

Merchant of Venice

Act – 2

Scene – 8

Extract - 1

(i) What is meant by 'a passion so confused, so strange, outrageous, and so variable'? Why was the Jew so excited?

(ii) Earlier, how the Jew troubled the Duke? Where did the Duke go and what were his findings?

(iii) Besides money, what else did the Jew's daughter steal?

(iv) Give the meaning of:

(a) double ducats:

(b) a sealed bag:

(v) What did the Jew utter in his excitement? Explain how Shylock's lamentations add to the humour in the play.

Answers:

(i) In the given lines, Salanio says that he has not seen such an outburst of anger, so confused, so strange, excessive and frequently changing as is displayed by the Jew. Shylock discovers that his daughter has eloped after robbing him of his money and jewellery. This makes him excited and furious with grief and despair. He gives vent to it by an exhibition of passionate excitement and anger which is strange, excessive and frequently changing.

(ii) Earlier, Shylock roused the Duke with his complaints against Lorenzo and Jessica for robbing him and eloping. He made such a disturbance that the Duke was obliged to attend to his demands. He even accompanied the Duke to search for Lorenzo and Jessica on board Bassanio's ship. By the time they reached the place, the ship had already set sail. The Duke was told by someone that Lorenzo and Jessica had been seen sitting together in a gondola.

(iii) In his excitement, Shylock utters confused cries for his daughter, who had eloped with a Christian, taking with her, his ducats and jewellery. He wants justice from the law. Besides money, Jessica has taken away from Shylock some jewels, precious stones and diamonds.

(iv)(a) coins of double ducats.

(b) a bag that is securely sealed to ensure the security of its contents.

(v) Shylocks' lamentations add to the humour in the play. He is depicted as a comic character in the scene. The manner in which he laments the loss of his daughter and his ducats amuses the audience; Shylock's repetition of 'O my daughter! O my Christian ducats!' indicate his greedy nature and shows that Jessica is another possession for him like the ducats. The manner in which all the boys of Venice follow him and repeat his words of lamentation in a tone of mockery and jeer at him further add to the humour in the scene.

Extract - 2

(i) What is meant by: 'Let good Antonio look he keep his day'? What could be the consequence if Antonio failed to 'keep his day'?

(ii) What did Salarino hear from the Frenchman, the previous day? Why was the news quite startling?

(iii) After hearing the news from the Frenchman, what did Salarino wish?

(iv) What advice does Salanio give to Salarino regarding Antonio?

(v) Explain how the news given by the Frenchman creates suspense in the story. What would be Shylock's reaction after hearing the news?

Answers:

(i) 'Let good Antonio keep his day' means let worthy Antonio make sure that he has the money to pay Shylock on the appointed day, If he fails to keep his day, Shylock would take his revenge on Antonio.

(ii) In his conversation with a Frenchman, Salarino heard that a richly laden ship from Italy had been wrecked in the narrow channel which divides England and France. The news was startling because Salarino thought of Antonio's ship and wished that it might not be one of his ships.

(iii) Salarino wished that the wrecked ship might not be one of Antonio's ships.

(iv) Salanio advises Salarino to tell Antonio what he has heard about shipwreck. However, he advises him not to tell Antonio about the news immediately for it may make him sad.

(v) The news given by the Frenchman creates a suspense in the story. The possibility of the wreckage of one of Antonio's ships casts a gloom since it may imply that Antonio would not be able to make payment of the loan on the day the bond is due. After hearing the news, Shylock is happy that he could take his revenge on Antonio, He calls him a bankrupt and insists on the execution of the bond.

Extract - 3

(i) In what context has Antonio said the words given in quotation? Who quotes his words here?

(ii) Give the meaning of:

(a) Slubber not business for my sake, Bassanio

(b) But stay the very riping of the time.

(iii) What advice did Antonio give to Bassanio about the latter's stay in Belmont and his love affair?

(iv) Describe how Antonio parted from Bassanio. What does it show about their relationship?

(v) What role do Salanio and Salarino play in the scene? What do they decide to do at the end of this scene?

Answers:

(i) Antonio has said these words at the time of bidding farewell to Bassanio, when the latter was about to embark on his journey to Belmont. Salarino quotes his words here.

(ii) (a) Bassanio, do not spoil your plan for my sake.

(b) But stay as long as it would be necessary to attain your objective.

(iii) Antonio advises Bassanio to stay at Belmont as long as it would be necessary for winning Portia and tells him not to bother about the bond. He advises Bassanio to be cheerful and devote himself entirely to win his lady-love in most suitable manner.

(iv) While parting, Antonio's eyes were filled with tears. He turned his face away and extended his hand behind him. Then, moved by his love, he held the hands of Bassanio and they parted from each other. It shows that there is great love and affection between them.

(v) Salanio and Salarino plays the role of friends of The merchant of Venice, who is Antonio and Bassanio who is the main hero of this play. They all are good friends. Also, well wisher of Antonio and they had also advises him when he's ship had wrecked. At the end of the scene, Salanio and Salarino decided to look for Antonio and raise his low spirits with some amusement.