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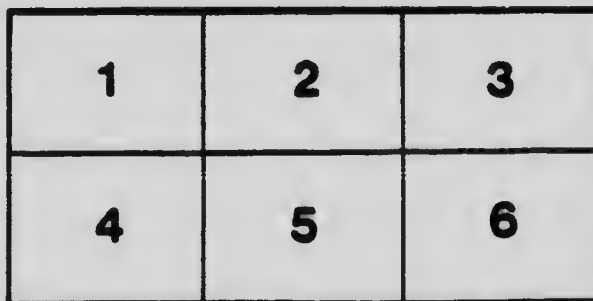
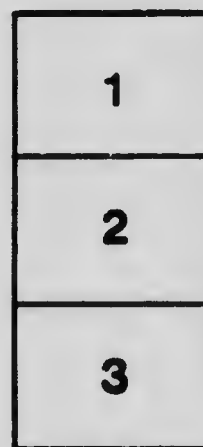
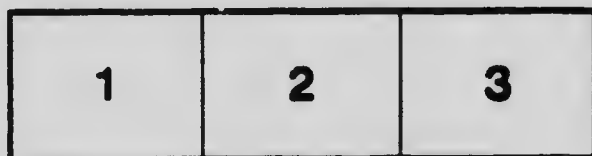
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Shakespeare's Comedy of



THE · MERCHANT · OF · VENICE

with illustrations by

Sir James D. Linton . R.I.



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*THE MERCHANT OF
VENICE*









Shylock and Jessica.

"Fast bind, fast find" (page 51).

Act II. Scene V.

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY OF
THE MERCHANT OF
VENICE



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY
SIR JAMES D. LINTON, R.I



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THE STORY OF 'THE MERCHANT OF VENICE'

IN Venice there lived a young and noble gentleman, Bassanio, who by lavishly spending from a slender purse had reduced his fortunes to a very low ebb. This prodigality, however, was but the excess of a generous nature that endeared him to many, and especially to Antonio, a rich Venetian merchant some few years his elder. The two were fast friends: for Antonio too, though a trader, had large and liberal notions of trade. In particular he abhorred usury, or the lending of money at interest upon other men's necessity; and for this reason he scorned the Jewish money-lenders infesting Venice, and lost no occasion of speaking his mind about them; in requital for which they naturally hated him.

But these same large notions of trading led Antonio to embark his wealth east and west in a number of ventures which—sound though he believed them to be—involved each a separate risk, and together left him for the while with no money to spare. For himself, his own tastes being simple he needed little and could well afford to wait. Nevertheless, and until his ventures should come safe home to port, he could not help feeling restless, anxious, melancholy. To his friends who rallied him on his sadness and accused him of letting his thoughts wander overseas in the track of his rich argosies, he answered that he had no fears for them; his eggs (as we say) were not in one basket; his sadness was not on account of his merchandise. And yet he was sad, as though overcast by the shadow of some calamity; why or wherefore he could not tell; it puzzled him, as it did them.

While this mood oppressed Antonio, Bassanio had hit on a

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

scheme for repairing his fortunes, and came to tell it to his friend. At Belmont there dwelt a gentlewoman, Portia by name; an heiress, and—setting aside her wealth—as virtuous as she was beautiful; in such sort indeed that suitors flocked to her from all quarters of the world, as though her sunny locks were the veritable Golden Fleece that of old drew Jason and his voyagers in hope to make it their prize. Bassanio had seen her; nay, unless he mistook, her eyes had challenged his, inviting him to be bold and dare to win her. ‘O my Antonio,’ he concluded, ‘had I but the means to furnish me forth, I make no question of my success!’ ‘My fortunes,’ answered Antonio, ‘are all at sea, as you know. I have neither the money nor goods upon which to raise the sum you require. But there remains my credit; and for your sake, Bassanio, I will stretch that to the uttermost to furnish you forth to Belmont, to this fair Portia.’

In their search for a loan the two friends called upon one Shylock, a wealthy Jew, at his house in the Jews’ Quarter, where he dwelt (being a widower) with his only daughter Jessica and a foolish Christian waiting-man named Launcelot Gobbo. This Shylock felt some surprise at being visited by Antonio and more when he learned his errand, to which he listened with a sly, growing satisfaction: for against the merchant he nursed an ancient grudge, hating him in the first place as a Christian, hating him more because he lent out money gratis and so injured the usurers’ market and rate of interest, but most of all hating him as one who never dissembled his contempt for the Jews but was used to rail upon them, and on Shylock in particular in public, on the Rialto, and wherever the merchants congregated to do business. ‘Cursed be my tribe, if I forgive him!’ swore Shylock to himself as he saw, or seemed to see, this enemy delivered into his hands. But he hid this wicked satisfaction from the two friends, and pretended to be pondering only on the sum—three thousand ducats—which Antonio required of him. ‘Three thousand ducats—for three months—and Antonio to be the surety,’ he mused. ‘Well, what do you answer?’ asked Bassanio impatiently. Shylock still appeared to debate with himself. ‘Antonio, to be sure, was a solid

THE STORY

man; as a surety sufficient—yes, no doubt. Still his means were in supposition. He had an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies: gossipsaid moreover on the Rialto—if gossip could be trusted—that he had a third in Mexico, a fourth for England, besides other ventures squandered here and there on the high seas. Ships, after all, were but boards, sailors but men; there were such things as pirates, perils of waters, winds, rocks. . . . Still and notwithstanding, Antonio must be supposed sufficient. . . .’

Antonio, overhearing, had no taste that his credit should be thus ‘hemmed’ over; it offended his pride, and he curtly demanded a ‘yes’ or a ‘no.’

‘I am considering what moneys I have by me,’ pleaded Shylock; ‘and, as near as my memory can guess, I cannot at this moment lay hands on such a round sum as three thousand ducats. But no matter: Tubal, a rich Hebrew of my tribe, will no doubt furnish me. Three thousand ducats—and for three months?’ Again he pretended to ponder. ‘Well, shall we be beholden to you?’ Antonio asked, losing patience. Shylock, starting from these calculations, turned upon him. ‘Signor Antonio,’ he answered, ‘again and again on the Rialto you have railed against me, my moneys and my usuries, and always I have borne your abuse with a patient shrug, since to suffer and be patient is the Jew’s portion. “Unbeliever” you have called me, and “cut-throat dog,” and have spat upon me and spurned me as you would kick an intruding cur across your threshold—and all for using the money which is my own. Can I not do what I will with mine own? . . . Well, now it seems that you need my help—*you*, that have so abused me. Here you come to me and say, “Shylock, lend me money” —*you*, of all men! How am I to answer you? Shall I say, “Hath a dog money? Can a cur lend three thousand ducats?” Or shall I cringe and answer, “Fair sir, only last Wednesday you spat on me; another time you called me a dog; and for these courtesies I will lend you my money.” To this Antonio replied haughtily, ‘For that matter, make no mistake. I am as likely to call you “dog” again; to spit on you, to spurn you again. If you will lend this money, lend it by no means as to a friend but rather,

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

if it please you, as to an enemy; and so, if I break, you may with a better face exact the penalty.' 'Why, look you,' fawned Shylock, 'how you storm! I would be friends with you; would forget the indignities you have put upon me, and supply your need—without interest too.' 'That, if you mean it, were kindness indeed.' 'I do mean it. Come with me to a notary and before him, as in sport between friends, we will sign a bond together. You shall have the money, and I your pledge that if it be not repaid within a certain day, you are to forfeit a pound of flesh, to be cut off from any part of your body I may choose.' 'Content,' Antonio agreed; 'I will sign to that, and moreover thank the Jew for his kindness.'

Bassanio protested that his friend should not seal to any such bond for him; but Antonio laughed and assured him there was no danger. 'Why, fear not, man; within these two months—and that's a month before the bond expires—my ships will bring me home the value of this debt nine times over!' Shylock, overhearing their friendly dispute, cast up eyes and hands towards heaven. 'O father Abraham, what a manner of men are these Christians, whose own hard dealing makes them suspicious of others! Why, tell me this, sir—if the merchant, here, should break his day, what do I stand to gain by exacting the forfeit? A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man, is not worth a pound of beef, of mutton, of goat's flesh even. However, have it as you choose. I would buy his good will, and you have heard my friendly offer. If he will take it, well; if not, I wish you a very good morning.'

The end was that, in spite of Bassanio's uneasiness, Antonio signed the bond and received the money, which he handed to his friend. Thus furnished, Bassanio made haste to array himself and provide a suitable retinue with which to take his passage by ship to Belmont. A merry friend, one Gratiano, had offered to accompany him, and the eve of their departure was to be celebrated by a supper, with a masque to follow it. Even Shylock was bidden to the supper, and accepted; though he knew nothing of the masque—in which, by the way, he would have cut a strange figure.

THE STORY

He had, in fact, and bitterly as he hated these Christians, a deeper cause of grudge against them than he came near to guessing. His daughter Jessica, moping at home in the lonely house in the Jewry, had caught the eye of Lorenzo, another gallant young Venetian and a friend of Bassanio's. Glances had been exchanged, and secret messages followed—the go-between being the lad Launcelot Gobbo, whose cheerfulness in the house had been Jessica's sole relief from the tedium of her life. But now Launcelot came and announced to her that he was leaving the Jew's service for a new master, Lord Bassanio, in whose train he would sail to Belmont. Here was a black prospect for the girl. Henceforth not only would the house be intolerably dull; she would have no one to carry her love messages, and she was very deep in love. In despair she sat down and wrote a last letter for Launcelot to convey. It was to be delivered to Lorenzo at Bassanio's supper; it urged him to carry her off that same night, and instructed him when and how she would be ready.

Something warned Shylock that trouble was brewing. He had evil dreams, or dreams that he regarded as evil. He was in two minds about attending the supper. 'Why should I go?' he asked himself. 'Certainly they have not invited me out of love . . . but yet I'll go, though in hate, to feed at this prodigal Christian's expense.' Jessica and Launcelot both urged him to go. 'And I will not say,' promised the lad, 'but you shall see a masque.'

'What! are there masques?' Shylock turned to his daughter: he had given her the house keys. 'Attend to me, Jessica. Lock up my doors, and let no noise of drums or squeaking of fifes tempt you upstairs to thrust your head out of the casement on the public street to gaze at these Christian fools with varnished masks on their faces. Stop the windows: I would have no sound of shallow foppery enter my sober house. . . . By the staff of Jacob, I have no mind to go to this feast to-night. . . . Yet I will go.'

He gave Jessica some last instructions, with his blessing, and left her, bidding Launcelot run and announce him: which the lad did, but not before whispering to Jessica that he had seen Lorenzo and that Lorenzo would not fail her.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Jessica, thus left in charge, fell to other business than the locking of doors and closing of windows. It was dark by this time, and the hour of tryst drawing near. First she donned boy's attire, then, ransacking the house, filled a casket with all the money and precious stones she could lay hands on, and so waited for her lover. He came by and by, with Gratiano and other friends, all masqued and on their way to Bassanio's feast—all, that is, but Lorenzo. 'Ho! who's within?' he called, after tapping softly at the Jew's door. Jessica thrust open a casement above—'Is it Lorenzo?' 'Lorenzo, and thy love.' 'Here, catch this casket!' She tossed it down, and hastily cramming her pockets with more gold pieces ran downstairs and into his arms. In the darkness and in her boy's dress she might easily pass for a torch-bearer, such as the gallants of the city hired to light them to and from their revels. So Lorenzo escaped with his bride to the canal, where a gondola waited to bear them away. His fellow-guests were met by Antonio with news that there would be no masque that night. Word had been brought to the feasters that the wind had shifted, and Bassanio must hurry on board, for the ship was on the point of sailing. Gratiano, too, must hurry. Aboard the voyagers went in haste; and Shylock returned from the interrupted supper to knock at the door of an empty house and find his daughter flown, having made good—or rather, bad—use of his keys.

We will leave him to his rage and hasten ahead of the ship bearing Bassanio to Belmont. There the lady of his quest, the Portia whom he had described so glowingly to Antonio, dwelt pestered by many suitors. Her father's will had left her an heiress, but on the strangest conditions. These were, that the wooer who would win her must make his choice between three caskets—the first of gold, the second of silver, and the third of lead. One of these contained her portrait, and on the wooer who, daring his fate, chose the right casket, she must perforce bestow her hand. The risk, however, was not to be lightly ventured; for as a condition he had to take an oath that, if he should choose

THE STORY

wrongly, he would never again speak of marriage to any woman ; and this condition when it came to the proof, the most of them had feared to face. A Prince of Naples, a Count of the Palatinate, with several Lords of France, England, Scotland, Saxony, had in turn kissed hands regretfully and bade farewell to the lady, so desirable in every way but so formidably protected. Two suitors only had put their fate to the test—the Princes of Morocco and Arragon, the one a swarthy Moor, the other a proud Spaniard. Each had chosen amiss, and each had taken defeat and dismissal with proud resignation. It was now Bassanio's turn, since he insisted on standing the test. Portia—whose heart had at once gone out to him—was cruelly distraught. Unless he happened to choose aright she could never be his ; therefore she longed for him to choose. But if he chose wrong he was lost to her forever ; therefore she could not persuade him to the ordeal from which her fears recoiled. These dreadful pros and cons she discussed with her waiting-maid Nerissa, who herself was in little better plight, having a fancy of her own for the gay Gratiano, the young suitor's companion. Had it been left to them these ladies would have lived in the present, inventing fresh excuses for delay. ' I pray you, tarry,' pleaded Portia with Bassanio. ' Pause, though it be for a day or two only : since, if you choose wrong, I shall lose your company. Something tells me—but it is not love—that I shall be sorry to lose you. You must not think it is love ; and yet it cannot be dislike : dislike would not counsel so. Lest you should not understand me—and yet a maiden has no tongue but only her thoughts—I say, I would keep you here a month, two months longer before you make venture for me. I could teach you, indeed, how to choose, but that would be dishonourable. That I will never be . . . and yet, without it, you may miss me ! Alas ! your looks have so managed to divide me that one half of me is yours—yes, and the other half yours.—Mine, I should have said ; but mine is yours when—if—I belong to you. Forgive this word-splitting. I am talking, still talking, to weigh and eke out the time.'

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

Her flattering broken speech—so plainly betraying her heart—
inflamed Bassanio. 'Let me choose, then,' he cried; 'for this
suspense is stretching me on the rack!'

'Go, then,' Portia commanded, hardening her courage: 'in
one of the caskets I am locked.' Then as, to the sound of music,
he turned to the shelf on which the three caskets stood, she pressed
a hand to her heart. 'More fearful it is,' she sighed, 'for me to
view the fray than for you to engage in it!'

Bassanio lifted the caskets, one by one, between his hands.
He pondered each, and the inscription on it. On the gold casket
was written—

Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire:

on the silver—

Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves:

while the lead bore this motto—

Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.

This casket made no promise: it merely challenged: nor might
any one warn Bassanio how the others by their promises had
deluded the Princes of Morocco and Arragon; of whom the first,
choosing the gold, had found within it a human skull, typifying
that to many sorrowful men in this world death is of all things
the most desirable; whilst Arragon, unlocking the silver, had read
the value of his deserts in a fool's cap-and-bells. But the blunt
challenge on the leaden casket spoke rather to Bassanio's
adventurous spirit. 'Gold,' he mused, 'is the outward show and
ornament of all corruption; silver the pale drudge in which men
are paid their wages. This lead, that threatens rather than
promises, stirs my spirit, daring it to the test: and here I choose.
May joy wait on my choice!'

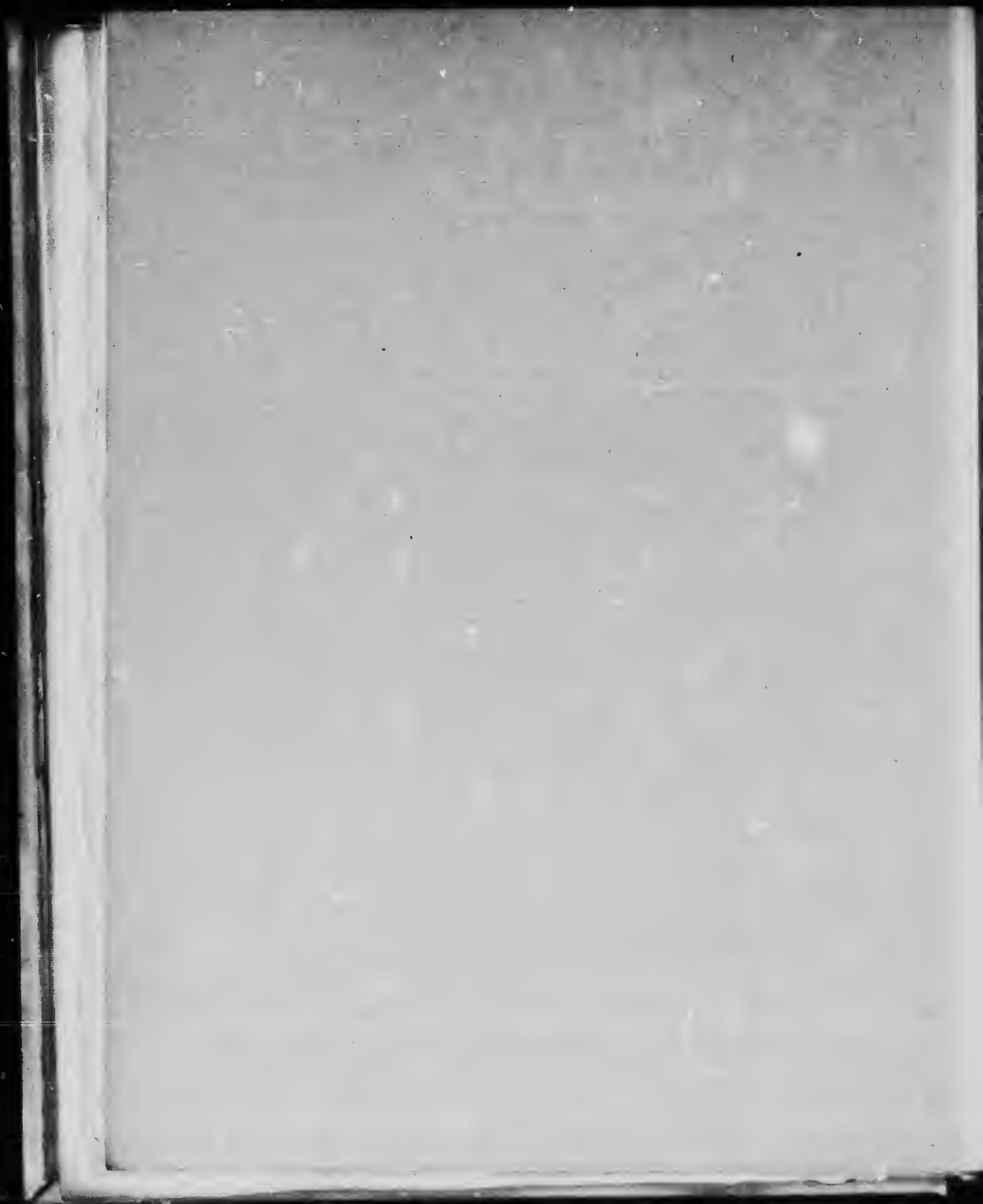
Joy indeed—rapturous joy—had rushed already upon Portia
in a flood, as he laid his hand on the right casket. But he was
bending to unlock it, and did not perceive her agitation; and in
another moment he had joy enough of his own to occupy him

Bassanio.

Act I. Scene I.







THE STORY

when, lifting the lid, he gazed upon his lady's portrait. Beside the portrait lay a scroll, which he plucked out and read :—

You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true !
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll indeed ! Bassanio, still giddy and incredulous of his happiness, turned to Portia to have it ratified.

'My lord Bassanio,' said the heiress with beautiful humility, 'you see me here, such as I am : and for my own sake I would not seek, perhaps, to be much better. But for yours I would be a thousand times fairer than I am, ten thousand times richer, that only in your eyes I might seem above price. In truth the full sum of me is nothing—an unlessoned girl, without schooling or practice; happy in this, that she is not too old to learn; happier, perhaps, that she has the wit whereby to learn; happiest of all, that her spirit is gentle and commits itself to yours to be directed, owning you her lord, her governor, her king. Myself with all that is mine is now converted to you and yours. A moment since I was lord of this fair mansion, master of many servants, queen of myself; and now, now at a stroke, this house, these servants, myself as you see me, are yours, my lord. Look, I give them with this ring! Wear it always; and never until you part with it will I reproach you with the ruin of your love—for that, and no less, the loss of it will spell.'

While she placed the ring on Bassanio's finger, and while, still in a maze of joy, he protested that he would sooner part with life itself than with this dear gift, his friend Gratiano drew near with Nerissa, the waiting-maid, to offer their felicitations. 'My lord and lady,' said Nerissa, 'we have stood by and seen our wishes prosper. It is now our time to cry, good joy. Therefore Good joy my lord and lady!' 'I also wish you all joy,' said Gratiano, 'and with the wish offer a petition—that when the

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wedding is held I may be married at the same time.' 'With all my heart,' laughed Bassanio, 'if you can first get a wife.' 'I thank you, but you have already won her for me: for whilst you were wooing the mistress I wooed the maid, and a hard wooing it was. But at length Nerissa, here, promised to wed me if fortune should give you the Lady Portia.' 'Is this true, Nerissa?' asked Portia. 'Madam, it is, so it please you.' 'Our feast,' said Bassanio, smiling, 'shall be honoured by your marriage.'

And now there happened an interruption which at first promised to be wholly pleasant, being no other than the arrival of the runaways, Lorenzo and Jessica, with Salanio, an old friend, from Venice. It seemed they had chanced to visit Belmont by the happiest of luck, for no wedding-guests could have been more welcome. But Salanio brought a letter which dealt a blow at all this happiness, and Bassanio grew pale and trembled as he read it. Portia noted this change of countenance, and stepped quickly to his side. 'Give me leave, Bassanio. I am half yourself, and must claim my share, good or ill, in whatever this letter brings you.' 'O sweet Portia,' he answered, 'here are a few of the unpleasantest words that ever blotted paper. Dearest lady, when I first told you of my love, I told you that I owned nothing but gentle birth. I should have told you that I was worth less than nothing, being a debtor and to a dear friend. This letter is from him—it might be his body, and every word a gaping wound dripping his life-blood. . . . But is it true?'—he turned to Salanio—'Have all his ventures mischanced? Man, they were scattered the world over—to Tripolis, Mexico, England—to Lisbon, Barbary, India! Are you telling me that not a single vessel has escaped?' Salanio shook his head sadly. 'Not one; and moreover it would seem that had he now the money to pay, the Jew would not take it. The creature is not human. His bond has run out, and albeit twenty merchants have joined their entreaties—ay, and the Doge himself, and our first magnificoes all—he cannot be persuaded from claiming the strict law and letter of his bond.' 'Do you say,' asked Portia, 'that it is a dear friend who is thus in trouble?' 'The dearest I have; the kindest,

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the sweetest of temper, the most unwearied in doing courtesies ; in whom dwells the old Roman honour and is unmatched by any man to-day drawing breath in Italy.' 'What sum does he owe to this Jew?' 'For me, three thousand ducats.' 'No more? Let him have six thousand, twelve thousand, thrice twelve thousand, before such a friend lose so much as a hair through fault of my husband Bassanio! First go with me to church and make me your wife—then away to Venice to your friend! and with gold enough to release him twenty times over. I would have you my husband ; but no husband will I have with a soul distressed. Go, and till you come again Nerissa and I will live as maids and widows.' Bassanio showed the letter, which ran : '*Sweet Bassanio, my ships are all lost, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit ; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and me if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure ; if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter.*'

'O my love,' cried Portia, 'despatch all business and be gone!' With all haste the weddings were celebrated ; and Bassanio and Gratiano kissed their brides at the church door and posted away to Venice.

When Shylock returned to his house and found it empty, his rage very naturally knew no bounds : but it was a rage in which loss of his daughter and loss of the money she had taken in her flitting jostled together in blind confusion. He ran by the streets and quays screaming 'My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter! Fled with a Christian—fled with my ducats—fled with my jewels, too! Justice! find the girl! Gone with the stones upon her—my ducats too! Where is the Law? Where is Justice?' With these outcries he roused the Doge himself, demanding that Bassanio's ship should be detained and searched, for by her he supposed that the runaways were planning their escape. In this the Doge could not oblige him, for the ship had already sailed ; and moreover he had Antonio's word that they were not on board. Indeed on further enquiry he learned that

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the lovers had been seen in a gondola hurrying down the Grand Canal. They were gone—lost past recovery; and for days the very s'treet-boys mocked Shylock, following and crying after him 'My daughter! my ducats!'

