

The Merchant of Venice – from Act 1 Scene 3, lines 37 to 64; In this extract, Shylock and Antonio meet to arrange the loan.

BASSANIO

This is Signor Antonio

SHYLOCK (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!

BASSANIO

Shylock, do you hear?

SHYLOCK

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 Antonio) Rest you fair, good signor – Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTONIO

Shylock, albeit 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. (To Bassanio) Is he yet possessed

How much ye would?

SHYLOCK

Ay, ay, three thousand ducats. And for three months.

(a)

Explore how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Shylock and Antonio in this extract. Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(b)

In this extract, Shylock reveals his hatred of Antonio. Explain the importance of hatred elsewhere in the play. In your answer, you must consider:

- where the hatred is shown
- the reasons for the hatred.

You must refer to the context of the play in your answer.

The Merchant of Venice – from Act 1 Scene 1, lines 119 to 152; in this extract, Bassanio discusses a loan.

ANTONIO

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

BASSANIO

'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
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.

ANTONIO

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 unlocked to your occasions.

BASSANIO

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.

(a)

Explore how Shakespeare presents the relationship between Antonio and Bassanio in this extract. Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(b)

In this extract, Antonio and Bassanio are discussing money. Explain the importance of money elsewhere in the play.

In your answer, you must consider:

- why money is important
- the effect of money on the characters.

You must refer to the context of the play in your answer.

The Merchant of Venice – from act 1 Scene 2, lines 34 to 60; in this extract, Portia is unhappy because her father’s will prevents her from choosing her own husband.

PORTIA

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

NERISSA

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

PORTIA

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. I am much afeard my lady his mother played false with a smith.

NERISSA

Then is there the County Palatine.

PORTIA

He doth nothing but frown – as who should say ‘An 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!

NERISSA

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

PORTIA

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.

(a)

Explore how Shakespeare presents Portia’s feelings towards her suitors in this extract. Refer closely to the extract in your answer.

(b)

In this extract, Portia tells Nerissa how she feels about her suitors. Explain the importance of love elsewhere in the play.

In your answer you must consider:

- when love is shown
- how love affects those involved.

You should refer to the context of the play in your answer.