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# The Merchant of Venice

WILLIAM  
SHAKESPEARE



*William Shakespeare*

# *The Merchant of Venice*



ANTONIO



SHYLOCK



PORTIA



JESSICA



BASSANIO

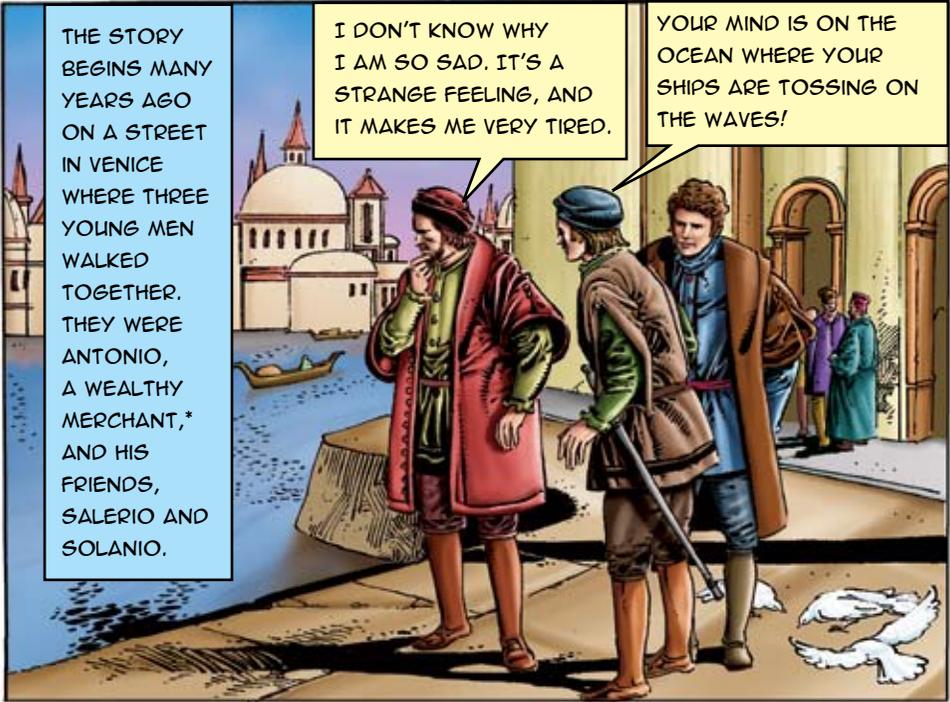
MEN CAME FROM EVERYWHERE TO TRY TO MARRY THE BEAUTIFUL PORTIA— RICH MEN FROM FRANCE, ENGLAND, AND GERMANY. BUT SHE COULD ACCEPT ONLY THE MAN WHO PASSED HER FATHER'S TEST.



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



\* 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.

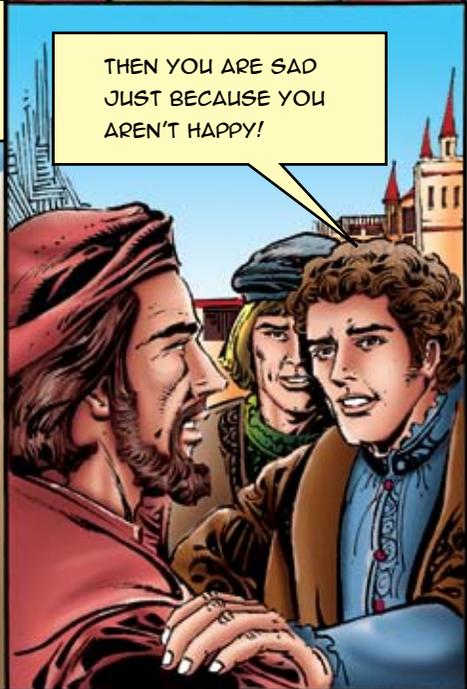


WHY, THEN YOUR ARE IN LOVE!

NO, THAT'S NOT IT EITHER.



