

PORTIA Yes, yes, it was Bassanio! — as I think so was he called.  
 NERISSA True, madam; he of all the men that ever my foolish eyes  
 looked upon was the best deserving a fair lady.  
 PORTIA I remember him well, and I remember him worthy of thy  
 praise.

*Enter a SERVINGMAN*

How now, what news?  
 SERVINGMAN The four strangers seek for you, madam, to take their  
 leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of  
 Moroccó, who brings word the prince his master will be here  
 tonight.  
 PORTIA If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid  
 the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach. If he have  
 the condition of a saint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather  
 he should shrive me than wive me.  
 Come, Nerissa; sirrah, go before:  
 Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at  
 the door

*Exeunt*

95 so was he] Q1, F; he was so Q2 99 SD] *As in F; follows 100 in Q1-2* 100] Q1-2; not in F 101 for] Q1-2;  
 not in F

95 as I think Portia attempts to cover up her eagerness. In substituting a smoother wording, 'as I think he was so called', Q2 loses the naturalness of her confusion.

100 How...news F's omission of this is probably an error, but some editors think the question too peremptory for Portia.

101 four But we have been told about six suitors. Joseph Hunter, *New Illustrations...of Shakespeare*, 1845, suggested that the scene had been revised to include the Englishman and the Scot. But such inconsistency is characteristic of 'foul papers'. See Textual Analysis, p. 183 below.

107 condition character, disposition; as in *LLL* 5.2.20: 'A light condition in a beauty dark'.

107 devil Devils traditionally were black. Portia seems about to make some pious remark about virtue mattering more than looks.

107-8 I had...wive me I would rather have him for a confessor than a husband. To shrive was to give absolution.

109-11 Come...door Not printed as verse in Q1-2 and F, but most editors feel it to be a rough closing couplet.

[1.3] *Enter BASSANIO with SHYLOCK the Jew* SIDE #3 START HERE  
 (Shylock, Bassanio, Antonio)

SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats, well.  
 BASSANIO Ay, sir, for three months.  
 SHYLOCK For three months, well.  
 BASSANIO For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.  
 SHYLOCK Antonio shall become bound, well. 5  
 BASSANIO May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know  
 your answer?  
 SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats for three months, and Antonio  
 bound.  
 BASSANIO Your answer to that? 10  
 SHYLOCK Antonio is a good man —  
 BASSANIO Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?  
 SHYLOCK Ho no, no, no, no: my meaning in saying he is a good man  
 is to have you understand me that he is sufficient. Yet his means  
 are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to 15  
 the Indies; I understand moreover upon the Rialto he hath a third  
 at Mexico, a fourth for England, and other ventures he hath  
 squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men;

Act 1, Scene 3 1.3] *Rowe subst.; not in Q1-2, F* 1, 3, 5 well.] Q1-2, F; well? *Pooler, conj. Hudson* 4] *As prose, Pope; as two lines divided after you, Q1-2, F* 6-7] *As prose, Pope; as two lines divided before* Shall Q1-2, F 8-9] *As prose, Pope; as two lines divided after* months, Q1-2, F

#### Act 1, Scene 3

0 SD SHYLOCK This is not known to occur as a Jewish name in Shakespeare's day. The nearest biblical approximation is 'Shiloh' (Gen. 49.10), which incongruously means 'Messiah'. A possible source is Joseph Ben Gurion's *History...of the Jews' Commonwealth*, translated in 1595, which records that when a Roman captain called Antonius was defending Askalon one of the Jewish leaders who went to parley with him was called Shiloh (p. 85). See 44 n. below.

1 SHYLOCK The variations in speech headings between 'Shylock' and 'Jew' are part of the evidence for the play having been printed from Shakespeare's manuscript: see Textual Analysis, p. 170 below. In this scene the variations do not appear to have any substantive significance.

1 ducats Gold ducats, literally coins 'of the duke', were first struck in Venice in the thirteenth century. The name was evocative of great wealth, like Swiss francs or Krugerrands today.

