
Por. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your
charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.
Shy. Is it so nominated in the bond?
Por. It is not so expressed; but what of that?
'Twere good you do so much for charity.
Shy. I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond. 260
Por. You, merchant, have you any thing to say?
Ant. But little; I'm 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 doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable 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 not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough, 
I’ll pay it instantly with all my heart.

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

_Por._ Your wife would give you little thanks for 
that,

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

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

_Ner._ ’T is well you offer it behind her back; 
The wish would make else an unquiet house.

_Shy._ [Aside] These be the Christian husbands. 
I have a daughter; 
Would any of the stock of Barrabas 
Had been her husband rather than a Christian!—

[To Portia] We trifle time; I pray thee, pursue 
sentence.

_Por._ A pound of that same merchant’s flesh is thine; 
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

_Shy._ Most rightful judge!

_Por._ And you must cut this flesh from off his 
breast;

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

_Shy._ Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare.
Por. Tarry a little; there is something else. This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood; The words expressly are "a pound of flesh": Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh; But, in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate Unto the state of Venice.

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

Shy. Is that the law?

Por. Thyself shall see the act: For, as thou urgest justice, be assured Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Gra. O learned judge! Mark, Jew; a learned judge!

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

Bass. Here is the money.

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

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

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

_Gra._ A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!  

Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.  

_Por._ Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.  

_Shy._ Give me my principal, and let me go.  

_Bass._ I have it ready for thee; here it is.  

_Por._ He hath refused it in the open court;  
He shall have merely justice and his bond.  

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

_Shy._ Shall I not have barely my principal?  

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

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

_Por._ Tarry, Jew:  
The law hath yet another hold on you.  
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
If it be proved against an alien  
That by direct or indirect attempts  
He seek the life of any citizen,  
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive  
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half  
 Comes to the privy coffer of the state;  
And the offender's life lies in the mercy  
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.  
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;  
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant; and thou hast incur'd
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.

Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

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

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

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

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

Por. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

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

Ant. So please my lord the duke and all the court
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 favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possess’d,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

_Duke._ He shall do this; or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronounced here.

_Por._ Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

_Shy._ I am content.

_Por._ Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

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

_Duke._ Get thee gone, but do it.

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

[Exit Shylock

_Duke._ Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

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

_Duke._ I am sorry that your leisure serves you not.
Antonio, gratify this gentleman;
For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[Exeunt Duke and his train

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

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

Por. He is well paid that is well satisfied;
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.

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

Por. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[To Ant.] Give me your gloves, I’ll wear them
for your sake;
[To Bass.] And, for your love, I’ll take this ring
from you:
Do not draw back your hand; I’ll take no more;
And you in love shall not deny me this.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Exeunt Portia and Nerissa]

Ant. My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring;
Let his deservings and my love withal
Be valued ’gainst your wife’s commandment.

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

[Exit Gratiano]

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

[Exeunt]

Scene II. Venice. A street

Enter Portia and Nerissa

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

Enter Gratiano

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

Por. 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.

Gra. That will I do.

Ner. 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.

Por. [Aside to Nerissa] Thou mayst, I warrant.

We shall have old swearing
That they did give the rings away to men;
But we'll outface them, and outswear them too.

[Aloud] Away! make haste; thou know'st where I
will tarry.

Ner. 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

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

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

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

Jes.  In such a night
Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

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

Jes.  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.

   Lor.       In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.
   Jes.   I would out-night you, did no body come:
   Lor. But, hark! I hear the footing of a man.

   Enter STEPHANO

   Lor. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?
   Steph. A friend.
   Lor. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray you, friend?
   Steph. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont; she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

   Lor. Who comes with her?
   Steph. None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet return’d?
   Lor. He is not, nor we have not heard from him.
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

   Enter LAUNCELOT

   Laun. Sola, sola! wo, ha, ho! sola, sola!
   Lor. Who calls?
Laun. Sola! Did you see master Lorenzo?
   Master Lorenzo, sola, sola!
Lor. Leave hollaing, man; here.
Laun. Sola! Where? where?
Lor. Here.
Laun. 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 Lor.
Lor. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter: why should we go in? My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you, Within the house, your mistress is at hand: And bring your music forth into the air. [Exit Stephano

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold: There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st But in his motion like an angel sings, Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins: Such harmony is in immortal souls; But whilst this muddy vesture of decay Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

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

[Music]  

Jes. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.  
Lor. The reason is, your spirits are attentive: 
For do but note a wild and wanton herd, 
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts, 
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud, 
Which is the hot condition of their blood; 
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound, 
Or any air of music touch their ears, 
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand, 
Their savage eyes turn’d to a modest gaze 
By the sweet power of music: therefore the poet 
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and 
floods; 
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage, 
But music for the time doth change his nature. 
The man that hath no music in himself, 
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds, 
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; 
The motions of his spirit are dull as night 
And his affections dark as Erebus: 
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter Portia and Nerissa

Por. That light we see is burning in my hall. 
How far that little candle throws his beams! 
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.  
Ner. When the moon shone, we did not see the 
candle.
Por. So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as a king
Until a king be by; and then his state
Empty itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

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

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

Ner. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

Por. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark,
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than the wren.
How many things by season season'd are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion
And would not be awakened. [Music ceases

Lor. That is the voice, 

Or am I much deceived, of Portia.

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

Lor. Dear lady, welcome home.

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

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

Por.  
Go in, Nerissa;  

Give order to my servants that they take  
No note at all of our being absent hence;  

Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.  

[A tucket sounds  

Lor. Your husband is at hand; I hear his  
trumpet:  

We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.  

Por. This night methinks is but the daylight  
sick;  

It looks a little paler; 'tis a day,  

Such as the day is when the sun is hid.  

Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and  
their followers  

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

Por. Let me give light, but let me not be light;  
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,  
And never be Bassanio so for me;  

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

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

This is the man, this is Antonio,  
To whom I am so infinitely bound.  

Por. You should in all sense be much bound  
to him,  

For, as I hear, he was much bound for you,
Ant. No more than I am well acquitted of.

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

Gra. [to Ner.] By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong;
In faith, I gave it to the judge’s clerk.

Por. A quarrel, ho, already! what’s the matter?

Gra. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me; whose posy was
For all the world like cutler’s poetry
Upon a knife, “Love me, and leave me not.”

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

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

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

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

Por. You were to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife’s first gift;
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger
And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring and made him swear
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't were to me, I should be mad at it.

_Bass._ [Aside] Why, I were best to cut my left
hand off

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

_Gra._ My lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed
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.

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

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

_Por._ Even so void is your false heart of truth.

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

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

Bass. No, by mine honour, 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 displeased 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 honour 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.

Por. 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 any thing I have.
Ant. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ant. Here, lord Bassanio; swear to keep this ring.

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

Por. 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 shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly:
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.
  Ant. I am dumb.
  Bass. Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?
  Ant. Sweet lady, you have given me life and living;
For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.
  Por. How now, Lorenzo!
My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.
  Ner. Ay, and I’ll give them him without a fee.—
There do I give to you and Jessica,
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possessed of.
  Lor. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.
  Por. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter’gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.
  Gra. Well, while I live I’ll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa’s ring. [Exeunt
NOTES

Authorities Quoted:

ACT I

Scene I

The Scene. Furness, in The Variorum Shakespeare, says: “In Charles Kean’s fine revival of the play at the Princess’s Theatre in 1858, the curtain draws upon a scene laid in Saint Mark’s Place, with various groups of Nobles, Citizens, Merchants, Foreigners, Water-Carriers, Flower-Girls, etc., passing and repassing, while a Procession of the Doge in state crosses the Square.”

1. Sooth. Truth. The expression in sooth is so used elsewhere, as in Love’s Labour Lost (V. 2. 586).

5. I am to learn. I have to learn, since I do not know.


9. Argosies. Huge merchant vessels. Recall the story of Jason and his ship Argo. Murray, however, thinks the word argosies is derived from the Italian word ragusea, meaning vessel.

11. Pageants. In early England, the Mystery Plays were called pageants. The same name was applied to the movable stage that was wheeled about from town to town. Shakespeare may have intended to picture the ships as resembling these theatrical platforms. Cf. Midsummer Night’s Dream (III. 2. 114): “Shall we their fond pageants see?” Love’s Labour Lost (V. 1. 118): “Or show, or pageant, or antique, or fire-work.”


15. Forth. Abroad.


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19. Roads. Places where ships may ride at anchor at some distance from the shore. Cf. V. 26: "are safely come to road."

27. Andrew. A valuable trading ship, probably so named from the Genoese admiral, Andrea Doria.


36. Thought. Anxiety. Compare the Biblical use of the word, in Matt. vi. 34: "Take no thought (i.e., anxious thought) for the morrow."

42. Bottom. Ship. Cf. Twelfth Night (V. 60): "The most noble bottom of our fleet."

50. Janus. The god from whom was derived the name of the first month. He was represented as two-headed, one head facing forward and the other backward. Explain the appropriateness of the name January.

52. Peep through their eyes. Peep, because their faces are wrinkled in laughter so that the eyes are not wide open.

54. Other. This is frequently used by Shakespeare in a plural sense. Cf. Macbeth (I. 3. 14): "I myself have all the other."

56. Nestor. One of the Greek heroes in the Trojan War; noted for his age and wisdom.


74. Respect upon. Serious regard for. Cf. II. 2. 192.

79. Play the fool. Act the part of fool in the play. In the early-time plays, this was the popular part. Name the jesters in some other of Shakespeare's plays.


89. Cream and mantle. Gather a cover (as scum) on the surface.

90. Entertain. Maintain. Cf. Measure for Measure (III. 1. 75): "I quake lest thou a feverish life should entertain." Shakespeare follows the practice of the writers of his time when he omits who before the verb do.


92. Conceit. Thought, understanding. In this play the word has three shades of meaning: (1) Conception, idea. "You have a noble and true conceit of god-like amity." III. 4. 2. (2) Fanciful thought or device. "Let it be as humours and con-
NOTES:  ACT I. SCENE I  139

ceits shall govern.”  III. 5. 45.  (3) Mental faculty, comprising
the understanding as well as the imagination (as here used).

93. Sir Oracle.  In ancient Greece the oracle was regarded
as a sacred form of prophecy, whose word was not to be disputed. Look up the subject in an encyclopedia or an ancient history book.

98–99.  In the Bible (Matt. v. 22) is the warning of severe pun-
ishment to be visited upon one who calls his brother “fool”. This passage evidently alludes to it.

102. Fool gudgeon.  A stupid fish. Izaak Walton speaks
of the gudgeon as a fish that is easily caught with any bait. Compare the use of “fool” as an adjective in II. 9. 25.

116. Shall.  Shakespeare often uses shall in all three per-
sions of the future tense.

125. Grant continuance.  Shakespeare omits of after this
expression.

126. Make moan to be abridged.  Complain of being cut off
from.

137. Eye.  Range, sight.
141. His.  Its.  In the time of Shakespeare used as the pos-
sessive of it.

Flight.  The range of the arrow.

1. 107): “Bade me be advised.”

find his fellow forth.”

144. Childhood proof.  Proof tested by experiment in one’s
childhood.

sweet perfections with one self king.”

