

## **Chapter III**

### **The Dual Role of Portia**

Portia is the rich lady that Bassanio wishes to marry. She lives near Venice, in a place called Belmont. The story arises after Bassanio successfully marries Portia. Antonio's life is in danger since he cannot afford to pay the loan to Shylock. Shylock intends to ask Antonio's pound of flesh due to the fact that Antonio fails to repay the loan. Actually, the money itself is used by Bassanio in pursuing Portia.

As the problem comes, the role of Portia in helping each of the male character differs from one to another. Portia puts herself as a savior to Bassanio and Antonio; meanwhile, she becomes a punisher to Shylock. The dual role that Portia plays becomes an important aspect in the play as the whole story is constructed around this dual role.

#### **3.1. Portia's Role as a Savior**

Antonio, a merchant of Venice, agrees to take a loan from Shylock, a Jewish moneylender in order to furnish Bassanio, his close friend, with the means to woo the rich heiress, Portia of Belmont, whom Bassanio has fallen in love with. Antonio is deceived into signing a bond which gives Shylock legal rights to a pound of his flesh if he fails to repay the loan on time. From this point, I begin to analyze Portia's role as a savior for Bassanio and Antonio.

A savior means a person who rescues or saves somebody from any danger. Portia rescues Bassanio and Antonio from their problems. These two male characters are helpless, they cannot figure out how to overcome their problems themselves. They need someone who is able to help them. Both Bassanio and Antonio are in a position where a presence of a savior who will help them to overcome their problems is urgent; otherwise their lives will be in misery.

### **3.1.1 Portia's Role as a Savior for Bassanio**

Bassanio, Antonio's friend is falling in love with the Lady of Belmont, Portia. He intends to propose to her. Yet, he should choose the three caskets made of gold, silver and leads, in which the right casket contains Portia's portrait. Nobody knows which is the right casket except Portia herself. Bassanio is a confident man, and he knows about the casket plot. Because of his love for Portia, it assures him to keep moving to win the casket plot. The condition is very clear, that when Bassanio fails to choose the right casket, he will have no second chance to win Portia's hands in marriage. Bassanio is in a helpless condition. He may choose the right casket and will be able to marry her or he will fail if he chooses the wrong casket. The other suitors who have tried to choose between the gold, silver or lead casket all fail and all of them have given promises to Portia that they are not allowed to tell which casket they have chosen and its content. Bassanio cannot find any information from them. Obviously, he needs a person who is able to help him choose the casket correctly. The only help he can get is from Portia as she is the only one who knows which one is the correct casket.

Portia realizes that Bassanio is in a difficult situation. Choosing the right casket, which contains Portia's portrait, is similar to gambling. The opportunity to choose the correct casket is equal to the opportunity in choosing the wrong one, and Portia understands this. She is worried that Bassanio will choose the wrong casket. The internal conflict that arises within Portia is that she has to decide whether to tell Bassanio the right casket or to let him choose by his own decision, with the consequence that Bassanio may fail in choosing the right one. If Bassanio fails, then Portia's dream to be Bassanio's wife cannot be fulfilled. This is the consequence that she cannot bear. Here, it is clear that Portia has a hidden motive when she becomes a savior to Bassanio, and the reason she does is because of her true love. Portia is a woman who has fallen in love and believes that it is only him who can bring happiness to Portia. A person who falls in love will do anything to pursue his or her own happiness. Like Bassanio, he is willing to face the casket plot although he knows the consequences if he fails in choosing the right one. It is love that binds them to one

another and enables them to take risks. Bassanio is a noble man, yet he spends his fortune unwisely so he has no money with him. As a result when he has a plan to go to Belmont to pursue Portia, he has to borrow money from Antonio, his best friend, and a wealthy merchant of Venice. Due to the fact that Bassanio has to borrow someone else's money, it shows that he cannot help himself to get money to support his needs. He can work in order to get money if he wants; yet he does not do that. He depends on someone else's favor. Furthermore, when Bassanio has to choose the correct casket that contains Portia's portrait, he has no idea which one out of three caskets contains the portrait of the lady.