But his revenge was not far off. It began to take shape and ripen during the golden days spent by Bassanio in wooing, while he forgot his friend, and by Portia in detaining him from the final venture. Day by day in these latter weeks came news that one and another of Antonio's argosies had suffered shipwreck—and still, as the time dragged by, not a sail of his arrived in port. His creditors began to press him. His friends remembered how, bidding Bassanio good-bye, he conjured him to let no thought of the Jew's bond cast a shadow on his courtship, and so turning aside to conceal his moist eyes, had put out a hand behind him to grasp his friend's and wring it. Shylock waited, nursing his hope of revenge. His kinsman Tubal, returning from a visit of business to Genoa, brought news that tore him between wrath and gratified hate. His daughter had been traced there. She was spending (so Tubal had heard) his money like water. Shylock groaned.—'I shall never see my gold again!' 'But Antonio, as I heard in Genoa——' 'What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?' '—hath an argosy cast away coming from Tripolis.' 'I thank God! I thank God!—Is it true, good Tubal?' 'I spoke with some of the sailors escaped from the wreck; and also with divers of Antonio's creditors, who swear that he cannot choose but break. . . . One of them showed me a ring that your daughter had paid him for a monkey.' '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.' 'But Antonio is certainly ruined.' 'Nay, that's true, that's very true! Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before. I'll have the heart of Antonio if he forfeit!'

Still Antonio's friends in Venice, though they heard of these threats, could not credit a vengeance so inhuman. 'Why sure, if he forfeit, you will never take his flesh?' they protested. Shylock turned on them in a fury. 'This man has disgraced me,

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hindered me half a million, laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, chilled my friends, incensed my enemies—and why? 'I am a Jew.' Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Is he not fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, 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 a Jew wrong a Christian, what is the Christian's humility? Revenge. Then if a Christian wrong a Jew let the answer be by Christian example—Revenge! The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction!

In this savage temper he persisted. At his suit, the date of repayment having expired, Antonio was arrested and cast into prison to await trial; and in prison, on the eve of that dreadful ordeal, Bassanio returned to find him. It had never crossed Bassanio's mind that Shylock would decline the money he brought from Belmont: and when the Jew refused it, saying that the hearing of the case was fixed, and that he meant to insist on his pound of flesh, it wrung his heart with anguish.

But at Belmont, meanwhile, Portia had been reflecting. She had spoken cheerfully enough when she despatched her lord on his errand, bidding him bring back his friend with speed: but she was less sanguine than he that this would be easily managed; and now, taking counsel with Nerissa, she set her woman's wit to work, if perchance it might help the man she loved in saving his dearest friend. By and by she hit on a plan. At Padua there lived a kinsman of hers, one Bellario, a learned Doctor of Law. To him she wrote out a statement of Antonio's case, requesting his opinion upon it and that with the opinion he would send an outfit of robes such as advocates wore in the law-courts. With these the messenger was to return and wait at the ferry which crossed to Venice, where by the ferry-side she and Nerissa would find him. For Portia had resolved on no less an adventure than

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to go in person to the city and there, in counsel's dress and armed with Bellario's notes, to plead for the merchant in open court. Her house at Belmont she left in charge of Lorenzo and Jessica; set out for Venice; and, being met by the messenger at the ferry, donned her disguise, while Nerissa dressed herself as a lawyer's clerk. So they crossed to the city and entered it on the very day of the trial.

In the Great Court of Justice the Doge sat enthroned with his counsellors. Plaintiff and defendant stood before him; and Bassanio by Antonio's side, in greater agony of mind than his friend who faced the ordeal. In the hush of the crowded court and before he heard the suit the Doge was making a last measured appeal to Shylock to show mercy and not drive his vengeance to the cold process of the law. But Shylock was obdurate. 'I have sworn to have the forfeit,' he answered, 'and I will have it. Why I pursue this man it is not your Grace's province to ask me. Say it is my humour: say that I have no better reason than that I hate and loathe this man. I stand here for law, and you dare not deny it.' To this he held, though Bassanio tendered six thousand ducats for the three thousand owing. 'If every ducat in your six thousand were in six parts and each separate part a ducat, I would not accept. I stand for judgment: answer me, Shall I have it?' The Doge mused. 'I have power to adjourn this court unless Bellario, a learned Doctor of Padua whom I have sent for in this difficulty, appear here to-day.' 'My lord,' it was announced, 'a messenger has this moment arrived from him, bearing a letter.' 'Bid him enter,' the Doge commanded; and Nerissa, dressed like a lawyer's clerk, entered and tendered the letter. It ran:—

Your Grace shall understand that your message found me in ill health: but when it arrived, there happened to be staying with me, on a friendly visit, a young Doctor of Rome, by name Balthazar. I acquainted him with the action between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned over many books together; he is furnished with my opinion, which his own learning will doubtless better. In fine, I have besought him to

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take my place in fulfilment of your Grace's request. He is young: but I beg you to esteem him none the worse on that account, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head.

—'Admit him.' Portia was ushered into court, rustling in her Doctor's robes and with a pile of law-books under her arm. She saluted the Doge, and answered his questions with self-possession while she gazed around on the senators, the lawyers, the crowd, and upon her own dear husband standing beside his friend. 'Yes, she came from Bellario. She was thoroughly informed upon the cause at issue. Might she be told which, in this audience, was the merchant and which the Jew?' They were ordered to stand forth. 'Is your name Shylock?' 'Ay.' 'Your suit is a strange one, yet to this extent valid, that the law of Venice cannot impugn its process. Does the defendant admit that he gave the bond?' 'I admit it,' said Antonio. 'Then the Jew must be merciful.' 'On what compulsion?' demanded Shylock. 'Compulsion?' — in words that should have been persuasive as they were beautiful Portia told him that the quality of mercy knew no compulsion: that it dropped as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath, blessing where it fell, not caring; that itself is twice blessed, in blessing the giver no less than him that receives. It becomes monarchs better than do their crowns, standing above their temporal sway, an attribute of the very God enthroned in their hearts: and earthly power never so nearly resembles God's as when mercy tempers justice. 'Remember, Jew, that if God were just only, none of us should attain salvation. It is for God's mercy we pray: and that prayer should teach us to render the deeds of mercy. . . .' Here she broke off, as though remembering she was a lawyer and her business strictly with the law of the case. 'I have said so much,' she continued, 'to mitigate the legality of your plea, not to deny it. If you persist and press it, the law of Venice is strict and sentence must go against the merchant.' 'I do press it,' Shylock persisted; 'and let my deeds be upon my own head!' 'Is he not able to pay the debt?' Here Bassanio stepped

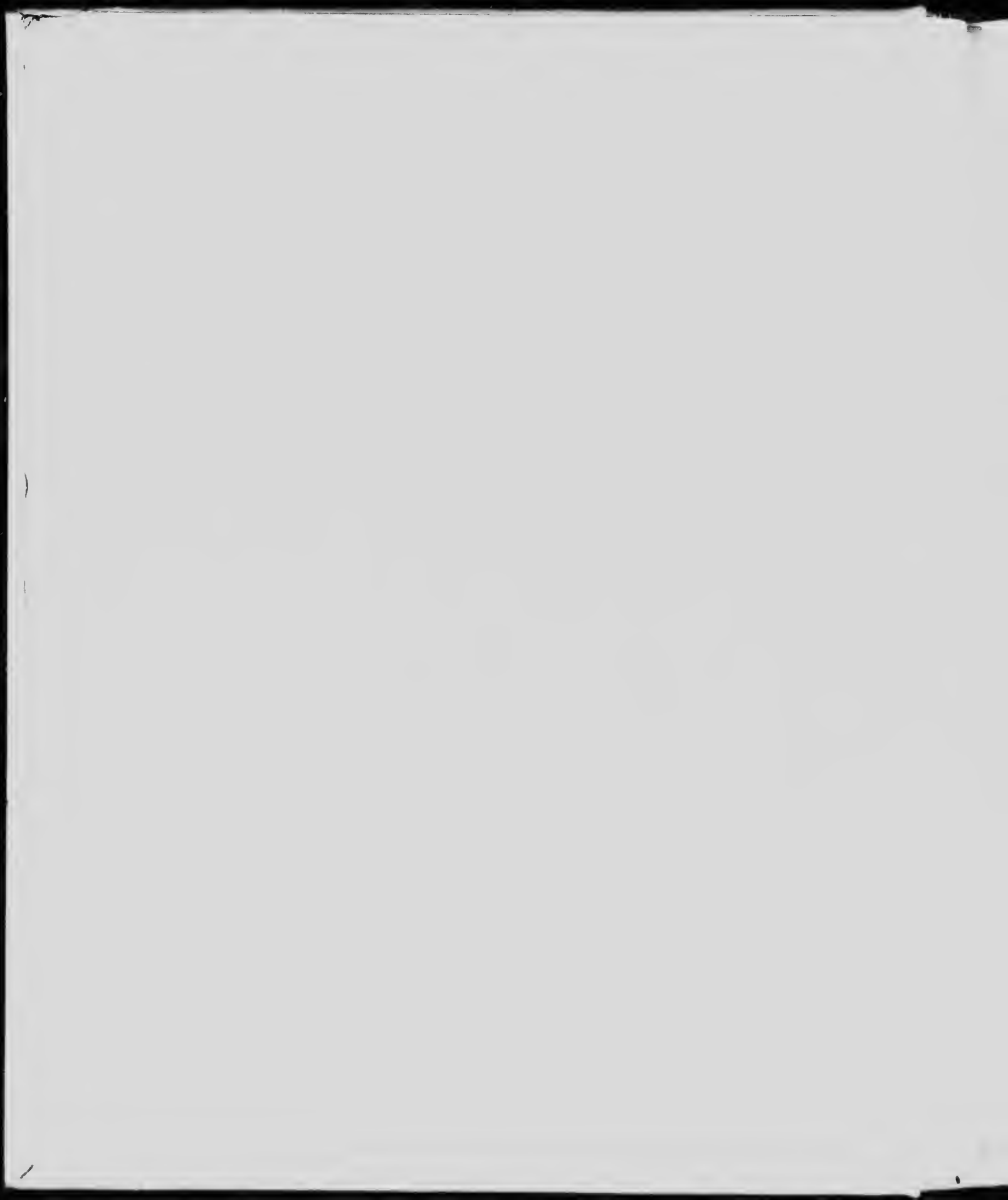
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forward.—'Certainly he is able. Here I tender it for him in open court, and will tender twice, even ten times the sum, if need be. I beseech your Grace'—he appealed to the Doge—'for once override and wrest the law a little to prevent this great wrong!' But Portia, in her character of learned lawyer, would not have this. 'Nay, that must not be. No power in Venice can override an established decree of the state.' 'A Daniel! a Daniel come to judgment!' applauded Shylock: for if the law might not be upset, the verdict must surely be his. 'Let me look upon the bond,' said Portia, and the Jew eagerly presented it. 'Yes,' she decided after perusing it, 'this bond is forfeit, and by it the creditor may legally claim a pound of flesh and cut it—if he please—from nearest the merchant's heart. Sir, be merciful: accept thrice the money and bid me tear the bond in two.' 'Not until I have what the law gives me,' Shylock persisted; 'there is no power in human tongue can change my resolve. I charge you, proceed to judgement.' 'Ay,' cried Antonio, to whom all this delay was but as torture before death; 'from my heart I beseech the court to give judgement and make an end!' 'Why then,' said Portia sadly, 'you must prepare your bosom for his knife'—and while Antonio made ready to bare his breast, the Jew whetted his knife with glee, calling aloud, 'O noble judge! excellent young man! O wise and upright judge!' 'Have you scales to weigh the flesh?' asked Portia. 'I have them ready.' 'And a surgeon likewise—to stop his wounds, lest he bleed to death?' 'A surgeon? . . . the bond says nothing of any surgeon.' 'Not expressly, Shylock. But what of that? So much at least you might do for charity.' 'I cannot find it,' replied the merciless man; 'it is not in the bond.' Portia turned from him to Antonio. 'Merchant, have you anything to say?' 'But little,' answered Antonio; 'I am armed and prepared for death. Give me your hand, Bassanio—farewell! Grieve not that I suffer this for you: but commend me to your honourable wife, telling her how I died and how I have loved you!' Bassanio could scarcely speak for anguish. 'Antonio,' he cried at length, 'I am married to a wife dear to me as life itself. But life itself, my wife, all that the world

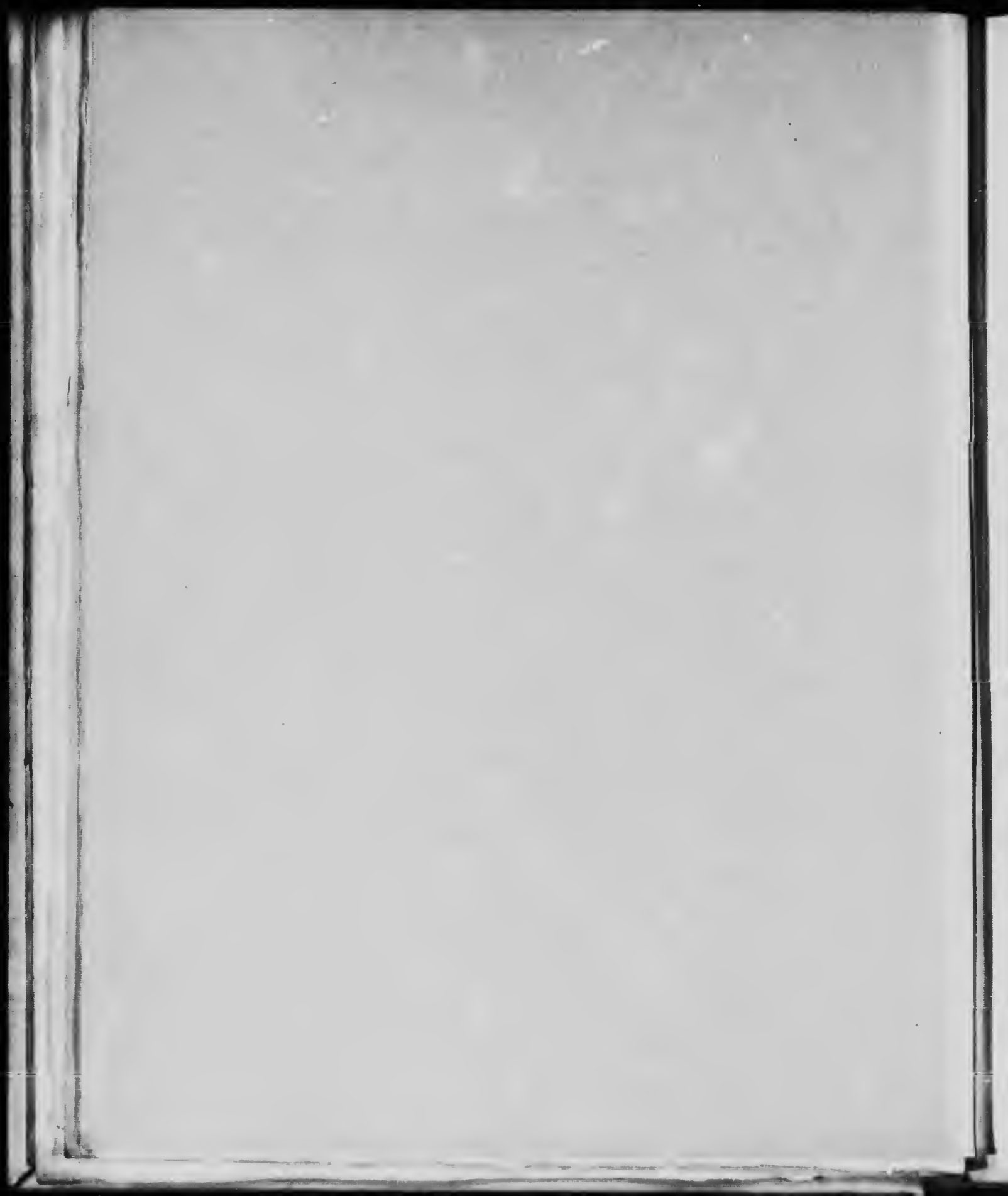
Antonio and Bassanio.

*"But if you please to shoot another arrow
that selfway" (page 11).*

Act I. Scene I.







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holds—I would lose them all, I would sacrifice them all to this devil here, to deliver you!’ Portia, standing by and hearing herself thus renounced, could not resist smiling. ‘Your wife, sir, would give you small thanks for that,’ she said mischievously, ‘if she were present to hear you make that offer.’ Whereupon Gratiano, who had a knack of echoing Lord Bassanio, protested that he too had a wife he loved. ‘But I would she were in heaven,’ he went on, ‘if she could entreat some power there to change this cur of a Jew!’ ‘Indeed?’ snapped the clerk Nerissa. ‘Then ’tis as well you make this offer behind her back, or the wish might earn you an unquiet house!’ ‘We trifle time,’ grumbled Shylock, ‘pursue sentence, pray.’ ‘True,’ agreed Portia.—‘The sentence is that—as the law allows and the court awards—you may cut a pound of flesh from the merchant’s breast.’ ‘Most rightful judge!’ With a snarl of hate Shylock sprang forward gripping l

But Portia put . . . and. ‘Tarry a little. The words are “a pound of flesh”: . . . and makes no mention of blood. Take your bond; take your pound of flesh. Only, if in the cutting you shed one drop of Christian blood, then by Venetian law your lands and goods are confiscated to the state.’ Shylock fell back. ‘Is that the law?’ he muttered, while Gratiano, as a great sigh of relief broke from the court, caught up the Jew’s late savage cry, and echoed it exultingly: ‘O upright judge! Mark him, Jew: O learned judge!’ Portia opened her law-book and held it out to Shylock. ‘Yourself shall see the act. You appealed to justice, and justice you shall have.’ ‘I take the offer then,’ said the foiled man; ‘give me thrice the money, and let the Christian go.’ Bassanio would have tendered it eagerly, but again Portia interposed. ‘Softly!’ she said; ‘the Jew shall have all justice and nothing but justice. Make ready, sir: take your pound of flesh. Shed no blood: and let the pound be a just pound, neither more nor less; for if it be lighter or heavier by so much as the weight of a hair, you shall die, and your goods be confiscated.’ ‘A Daniel! a Daniel, Jew!’ crowed Gratiano, while the court echoed him with such laughter as breaks from men whose suspense and

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worst fears are suddenly converted to triumph; 'now, unbeliever, it is your turn to be had on the hip!' 'Why doth the Jew pause?' asked Portia. Shylock looked around on the faces that all condemned him. 'Give me my principal then,' he growled, abating his demand as he began to fear worse things: 'give me that, and let me go.' 'I have it ready: here it is,' again said cager Bassanio, but again Portia told him that there was no haste. 'He has refused it in open court. He may now take only the forfeit written in the bond.' 'What! Not even my bare money?' gasped Shylock. 'No: nothing but the forfeit, and that at your peril.' 'Why then—' in a fury he flung the bond at Antonio's feet—'the devil take him, and it! I'll stay no more of your justice!' and he would have rushed from the court, but yet once again Portia's clear voice called to him to tarry, and the officers thrust him back from the door. 'Tarry, Jew: the law hath yet one more hold on you. By Venetian law it is enacted that if an alien be found directly or indirectly plotting against the life of any citizen of Venice, the injured person shall seize one half of his goods, the other half shall be forfeit to the state's coffers, and the offender's life shall lie at the Doge's mercy, to be taken or spared. In this dreadful predicament you stand at this moment: therefore down on your knees and beg the Duke's mercy!'

The Doge was merciful. 'That you may see,' he said, gravely addressing Shylock, 'the difference between our clemency and your hardness of heart, I grant your life before you ask it. The half of your wealth is Antonio's; the other half is confiscated to the public chest,—but this on your humble petition may be commuted to a fine.' 'Nay,' said the beaten man, 'take my life with the rest. You take my house when you take the prop that sustains it; so you take my life when you take away my means of living.' But here the large-hearted Antonio begged to be heard. He would release his legal share if Shylock would sign a deed leaving the money at his death to his daughter Jessica and her husband Lorenzo. Shylock said that he was content; but, a moment later, put a hand to his brow and

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staggered. 'I am not well,' he stammered hoarsely: 'I pray you give me leave—let me go from hence. Send the deed after me to my house, and I will sign it.' He was allowed to go free, the crowd following him with hootings and curses. So this strange trial ended, and the Doge rose and dismissed the court, but paused on his way forth to speak with Antonio and remind him how much he owed to the young doctor's wonderful pleading.

Neither Antonio nor his friend needed any such reminder. 'Most worthy gentleman,' said Bassanio, addressing Portia as she and her clerk gathered up their papers, 'I and my friend have to-day by your wisdom been delivered from very grievous penalties. We beg you in return to accept the three thousand ducats due to the Jew.' 'And,' added Antonio, 'over and above this we shall yet stand indebted to you in love and service to our life's end.' Portia, however, would not accept the money. 'I am well enough paid, sir, in the satisfaction of having served you: and for you, sir,'—to Bassanio mischievously—'I pray you will know me when we meet again. So good-bye and good-day! But, Bassanio still urging that at least some token of gratitude might be accepted, she appeared to relent. 'Give me your gloves then, Signor Antonio: I will wear them for your sake. And you, sir, may give me that ring I see on your finger.—Nay, but you drew back your hand. Very well: I will take no more, and surely this much you ought not to deny me.' 'This ring, good sir,' answered Bassanio in confusion,—'it is a trifle—it would shame me to give anything so paltry.' 'But since I have a fancy for it?' 'Sir, I will give you the costliest ring in Venice: only ask me not for this one.' 'Ah, I see you are liberal in offers.'—Portia simulated scorn. 'Learned sir, you will pardon me—this ring was given to me by my wife, and when she put it on my finger I took oath that I would never part with it.' 'If your wife be not a madwoman, sir, when she hears how I have deserved the ring she will forgive you. But since you will not oblige me in this trifle, I wish you good-day.'

'My lord Bassanio,' said Antonio, as the mock Doctor departed in mock dudgeon, 'let him have the ring. Let my love and what

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he hath done for us outweigh a behest your wife will be glad to withdraw when she hears the truth.' Bassanio could not refuse this plea. Plucking the ring from his finger he bade Gratiano run after the doctor with it. But when Gratiano overtook Portia and Nerissa it appeared that the lawyer's clerk also wanted a ring for a souvenir: whereupon, still following his lord's example, he too plucked off his ring—the ring Nerissa had given him—and gave it to the clerk. The two disguised ones thanked him demurely and took their leave of him, meaning to set off at once on the return journey to Belmont, and laughing together at the trick each had played on her lord and master.

Night had fallen as they drew near to Belmont. The moonlight lay spread among the statues and cypresses in Portia's garden, where on a grassy bank the two lovers, Lorenzo and Jessica, talked together in low antiphons such as lovers use, and in the pauses of their talk gazed and drank in the beauty of the heavens. Word had come that the mistress of the house would return home before daybreak; and close upon this came a messenger with the news that Bassanio, too, might be expected. Lorenzo called for music: no gentler or more gracious welcome could there be for the home-comers, should they be arriving; and if not, still he and Jessica could sit till the moonlight faded, and let the sweet sounds creep in their ears, while the stillness of the garden, the embracing silent night, made harmony with the hidden lutes, as the listening heart might hear its own beating harmonies whispered back from the stars paving the floor of heaven.

So while the lovers listened and held one another close, and while the moon sank, Portia and Nerissa stole on them at unawares across the dewy garden. This was home; and the exceeding peace of it at once soothed and lifted Portia's spirits, yet a little awed by the trial in the crowded Court of Justice and a-flutter with the brave action ventured and performed. 'The light we see burns in my hall, Nerissa. See how far a little candle may throw its beam! So shines a good deed in a naughty world. Hark! I hear music!' 'It is your music, madam: it

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sounds from the house.' They tip-toed forward and almost stumbled on the reclining lovers, who started to their feet; but, an instant later, recognised Portia's voice. 'Dear lady, welcome home!' 'We have been praying,' said Portia, 'for our husbands' welfare. Are they yet returned?' 'Not yet, dear madam: but a messenger has brought word of them. They are near—and hark! there is their trumpet announcing them!' Night was already paling in the garden as they went across it to greet their lords. Bassanio, the first embraces exchanged, presented Antonio, and Portia was bidding that good friend welcome when she turned at the sound of voices—Nerissa's and Gratiano's—lifted in altercation.

'A quarrel already! What is the matter?'