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

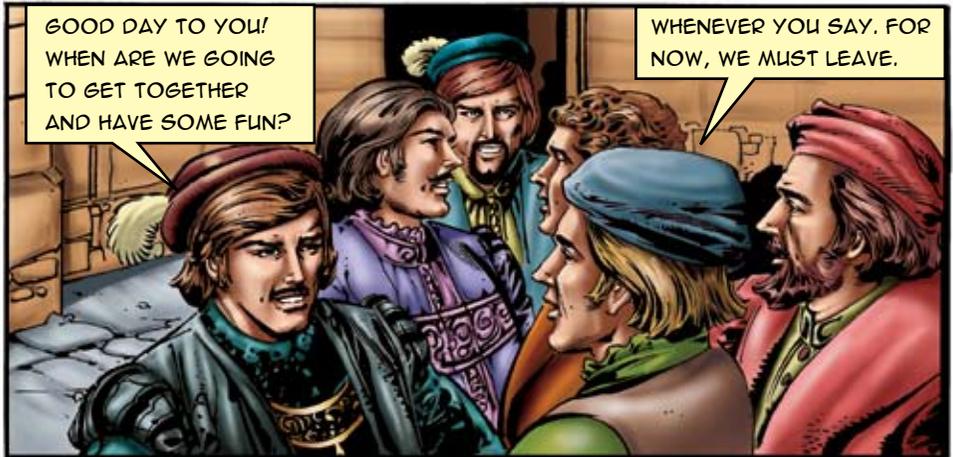


HERE COMES YOUR  
COUSIN BASSANIO  
WITH LORENZO AND  
GRATIANO. WE'LL  
LEAVE YOU IN GOOD  
COMPANY.



GOOD DAY TO YOU!  
WHEN ARE WE GOING  
TO GET TOGETHER  
AND HAVE SOME FUN?

WHENEVER YOU SAY. FOR  
NOW, WE MUST LEAVE.



YOU DON'T  
LOOK WELL,  
ANTONIO.  
YOU ARE TOO  
SERIOUS!

THE WORLD'S A STAGE,  
GRATIANO, AND THE PART I  
MUST PLAY IS A SAD ONE.

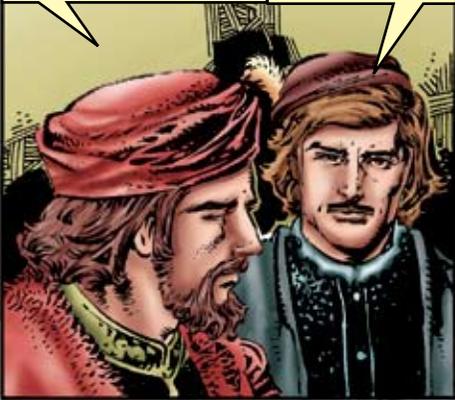




\* great minds; learning

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.



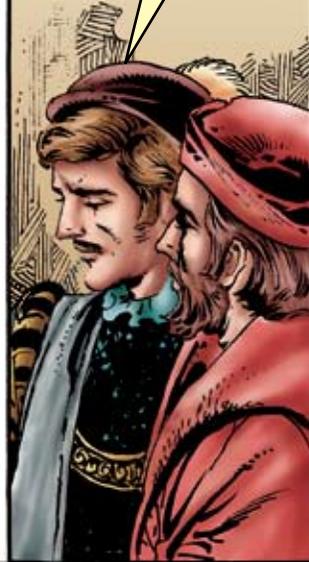
THERE IS A RICH YOUNG LADY IN BELMONT NAMED PORTIA. SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, TOO, AND GOOD!



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.





NOW ANTONIO, IF I HAD THE MONEY TO GO TO BELMONT AND TRY MY LUCK, I THINK I COULD WIN HER LOVE.

YOU KNOW THAT ALL MY MONEY IS TIED UP IN MY SHIPS AND THEIR CARGOES—BUT MY CREDIT\* IS GOOD.

USE IT TO BORROW AS MUCH MONEY AS YOU NEED, AND I WILL SOON REPAY IT!

THANK YOU, ANTONIO!



MEANWHILE IN BELMONT, THE HEIRESS\*\* PORTIA TALKED WITH HER MAID, NERISSA.

NERISSA, I'M BORED WITH EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD!

I SUPPOSE PEOPLE WITH TOO MUCH MONEY CAN BE AS SICK OF IT AS THOSE WHO HAVE NOTHING.

\* a promise to pay back any money borrowed

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

BUT IS IT FAIR THAT A LIVING DAUGHTER SHOULD BE CONTROLLED\* BY THE WILL OF A DEAD FATHER?