150. Or—or.  In English to-day we should use either—or.
To find.  Shakespeare uses the infinitive where to day
we would use a subordinate clause.  Here it might be expressed:
that I shall find.

154. Circumstance.  Circumlocution, or a roundabout way
of expressing oneself.  Cf. Second part of Henry VI. (I. 1. 105):
“What means this passionate discourse; this peroration with
such circumstance?”

156. Making question of my uttermost.  Doubting that I
will use all within my means to aid you.
160. **Prest.** Ready.

161. **Richly left.** Who has been left a rich inheritance.

163. **Sometimes.** Sometime. Shakespeare uses both words in the same sense, relating to some time in the past. Cf. *Richard II* (I. 2. 54): “Thy sometimes brother’s wife.”

165. **Nothing undervalued.** In no way inferior.

166. **Cato’s daughter, Brutus’ Portia.** In the play *Julius Caesar* we find this Portia. She is represented as a woman of tender affection, yet she displayed great restraint and Stoic dignity as did her husband.

170-172. **A golden fleece . . . Colchos’ strand . . . Jasons.** In mythology we read of Jason’s organizing the Argonautic expedition to go in search of the Golden Fleece. This was hanging on a tree in Colchis (not Colchos, as here), which was on the Black Sea. With the aid of the witch Medea, Jason succeeded in his quest.

175. **Presages.** Supply the pronoun *which* before this word. See the note on line 90. Where should the accent come in the word *presages*?

**Thrift.** Success.

178. **Commodity.** Property. Also used in this play (III. 3. 27) to mean *convenience*.


183. **Presently.** Immediately. It is so used in five other instances in this play. The modern meaning, *shortly*, is found in I. 3. 171 and in II. 6. 65.

184. **Question.** Doubt. Cf. line 156.

185. **Trust.** Credit. The line means that the money is to be obtained either on Antonio’s credit as a business man or on the basis of personal friendship.

**Scene II**

**The Scene.** Mrs. Jameson, in *Characteristics of Women* (p. 72), says: “We are not told expressly where Belmont is situated; but as Bassanio takes ship to go thither from Venice, and as we find Portia afterwards ordering horses from Belmont to Padua, we will imagine Portia’s hereditary palace as standing on some lovely promontory between Venice and Trieste, overlooking the blue Adriatic, with the Friuli Mountains or the Euganian hills for its background.”

1. **Troth.** Truth. The word is a variant of the word *truth*, and in this passage it is not used as an antonym of *falsehood* but as meaning *faithfulness*.

7–8. Notice the play on words in the double use of the word
mean. As an adjective, in the expression mean happiness, the word means insignificant, trivial; in the phrase in the mean it means middle.

13. Chapels, churches. A chapel is a small church or a small building attached to a church. It originated in the word capella, meaning cap, the story being that St. Martin's hat used to be carried into war by the French kings as a sacred relic, or capella, and kept in a tent. The tent as a sacred place came to be called a capella. From the word chapel comes what name for a priest in charge of such a place?

18. Brain, blood. To Shakespeare the brain stands for the reasoning faculties and the blood for the emotions or passions.

24. Will. Explain the play on words.

26. Nor refuse none. Notice the double negative, a grammatical error today, but frequently found in Shakespeare.

32. One who shall rightly love. Supply by before the word one.


40. Makes it a great appropriation. Takes it to his own credit to the exclusion of others.

43. County Palatine. Count Palatine. This title was originally applied to those in imperial service in the court of the Roman empire. Later it was the title of the highest judicial officer under the German kings. After the Norman Conquest it was applied to the English county rulers of Durham, Chester, and Lancaster. They stood at the head of the feudal system of land tenure in their counties. Johnson says: “The Count here mentioned was, perhaps, Albertus a Lasco, a Polish Palatine, who visited England in our author’s time, was eagerly caressed and splendidly entertained; but running in debt, at last stole away, and endeavored to repair his fortune by enchantment.”

45. An you will not have me, choose. Perhaps this means: “If you will not have me, suit yourself.”

47. The weeping philosopher. Heraclitus, the Greek, was the “weeping philosopher”; Democritus was the “laughing philosopher”.

48. Had rather. Observe that Shakespeare uses this expression, which has excellent support in modern times, although many defend the use of would rather.

52. By. Concerning.

59. Throstle. Song thrush.

A-capering. A is the shortened form of the old preposition an, or of the modern preposition on.
68. Come into court. *i.e.* to witness for me.
70. Proper. Handsome. But in III. 2. 46 it means *suitable.*
72. Suited. Dressed. But it has the modern meaning of *adapted* in III. 5. 47: "How his words are suited."
73. Round hose. Coverings for the trunk and legs.
74. Doublet. A close-fitting coat or jacket. So called from the fact that it was heavily lined.
75. Bonnet. A man’s cap. We are familiar with its use in Scotland.
80. The Frenchman became his surety. The Scotch and French had for many years been under an alliance.
81. Sealed under for another. Put his signature and seal below that of the Scotchman. This was his guarantee that he would "become his surety".
82. An the worst fall. If the worst befall.
84. Contrary. Adverse, unfavorable.
85. Some other sort. Some other way.
87. Sibylla. In Ovid’s story, the sibyl of Cumae was promised by Apollo that she should live as many years as she held grains of sand in her hand.
88. This parcel of wooers are. Notice what we to-day would call a grammatical error in using here a plural verb. *Parcel* means *company.* Cf. Love’s Labour Lost (V. 2. 160): "A holy parcel of the fairest dames."
89. The four strangers. Reference has been made in the text to six rather than four. The error has not been satisfactorily explained, although it has been suggested that later additions were made to the original manuscript.
90. To-night. The next night. Also used with this meaning in II. 2. 173 and in five other places. But in II. 5. 18 it means *last night.*
93. Shrive. Minister confession and absolution to.
94. Whiles. An old adverbial form.

**Scene III**

1. Ducat. A Venetian coin, said by Coryat, who traveled in Italy in 1608, to be worth 4 s. 8 d. This would correspond roughly to our dollar. In origin, it means *a piece of money coined by a duke.*

7. May you stead me? Can you assist me? Notice the use of *may* for *can.* In early days, *may* signified *ability,* and *can* was used to mean *to be skilled.*
NOTES: ACT I. SCENE III

Pleasure. Here used as what part of speech?

12. Good. i.e., of good financial standing. Bassanio's reply would indicate that he misunderstood Shylock and thought he referred to Antonio's character. Consider our use of the word goods.

17. In supposition. In a doubtful state. This was because they were subject to the perils of the sea, where all his ships now were.


19. The Indies. The West Indies.

20. The Rialto. The Exchange in Venice. Formerly the name was applied to the largest island in Venice, on the Grand Canal. Then it came to be the name of the commercial Exchange, located on the island. Coryat thus describes it: "The Rialto, which is at the farthest side of the bridge as you come from St. Mark's, is a most stately building, being the Exchange of Venice, where the Venetian gentlemen and the merchants do meet twice a day, betwixt eleven and twelve of the clock in the morning, and betwixt five and six of the clock in the afternoon. This Rialto is of a goodly height, built all of brick as the palaces are." The famous Rialto bridge was not built until 1591, and that of today is of more recent origin.


34. Nazarite. Here used for Nazarene, i.e. an inhabitant of Nazareth.

40. Fawning publican. The publicans, under the Roman government, were tax collectors in Syria and the Roman provinces. Shylock well knew that the term fawning applied illy to Antonio. But he used it in a contemptuous sense, borrowing the idea from ancient times, when the publicans were especially disliked by the Jews.

41. For. Because.

44. Usance. Interest. In Shakespeare's time usance, usury, and interest meant the same thing. The charging of interest was regarded as disreputable. See Introduction, p. 22.

45. Upon the hip. A term used in wrestling.

50. Interest. See note on usance, line 44.

52. Of. Used by Shakespeare to mean about.

56. Tubal. Cf. Gen. x. 2., where Tubal is named as a son of Japheth.

58. Rest you fair. Probably means God give you fair fortune. Cf. As You Like It (V. 1. 65): "God rest you merry!"

61. Excess. Interest; whatever is beyond the principal loaned.
62. Ripe wants. Matured wants; ripe in the sense that fruit is ripe, in not admitting of delay in picking.
63. Possess'd. Informed. Cf. IV. 1. 35: "I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose."
77. Were compromised. Had agreed.
79. Fall. Bring forth. Here used as a transitive verb.
80. Pilled. Peeled. The story of Jacob is in Gen. xxx. Shylock resorts to Scripture as his defense, but misses his point, for Jacob's trick upon the unsuspecting Laban had nothing to do with their mutual agreement as to profits, and therefore is not to be compared with the charging of interest, or usance, which is the matter under debate. Antonio appreciates this in his reply, and in his later remark: "The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose." (line 93).
93. The devil can cite Scripture. Cf. Matt. iv. 6, where the devil is represented as quoting from one of the Psalms. (Ps. xci. 11, 12.)
94. Producing holy witness. Quoting sacred authority.
96. What a goodly outside falsehood hath. Dr. Johnson considered falsehood as here used to mean dishonesty. This applies better to the situation. Does it not make the aphorism more true to life?
100. Beholding. Beholden.
107. Gaberdine. A long, coarse frock. It is not to be understood that it is here referred to as a distinctively Jewish garment, for in those days no distinction existed between the dress of the Jewish and Christian merchants, except that the Jews wore a yellow bonnet. Cf. the use in The Tempest (II. 2. 40) where Trinculo crawls under Caliban's gaberdine.
124. Moneys. Perhaps the plural is here used because Shylock is quoting the word as used by Antonio.
129. Breed. Money bred from the principal, i.e. interest.
131. Who, if he break. There is no verb following the subject who. Who and he may be regarded as one subject, separated by a clause.
133. I would be friends with you. This is an idiomatic expression that is in good use even to-day. Is it grammatically correct?
135. Doit. A small Dutch coin of exceedingly small value, which accounts for its use here.
140. Single bond. A bond that has only the maker's signature, there being no other guarantors.
NOTES: ACT I. SCENE III

144. Nominated for. Named as.
Equal. Exact, of the same weight.


156. Teaches. An example of the Northern Early English plural, ending in es.

158. Break his day. Break his engagement.

162. Mutton, beefs. These are the Norman-French words, and they are here used with their original meanings, for sheep and oxen.

165. For my love. For my love's sake.


171. Knave. Sometimes this was used to mean a boy; it also was used to mean a rogue. Cf. use in II. 3. 12: “to play the knave.”

ACT II

Scene I

Enter the Prince of Morocco. The First Folio stage directions add: “A tawny Moor all in white.” This has been used by some, in studying Othello, to prove that Othello, although a Moor, was white.


7. Whose blood is reddest. Dr. Johnson points out that red blood was considered to be a sign of courage. Later, Bas-sanio speaks of cowards as having “livers white as milk.” (III. 2. 86.) See Introduction, p. 21. Notice the use of the superlative degree of red, in comparing two objects. This was good usage in Shakespeare’s time.


9. Fear’d. Caused to fear. Here used as a transitive verb.


14. Nice. Precise. The word is to-day used in many senses; its correct use is here shown. We should speak of a nice dis-tinction, but not of a nice apple.


18. Wit. Wisdom. Some commentators give it here the meaning of will.

19. His . . . who. The relative pronoun goes back to the possessive his as its antecedent.

20. Stood. Would have stood.

26. Sultan Solyman. A probable reference to the campaign undertaken by Solyman (Solomon) the Magnificent against the Persians, in 1535.

32. Hercules and Lichas. Lichas was the servant of Hercules who innocently brought to his master the poisoned shirt which had been dipped in the blood of the Centaur Nessus. The poor servant met with the unjust punishment of being thrown headlong into the sea. The story is from Ovid (Met. ix. 155).

35. Alcides. Hercules. This name came through the descent of Hercules from Alcaeus, the son of Perseus.


43. Nor will not. Another example of Shakespeare's use of the double negative.

44. The temple. They are to go to the temple, or church, where the oath referred to in Portia's previous speech is to be administered.

46. Blest or cursed'st. Most blessed or most cursed. The superlative ending of one adjective serves for both adjectives. Cf. III. 2. 289: "The best condition'd and unwearied spirit."

Scene II

Enter Launcelot. The First Folio reads: "Enter the Clown alone". This would suggest that Launcelot is the jester of the play, and so he is, although in a somewhat different sense than Shakespeare usually characterizes such a person. Here we have not a court jester but a rustic servant who is serving an urban master. Yet he is the fun-maker of the play and his oddities in speech and manners do much to lighten the mood of the play.

10 Pack. Begone, or, prepare to go as in The Comedy of Errors (III. 2. 158): "'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone."

11 Via. Away, be off. An Italian word. Cf. the Latin via.

24. God bless the mark. An expression difficult to explain. Prof. Child suggested that the mark may have been derived from the mark set upon idolatrous, as shown in Ezekiel ix. 6. (See Furness, Variorum Edition, p. 64.) The expression seems to be spoken as an apology for having used profanity; possibly the speaker points to the mark or crosses himself.

28. Incarnal. Incarnate. Launcelot might, in modern language, be said to use many "malapropisms", a word derived
from the name Mrs. Malaprop, a character in Sheridan’s play The Rivals, and referring to the use of words that are out of place where they are employed.

36. **Sand-blind.** Purblind, half-blind.

37. **Confusions.** Launcelot misuses this for conclusions.

43. **Marry.** For Mary. Originally the expression was by Mary, i.e. the Virgin Mary; but in Shakespeare’s time it had been contracted to marry.

44. **Indirectly.** Launcelot means directly.

45. **By God’s soties.** Probably means by God’s saints.

54. **A’.** Uneducated people of the times used this for he.

57. **Ergo.** This is the Latin for therefore. In some way Launcelot has acquired these learned phrases. It has been suggested that before entering Shylock’s service he must have been the servant of some Venetian scholar, or perhaps he may have been a choir-boy.

61. **Father.** Launcelot uses the word several times, but it does not serve to disclose his identity to old Gobbo, for the word was commonly used in addressing any old man.

62. **The Sisters Three.** The three Fates.

69. **Hovel-post.** One of the posts used in the frame-work of a hovel. The posts all came up to a point, and they were covered with sods.

82. Launcelot has been kneeling, awaiting his father’s blessing. The traditional stage directions here require that he turn his back to his father, who mistakes his long black hair for a beard (line 95).

96. **Fill-horse.** Thill-horse, i.e. the horse in the thills or shafts.

104. **Set up my rest.** Am determined. The term was used in playing a game. When the highest “stake” was settled, or determined, it was called the rest.

111. **Run as fast as God has any ground.** This, according to Knight, was a characteristic Venetian speech, for there being so little land in Venice, the peasants longed to get away from their limitations and be able to walk indefinitely on ground.

121. **Grammercy.** From the French grand merci, “great thanks.”

125. **Infection.** Gobbo uses this for affection or desire.

131. **Cater-cousins.** A doubtful term, but evidently signifying distant relationship. Scarce cater-cousins means not agreeing well.

134. **Frutify.** Launcelot uses this for certify.

138. **Impertinent.** He means to use pertinent.

144. **Defect.** Gobbo uses this for effect.
147. Preferred. Recommended for preferment or promotion.


160. Table. The table line or line of fortune is a term in palmistry. It is the line that goes from the fore-finger to the side of the hand. The table, then, might be regarded as the palm of the hand. The sentence is confusing; the clause which doth offer to swear upon a book probably modifies man and not table.

162. Line of life. The line extending across the hand. Here’s a small trifle of wives. In early palmistry the lines extending from the ball of the thumb toward the line of life signified the number of wives.


Take pain. Shakespeare uses both the singular and the plural of pain, when employing this expression.


194. Hood mine eyes. Staunton says: “The practice of wearing the hat at meals was probably derived from the age of chivalry. In the present day, at the installation banquet of the Knights of the Garter, all the Knights Companions wear their hats and plumes. It appears to have been usual formerly for all persons above the rank of attendants to keep on their hats at the dinner-table.”

Scene III

10. Exhibit. Launcelot probably meant to use inhibit, meaning stop. Furness agrees with Eccles in thinking that it means: “My tears express what my tongue should, if sorrow would permit it.”

Scene IV

2. Disguise us. For information regarding these masques read Introduction, p. 23.
NOTES: ACT II. SCENE IV

5. Spoke us yet of. One interpretation reads: “Spoke as yet of”; another: “Bespoke us yet of”. Perhaps the former is to be preferred.

Torch-bearers. These were needed because the streets were poorly lighted and dangerous. See Introduction, p. 24.


23. Provided of. Provided with. At times, Shakespeare uses this expression to mean provided by.


37. Faithless. Without faith, unbelieving.

Scene V

3. What. This interjection was often used to express impatience.


17. Towards my rest. That will affect my peace of mind.

18. To-night. Last night. But in seven other instances in this play, it means the next night. See note on I. 2. 126.


25. Black-Monday. Easter Monday. Stowe says: “In the 34 Edw. III (1360) the 14 of April, and the morrow after Easter-Day, King Edward with his host lay before the city of Paris; which day was full dark of mist and hail, and so bitter cold, that men died on their horses’ backs with the cold. Wherefore unto this day it hath been called the Black-Monday.”

30. The wry-neck’d fife. The expression is susceptible of two interpretations. Some commentators maintain that “fife” means a player on the fife, and consequently “wry-necked” refers to the musician’s always looking away from his instrument. Others claim that since the old-time fifers had bent-mouth-pieces in their instruments, the expression “wry-necked” applies to the fife. The elder Booth, in acting the part, illustrated the expression by turning his head in the way it is held when one is playing a fife.


36. Jacob’s staff. In Gen. xxxii. 10 we read: “With my staff I passed over this Jordan.”

37. Of feasting forth. For feasting out.

42. A Jewess’ eye. A Jew’s eye. There was an old proverb: “It’s worth a Jew’s eye.” It refers to the cruel persecution of the Jewish people, when large sums of money were demanded of them, the failure to yield which resulted in the mutilating of the eyes or ears. See Introduction, p. 19.
43. **Hagar's offspring.** A Gentile and a son "of a bondwoman."

45. **Patch.** The professional jester was so called probably from his patched or parti-colored dress. From its use to mean "fool" you may explain our expression "cross patch."

**Scene VI**

1. **Pent-house.** Shed.

5. **Venus' pigeons.** The doves by which Venus's chariot was supposed to be drawn.

7. **Obliged.** Pledged. The word is here sounded as having three syllables.

9. **Sits down.** Add the preposition with.

10. **Untread again.** Retrace.

14. **Younker.** A stripling. Cf. Burns' *Cotter's Saturday Night*, line 47: "The younkers a' are warned to obey."

15. **Scarfed.** Decked with flags and streamers.

18. **Over-weathered.** Weather-beaten.

35. **Exchange.** *i.e.* of dress.

42. **Too-too light.** Notice the repetition of *too*, the purpose being for emphasis. Cf. III 2.16. In *Words and Their Ways in English Speech*, by Greenough and Kittredge, (p. 173), speaking of the development of words, the authors say: "Sometimes a stem was formed by merely repeating the root, as the Italian uses *piano piano*, the French *beau beau*, or a child *goody goody*, to express a high degree of the idea intended."

43. **Office of discovery.** *i.e.*, the office, or duty of a torch-bearer is to discover, or disclose what is ahead.

47. **Close.** Secret. Cf. *Hamlet* (II. 1. 118): "This must be known; which being kept close."

51. **By my hood.** Perhaps Gratiano swears by the hood or masque he is wearing. Some commentators say it means: "by my self". Cf. *hood in manhood."

**Gentile.** In the early Folio, the word *gentle* was used. Shakespeare evidently intended a play on words.

67. **Glad on't.** Glad of it. In Shakespeare's plays there is frequent use of *on* for *of*.

**Scene VII**

4. **Of gold who.** Of gold which. Shakespeare did not follow our modern grammatical distinctions in the use of the relative pronouns.
NOTES: ACT II. SCENE VII

41. Hyrcanian. Hyrcania was a country south of the Caspian Sea.

42. Throughfares. Thoroughfares.
49. Like. Likely.
50. Too gross. Too coarse a material.
51. Rib. Inclose.
Cerecloth. Cloth covered with wax; used in embalming.

Obscure. Accent the first syllable.
57. Insculp'd upon. i.e. engraved on the surface of the coin. It was worth about ten shillings. The name angel came from the representation upon it of St. Michael killing the dragon. This word angel corresponded to the Dutch, Engel, whence the word English. You will recall the story of Pope Gregory's pun upon Angli and Angeli.
59. Key. . . . 60. May. In Shakespeare's time key was pronounced kay.
65. Glisters. Shakespeare does not use glisten.
75. Welcome, frost. Halliwell explains that this is the inversion of the old proverb, "Farewell, frost," which was used whenever anything displeasing took leave.
77. Part. Depart.

Scene VIII

8. Gondola. Coryat, in describing the gondola, which to-day is similar to what it was in earlier days, says: "If the passenger meaneth to be private, he may draw the fair black cloth, and after row so secretly that no man can see him." This may have been done by Lorenzo and Jessica.
27. Reason'd. Talked.
30. Fraught. Freighted.
33. You were best. It were best for you. You is the indirect object, not the subject. Another instance is found in the Second Part of Henry VI (V. 1): "You were best to go to bed."

40. Riping. Ripeness.
42. Mind of love. Loving mind.
45. Conveniently. Suitably.
52. Embraced sadness. i.e., sadness which he has embraced.