'About a hoop of gold,' answered Gratiano sulkily; 'a paltry ring that Nerissa gave me, with some sort of posy on it like cutler's writing on a knife—*Love me and leave me not.*' 'What does the posy or the price matter?' demanded Nerissa hotly—'You swore to me when I gave it you that you would wear it till your last hour. And now, say you, you have given it to a lawyer's clerk! Lawyer's clerk indeed!—some woman, more like!' 'Now by this hand,' Gratiano protested, 'I gave it to a youth—a kind of boy—a scrubby little prating boy no higher than yourself, Nerissa. He begged it from me, and there were reasons why I could not in my heart deny him.' 'You did wrongly, then,' said Portia, exchanging a sly smile with Nerissa, 'to part with your wife's first gift. I gave my husband Bassanio a ring, and I dare swear he would not part with it for all the wealth in the world.' 'Why,' blurted out Gratiano, though Bassanio kept making signs and frowning to him to hold his tongue, 'my lord, here, gave *his* ring away too—to the lawyer that begged it from him, and deserved it indeed; and then I followed suit and gave mine to the clerk, who has been at some pains in writing.' Portia turned upon her husband, and then, since he could not deny that the ring was gone, she pretended to be furiously angry. 'Nerissa,' she said, 'teaches me what to believe! That ring of mine was given to no lawyer, but to some woman!'

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'No, by my honour, madam, I gave it to no woman, but to a Doctor of Law, who refused three thousand ducats of me and would have the ring or nothing: and I suffered him to go off in displeasure because I denied him, after he had saved my friend's life too! Sweet lady, what could I do? I was so beset with the thought of my discourtesy, my ingratitude, that for very shame I sent the ring after him. Pardon me, Portia! had you been there I think you would have begged the ring from me to give to the worthy Doctor.' Antonio here interposed. 'I,' said he, 'am the unworthy cause of these quarrels.' Portia begged him to feel that he was welcome, notwithstanding. 'Nay, hear me,' he said, 'I once did lend my body that Bassanio might prosper; and but for the man to whom Bassanio gave the ring, this body of mine would even now be in the grave. I dare be bound, madam—and will forfeit my soul upon it—your lord will never again break faith with you!' 'Then,' said Portia, 'you shall be his surety. Give him this ring, and enjoin him to keep it better than he kept the other.'

Bassanio took the ring his friend handed him. 'By heaven!' he cried, 'it is the same that I gave to the Doctor!' And at the same moment Gratiano stared at the ring which Nerissa showed him and gazed at his lord in an equal and blank amazement. 'Listen,' said Portia: and she told them first how that she was the young lawyer Bellario, and Nerissa his clerk; and further how that, as she left Venice, she had assured news that three of Antonio's ships had come to harbour, happily restoring his fortunes. 'And now,' she said, as they stood amazed in the fair garden where the daylight crept and grew about them, 'it is almost morning. Let us all go into our house and be happy.'

The Merchant of Venice is the last-named comedy in the list of Shakespeare's plays enumerated by Francis Meres, 1598. An entry in the Stationers' Register, dated July 22, 1598, describes it as 'a booke of the Marchaunt of Venyce, or otherwise called the Jewe of Venice'; but it did not appear in print until 1600, when two quarto editions were published. It was certainly new in

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1598, though it may have been written a year, or even two years, earlier.

The plot is based on an old story found in *Il Pecorone*, a collection of Italian tales by one Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, 1378. Ser Giovanni tells us of the Jew and the pound of flesh; the courtship of the fair heiress of Belmont; the trial and the merchant's deliverance: but, the tests by which the lover wins his lady in the book being quite unsuitable for the stage, Shakespeare had to seek elsewhere, and took the business of the caskets from the *Gesta Romanorum*. Some critics, however, from a reference in Gosson's *School of Abuse* to a play called *The Jew*—'representing the greediness of worldly chusers and bloody minds of usurers'—have surmised that he borrowed his plot from this lost play and was indebted to *Il Pecorone* only at second-hand.

It is only by seeing *The Merchant of Venice* on the stage that we can gauge the amazing skill of its workmanship; as the actual inhumanity, even lunacy, of the two stories composing it can only perhaps be realised by one who has attempted to write out its Argument in plausible prose. It is past credence, when narrated in prose, that any man, being a man of business, could ever have been fool enough to sign such a bond as Antonio signed; any man bestial enough to exact such a penalty as Shylock tried to exact; any court of law so childish that it failed to nonsuit the plaintiff out of hand, or, failing that, so inexpressibly childish as to acquit upon such pleadings as Portia's. Again, and in spite of Shakespeare's glosing, Bassanio wins Portia by mere luck—he has not been presented to us as a person likely to choose lead before gold: his moralising upon outward show and the rest of it strike us as beautifully expressed humbug: or, if this be desired, it was a pure fluke that Morocco, for instance, did not choose the right casket before him: and luck, accident, τὸ συμβεβηκός—whatever we call it—is, as Aristotle rightly perceived and taught, the most undramatic thing in the world, being indeed a 'negation of Art and Intelligence, and of Nature as an organising force.' Further, and as if all this were not handicap enough, the plot and the characters allowed Shakespeare no sure hold upon sympathy—

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his own, or his audience's—to draw and concentrate it upon the right side. Admission of this is implied in the varied 'interpretations' of Shylock given us by various great actors. We ought to hate Shylock: on the face of it there would appear nothing difficult in detesting a man who plots to cut a man's heart out for a debt. But in the end we feel pity for him; and a strange, an immense respect. He is beaten, but by trick: and his defeat leaves him the moral master of every one in the play. He is solitary, one against a crowd; but the gaunt isolation lifts him towering above his enemies. He is great, after all, and they are little. Antonio has our respect; we allow him to be a true friend and

the kindest man,
The best condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

'The ancient Roman honour'—but not quite the ancient Roman greatness. He shows all the dignity, all the courage, we could desire; he is one of the very few characters in Shakespeare to understand self-sacrifice—a virtue which does not appear to have been one of Shakespeare's favourites; we are eager for his deliverance. But in comparison Shylock has greatness; not Roman greatness, but Hebrew; the greatness of a Job gone wrong. Portia is charming, a beautiful woman all compact. But for the rest of the characters, they sit very loose to decent feeling; they are certainly not great, and one would hesitate to call them passably good. Perhaps 'non-moral' is the best term for them. Bassanio, having impoverished himself

By something showing a more swelling port
Than his faint means would grant continuance—

—in plain prose, by living above his income—seeks to repair his fortunes by marrying an heiress: that is his avowed motive in the play, and for a gallant young hero it may be thought in some respects deficient. Jessica elopes from her father's house with a

THE STORY

lover, as honest maids have done before her; but she also carries off his ducats for the honeymoon, and neither she nor Lorenzo nor any of their friends among the young Venetian bloods show any sense that this was playing outside the rules of the game. Seemingly it never crosses their minds, though into Shylock's mind it eats pretty deeply. He stands, before the end of Act II., a grossly wronged man; and—if it be permissible to wish away anything that Shakespeare has written—I could wish he had deleted Shylock's first 'aside' in Act I. Scene iii., with its promise to feed fat an ancient grudge. These few lines removed, we could believe that Shylock does in fact, as he tells Antonio, propose the form of the bond 'in a merry sport'—a savage jest, no doubt, yet in its way effective as a retort upon a man who, after reviling him for usury, comes in the end to borrow money; and that only when these Christians have done him unpardonable wrong does he translate the jest into deadly earnest and so pursue it. I could wish this (I say), though well enough aware that it was not Shakespeare's own intention. Upon that intention we must employ our historical sense and bear in mind (1) that usury was in Shakespeare's day regarded as a devilish practice (the teaching of the Christian Church had for centuries been positive on this point); (2) that Jews, as Jews, were denied admission to this realm, and were accepted by the popular mind as beings naturally hateful and proper subjects of persecution; and (3) that the Elizabethan drama was—in its fun especially—brutal to a degree which nowadays one must have known and outgrown a Public School to understand. Nevertheless, and when all these reservations have been made, it remains true that as the conception of Shylock takes hold of Shakespeare, the essential greatness, humanity, even nobility of the character fairly beat the playwright out of his *parti pris*. His sympathy wavers, goes over to the Jew's side, and draws our sympathy with it. As Professor Raleigh has excellently said, 'the air is heavy with Shylock's tragedy long after the babble of the love-plot has begun again. The Fifth Act is an exquisite piece of romantic comedy; but it is a welcome distraction, not a full solution. The revengeful Jew, whose defeat

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

was to have added triumph to happiness, keeps possession of the play, and the memory of him gives to these closing scenes an undesigned air of heartless frivolity.'

With such a plot, then, and such distraction of sympathy, *The Merchant of Venice* must needs, when examined coolly, appear both artificial and cynical. The marvel is that whenever we see it staged, the action chases these second thoughts completely out of our heads. Shakespeare, who wrote many better plays, never achieved one more vivid. For pure stagecraft it remains unbeaten until we reach *Othello* and hear Desdemona singing as she undresses for death. There, conducted by stagecraft, we attain a height at which stagecraft melts away and leaves us face to face with the naked soul. But its achievement is only less marvellous when, as Portia speaks four simple words in the garden—'It is almost morning'; these and no more—with a snap of the wand the shadow of the terrible Hall of Justice wavers, breaks, and goes down the wind, 'following darkness like a dream.'

A. T. QUILLER-COUCH

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE DUKE OF VENICE.

THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO, } suitors to Portia.
THE PRINCE OF ARRAGON, }

ANTONIO, a merchant of Venice.

BASSANIO, his kinsman, suitor likewise to Portia.

SALANIO, }
SALARINO, } friends to Antonio and Bassanio.
GRATIANO, }
SALERIO, }

LORENZO, in love with Jessica.

SHYLOCK, a rich Jew.

TUBAL, a Jew, his friend.

LAUNCELOT GOBBO, the clown, servant to Shylock.

OLD GOBBO, father to Launcelot.

LEONARDO, servant to Bassanio.

BALTHASAR, } servants to Portia.
STEPHANO, }

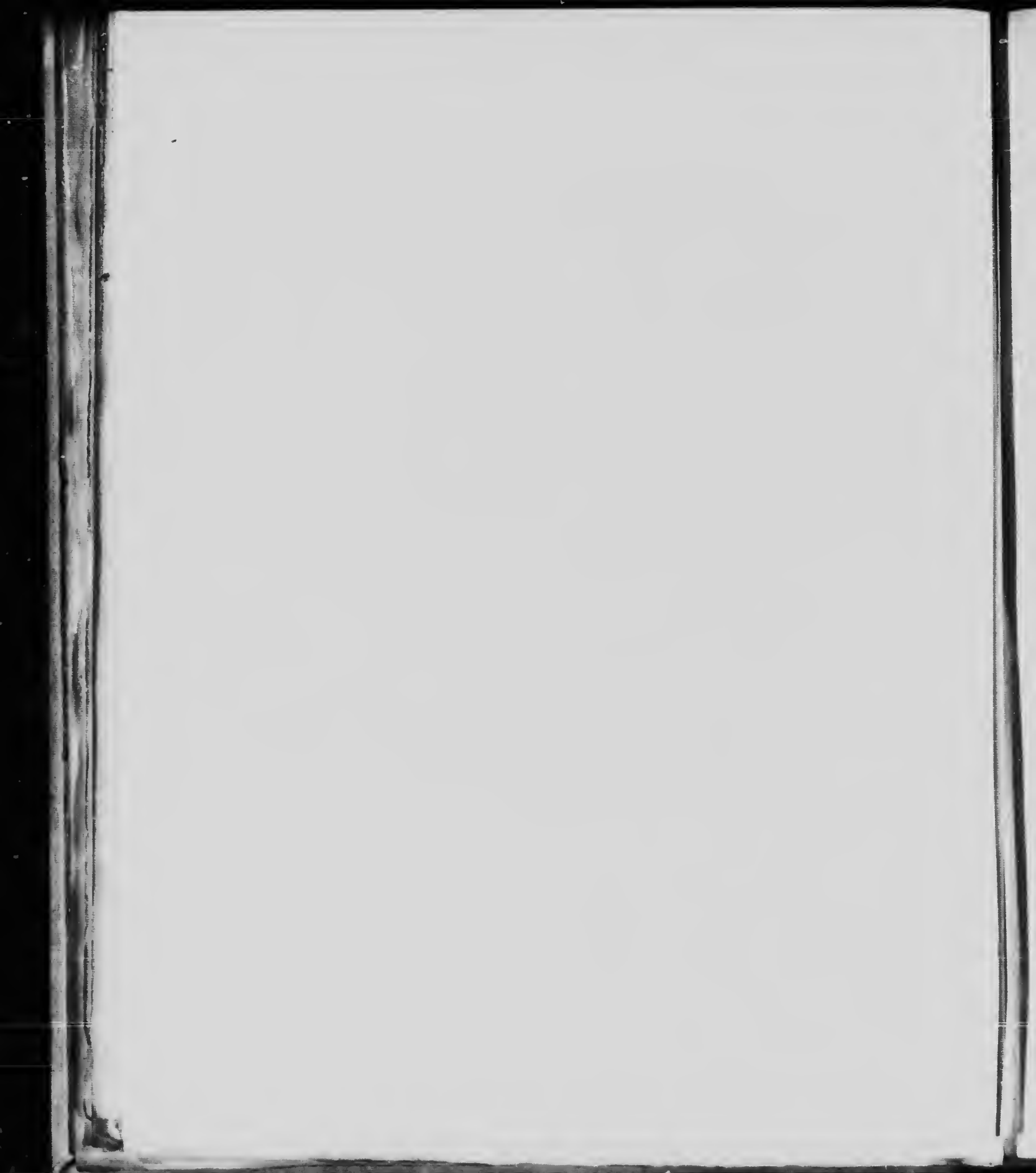
PORTIA, a rich heiress.

NERISSA, her waiting-maid.

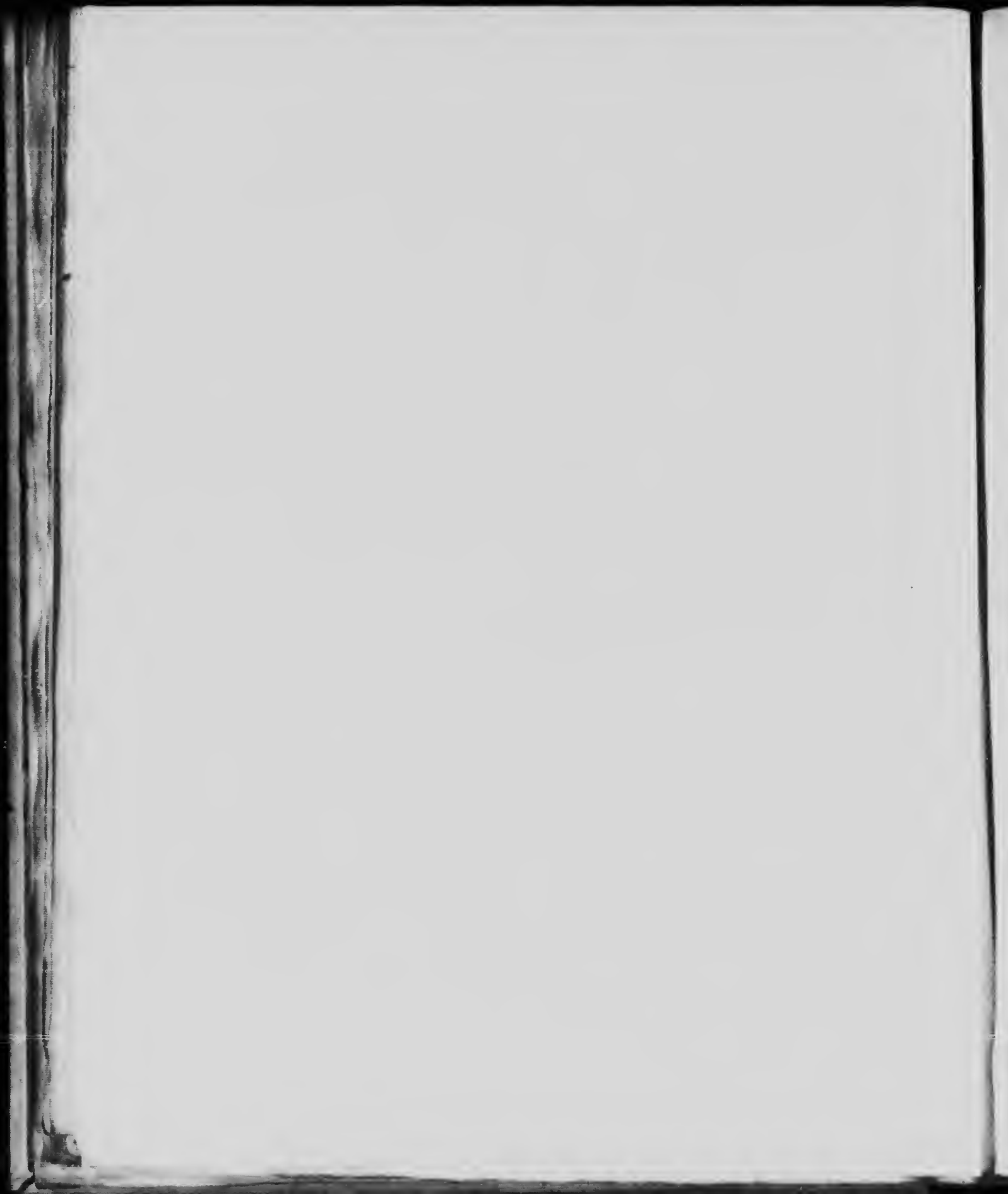
JESSICA, daughter to Shylock.

Magnificoes of Venice, Officers of the Court
of Justice, Gaoler, Servants to Portia, and
other Attendants.

SCENE—*Partly at Venice, and partly at Belmont,
the seat of Portia, on the Continent.*



ACT I



SCENE I

Venice. A street.

Enter ANTONIO, SALARINO, and SALANIO.

ANT. In sooth, I know not why I am so sad :
It wearies me ; you say it wearies you ;
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn ;

And such a want-wit sadness makes of me
That I have much ado to know myself.

SALAR. Your mind is tossing on the ocean ;
There, where your argosies with portly sail,
Like signiors and rich burghers on the flood,
Or, as it were, the pageants of the sea,
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curtsy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

SALAN. Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

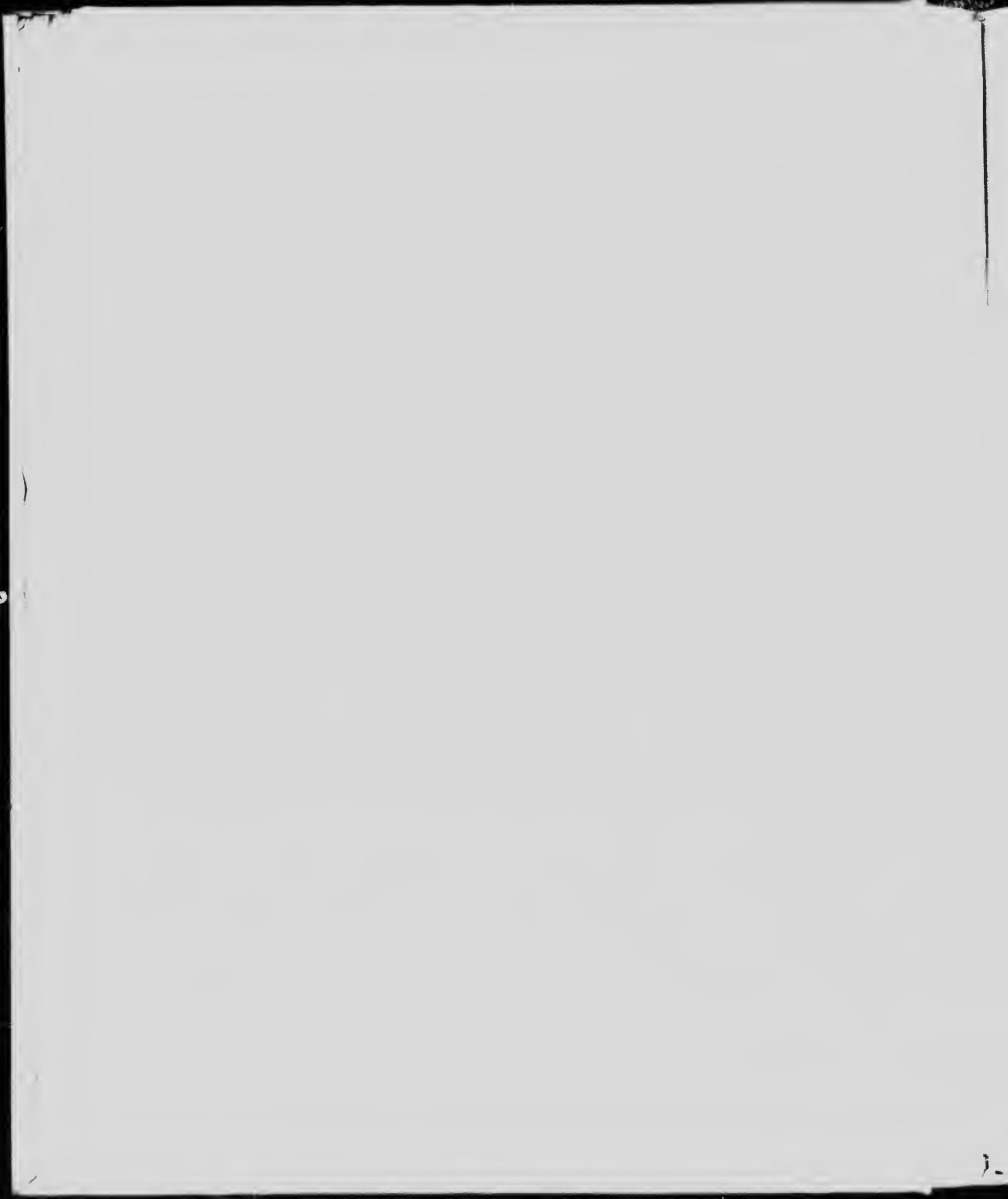
Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass, to know where sits the wind,
Peering in maps for ports and piers and roads ;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures out of doubt
Would make me sad.

SALAR. My wind cooling my broth
Would blow me to an ague, when I thought
What harm a wind too great at sea might do.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run,
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see my wealthy Andrew dock'd in sand,
Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs
To kiss her burial. Should I go to church
And see the holy edifice of stone,
And not bethink me straight of dangerous rocks,
Which touching but my gentle vessel's side,
Would scatter all her spices on the stream,
Enrobe the roaring waters with my silks,
And, in a word, but even now worth this,
And now worth nothing? Shall I have the
thought
To think on this, and shall I lack the thought
That such a thing bechanced would make me sad ?
But tell not me ; I know, Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Portia and Nerissa.

"I pray thee over-name them" (page 15).

Act I. Scene 11







SC. I.]

OF VENICE

ANT. Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

SALAR. Why, then you are in love.

ANT.

Fie, fie!

SALAR. Not in love neither? Then let us say you
are sad,

Because you are not merry: and 'twere as easy
For you to laugh and leap and say you are merry,
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed
Janus,

Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes
And laugh like parrots at a bag-piper,
And other of such vinegar aspect
That they'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Enter BASSANIO, LORENZO, *and* GRATIANO.

SAL. Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kins-
man,

Gratiano and Lorenzo. Fare ye well:
We leave you now with better company.

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

SALAR. I would have stay'd till I had made you
merry,

If worthier friends had not prevented me.

ANT. Your worth is very dear in my regard.

I take it, your own business calls on you
And you embrace the occasion to depart.

SALAR. Good morrow, my good lords.

BASS. Good signiors both, when shall we laugh?
say, when?

You grow exceeding strange: must it be so?

SALAR. We'll make our leisures to attend on
yours. [*Exeunt* SALARINO and SALANIO.

LOR. My Lord Bassanio, since you have found
Antonio,

We two will leave you: but at dinner-time,
I pray you, have in mind where we must meet.

BASS. I will not fail you.

GRA. You look not well, Signior Antonio;

You have too much respect upon the world:

They lose it that do buy it with much care:

Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

ANT. I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;

A stage where every man must play a part,

And mine a sad one.

GRA. Let me play the fool:

With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come,

sc. 1.]

OF VENICE

And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man, whose blood is warm within,
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks—
There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond,
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit,
As who should say 'I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark!'
O my Antonio, I do know of these
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing, when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those
ears
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers
fools.
I'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not, with this melancholy bait,
For this fool gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo. Fare ye well awhile:
I'll end my exhortation after dinner.

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.]

LOR. Well, we will leave you when till dinner-time :
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

GRA. Well, keep me company but two years moe,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own
tongue.

ANT. Farewell : I'll grow a talker for this gear.

GRA. Thanks, i' faith, for silence is only commend-
able

In a neat's tongue dried.

