

Merchant of Venice – Important Quotes

Friendship & Relations

- Antonio (1.1) – And such a want-wit sadness makes of me...
 - Shows that Antonio is sad because of this – and whereas other friends know, Bassanio doesn't.
- Salarino (1.1) – My wind cooling my broth would blow me to an ague.
 - Shows that Antonio is sad because of this – and whereas other friends know, Bassanio doesn't.
- Solanio (1.1) – Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman.
- Antonio (1.1) (Good hook to begin with) – I hold the world but as a world, Gratiano: A stage where every man must play a part
- Gratiano (1.1) – There are a sort of men whose visages do cream and mantle like a standing pond
- Bassanio (1.1) – I owe you much, and like a wilful youth that which I owe is lost; but if you please to shoot another arrow the 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
 - shows the relationship between Antonio and Bassanio
- Salerio – (2.8) – I think he only loves the world for him
 - Salerio says how much Antonio loves Bassanio
- Antonio (4.1) – For herein Fortune shows herself more kind than is her custom
- Antonio (4.1) – Repent but you that you shall lose your friend, and he repents not that he pays your debt

- Lorenzo (5.1) – In such a night did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew.
- Jessica (5.1) – In such a night did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well, stealing her soul with many vows of faith.
- Portia (5.1) – You should in all sense be much bound to him, for as I hear he was much bound for you.
- Gratiano (5.1) – Upon a knife: ‘Love me, and leave me not.’
- Portia (5.1) – Even so void is your false heart of truth. By heaven I will ne’er come in your bed until I see the ring.

- (5.1) – The different ways in which ill-fated lovers are compared to Lorenzo and Jessica

Appearances can be deceiving

- Solanio (1.1) – Now by two-headed Janus nature hath framed strange fellows in her time
- Solanio (1.1) – That they’ll not show their teeth in way of smile
- Bassanio (1.1) – By something showing a more swelling port than my faint means would grant continuance.
- Nerissa (1.2) – Do you not remember, lady, in your father’s time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?
- [Directions -2.6] – *Enter Jessica above, in boy’s clothes*
- Jessica (2.6) – For I am much ashamed of my exchange. But love is blind, and lovers cannot see the pretty follies that themselves commit; to see me thus transformed to a boy.
- Jessica (2.6) – What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
- Morocco (2.7) –
 - Gold – “Who chooseth me, shall gain what many men desire.”
 - Silver – “Who chooseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.”
 - Dull lead – “Who chooseth me, must give and hazard all he hath”
- Morocco (2.7) –
 - All that glisters is not gold; often have you heard that told
 - Gilded tombs do worms enfold
- Arragon (2.9) – Silvered o’er, and so was this. Take that wife you will to bed
- Arragon (2.9) – What here? A portrait of a blinking idiot
- Bassanio (3.2) – So may the outward shows be least themselves: the world is still deceived with ornament.
- Bassanio (3.2) – You that choose not by the view, chance as fair, and choose as true.
- Portia (3.4) – They shall, Nerissa, but in such a habit that they shall think we are accomplished with that we lack. I will hold thee any wager, when we are both accoutred like young men.
- Portia (3.4) – Speak between the change of man and boy
- Portia (3.4.) – A thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks, which I will practise.
- Duke (4.1.) – I beseech you, let his lack of ears be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation, for I never knew so young a body with so old a head.
- Portia (4.2) – We shall have old swearing that they did give the rings away to men. *[Very Important – Could be exam question!!!]*

- Jessica (5.1) – In such a night did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well, stealing her soul with many vows of faith, and ne’er a true one.
- Gratiano (5.1) – Were you the clerk that is to make me cuckold?

- Counter: Bassanio (3.2) – 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 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.

Youth VS Old Age

- Portia (1.2) - The brain may devise laws for the blood, but a hot temper leaps o’er a cold decree – such a hare is madness to the youth, to skip o’er the meshes of good counsel the cripple.
- Portia (1.2) – I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father.
- Duke (4.1) – 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.