The point here is that Portia knows how big is the love of Bassanio towards her. Yet, she also knows exactly that Bassanio's chance is just the same as the previous suitors. However, the difference is that Portia has fallen in love with Bassanio so that she will make sure that Bassanio will choose the right casket. Portia gives a clue which leads Bassanio in choosing the right casket. By giving a clue to Bassanio, Portia solves her internal conflict. She makes a decision to help Bassanio in order he will choose the right casket, because only one man who can choose correctly will marry Portia. Her true love to Bassanio is the reason why she gives a clue. Thus, she does not give the answer directly, but with the song of the musician to help Bassanio to choose the casket correctly:

THE SINGER. Tell me, where is fancy bred,  
 Or in the heart, or in the head?  
 How begot, how nourished?  
 Reply, reply.  
 It is engend'ed in the eyes,  
 With gazing fed, and fancy dies  
 In the cradle where it lies.  
 Let us all ring fancy's knell.  
 I'll begin it-Ding, dong, bell.  
 Ding, dong, bell ( 3.2.65-74)

It is a lyric that is sung as Bassanio is brought in front of the three caskets of gold, silver and lead to make his final decision to choose the right casket. Portia has never used a song before to accompany the other suitors before Bassanio when they are choosing for the right casket. The lyric of the song contains some clue to help Bassanio to choose the right casket. It says about where is the fancy bred, which is in the heart or in the head. Fancy in here is a love. The meaning of true love is a love which comes from a deep heart. In another words, Portia tries to say that the inward appearance is more important than outward appearance. Portia does not directly point to the right casket, but she gives the clue that is contained in the lyric of the song. The lyric implies that inward appearance is more important than the outward looks, because loving someone wholeheartedly cannot be measured by his or her physical appearance only, but more than that the inner beauty is the most important thing. So, what looks good outside, the gold and silver ones, does not guarantee that the inside would be as valuable as the appearance. The lead casket is often being ignored for its outward appearance. The point is that to win the casket plot and become Portia's husband, Bassanio has to choose the lead casket instead of the gold and the silver one. Portia's portrait is hidden in the lead casket. This lyric clearly provides the clue, which directs Bassanio to choose the right casket. Bassanio grasps this clue and understands that the one he should choose is the lead, for his love toward Portia is not because of her outer beauty, it is her inner beauty that attracts him and makes him pursue Portia. By choosing the inward qualities rather than the outward qualities means that Bassanio has proved his true love. Thus, Portia will be able to tell that it is her that Bassanio loves, not her wealth nor her beauty. It means that Bassanio also passes the test of his true love and his personality.

As I have stated before, Portia, through her musicians gives the clue only to Bassanio since there is no song that has been sung by the musicians when the previous suitors, Prince of Morocco and Prince of Arragon are making a choice upon the three caskets. In other words, Portia becomes a savior for Bassanio since she gives a clue indirectly in order to prevent Bassanio from choosing the wrong casket. If Portia does not give a clue, Bassanio might choose the wrong casket and will

therefore lose everything, love and money. I can conclude that Portia becomes Bassanio's savior in order to win her to become Bassanio's wife. By saving Bassanio, Portia also saves herself and ensures her own future with the man she loves.

Portia does not only become a savior for Bassanio in the way she helps him to choose the right casket, but she also becomes a savior for Bassanio in financial matter. Being Portia's husband, Bassanio will also share her wealth. The continuing scene after the success of the casket plot is the happiness for both Portia and Bassanio. They finally get married and ready to enter a new life as a husband and wife. A letter from Antonio informing that his life is in danger has urged Bassanio to go back to Venice. Portia understands that the relationship between his husband and Antonio is very close. Here is a conversation between Portia and Bassanio talking about Antonio:

PORTIA. Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

BASSANIO. The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,

The best-conditioned and unwearied spirit

In doing courtesies, and one in whom

The ancient Roman honor more appears

Than any that draws breath in Italy (3.2.302-07)

From Bassanio's explanation, it implies how close their relationship is. When Portia asks him about the person that sends him the letter, whether he is only a friend or more than a friend; Bassanio acknowledges that the person who writes the letter to him is his best friend, a very kind person. Definitely, he adores and praises Antonio so much, especially when he describes Antonio as the one whom the ancient Roman honors.