[*Exeunt GRATIANO and LORENZO.*]

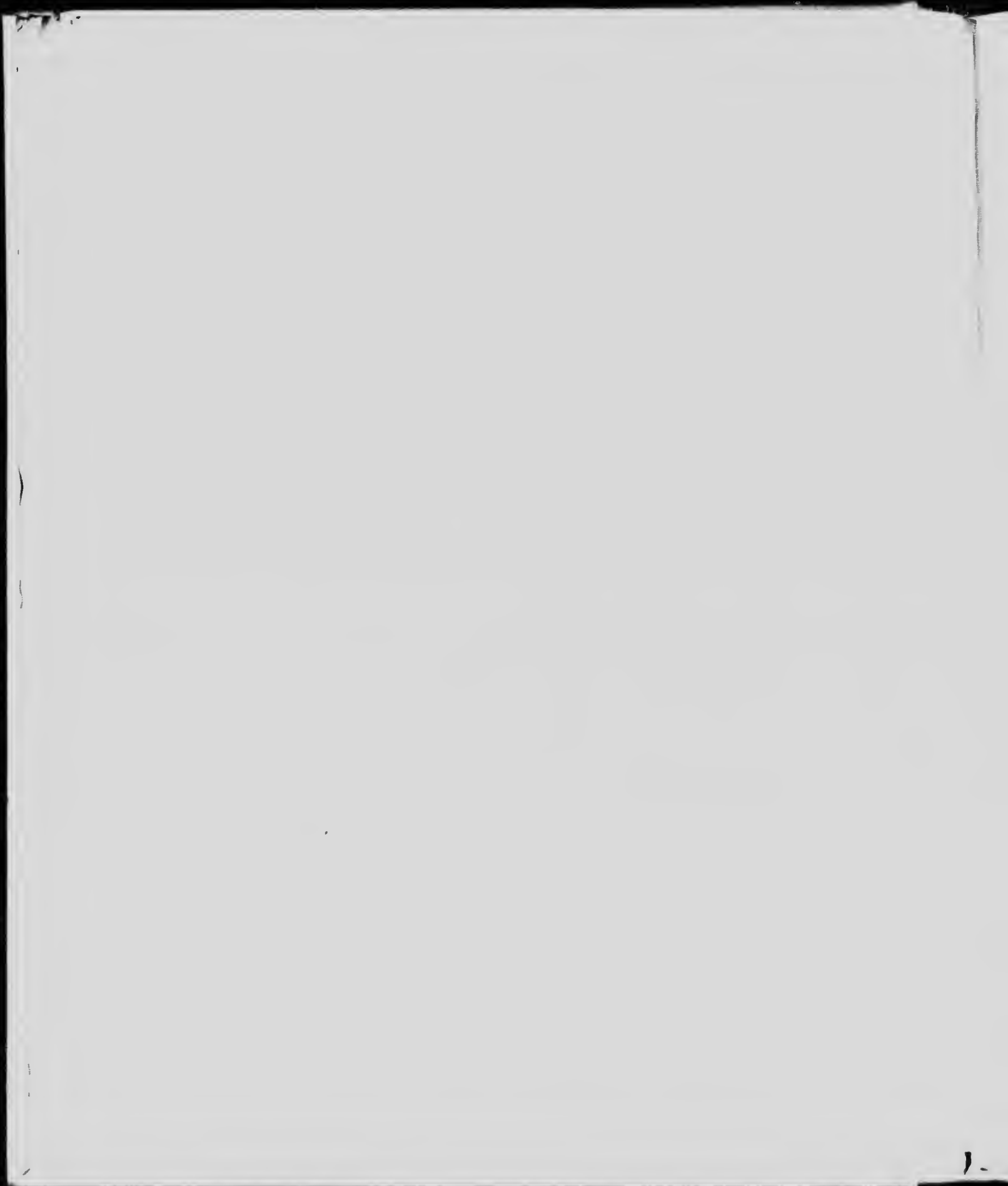
ANT. Is that any thing now ?

BASS. Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing,
more than any man in all Venice. His reasons
are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels
of chaff : you shall seek all day ere you find
them, and when you have them, they are not
worth the search.

ANT. Well, tell me now what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of ?

BASS. 'Tis not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance :
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged

Shylock, Bassanio and Antonio.
"With bated breath and whispering
humbleness" (page 25). *Act I. Scene III*





sc. 1.]

OF VENICE

From such a noble rate ; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time something too prodigal
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most, in money and in love,
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburden all my plots and purposes
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

ANT. I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it ;
And if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured,
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlock'd to your occasions.

BASS. In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advised watch,
To find the other forth, and by adventuring both
I oft found both : I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much, and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost ; but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both
Or bring your latter hazard back again
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

ANT. You know me well, and herein spend but
time

To wind about my love with circumstance ;
And out of doubt you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost
Than if you had made waste of all I have :
Then do but say to me what I should do
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it : therefore speak.

BASS. In Belmont is a lady richly left ;
And she is fair and, fairer than that word,
Of wondrous virtues : sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages :
Her name is Portia, nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia :
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth,
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renowned suitors, and her sunny locks
Hang on her temples like a golden fleece ;
Which makes her seat of Belmont Colchos' strand.
And many Jasons come in quest of her.
O my Antonio, had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate !

ANT. Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea ;

sc. 1.]

OF VENICE

Neither have I money nor commodity
To raise a present sum : thereforh go forth ;
Try what my credit can in Venice do :
That shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is, and I no question make
To have it of my trust or for my sake.

[Exeunt.]

[ACT I.

SCENE II

Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

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

NER. You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries
were in the same abundance as your good for-
tunes are: and yet, for aught I see, they are as
sick that surfeit with too much as they that
starve with nothing. It is no mean happiness
therefore, to be seated in the mean: superfluity
comes sooner by white hairs, but competency
lives longer.

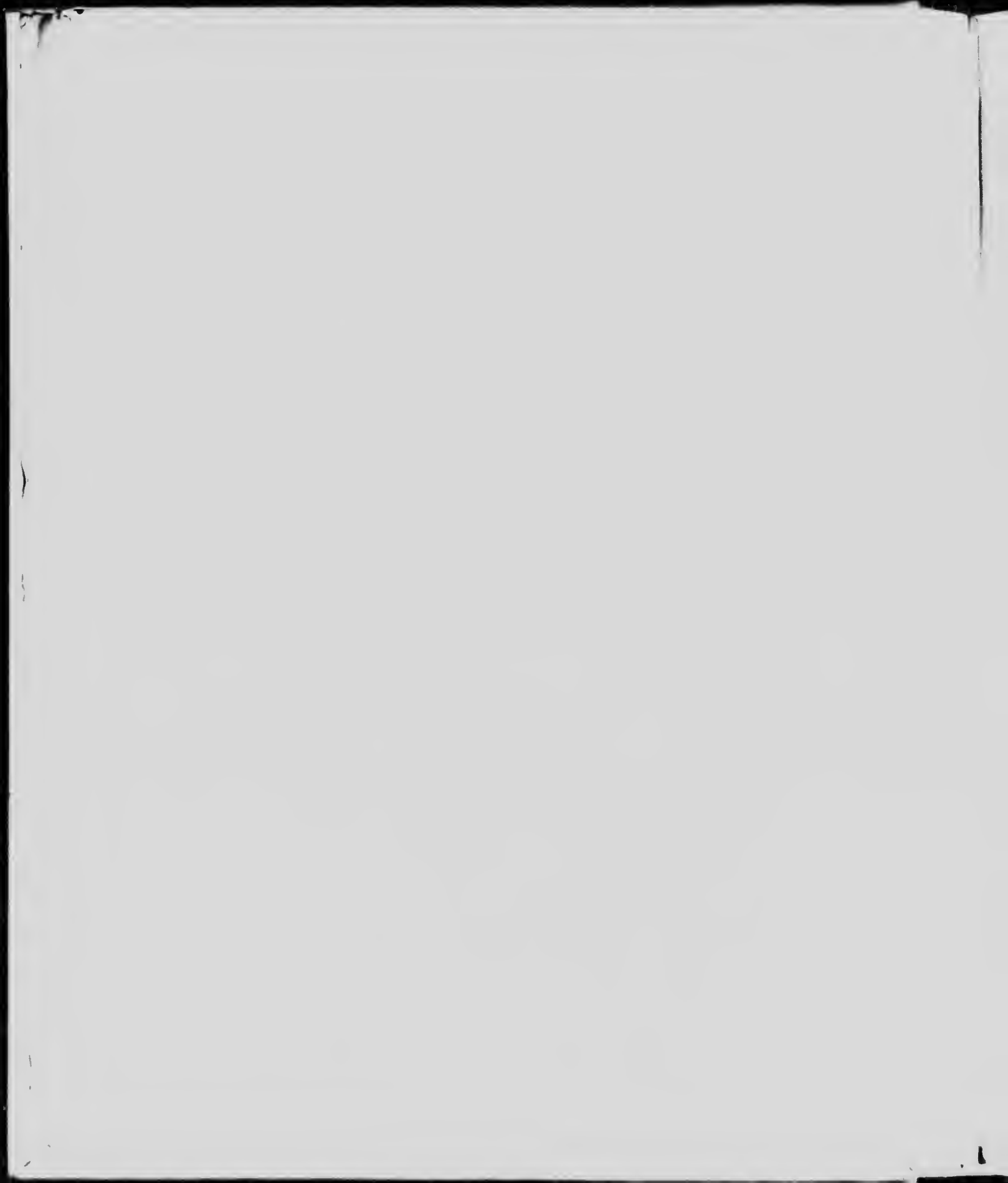
POR. Good sentences and well pronounced.

NER. They would be better, if well followed.

POR. If to do were as easy as to know what were
good to do, chapels had been churches and poor
men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good
divine that follows his own instructions: I can

Portia.

Act II. Scene I.







SC. II.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o'er a cold decree: such a hare is madness the youth, to skip o'er the meshes of good counsel the cripple. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband. O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose whom I would nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?

NER. 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, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, 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?

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

NER. First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

POR. Ay, that's a colt indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts, that he can shoe him himself.

NER. Then there is the County Palatine.

POR. He doth nothing but frown, as who should say 'If you will not have me, choose': he hears merry tales and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. 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!

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

POR. God made him, and therefore let him pass for a man. In truth, I know it is a sin to be a mocker: but, he! why, he hath a horse better than the Neapolitan's, a better bad habit of frowning than the Count Palatine; he is every man in no man; 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. If he would despise me, I would forgive him, for if he love me to madness, I shall never requite him.

SC. II.]

OF VENICE

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

POR. You know I say nothing to him, for he understands not me, nor I him: he hath neither Latin, French, nor Italian, and you will come into the court and swear that I have a poor pennyworth in the English. He is a proper man's picture, but, alas, who can converse with a dumbshow? How oddly he is suited! I think he bought his doublet in Italy, his round hose in France, his bonnet in Germany and his behaviour every where.

NER. What think you of the Scottish lord, his neighbour?

POR. That he hath a neighbourly charity in him, for he borrowed a box of the ear of the Englishman and swore he would pay him again when he was able: I think the Frenchman became his surety and sealed under for another.

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

POR. 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: an the worst fall that ever

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

NER. 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.

POR. Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee, set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket, for if the devil be within and that temptation without, I know he will choose it. I will do any thing, Nerissa, ere I'll be married to a sponge.

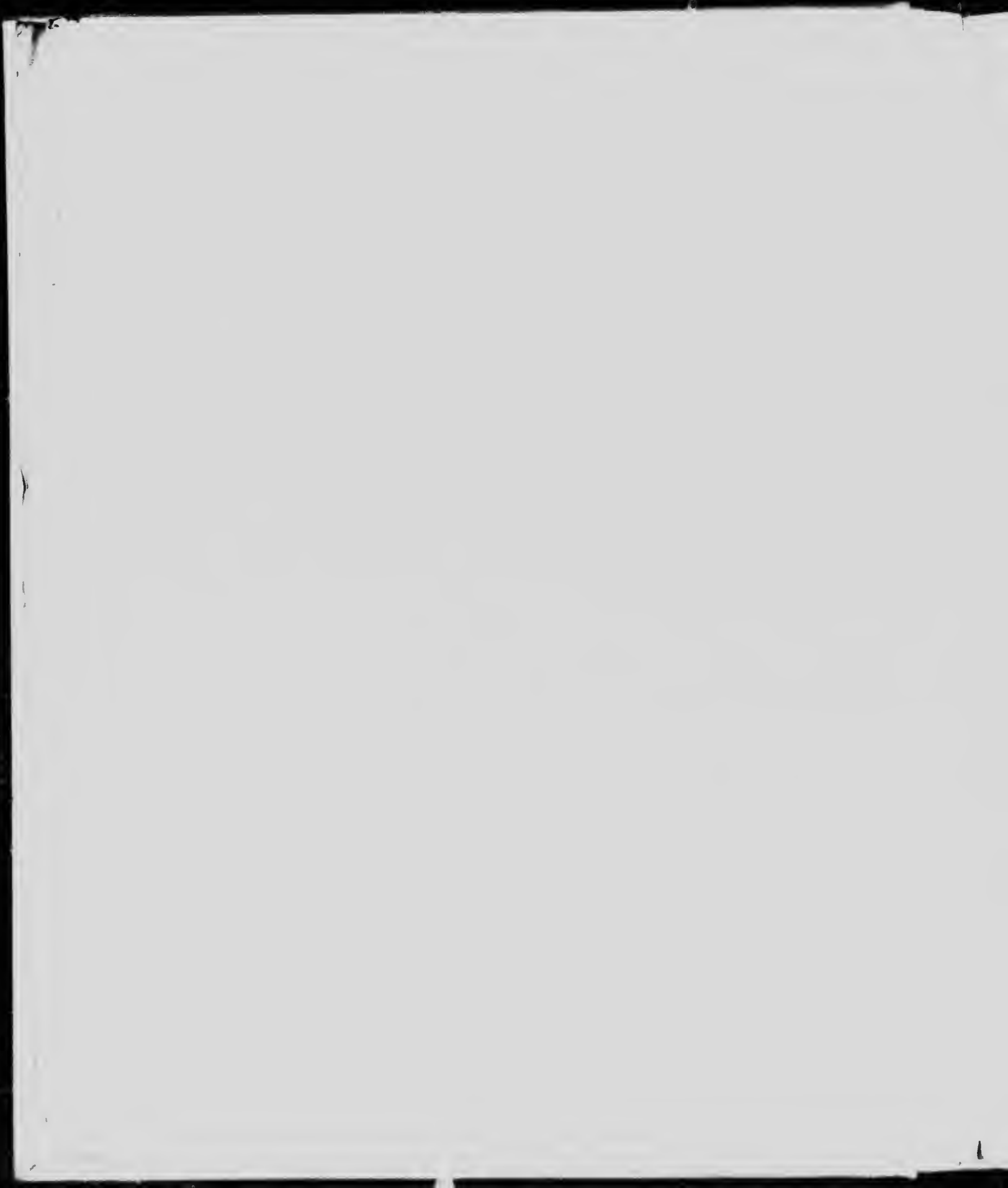
NER. You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords: they have acquainted me with their determinations; which is indeed to return to their home and to trouble you with no more suit, unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition depending on the caskets.

POR. If I live to be as old as Sibylla, I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable, for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I pray God grant them a fair departure.

NER. Do you not remember, lady, in your father's

*Bassanio, Lorenzo, Old Gobbo and
Launcelot Gobbo.*

*"To him, Father" (page 39).
Act II. Scene II.*





SC. II.]

OF VENICE

time, a Venetian, a scholar and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Monferrat?

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

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

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

Enter a Serving-man.

How now! what news?

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

POR. If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good a heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before.

Whiles we shut the gates upon one wooer, another knocks at the door.

[Exeunt.]

[ACT I.

SCENE III

Venice. A public place.

Enter BASSANIO and SHYLOCK.

SHY. Three thousand ducats ; well.

BASS. Ay, sir, for three months.

SHY. For three months ; well.

BASS. For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall
be bound.

SHY. Antonio shall become bound ; well.

BASS. May you stead me ? will you pleasure me ?
shall I know your answer ?

SHY. Three thousand ducats, for three months, and
Antonio bound.

BASS. Your answer to that.

SHY. Antonio is a good man.

BASS. Have you heard any imputation to the con-
trary ?

SHY. Oh, no, no, no, no : my meaning in saying
he is a good man is to have you understand me

SC. III.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

that he is sufficient. Yet his means are in supposition : he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies ; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men : there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves, I mean pirates, and then there is the peril of waters, winds and rocks. The man is, notwithstanding, sufficient. Three thousand ducats ; I think I may take his bond.

BASS. Be assured you may.

SHY. I will be assured I may ; and, that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio ?

BASS. If it please you to dine with us.

SHY. Yes, to smell pork ; to eat of the habitation which your prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following, but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What news on the Rialto ? Who is he comes here ?

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

Enter ANTONIO.

BASS. This is Signior Antonio.

SHY. [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian,
But more for that in low simplicity
He lends out money gratis and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation, and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe,
If I forgive him!

BASS. Shylock, do you hear?

SHY. I am debating of my present store,
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But soft! how many months
Do you desire? [*To ANT.*] Rest you fair, good
signior;
Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

Gratiano.

Act II. Scene II.









SC. III.] OF VENICE

ANT. Shylock, although I neither lend nor borrow
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I'll break a custom. Is he yet possess'd
How much ye would?

SHY. Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

ANT. And for three months.

SHY. I had forgot; three months; you told me so.
Well then, your bond; and let me see; but hear
you;

Methought you said you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

ANT. I do never use it.

SHY. When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep—
This Jacob from our holy Abram was,
As his wise mother wrought in his behalf,
The third possessor; ay, he was the third—

ANT. And what of him? did he take interest?

SHY. No, not take interest, not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did
When Laban and himself were compromised
That all the eanlings which were streak'd and
pied

Should fall as Jacob's hire.

This was a way to thrive, and he was blest:
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

ANT. This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served
for ;

A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But sway'd and fashion'd by the hand of heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

SHY. I cannot tell ; I make it breed as fast :
But note me, signior.

ANT. Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil sou' producing holy witness
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart :
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath !

SHY. Three thousand ducats ; 'tis a good round
sum.

Three months from twelve ; then, let me see ;
the rate—

ANT. Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you ?

SHY. Signior Antonio, many a time and oft
In the Rialto you have rated me
About my moneys and my usances :
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For sufferance is the badge of all our tribe.
You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,

sc. III.]

OF VENICE

And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well then, it now appears you need my help :
Go to, then ; you come to me, and you say
'Shylock, we would have moneys' : you say
so ;

You, that did void your rheum upon my beard
And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold : moneys is your suit.
What should I say to you ? Should I not
say

'Hath a dog money ? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats ?' Or
Shall I bend low and in a bondman's key,
With bated breath and whispering humbleness,
Say this ;

'Fair sir, you spit on me on Wednesday last ;
You spurn'd me such a day ; another time
You call'd me dog ; and for these courtesies
I'll lend you thus much moneys ?'

ANT. I am as like to call thee so again,
To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends ; for when did friendship
take

A breed for barren metal of his friend ?
But lend it rather to thine enemy,

THE MERCHANT [ACT I.

Who if he break, thou mayst with better face
Exact the penalty.

SHY. Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you and have your
love,
Forget the shames that you have stain'd me
with,
Supply your present wants and take no doit
Of usance for my moneys, and you'll not hear
me:

This is kind I offer.

BASS. This were kindness.

SHY. This kindness will I show.

Go with me to a notary, seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum or sums as are
Express'd in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

ANT. Content, i' faith: I'll seal to such a bond

And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

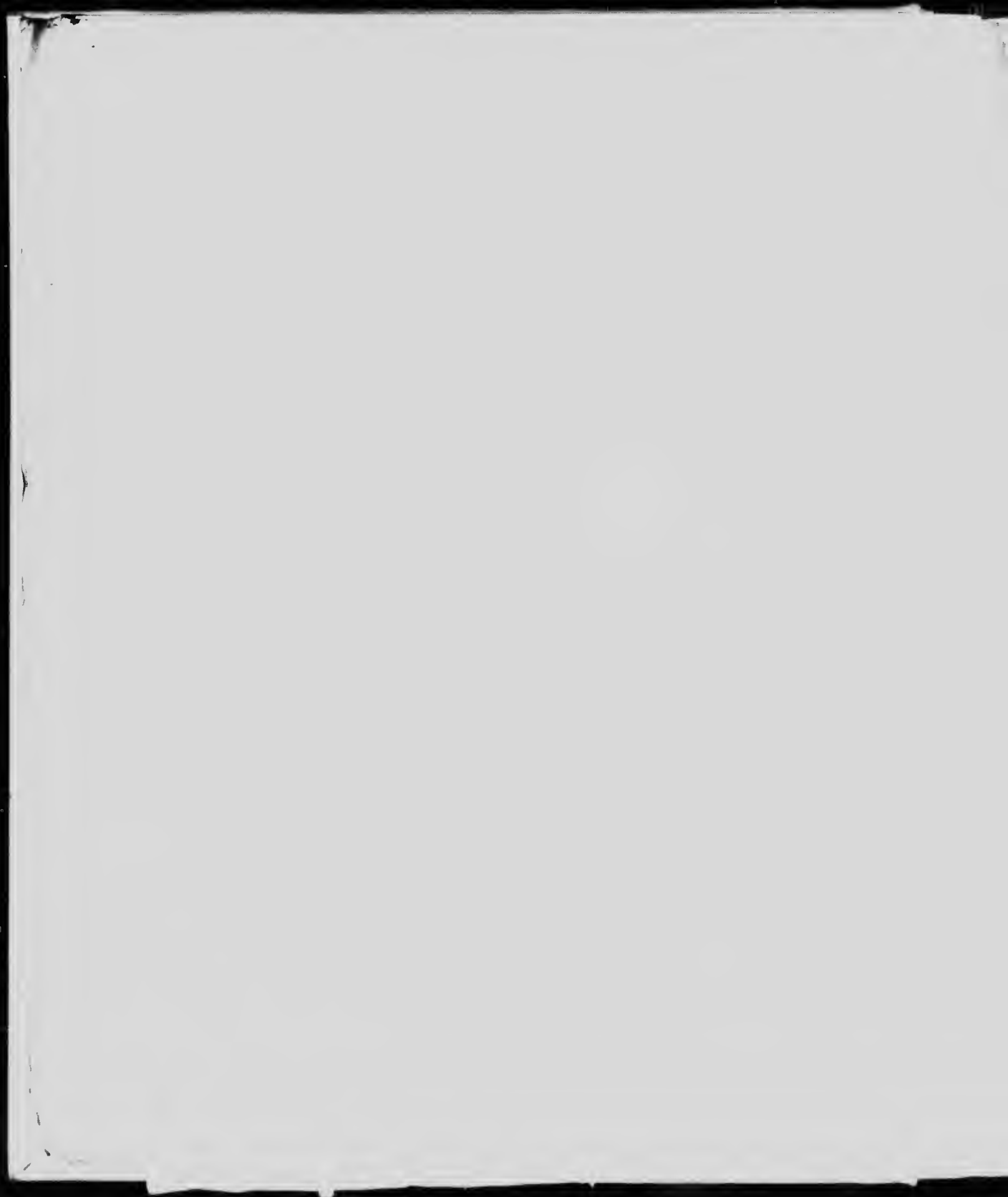
BASS. You shall not seal to such a bond for me:

I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANT. Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:

Jessica and Launcelot.

Act II. Scene III.





1871

SC. III.] OF VENICE

Within these two months, that's a month
before

This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHY. O father Abram, what these Christians
are,

Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me
this;

If he should break his day, what should I
gain

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 my friendship:

If he will take it, so; if not,

And, for my love, I pray you, let me not.

ANT. Yes, Shylock, I will seal up 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 ward

Of an unthrifty knave, and presently

I will be with you.

ANT. Hie thee, gentle Jew. [Exit]

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT I.