Character Transactions (Economic)

- Bassanio (1.1) – 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.
 - Side note: Portia is latin for pig (offensive to Shylock – potential foreshadowing)
- Bassanio (1.1.): *Useful for Bassanio’s perception of Portia*
 - For the four winds blow in from every coast renowned suitors...
 - Her sunny locks hang on her temples like a golden fleece
 - Many Jasons come in quest of her.
- Antonio (1.3) – As to thy friends, for when did friendship take a breed for barren metal of its friend?
- Lancelot (2.2) – If I serve not him, I will run as far as God has any ground. O rare fortune, here comes the man! To him, father, for I am a Jew if I serve the Jew any longer.
- Shylock (1.3) – Signor Antonio, many a time and oft in the Rialto you have rated me about my monies and my usances.
- Jessica (2.3) – 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.
- Shylock (2.5) – For I did dream of money bags tonight.
- Jessica (2.5) – Farewell, and if my fortune be not crossed, I have a father, you a daughter lost.
- Morocco (2.7) –
 - Gold – “Who chooseth me, shall gain what many men desire.”
 - Silver – “Who chooseth me, shall get as much as he deserves.”
 - Dull lead – “Who chooseth me, must give and hazard all he hath”

- Portia (3.2) – This house, these servants, and this same myself are yours, my lord's. 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
- Gratiano (3.2) – We are the Jasons, we have won the fleece.
- Portia (3.2) – Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
- Portia (4.1) – Shylock, there's thrice thy money offered thee.
- Bassanio (4.1) – Take some remembrance of us as tribute, not as a fee. Grant me two things, I pray you: not to deny me, and to pardon me.
- Antonio (4.1) – My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring. Let his deservings, and my love withal be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.
- Lorenzo (5.1) – In such a night did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew, and with an unthrift love did run from Venice ad far as Belmont/
- Portia (5.1) – You should in all sense be bound to him, for as I hear he was much bound to you.
- Gratiano (5.1) – Well, while I live I'll fear no other thing so sore as keeping safe Nerissa's ring.

- Bassanio (4.1) – But life itself, my wife, and all the world are not with me esteemed above thy life.

Discrimination (religious) – usually what happens to Shylock

- Shylock (1.3) – I hate him for he is a Christian
- Shylock (1.3) – I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
- Antonio (1.3) – Mark you this, Bassanio, the devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. An evil soul producing witness is like a villain with a smiling cheek, a goodly apple rotten at the heart. O what a goodly outside falsehood hath!
- Shylock (1.3) – You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog, and spit upon my Jewish gaberdine
- Antonio (1.3) – The Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind (Also a foreshadowing for Shylock's eventual conversion to Christianity)
- Lancelot (2.2) – 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.
- Jessica (2.3) – Our house is hell, and thou a merry devil didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
- Shylock (2.5) – Nor thrust your head into the public street to gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces.
- Counterpoint: Lorenzo (2.6.56 – 2.6.57) – As true she is, she hath proved herself: and therefore like herself, wise, fair, and true shall she be placèd in constant soul.
- Solanio (3.1.17 – 3.1.18) – Let me say 'amen' betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer, for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

- Salarino (3.1.31 – 3.1.33) – 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.
- Shylock (3.1.42 – 3.1.57) – 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 sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge! The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.
- Salerio (3.2.274 – 3.2.275) – Never did I know a creature that did bear the shape of a man so keen and greedy to confound a man.
- Shylock (3.3.7) (*Specific to Shylock*) – But since I am a dog, beware my fangs
- Lancelot (3.5.9) – Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.
- Jessica (3.5.15) – I shall be saved by my husband; he hath made me a Christian.
- Jessica (3.5.26 – 3.5.27) – He tells me flatly there's 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.
- Duke (4.1.4) – A stony adversary, an unhuman wretch, incapable of pity, void and empty, from any dram of mercy
- Duke (4.1.25) – But, touched with human gentleness and love, forgive a moiety of the principal
- Bassanio (4.1.63 – 4.1.64) – There is no answer, thou unfeeling man, to excuse the current of thy cruelty.
- Antonio (4.1.73) - "Wolf"
- Antonio (4.1.80) – You may as well do anything most hard as seek to soften that – than which what's harder? – his Jewish heart.
- Gratiano (4.1.128) – O be thou damned, execrable dog, and for thy life let justice be accused!
- Gratiano (4.1.134/4.1.138) "Wolf", "wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous"
- Bassanio (4.1.213) – And curb this cruel devil of his will
- Shylock (4.1.291 – 4.1.294) – These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter: would any of the stock of Barabbas had been her husband, rather than a Christian!
- Portia (4.1.306 – 4.1.307) – If thou dost shed one drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods are by the laws of Venice confiscate
- Portia (4.1.345 – 4.1.347) – If it be proved against an alien...
- Antonio (4.1.383) [Both a point, and counterpoint] – He presently become a Christian.
- Jessica (5.1.69) – I am never merry when I hear sweet music