Surely, Bassanio's statement is not exaggerated since it is on Antonio's credit that the money has been borrowed from Shylock and being used by Bassanio as his own money to pursue Portia. When it turns out that in three months after the agreement Antonio cannot repay the loan and fails to fulfill the agreement, it means that Shylock may have the rights to claim Antonio's pound of flesh. Obviously, Bassanio understands about the agreement and he has never expected that Antonio

might fail to repay the loan, because Antonio is well-known as a wealthy merchant of Venice. Bassanio feels guilty with this; because it is for his sake that Antonio sacrifices his life. Antonio is innocent; he just helps Bassanio to get his happiness by pursuing Portia and winning her heart. Bassanio blames himself for this misfortune. He knows he has to do something to rescue his friend from Shylock's hands. Unfortunately, Bassanio is also in a helpless condition. How can a man like him who depends on his friend's money can rescue Antonio, when he is in a position not to have any money in a large amount to pay the loan. He needs some help. Portia, as his wife could sense Bassanio's confusion. She knows the true condition that the man married to her is a man who does not have any money to support his own life. She understands if Bassanio must be feeling so guilty. Therefore, Portia gives him the money to pay the loan, as stated through the conversation below:

PORTIA. What sum owes he the Jew?

BASSANIO. For me three thousand ducats.

PORTIA. What, no more?

Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond.

Double six thousand and then treble that

Before a friend of this description

Shall lose a hair through Bassanio's fault (3.2.308-14)

Portia understands that the only way out to rescue Antonio is by repaying back his loan from the Jewish money lender. Her willingness to give her money to Bassanio to help Antonio shows her role as a savior for Bassanio by providing his needs for money. As a good wife, it is her job to give help whenever her husband needs it. Portia's character trait which shown in here is her generosity. Without Portia's financial aid, Bassanio would never go back to Venice because he has no money at all to save Antonio. As Antonio is taking part in determining Portia's happiness, it is Portia's duty to repay his kindness. If Antonio did not help Bassanio to borrow money from Shylock, then Bassanio would not be able to go to Belmont. And if Bassanio did not go to Belmont, Portia probably would be in misery waiting for the right man to choose the right casket.

In short, Portia feels that she should do her best to help Bassanio in rescuing and saving Antonio's life. It can be said that Portia helps Bassanio to be a savior for Antonio. Portia herself plays her role as a savior for Bassanio by giving her money as much as he needs. Her money enables her to become a savior for both Bassanio and Antonio.

### **3.1.2. Portia's Role as a Savior for Antonio**

Antonio is Bassanio's best friend who has borrowed the money in the amount of 3000 ducats from a Jewish money-lender in order to help Bassanio financially to go to Belmont to pursue Portia. Soon afterward, Antonio could not pay back the loan within the due time, three months after the agreement. According to their agreement, if Antonio could not repay the loan, then for the compensation Shylock may cut a pound of Antonio's flesh:

SHYLOCK. 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

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/ 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 (1.3.146-157)

The agreement being made between Shylock, a Jewish money lender and Antonio, a wealthy young merchant of Venice is an unordinary bond for there has never one existed before in Venice, that the loan may be replaced by a pound of flesh if the borrower cannot repay it back on the time they had agreed on. Even Bassanio has insisted that he does not agree with that kind of bond. A conflict exists when the

disagreement between Antonio and Bassanio happens. In Antonio's side, he agrees to sign the bond though it is unordinary. In Venice, the money lender will lend his money to other people, and the money lender gains profit by collecting an interest to the loan. But Shylock, as a money lender, gives a loan with an agreement if Antonio cannot repay it back within three months, a pound of his flesh must be cut off. Antonio is a rich merchant. He believes he can pay the loan on time before the expired date. At Bassanio's side, he feels uncomfortable with the bond. He assumes Shylock has a hidden motive by lends his money. Both Bassanio and Antonio do not realize that the Jew hates them so much, and has his own purpose to take a revenge upon Antonio whom he regards as his enemy. Antonio's agreement to such a bond shows how confident Antonio is in his ability to repay Shylock, as he is a wealthy merchant. It also shows his complete trust in Bassanio as a friend that he is ready to make his life as a guarantee for his friend's happiness. The following conversation shows Antonio's reaction toward Bassanio's fear of such an agreement:

ANTONIO. Why, fear not, man! I will not forfeit it.