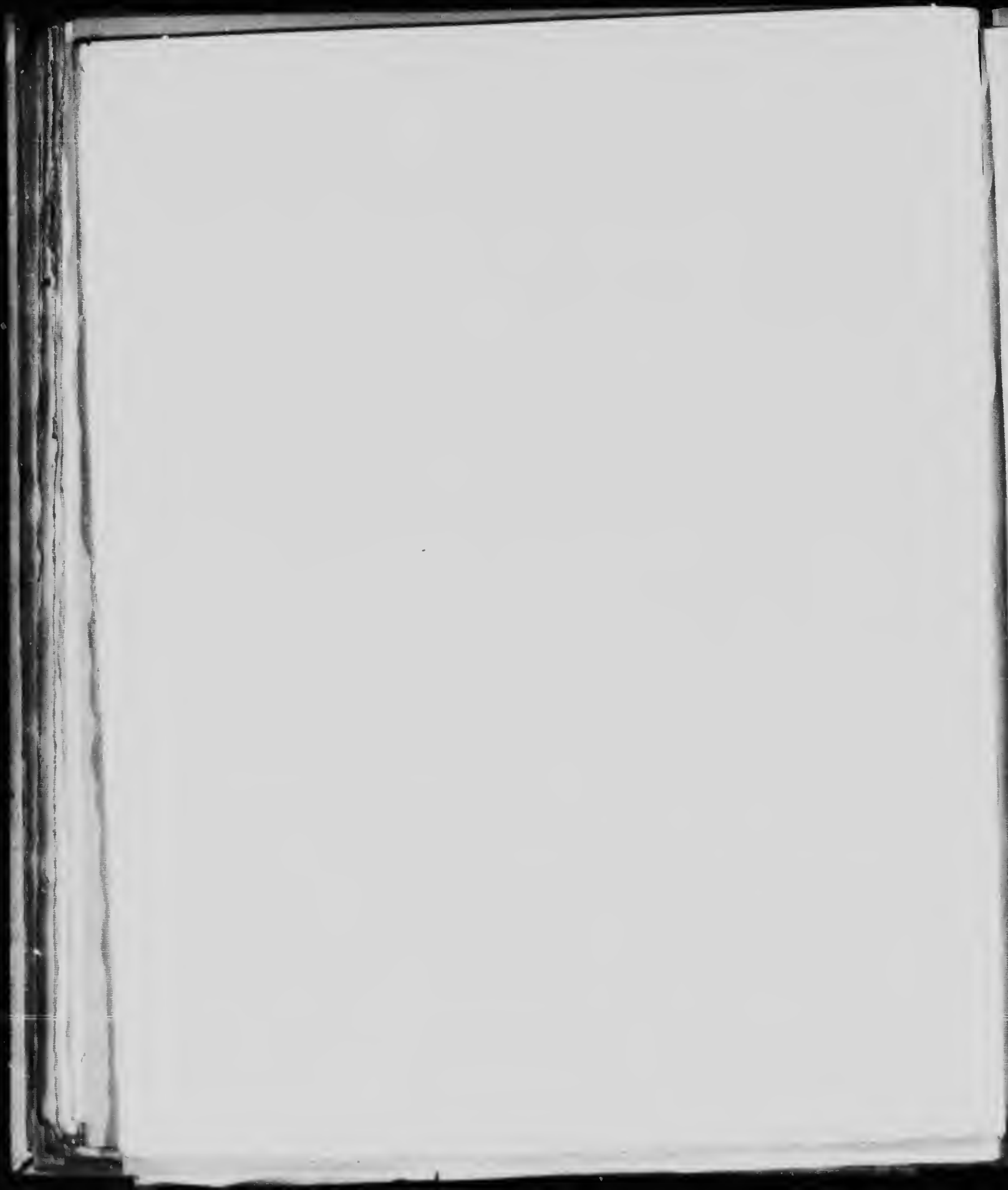
The Hebrew will turn Christian: he grows
kind.

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



Jessica.

Act II. Scene V.







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. Mislake 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,
Whom Phœbus' 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;

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

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,

sc. 1.]

OF VENICE

And either not attempt to choose at all
Or swear, before you choose, if you choose
wrong

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 curs'd'st among men.

[Cornets, and exeunt.]

[ACT II.

SCENE II

Venice. A street.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

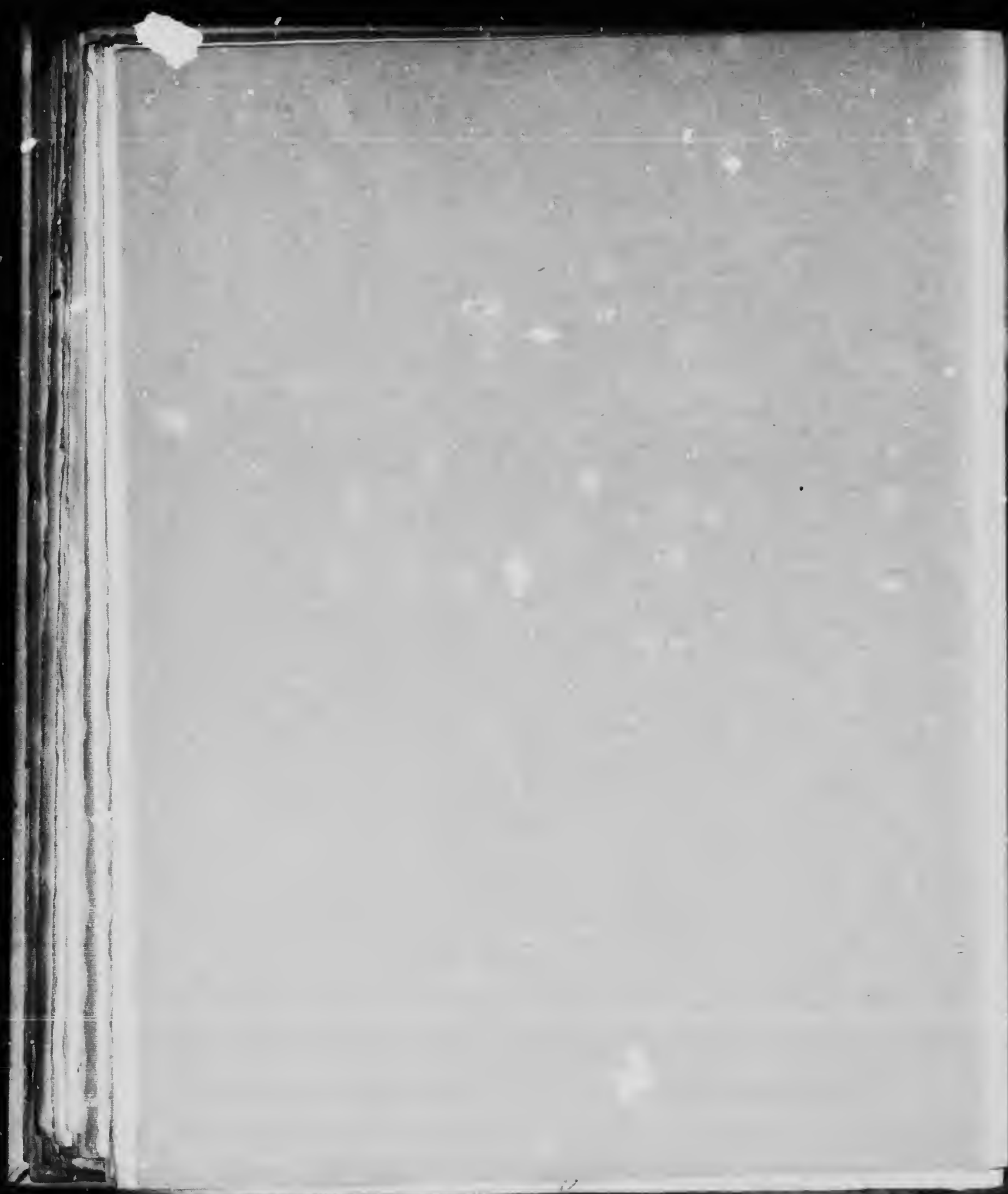
LAUN. Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master. The fiend is at mine elbow and tempts me, saying to me 'Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot,' or 'good Gobbo,' or 'good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away.' My conscience says 'No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo,' or, as aforesaid, 'honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run; scorn running with thy heels.' Well, the most courageous 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

Slylock.

Act II. Scene V.







SC. II.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

an honest woman; for indeed my father did something . . . , something grow to, he had a kind of taste; well, my conscience says 'Launcelot, budge not.' 'Budge,' says 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 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-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel-blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

GOB. Master young gentleman, I pray you, 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, 'twill 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?

[*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?

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

SC. II.]

OF VENICE

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.

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 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 child that shall be.

GOB. I cannot think you are my son.

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

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 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 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

Lorenzo

Act II. Scene VI.







SC. II.] OF VENICE

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—

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

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?

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.

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.

SC. II.] OF VENICE

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 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.

BASSANIO. 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!

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

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.

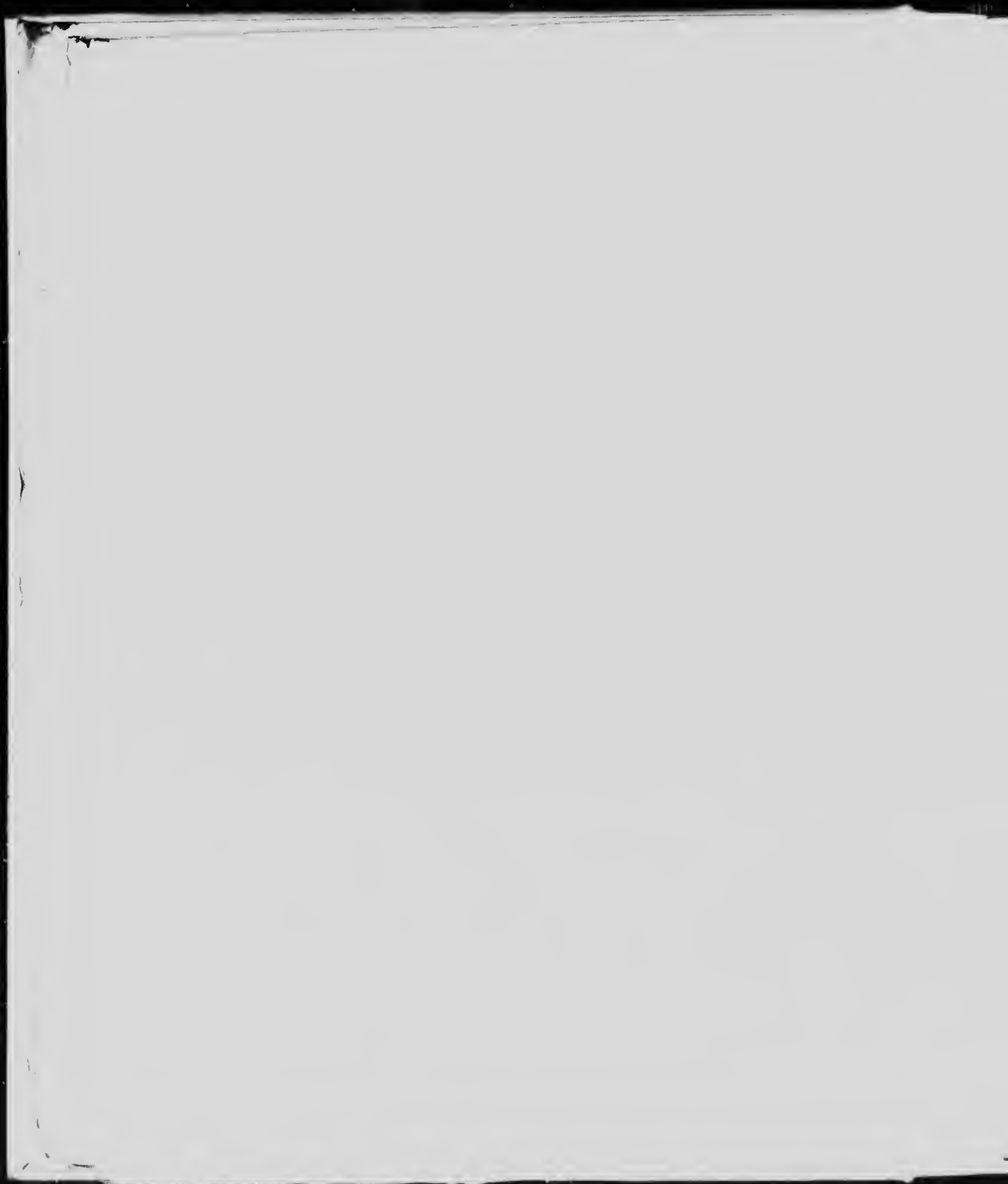
GRA. Signior Bassanio, hear me :

If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely,
Say more, while grace is saying, hood mine
eyes

Thus with my hat, and sigh and say ' amen,'
Use all the observance of civility,

*Jessica, Lorenzo, Gratiano and
Salarino.*

*"Here, catch this caske!" (page 54).
Act II. Scene VI.*







OF THE

Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page.

SC. II.]

OF VENICE

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
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.*]

[ACT II.

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, 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 !

SC. III.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

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.]

[ACT II.

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,
Al! in an hour.

GRA. We have not made good preparation.

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

SALAN. 'Tis vile, unless it may be quaintly order'd,
And better in my mind not undertook.

LOR. 'Tis now but four o'clock : we have two hours
To furnish us.

Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter.

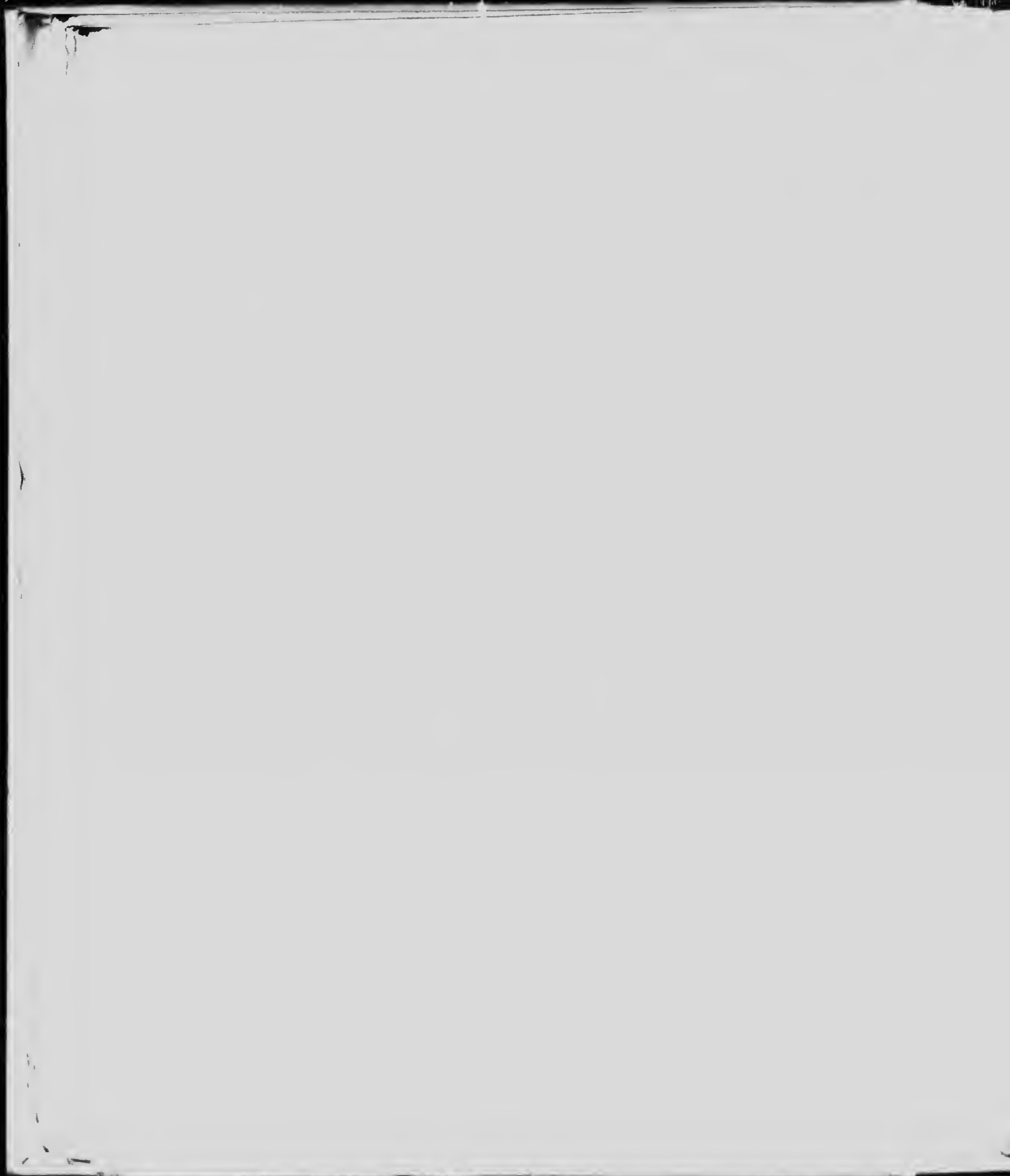
Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

LAUN. An it shall please you to break up this, it
shall seem to signify.

Lorenzo and Jessica.

*"So are you, sweet, even the lovely
garnish of a boy" (page 54).*

Act II. Scene VI.





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sc. iv.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

LOR. I know the hand : in faith, 'tis 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 iny old master the Jew to
sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

LOR. Hold here, take this : tell gentle Jessica
I will not fail her ; speak it privately.

[*Exit* LAUNCELOT.

Go, gentlemen,

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. 'Tis good we do so.

[*Exeunt* SALARINO and SALANIO.

GRA. Was not that letter from fair Jessica ?

LOR. I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed

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,

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT II.

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.*

sc. v.]

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?

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.]

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. An 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 morn-
ing, 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,
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 :

Jessica.

*"I will make fast the doors, and will gild
myself with some more ducats" (page 57).*

Act II. Scene VI.







sc. v.] OF VENICE

But I will go. Go you before me, sirrah ;
Say I will come.

LAUN. I will go before, sir. Mistress, look out 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
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.*

[ACT II.

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

SC. VI.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

The scarfed bark puts from her native bay,
Hugg'd and embraced by the strumpet wind!
How like the prodigal doth she return,
With over-weather'd ribs and ragged sails,
Lean, rent and beggar'd by the strumpet wind!
SALAR. Here comes Lorenzo: more of this here-
after.

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 certainty,
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
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

LOR. Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that
thou art.

JES. Here, catch this casket ; it is worth the pains.
I am glad 'tis 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 commi. ,
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.

JES. What, must I hold a candle to my shames ?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too too light.
Why, 'tis 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. *[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,

The Prince of Morocco.

Act II. Scene VII.







SC. VI.] OF VENICE

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?

'Tis 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.

[ACT II.

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
deserves';

The 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?

POR. He on whom they contain my picture, prince
If you please that, then I am yours withal.

SC. VII.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

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;

I'll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What say the silver with her virgin hue?

'Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.'

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

Were but a weak disabling

As much as I deserve!

I do in birth deserve her.

In graces and in qualities

But more than these, in

What if I stray'd no further out choice

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

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.

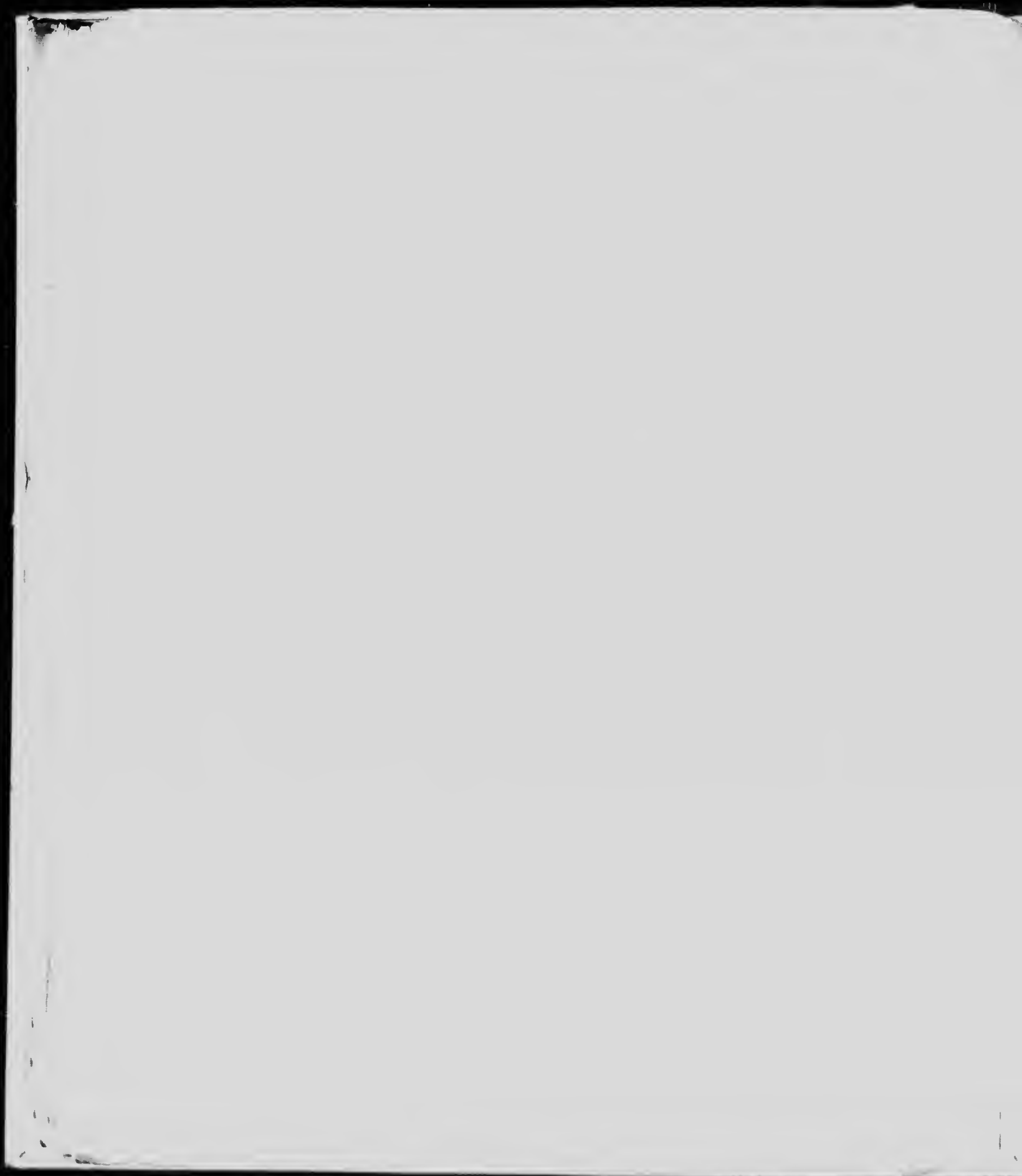
One of these three contains her heavenly picture.
Is't like that lead contains her? 'Twere damna-
tion

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

Nerissa.

Act II. Scene IX.







SC. VII.] OF VENICE

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 t.'e 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 inscroll'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.*

[ACT II.

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 !

SC. VIII.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

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:
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;

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT II.

Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio,
But stay the very riping of the time ;
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.

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.*

The Prince of Arragon

Act II. Scene IX.







SC. IX.]

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.

ARRA. I am enjoin'd by oath to observe three
things:

First, never to unfold to any one

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

Which casket 'twas 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.

ARRA. 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.

I will not choose what many men desire,

SC. IX.] OF VENICE

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.
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.]

THE MERCHANT [ACT II.

POR. Too long a pause for that which you find there.

ARRA. 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.

ARRA. What is here?

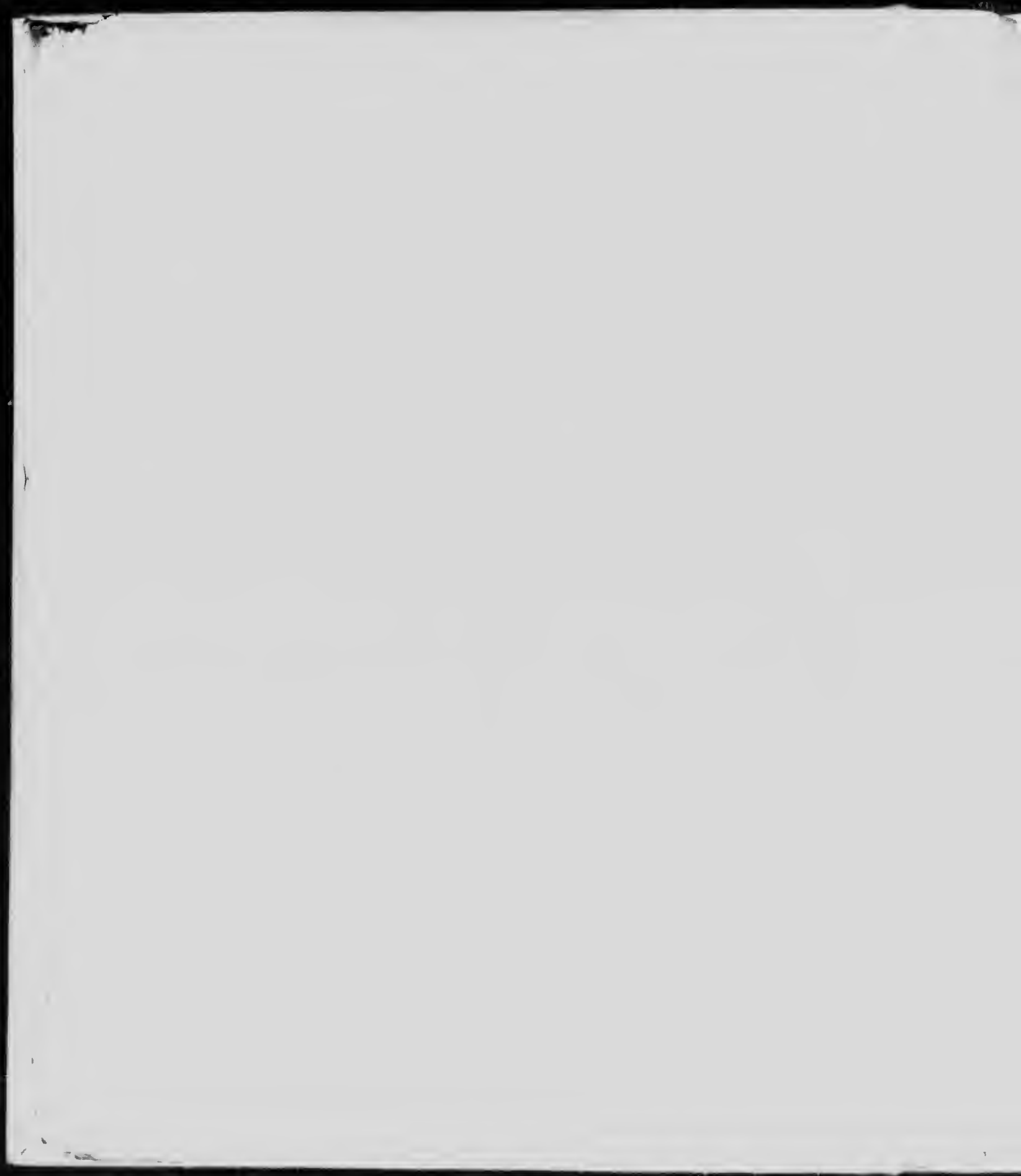
[*Reads*] The fire seven times tried this:
Seven times tried that judgement is,
That did never choose amiss.
Some there be that shadows kiss;
Such have but a shadow's bliss:
There be fools alive, I wis,
Silver'd o'er; and so was this.
Take what wife you will to bed,
I will ever be your head:
So be gone: 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.