Discrimination (racial) – Usually what happens to Prince of Morocco

- Portia (1.2.106 – 1.2.108) – If he have the condition of a saint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.
- Morocco (2.1.1 onwards) – Mislike me not for my complexion, the shadowed livery of the burnished sun, to whom I am a neighbour and near bred. Bring me the fairest creature northward born, where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles, and let us make incision for your love to prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine. I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine hath feared the valiant; by my love I swear the best-regarded virgins of our clime hath loved it too. I would not change this hue, except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.
- Lorenzo (3.5.31 – 3.5.32) – I shall answer that better to the commonwealth than you can the getting up of the Negro's belly: the Moor is with child by you, Lancelot.
- Portia (4.1.345 – 4.1.347) – If it be proved against an alien...

Discrimination (Gender)

- Portia (1.2.87 – 1.2.88) – 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.
- Portia (1.2.20 – 1.2.21) – O me, the word 'choose'! I may neither choose who I would, nor refuse who I dislike, so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father.
- (3.2.9 – 3.2.10) I would detain you here some month or two before you venture for me
- Pages 176 – 177 (when Portia and Nerissa talk to Bassanio and Gratiano regarding the rings)
→ Summarize plot points

Fillial Piety

- Portia (1.2.87 – 1.2.88) – 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.
- Jessica (2.3) – Alack, what heinous sin is it in me to be ashamed to be my father's child!
- Jessica (2.5.54 – 2.5.55) – Farewell, and if my fortune be not crossed, I have a father, you a daughter, lost.
- Shylock (3.1.30) – I say my daughter is my flesh and blood.
- Shylock (3.1.96) – 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.
- Portia (3.2.9 – 3.2.10) – I would detain you here some month or two before you venture for me. I could teach you how to choose right, but then I am forsworn.
- Bassanio's comments regarding casket (3.2.63 – 3.2.65) – Tell me where is fancy bred, or in the heart, or in the head? How begot, how nourished?
- Jessica (5.1.14 – 5.1.15) – In such a night did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew and with an unthrift love did run from Venice as far as Belmont.
- Jessica (2.3) – But though I am a daughter to his blood, I am not to his manners.

Mercy and Justice

- Shylock (3.1.42 – 3.1.57) – 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, hirt 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 sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge! The villainy you teach me I will execute, and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

- Salerio (3.2.282) – But none can drive him from the envious plea of forfeiture, of justice, and thy bond.
- Lorenzo (3.4.2 – 3.4.3) (*Specific to Mercy only, and Portia*) – You have a noble and a true conceit of god-like amity, which appears most strongly in bearing thus the absence of your lord.
- Jessica (3.5.26 – 3.5.27) – He tells me flatly there’s no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew’s daughter.
- Duke (4.1.6) – A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch, incapable of pity, void and empty, from any dram of mercy.
- Duke (4.1.20 – 4.1.21) – Thou’lt show thy mercy and remorse more strange than is thy strange apparent cruelty.
- Shylock (4.1.39) (*Justice only*) – If you deny it, let the danger light upon your charter and your city’s freedom!
- (4.1.88 – 4.1.89) [*Very Important*] –
 - Duke: How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?
 - Shylock: What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?
- Portia (4.1.180) – The quality of mercy is not strained, 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...
- Portia (4.1.193 – 4.1.196) – Therefore, Jew, though justice be thy plea, consider this: that in the course of justice, none of us should see salvation.
- Bassanio (4.1.210 – 4.1.214) – 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 (4.1.215 – 4.1.216) – It must not be; there is no power in Venice can alter a decree established.
- Shylock (4.1.234 – 4.1.236) – 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
- Portia (4.1.257) – It is *not so expressed, but what of that?* ‘Twere good you do so much for charity.
- Portia (4.1.306 – 4.1.307) – But in the cutting of it, if thou dost shed one drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods are by the laws of Venice confiscate.
- Portia (4.1.311 – 4.1.312) – For as thou urgest justice, be assured thou shalt have justice more than thou desirest.
- Portia (4.1.369) - Counter Point: [*Very Important*] – Ay, for the state, not for Antonio

Random Notes

- Remember the names of all of Portia's suitors
 - Prince of Morocco
 - Prince of Arragon
 - French Lord, Monsieur Le Bon
 - Young Baron of England, Falconbridge
 - Duke of Saxony's Nephew
 - Neapolitan Prince
 - County Palatine

Portia's hypocrisy – I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching.