

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 muttens, 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
 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 scanted 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 thee, lady. But, alas the while!
 If Hercules and Lichas play at dice
 Which is the better man, the greater throw
 May turn by fortune from the weaker hand:
 So is Alcides beaten by his page;
 And so may I, blind fortune leading me,

Miss that which one unworthier may attain,
And die with grieving.

Por. You must take your chance,
And either not attempt to choose at all
Or swear before you choose, if you choose wrong 40
Never to speak to lady afterward
In way of marriage: therefore be 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 10
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 20
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 30
me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the
more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels
are at your command; I will run.

Enter Old GOBBO, with a basket

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

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

Gob. Master young gentleman, I pray you, 40
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, 't will 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? 5
[*Aside*] 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? 6

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. 7

Laun. Do I look like a cudgel or a hovel-post, a staff or a prop? 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, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun. Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you

might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father 80 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 at the length 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 90 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 100 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 110 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? 150

Laun. Serve you, sir.

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

Bass. I know thee well; thou hast obtain'd thy suit:

Shylock thy master spoke with me this day,
And hath preferr'd thee, if it be preferment
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun. The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir: you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough, 160

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

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

Laun. Father, in. I cannot get a service, no; 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 170 widows and nine maids is a simple coming-in for one man: and then to 'scape drowning thrice, and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a

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.*]

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 behaviour
I be misconstrued in the place I go to
And lose my hopes.

Gra. Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then, 200
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Nay more, while grace is saying, hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say "amen,"
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam, never trust me more.

Bass. Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra. Nay, but I bar to-night: you shall not
gauge me
By what we do to-night.

Bass. No, that were pity:
I would entreat you rather to put on 210
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well:
I have some business.

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

SCENE III — *The same.* 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 something 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 — *The same. A street*

Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO

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

Gra. We have not made good preparation.

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

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

Lor. 'T is 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, 't is 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 ²⁰
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. 'T is good we do so.

[*Exeunt Salar. and Salan.*]

Gra. Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

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

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

What gold and jewels she is furnish'd with,

What page's suit she hath in readiness:

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

It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:

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

Laun. Why, Jessica!

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

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

Enter JESSICA

Jes. Call you? what is your will?

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-Wednesday was four year, in the afternoon.

Shy. What, are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:

Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum
And the vile squealing of the wry-neck'd fife, 30
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street
To gaze on Christian fools with varnish'd faces,
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements:
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
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 40
at window, for all this;

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

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

Jes. His words were "Farewell mistress;"
nothing else.

Shy. The patch is kind enough, but a huge
feeder;

Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild-cat; drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste 50
His 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 the 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
hereafter.

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 cer-
tainty,

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 30
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 't is 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. 40

Jes. What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.

Why, 't is an office of discovery, love;

And I should be obscured.

Lor. So are you, sweet,
Even in the lovely garnish of a boy.
But come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are 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. 5
[*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?
'T is 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 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 de-
serves;"

This third, dull lead, with warning all as blunt,
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he
hath."

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

Por. The one of them contains my picture,
prince:

If you choose that, then I am yours withal.

Mor. Some god direct my judgement! Let me
see;

I will survey the inscriptions back again.

What says this leaden casket?

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

Must give: for what? for lead? hazard for lead?
This casket threatens. Men that hazard all
Do it in hope of fair advantages:

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross; 20
I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?
 "Who chooseth me shall get as much as he de-
 serves."

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 afraid 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? 'T were damna-
 tion

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 England
 A coin that bears the figure of an angel
 Stamped in gold, but that's insculp'd upon;
 But here an angel in a golden bed
 Lies all within. Deliver me the key:
 Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

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 in scroll'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 SALARINO 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 : 30
I thought upon Antonio when he told me;
And wish'd in silence that it were not his.

Salan. You were best to tell Antonio what you
hear;

Yet do not suddenly, for it may grieve him.

Salar. A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.
I saw Bassanio and Antonio part :
Bassanio told him he would make some speed
Of his return : he answer'd, "Do not so ;
Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time ; 40
And for the Jew's bond which he hath of me,
Let it not enter in your mind of love :
Be merry, and employ your chiefest thoughts
To courtship and such fair ostents of love
As shall conveniently become you there :"
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. 50
I pray thee, let us go and find him out
And quicken his embraced heaviness
With some delight or other.

Salar. Do we so. [*Exeunt.*]

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

Enter NERISSA with a Servitor

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

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

*Flourish of cornets. Enter the PRINCE OF ARRAGON,
PORTIA, and their trains*

Por. Behold, there stand the caskets, noble prince:

If you choose that wherein I am contain'd,
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 enjoind by oath to observe three things:

First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 't was 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. 30

I will not choose what many men desire,
Because I will not jump with common spirits
And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.
Why, then to thee, thou silver treasure-house;
Tell me once more what title thou dost bear:
"Who chooseth me shall get as much as he
deserves:"

And well said too; for who shall go about
To cozen fortune and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume
To wear an undeserved dignity. 40
O, that estates, degrees and offices
Were not 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 deservings!
"Who chooseth me shall have as much as he deserves."

Did I deserve no more than a fool's head?
Is that my prize? are my deserts no better?

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, 80
They have the wisdom by their wit to lose.

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

Por. Come, draw the curtain, Nerissa.

Enter a 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 regrets,
To wit, besides commends and courteous breath, 90
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-spurrer 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. 100

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

[*Exeunt.*]