Scene IX

   Dream (V. 107): "Prepared to answer his desire."
   Fortune. i.e., good fortune.
28. In the weather. In the face of the storms.
   "Till each circumstance cohere and jump."
   not vanquish'd, but cozen'd and beguiled."
43. The line means that many should then keep their hats on,
   to show their superiority.
   45-47. Dr. Johnson gives as the meaning: "How much
   meanness would be found among the great, and how much
   greatness among the mean." He explains the figure by saying
   that "men are always said to glean corn though they may pick
   chaff."
   47. Ruin. Rubbish.
   "Hail, Caesar! read this schedule."
62. Fire. Pronounce as two syllables.
67. I wis. Shakespeare uses wis as a verb, but there never
   was such a verb. Ywis, in Old English, meant certainly or
   indeed.
70. You are sped. Your fate is sealed. Cf. Romeo and
   Juliet (III. 1. 94): "I am hurt. . . . I am sped. Is he gone,
   and hath nothing?"
76. Wroth. That which causes writhing, i.e., disaster. Ruth
   is a synonym.
87. Sensible regrets. Greetings that are evident to the
   senses,—i.e., substantial. Cf. use in II. 8. 48.
   II (III. 3. 126): "Speak to his gentle hearing kind com-
   mends."
89. Yet I have not. I have not yet. Yet was often used, in
   Shakespeare's day, before a negative.
96. **High-day wit.** Holiday wit, as contrasted with everyday wit.
98. **Post.** A messenger, or, as we say, a *postman*.
99. **Lord Love.** Cupid. She here invokes the aid of Cupid.

**ACT III**

**Scene I**

2. *It lives there unchecked.* *i.e.* the rumor is not contradicted.
4. **The Goodwins.** The Goodwin Sands are off the eastern coast of Kent. Tradition has it that there once existed there an island belonging to Earl Godwin, and that in the year 1100 this island was swallowed up by the sea.
9. **Knapped.** Gnawed or nibbled. The idea that old women were fond of ginger is again referred to in the play *Measure for Measure* (IV. 3, 8): “Marry, then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead.”
27. **The wings she flew withal.** The disguise (*i.e.*, the boys’ clothes) in which she ran away.
29. **Complexion.** Disposition. Cf. *Hamlet* (V. 2. 102): “Methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.”
41. **Rhenish.** A white wine.
43. **Match.** Bargain.
44. **A prodigal.** This is probably Shylock’s word, where others would have called Antonio “generous.” Shylock cannot appreciate Antonio’s liberality.
46. **Smug.** Trim, neat. In *King Lear* (IV. 6. 202) is the expression “a smug bridegroom”.
54. **Half a million.** That is, ducats.
71. **It shall go hard, etc.** I shall exert every effort to outdo you in all you teach me.
77. **Matched.** Found to match them.
121. **Turquoise.** This stone was believed to possess unusual qualities, its color being said to fade or grow brighter according to the health of the wearer. In an early work, Fenton’s *Secret Wonders of Nature* (1569), we read: “The Turkeys doth move when there is any peril prepared to him that weareth it.”
130. **At our synagogue.** Victor Hugo, as quoted by Furness, says: “In entering his synagogue Shylock entrusts his hatred to the safeguard of his Faith. Henceforward his vengeance assumes a consecrated character.”
Scene II

8. The line perhaps is intended to show what Furness calls "Portia's maidenly embarrassment" at asking Bassanio to pause "a day or two"; and "lest he should not understand her well" in preferring such a request, she urges her incapacity as a tongue-tied maiden to explain herself more fully.

15. O'erlooked. Bewitched. This refers to the old superstitious idea of the effect of "evil eye." In The Merry Wives of Windsor (V. 5. 87) we find: "Thou wast o'erlooked even in thy birth."

18. Naughty. Worthless. Used by Shakespeare in a different sense than we use it to-day. It then meant good for naught.

20. Prove it so. If it prove so. She means: "If it prove that I am not yours, then let fortune and not I take the punishment."

22. Peize. Weigh or keep suspended. The word comes from the French peser, meaning to weigh. Steevens explains that it here means to delay, in the sense that as the weights of the weighing scales are added, they hold back what is being weighed.

32. Upon the rack, etc. Referring to the rack used in the early English prisons, to torture the victims suspected of treason. Shakespeare here voices a protest against the injustice of this punishment. The famous Tower of London witnessed many cruel tortures during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Cf. the verb use in I. 1. 181.

44. A swan-like end. It used to be believed that swans sing just before dying. Cf. Othello (V. 2. 247): "I will play the swan, and die in music."


49. Flourish. i.e. of trumpets.

51. Dulcet sounds, etc. A reference to the custom of playing music, on the marriage morn, below the bridegroom's window.


55. Alcides. Hercules. In Ovid's Metam. xi. is the story of Hercules' rescue of Hesione, daughter of Laomedon, King of Troy. Neptune had threatened to flood the country in return for an offense committed by the king, but he had offered to stay his threat if Hesione should be offered as a sacrifice. The maiden was chained to a rock where she was exposed to the danger of falling prey to a sea-monster. With the proffered reward of a pair of horses, Hercules rescued her, not through love of the maiden but because of the prize in store. Thus Portia shows now much greater is Bassanio's motive, for Bassanio acts through love.
NOTES: ACT III. SCENE II

58. Dardanian wives. Trojan women.
61. Much much. See note II. 6. 42.
63. Fancy. Love. Weiss says it here means a passing sentiment, although elsewhere it refers to "genuine passion."
76. Season'd. Rendered more agreeable. In one other instance (IV. 1. 195) it is used to mean temper or moderate.
82. His. Its. See note on I. 1. 141.
86. Livers white as milk. See Note on II. 1. 7.
87. Excrement. Excrescence, an added growth. It is used in speaking of the beard, which for some reason was mentally associated with valor. The reference here is to a mere external show of valor. Cf. Love's Labour Lost (V. 1. 109): "Dally with my excrement, with my mustachio."
88. Beauty. Steevens says it here refers to "artificial beauty."
91. Lightest. Not in weight, but in character.
94. Upon supposed fairness. Depending upon their counterfeit beauty.
95. A second head. False hair, which was common in Shakespeare's time. Furness quotes Barnaby Rich (1615): "My lady holdeth on her way, perhaps to the tire-maker's shop, where she shaketh her crowns to bestow upon some new-fashioned attire, upon such artificial deformed periwigs, that were fitter to furnish a theatre. . . . These attire-makers within these forty years were not known by that name. . . . But now they are not ashamed to set forth upon their stalls,—such monstrous mop-poles of hair, so proportioned and deformed, that but within these twenty or thirty years would have drawn the passers-by to stand and gaze, and to wonder at them."
99. Veiling an Indian beauty. The commentators are at variance regarding this passage, it being doubtful why Shakespeare uses the word beauty, when he is contrasting it with a beauteous scarf. Some critics insist that a semi-colon be inserted after Indian.
102. Midas. The story is familiar. Midas, King of Phrygia, was granted by Bacchus the power to turn whatever he touched into gold. But when the food he touched was thus changed, he realized the folly of his wish.
112. Rain. Probably means rein, to curb.

126. Unfurnished. Bailey says that in another instance this is used to mean unfellowed. Here it probably means "leave itself without the other eye."

130. Continent. Container.

140. I come by note, etc. I come in accordance with what is noted in the scroll, to give and to receive a kiss.

141. In a prize. In a contest for a prize.


159. The First Folio reads: "Is sum of nothing." The text as given here, which has the support of many commentators, is clearer than the Folio.

175. My vantage to exclaim on you. My opportunity to exclaim against you. In several instances Shakespeare uses exclaim on.

179. Fairly. Well, gracefully.

188, 189. Our time, that. Notice the reference of the relative pronoun that to the antecedent our. Cf. Note on II. 1. 19.


196. So. Provided.


209. Achieved. Won.

215. Salanio. In most texts a new character, Salerio, a Messenger, is here introduced. It seems improbable that a new character would be introduced here, when it did not appear in the original Dramatis Personae.


228. Him. Himself.


239. Shrewd. Evil, malicious.


263. Hit. Succeeded. The word is a part of the expression "hit the mark."


272. Confound. Destroy. In the Bible occurs the expression "confound thine enemies." Cf. Ps. lxxi. 13: "Let them be confounded and consumed that are adversaries to my soul."

274. Impeach the freedom of the state. i.e. he denies that the state grants free rights to aliens.

276. Magnificoes. The "chief men of Venice,"—i.e. those of highest rank, or port, as the next line says.

278. Envious. Malicious.

281. Chus. A Biblical name. Cf. Gen. 10. 6, where the name appears as Cush, one of the sons of Ham.


296. Description. Pronounce as four syllables.


315. Between you and I. This was an established Shakespeare idiom. Little regard was then given to the grammatical usage of pronouns. Cf. I. 2. 28.

**Scene III**


27. Commodity. Commercial advantages, convenience. Cf. use in I. 1. 178. There has been considerable discussion as to the antecedent of it in the line following; Furness favors commodity.

32. 'Bated. Reduced. Cf. I. 3. 119: "with bated breath".

**Scene IV**

2. Conceit. Conception, idea. See Note on I. 1. 92.

7. Lover. Friend. Cf. the introduction of Brutus' speech in Julius Caesar (III. 2. 13): "Romans, countrymen, and lovers".

9. Bounty can enforce you. Benevolence can incline you to be.


33. Imposition. Injunction, order. There was not in the word, as there is to-day, any implication of deceit. Cf. use in I. 2. 104.
49. Padua. The seat of a famous university of law, which was well known even in the Middle ages. (See Introduction, p. 20).

50. Cousin. Kinsman. In some instances Shakespeare uses it as we do to-day. For example, in As You Like It (I. 1. 113), in speaking of Rosalind and Celia.

52. Imagined speed. The speed of imagination.

53. Traject. A word of doubtful origin, used by Shakespeare in no other place. It seems plausible to associate it with the Italian word traghetto, meaning ferry.


59. Before they think of us. i.e., of seeing us.


72. I could not do withal. I could not help it.

77. Raw. "Green." Cf. what Touchstone, in As You Like It (III. 2. 76), says of Corin: "Thou art raw."


Scene V

3. I fear you. I fear for you.

4. Agitation. Launcelot meant to use cogitation, thought.


33. Cover. Launcelot is using the word in its two meanings: (1) cover the table, (2) cover the head. For the custom referred to in the second meaning, see the note on II. 2. 194. It is similarly used in II. 9. 43.

37. Quarrelling with occasion. Quibbling on every opportunity.

46. Conceits. Fanciful thoughts or devices. See Note on I. 1. 92.

47. Discretion. Discrimination. Used in contrast to the word quarreling, which was used in his previous speech.

Are suited. Go together, are matched. Perhaps here meaning illy-matched. Cf. use of suited in I. 2. 72.

51. Garnish'd. Furnished; i.e., with words.

52. How cheer'st thou. Roberts' folio reads: "How farest thou?" Cf. the noun use of cheer in III. 2. 308.

59-60. This passage has occasioned much discussion. Per-
haps the clearest interpretation is given by Prof. Corson, who suggests that mean is the verb form of the word meaning "between two extremes." He paraphrases thus: "If on earth he do not observe a mean in his pleasures, it is reason he should never come to heaven." This is indorsed by Furness.

64. Pawn'd. Staked.

ACT IV

Scene I

Stage Arrangement for This Scene. Edward W. Godwin, in The Architect, March 27, 1875, says: "I propose a diagonal set for this scene, where the left side of the angle is taken up with the raised platform for the Doge and Magnificoes; in front of it the lawyers' table, at which, in the very centre of the stage, stands Portia; to her left and in front of her stands Antonio; on her right, at the end of the lawyers' table, in advance of Antonio, and the nearest character to the footlights, stands Shylock. Bassanio's position is on the platform, among the nobles around the Doge." The article quoted gives further minute details that would be suggestive in staging the scene. See Furness, Variorum Shakespeare, p. 393.