1, 3, 5 well. Some editors and many actors have made these lines interrogative. But Shylock is more likely to respond to Bassanio's eagerness with a studied deliberation.

4 bound compelled to repay by a written under-

taking. There is a sinister undertone of the meaning 'captive'.

6 May you stead me? Can you help me?

6 pleasure oblige.

11 good Shylock means 'financially sound', but in a conflict of values typical of the play Bassanio takes the word to mean 'honourable'.

14 sufficient i.e. security enough in normal circumstances.

15 in supposition to be assumed, hypothetical.

15-17 Tripolis...England On this range of ventures, impossible for a real Venetian merchant of the time, see p. 13 above. Tripoli (Tarabulus esh Sham) in Lebanon was a major port for the trade in oriental goods.

16 Rialto The Exchange of Venice, and its adjoining piazza. Florio's Italian dictionary (1611) defines it as 'An eminent place in Venice where merchants commonly meet'.

18 squandered This may simply mean 'scattered', without any hint of contempt (*OED v* 1a); but Shakespeare's only other use of the verb, 'squand'ring glances of the fool' in *AYLI* 2.7.57, implies folly; so Shylock may, from the viewpoint of a prudent financier, be glancing at the want of prudence in Antonio's undertakings.

there be land rats, and water rats, water thieves and land thieves  
 – I mean pirates – and then there is the peril of waters, winds and  
 rocks. The man is notwithstanding sufficient. Three thousand  
 ducats: I think I may take his bond.

BASSANIO Be assured you may.

SHYLOCK I will be assured I may; and that I may be assured, I will  
 bethink me – may I speak with Antonio?

BASSANIO If it please you to dine with us –

SHYLOCK Yes, to smell pork, to eat of the habitation which your  
 prophet the Nazarite conjured the devil into. I will buy with you,  
 sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but  
 I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you. What  
 news on the Rialto? Who is he comes here?

Enter ANTONIO

BASSANIO This is Signor Antonio.

SHYLOCK [*Aside*] How like a fawning publican he looks!

I hate him for he is a Christian;

But more, for that in low simplicity

He lends out money gratis, and brings down

The rate of usance here with us in Venice.

24, 27, 33 SH SHYLOCK] Q2; Jew Q1, F 33 SD] Rowe; not in Q1-2, F

20 pirates Piracy, largely by Balkan refugees from the Turkish invasions, reached horrifying proportions in the Adriatic at this time. The word thus had the associations of 'terrorist' today, and it is a pity if the actor detracts from its menace by pronouncing it 'pi-rats' to chime with 'land rats, and water rats'; the spelling of Q1-2 and F, 'Pyrats', is widespread enough to have no special significance. The prosaic explanation of a figure of speech is typical of Shylock's very individual speech habits; compare 2.5.33, and see Brian Vickers, *The Artistry of Shakespeare's Prose*, 1968, pp. 82-8.

23, 24 assured Bassanio means 'reassured', but Shylock twists the meaning to 'financially secure'.

24-5 I will bethink me – A dash has been used, in place of the comma of the early texts, to suggest a half-formed thought of some ingenious kind of security. But the sentence could be complete, and decisive – 'I will give the matter my careful consideration.' The actor has a choice.

28 Nazarite Jesus of Nazareth. The word is used with reference to Nazareth in both BB and GB (e.g. 'He should be called a Nazarite', Matt. 2.23) and it was not until the AV (1611) that 'Nazarene'

was used in order to avoid confusion with the Jewish sect called Nazarites.

28 conjured...into The Synoptic Gospels relate that devils driven out of two madmen by Jesus entered into a herd of pigs. See Matt. 8.28 to end.

32 This is Not a formal introduction, but simply 'It's'. The short line may indicate that Bassanio goes over to reassure the startled Antonio, who did not expect to find him with Shylock.

