

# **Merchant of Venice**

## **Act - 3**

### **Scene – 1**

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#### **Extract - 1**

**(i) Where does the scene takes place? Whom does she refer to in the first line of the extract? What is said about her in the extract?**

**(ii) What was said earlier about the place where a ship of Antonio was wrecked? Where did the news about the ship-wreckage spread?**

**(iii) Give the meaning of: "without any slips of prolixity or crossing the plain highway of talk,".**

**(iv) How does Shylock react to the loss of Antonio's ship?**

**(v) What feelings for Antonio are expressed by Salanio in the scene? Who enters the scene at this time? What does Salanio say about his daughter?**

#### **Answers:**

(i) In the first line 'she' refers to the rumour or report which is personified as a tattling old woman. When Salarino talks about Antonio's ship, Salanio only wishes that Rumour may prove to be a big liar in this case as any old woman, who ever gossiped with her neighbours over her ginger bread cakes and made her neighbours believe that she mourned sincerely for the death of her third husband.

(ii) Earlier, it was told that Antonio's ship was wrecked in the waters of the English channel at a spot known as Goodwin Sands, a most perilous sand bank. The news about the ship-wreckage spread at the Rialto or the Exchange where merchants met for business transactions.

(iii) The given words mean: 'without speaking much or beating about the bush'. That is without being guilty of any lengthy, irrelevant or tedious speech or going outside plain direct speech.

(iv) Shylock was pleased to hear about the loss of Antonio's ship. He calls him a spendthrift and a beggar, who used to come smiling, so self-satisfied to the market. He must take care to redeem his bond in time.

(v) In the given extract, Salarino and Salanio express their feelings of concern and sympathy for Antonio. Salanio calls him 'good Antonio', honest Antonio and wants a better adjective to describe 'him'. Finally, Salanio conveys the news that Antonio has lost a ship. Salarino hopes that this may be the end of his losses.

## **Extract - 2**

**(i) Whose flight is being talked about? Where has the person flown? With whom has the person flown?**

**(ii) What bad news, besides the flight of the bird, is given just before the arrival of Shylock?**

**(iii) Give the meaning of:**

**The bird was fledged;**

**and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.**

**(iv) What steps has Shylock taken to get back the flown bird?**

**(v) How does Salarino compare after the extract the character of the flown bird with that of Shylock?**

### **Answers:**

(i) The flight of Jessica is being talked about. She has flown to Belmont. Jessica has flown with Lorenzo

(ii) Just before the arrival of Shylock, the news about the Antonio's ship-wreck in the English Channel at a spot called Goodwin Sands is given.

(iii) The given words mean that it is the nature of a fully feathered young bird to leave the nest when it is old enough. He means to say that Jessica was old enough to run away with her lover, Lorenzo.

(iv) Shylock took all possible steps to get back his eloped daughter. He asked the Duke for justice and even persuaded him to check the ship in which Bassanio left for Belmont. Later it was said that someone saw Lorenzo and Jessica in a gondola. Shylock engaged his friend Tubal for finding and bringing Jessica to him.

(v) After the extract, Salarino compares the character of Jessica and Shylock. He says that Jessica is a complete contrast to Shylock as black is to white or as ordinary red wine is to expensive white Rhenish wine.

## **Extract - 3**

**(i) What is meant by a bankrupt as well as a prodigal? Why has the man gone bankrupt? Why is he called a prodigal?**

**(ii) What is known as Rialto? Why was the man said to go 'so smug upon the mart'?**

**(iii) Give some incidents to show that the man referred to in the extract used to insult Shylock?**

**(iv) How did the 'bankrupt' cause loss to Shylock in Venice?**

**(v) How is the bankrupt likely to go into a loss? How will such a loss affect Shylock as far as his revenge and financial position is concerned?**

**Answers:**

(i) A 'bankrupt' means a person who has not enough money to pay off his just debts. 'Prodigal' means a spendthrift who spends recklessly. The man has gone bankrupt because his ship has wrecked in the English Channel with its rich cargo. He is a spendthrift who has mismanaged his affairs and has gone bankrupt. That is why he is called a prodigal by Shylock.

(ii) The Venetian Stock Exchange where the merchants used to meet to transact business deals, was known as the Rialto. The man used to go to Rialto smiling and so self-satisfied because he was sure of his financial position as he owned a number of ships carrying merchandise to the four corners of the world. Shylock says these words to compare Antonio's financial position in the past with his present bankrupt condition.

