

# The Merchant of Venice

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## SCENE IV. The same. A street.

*Enter GRATIANO, LORENZO, SALARINO, and SALANIO*

### LORENZO

Nay, we will slink away in supper-time,  
Disguise us at my lodging and return,  
All in an hour.

### GRATIANO

We have not made good preparation.

### SALARINO

We have not spoke us yet of torchbearers.

### SALANIO

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

### LORENZO

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

*Enter LAUNCELOT, with a letter*

Friend Launcelot, what's the news?

### LAUNCELOT

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

### LORENZO

I know the hand: in faith, 'tis a fair hand;  
And whiter than the paper it writ on  
Is the fair hand that writ.

### GRATIANO

Love-news, in faith.

**LAUNCELOT**

By your leave, sir.

**LORENZO**

Whither goest thou?

**LAUNCELOT**

Marry, sir, to bid my old master the  
Jew to sup to-night with my new master the Christian.

**LORENZO**

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

*Exit Launcelot*

Will you prepare you for this masque tonight?  
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

**SALANIO**

Ay, marry, I'll be gone about it straight.

**SALANIO**

And so will I.

**LORENZO**

Meet me and Gratiano  
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

**SALARINO**

'Tis good we do so.

*Exeunt SALARINO and SALANIO*

**GRATIANO**

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

**LORENZO**

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,  
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*

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