33 fawning publican The adjective is meant to recall the publican – that is, tax gatherer – in the parable told in Luke 18.9-14; his humility (compare 'low simplicity' in 35) is contrasted with the arrogance of the Pharisee who, like Shylock, prides himself on his observance of the law. Noble, however, thinks that 'Shylock meant to stigmatise Antonio as the creature of the ruling class... Antonio bullied Jews, just as had the publicans' (p. 164).

35 low simplicity humble foolishness.

36 gratis without taking interest.

37 usance Shylock prefers 'usance' to 'usury' as, in Thomas Wilson's phrase, 'a more cleanly name' (*Discourse upon Usury* (1572), ed. R. H. Tawney, 1925, p. 228).

If I can catch him once upon the hip,  
 I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.

He hates our sacred nation, and he rails 40

Even there where merchants most do congregate

On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift

Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe

If I forgive him!

BASSANIO Shylock, do you hear?

SHYLOCK I am debating of my present store, 45

And by the near guess of my memory

I cannot instantly raise up the gross

Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?

Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,

Will furnish me. But soft, how many months 50

Do you desire? [*To Antonio*] Rest you fair, good signor!

Your worship was the last man in our mouths.

ANTONIO Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow

By taking nor by giving of excess,

Yet to supply the ripe wants of my friend 55

I'll break a custom. [*To Bassanio*] Is he yet possessed

How much ye would?

42 well-won] Q1-2; well worne F 44 Shylock] Q2, F; Shyloch Q1 51 SD] Follows signor in Rowe; not in Q1-2, F 56 SD] NS; following would in 58, Staunton; not in Q1-2, F 56 Is...possessed] Q1, F; are you resolv'd Q2 57 ye would] Q1; he would have Q2; he would F

38 upon the hip at a disadvantage; Iago claims to have Cassio 'on the hip' in *Oth.* 2.1.305. As this is a wrestling metaphor, N. Nathan thinks Shakespeare is remembering the story of Jacob wrestling with the angel in Gen. 32, which comes a little after the story of Jacob and Laban (*NQ* 197 (1952), 74; see 63-80 below).

42 well-won F's emendation, if it is one, to 'well-worne' may just conceivably be right. In the sense of 'long accustomed', it implies that the taking of interest was a time-honoured practice.

43, 67, 68 interest Shylock recoils from the crude association of this word with unnatural profit. See 37 n.

43 my tribe Presumably one of the twelve tribes of Israel, from which all Jews traced their descent. Shakespeare is attempting a kind of local colour, but the oath rings false to Jewish ears.

44 Shylock Q1's spelling here, 'Shyloch', may result from Shakespeare's initial uncertainty about the name. See 1 SH n. above.

45 debating...store considering what ready cash I have.

47 gross full sum.

49 Tubal By involving him in the deal, Shakespeare shows that the Jews in Venice follow the injunction of Deut. 23.20 in lending freely to each other and taking interest only of non-Jews. On the name see 3.2.284 n.

50 soft wait a moment.

50 months months' credit.

52 Your...mouths i.e. we were just talking about you. Shylock's delay in greeting Antonio suggests his fear and revulsion.

54 of excess anything over and above the sum in question; i.e. interest.

55 ripe pressing.

56-7 Is he...would? Has he been told how much you want? Antonio has turned abruptly away in distaste from the moneylender. Q2's editor failed to see this and emended the lines so that Antonio continues to speak to Shylock. The F reading probably makes the same mistake, and emends so that Antonio asks Shylock if Bassanio knows yet how much money he is going to need – an improbable question.

