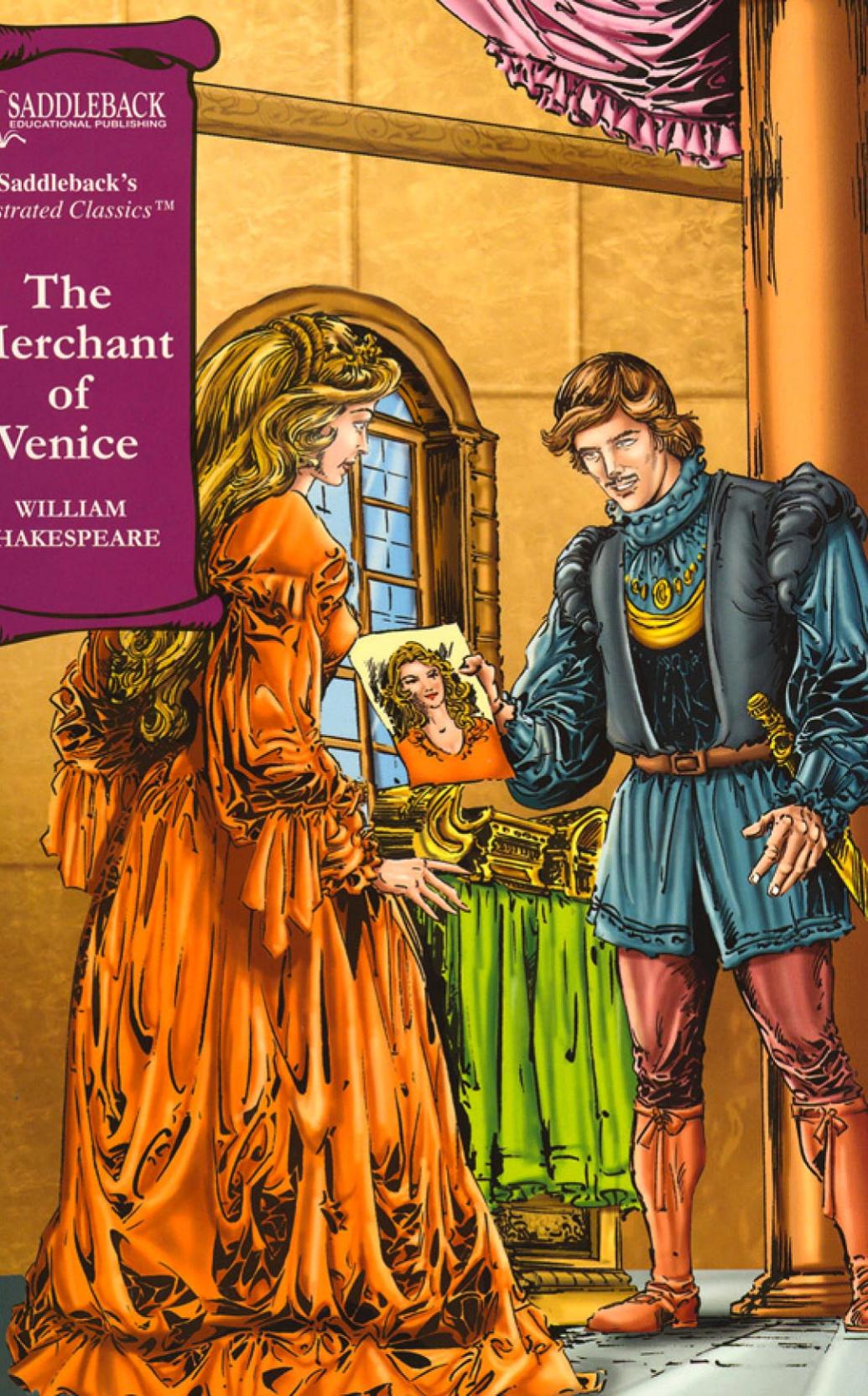




Saddleback's
Illustrated Classics™

The Merchant of Venice

WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE



William Shakespeare

The Merchant of Venice



MEN CAME FROM EVERYWHERE TO TRY TO MARRY THE BEAUTIFUL PORTIA—RICH MEN FROM FRANCE, ENGLAND, AND GERMANY. BUT SHE COULD ACCEPT ONLY THE MAN WHO PASSED HER FATHER'S TEST.