(iii) The man referred to in the extract used to insult Shylock. He used to disgrace him, laugh at his losses, mock at his gains, despise his race and interfere in his business deals simply because he was a Jew.

(iv) The bankrupt caused loss to Shylock in Venice by lending money without interest and thus, affecting Shylock's business of lending money at exorbitant rate of interest.

(v) The bankrupt is likely to go into a loss as his ship has been wrecked with its rich cargo. Besides, he is to pay three thousand ducats he had borrowed from Shylock for Bassanio. Such a loss will favour Shylock to pursue his plan of revenge.

**Extract - 4**

**(i) Who is the thief referred to in the extract? What had the thief stolen? What loss has Shylock suffered due to the theft?**

**(ii) Who is Tubal? Why did he go to Genoa?**

**(iii) What news did Tubal bring from Genoa about the thief?**

**(iv) The extract refers to 'satisfaction' and 'revenge'. In what context are these expressions used by Shylock?**

**(v) State what ill-luck befell Antonio. Why was Shylock happy over the news?**

**Answers:**

(i) The thief referred to in the extract is Shylock's daughter, Jessica. The thief had stolen his money, gold and gems, including a diamond costing two thousand ducats. After the theft, Shylock has to spend money to locate Jessica. So he has suffered loss upon loss due to the theft.

(ii) Tubal is another Jew, a friend of Shylock. He went to Genoa to search for Jessica, who has eloped with Lorenzo.

(iii) Tubal brought the news that he went to the places in Genoa where he heard some news about Jessica but could not find her.

(iv) Shylock uses the expression satisfaction and revenge in the content of his efforts to retrieve his lost money and eloped daughter. His daughter, Jessica had stolen money, precious stones, and many jewels. His efforts to locate her and retrieve them have not succeeded. So, he has neither the satisfaction of getting back his lost daughter and money nor taking revenge on the Christians, who caused her elopement.

(v) One of Antonio's large ships has been wrecked on the way back from Tripolis. This was the ill-luck that befell Antonio. Shylock was happy over the news as his chances of taking revenge on Antonio became brighter.

## **Extract - 5**

**(i) What does Tubal say that Antonio is undone? What makes him say with certainty that Antonio is undone? Who is Leah? Why is she referred to in the extract?**

**(ii) In what mood is Shylock in this scene? How is Tubal said to be torturing him?**

**(iii) What is Shylock's reaction on hearing about Antonio's misfortune? How is he going to punish Antonio? What would he gain by his Revengeful action?**

**(iv) What is a synagogue? What can you conclude from Shylock's journey towards the synagogue?**

**(v) In what way, by the end of the scene, does Shylock convince the audience that his attack on Antonio is without any mercy? Which character trait of Shylock is shown in this scene?**

**Answers:**

(i) Tubal says that Antonio is undone because he has heard from some of the sailors he met in Genoa that one of Antonio's large ships has been wrecked on the way back from Tripolis.

(ii) In this scene, Shylock is in a mood of grief. He feels as if he is the only one in the world suffering from ill luck. Tubal is said to be torturing Shylock by giving alternate accounts of Antonio's losses and Jessica's extravagances. He alternately makes Shlock elated and depressed for apparently no reason. He elates him by the news of wreckage of Antonio's ship on its way back from Tripolis, while he depresses him by saying that he could not find Jessica and that she had spent eighty ducats on one evening and exchanged a ring with a merchant for a monkey.

(iii) Antonio's misfortune makes Shylock elated because he will be able to take his revenge on Antonio. He will punish Antonio by exacting a pound of flesh from any part of his body. By his revengeful action, he would avenge his hatred for Antonio and the Christians. Further, if Antonio is removed from Venice he can make profits as he likes.

(iv) A synagogue is a Jewish house of prayer. Shylock's journey to the synagogue gives us the clue that he will take revenge on Antonio. Shylock believes in the old Mosaic law, which prescribed an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. So, Shylock feels he is justified in taking revenge against an enemy of his religion and race.

(v) Shylock's passion for revenge and his complete justification of it is given in this scene. He explains the insults he has suffered unjustly and his right to take revenge. He believes that he is doing as his enemies would do. The fierceness of his thirst for revenge is expressed in his final threat 'I will have the heart of him'. Shylock states that Jews are no different from Christians and they will follow their example in the matter of revenge too.