SHYLOCK Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.  
 ANTONIO And for three months.  
 SHYLOCK I had forgot, three months; [*To Bassanio*] you told me so.  
 Well then, your bond; and let me see – but hear you, 60  
 Methoughts you said you neither lend nor borrow  
 Upon advantage.  
 ANTONIO I do never use it.  
 SHYLOCK When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep –  
 This Jacob from our holy Abram was  
 (As his wise mother wrought in his behalf) 65  
 The third possessor; ay, he was the third –  
 ANTONIO And what of him, did he take interest?  
 SHYLOCK No, not take interest, not as you would say  
 Directly interest. Mark what Jacob did:  
 When Laban and himself were compromised 70  
 That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied  
 Should fall as Jacob's hire, the ewes being rank  
 In end of autumn turnèd to the rams,  
 And when the work of generation was  
 Between these woolly breeders in the act, 75  
 The skilful shepherd pilled me certain wands

59 SD] *Brown*; not in Q1-2, F 76 pilled] *Knight*; pyld Q1-2; pil'd F; peel'd *Pope*

58 And...months *Brown* suggests the missing half-line indicates a pause. Shylock does not want to appear too compliant.

59 you told me so This oblique, almost over-the-shoulder remark to Bassanio underlines how quickly the scene is developing into a confrontation between Antonio and Shylock.

62 advantage i.e. to the lender's advantage, or profit.

62 I...use it Antonio may mean more than 'That is not my custom.' 'Use it' may mean 'take usury', a sarcastic formation on the lines of 'wive it' (*Shr.* 1.2.75) or 'prince it' (*Cym.* 3.3.85).

63-80 When Jacob...were Jacob's Gen. 27 relates how Rebecca deceived her blind husband Isaac into mistaking her son Jacob for his half-brother Esau. She put rough kidskins on Jacob's hands, so that his father mistook his touch for that of Esau, blessed him, and made him his heir. Jacob fled from Esau's consequent anger and served his uncle Laban for seven years in order to gain the hand of his daughter Rachel. In Gen. 30 the story is told of Jacob's sheep. Laban agreed to his keeping all the parti-coloured animals in their flock. Jacob

acquired huge numbers of sheep by means of the trick Shylock describes here, which was based on the belief that offspring resemble whatever the mother sees at their conception.

64 Abram N. Nathan suggests that Shakespeare intentionally used the original name (Gen. 11.26), which meant 'sterile', rather than the name 'Abraham' given to the patriarch in Gen. 17.2, which meant 'father of many nations' (*NQ* ns 17 (1970), 127-8).

70 compromised agreed.

71 eanlings new-born lambs; from the verb 'ean' meaning 'to give birth'. See also 79 below.

72 hire wages.

72 rank on heat.

74 work of generation mating.

76 pilled...wands partly stripped the bark off some twigs. The old form 'pilled' is retained here because it is found in Gen. 30.37 in the Tudor translations of the Bible, though it is reasonable the actor should modernise to 'peeled' with the Revised Version. 'Me' is the ethic dative, which adds nothing to the meaning but 'personalises' Shylock's speech.

And in the doing of the deed of kind  
 He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,  
 Who then conceiving, did in eaning time  
 Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's. 80  
 This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;  
 And thrift is blessing if men steal it not.  
 ANTONIO This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for,  
 A thing not in his power to bring to pass,  
 But swayed and fashioned by the hand of heaven. 85  
 Was this inserted to make interest good?  
 Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?  
 SHYLOCK I cannot tell, I make it breed as fast.  
 But note me, signor –  
 ANTONIO Mark you this, Bassanio,  
 The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose. 90  
 An evil soul producing holy witness  
 Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,  
 A goodly apple rotten at the heart.  
 O what a goodly outside falsehood hath!  
 SHYLOCK Three thousand ducats, 'tis a good round sum. 95  
 Three months from twelve, then let me see, the rate –  
 ANTONIO Well, Shylock, shall we be beholding to you?  
 SHYLOCK Signor Antonio, many a time and oft  
 In the Rialto you have rated me  
 About my monies and my usances. 100  
 Still have I borne it with a patient shrug

77 in the doing...kind during mating.

78 fulsome *OED* bases its definition 'lustful' (sv 2c) on this passage.