PERHAPS THE PRINCE OF MOROCCO* WOULD WIN HER. OR PERHAPS IT WOULD BE A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN FROM VENICE.**

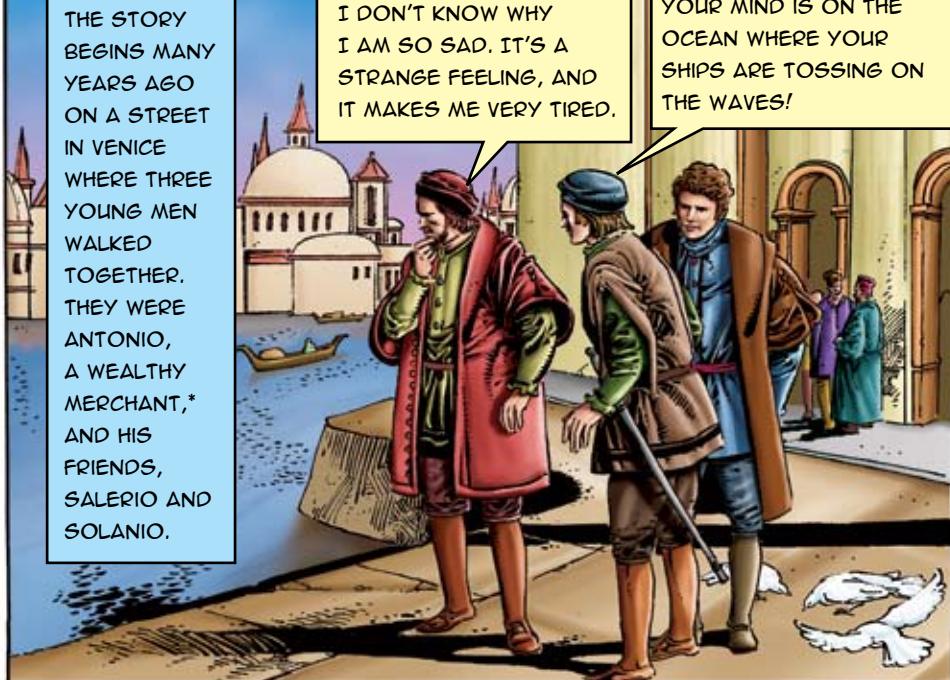
* a country in northern Africa

** a city in Italy

THE STORY BEGINS MANY YEARS AGO ON A STREET IN VENICE WHERE THREE YOUNG MEN WALKED TOGETHER. THEY WERE ANTONIO, A WEALTHY MERCHANT,* AND HIS FRIENDS, SALERIO AND SOLANIO.

I DON'T KNOW WHY I AM SO SAD. IT'S A STRANGE FEELING, AND IT MAKES ME VERY TIRED.

YOUR MIND IS ON THE OCEAN WHERE YOUR SHIPS ARE TOSSED ON THE WAVES!



IF I HAD SO MANY SHIPS AT SEA WITH SUCH RICH CARGOES,** I'D ALWAYS BE WONDERING WHERE THE WIND WAS BLOWING THEM!

EVERY TIME I SAW A STONE CHURCH I'D WONDER WHAT DANGEROUS ROCKS MY SHIPS MIGHT HIT.



* a seller of goods often imported from faraway lands

** loads of goods to sell

NO, NO! MY FORTUNE IS SPREAD OUT ON MANY SHIPS IN MANY PLACES. NOT ALL OF THEM COULD BE LOST AT ONCE!



BELIEVE ME, I AM NOT SAD BECAUSE OF WORRYING ABOUT MY SHIPS AND MY FORTUNE.



