

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed  
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods  
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate  
310 Unto the state of Venice.

**Gratiano**

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

**Shylock**

Is that the law?

**Portia**

Thyself shalt see the act,

For, as thou urgest justice, be assur'd  
Thou shalt have justice more than thou desir'st.

**Gratiano**

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

**Shylock**

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

**Bassanio**

Here is the money.

**Portia**

Soft!

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

**Gratiano**

O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

**Portia**

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 tak'st more,  
325 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,  
330 Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

**Gratiano**

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

**Portia**

Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

**Shylock**

Give me my principal, and let me go.

**Bassanio**

335 I have it ready for thee; here it is.

312 *act*: the legal act confirming the  
law.

313 *urges*: demand.

321 *upright*: honest.

326 *substance*: weight.

328 *scruple*: a weight unit (used by  
the old apothecaries) of 20 grains.

329 *estimation*: weight.

332 *on the hip*: at my mercy.

334 *principal*: the original sum  
borrowed.



Portia

He hath refus'd it in the open court:  
He shall have merely justice, and his bond.

Gratiano

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

Shylock

340 Shall I not have barely my principal?

Portia

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

Shylock

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

Portia

Tarry, Jew:

345 The law hath yet another hold on you.  
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
If it be prov'd against an alien  
That by direct or indirect attempts  
He seek the life of any citizen,  
350 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.  
355 In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st;  
For it appears by manifest proceeding,  
That indirectly, and directly too,  
Thou hast contriv'd against the very life  
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurr'd  
360 The danger formerly by me rehears'd.  
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

Gratiano

Beg that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself—  
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,  
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;

365 Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's charge.

Duke

That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,  
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,  
370 Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

question: to argue.

enacted: decreed.

party: person (Portia uses the  
correct legal term, still used today).

contrive: plot.

privy coffer: treasury.

'gainst all other voice: no matter  
what anyone else says.

manifest proceeding: quite clearly  
from what has happened.

rehears'd: declared.

general state: general use of the  
state.

And if you are humble this may  
be reduced to a fine.



371 *not for Antonio*: the money due to Antonio will not be reduced.

377 *halter*: rope to hang himself with.  
*gratis*: free of interest.

378 *So please*: if it pleases.

379 *quit*: be satisfied with.  
*for*: instead of.

380 *so*: if.

381 *in use*: on trust — to use as Antonio now describes.

385 *presently*: immediately.

387 *all he dies possess'd*: all that he owns when he dies.

389 *recant*: withdraw.

396 *god-fathers*: these take the responsibility for seeing that the baptized child is properly educated in the Christian faith; 'god-fathers' was also a joking name for the members of a jury — a body of twelve men who were needed to pass sentence on a criminal. Gratiano suggests that a jury would have condemned Shylock to death.

**Portia**

Ay, for the state; not for Antonio.

**Shylock**

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

**Portia**

What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

**Gratiano**

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

**Antonio**

So please my lord the duke, and all the court,  
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,  
380 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,  
385 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  
390 The pardon that I late pronounced here.

**Portia**

Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou say?

**Shylock**

I am content.

**Portia**

Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

**Shylock**

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

**Duke**

Get thee gone, but do it.

**Gratiano**

In christening shalt thou have two god-fathers;  
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,  
To bring thee to the gallows, not to the font.  
[Exit Shylock]

**Duke**

Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.



**Portia**

400 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,  
405 For, in my mind, you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke, Merchants, and Officers of the Court*]

**Bassanio**

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

**Antonio**

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

**Portia**

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

**Bassanio**

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

**Portia**

You press me far, and therefore I will yield.  
Give me your gloves, I'll wear them for your sake ;  
425 And (for your love) I'll take this ring from you.  
Do not draw back your hand ; I'll take no more,  
And you in love shall not deny me this.

**Bassanio**

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

**Portia**

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

meet: necessary.

your leisure serves you not: you  
do not have time to spare.

gratify: show your gratitude to.

bound: indebted.

in lieu whereof: in payment for

freely: most willingly.

cope: reward.

pains: trouble.

over and above: in addition.

mercenary: interested in money.

know: recognize.

of force: it is necessary.

attempt you further: try harder  
to persuade you.

some remembrance: something to  
remind you.

tribute: token of respect.

Not to refuse my request, and  
to forgive me for making it.

You press me far: you are very  
insistent.

for your sake: to acknowledge  
your politeness.

for your love: to acknowledge  
your love.

And now I really do want it.



434 *by proclamation*: by public announcement that I will buy the most expensive ring in Venice.

435 *for this*: i.e. this ring.

436 *liberal in offers*: generous only in making offers (not in fulfilling them).

442 *'scuse*: excuse.

445 *hold out enemy*: be angry with you.

449 *'gainst*: more highly than.  
*commandement*: the extra *è* is for the sake of the rhythm.

#### Act 4 Scene 2

Gratiano gives Bassanio's ring to Portia, who is still disguised as the young lawyer and accompanied by Nerissa as her 'clerk'. Nerissa plans to get her own ring from Gratiano.

1 *Inquire . . . out*: find out where the Jew's house is.

*this deed*: the document in which he promises to make Lorenzo his heir.

#### Bassanio

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

435 Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

#### Portia

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

#### Bassanio

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

#### Portia

That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.  
And if your wife be not a mad-woman,  
And know how well I have deserv'd this ring,  
445 She would not hold out enemy for ever,  
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you.  
[Exeunt Portia and Nerissa]

#### Antonio

My Lord Bassanio, let him have the ring:  
Let his deservings and my love withal  
Be valu'd 'gainst your wife's commandement.

#### Bassanio

450 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 thither presently,  
And in the morning early will we both  
455 Fly toward Belmont. Come, Antonio. [Exeunt]

#### Scene 2 Venice. A street

Enter Portia and Nerissa

#### Portia

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



*Enter Gratiano*

**Gratiano**

5 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.

**Portia**

That cannot be.

His ring I do accept most thankfully,  
10 And so, I pray you, tell him: furthermore,  
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

**Gratiano**

That will I do.

**Nerissa**

Sir, I would speak with you.

[*Aside to Portia*] I'll see if I can get my husband's  
ring.

Which I did make him swear to keep for ever.

**Portia**

15 Thou may'st, 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.  
Away, make haste! thou know'st where I will tarry.

**Nerissa**

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

[*Exeunt*]

*upon more advice: having thought  
more about the matter.*

15 *Thou may'st, I warrant: I'm sure  
you will be able to do it.  
old: a lot of.*

18 *tarry: wait.*