Staunton says that Portia "appears as a judge, not an advocate, and that her proper place, therefore, is on the judgement-seat, below the Duke's throne, rather than on the supposed floor of the Court, in front of the stage."

5. Empty from. In all other instances, Shakespeare uses empty of.


8. Obdurate. The accent is on the second syllable.


29. Royal merchant. Italy in the Middle Ages offered as an inducement to merchants to fit out vessels the gift of island territory, where they could set up independent principalities. In this way they became "royal merchants."
43. Say. Suppose.
  Humour. Whim, turn of mind.
47. A gaping pig. Probably refers to the roasted pig which
  was brought to the table with a lemon in its open mouth.
  Furness refers to Nashe's Pierce Penilesse, quoting this: "Some
  will take on like a mad man, if they see a pig come to the table."
  The work quoted from is an early story written in Shakespeare's
time.
69. Think your question. Consider that you are arguing
  with.
71. Main flood. Ocean tide.
76. Fretten. Fretted.
82. Judgement. Court sentence.
91. Parts. Duties. Allied to the word part, as used in a
  play.
103. My power. My own authority.
122. Shakespeare uses the same play on words in Julius
  Caesar (I. 1. 15) where the cobbler says he is a "mender of bad
  soles."
128. For thy life. For letting thee live.
130. Pythagoras. Pythagoras was a Greek philosopher who
  held to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. According
  to this theory the soul, after the death of a human being, goes
  over into the body of an animal, after whose death it again
  seeks a human habitation. Cf. Twelfth Night (IV. 2. 54):
  Clown. What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning wild fowl?
  Malvolio. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.
159. Fill up. Fulfil.
160. Impediment to let him lack. Clarendon says it means:
  "No hindrance to his receiving."
168. Take your place. i.e. on the judge's dais. See Note at
  the beginning of this scene.
169. The difference that holds this present question in court.
  The dispute that is under consideration in the present trial.
  (III. 2. 15): "Remains in danger of her former tooth."
180. Must. Portia uses the word in the sense of will, not as
  implying the idea of compulsion. But Shylock interprets it
  otherwise.
182. Strain’d. Restrained, restricted to a few people. Furness calls attention to Portia’s use of strain’d as the answer to Shylock’s question of compulsion.

184. Twice blest. Carries two blessings.

195. Seasons. Tempers, moderates. See Note on III. 2. 76.

198. We do pray for mercy, etc. Probably refers to a similar statement in the Lord’s Prayer.


206. Discharge. Pay. See Note on III. 2. 269.


221. A Daniel come to judgement. It may refer to an Apocryphal story in the History of Susanna. Here Daniel is represented as convicting the Elders of falsehood. Furness calls attention to the substitution of Solomon in Lansdowne’s version. This seems fitting, for the familiar story of Solomon’s judgment in the case of the two mothers (I Kings iii. 16–28) shows how well he played the part of an “upright judge”.

246. Hath full relation. Is clearly applicable to.

249. More elder. A double comparative; commonly used by Shakespeare.

253. Are there balance? Haliwell, as quoted by Furness, says: “Balance was used in Shakespeare’s time as a plural noun.”

255. On your charge. At your expense.

266. Still her use. Ever her custom.

273. Speak me fair. Speak well of me.


289. So. If.

294. Barrabas. We read in the Bible (John xviii, 40): “Now Barabbas was a robber.”

296. Pursue. Accent the first syllable.


326. Substance. Weight. Here meaning the mass, or gross weight.

329. Estimation. Weight. In this instance, the estimated weight.

332. I have thee on the hip. A wrestling expression. See note on I. 3. 45.

344. Question. Pronounce as three syllables.

347. Alien. Pronounce as three syllables.

Which humbleness may drive unto a fine. Which humble petition of mine may lead me to change the sentence to a fine.

Ay, for the state; not for Antonio. The part going to the state may be so changed (i.e., to a fine), but not Antonio’s part.


Ten more. For the purpose of making up a full jury of twelve.

Presently. Immediately.

Gratify. Recompense. Cf. Cymbeline (II. 4. 7): “In these feared hopes I barely gratify your love.”

Cope. Give an equivalent for, pay for.


Commandment. Pronounce as four syllables, by spelling it commandement, as in the early Folios.

Scene II

Upon more advice. Upon further thought. Cf. I. 1. 142, where advised means careful, thoughtful.

Old swearing. Old is used as a word that merely intensifies without adding any particular meaning. Rolfe alludes to our modern slang phrase, “a high old time.”

ACT V

Scene I

The Scene. Hunter, in New Illustrations, as quoted by Furness, says: “The ‘poet’s pen’ has nowhere given more striking proof of its power than in the scene of the garden of Belmont. We find ourselves transported into the grounds of an Italian palazzo of the very first class, and we soon perceive them to be of surpassing beauty and of almost boundless extent. It is not a garden of parterres and flowers, but more like Milton’s ‘Paradise,’ full of tall shrubs and lofty trees,—the tulip tree, the poplar, and the cedar. But it is not, like Milton’s, a garden in which the hand of Nature is alone visible. There are terraces and flights of steps, cascades and fountains, broad walks, avenues, and ridings, with alcoves and banquetting-houses in the rich architecture of Venice. It is evening; a fine evening of summer, which tempts the masters of the scene to walk abroad and enjoy the breezes which ruffle gently the foliage. The moon
is in the heavens, full orbed and shining with a steady lustre; no light clouds disturbing the deep serene. On the green sward fall the ever-changing shadows of the lofty trees, which may be mistaken for fairies sporting by the moonlight; where trees are not, the moonbeams sleep upon the bank. The distant horn is heard; and even sweeter music floats upon the breeze.'

4. Troilus. Prince Troilus was the son of Priam, king of Troy. He secretly fell in love with Cressida, a Greek maiden. Later, however, she proved traitor to Troilus and fell in love with Diomed, a Greek warrior. Shakespeare got the story from Chaucer's *Troilus and Cressida*. The details appear in Shakespeare's play *Troilus and Cressida*.

7. Thisbe. Pyramus and Thisbe were Babylonian lovers. They agreed upon a secret meeting-place and Thisbe reached the place first. She became deathly frightened at the sight of a lioness that was covered with blood in consequence of an encounter with another animal; and she fled, leaving behind her cloak. Pyramus soon arrived on the scene, to find the cloak which was now stained with blood. Heart-broken at supposing she had been killed by the lioness, he killed himself. Thisbe, on later returning, took her own life. The story first appeared in Ovid's *Metam.* IV. Later we find it in Chaucer's *Legende of Goode Women*. You are probably familiar with the humorous presentation of the story in *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

10. Dido. In Virgil's story of the wanderings of Aeneas we read of the visit Aeneas made with the Carthaginian queen Dido. Here is the reference to his departure from Carthage.


13. Medea. The picture is of the sorceress Medea going forth at midnight, as was her wont, to gather enchanted herbs. Some of these herbs she boiled in a cauldron, and putting the aged Aeson, Jason's father, into the boiling mixture, miraculously restored his youth. Cf. note on I. 1. 170. The picture of Medea is here introduced to add to the witchery of the midnight hour.

28. Stephano. Note the accent on the second syllable. As used in *The Tempest* it comes on the first syllable.

31. Holy crosses. Furness quotes Knight as follows: "These holy crosses still, as of old, bristle the land in Italy, and sanctify the sea. Besides those contained in churches, they mark the spot where heroes were born, where saints rested, where travelers died."

39. Sola, etc. The words imitate the notes of the horn carried by the courier, or "post".

59. Patines. Plates. Referring to the gold or silver plates used for the bread in the Holy Sacrament, or the Eucharist. Some commentators think the original word used was patterns, and that the word is used to refer to the stars themselves.


Like an angel sings. This refers to the ancient belief in "the music of the spheres". Plato in De Republica discourses upon the "harmony of the spheres". He pictures a siren sitting on each one of the eight planets, singing the tone peculiar to the individual "sphere." The eight tones produce the perfect "harmony".

62. Cherubins. The Hebrew plural of cherub is cherubim, as shown in the Biblical phrase "cherubim and seraphim." This form, cherubins, is a plural formed from the French word cherubin. It appears thus in A Lover's Complaint (319), and in The Tempest (I. 2. 152). The form cherub appears in Hamlet (IV. 3. 50): "I see a cherub that sees them."

63. Such harmony is in immortal souls. The ancient belief was that the "music of the spheres" is heard only within the immortal soul.

65. Close it in. Again referring to the ancient belief, according to which the body, the "muddy vesture of decay," deadens the harmony, "doth grossly close it in." Some read the line: "Doth close us in;" but the early Folio says, "Doth grossly close in it", seeming by it to refer to the harmony.

66. Wake Diana. i.e., wake the moon. Diana being the goddess of the moon.


79. The poet. Probably Ovid.

80. Orpheus. By the music of his lyre he charmed everything within hearing.

87. Erebus. The dark underworld of mythology. Through this must pass the departed spirits on their way to the Styx and Hades.

91. Naughty. See note on III. 2. 18.


99. Without respect. Without regard to circumstances. For another illustration of respect, meaning regard, see Midsummer Night's Dream (I. 1. 160): "She respects me as her only son."

103. Attended. Attended to, attentively listened to. Furness, however, thinks it does not need the preposition. To him it means: "It is the attendant circumstances alone which prevent
the lark and the crow from being equally good; even the nightingale, if ill-attended, is no better musician than a wren.”


121. A bucket sounds. The bucket is what has elsewhere (III. 2. 49) been called a flourish; i.e., a series of sounds on a trumpet. The Italian word is toccata.

127. Hold day with the Antipodes. If you, Portia, should walk in the night, we should then have daylight, as do the Antipodes, on the other side of the globe.

132. Sort all. Dispose all things. Cf. Richard III (II. 3. 36); “All may be well; but God sort it so, ’tis more than we deserve.”

136. In all sense. In every respect. Cf. The Taming of the Shrew (V. 2. 141): “It blots thy beauty . . . and in no sense is meet or amiable.”

141. Breathing courtesy. The courtesy that does not go beyond the breathing of words.


160. Scrubbed. Stunted in growth, or a stripling. Cf. our word “scrub oak.” To some commentators the word contains a further meaning, implying that ugliness goes with the deformity.

175. I were best. See note on II. 8. 33.


197. Contain. Retain. Cf. The Taming of the Shrew (Introduction I. 100): “We can contain ourselves.” Elsewhere in this play, as in II. 7. 11, we have the usual meaning of contain.

201. Wanted. Lacked. The text should read: “To have wanted.” Cf. Goldsmith’s Vicar of Wakefield, Chapt. II: “There were three strange wants at Wakefield,—a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and ale-houses wanting customers.”