*The Prince of Arragon, Portia and
Nerissa.*

*"Sweet adieu. I'll keep my oath, patiently
to bear my wroth" (page 67).*

Act II. Scene IX.







SC. IX.] OF VENICE

Sweet, adieu. I'll keep my oath,
Patiently to bear my wrath.

[Exeunt ARRAGON and train.]

POR. Thus hath the candle singed the moth.
O, these deliberate fools! when they do choose,
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,
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,

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT II.

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.

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

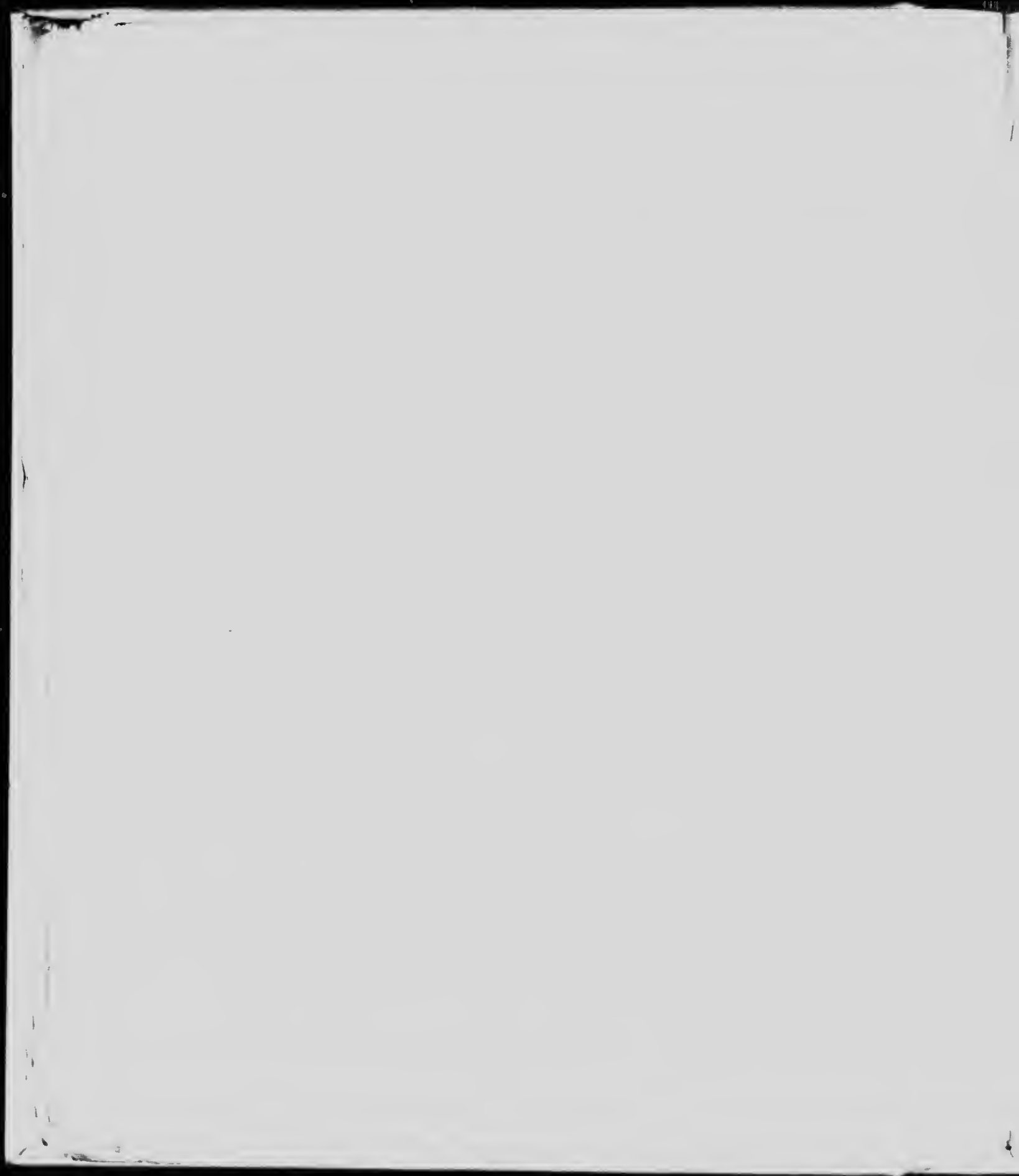
[Exeunt.]

ACT III



Bassanio and Gratiano.
The Journey to Belmont (page 67).
Act II. Scene IX.









SCENE I

Venice. A street.

Enter SALANIO and SALARINO.

SALAN. Now, what news on the Rialto?

SALAR. 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.

SALAN. 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!—

SALAR. Come, the full stop.

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.

SALAN. Ha! what sayest thou? Why, the end is,
he hath lost a ship.

SALAR. I would it might prove the end of his
losses.

SALAN. Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil
cross my prayer, for here he comes in the like-
ness of a Jew.

Enter SHYLOCK.

How now, Shylock! what news among the
merchants?

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

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

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

SHY. My own flesh and blood to rebel!

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

SHY. 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.

SALAR. Why, I am sure, if he forfeit thou shalt not take his flesh: what's that good for.

SHY. 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 suffer-

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.

ance 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.

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

SALAR. We have been up and down to seek him.

Enter TUBAL.

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

[Exeunt SALANIO, SALARINO, and Servant.

SHY. How now, Tubal! what news from Genoa?
hast thou found my daughter?

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

SHY. Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond
gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort!
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

Shylock and Tubal.

"Out upon her. Thou torturest me, I' bal"
(page 76).

Act III. Scene I.







sc. 1.]

OF VENICE.

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.

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

SHY. What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

TUB. Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

SHY. I than! God, I thank God. Is't true, is't true?

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

SHY. I thank thee, good Tubal: good news, good news! ha, ha! where? in Genoa?

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

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

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

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT III.]

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

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

SHY. 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.

TUB. But Antonio is certainly undone.

SHY. Nay, that's true, that's very true. Go, Tubal, see 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, go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue ; go, good Tubal ; at our synagogue, Tubal. *[Exeunt.]*

SC. II.]

SCENE II

Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

*Enter BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA,
and Attendants.*

POR. I pray you, tarry : pause a day or two
Before you hazard ; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company : therefore forbear awhile.
There's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you ; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.
But lest you should not understand me well,—
And yet a maiden hath no tongue but thought,—
I would detain you here some month or two
Before you venture for me. I could teach you
How to choose right, but I am then forsworn ;
So will I never be : so may you miss me ;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn. Beshrew your eyes,
They have o'erlook'd me and divided me ;
One half of me is yours, the other half yours,

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

Mine own, I would say; but if mine, then yours,
And so all yours. O, these naughty times
Put bars between the owners and their rights!
And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so,
Let fortune go to hell for it, not I.
I speak too long; but 'tis to peize the time,
To eke it and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

BASS. Let me choose;

For as I am, I live upon the rack.

POR. Upon the rack, Bassanio! then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

BASS. None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love:
There may as well be amity and life
'Tween snow and fire, as treason and my love.

POR. Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything.

BASS. Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

POR. Well then, confess and live.

BASS. 'Confess' and 'love'
Had been the very sum of my confession:
O happy torment, when my torturer
Doth teach me answers for deliverance!
But let me to my fortune and the caskets.

POR. Away, then! I am lock'd in one of them:

*Portia, Bassanio, Nerissa and
Gratiano.*

*"But thou, thou meagre lead" (page 81).
Act III. Scene II.*







sc. II.]

OF VENICE

If you do love me, you will find me out.
Nerissa and the rest, stand all aloof.
Let music sound while he doth make his choice ;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music : that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the
stream.

And watery death-bed for him. He may win ;
And what is music then ? Then music is
Even as the flourish when true subjects bow
To a new-crowned monarch : such it is
As are those dulcet sounds in break of day
That creep into the dreaming bridegroom's ear
And summon him to marriage. Now he goes,
With no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea-monster : I stand for sacrifice ;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules !
Live thou, I live : with much more dismay
I view the fight than thou that makest the fray.

*Music, whilst BASSANIO comments on the caskets
to himself.*

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

SONG.

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart or in the head?
How begot, how nourished?

Reply, reply.

It is engender'd in the eyes,
With gazing fed; and fancy dies
In the cradle where it lies.

Let us all ring fancy's knell:
I'll begin it,—Ding, dong, bell.

ALL. Ding, dong, bell.

BASS. So may the outward shows be least themselves:

The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt
But, being season'd with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damned error, but some sober brow
Will bless it and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?
There is no vice so simple but assumes
Some mark of virtue on his outward parts:
How many cowards, whose hearts are all as false
As stairs of sand, wear yet upon their chins
The beards of Hercules and frowning Mars,
Who, inward search'd, have livers white as milk;

sc. II.]

OF VENICE

And these assume but valour's excrement
To render them redoubted! Look on beauty,
And you shall see 'tis purchased by the weight;
Which therein works a miracle in nature,
Making them lightest that wear most of it:
So are those crisped snaky golden locks
Which make such wanton gambols with the wind,
Upon supposed fairness, often known
To be the dowry of a second head,
The skull that bred them in the sepulchre.
Thus ornament is but the guiled shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty; in a word,
The seeming truth which cunning times put on
To entrap the wisest. Therefore, thou gaudy
gold,

Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee;
Nor none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man: but thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threatenest than dost promise aught,
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence;
And here choose I: joy be the consequence!
POR. [*Aside*] How all the other passions fleet to air,
As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy!
O love, be moderate; allay thy ecstasy;

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

In measure rain thy joy ; scant this excess.
I feel too much thy blessing : make it less,
For fear I surfeit.

BASS.

What find I here ?

[*Opening the leaden casket.*]

Fair Portia's counterfeit ! What demi-god
Hath come so near creation ? Move these eyes ?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seem they in motion ? Here are sever'd lips,
Parted with sugar breath : so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her
hairs

The painter plays the spider and hath woven
A golden mesh to entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs : but he, eyes,—
How could he see to do them ? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his
And leave itself unfurnish'd. Yet look, how far
The substance of my praise doth wrong this
shadow

In underprizing it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance. Here's the
scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

[*Reads*] You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair and choose as true !

*Portia, Bassanio, Gratiano and
Nerissa.*

"You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid"
(page 85).

Act III. Scene II.







sc. II.]

OF VENICE

Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is
And claim her with a loving kiss.

A gentle scroll. Fair lady, by your leave ;
I come by note, to give and to receive.
Like one of two contending in a prize,
That thinks he hath done well in people's eyes,
Hearing applause and universal shout,
Giddy in spirit, still gazing in a doubt
Whether those peals of praise be his or no,
So, thrice-fair lady, stand I, even so ;
As doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirm'd, sign'd, ratified by you.
POR. You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am : though for myself alone
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better ; yet, for you
I would be trebled twenty times myself ;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich ;
That only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account ; but the full sum of me

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

Is sum of—something, which, to term in gross,
Is an unlesson'd girl, unschool'd, unpractised ;
Happy in this, she is not yet so old
But she may learn ; happier than this,
She is not bred so dull but she can learn ;
Happiest of all is that her gentle spirit
Commits itself to yours to be directed,
As from her lord, her governor, her king.
Myself and what is mine to you and yours
Is now converted : but now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself ; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants and this same myself
Are yours, my lord : I give them with this ring ;
Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

BASS. Madam, you have bereft me of all words,
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins ;
And there is such confusion in my powers
As, after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince, there doth appear
Among the buzzing pleased multitude ;
Where every something, being blent together,
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,
Express'd and not express'd. But when this ring

SC. II.] OF VENICE

Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence :
O, then be bold to say Bassanio's dead !

NER. My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy : good joy, my lord and lady !

GRA. My lord Bassanio and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish ;
For I am sure you can wish none from me :
And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

BASS. With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

GRA. I thank your lordship, you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours :
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid ;
You loved, I loved, for intermission.
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the casket there,
And so did mine too, as the matter falls ;
For wooing here until I sweat again,
And swearing till my very reef was dry
With oaths of love, at last, if promise last,
I got a promise of this fair one here
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

POR. Is this true, Nerissa ?

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.

NER. Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

BASS. And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

GRA. Yes, faith, my lord.

BASS. Our feast shall be much honour'd in your marriage.

GRA. But who comes here? Lorenzo and his infidel?

What, and my old Venetian friend Salerio?

Enter LORENZO, JESSICA, and SALERIO, a messenger from Venice.

BASS. Lorenzo and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome. By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

POR. So do I, my lord:
They are entirely welcome.

LOR. I thank your honour. For my part, my lord,

My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did intreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

SALER. I did, my lord;

Bassanio, Portia and Nerissa.

*"There are some shrewd contents in 'on
same paper'" (page 87).*

Act III. Scene II.







SC. II.] OF VENICE

And I have reason for it. Signor Antonio
Commends him to you.

[Gives BASSANIO a letter.]

BASS. Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you, tell me how my good friend doth.

SALER. Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind ;
Nor well, unless in mind : his letter there
Will show you his estate.

GRA. Nerissa, cheer yon stranger ; bid her welcome.
Your hand, Salerio : what's the news from
Venice ?

How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio ?
I know he will be glad of our success ;
We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.

SALER. I would you had won the fleece that he
hath lost.

POR. There are some shrewd contents in yon same
paper,
That steals the colour from Bassanio's cheek :
Some dear friend dead ; else nothing in the
world

Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse !
With leave, Bassanio ; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of anything
That this same paper brings you.

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.

BASS.

O sweet Portia,

Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins, I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told
you

That I was worse than nothing; for indeed
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures fail'd? What, not one
hit?

From Tripolis, from Mexico and England,
From Lisbon, Barbary and India?
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

SALERIO.

Not one, my lord.

Besides, it should appear, that if he had

SC. II.]

OF VENICE

The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature, that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man :
He plies the duke at morning and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice : twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him ;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice and his bond.

JES. When I was with him I have heard him
swear

To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,
That he would rather have Antonio's flesh
Than twenty times the value of the sum
That he did owe him : and I know, my lord,
If law, authority and power deny not,
It will go hard with poor Antonio.

POR. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

BASS. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best-condition'd and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies, and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

POR. What sum owes he the Jew?

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

BASS. For me three thousand ducats.

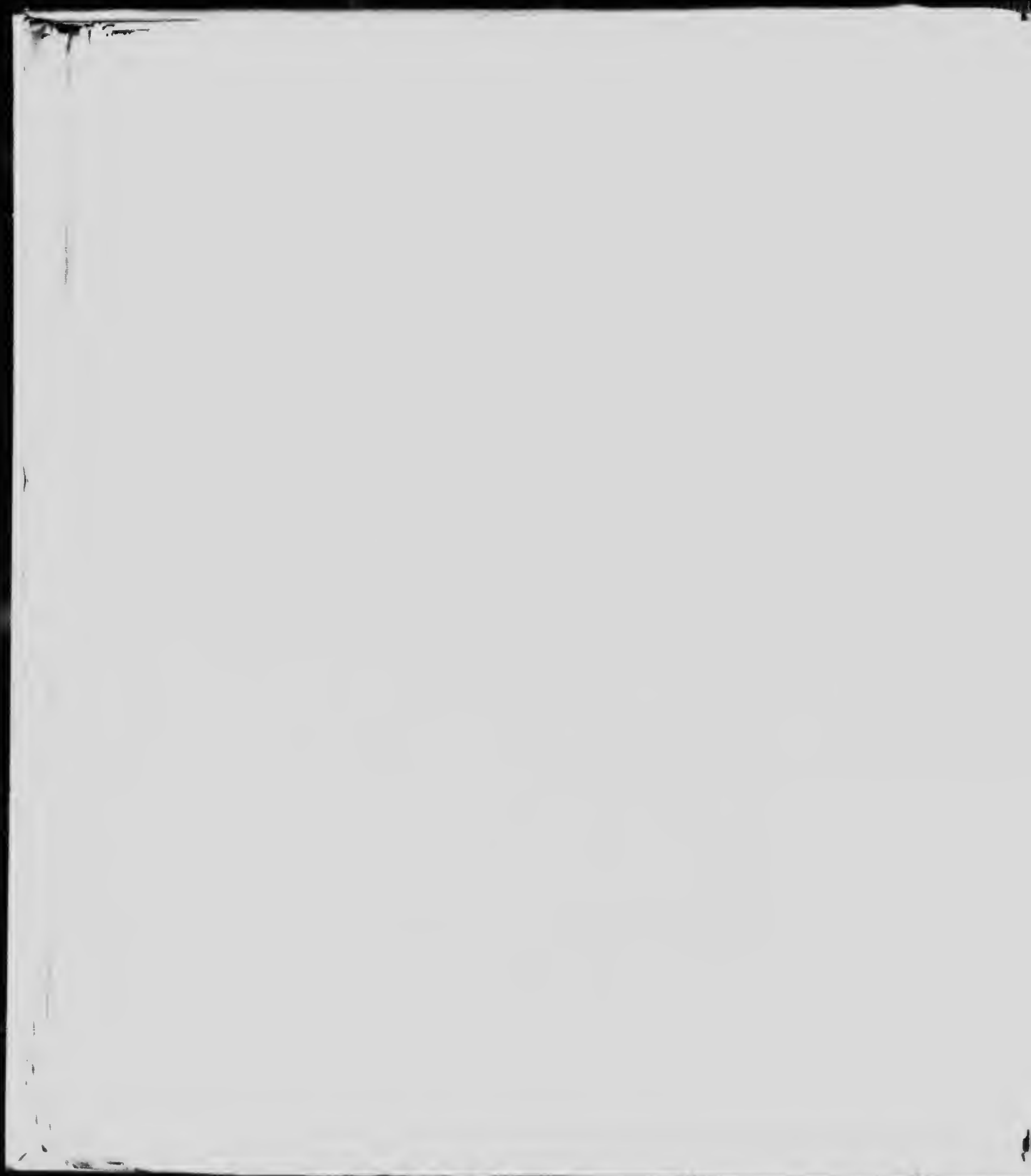
POR. What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond ;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault.
First go with me to church and call me wife,
And then away to Venice to your friend ;
For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over :
When it is paid, bring your true friend along.
My maid Nerissa and myself meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away !
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day :
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer :
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

BASS. [*Reads*] Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all
miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate
is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit ; and
since in paying it, it is impossible I should live,
all debts are cleared between you and I, if I
might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding,
use your pleasure : if your love do not persuade
you to come, let not my letter.

Antonio.

Act III. Scene II.







SC. II.] OF VENICE

POR. O love, dispatch all business, and be gone!

BASS. Since I have your good leave to go away,

 I will make haste: but, till I come again,

 No bed shall e'er be guilty of my stay,

 No rest be interposer 'twixt us twain.

[Exeunt.]

[ACT III.

SCENE III

Venice. A street.

Enter SHYLOCK, SALARINO, ANTONIO, and Gaoler.

SHY. Gaoler, look to him : tell not me of mercy ;
This is the fool that lent out money gratis :
Gaoler, look to him.

ANT. Hear me yet, good Shylock.

SHY. I'll have my bond ; speak not against my
bond :

I have sworn an oath that I will have my bond.
Thou call'dst me dog before thou hadst a cause ;
But, since I am a dog, beware my fangs :
The duke shall grant me justice. I do wonder,
Thou naughty gaoler, that thou art so fond
To come abroad with him at his request.

ANT. I pray thee, hear me speak.

SHY. I'll have my bond ; I will not hear thee speak :
I'll have my bond ; and therefore speak no more.
I'll not be made a soft and dull-eyed fool,

SC. III.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

To shake the head, relent, and sigh, and yield
To Christian intercessors. Follow not ;
I'll have no speaking ; I will have my bond.

[*Exit.*

SALAR. It is the most impenetrable cur
That ever kept with men.

ANT. Let him alone :
I'll follow him no more with bootless prayers.
He seeks my life ; his reason well I know :
I oft deliver'd from his forfeitures
Many that have at times made moan to me ;
Therefore he hates me.

SALAR. I am sure the duke
Will never grant this forfeiture to hold.

ANT. The duke cannot deny the course of law :
For the commodity that strangers have
With us in Venice, if it be denied,
Will much impeach the justice of his state ;
Since that the trade and profit of the city
Consisteth of all nations. Therefore go :
These griefs and losses have so bated me,
That I shall hardly spare a pound of flesh
To-morrow to my bloody creditor.
Well, gaoler, on. Pray God, Bassanio come
To see me pay his debt, and then I care not !

[*Exeunt.*

[ACT III.

SCENE IV

Belmont. A room in PORTIA'S house.

*Enter PORTIA, NERISSA, LORENZO,
JESSICA, and BALTHASAR.*

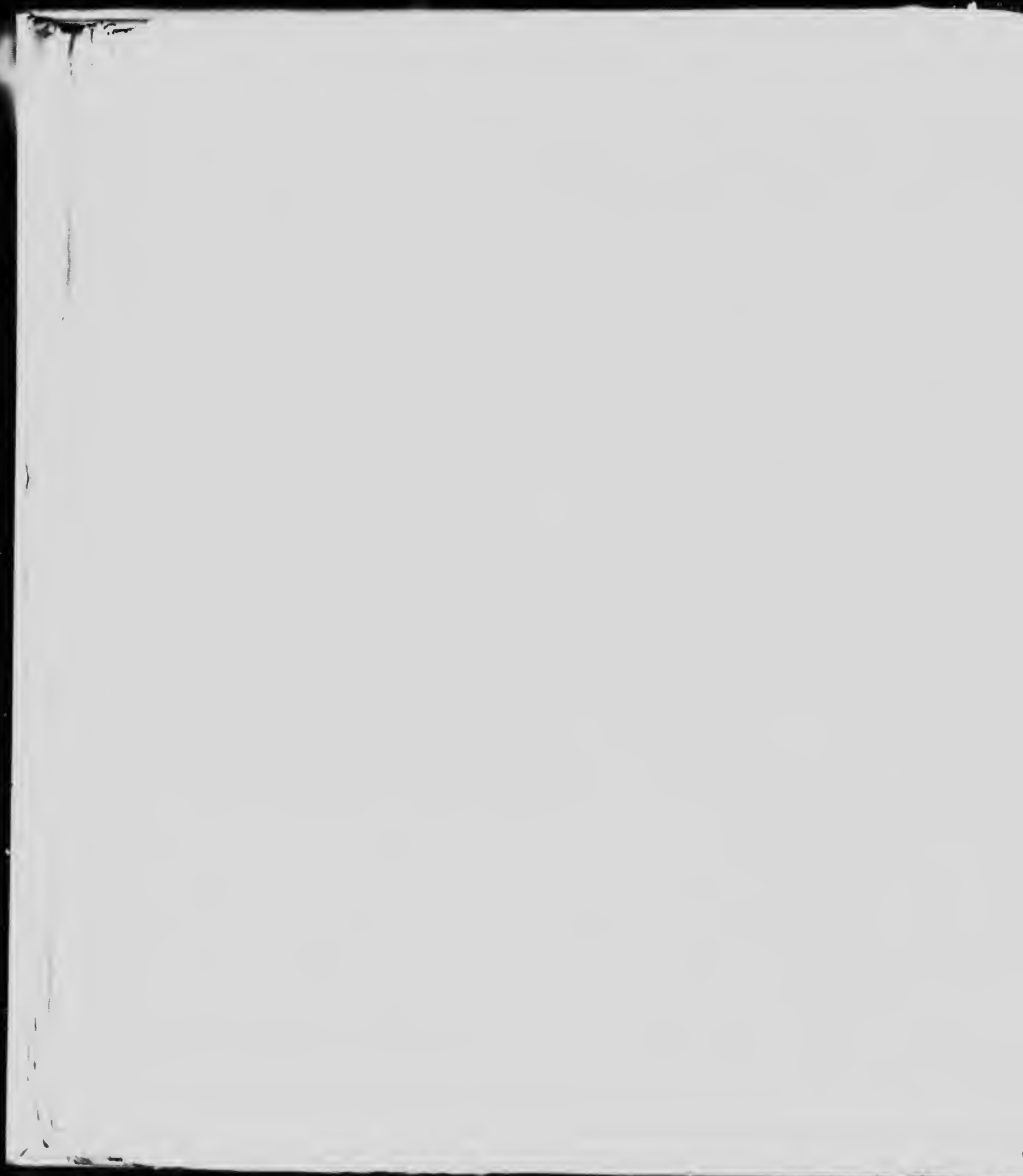
LOR. Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of god-like amity ; which appears most strongly
In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

POR. I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now : for in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit ;

*Shylock, Antonio, Salarino and
Gaoler.*

*"Tell me not of mercy—Gaoler look to
him" (page 92).*

Act III. Scene 1.







