

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Lor. (*rising Xs to R C*). That is the voice,
Or I am much deceived, of Portia.

Por. He knows me as the blind man knows
the cuckoo,
By the bad voice. (*They laugh.*)

*Lor.*¹ Dear lady, welcome home.

Por. (*C*). We have been praying for our
husbands' healths,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they returned?

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;²
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you.

(*A tucket sounds off L.*)

Lor. (*L C*). Your husband is at hand; I
hear his trumpet:
We are no tell-tales, madam; fear you not.

Por. (*C*). This night methinks is but the
daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 't is a day.
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.³