202. As a ceremony. As a sacred thing.

206. A civil doctor. A doctor of civil law.


235. Wealth. Welfare. To-day we so use it in the word commonwealth.


261. To road. To harbor. See note on I. 1. 19.
267. Manna. Here is an opportunity to review the Bible story.


271. Charge us there upon intergatories. Furness quotes from Campbell as follows: “In the court of Queen’s Bench, when a complaint is made against a person for a ‘contempt,’ the practice is that before sentence is finally pronounced he is sent into the Crown office, and being there ‘charged upon interrogatories’, he is made to swear that he will ‘answer all things faithfully.’” The “interrogatories,” then, are questions put to the witness.
A STUDY OF THE PLAY

Lesson 1

Before any study can be intelligently undertaken, there should be a reading of the entire play for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the plot. In such a study, the making of a topical outline is of great assistance. In making this outline, the pupil should understand that a good topic is like a guide post, in that it is not an end in itself, but is something that leads the reader on. Such a topic, at the beginning, as The entrance of Antonio, Salarino, and Salanio would lead nowhere in a recitation. The following two topics are suggested for the beginning:

Salarino’s surmise regarding Antonio’s sadness.
Salanio’s surmise

The lesson assignment: Make a topical outline for Act I.

Lesson 2, 3, 4, and 5

Make topical outlines for Acts II, III, IV, and V.

Lesson 6

Act I. Scene 1. Lines 1–56.

Read what is said in the Introduction about Venice. (p 20). How do you suppose an audience in Shakespeare’s time would know what the setting is? (See p. 11). How were these Italian gentlemen dressed? (See p. 21). How does the mood of Salarino and Salanio contrast with that of Antonio? How does each attempt to explain his sadness? What does the difference in the moods of these first speakers promise regarding the moods of the play itself as it later develops? Why does the suggestion of anxiety regarding the ships at sea seem a fitting theme for the opening of the play? Would you judge from
Antonio’s opening speech that his sadness is a habitual mood? Why do you suppose he was sad now? Is there any hint given in his later question to Bassanio (119–121)? Why does he turn aside so abruptly Salarino’s hint regarding love (46)? Would this suggest that Antonio is a man well along in years? How old do you imagine him to be? Considering Antonio’s interest in Bassanio’s affairs, why is this reference to love a fitting one at the opening of the play?

Look up and explain the following: 9. argosies. 11. pageants. 19. roads. 27. wealthy Andrew. 42. bottom. 50. two-headed Janus. 56. Nestor.

Explain these expressions: 6. want-wit sadness. 10. on the flood. 12. overpeer. 14. their woven wings. 18. (explain the line). 22. cooling my broth. 25. hour-glass. 28. ribs. 52. peep through their eyes. 54. vinegar aspect.

Memorize lines 1–5.

Lesson 7

Act I. Scene 1. Lines 57–118

The first mention of Bassanio shows him to be held in what regard by Antonio? (57) Is Salarino discourteous? (60–61) Show how Antonio’s reply is both frank and courteous. (62–64) What does Salarino mean by his reply? (68) What is the time of day now? (70) How does Bassanio’s explanation of Antonio’s sadness differ from the previous guesses? (73–76) Do you suppose Shakespeare had a purpose in introducing Bassanio at just this point? What figure of speech does Antonio use in lines 77–78? Explain the comparison. Notice in Gratiano’s speech any evidence to show that Bassanio rightly judged him in a later speech. (114) Look up the reference to medicine in lines 81–82. (See Introduction, page 21). Explain the figure in lines 93–94. What do we learn in Bassanio’s speech (lines 114–118) as to the setting of the story? At this point, what is your opinion of Antonio? of Bassanio? of Gratiano?

Look up and explain: 74. too much respect upon the world. 79. fool. 92. conceit. 102. fool-gudgeon. 110. gear. 112. neat’s tongue.

Memorize lines 77–79; 93–94; 114–115.
Lesson 8

Act I. Scene 1. Lines 119-end.

After Bassanio's critical remarks about Gratiano, does Antonio join in with the criticism or does he turn to something else? Does what he talks about pertain to his own interests? What judgments of his character may we make? What would line 119 and line 131 indicate that Bassanio had previously talked over with Antonio? Would this explain Antonio's sadness? What reason has Bassanio for seeming embarrassed in approaching Antonio? What characteristic in Antonio is brought out in his speech in lines 135-139? Explain Bassanio's figure of the shaft. (140-152) What would this indicate regarding one of the school sports in Shakespeare's day? How does Bassanio propose to apply this shaft figure? (161-176) Is it a sound business proposition? Locate Belmont. (161) (See Introduction, p. 20). Has Bassanio received any encouragement from Portia? (163-164) (also Act I. Scene 2. Line 104). What description is here given of Portia? Does she seem different here than when she later appears as a lawyer? Does that explain why Bassanio does not then recognize her? Explain the reference to Brutus' Portia. (166) In what other play is she mentioned? How does Antonio's speech (177-185) further show his character?

Look up and explain: 124. a more swelling port. 130. gag'd. 140. shaft. 141. fellow; flight. 143. proof. 163. sometimes. 171. Colchus; Jason.

Lesson 9

Act I. Scene 2. Lines 1-end.

Find the facts that this scene is intended to give to the reader: the conditions of the choice of the caskets (27-32); the wide distribution, geographically, of the suitors (locate all); Portia's opinion of each; what happened to all (99-104); Bassanio's previous visit (111-114); and Portia's feeling regarding him (120-121).

Find in the scene all the evidences of Portia's girlish love of fun. Has Shakespeare any purpose in thus picturing her? Is she lacking in serious dignity? Is her mocking of the suitors fair? Do you like her as she is here shown? How old do you
imagine her to be? How do you picture her appearance? How well educated is she? (66-70). Is Nerissa more serious? Does Nerissa’s relation to Portia seem in any way unusual for that of a waiting-maid? What tiresome company may have occasioned Portia’s opening words? (1-2) What proverb summarizes her speech in lines 12-17? Is the father’s plan for the choice of a husband a natural one? Do the customs of any people seriously restrict a maiden in the choice of a husband? Is Nerissa’s defence of the plan (27-34) a strong one? In your own words give Portia’s reason for disliking each of the suitors except Bassanio. Which of the suitors is most disliked? Does this reflect on the nation he represents? What does she mean when she says: “I had rather be married to a death’s head” (48); “God made him and therefore let him pass for a man” (54); “If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands” (60-61); “I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I will be married to a sponge” (97-98)?

Explain the following: 43. County Palatine. 57. the weeping philosopher. 59. throttle. 72. suited; doublet; round hose; bonnet. 105. Sibylla.
Memorize lines 1-2; 12-17; 54.

Lesson 10

Act I. Scene 3.

At this point begins our study of Shylock’s character. Read the speeches in lines 33-38 and 40-51; then read the Introduction, p. 26. Try to decide whether Shylock’s feeling is thirst for personal revenge or suffering for the wrongs of his race. In connection with lines 43-44 read the Introduction, p. 22. Read the speeches in lines 40-51 and 101-132; then consider the reasonable and the unreasonable causes for Shylock’s hatred of Antonio. Do lines 57-59 show any good quality in Shylock? What attitude and manner does Antonio display in this scene? Do lines 125-126 seem consistent with Antonio’s character as we have seen it in Act I? Discuss the probability of the agreement in lines 143-146 being made. Why is Bassanio so much more distrustful of Shylock’s bond than is Antonio? (146-150) Upon what does Antonio base his assurance? (151-155) Is Shylock’s argument (156-165) convincing? Was Bassanio
A STUDY OF THE PLAY

fully won over to favor the bond? (175) Do you believe Antonio was fully won over? (176–177) What is now your feeling toward Shylock? Is he eager to torture Antonio? Show how shrewdly he has won his way.

Explain the following: 1. Value of a ducat. 12. a good man. 17. in supposition. 18. Tripolis; location. 20. the Rialto. 46. catch him upon the hip. 107. gaberdine. 136. doit.

Memorize line 94.

Lesson 11

ACT II. SCENE 1 AND SCENE 2. Lines 1–32.

(1) Scene 1. Why does Morocco make the statement in line 1? Read Morocco's two speeches (1–12; 22–38) and notice whether he devotes the time to self-praise or to praise of Portia. How would this affect his cause as a suitor? How much does Portia seem to favor him? Is she sincerely complimenting him? What quality in Morocco is shown in lines 30–31? Why should the requirement in lines 38–42 have been made in the father's will? Why do they go to the temple? (44).

Explain the following: 17. scanted. 24. scimitar. 25. Sophy. 32. Hercules and Lichas. 35. Alcides.

(2) Scene 2. Lines 1–32. Notice the contrast between the types of character here introduced and those in the previous scenes. Is anything gained by picturing such a variety of characters? Have you heard of any ways in which Launcelot, as the part is acted on the stage, represents Conscience and the Fiend? What is the meaning of via? (11) What opinion does Launcelot express regarding his father's honesty? (15–17). What finally brings him to a decision regarding running away?

Write these 32 lines as a play in one act and one scene, giving your play a title, indicating the dramatic personae and the setting, and properly writing out the individual speeches.

Lesson 12

ACT II. SCENE 2. Lines 33–end.

Is Launcelot wilfully disrespectful to his aged father? (37) Is he an ignorant boy? (60–65; 163–164) In what sense does he use the word father in line 61? Explain the joke in lines
56–57; also that in lines 77–78. What Bible incident in the life of Jacob does line 79 remind you of? What gives Gobbo the first inkling that this youth may be his son? How does Launcelot fool his father so that the father thinks him changed? (94–96) Compare Launcelot’s opinion of Shylock (24, 106, 150–152) with that he has of Bassanio. (110–111) Do you sympathize with his feeling toward them? Why does Launcelot say he would run so far? (111) Launcelot and Gobbo stand back to back in that part of the scene beginning line 114, and they swing about as they speak. What does Launcelot mean in line 134 by frutify? What leads Bassanio to say what he does in line 142? What does Gobbo mean in line 144 by defect? Explain why this might be called a malapropism. What do lines 194–195 show as to the table manners of men in Shakespeare’s time? Does Bassanio think Gratiano will be true to his promise to avoid garrulousness? (199).

Explain the following: 36–37. sand-blind; gravel-blind. 45. God’s sonties. 63. the Sisters Three. 104. set up my rest. 131. cater-cousins. 162. simple line of life.

Lesson 13

ACT II. SCENE 3–4.

(1) SCENE 3. How do you learn from the text who Jessica is? What do you imagine to be her age? Find in the scene all the evidences as to the nature of the home life of Shylock and Jessica. From the picture of Launcelot in the previous scene can you imagine why Jessica called him a “merry devil?” (2) Does Jessica give any good reason for her criticism of her father? To what one criticism does she limit herself? Does she lack conscience? (16–17) What do you imagine had been Shylock’s treatment of her? Do you blame her for what, in the last lines of the scene, she contemplates doing? What do you think occasioned Launcelot’s deep feeling? (10–14) Did the present Jessica gave him (4) have anything to do with it? Explain what he means by saying: “Tears exhibit my tongue.” (10) How has this scene advanced the plot?

(2) SCENE 4. What was the masque like? (See Introduction, p. 23). Find the reference to this masque at the end of Scene 2. Why is Lorenzo so much excited over the coming masque?
Has Lorenzo had any previous correspondence with Jessica? (12) Where have we heard of Lorenzo before? What is he doing at this time? Where is he visiting? (Scene 3. Line 5). Does Launcelot get double pay as messenger? (Compare Line 18 with Scene 3. line 4). How does the scene show the closeness of the friendship between Lorenzo and Gratiano? Is Lorenzo fair to Jessica in revealing their secrets to Gratiano? How did Lorenzo’s closing speech help the audience of Shakespeare’s time to grasp the meaning of the plot?

