

Act 1, Scene 2 Belmont. A room in Portia's house

(PORTIA and NERISSA.)

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose nor refuse my own husband?
So is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA

He doth nothing but talk of his horse. I am much afeard his mother played false with a smith.*

NERISSA

Then there is the County Palatine.

PORTIA

He doth nothing but frown.
I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these.
God defend me from these two!

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Why he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, and a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine. If a throstle sing, he falls straight a capering; he will fence with his own shadow. If I should marry him, I should marry twenty husbands.

mother played false with a smith - mother was unfaithful to the father with a blacksmith

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him.

He is a proper man's picture,* but who can converse with a dumb show?

How oddly he is suited!* I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behavior everywhere.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

Very vilely in the morning when he is sober, and most vilely in the afternoon when he is drunk.

When he is best he is a little worse than a man, and when he is worst he is little better than a beast.

NERISSA

If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket,

you should refuse to perform your father's will if you should refuse to accept him.

PORTIA

Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish* wine on the contrary* casket.

I will do anything, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

(A servant delivers a note to NERISSA.)

NERISSA

You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords. They have acquainted me with their determinations, which is indeed to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit.

PORTIA

I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable,*

for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence.

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

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

proper man's picture - handsome, *suit*ed - dressed (the English were known for their eclectic tastes in fashion), *Rhenish* - white German wine, *contrary* - wrong, *reasonable* - (because the price for choosing incorrectly is never marrying)

(Enter a SERVANT.)

How now? What news?

SERVANT

The five strangers seek for you, madam, to take their leave;
and there is a forerunner come from a sixth, the Prince of Morocco,
who brings word the prince his master will be here to night.

PORTIA

If I could bid the sixth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other five farewell,
I should be glad of his approach.
Come, Nerissa.

(Exeunt.)

Act 3, Scene 1 Venice. A street

(SALANIO and SALERIO.)

SALERIO

Now what news on the Rialto?

SALANIO

Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow sea—the Goodwins* I think they call the place, a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried.

SALERIO

I would it might prove the end of his losses.

SALANIO

Let me say 'amen' lest the devil cross my prayer—for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

(Enter SHYLOCK.)

SALERIO

How now, Shylock? What news among the merchants?

SHYLOCK

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

SALERIO

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

SHYLOCK

She is damned for it.

SALANIO

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

SHYLOCK

My own flesh and blood to rebel!

SALERIO

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.

SALANIO

But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?*

Goodwins - sandy shoals off the English (Kentish) coast,

but...no - in an attempt to get information, Salanio foolishly agitates Shylock by mentioning Antonio

SHYLOCK

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

SALERIO

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

SHYLOCK

To bait fish withal. If it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge.
He 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.)

SERVANT

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

SALERIO

We have been up and down to seek him.

(Enter TUBAL.)

SALANIO

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

(Exeunt SALANIO, SALERIO and SERVANT.)

SHYLOCK

How now, Tubal! What news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter?

TUBAL

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

smug upon the mart - arrogant (stylish) to the market,
usurer - one who lends money at an excessively or unlawfully high rate of interest,
courtesy - act of generosity, **hindered** - prevented me from earning,
dimensions - bodily parts, **better the instruction** - teach revenge better than Christians

SHYLOCK

Why, there, there, there, there! A diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt!
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 on my shoulders, no sighs but of my breathing,
no tears but of my shedding.

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

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

TUBAL

Hath an argosy cast away coming from Tripolis.

SHYLOCK

I thank God, I thank God! Is't true? Is't true?

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

I thank thee, good Tubal. Good news, good news! Ha, ha! Heard in Genoa?

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

Thou stickest a dagger in me. I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting, fourscore ducats!

TUBAL

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

SHYLOCK

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

TUBAL

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

hearsed - loaded in the vehicle to carry her to her grave,

fourscore - eighty, *divers* - various; several, *break* - go bankrupt

SHYLOCK

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

TUBAL

But Antonio is certainly undone.

SHYLOCK

Nay, that's true, that's very true.

Go, Tubal, fee me an officer;* bespeak him a fortnight before.*

I will have the heart of him if he forfeit, for were he out of Venice I can make what merchandise I will.*

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

(Exeunt.)

officer - arresting officer,

bespeak him a fortnight before - engage his services two weeks before Antonio's bond is due,

make what merchandise I will - drive what bargains I wish