

ACT-III, SCENE I

Stanzas for Comprehension

1. (i) Shylock is extremely pained that his own daughter Jessica has rebelled against him and run away with a Christian. But he is happy that Antonio has become a bankrupt and will not be able to return the money.
(ii) Salarino's attitude towards Shylock is one of mockery. He seems to be deriving a sadistic pleasure out of the misery of Shylock.
(iii) We come to know that although Jessica is the daughter of Shylock, there is much difference between the daughter and the father. Jessica is fair complexioned and Shylock is of a dark complexion. If Shylock is compared to red wine, Jessica is Rhenish.
(iv) Shylock says that Antonio has become a bankrupt. He dare not show his face at the Rialto. He adds that Antonio used to call him a usurer, and he would lend money free of interest. If he does not redeem his bond in time, he will be in trouble.
(v) Salarino's speech is very significant. It prepares us for what is going to take place. Shylock is very angry at the loss of his money and his daughter's elopement. He is likely to become more merciless.
2. (i) Salanio and Salerio meet Shylock in the street. They try to make fun of him. Shylock who is already much disturbed due to Jessica's elopement loses his temper. Salanio hopes that he would not take Antonio's flesh. If the latter forfeits the bond of what use it is to him ? Shylock says that it can be used as bait for fish.
(ii) Shylock's speech throws much light on Antonio's conduct in the past. We come to know that Antonio had many times disgraced Shylock. He had laughed at his losses and mocked at his gains. In short, Antonio had prevented Shylock's business deals. He had also scorned Shylock's nation.
(iii) Shylock's speech is very significant. It throws light on Shylock's motive for revenge. It also justifies, to some extent, the cruel attitude of Shylock. Shylock says that he has borne disgrace and abuses simply because he is a Jew living in the country where Christians are in majority. His words spoken in defence of Jews, "Hath not a Jew eyes ? Hath not a Jew hands...", amply justify his stand of villainy.
(iv) From Shylock's speech we come to know that Antonio is proud of his being a Christian and he looks down upon the Jews and their business of money-lending. He used to mock at Shylock's gains and scorn his nation. He also would encourage Shylock's enemies, and prevent his business deals.
(v) We infer that Shylock and Antonio are inimical to each other. Their dislike for each other is deep-seated. If Shylock gets a chance, he will definitely try to take revenge from Antonio.
3. (i) The lines given here are spoken by Shylock when he meets Tubal in a street of Venice. Shylock had sent Tubal in search of Jessica and Lorenzo but he has failed to find them out. Tubal tells him that he did go to the places where he heard of the run-away lovers but he could not find them.
(ii) Shylock's predicament is that his daughter has run away with so much money and jewels and he is spending so much money in her search. He loves his daughter but more than his daughter he loves his ducats. The money spent in the search pinches him.

- (iii) The lines throw light on the character of Shylock. He is so money-minded that he wishes that Jessica were in her coffin before him as long as the ducats were in her coffin. He laments that the thief (Jessica) has stolen so much and now so much has been spent to find the thief. He feels that he is the only grief-stricken follow.
 - (iv) Shylock feels the loss of his daughter deeply, but he is unable to separate her from the thought of his financial loss. He wants his daughter dead at his feet provided she has the jewels in her ears. His utterance becomes confused and frenzied because he is totally unhinged at this moment.
 - (v) As soon as Shylock finishes his speech with the words that ill-luck seems to befall him alone, Tubal says that other men also have bad luck. Antonio is one such man.
4. (i) Tubal tells Shylock that Jessica spent eighty ducats in one night. Not only that, she gave a ring to a diver in exchange for a monkey. This is how she wasted Shylock's money.
- (ii) Jessica gave in exchange for a monkey one of the rings that she had stolen from her house. This ring had a turquoise studded in it and it was given to Shylock by his wife before marriage.
 - (iii) As soon as Tubal tells Shylock about a ring which a diver had got from Jessica for a monkey, he remembers the ring. It was his precious turquoise ring, given to him by his beloved wife, as a present before they were married.
 - (iv) The ring was precious for Shylock because it was a token of remembrance of his wife Leah, given to him before they were married.
 - (v) Tubal says that Antonio is certainly ruined. According to the creditors who travelled with Tubal, Antonio cannot avoid being bankrupt.

Assignment : For Practice

ACT-III, SCENE II

Stanzas for Comprehension

1. (i) Bassanio is ready to make a choice of the right casket. Portia who is attached to him wants that he should wait for a day or two before that. If he chooses wrongly, she will have to lose his company.
- (ii) In these lines Portia says that she can tell him which is the right casket to choose but then she will have to break the oath which she has taken. This she will not like to do in any case.
- (iii) Portia's speech tells us that she has a great respect for her father. She has taken an oath that she will not reveal to anyone, which is the right casket. She understands the sanctity of her oath. She is ready to sacrifice her love but she will remain sincere to the wishes of her father.
- (iv) Portia has fallen in love with Bassanio. She feels that his eyes have cast a spell on her. Mentally Portia has accepted him as her lord. She curses the bad time which puts an obstacle between her and Bassanio.
- (v) These lines mean that Bassanio's eyes have cast a spell on Portia. They have divided her into two. One half belongs to Portia but the other half has become Bassanio's. Portia says that his eyes may be confounded.