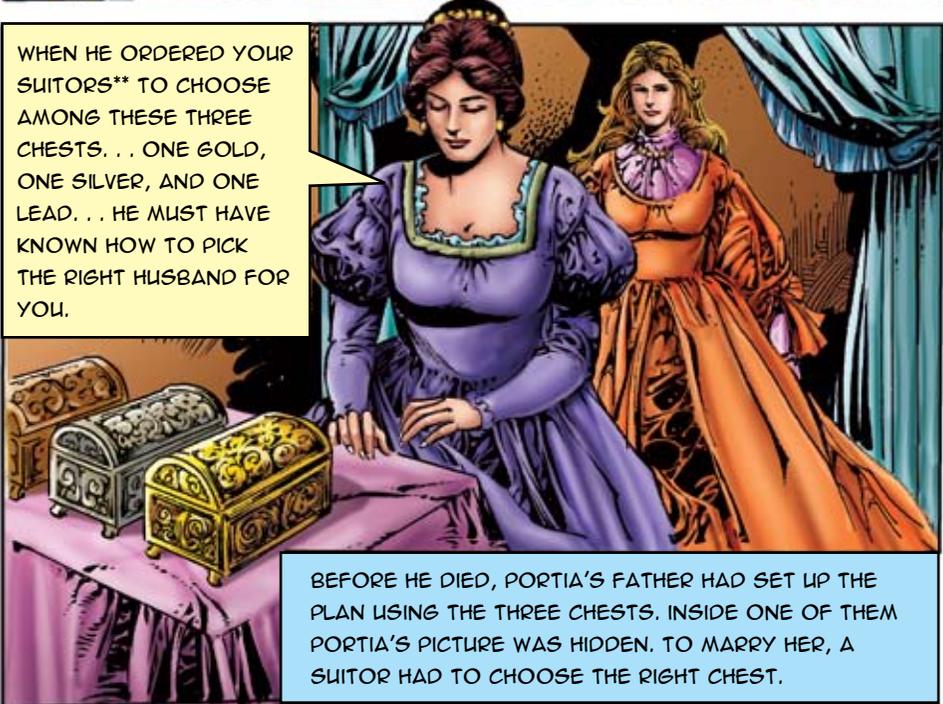


I'M NOT ALLOWED TO REFUSE A HUSBAND I DON'T LIKE, OR TO CHOOSE ONE I DO LIKE.

BUT YOUR FATHER WAS A WISE AND HOLY MAN.



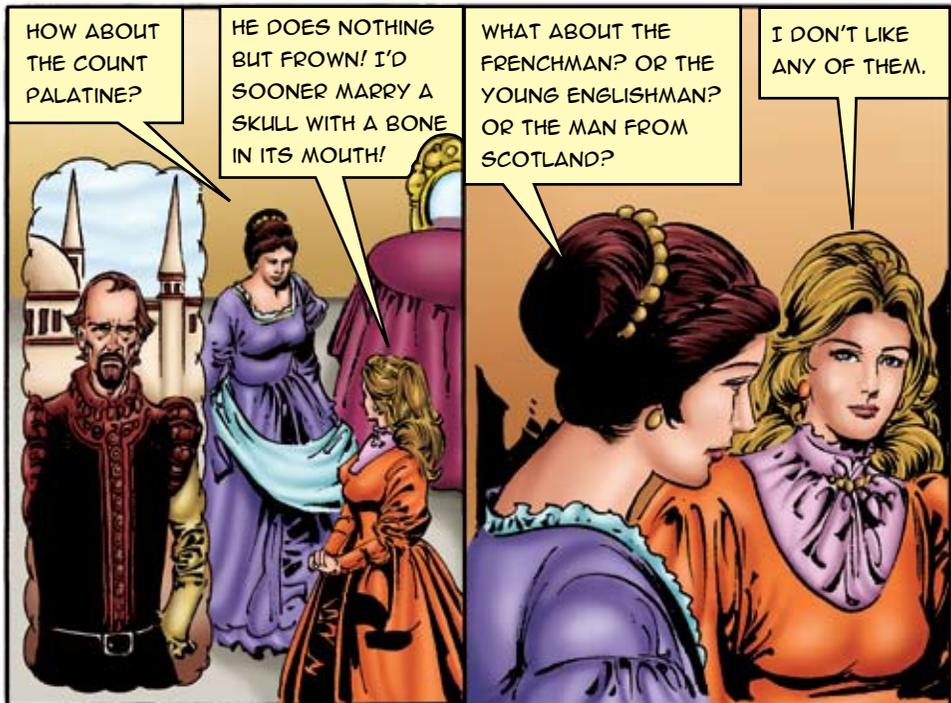
WHEN HE ORDERED YOUR SUITORS\*\* TO CHOOSE AMONG THESE THREE CHESTS. . . ONE GOLD, ONE SILVER, AND ONE LEAD. . . HE MUST HAVE KNOWN HOW TO PICK THE RIGHT HUSBAND FOR YOU.



BEFORE HE DIED, PORTIA'S FATHER HAD SET UP THE PLAN USING THE THREE CHESTS. INSIDE ONE OF THEM PORTIA'S PICTURE WAS HIDDEN. TO MARRY HER, A SUITOR HAD TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT CHEST.

\* ordered around

\*\* men who wanted to marry a certain young lady



\* a city in Italy