Within these two months-that's a month before  
This bond expires-I do expect return  
Of thrice three times the value of this bond

SHYLOCK. O father Abram, what these Christians are,  
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect  
The thought of others! Pray you, tell me this:  
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,  
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,  
To buy his favour, I extend this friendship;  
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;  
And pray 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.

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.

ANTONIO. Hie thee, gentle Jew.

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 (1.3.151-176)

Antonio gives assurance to Bassanio that there is nothing to be worried about, for in two months his wealth will come to him three times over the value of the bond itself, if Antonio can repay before the due time, a pound of his flesh will never be cut out, and he does not see any reason to fear about it. Once again Antonio reassures Bassanio that everything will be fine and there is nothing to worry about because all his wealth which is being invested in his ships will come back to him within two months. Antonio's confidence in the return of his ship is actually very dangerous as he has never thought that something bad might happen to his ship. This shows Antonio's trust to Shylock and to his future. He believes that Shylock is a kind person and he also believes that his ships will bring his wealth. In addition, it also shows how naive Antonio is in his trust to another man and to his own luck.

Two months later, Antonio's ships are wrecked in the sea. One minor character in a play, Salerio describes it:

SALERIO. Why, yet it lives there unchecked that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas; the Goodwins I think they call the place, a very dangerous flat and fatal, where the carcasses of many tall ship lie buried, as they say – if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word (3.1.2-6)

The effect of this ship accident is so fatal that causes Antonio's bankruptcy, which forces him to obey the agreement being made with Shylock three months before.

Antonio is in a helpless condition, his confidence soon falls down as he realizes he has no money. All of his fortune lies down at the bottom of the sea. A bond is a bond, and there will be no excuses to prevent Shylock from claiming his rights upon Antonio's flesh. In his letter to Bassanio, Antonio does not blame Bassanio, and he even frees Bassanio from his debts to Antonio. The following is the letter from Antonio to Bassanio:

BASSANIO. Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit, and since in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your pleasure; if you love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter (3.2.323-19)

Antonio is in helpless conditions where no one can be able to save him from the revenge of Shylock in demanding for his flesh. He remarks that he has grown so thin that he will scarcely have a pound of flesh left for the trial. He also recognizes the considerations, which prevent the duke from acting in his individual case. The prosperity of Venice depends upon trade, mainly with foreign nations. If the duke does not follow the law in this case but twist it in favor of the citizen, foreigners will lose confidence in the justice and impartial administration of law in Venice. Obviously Antonio needs someone who can help him solve his problem even though he himself has relapsed into hopelessness, as he clearly states in his conversation with Bassanio, from which I can see how miserable and hopeless Antonio is. The following is Antonio's word:

ANTONIO. I am a tainted wether of the flock,  
 Meetest for death. The weakest kind of fruit  
 Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.  
 You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,  
 Than to live still, and write mine epitaph (4.1.117-121)

Antonio is utterly spiritless and seems to welcome death by calling himself a "tainted wether of flock, meetest for death". He sees no hope, and he surrenders to his destiny. That is why Portia helps him. I have pointed out before how Bassanio feels so guilty,

and with Portia giving the money to repay back the loan, Bassanio flew back to Venice to rescue Antonio from his misery.

Even though Bassanio is offering the amount three times over the loan, it did not help at all because Shylock does not care about the amount of the money. All he wants is to put Antonio into misery. It can be said that Bassanio's help is useless since there is no peace treaty between Shylock and him. It is a deadlock. And Shylock implies what he desires clearly in a dialogue below:

BASSANIO. For thy three thousand ducats here is six

SHYLOCK. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,

I would not draw them, I would have my bond (4.1.87-9)

Hatred and anger control Shylock that is why he refuses the money even though Bassanio can repay it three times over the amount of the loan. Shylock's determination to keep the bond leaves Bassanio in helplessness as he has no idea what else he can do to help Antonio except paying Shylock. It means that both Antonio and Bassanio are in helpless and desperate condition with no way out unless someone comes as their savior.