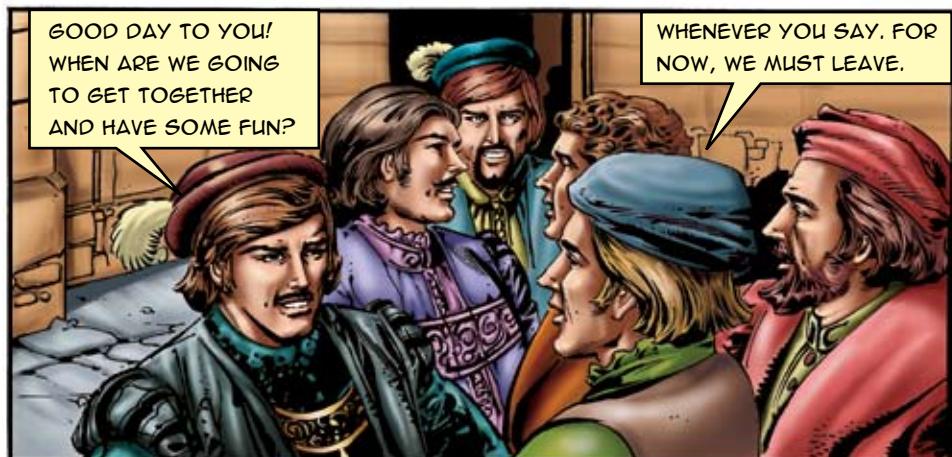
WHY, THEN YOUR ARE IN LOVE!



NO, THAT'S NOT IT EITHER.

THEN YOU ARE SAD JUST BECAUSE YOU AREN'T HAPPY!







* great minds; learning

NOW, TELL ME ABOUT THIS LADY YOU SPOKE OF—THIS SECRET TRIP YOU WANT TO MAKE TO SEE HER.

WELL, YOU KNOW THAT I'VE ENJOYED MYSELF AND SPENT MORE THAN I HAVE.

I OWE A LOT OF MONEY, AND MOST OF IT TO YOU! BUT I HAVE A PLAN FOR PAYING EVERYTHING BACK.

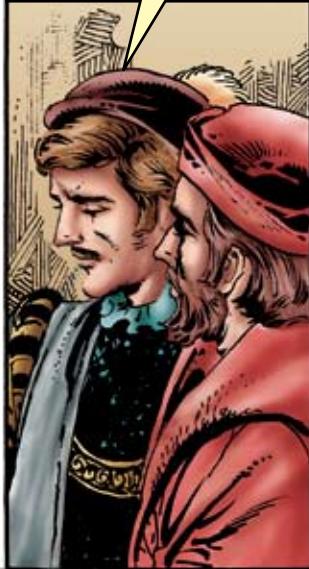
TELL ME ABOUT IT, BASSANIO. I WILL DO EVERYTHING I CAN TO HELP YOU.



THERE IS A RICH YOUNG LADY IN BELMONT NAMED PORTIA. SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, TOO, AND GOOD!

THE WORD ABOUT HER HAS SPREAD, AND MEN SAIL IN EVERY DAY TO TRY AND WIN HER.