80 Fall Drop.

81 blest In Gen. 31 Jacob claims that he acted as he did on God's guidance ('The God of my father hath been with me', 31.5), because Laban had been cheating him out of his wages.

82 thrift profit, increase; compare 1.1.174.

83 venture speculation involving some uncertainty. Antonio, like the Reformation commentators, condones Jacob's stratagem as an act of faith 'showing that he looked to God, whose hand alone could dispose of this so abstruse and hidden a thing in the course of nature' (William Whately, quoted Neil Carson, 'Hazarding and cozening in *The Merchant of Venice*', *ELN* 9 (1972), 168-77, p. 175).

83 served for i.e. he continued to work for Laban while carrying out his scheme. A common

objection to usury was that its production involved no toil.

86 inserted Probably 'brought into our talk'; less probably, 'put into the biblical story'.

88 I cannot tell A polite formula for maintaining a difference of opinion.

89 note me Either Shylock claims attention by this phrase, as Antonio disdainfully turns aside to Bassanio; or he has withdrawn into his calculations.

94 goodly The emendation of Rowe and some other eighteenth-century editors to 'godly' avoids a repetition from the previous line, but it has no textual authority.

99 rated berated. The word pivots Shylock from his matter-of-fact calculations of 'the rate' (96) into his dramatic outburst.

100, 108, 111, 121 monies Strictly 'sums of money', but often used in Elizabethan English where we should use the singular. Later writers adopted it as a typical Jewish usage, in imitation of Shylock.

For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe.  
 You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
 And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine,  
 And all for use of that which is mine own. 105  
 Well then, it now appears you need my help.  
 Go to, then, you come to me, and you say,  
 'Shylock, we would have monies' – you say so,  
 You that did void your rheum upon my beard,  
 And foot me as you spurn a stranger cur 110  
 Over your threshold: monies is your suit.  
 What should I say to you? Should I not say  
 'Hath a dog money? Is it possible  
 A cur can lend three thousand ducats?' Or  
 Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key, 115  
 With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness,  
 Say this:  
 'Fair sir, you spat on me on Wednesday last,  
 You spurned me such a day, another time  
 You called me dog: and for these courtesies 120  
 I'll lend you thus much monies.'

ANTONIO I am as like to call thee so again,  
 To spit on thee again, to spurn thee too.  
 If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not  
 As to thy friends, for when did friendship take 125  
 A breed for barren metal of his friend?

103 cut-throat] Q1-2, F; cut-throat, Hudson, conj. Thirlby  
 126 for] Q1-2; of F

102 suff'rance...tribe Sufferance means 'forbearance', but there is perhaps some play on the meaning 'suffering' because the 'badge' or distinguishing mark which Venetian Jews were compelled to wear was a yellow O, which could be interpreted as a cry. See F. C. Lane, *Venice: A Maritime Republic*, 1973, p. 300, and compare the analogous use of the letter H with a play on 'ache' (*Ant.* 4.7.8).

103 dog Particularly insulting to Shylock, to whom as a Jew dogs were unclean.

104 gaberdine A loose outer garment, not distinctively Jewish. In *Temp* 2.2.38 Trinculo creeps under Caliban's gaberdine.

105 use With a nuance of 'putting to use, taking interest upon'. There is a possible echo of Matt. 20.15, which had become proverbial (Tilley 099): 'Is it not lawful for me to do as I will with my own?' (GB).

117] *As separate line, Steevens*<sup>3</sup>; *as part of 118, Q1-2, F*

109 void your rheum spit.

111 suit request.

115 key tone of voice.

117 Say this The pause gives time for a mock obeisance, and throws emphasis on to the concluding lines of the speech.

126 A breed...metal i.e. an increase in a sum of money, as if it were able to reproduce. The idea originated with Aristotle's play upon the Greek word for 'interest' which means 'offspring': 'And this term interest, which means the birth of money from money, is applied to the breeding of money because the offspring resembles the parent. Wherefore of all modes of getting wealth this is the most unnatural' (*Politica*, trans. B. Jowett, in *Works*, ed. W. D. Rouse, 1908, 1258b).