Portia goes to the court by disguising herself as a young doctor of law, accompanied by Nerissa, her maid, who also disguises as a lawyer's clerk. She is welcome. When she declares herself to be acquainted with the case, she plays her role as a savior by requiring Shylock to act according to the bond, which states that Shylock is to have one pound of flesh, but if, in taking it, he sheds a drop of blood, the state is empowered to confiscate all his property. Here is what Portia has done in saving Antonio :

PORTIA. Tarry a little; there is something else.

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;

The words expressly are "a pound of flesh."

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;

But in the cutting it if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice (4.1.315-322)

No one on the earth would be able to cut a pound of flesh from someone's body without dropping blood because the removal of flesh from a living being essentially involves the shedding of the blood. The second thing that Shylock has to fulfill is cutting the flesh exactly that amount, and surely no one on earth has the skill to cut off exactly a pound of anything. In other words, Portia has been successful in rescuing Antonio's life from Shylock. She acts exactly as the bond has been stated, neither adding nor subtracting the content of the bond. The way Portia analyzes and applies the content of the bond, based on the law of Venice makes sense and acceptable. Excluding Shylock, the others agree with Portia about the bond. Finally, Shylock cannot take the revenge on Antonio. Thus, he has to give half of his property to Antonio. The laws of the city declare that if there are any alien plots against the life of a citizen, half of his property shall be seized by the state, the other half to go to the person plotted against, and the life of the offender shall be at the mercy of the duke without appeal. This event really shows how Portia becomes a savior to Antonio. She does not only save Antonio's life, moreover she puts Shylock who is firstly more superior to Antonio on the other way round. It is Antonio who determines whether to give mercy on Shylock or not.

Another event which also shows Portia's role as a savior toward Antonio is when Portia decides to ask for help from her cousin, Doctor Bellario. Portia is an intellectual woman. She has learned the case of Antonio and realizes that Antonio's position in the eyes of the law is so weak. There is not any chance to win his case unless she asks some advice from her cousin who has experienced in a law case. She gives order to her servant, Balthasar to give letter to Doctor Bellario:

PORTIA. Now, Balthasar,

As I have ever found thee honest-true,

So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,

And use thou all th' endeavor of a man

In speed of Padua. See thou render this

Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;  
 And look, what notes and garments he doth give thee  
 Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed (3.4.46-53)

Portia asks for advice from her cousin because she knows that to win Antonio's case against Shylock, she needs any recommendation from an experienced lawyer. By asking advice from her cousin, once again Portia shows her role as a savior. She does not only depend on her wealth but also on her intelligence and her careful preparation to fight back what Shylock is going to do. Thus, her acting as a savior is not just a coincidental action, but a deliberate one. Her willingness to help by giving away her money, her time and her intelligence shows her seriousness in her intention to help Antonio.

### **3.2. Portia's Role as a Punisher**

A punisher means a person who gives a discipline and the one who correct someone else's mistake. Portia's role to Shylock is different with her role to Bassanio and Antonio. She gives a valuable lesson to Shylock who intends to have Antonio's life by discipline Shylock with her wisdom words.

In the court of justice, these three male characters, Antonio as the miserable man whose life depends on Shylock's mercy, Bassanio who believes that he is responsible for Antonio's life, since the bond being made is to help Bassanio pursue the Lady of Belmont, and Shylock, the man who is determined to have a pound of flesh of Bassanio. In the court and in front of the judge, Shylock insists on his rights in having Antonio's pound of flesh since Antonio is unable to repay the loan. Here is the dialogue between Shylock and the judge:

DUKE. Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too, . . .  
 Thou'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange  
 Than is thy strange apparent cruelty;  
 And where thou now exact'st the penalty,  
 Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh,  
 Thou wilt not only loose the forfeiture,

But, touched with human gentleness and love, . . .

We all expect a gentle answer, Jew

SHYLOCK. I have possessed your Grace of what I purpose,

And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn

To have the due and forfeit of my bond.

If you deny it, let the danger light

Upon your charter and your city's freedom!