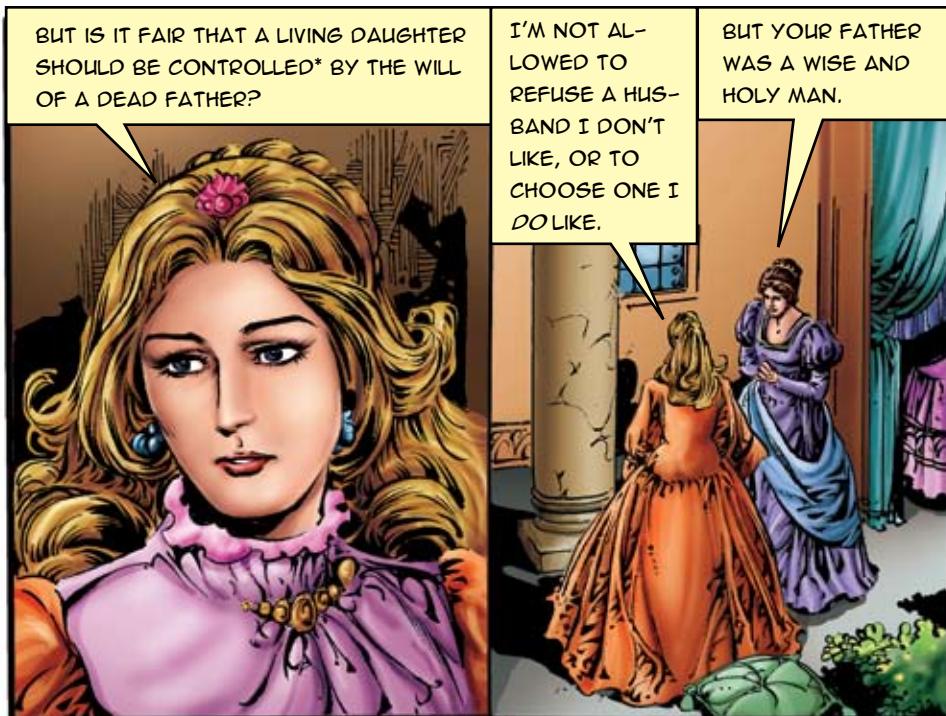
I MET HER ONCE... AND I COULD SEE IN HER EYES THAT SHE LIKED ME.





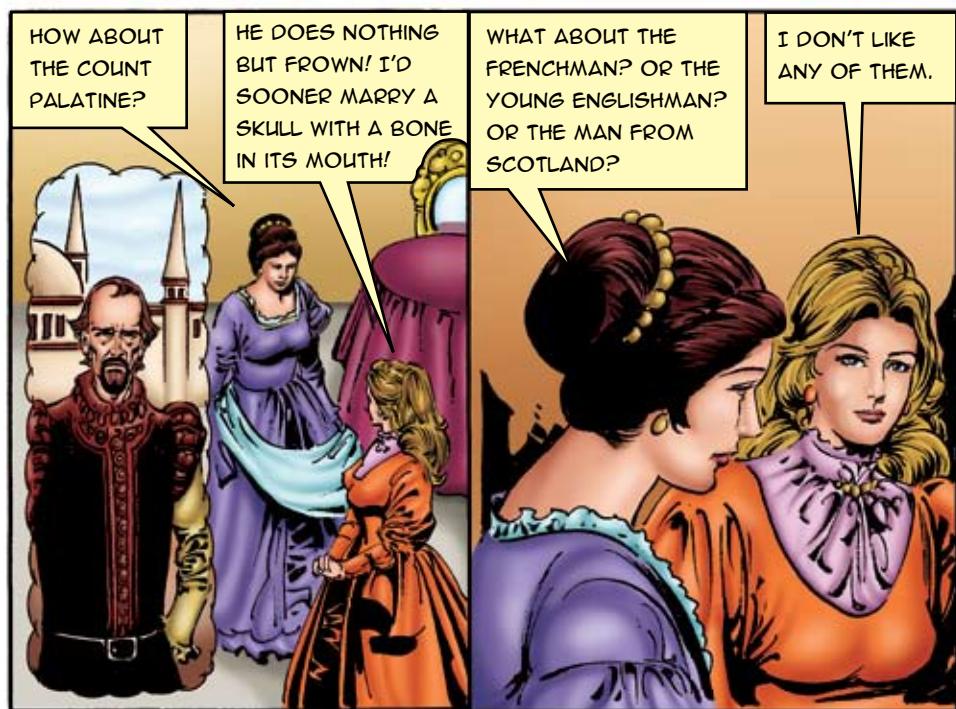
* a promise to pay back any money borrowed

** a young woman who had been given a great deal of money when her parents died



* ordered around

** men who wanted to marry a certain young lady



* a city in Italy