126 for F changes the preposition, but 'for' is quite natural. Compare its common use in such phrases as 'a daughter for Margaret'.

But lend it rather to thine enemy,  
 Who if he break, thou mayst with better face  
 Exact the penalty.

SHYLOCK Why look you how you storm! 130  
 I would be friends with you, and have your love,  
 Forget the shames that you have stained me with,  
 Supply your present wants, and take no doit  
 Of usance for my monies, and you'll not hear me.  
 This is kind I offer.

BASSANIO This were kindness. 135  
 SHYLOCK This kindness will I show.

Go with me to a notary, seal me there  
 Your single bond, and, in a merry sport,  
 If you repay me not on such a day,  
 In such a place, such sum or sums as are 140  
 Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit  
 Be nominated for an equal pound  
 Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken  
 In what part of your body pleaseth me.

ANTONIO Content, in faith! I'll seal to such a bond, 145  
 And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

BASSANIO You shall not seal to such a bond for me;  
 I'll rather dwell in my necessity.

ANTONIO Why, fear not, man, I will not forfeit it.  
 Within these two months, that's a month before 150  
 This bond expires, I do expect return  
 Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

SHYLOCK O father Abram, what these Christians are,

128 break go bankrupt.

133 doit A very small Dutch coin of little value.

135, 136 kindness In picking up this word, which Bassanio uses in its normal sense, Shylock is made to pun grimly on the meaning 'natural inclination', which also supplies an ominous overtone to the word in 146. Similar ambiguities in the use of 'kind' and 'kindly' occur in *King Lear*.

138 single bond i.e. an unconditional bond. But Shylock immediately pretends that a condition has occurred to him by way of a joke.

138 merry sport This may either echo or be echoed by line 49 of the ballad *Gernutus*: 'But we will have a merry jest.' See p. 5 above. In Irving's

production, Shylock tapped Antonio confidently on the chest at these words, and Antonio recoiled from his touch. Olivier preserved Irving's gesture, but used it five lines later, at 'your fair flesh'.

141 condition i.e. the terms of the bond.

142 nominated for named as.

142 equal exact. This insistence on exactness is to prove Shylock's undoing.

142-4 an equal...me This closely follows *Il Pecorone*: 'una libra di carne d'addosso di qualunque luogo e' volesse' (a pound of flesh from whatever place you wish).

148 dwell...necessity continue to lack means (for my venture). The rhyme helps the emphasis of Bassanio's words.

Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
 The thoughts of others! Pray you tell me this: 155  
 If he should break his day what should I gain  
 By the exaction of the forfeiture?

A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,  
 Is not so estimable, profitable neither, 160  
 As flesh of muttuns, beefs, or goats. I say  
 To buy his favour, I extend this friendship.  
 If he will take it, so; if not, adieu,  
 And for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

ANTONIO Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

SHYLOCK Then meet me forthwith at the notary's. 165  
 Give him direction for this merry bond,  
 And I will go and purse the ducats straight,  
 See to my house left in the fearful guard  
 Of an unthrifty knave, and presently  
 I'll be with you. *Exit*

ANTONIO Hie thee, gentle Jew. 170

The Hebrew will turn Christian, he grows kind.

BASSANIO I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

ANTONIO Come on, in this there can be no dismay,  
 My ships come home a month before the day. *Exeunt*

Side #3  
 End  
 here

170 SD] Q1-2, F; placed at end of line, Capell 170-1 Hie...kind] As in Q3; ...turne / Christian...Q1-2, F  
 171 The] Q1-2; This F

154 dealings...teaches Plural subjects with a singular form of the verb are not uncommon in Shakespeare (Abbott 333).

160 muttuns, beefs sheep, oxen. The distinction between the native English word for the animal and the French one for its meat was not rigid in the sixteenth century.