SC. IV.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

Which makes me think that this Antonio,
Being the bosom lover of my lord,
Must needs be like my lord. If it be so,
How little is the cost I have bestow'd
In purchasing the semblance of my soul
From out the state of hellish misery !
This comes too near the praising of myself :
Therefore no more of it : hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house
Until my lord's return : for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return :
There is a monastery two miles off ;
And there will we abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love and some necessity
Now lays upon you.

LOR. Madam, with all my heart :
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

POR. My people do already know my mind,
And will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself.
And so farewell, till we shall meet again.

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.]

LOR. Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you !

JES. I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

POR. I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you : fare you well, Jessica.

[*Exeunt* JESSICA and LORENZO.]

Now, Balthasar,

As I have ever found thee honest-true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua : see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario ;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give
thee,

Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the tranect, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice. Waste no time in words,
But get thee gone : I shall be there before thee.

BAL. Madam, I go with all convenient speed.

[*Exit.*]

POR. Come on, Nerissa ; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of : we 'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

NER. Shall they see us ?

POR. They shall, Nerissa ; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I 'll hold thee any wager

sc. iv.]

OF VENICE

When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace,
And speak between the change of man and boy
With a reed voice, and turn two mincing steps
Into a manly stride, and speak of frays
Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died ;
I could not do withal ; then I'll repent,
And wish, for all that, that I had not kill'd them ;
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I have discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,
Which I will practise.
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate ; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

The same. A garden.

Enter LAUNCELOT and JESSICA.

LAUN. Yes, truly; for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore, I promise ye, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned. There is but one hope in it that can do you any good; and that is but a kind of base hope neither.

JES. And what hope is that, I pray thee?

LAUN. Marry, you may partly hope that you are not the Jew's daughter.

JES. That were a kind of base hope, indeed: so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

LAUN. Truly then I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother: well, you are gone both ways.

Portia, Nerissa and Balthazar.
"Take this same letter—in speed to
Padua" (page 96).

Act III. Scene IV.





THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

As you like it

By William Shakespeare

London Printed by J. Sturges and Sons, 15, Abchurch Lane, in the Year 1851

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sc. v.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

JES. I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.

LAUN. Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enow before; e'en as many as could well live, one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs: if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Enter LORENZO.

JES. I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say: here he comes.

LOR. I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot.

JES. Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo: Launcelot and I are out. He tells me flatly, there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter: and he says, you are no good member of the commonwealth, for in converting Jews to Christians, you raise the price of pork.

LOR. I think the best grace of wit will shortly turn into silence, and discourse grow commendable in none only but parrots. Go in, sirrah; bid them prepare for dinner.

LAUN. That is done, sir; they have all stomachs.

THE MERCHANT [ACT III.

LOR. Goodly Lord, what a wit-snapper are you!
then bid them prepare dinner.

LAUN. That is done too, sir; only 'cover' is the
word.

LOR. Will you cover then, sir?

LAUN. Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

LOR. Yet more quarrelling with occasion! Wilt
thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an
instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in
his plain meaning: go to thy fellows; bid them
cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will
come in to dinner.

LAUN. For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for
the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your
coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as
humours and conceits shall govern. [*Exit.*

LOR. O dear discretion, how his words are suited!
The fool hath planted in his memory
An army of good words; and I do know
A many fools, that stand in better place,
Garnish'd like him, that for a tricky word
Defy the matter. How cheer'st thou, Jessica?
And now, good sweet, say thy opinion,
How dost thou like the Lord Bassanio's wife?

JES. Past all expressing. It is very meet
The Lord Bassanio live an upright life;

sc. v.]

OF VENICE

For, having such a blessing in his lady,
He finds the joys of heaven here on earth ;
And if on earth he do not mean it, then
In reason he should never come to heaven.
Why, if two gods should play some heavenly
match

And on the wager lay two earthly women,
And Portia one, there must be something else
Pawn'd with the other, for the poor rude world
Hath not her fellow.

LOR. Even such a husband
Hast thou of me as she is for a wife.

JES. Nay, but ask my opinion too of that.

LOR. I will anon : first, let us go to dinner.

JES. Nay, let me praise you while I have a
stomach.

LOR. No, pray thee, let it serve for table-talk ;
Then, howsoe'er thou speak'st, 'mong other things
I shall digest it.

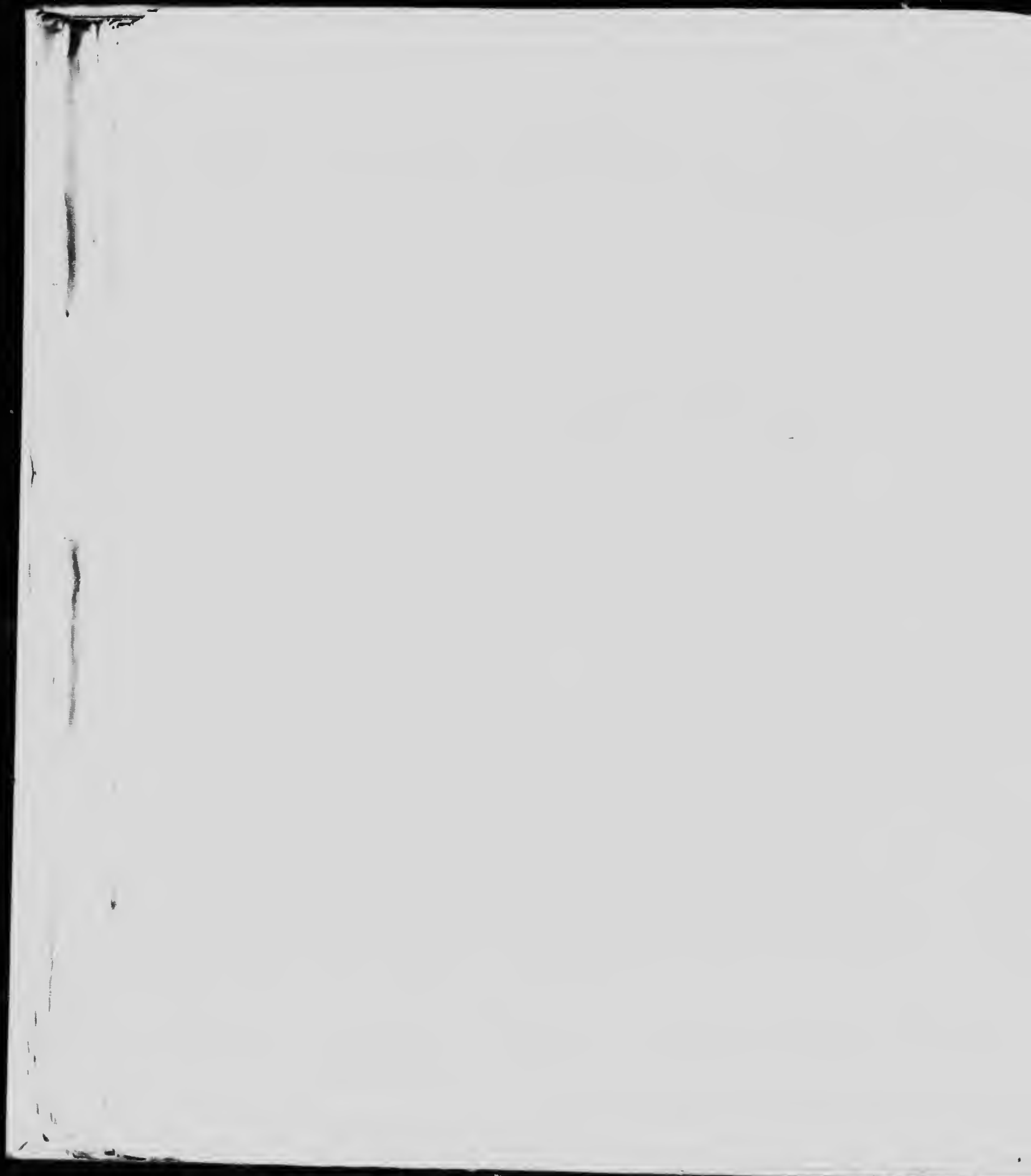
JES. Well, I'll set you forth. [*Exeunt.*



Lorenzo and Jessica.

"Even such a husband hast thou of me"
(page 101).

Act III. Scene V.







ACT IV



SCENE I

Venice. A court of justice.

*Enter the DUKE, the Magnificoes, ANTONIO,
BASSANIO, GRATIANO, SALERIO, and others.*

DUKE. What, is Antonio here?

ANT. Ready, so please your grace.

DUKE. I am sorry for thee: thou art come to
answer

A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

ANT. I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands
obdurate

And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury, and am arm'd
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

DUKE. Go one, and call the Jew into court.

SALER. He is ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

Enter SHYLOCK.

DUKE. Make room, and let him stand before our face.

Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then 'tis thought
Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse more
strange

Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;
And where thou now exact'st the penalty,
Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,
Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,
But, touch'd with human gentieness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enow to press a royal merchant down
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never train'd
To offices of tender courtesy.

We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

*Shylock, Portia, Bassanio, Antonio,
Gratiano and Nerissa.*

*"In which predicament, I say, thou
stand'st" (page 121).*

Act IV. Scene 1.





OF VENICE

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

SHY. I have possess'd your grace of what I purpose,
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond :
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me, why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh than to receive
Three thousand ducats : I 'll not answer that :
But, say, it is my humour : is it answer'd ?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned ? What, are you answer'd yet ?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig ;
Some that are mad if they behold a cat ;
Some, when they hear the bagpipe : for affection,
Mistress of passion, sways it to the mood
Of what it likes or loathes. Now, for your
answer :

As there is no firm reason to be render'd,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig ;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat ;
Why he, a woollen bag-pipe ; but of force
Must yield to such inevitable shame
As to offend, himself being offended ;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate and a certain loathing

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

A losing suit against him. Are you answer'd?

BASS. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

SHY. I am not bound to please thee with my
answers.

BASS. Do all men kill the things they do not love?

SHY. Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

BASS. Every offence is not a hate at first.

SHY. What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee
twice?

ANT. I pray you, think you question with the Jew:

You may as well go stand upon the beach

And bid the main flood bate his usual height;

You may as well use question with the wolf

Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;

You may as well forbid the mountain pines

To wag their high tops and to make no noise,

When they are fretten with the gusts of heaven;

You may as well do anything most hard,

As seek to soften that—than which what's
harder?—

His Jewish heart: therefore, I do beseech you,

Make no more offers, use no farther means,

But with all brief and plain conveniency

Let me have judgement and the Jew his will.

SC. 1.]

OF VENICE

BASS. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

SHY. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts and every part a ducat,

I would not draw them ; I would have my bond.

DUKE. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering
none?

SHY. What judgement shall I dread, doing no
wrong?

You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses and your dogs and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,

Because you bought them : shall I say to you,

Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?

Why sweat they under burdens? let their beds

Be made as soft as yours and let their palates

Be season'd with such viands? You will answer

'The slaves are ours' : so do I answer you :

The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,

Is dearly bought ; 'tis mine and I will have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law!

There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgement : answer ; shall I have it?

DUKE. Upon my power I may dismiss this court,

Unless Bellario, a learned doctor,

Whom I have sent for to determine this,

Come here to-day.

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

SALER. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

DUKE. Bring us the letters ; call the messenger.

BASS. Good cheer, Antonio ! What, man, courage
yet !

The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and
all,

Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

ANT. I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death : the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground ; and so let me :
You cannot better be employ'd, Bassanio,
Than to live still and write mine epitaph.

Enter NERISSA, dressed like a lawyer's clerk.

DUKE. Came you from Padua, from Bellario ?

NER. From both, my lord. Bellario greets your
grace. [*Presenting a letter.*]

BASS. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ?

SHY. To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

GRA. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou makest thy knife keen ; but no metal can,
No, not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness
Of thy sharp envy. Can no prayers pierce thee ?

Shylock leaving the Ducal Palace
(page 123). *Act IV. Scene 1.*





OF VENICE

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

SHY. No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

GRA. O, be thou damn'd, execrable dog!

And for thy life let justice be accused.

Thou almost makest me waver in my faith

To hold opinion with Pythagoras,

That souls of animals infuse themselves

Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit

Govern'd a wolf, who, hang'd for human
slaughter,

Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,

And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallow'd dam,

Infused itself in thee; for thy desires

Are wolfish, bloody, starved and ravenous.

SHY. Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond

Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:

Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall

To cureless ruin. I stand here for law.

DUKE. This letter from Bellario doth commend

A young and learned doctor to our court.

Where is he?

NER. He attendeth here hard by,

To know your answer, whether you'll admit him.

DUKE. With all my heart. Some three or four of
you

Go give him courteous conduct to this place.

Meantime the court shall hear Bellario's letter.

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.]

CLERK. [*Reads*] Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter I am very sick: but in the instant that your messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthasar. I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnish'd with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning, the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend, comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation.

DUKE. You hear the learn'd Bellario, what he writes:

And here, I take it, is the doctor come.

Enter PORTIA, dressed like a doctor of laws.

Give me your hand. Come you from old Bellario?

POR. I did, my lord.

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

DUKE. You are welcome : take your place.

Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court ?

POR. I am informed throughly of the cause.

Which is the merchant here, and which the Jew ?

DUKE. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

POR. Is your name Shylock ?

SHY. Shylock is my name.

POR. Of a strange nature is the suit you follow ;

Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you as you do proceed.

You stand within his danger, do you not ?

ANT. Ay, so he says.

POR. Do you confess the bond ?

ANT. I do.

POR. Then must the Jew be merciful.

SHY. On what compulsion must I ? tell me that.

POR. The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath ; it is twice blest ;
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes :
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes
The throned monarch better than his crown ;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings ;

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

But mercy is above this sceptred sway ;
It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself ;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this,
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much
To mitigate the justice of thy plea ;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant
there.

SHY. My deeds upon my head ! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

POR. Is he not able to discharge the money ?

BASS. Yes, here I tender it for him in the court ;

Yea, twice the sum : if that will not suffice,

I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,

On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart :

If this will not suffice, it must appear

That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,

Wrest once the law to your authority :

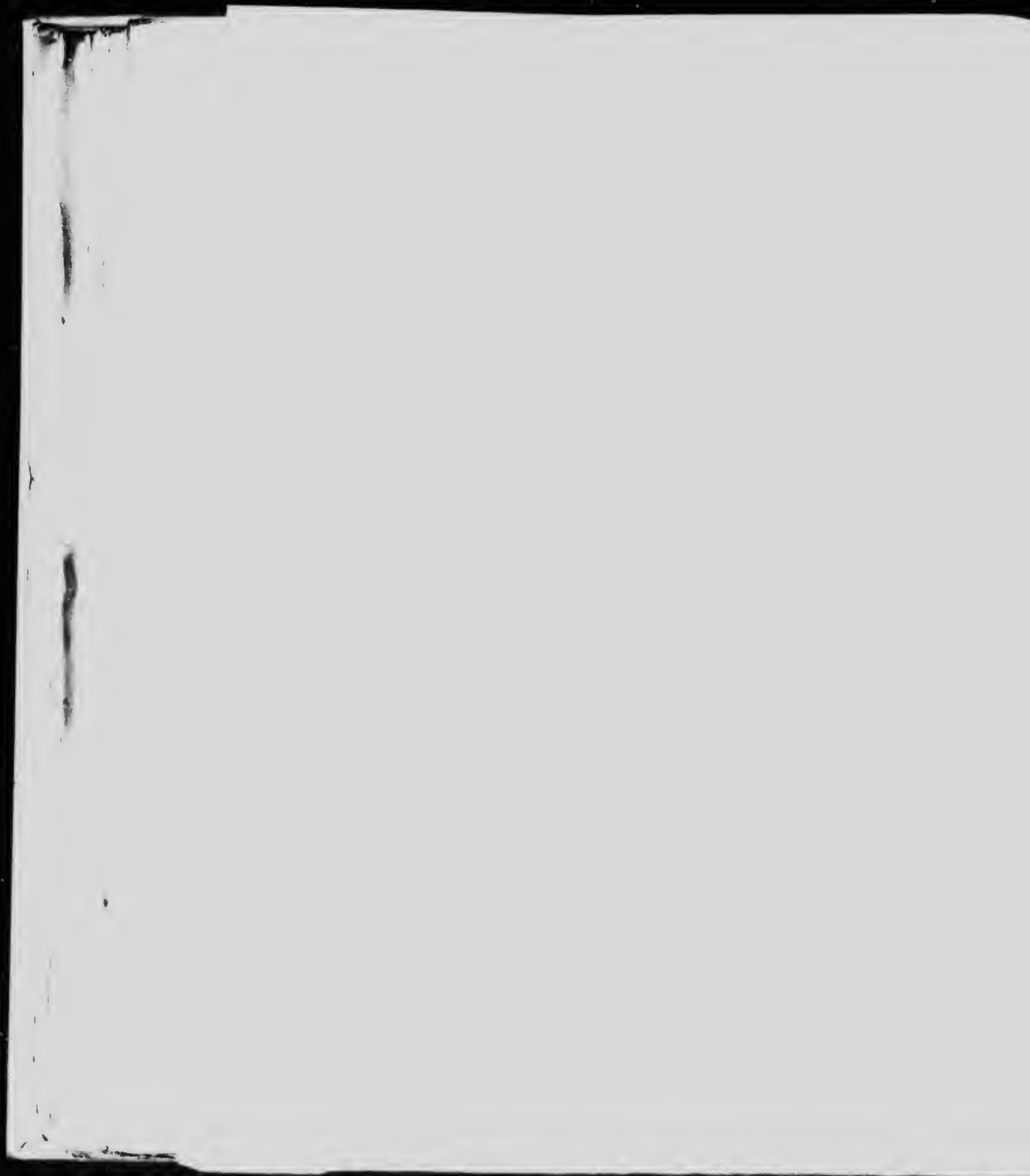
To do a great right, do a little wrong,

And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Portia, Nerissa and Gratiano.

*"My Lord Bassanio upon more advice
has sent you here this ring" (page 126).*

Act IV. Scene II.





OF AMERICA

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

POR. It must not be ; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established :
'Twill be recorded for a precedent,
And many an error by the same example
Will rush into the state : it cannot be.

SHY. A Daniel come to judgement ! yea, a Daniel !
O wise young judge, how I do honour thee !

POR. I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

SHY. Here 'tis, most reverend doctor, here it is.

POR. Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered
thee.

SHY. An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven :
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul ?
No, not for Venice.

POR. Why, this bond is forfeit ;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful :
Take thrice thy money ; bid me tear the bond.

SHY. When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge ;
You know the law, your exposition
Hath been most sound : I charge you by the
law,

Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgement : by my soul I swear

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

ANT. Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgement.

POR. Why then, thus it is:

You must prepare your bosom for his knife.

SHY. O noble judge! O excellent young man!

POR. For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty

Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

SHY. 'Tis very true: O wise and upright judge!

How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

POR. Therefore lay bare your bosom.

SHY. Ay, his breast:

So says the bond: doth it not, noble judge?

'Nearest his heart': those are the very words.

POR. It is so. Are there balance here to weigh
The flesh?

SHY. I have them ready.

POR. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your
charge,

To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

SHY. Is it so nominated in the bond?

POR. It is not so express'd: but what of that?

'Twere good you do so much for charity.

SHY. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond.

SC. I.] OF VENICE

POR. You, merchant, have you any thing to say?

ANT. But little: I am arm'd and well prepared.
Give me your hand, Bassanio: fare you well!
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you;
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretched man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which lingering penance
Of such misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent but you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I'll pay it presently with all my heart.

BASS. Antonio, I am married to a wife
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteem'd above thy life:
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.



THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

POR. Your wife would give you little thanks for that,

If she were by, to hear you make the offer.

GRA. I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love :

I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

NER. 'Tis well you offer it behind her back ;

The wish would make else an unquiet house.

SHY. [*Aside*] These be the Christian husbands. I
have a daughter ;

Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband rather than a Christian !

[*Aloud*] We trifle time : I pray thee, pursue sentence.

POR. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is
thine :

The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

SHY. Most rightful judge !

POR. And you must cut this flesh from off his
breast :

The law allows it, and the court awards it.

SHY. Most learned judge ! A sentence ! Come,
prepare !

POR. Tarry a little ; there is something else.

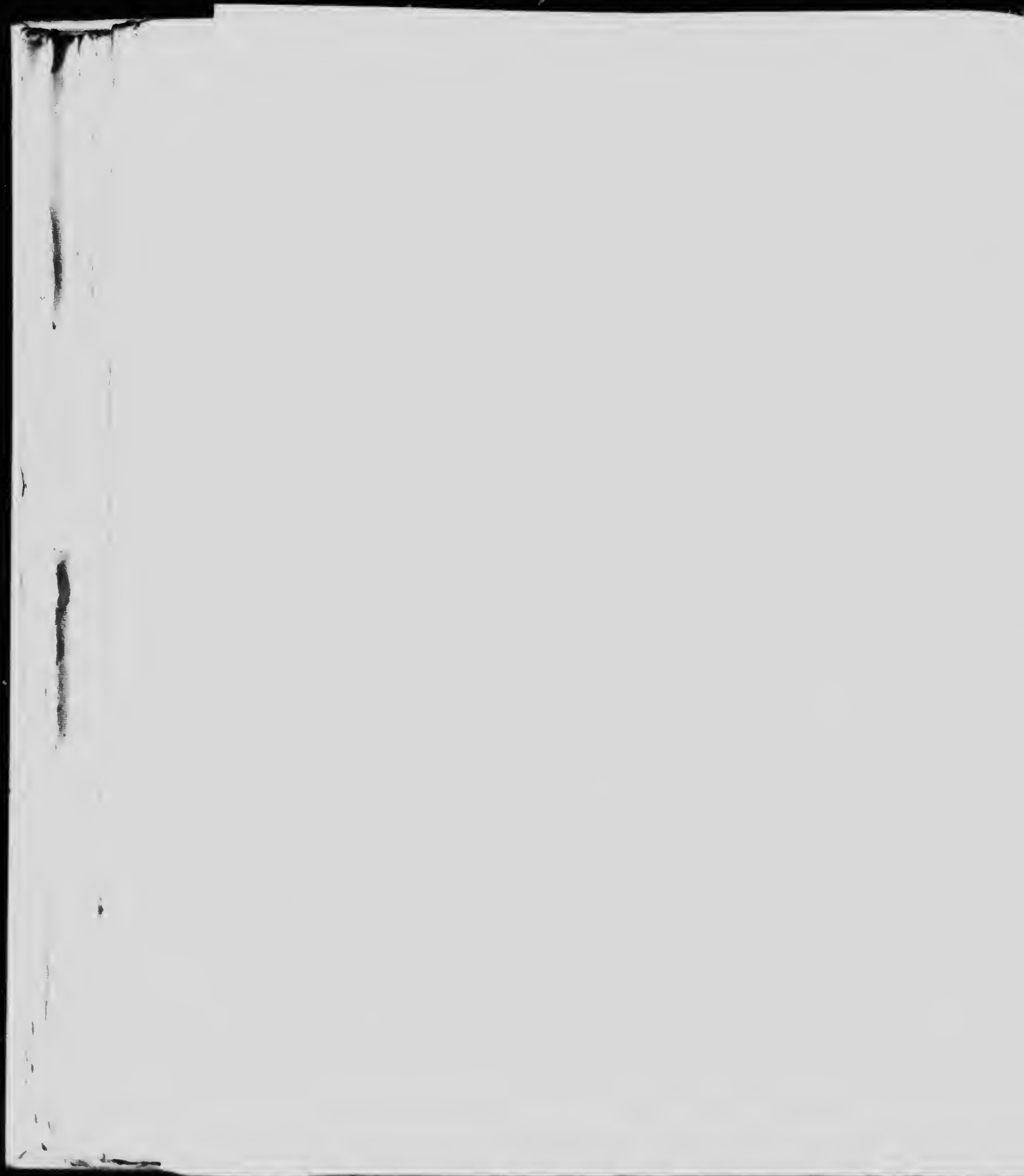
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood ;

The words expressly are ' a pound of flesh ' :

Lorenzo and Jessica.