You'll ask me why I rather choose to have

A weight of carrion flesh than to receive

Three thousand ducats. I'll not answer that,

But say it is my humour – is it answered?. . .

More than a lodged hate and certain loathing

I bear Antonio, that I follow thus

A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

BASSANIO. This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,

To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

SHYLOCK. I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

BASSANIO. For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

SHYLOCK. If every ducat in six thousand ducats

Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,

I would not draw them; I would have my bond.

DUKE. How shalt thou hope for mercy, rendering none?

SHYLOCK. What judgement shall I dread, doing no wrong?. . .

So do I answer you:

The pound of flesh which I demand of him

Is dearly bought, 'tis mine, and I will have it.

If you deny me, fie upon your law!

There is no force in the decrees of Venice.

I stand for judgement. Answer. Shall I have it? (4.1.16-103)

From the dialogue above, Shylock clearly states his rights to have Antonio's flesh. It is uncommon agreement which has been made at that time, because a moneylender like Shylock, usually take interest rather than a pound of flesh for a loan borrowed by a customer. However, even though the bond seems weird, it is legal since in the very beginning Shylock has told Antonio that a pound of flesh must be given instead of interest if Antonio fails to repay the loan within three months. It is legal because the law of the Venice which agrees to a bond which is made based on the agreement of the related people, and these people also sign the bond they have agreed on. In this unpleasant situation, comes Portia and Nerissa, her maid, addressing themselves as Dr Balthazar and her clerk to replace doctor Bellario who cannot come because of his illness. Below is the statement from Portia.

PORTIA. I am informed throughly of the cause. Which is the merchant here?

And which the Jew?

DUKE. Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth

PORTIA. Is your name Shylock?

SHYLOCK. Shylock is my name (4.1.171-174)

Before attending the court, Portia has been well informed by Bellario about the bond, so she knew exactly what to do.

From the very first conversation Portia has acknowledged the temperament of Shylock. He is a stubborn man, and full of hatred toward Antonio. The keywords which show Shylock' stubbornness is when he answers the Duke that no matter what, he insists to have Antonio's pound of flesh. Portia's plea for mercy falls on deaf ears for Shylock refuses to have a surgeon at hand to attend to Antonio in case he bleeds to death. Shylock also refuses thrice the payment that Bassanio offers him for cancellation of the bond, as he asserts: "There is no power in the tongue of man/ To alter me. I stay here in my bond "(4.1.239-40). Shylock holds firmly to his decision. He doesn't compromise or gives a chance for Antonio to get free from his demand. In addition, the theory of characterization is applied in here, in a second theory, what a character says about him. Shylock already states his mind, he demands the bond to be fulfilled. The very beginning, Portia behaves kindly to Shylock in order to soften his

heart so that he will accept twice the amount of the loan. She appeals to Shylock's mercy, in which she describes mercy as a gift from heaven which blesses both the giver and the receiver:

PORTIA. The quality of mercy is not strained,  
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
 Upon the place beneath. It is twice blest-  
 It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.  
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest. It becomes  
 The throne monarch better than his crown.  
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
 The attribute to awe and majesty,  
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;  
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway,  
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
 It is an attribute to God himself;  
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this,  
 That, in the course of justice, none of us  
 Should see salvation. We do pray for mercy,  
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
 The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much

SHYLOCK. My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,  
 The penalty and forfeit of my bond (4.1.189-205)

Portia performing as Balthazar gives an opening speech addressed to Shylock about showing mercy instead of asking for justice. She implies that mercy is a gift from heaven. Portia knows that Shylock is a Jewish, therefore there is a possibility that he never knows the term of forgiveness or showing mercy. In her speech, Portia advises Shylock to show mercy for Antonio by forfeiting the bond and receiving the pay. The speech above is related to Christianity, since Portia mentions that mercy is an



attribute to God himself. If God is the mercy, then the creature on the earth must live together with one another with mercy inside the heart of each of the person. Portia believes that this case can easily be solved if Shylock as the one who demands his rights of the agreement will show his mercy and forget the idea of cutting Antonio's pound of flesh. However, Portia's plea for mercy falls on deaf ears for Shylock refuses to show mercy at all. In addition, Portia again has an effort to touch Shylock's conscience by calling a surgeon at hand to attend to Antonio in case he bleeds to death. Here is Portia's plea as seen in the play :

PORTIA. Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,

To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

SHYLOCK. Is it so nominated in the bond?