163 for my love for my sake.

168 fearful untrustworthy.

169 unthrifty careless.

169 knave Not as disparaging as in modern English. Its primary meaning was still 'servant', as in *Oth.* 1.1.45.

170 gentle A pun on 'Gentile' as at 2.6.52.

173 dismay i.e. cause for dismay.

2.[1] [*A flourish of cornets.*] Enter [*the Prince of*] MOROCCO, a tawny Moor all in white, and three or four followers accordingly; with PORTIA, NERISSA, and their train

MOROCCO Mislike me not for my complexion,

The shadowed livery of the burnished sun,  
 To whom I am a neighbour and near bred.

Bring me the fairest creature northward born,  
 Where Phoebus' fire scarce thaws the icicles, 5

And let us make incision for your love  
 To prove whose blood is reddest, his or mine.

I tell thee, lady, this aspect of mine  
 Hath feared the valiant; by my love I swear

The best-regarded virgins of our clime  
 Have loved it too. I would not change this hue, 10

Except to steal your thoughts, my gentle queen.

PORTIA In terms of choice I am not solely led

Act 2, Scene 1 2.1] Rowe subst.; not in Q1-2; Actus Secundus. F 0 SD A...cornets] Malone subst.; not in Q1-2; Flo. Cornets / follows / train / in 0 SD.3, F 0 SD the Prince of] Capell; not in Q1-2, F 0 SD MOROCCO] Capell; Morochus Q1-2, F 1 SH MOROCCO] Q1 subst.; Moroc. Q2; Mor. F

Act 2, Scene 1

0 SD.1 A...cornets This musical stage direction from F is a theatrical addition. A flourish was a short call or phrase, probably extemporised. Cornets at the time were thin, curved woodwind instruments, as in C. Walter Hodges's drawing (illustration 4, p. 28 above). They signified the entry of an important person.

0 SD.1 tawny i.e. light-skinned, as distinct from a 'blackamoor', or sub-Saharan Negro. See Eldred Jones, *Othello's Countrymen*, 1965, pp. 68-9.

0 SD.2 white Shakespeare, who may have known that white was a ceremonial colour in Islam, visualises a theatrically effective contrast between the strangers and the rich colours worn by Portia's 'train'.

0 SD.2 three or four This vagueness is typical of a dramatist's own manuscript.

0 SD.2 accordingly i.e. 'complexioned and dressed as Morocco' (Brown).

1 complexion The metre requires this to have four syllables. This may suggest Morocco's careful 'foreign' diction, in contrast to Portia's trisyllabic 'direction' (14) and 'affection' (22).

1-3 Mislike...bred Reminiscent of Song of Sol. 1.5 (BB): 'Marvell not at me that I am so black, for why? the sun hath shined upon me.'

2 shadowed dark; with some play on the word

as applied to a way of weaving or dyeing textiles (*OED* sv 5), rather than the heraldic meaning 'outlined' proposed by NS and subsequent editors.

2 livery uniform; with a nuance of the original meaning 'something bestowed' (*OED* sb 1).

2 burnished bright like polished metal. A word from Shakespeare's 'high style'; he uses it to enliven Plutarch's description of Cleopatra's barge, as translated by North (*Ant.* 2.2.191).

3 near bred (1) reared nearby, (2) closely related. Morocco makes himself sound both subservient ('livery') in the courtly-love tradition and super-humanly connected with the sun god, Phoebus.

4 fairest most light-skinned.

6 make incision The image keeps the idea of the flesh bond, heard of only minutes ago, reverberating in our minds.

7 reddest 'Red blood is a traditional sign of courage' (Johnson).

9 feared terrified.

10 best-regarded most admired.

12 queen Like 2-3, this suggests both courtly-love subservience and royal condescension.

13 terms of Probably in the vague sense recognised by Onions and the *OED*, 'as a matter of, in respect of', as when Hamlet says 'in my terms of honour' (5.2.246).