2. (i) These lines spoken by Portia are addressed to Bassanio, Nerissa and others and the musicians. Bassanio is going to make a choice of the casket. Everything is ready. He is standing before the caskets.
- (ii) Portia orders her musicians to play the music while Bassanio makes a choice. If he fails, he will die as the swan is said to die, fading away in music. But if he wins, the notes of trumpet will be like sweet sounds meant to awaken the dreaming bridegroom to the day of his marriage.
- (iii) This line means that if Bassanio fails, he will die as the swan is said to die fading away in music. The allusion is to an old superstition. It is that a swan, usually mute, sings just before its death. Bassanio's failure will fade away in the sounds of music.
- (iv) Portia has fallen in love with Bassanio. She wants that he should win her. She can teach him which is the right casket. But she does not want to break her oath. Very cleverly, she orders the musicians to play music which will give hint to Bassanio.
- (v) These lines mean that if Bassanio succeeds, the sounds of trumpet would suggest a coronation ceremony when trumpets are sounded and crown is placed on the new made king's head and all the subjects bow to him.
3. (i) Bassanio is standing in front of three caskets and is musing on the fact that appearances are often deceptive. Soon he is to choose one casket.
- (ii) Bassanio says that outward glitter of things has no real truth. The world is always deceived by ornamental things.
- (iii) In religion the greatest sin is to support a bad thing by quoting a text from the scriptures to justify it. This hides the badness with coloured words.
- (iv) Bassanio says that many cowards wear on their chins beards like those of god Hercules or the stern-faced Mars. Thus they try to look formidable. But if they are examined inwardly, their livers are cowardly.
- (v) These lines show that Bassanio is a very intelligent and practical man. He is not fascinated by the glitter of the golden casket and silver casket. Like a true scholar, he understands that every vice assumes some mark of virtue. Things are not what they appear to be.
4. (i) Bassanio is standing in front of the caskets, commenting to himself on the caskets. He is thinking hard on the lines that appearances are deceptive.
- (ii) He says that beauty can be bought by weight (in a chemist's shop). It makes a seeming contradiction in nature. Those who wear most of the purchased beauty (cosmetics) appear lightest (in character).
- (iii) Bassanio says that curly golden hair (or wigs) which play so lively in the wind over a face, supposed to be beautiful, are actually the property of another head. The skull on which they grew is lying in the tomb.
- (iv) These lines mean that adornment may be looked upon as a treacherous shore bounding a dangerous sea. In other words, adornment is like a lovely scarf covering a dusky face.
- (v) The above given lines throw ample light on the character of Bassanio. He is a soldier and a scholar. He is not misled by external show of costly metals. Like a true lover he is prepared to give and hazard all he has.

5. (i) Bassanio has just chosen the lead casket. On opening it he finds the portrait of Portia in it. The portrait is lifelike. He is very happy.
- (ii) He says that some semi-divine artist has made this picture. It is so lifelike. It seems that the eyes in the picture move. He feels that they move in unison with his own eyes.
- (iii) Bassanio is in an extremely happy mood. He has chosen the right casket and won fair Portia.
- (iv) Bassanio says that the artist who made this picture must have been semi-divine being. His painting has almost approached God's work of creation. The eyes, the lips, the golden hair all these are painted in a very realistic manner.
- (v) This speech reveals that Bassanio, according to his mood, uses the language full of exaggerated phrases and images. It shows that he is a scholar who can express himself in flowery language suitable to the occasion easily.
6. (i) Portia and Bassanio are in the room where three caskets were placed. Bassanio has just chosen the right casket and kissed Portia to claim her. It was written on the lead casket :
"Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath."
- (ii) Bassanio says that this portrait must have been made by some semi-divine artist because it is so realistic. The eyes, the lips, the hair – all are portrayed in a natural manner.
- (iii) On this happy occasion Bassanio receives the letter of Antonio. It makes him very sad. Portia asks Bassanio to give six thousand ducats to Shylock and deface the bond.
- (iv) Balthazar was the trusted servant of Portia. He was asked to go to Padua immediately. He was to give a letter to Portia's cousin Dr. Bellario and bring back from him the papers and robes he would give him.
- (v) Portia plans to go to Venice. Both Portia and Antonio love Bassanio very much. This scene reveals that Portia is very intelligent, practical and resourceful. She understands well the need of the moment and acts accordingly.
7. (i) Portia tells Bassanio to give six thousand ducats to Shylock and deface the bond. If he does not agree to it, double six thousand and then treble that amount before this friend loses even a hair.
- (ii) Portia tells Bassanio to go with her to the church and have the legal ceremony of marriage performed by him.
- (iii) This line means that Portia is ready to spend any amount of money to save the man who is Bassanio's best friend. She means that Bassanio should spend as much money as is required before his friend suffers even the slightest harm.
- (iv) The speech reveals that Portia is very generous. She respects the sentiments of her beloved husband. She is ready to bring cheer to her husband at any cost.
- (v) Portia suggests to Bassanio that he should give double the amount of borrowed money. If it is not enough he should double six thousand or treble that amount, to get the bond nullified.

Assignment : For Practice