"In such a night as this" (page 131).

Act V. Scene 1





(OR ADVICE)

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SC. I.]

OF VENICE

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of
flesh ;

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
Unto the state of Venice.

GRA. O upright judge! Mark, : O learned
judge!

SHY. Is that the law?

POR. thyself shalt see the act :

For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

GRA. O learned judge! Mark, Jew: a learned
judge!

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

BASS. Here is the money.

POR. Soft!

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

GRA. O Jew! an upright judge, a learned judge!

POR. 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 cut'st more
Or less than a just pound, be it but so much,
As makes it light or heavy in the substance,

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple, nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,
Thou diest and all thy goods are confiscate.

GRA. A second Daniel, a Daniel, Jew!

Now, infidel, I have you on the hip.

POR. Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

SHY. Give me my principal, and let me go.

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

POR. He hath refused it in the open court:

He shall have merely justice and his bond.

GRA. A Daniel, still say I, a second Daniel!

I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

SHY. Shall I not have barely my principal?

POR. Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,

To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

SHY. Why, then the devil give him good of it

I'll stay no longer question.

POR. Tarry, Jew:

The law hath yet another hold on you.

It is enacted in the laws of Venice,

If it be proved against an alien

That by direct or indirect attempts

He seek the life of any citizen,

The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive

Shall seize one half his goods; the other half

sc. 1.]

OF VENICE

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.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st ;
For it appears, by manifest proceeding,
That indirectly and directly too
Thou hast contrived against the very life
Of the defendant ; and thou hast in
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down therefore and beg mercy of the duke.

GRA. Beg that thou mayst have leave to hang
thyself :

And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord ;
Therefore thou must be hang'd at the state's
charge.

DUKE. That thou shalt see the difference of our
spirits,

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,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

POR. Ay, for the state, not for Antonio.

SHY. Nay, take my life and all ; pardon not that :
You take my house when you do take the
prop

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

That doth sustain my house ; you take my life
When you do take the means whereby I live.

POR. What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

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

ANT. So please my lord the duke and all the court

To quit the fine for one half of his goods,

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,

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

The pardon that I late pronounced here.

POR. Art thou contented, Jew? what dost thou
say?

SHY. I am content.

POR. Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

SHY. I pray you, give me leave to go from hence ;

I am not well : send the deed after me,

And I will sign it.

DUKE. Get thee gone, but do it.

GRA. In christening shalt thou have two godfathers.

Enter Musicians (page 134).

Act V. Scene I.





SC. 1.]

OF VENICE

Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten
more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit* SHYLOCK.

DUKE. Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

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

[*Exeunt* DUKE and his train.

BASS. 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,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

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

POR. He is well paid that is well satisfied ;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied
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.

THE MERCHANT [ACT IV.

BASS. Dear sir, of force I must attempt you further :

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.

POR. You press me far, and therefore I will yield.
[To ANTONIO] Give me your gloves, I'll wear
them for your sake ;

[To BASSANIO] 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.

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

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

BASS. 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 :
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

POR. 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.

BASS. Good sir, this ring was given me by my
wife ;

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell nor give nor lose it.

POR. That 'scuse serves many men to save their
gifts.

An if your wife be not a mad-woman,
And know how well I have deserved the ring,
She would not hold out enemy for ever,
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[Exeunt PORTIA and NERISSA.]

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

BASS. 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
Fly toward Belmont: come, Antonio.

[Exeunt.]

[ACT IV.

SCENE II

The same. A street.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

POR. Inquire the Jew's house out, give him this deed

And let him sign it : we'll away to-night
And be a day before our husbands home :
This deed will be well welcome to Lorenzo.

Enter GRATIANO.

GRA. 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.

POR. That cannot be :
His ring I do accept most thankfully :
And so, I pray you, tell him : furthermore,
I pray you, show my youth old Shylock's house.

GRA. That will I do.

Portia and Nerissa.

*"This night, methinks, is but the daylight
sick" (page 137).*

Act V. Scene I.





SC. II.] MERCHANT OF VENICE

NER. 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.

POR. [*Aside to NERISSA*] 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.

[*Aloud*] Away! make haste: thou know'st where
I will tarry.

NER. Come, good sir, will you show me to this
house? [*Exeunt.*]



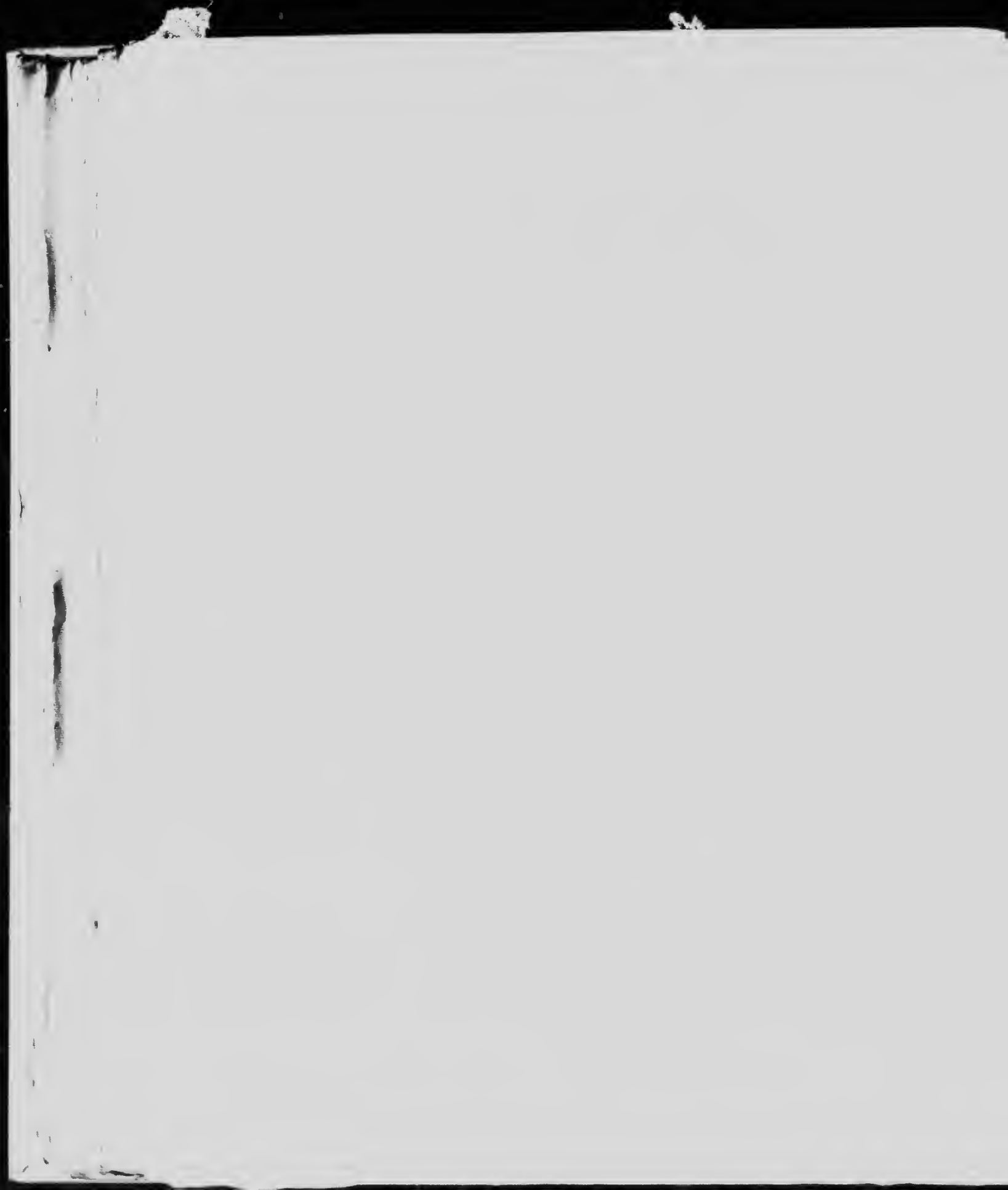
ACT V

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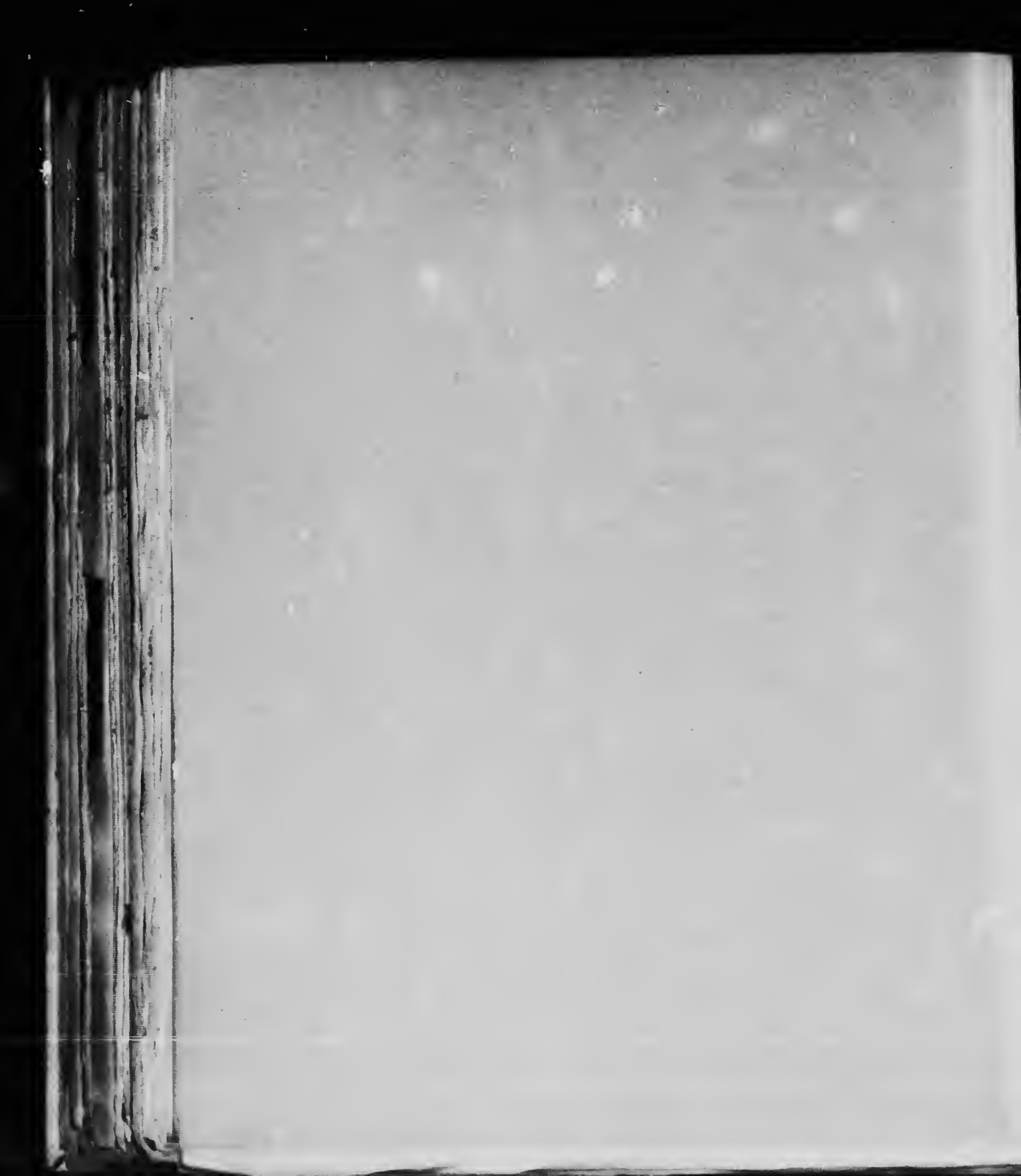


Antonio's Argosy.

Act V. Scene 1







SCENE I

Beimont. Avenue to PORTIA'S house.

Enter LORENZO and JESSICA.

LOR. The moon shines bright : in such a night as
this,

When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees
And they did make no noise, in such a night
Troilus methinks mounted the Troyan walls
And sigh'd his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night

JES. In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself
And ran dismay'd away.

LOR. In such a night
Stood Dido with a willow in her hand
Upon the wild sea banks and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

JES. In such a night

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.]

Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

LOR. In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

JES. In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well,
Stealing her soul with man's vows of faith
And ne'er a true one.

LOR. In such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave it her.

JES. I would out-night you, did no body come;
But, hark, I hear the footing of a man.

Enter STEPHANO.

LOR. Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

STEPH. A friend.

LOR. A friend! what friend? your name, I pray
you, friend?

STEPH. Stephano is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will before the break of day
Be here at Belmont: she doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

LOR. Who comes with her?
STEPH. None but a holy hermit and her maid.

I pray you, is my master yet return'd?
LOR. He is not, nor we have not heard from
him.

But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Enter LAUNCELOT.

LAUN. Sola, sola! wo ha, ho! sola, sola!

LOR. Who calls?

LAUN. Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo? Master
Lorenzo, sola, sola!

LOR. Leave hollaing, man: here.

LAUN. Sola! where? where?

LOR. Here.

LAUN. Teil him there's a post come from my master,
with his horn full of good news: my master will
be here ere morning. *[Exit.*

LOR. Sweet soul, let's in, and there expect their
coming.

And yet no matter: why should we go in?
My friend Stephano, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.

And bring your music forth into the air.

[*Exit* STEPHANO.

How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears : soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold :
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins ;
Such harmony is in immortal souls ;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

Enter Musicians.

Come, ho ! and wake Diana with a hymn :
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

JES. I am never merry when I hear sweet music.

LOR. The reason is, your spirits are attentive :
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing
loud,

*Lorenzo, Jessica, Antonio, Portia,
Bassanio, Nerissa and Gratiano.*

The Wedding Feast

Act V. Scene I.





sc. 1.] OF VENICE

Which is the hot condition of their blood ;
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to a modest gaze
By the sweet power of music : therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones and
floods ;
Since nought so stockish, hard and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils ;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night
And his affections dark as Erebus :
Let no such man be trusted. Mark the music.

Enter PORTIA and NERISSA.

POR. That light we see is burning in my hall.
How far that little candle throws his beams !
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

NER. When the moon shone, we did not see the
candle.

POR. So doth the greater glory dim the less :
A substitute shines brightly as a king

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.

Until a king be by, and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters. Music! hark!

NER. It is your music, madam, of the house.

POR. Nothing is good, I see, without respect:

Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

NER. Silence bestows that virtue on it, madam.

POR. The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark

When neither is attended, and I think

The nightingale, if she should sing by day,

When every goose is cackling, would be thought

No better a musician than the wren.

How many things by season season'd are

To their right praise and true perfection!

Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion

And would not be awaked. [*Music ceases.*]

LOR. 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.

LOR. Dear lady, welcome home.

POR. We have been praying for our husbands'
healths,

Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.

Are they return'd?

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

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 ;
Nor you, Lorenzo ; Jessica, nor you.

[*A tucket sounds.*

LOR. Your husband is at hand ; I hear his trumpet :
We are no tell-tales, madam ; fear you not.

POR. This night methinks is but the daylight sick ;
It looks a little paler : 'tis a day,
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

*Enter BASSANIO, ANTONIO, GRATIANO, and their
followers.*

BASS. We should hold day with the Antipodes,
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

POR. Let me give light, but let me not be light ;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me :
But God sort all ! You are welcome home, my
lord.

BASS. I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my
friend.

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.]

This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

POR. You should in all sense be much bound to him,
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

ANT. No more than I am well acquitted of.

POR. Sir, you are very welcome to our house :
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

GRA. [To NER.] By yonder moon I swear you do
me wrong ;

In faith, I gave it to the judge's clerk :
Would he were dead that had it, for my part,
Since you do take it, love, so much at heart.

POR. A quarrel, ho, already ! what's the matter ?

GRA. About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give me, whose posy was
For all the world like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, 'Love me, and leave me not.'

NER. What talk you of the posy or the value ?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death
And that it should lie with you in your grave :
Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths,
You should have been respective and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk ! no, God's my judge,
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on's face that had it.

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

GRA. He will, an if he live to be a man.

NER. Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

GRA. Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth,

A kind of boy, a little scrubbed boy,

No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk,

A prating boy, that begg'd it as a fee :

I could not for my heart deny it him.

POR. You were to blame, I must be plain with
you,

To part so slightly with your wife's first gift ;

A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger

And so riveted with faith unto your flesh.

I gave my love a ring and made him swear

Never to part with it ; and here he stands ;

I dare be sworn for him he would not leave it

Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth

That the world masters. Now, in faith, Gratiano.

You give your wife too unkind a cause of grief :

An 'twere to me, I should be mad at it.

BASS. [*Aside*] Why, I were best to cut my left
hand off,

And swear I lost the ring defending it.

GRA. My Lord Bassanio gave his ring away

Unto the judge that begg'd it and indeed

Deserved it too : and then the boy, his clerk,

That took some pains in writing, he begg'd mine ;

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.

And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

POR. What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me.

BASS. If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not the ring upon it; it is gone.

POR. Even so void is your false heart of truth.
By heaven, I will never be your wife
Until I see the ring.

NER. No, nor I yours
Till I again see mine.

BASS. Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring
And would conceive for what I gave the ring
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

POR. If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
What man is there so much unreasonable,
If you had pleased to have defended it
With any terms of zeal, wanted the modesty

SC. 1.]

OF VENICE

To urge the thing held as a ceremony?

Nerissa teaches me what to believe :

I'll die for't but some woman had the ring.

BASS. No, by my honour, madam, by my soul,

No woman had it, but a civil doctor,

Which did refuse three thousand ducats of me

And begg'd the ring ; the which I did deny him

And suffer'd him to go displeas'd away ;

Even he that did uphold the very life

Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet

lady?

I was enforced to send it after him ;

I was beset with shame and courtesy ;

My honour would not let ingratitude

So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady ;

For, by these blessed candles of the night,

Had you been there, I think you would have

begg'd

The ring of me to give the worthy doctor.

POR. Let not that doctor e'er come near my house :

Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,

And that which you did swear to keep for me,

I will become as liberal as you ;

I'll not deny him any thing I have.

NER. Nor I his clerk ; therefore be well advised

How you do leave me to mine own protection.

THE MERCHANT [ACT V.

GRA. Well, do you so : let not me take him then ;
For if I do, I'll mar the young clerk's pen.

ANT. I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

POR. Sir, grieve not you ; you are welcome notwithstanding.

BASS. Portia, forgive me this enforced wrong ;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine own fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself—

POR. Mark you but that !
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself ;
In each eye, one : swear by your double self,
And there's an oath of credit.

BASS. Nay, but hear me :
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

ANT. I once did lend my body for his wealth ;
Which, but for him that had your husband's ring,
Had quite miscarried : I dare be bound again,
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

POR. Then you shall be his surety. Give him this
And bid him keep it better than the other.

ANT. Here, Lord Bassanio ; swear to keep this
ring.

BASS. By heaven, it is the same I gave the doctor !

SC. I.]

OF VENICE

POR. You are all amazed :

Here is a letter : read it at your leisure ;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario :
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa there her clerk : Lorenzo here
Shall witness I set forth as soon as you
And even but now return'd : I have not yet
Enter'd my house. Antonio, you are welcome ;
And I have better news in store for you
Than you expect : unseal this letter soon ;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly :
You shall not know by what strange accident
I chanced on this letter.

ANT.

I am dumb.

BASS. Were you the doctor and I knew you not?

GRA. Were you the clerk and yet I knew you
not?

ANT. Sweet lady, you have given me life and
living ;

For here I read for certain that my ships
Are safely come to road.

POR.

How now, Lorenzo !

My clerk hath some good comforts too for you.

NER. Ay, and I'll give them him without a fee.

There do I give to you and Jessica,

MERCHANT OF VENICE [ACT V.]

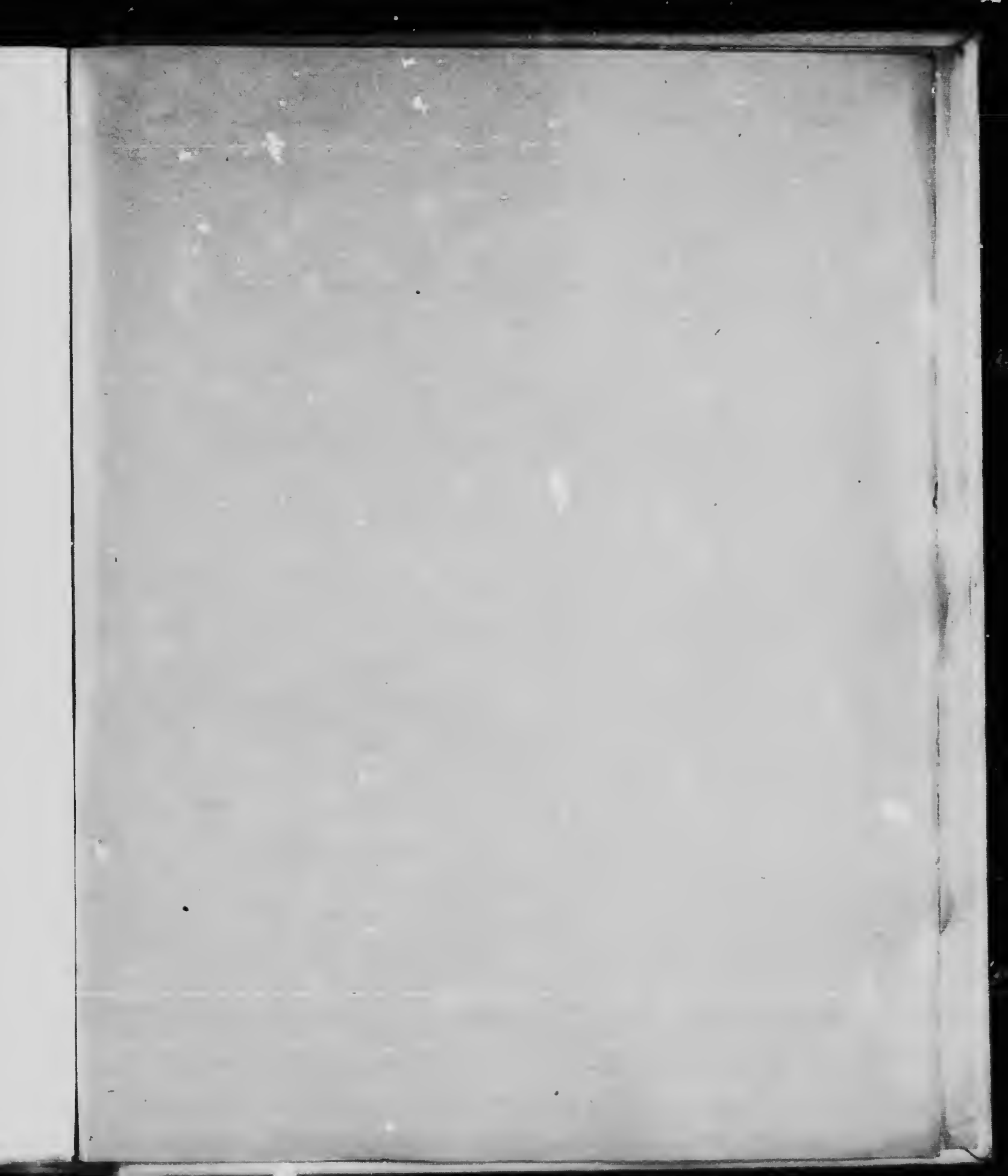
From the rich Jew, a special deed of gift,
After his death, of all he dies possess'd of.

LOR. Fair ladies, you drop manna in the way
Of starved people.

POR. It is almost morning,
And yet I am sure you are not satisfied
Of these events at full. Let us go in ;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories,
And we will answer all things faithfully.

GRA. Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing
So sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

[Exeunt.]





**This microfiche was not
required for filming.**

**Cette microfiche n'est pas
requisse pour le filmage.**