PORTIA. It is not so expressed, but what of that?

SHYLOCK. I cannot find it; 'tis not in the bond (4.1.255-260)

From the dialogue above, it is very obvious how stubborn and cruel Shylock is, and his stubbornness becomes the cause of his own misery because it shows to all people in the court, including Portia that actually Shylock does not put any interest in the loan, as he has a revenge in his heart and his desire is only seeing his enemy's death in his own hand. First, he refuses to show mercy. Secondly, he refuses to call a surgeon because in the agreement, there is no word promising a surgeon. Shylock fails to show mercy and humanity to his fellow creatures. He focuses his mind and his thought only on his personal gain of revenge. He does not care if the agreement has risked Antonio's life. He is not disturbed by any wound Antonio may suffer if he cuts the flesh, and his behaviour is enough for Portia to put herself to act as punisher for Shylock.

As a woman who is merciful, Portia is patient enough to give Shylock one more chance to cancel the bond, by persuading Shylock to receive the loan being offered three times over the first loan:

PORTIA. Why, this bond is forfeit,

And lawfully by this the Jew may claim

A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off

Nearest the merchant's heart. Be merciful  
 Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond  
 SHYLOCK. When it is paid, according to the tenour  
 It doth appear you are a worthy judge,  
 You know the law; your exposition  
 Hath been most sound. I charge you by the law,  
 Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,  
 Proceed to judgement. By my soul I swear  
 There is no power in the tongue of man  
 To alter me. I stay here on my bond (4.1.226-240)

Portia gives Shylock one more chance in the dialogue above. Ignoring Shylock's previous refusal, Portia advises him to forfeit the bond, which is by law will be legal if Shylock himself who cancels it. She reminds Shylock that he will get back his money three times over the first loan. Yet, Shylock is still persistent with his refusal. A conflict arises between Portia and Shylock. At one side, Portia offers Shylock to show mercy and accept the loan. She even quotes the quality of mercy which is a gift from heaven, therefore Shylock must shows mercy too. Meanwhile, Shylock is against Portia's idea. He has his own opinion. He points out to Portia that he knows the law better than her and challenges her to uphold the law as it should be. He insists on sticking to the agreement that is in cutting out Antonio's pound of flesh. He ensures Portia that whatever Portia says, she will not be able to make him change his mind. Thus, he will stick to the bond.

Three chances have been given to Shylock, and he refuses all. Shylock roars for justice for himself, and Portia gives her devotion to the term as written in the bond. Portia gives permission to Shylock to prepare him to cut Antonio's pound of flesh:

PORTIA. A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine  
 The court awards it, and the law doth give it  
 SHYLOCK. Most rightful judge!  
 PORTIA. And you must cut the flesh from off his breast  
 The laws allows it, and court awards it

SHYLOCK. Most learned judge! A sentence! Come, prepare! (4.1.297-302)

In a tremendous moment, Shylock almost gets what he wants and Portia has already given her permission to please Shylock. He is full of confidence that no one on earth could force him to forfeit the bond or to cancel the bond or agreement itself. The victory is in his hand, the merchant's life will be taken over by Shylock. In a moment, his hatred, bitterness, and revenge toward Antonio will be repaid in Antonio's life.

When Portia permits Shylock to have his right, it seems that the favour stands on Shylock's side, and Shylock has thought about the same thing. However, this intelligent woman who performs herself as a learned doctor Balthazar prepares a tricky strategy to punish Shylock. The moment before Shylock is able to cut the flesh, Portia stops him, and gives a shocking instruction, words that no one had figured out before, even Shylock himself does not realize that he has made a fatal mistake. The following is that "shocking instruction":

PORTIA. Tarry a little; there is something else

This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood

The words expressly are 'a pound of flesh'

Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh

But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed

One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods

Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate

Unto the state of Venice

GRATIANO. O upright judge! Mark, Jew. O learned judge!

SHYLOCK. Is that the law?