Explain the following: 6. quaintly ordered. 10. break up this. 23. marry.

Lesson 14

Act. II. Scene 5.


Explain the following: 18. to-night. 25. Black-Monday. 35. foppery. 45. patch.

Lesson 15

Act II. Scene 6.

This scene continues the story begun in what previous scene? How much later is it in the day? (34, 63) Whose house is referred to in line 1? Why called a “pent-house?” How does Gratiano’s speech (8–19) foreshadow the coming elopement? Paraphrase lines 14–15; 35; 36–37; 47; 49–50. Can you find any excuse for the theft of Shylock’s jewels? Was not this jewelry her lawful dowry? Would she have gained it otherwise? Can you find any excuse for her desertion of her father? Which do you blame the more,—Jessica or her father? (Consult the
Introduction, page 32.) Has Jessica evidenced the three characteristics given by Lorenzo in lines 53–55? What in nature accounts for the unexpectedly early sailing of Bassanio? (64–65) How does this speech of Antonio serve to turn our thoughts again to the main plot of the play? Why doesn’t Shakespeare continue with the details of the masque? Why is Gratiano so anxious to sail? (66–67) Do lines 40 and 66 suggest to your mind modern street lights and telephones?

Explain the following: 5. Venus’ pigeons. 7. obliged faith. Memorize lines 36–37.

Lesson 16

Act II. Scene 7.

Look back to the end of Scene I and see if you can discover any reason why this scene was not placed directly after that scene. With what previous impression of the Prince do you begin the study of this scene? Picture fully the setting of this scene. What curtains are referred to in line 1? Would lines 11–12 indicate that the Prince was not fully informed as to the conditions of the choice? In your own words explain the reason for Morocco’s rejection of the lead casket and of the silver one, and for his choice of the gold one. What impression do you get of him from lines 32–33? Is Portia sincere in Scene I. Lines 20–22, and in her gracious words in this scene, or in her manner merely affected? Does her last speech in this scene throw a different light on this question? What objection would she have to Morocco? What do you think his greatest fault? How far is it from Morocco to Venice? Why had he come all this way? How do you suppose he had learned of Portia? (38–47) What did the gold casket contain? Have you heard line 65 quoted differently? Why would there have been no need of the “scroll” in the right casket? (70–72).

Explain the following: 41. The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds. 51. cerecloth.

Memorize line 65.

Lesson 17

Act II. Scene 8.

What in the first speeches would lead to the conclusion that it is now the second day of the play? What does this scene bring
out regarding the escape of Jessica and Lorenzo? (6-11) regarding Shylock’s feeling upon discovering this? (12-22) regarding the loss of a ship? (28-30) regarding Antonio’s feeling toward Bassanio? (36-50) What troubles Shylock most? (12-22) Do you feel any sympathy for him? Compare 23-24 and 2 Kings: ii. 23-24. Are children of to-day any different? Why, upon hearing of Jessica’s escape, did Shylock run down to the wharf? (4-5) Why did the duke join him? Had Shylock suspicion of Antonio? Are we expected to conclude that the ship that is reported lost is Antonio’s? Does the scene lessen our regard for Shylock? Does it heighten our regard for Antonio? How do you think a Shakespearean audience would receive the scene?

Explain the following: 28. the narrow seas. 48. sensible.

Lesson 18

Act II. Scene 9.

Whence came the Prince of Arragon? What are the three conditions governing the choice of the caskets? (10-15) Which of them have been mentioned before? Where? Why is the first condition necessary in the dramatic unfolding of the play? Would a suitor’s acceptance of these conditions seem to you probable? Why do you suppose they had been made so severe? Is this scene in any way a repetition of that in which Morocco makes his choice? Point out the innovations. Explain the reason for Arragon’s rejection of the two caskets. What characteristic is prominently displayed in his remarks about the gold casket? Compare him with Arragon in sincerity, in his feeling toward Portia, in intellect, in pride, in his regard for outward appearances, and in the way he takes defeat. Why does he choose the silver casket? Do you think of Portia as knowing the contents of the caskets? Would line 52 indicate a previous knowledge of the contents? How does the motto on the silver casket apply to this particular casket? From the way she addresses her servant (84) what mood should you judge Portia is in? Can you find other evidence of this mood? Would you know from the servant’s words (85-93) who is approaching? How does the closing line of the scene prepare us for what is to follow? Do we know which casket he is to choose? Should
more than three choices have been shown on the stage? More than two? Has Nerissa any reason for showing such a keen interest in Bassanio’s fortune?

Explain the following: 3. election. 26. fond eye. 27. martlet. 28. in the weather. 29. casualty. (compare with the use to-day in war reports) 31. jump. 54. schedule.

Lesson 19

Act III. Scene 1.

Find in Act I. Scene 3 the same words that are used here in line 1. Is there evidence that this occurs at a later time than were the previous scenes? Do lines 8–9 remind you of any habits you have known old people to have? Explain the figure of speech in lines 11–12. Explain the jest in lines 38–41. In what senses does Shylock use the word prodigal in speaking of Antonio? (44) In the speech beginning line 52 how many times does Shylock use the word “revenge?” Read in the Introduction (page 26) the interpretation of Shylock’s character and then study this speech to find his motive in so vehement a denunciation of Antonio. What would be the difference in our interpretation of the speech if we tried to view it in the light of Shakespeare’s time? What do we learn of the extent and character of Shylock’s business? (54–56) Why does Antonio wish to see Salanio and Salarino? (74) Would the speech beginning line 83 indicate that Shylock has no love for Jessica, or is money the sole object of his affection? Or is it her disloyalty to her race that is in the background of his mind? What is his reason for prizing the turquoise? (121) Can you find any pathos in the speech? Evidently Tubal has been where? (108) Recall the rumors we have had of the loss of ships that are now confirmed by Tubal’s news. (100, 104) Notice the alternation of good and bad news reported by Tubal. Is Tubal serious or is he just playing with Shylock’s feelings by this alternation? If serious, is he skilfully leading up to a climax? What is the climax? “Bespeak the officer a fortnight before” what? (126) How does Shylock’s appointment to go to the synagogue affect our opinion of him?

Explain the following: 4. Locate the Goodwins. 9. knapped ginger. 45. smug. 121. Value of the turquoise to one in Shakespeare’s time.
Lesson 20

Act III. Scene 2. *Lines 1–148.*

What effect do the expressions of love between Portia and Bassanio have on the interest in the coming choice of a casket? Has the knowledge of the previous choices lessened the interest the audience feels in this third choice? Can you find any evidences of Portia’s playful nature? Find the line in which she tells Bassanio that she knows which is the right casket. Also the lines in which she expresses confidence that Bassanio will make the right choice. Does Portia’s desire that Bassanio delay indicate any fears that he may choose wrongly? Why is Bassanio so anxious to make the choice at once? Show how the song (63–72) is intended to hint to Bassanio what casket he should choose. Have the other suitors been given any assistance? In giving this aid is Portia untrue to her father? Would the other suitors have been influenced by this song? What effect do Bassanio’s words show that it had on him? Can you apply his sermon (73–107) to our life of to-day? How has Shakespeare changed the form in lines 108–114 to show Portia’s emotion? Does the sight of Portia’s portrait (115) assure Bassanio that he has chosen the right casket?


Memorize lines 81–82.

Lesson 21

Act III. Scene 2. *Lines 149–end.*

Find in Portia’s speech (149–174) the evidences of her humility; of her submissiveness to Bassanio. Would the reference to her knowledge of languages in Act I. Scene 2. Line 68 seem consistent with what she says here in line 159? What evidence of learning does she later show in the court scene of Act IV? What is the condition on which the ring is given? (171–174) the vow with which it is accepted? (183–185) What is there in Gratiano’s speech (197–209) that explains the keen interest Nerissa had shown in Bassanio’s fate? (Act II. Scene
9. Line 100) Why had Nerissa kept it secret from Portia? Contrast Gratiano’s reception of Jessica and Lorenzo (214) with Portia’s. (220) How chance they to be here? (221–225) Had Salerio any purpose in urging them to join him? (227–228; 280–286) Was it a necessary part of Shakespeare’s plan, to have these characters in some way brought together? What has occupied Portia’s attention so that she overlooks her duty as hostess? (233) How is her loyalty to Bassanio shown in her attitude during Bassanio’s reading of the letter? (239–246) Why is Bassanio so seriously disconcerted now? (248–259) Locate the countries mentioned in lines 264–265. Is Jessica’s testimony as to her father’s determination (280–286) to have revenge so tainted by prejudice as to be unreliable? What do you now believe to be Shylock’s motive? Does Portia really regard the debt as a trifle? (295) Why haven’t Antonio’s friends supplied him the money? In what humorous sense did Portia speak in lines 309? Why must it not be taken literally? What favorable impression has this scene given us of Portia? of Bassanio? of Antonio? What unfavorable impression of Jessica? of Gratiano?

Explain the following: 200. intermission. 232. estate. 237. we are the Jasons. 263. hit. 267. merchant-marring rocks. 269. discharge. 308. cheer.

Lesson 22

Act III. Scene 3–5.

Scene 3.

Granting that the Elizabethan stage had no scenery, how would the audience know that this scene was a street in Venice? What personal grievance has Shylock against Antonio? (2, 6) Why has Antonio thus loaned money? (22–24) Why has he little hope of a favorable outcome of the trial? (27–31) Why does Antonio especially desire to see Bassanio? (35–36) What has the scene shown us regarding Antonio’s situation? his courtesy? his mental condition? his attitude toward Bassanio? toward Shylock? How does the scene prepare us for the coming court scene?

Explain the following: 9. fond. 32. bated.
Scene 4.

Is Portia right in her statement regarding the effects of intimate friendship? (11–15) Has she worried about her expenditure of money? (19–21) Would Lorenzo seem to you a trustworthy guardian of Portia’s property (24–26)? Has Portia any excuse for telling a falsehood about her plans? (26–32) Have her plans been fully made? (76–81) Does line 51 give too broad a hint of her plot? Why does Shakespeare have Jessica and Lorenzo leave the stage when they do? (44) For what was Padua (49) noted? (See Introduction, p. 20). Can you tell anything of its association with the World War? Why doesn’t Portia now fully inform Nerissa about her plans? (60–82) Is she confident of the success of her plans? What impression do you get of Portia’s ideas regarding men’s manners? (62–76) Does she later display these manners she now describes? Can you tell of any situation in other Shakespeare plays where women dress as men?

Explain the following: 2. conceit. 7. lover. 25. husbandry. 50. cousin. 65. braver. 69. quaint.

Scene 5.

Is this scene introduced merely to indicate a lapse of time while Portia is traveling, or to quiet the minds of the audience prior to a tense dramatic scene, or does it add materially to the facts needed in the plot development? About what have Launcelot and Jessica been talking when the scene opens? Is your sympathy with Launcelot in his criticism of her? Does this scene confirm any previous opinion you may have formed of Jessica? What is her attitude toward her father? toward her race? Explain Launcelot’s joke in line 30. What is Jessica’s opinion of Portia? (55–65) Is Lorenzo displeased at this praise of Portia? or is he speaking humorously (65–66).

