

EDSC304B

William Shakespeare's

The Merchant of Venice

LEVEL 3



A Game of Risk



Antonio talks with his friends Salerio and Solanio.

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
 2. Look at the picture.
 3. Read the sentence under the picture.
 4. Read the first five paragraphs of the story.
 5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that

- a. Antonio's ships are all out to sea.
- b. a strong wind had caused one of Antonio's ships to go down.
- c. Antonio went down with one of his ships.
- d. Antonio was not a good merchant.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out why Bassanio wants to borrow more money from Antonio.

A New Master

Shylock's servant, Launcelot Gobbo, wanted to run away. *It would be wrong to run away* he thought. *I gave my word that I would stay.*

Launcelot wasn't happy. But he needed a good reason to stop working for Shylock. *I must decide what is right, but still get to do what I want.* He thought some more about this. "Shylock is not a good man," he whispered to himself. "By being his servant, I'm helping to hurt other people. *I should* run away because I should not be helping to hurt others." Then Launcelot smiled to himself. "This is a good reason to leave Shylock."

Launcelot saw his father walking carefully down the street. Old Gobbo held a basket in one hand and a walking stick in the other. Gobbo had not been able to see for many years.

Knowing that someone stood in front of him, Old Gobbo asked, "Do you know the way to Shylock's house? He has a servant named Launcelot."

Launcelot thought he would have some fun. He decided to trick his father. In a different voice he said, "Old man, Launcelot isn't a *servant*. Why, he's the *master* of the place!"

Old Gobbo smiled. "You are wrong. Launcelot comes from a *poor* family. I should know. He's my boy."

"Then I am sad to have to tell you of Launcelot's death," said Launcelot.

The blood inside Old Gobbo turned cold. "No! That boy was *everything* to me!" he cried. "Why, he held me up through life like my own walking stick!"

Launcelot, knowing he had gone too far, began to talk in his own voice. "Do I sound like a stick?" Then laughing, "Father, I am Launcelot!"

Old Gobbo did not think his trick was funny. He opened his

basket to show Launcelot the small birds he had cooked for Shylock.

"Don't give Shylock a gift," said Launcelot, "give him rope to hang himself! He gives me such little food, that I'm just skin and bone! Bring your gift to Bassanio. I hope to be working for him really soon. He gives new clothes to his servants."

Launcelot brought his father to Bassanio.

"I have to prepare for my trip to Belmont," Bassanio said kindly. "Have you come here to ask a favor of me?"

Old Gobbo gave the cooked birds to Bassanio. He told how Launcelot wanted a new master.

Bassanio thought about it for a minute. "I like the idea," he said to Launcelot. "But, I'm a master without money of my own. Are you sure you want to work for a poor master?"

"I want to work for a *good* master," answered Launcelot.

Bassanio laughed. "You tell Shylock I've said you can come work for me. I'll give you clothes with more buttons and brighter colors than my other servants."

Later Gratiano came to Bassanio. "I have a favor to ask of you," he said. "I must go with you to Belmont."

"You are a jewel of a friend," answered Bassanio. "But know this. Our friends don't care that you say and do things that you should not. But, while we are at Belmont, remember that those people don't know you. If you do something wild, you'll hurt my hopes of marrying Portia."

"Thank you," said Gratiano. "You have my word that I'll be as quiet as a mouse. But, at our party tonight, I shall be myself."

* * *

Launcelot went to see Shylock. Then he went to say good-bye to Shylock's daughter Jessica.

She handed him a ducat. "At your new master's house, you'll meet Lorenzo. Give him this letter secretly."

Jessica watched the door close behind Launcelot. *The same blood runs through my father and me, but we are nothing like each other. Soon I'll be Lorenzo's wife ---and a Christian.*

At Bassanio's house Lorenzo told his friends how they would go get Jessica that night. Each of them would change into his disguise while Bassanio and the others were eating dinner.

"We need to prepare more," said Gratiano.

"The streets will be dark," said Salerio. "We'll need servants to light the way for us."

"We should not go through with this," said Solanio.

When Launcelot reached Bassanio's, he gave Lorenzo the letter from Shylock's daughter. "I have to go back to Shylock's house," said Launcelot. "Bassanio has sent me to ask him to dinner." Then he hurried away.

Lorenzo read the letter. "Jessica has taken her father's gold and jewels," he said. "Her disguise is hanging ready in her room. Tonight, Jessica will dress as my servant."

A Happy Choice

VOCABULARY CHECK

company	divide	invite	pale	rather	save
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I. Sentences to Finish

Fill in the blank in each sentence with the correct key word from the box above.

1. Will you _____ Jill to your birthday party?
2. Joe tried to _____ the little boy who had fallen into the pond.
3. Mother will _____ the pie so everyone gets a piece.
4. Mrs. Watts lives alone. She misses the _____ of her family.
5. Dad says he would _____ own a dog than a cat.
6. Suzie's face turned _____ when she found out her dog had been hit by a car.

II. Making Sense of Sentences

Put a check next to YES if the sentence makes sense. Put a check next to NO if the sentence does not make sense.

- | | | |
|---|--------|-------|
| 1. Loni will divide the cake into eight pieces. | ___YES | ___NO |
| 2. Dan started a fire to save his family. | ___YES | ___NO |
| 3. I would rather go fishing than go to work. | ___YES | ___NO |
| 4. Little Walter lost his pale and shovel. | ___YES | ___NO |
| 5. I like Uncle Ralph's company . He makes me laugh. | ___YES | ___NO |
| 6. Who will you invite to your party? | ___YES | ___NO |

Check your answers with the Key on page 70.

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