

The Merchant of Venice abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 2

Request

Situation: Bassanio prepares to leave for Belmont to see Portia, borrowing the funds he needs for the trip from Shylock through Antonio's good credit. Bassanio's good friend Gratiano begs him to allow him to go with him, and Bassanio agrees to his request, but not before setting some conditions.

GRATIANO: Signior Bassanio! I must go with you to Belmont.

BASSANIO: Why then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano.

Bassanio to Gratiano

Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice,
Where these qualities become thee of choice,
And in such eyes as ours appear not as
Faults. But where thou art not known, why, they may
See thee as reckless, and as one who has
Undisciplined parts. Take pain to allay
Your spirit with some drops of modesty,
Lest through thy stormy behavior I be
Misconsidered and lose my hopes. Do lace
Your talk with respect, and swear but now and
Then. Wear prayer books in thy vest and at grace
Hood thine eyes and sigh, and say "amen." Stand
With the style of one well studied, and aim
To please my friends, as to please your granddame.

GRATIANO: Signior Bassanio, hear me. If I do not put on a sober habit, never trust me more.

BASSANIO: Well, we shall see your bearing.

GRATIANO: Nay, but I bar tonight. You shall not gauge me by what we do tonight.