

The Merchant of Venice

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SCENE VI. The same.

Enter GRATIANO and SALARINO, masqued

GRATIANO

This is the pent-house under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

SALARINO

His hour is almost past.

GRATIANO

And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

SALARINO

O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new-made, than they are wont
To keep obliged faith unforfeited!

GRATIANO

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
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!

SALARINO

Here comes Lorenzo: more of this hereafter.

Enter LORENZO

LORENZO

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

JESSICA

Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I'll swear that I do know your tongue.

LORENZO

Lorenzo, and thy love.

JESSICA

Lorenzo, certain, and my love indeed,
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

LORENZO

Heaven and thy thoughts are witness that thou art.

JESSICA

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 commit;
For if they could, Cupid himself would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy.

LORENZO

Descend, for you must be my torchbearer.

JESSICA

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.

LORENZO

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.

JESSICA

I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

Exit above

GRATIANO

Now, by my hood, a Gentile and no Jew.

LORENZO

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,
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

ANTONIO

Who's there?

GRATIANO

Signior Antonio!

ANTONIO

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.

GRATIANO

I am glad on't: I desire no more delight
Than to be under sail and gone to-night.