Explain the following: 4. agitation. 14. rasher.

Lesson 23

Act IV. Scene 1. Lines 1–117.

Up to this point in the play everything has pointed in what direction as concerns the fate of Antonio? Try to picture the scene in the court, arranging the position of each character.
Read in the Introduction (p. 23) about the Venetian Duke. How do you imagine the Duke would have settled the case if Portia had not taken it up? (3–10) What influence had Shylock and others brought to bear? (35–37; also Act III. Scene 2. Lines 273–279) What does the Duke think of the sincerity of Shylock’s display of cruelty? (17–21) Does it seem in keeping with the dignity and justice of court procedure for the Duke to express an opinion of the plaintiff before the trial opens? (3–6) How must this statement have affected Antonio? What effect did his pleading with Shylock (17–34) have upon Shylock? Does Shylock give any reason for his cruel determination (35–61)? What have we previously decided to be the motive for this strong feeling? With whom, at this time, is your sympathy? Find all the instances in which Shylock emphasizes the law. Is this emphasis due to Shylock’s inability to recognize the higher law of mercy? Is there any difference between the tone of Bassanio’s and Antonio’s speeches to Shylock? (62–82) Is Bassanio lacking in mercy? Consider the force of each of Antonio’s allusions to nature. (70–76) Would Shylock’s answer to Bassanio’s money offer (83–86) indicate that he would give no consideration to money? What does he say to show that he feels his action is absolutely right? (88–102) The Duke’s words (103–106) are meant to prepare us for what later situation? What possible hope has Bassanio in his mind that leads him to say what he does in lines 110–112? Explain Antonio’s language in lines 112–114.

Explain the following: 26. moiety. 32. Tartars.
Memorize lines 113–114a.

Lesson 24


How would the way in which women’s parts were taken on the Shakespearean stage assist in the disguise used by Nerissa and Portia? What other reasons would there be why even the Duke would not suspect them of being disguised? Explain the play on words in line 122. Compare Gratiano’s language in addressing Shylock with that of Bassanio and Antonio, as considered in the last lesson. (125, 127–137) Is Shylock’s lan-
guage in reply in any way different in tone from that he used to the others? Is Bellario’s letter truthful? What must have been the feeling of Antonio and of Shylock at Portia’s first statement? (175–178) Paraphrase the “quality of mercy” speech. (182–203) What purpose do you think Portia had in her plea for mercy? Did she hope it would be effective with Shylock? What was its effect on him? Did the principle underlying the speech apply equally well to Shylock’s assailants? Is Shylock’s tone in his answer to Portia different from that he showed toward Gratiano, Bassanio, and Antonio? What is Portia’s second point of approach? (206) Does she hope this will be effective? or is she simply planning her case so as to prevent Shylock from later claiming any money payment? or is she aiming to seemingly establish one more point in Shylock’s favor? Can you see any humor in the situation when Bassanio, in the presence of Portia, makes the money offer? Why does Shylock call Portia a “Daniel come to judgement”? (221) How do you picture Portia’s manner as she speaks in line 222? Has the bond originally allowed a “pound of flesh nearest the merchant’s heart”? (See Act I. Scene 3. Lines 145–146) How do Portia’s dramatic orders (243, 250, 253, 255) add to the tension of the scene? Granted that a surgeon could do nothing to save Antonio, what test of Shylock is Portia making in requiring him to have one present? (255–256) Can you find any humor in the situation presented by the speeches in lines 280–292? Has Shakespeare a purpose in introducing such a situation at this moment of extreme tenseness? Is Portia impatient or is she simply getting a lot of fun out of the situation? What do you think is Nerissa’s feeling? How does Shylock moralize on the situation? (293–296) Does it give us any light on his real attitude toward his daughter? Try to express what you think is now the feeling in the mind of each of the leading characters.

Explain the following: 130–131. What was Pythagoras’ doctrine? 169. difference. 182. strain’d. 195. seasons. 206. discharge. 255. on your charge. 294. stock of Barrabas.

Memorize lines 182–200a.
Lesson 25


Now comes a swift turn in affairs. Shylock has repeatedly laid emphasis upon “the law”. Look back to find all the instances of this. Now Portia, using the very same weapon Shylock has wielded, insistence on the exact interpretation of the law, turns the tables. She brings forward three legal points: (1) lines 303–310, (2) 323–330, (3) 345–354. The first two are often criticized as mere quibbles. How do they fail to conform to the spirit of the contract that has been made in the bond? The third is above criticism. Would this alone have sufficed to win the case? Might the first two have been purposely introduced by Portia to match Shylock’s absurd insistence on the minute details of the law? What prevents Shylock from immediately replying to Portia? Imagine Gratiano’s manner and voice in his mocking taunts (311, 315, 321). Does his mockery arouse your sympathy with Shylock? Is Portia merciless in her demands, or is she imitating Shylock’s insistence on the law, or is she aiming to get Shylock into a mood of penitence? Is Shylock to be blamed for the demands he makes for his money (316, 334, 340) when he has struggled so hard all his life to gain it? How do you feel toward Gratiano after his speeches of lines 362–365, 377, 396–398? How does the Duke show his generous spirit? (366–370) Does Shylock’s speech in lines 372–375 further arouse your pity? Is Antonio fair in his three demands of Shylock? (378–388) Is Shylock’s statement “I am content” (392) said submissively, or is he simply exhausted? Is there any ray of hope left him? Do you suppose he is really sick? (394) Could Nerissa have drawn up a deed? (392) Have “deeds of mercy” (200) been rendered to Shylock?

Lesson 26

Act IV. Scene 1. Lines 399–end; Act IV. Scene 2.

Scene 1. Lines 399–end.

It is held by many that the play should come to a conclusion at this point, since in their opinion the main plot has now ended. What would you call the main plot? From what you know of the story as it goes on, can you give any reason to justify this
continuance? Is there any plot that is not yet complete? Could Portia, as a stranger, be expected to have enough interest in Antonio to refuse to accept pay for her services? (413–418) How would the acceptance of money have affected her later requests? What different meaning has line 417 to Portia than it would have to Antonio and Bassanio? Can you blame Bassanio for his words in lines 428–429? Does he justify himself by his later words (432–435) or is this a weak excuse? What must Portia’s thoughts have been? Was it not unfair for Portia to press Bassanio so hard, or is she simply enjoying a huge joke? What do later facts reveal her motive to have been?

Explain the following: 410. cope. 412. explain the line. 419. attempt. 443. mad.

Scene 2.

What is the deed? (1) Why will it be welcome to Lorenzo? (4) Why does she wish Gratiano to show Nerissa the way to Shylock’s house? (11) What is the mood of Portia and Nerissa in this scene? Does this short scene add anything to the plot? Why was it not inserted in Scene 1? What do you imagine as happening after the scene ends?

Explain the following: 6. upon more advice.

Lesson 27

Act V. Scene 1. Lines 1–88.

See if you can find lines that tell us the time and place of this scene. What advantages would a modern theatre have in picturing the scene? Are there any word pictures that satisfy us in the absence of scenery? Does the first line indicate in any way the mood the scene will have? How does this scene afford relief from the tenseness of the court scene? Where is Portia supposed to be? (28–32) Has she any reason for traveling at night? Notice the skill Shakespeare shows in leading up from reference to ancient love scenes to that of the present scene. Would you expect either Lorenzo or Jessica to be familiar with these classical stories? In lines 19–20 is Jessica in earnest? Is Lorenzo in earnest in line 22? Does this scene give you a dif-
ferent impression of Lorenzo and Jessica than you have previously had? Find the nature pictures in Lorenzo’s speech (54–65). Is there any reason for Lorenzo’s choice of Diana in referring to mythology? (67) What do you suppose is the effect of music on Jessica? (69) Do you believe Lorenzo’s words in lines 83–88?


Lesson 28

Memorize and also write a paraphrase of lines 54–64; 83–88a in Act V. Scene 1.

Lesson 29

Act V. Scene 1. Lines 89–end.

What change in the appearance of Portia and Nerissa is now apparent? Can you give any illustration of Portia’s proverb in lines 107–108? Why does Portia give such a strict order to her servants? (119–121) Explain Bassanio’s compliment to Portia. (127–128) What would the cordiality with which Portia welcomes Bassanio indicate as to the seriousness with which she has taken his surrender of the ring? (129–132) Notice Gratiano’s manner in confessing to the surrender of the ring (145–148), and compare it with that shown by Bassanio. (190–196) How does Nerissa’s meaning in what she says in lines 155–156 differ from Gratiano’s interpretation of it in line 157? What is learned regarding Nerissa from Gratiano’s description of the clerk? (159–163) What does Portia mean by saying she would be “mad”? (174) What is the effect of her words upon Bassanio? (175–176) upon the audience’s interest? Does Bassanio imply in line 212 that he had given the ring against his own will? What good trait is shown by his not accusing Antonio of having encouraged the act? Why does Portia so speedily assure Antonio there is no feeling against him? (225) What must
have been the effect of Bassanio's pleading (226–229) upon Portia's efforts to feign anger? Show how the play ends happily for all.


Lesson 30

General Questions Upon The Play

Is the play a comedy or a tragedy? Why? (See Introduction, p. 12). Briefly outline the different plots connected with the caskets, the bond, the rings, and the love story of Lorenzo and Jessica. In which character have you been most deeply interested? Why? Does the play end happily for all? Should a story or a play always end happily? Why? Can it be a tragedy and end happily? What does the play show that might be an argument for regarding Shylock as unworthy of our sympathy? (II. 3. 1–2; III. 1. 52. etc; III. 1. 87. etc; IV. 1. 4–5; 127). As deserving our pity? (II. 3. 20–21; II. 6. 49–50; III. 1. 63–72) (Read the Introduction, p. 26.) Regarding Portia's education see I. 2. 66–69; and IV. 1. 155. Bassanio gives us a description of her (I. 1. 161–172). You can find several illustrations of her wit, as in the ring episode and in her caustic comments on her different suitors. Where does she display her lovable qualities? her dignity? her light-heartedness? her religious nature? her ability as a speaker? her use of flashing scorn? (See Introduction, p. 27). Find in the play the different explanations suggested for Antonio's sadness? What is your explanation? How does he show unselfishness? scorn? tenderness? loyalty? (See Introduction, p. 31). Show the sincere frankness of Bassanio in presenting his cause to Antonio; his lack of charity in dealing with Shylock and with Gratiano; his sincerity and truthfulness in the ring episode; his good sense as shown in the choice of caskets. (See Introduction, p. 32.) How was Jessica disloyal to her father? to her religion? Can you suggest any instances of her displaying frivolity? Had she
any serious nature? Was she excusable for her follies? Why? Would you take an intermediate ground, as does Hudson (See Introduction, p. 32) or have you a positive opinion either in sympathy with Jessica or in criticism of her? Find instances to justify Bassanio’s saying that Gratiano talked “an infinite deal of nothing.” What good purpose had he in so gayly talking on in an endless stream? What purpose did Shakespeare have in introducing such a character in the play? (See Introduction, p. 33). Why is Nerissa admirably suited to be the companion of Gratiano? Show instances where she displays wit; playfulness; caustic scorn; a strong will; talkativeness. (See Introduction, p. 34).
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