

The Merchant of Venice

3.1

Enter Solanio and Salerio

SOLANIO

Now, what news on the Rialto?

SALERIO

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. 5

SOLANIO

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±± 10

SALERIO

Come, the full stop. 15

SOLANIO

Ha, what sayst thou? Why, the end is he hath lost a ship.

SALERIO

I would it might prove the end of his losses.

SOLANIO

Let me say amen betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer±± 20

Enter Shylock

for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew. 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. 25

SOLANIO

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

SHYLOCK

She is damned for it. 30

SALERIO

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

SHYLOCK

My own flesh and blood to rebel!

SOLANIO

Out upon it, old carrion, rebels it at these years?

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

SALERIO There is more difference between thy flesh and 35
hers than between jet and ivory; more between your
bloods than there is between red wine and Rhenish.
But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had
any loss at sea or no?

SHYLOCK There I have another bad match. A bankrupt, a 40
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 45
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 50
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, 55
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 60
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 65
example? Why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I
will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the
instruction.

Enter a Man from Antonio

MAN (to Solanio and Salerio) Gentlemen, my master Antonio
is at his house and desires to speak with you both. 70

SALERIO We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter Tubal

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

Exeunt Solanio and Salerio, with Antonio's Man

SHYLOCK How now, Tubal? What news from Genoa? Hast thou found my daughter? 75

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

SHYLOCK Why, there, there, there, there. A diamond gone cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfurt. The curse never fell upon our nation till now±±I never felt it till 80 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 85 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. 90

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 it true, is it true? 95

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, one 100 night fourscore ducats.

SHYLOCK Thou stick'st 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 105 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 110

daughter for a monkey.

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. 115

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 120
our synagogue, Tubal.

Exeunt severally