PORTIA. Thyself shalt see the act

For, as thou urgest justice, be assured

Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st (4.1.303-314)

The bond states that he is to have one pound of flesh, but if, in taking it, Shylock sheds a drop of blood, then the state is empowered to confiscate all his property.

What a shocking instruction, since we know it is an impossible thing to do. The removal of flesh from a living being essentially involves the shedding of the blood, as

Portia indicates when she asks the surgeon. This “shocking instruction” is a punishment to Shylock considering his refusal to show mercy, then he gets no mercy too. In this case, Portia plays her role as a punisher since she gives Shylock an instruction which is based on the bond. She does not go beyond the bond itself, because that instruction is impossible to do. Shylock's spirit is broken until he is speechless, that he decides to accept three times the amount of the loan, as it is offered to him before.

SHYLOCK. I take this offer then; pay the bond thrice

And let the Christian go

BASSANIO. Here is the money

PORTIA. Soft!

The Jew shall have all justice. Soft! No haste

He shall have nothing but the penalty (4.1.316-320)

Shylock realises the fatal mistake of his own deed. The bond does say that, a pound of flesh, and there is no other key word referring to the word "blood" that accompanies the cutting of the flesh. Shylock must be very embarrassed, but he is a greedy man, he will not let himself go without carrying anything. And he demands the loan, the money that he lends to Antonio, his own money. Yet, Portia does not give him a chance at all to let him get what he wants. She punishes Shylock by not letting him receives what he wants. She insists that no matter what Shylock does, he must fulfil the bond. Portia stops Bassanio who is ready to pay the loan, declaring that Shylock has already refused it in the open court. Shylock has prepared himself to go back to his house, accepting the lost he must suffer. This Portia, still acted as Dr Balthazar detains him.

Portia punishes Shylock by not letting him cut a pound of Antonio's flesh, therefore she blocks Shylock's hatred and revenge to kill Antonio. She also makes Shylock lose all his property, due to the fact that the laws of the city declare that if there is any plan to take the life of a citizen is revealed, half of his property shall be seized by the state, and the other half goes to the person plotted against, and the life of the offender shall be at the mercy of the duke. She punishes Shylock, the money-

lender and makes him lose all his wealth and property. Portia declares that it is clear he has plotted against Antonio and thus breaks this law.

PORTIA. Tarry, Jew

The law hath yet another hold on you  
 It is enacted in the laws of Venice,  
 If it be proved against an alien  
 That by direct or indirect attempts  
 He seeks the life of any citizen  
 The party 'gaints the which he doth contrive  
 Shall seize one half his goods; the other half  
 Comes to the privy coffer of the state  
 And the offender's life lies in the mercy  
 Of the Duke only, 'gainst all other voice  
 In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st  
 For it appears by manifest proceeding  
 That indirectly, and directly too,  
 Thou hast contrived against the very life  
 Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred  
 The danger formerly by me rehearsed

Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the Duke (4.1.345-361)

The application of characterization in the way what other character says about him, can be seen from Portia's line above which describes Shylock. When Portia says that: "He seeks the life of any citizen" (line 350), it implies Shylock's character trait which are cruel and full of hatred. Shylock's fall is truly pathetic. He is a bent and broken old man who leaves the court, contrary to the energetic man in the prime of life who enters it. Portia perfectly plays her role as Dr Balthazar and also a punisher. Her plan is to follow the correct course of the law to the ultimate conclusion in the hope that Shylock will relent and accept the money being offered to him. She figures out the situation when she gives advice to Shylock. There is a possibility she will acts as a punisher if Shylock shows mercy .When Shylock refuses to accept and insists to stick

to the law, then Portia gives him the bond to be fulfilled, and she punishes him because of his stubbornness, hatred, and arrogance. He is being punished because of his stubbornness and refusal to show mercy.

Portia plays her first role as a savior toward Bassanio because he is in a desperate condition and does not able to find the way out to solve his problem. Therefore, when Portia comes as a savior, she gives him a help. The same thing also happens when Antonio in a terrible condition and almost loses his life, Portia comes as a savior and solves the problem. On the contrary, she becomes a punisher to Shylock since he refuses to show mercy. And as the consequences, Shylock loses his property and cannot take revenge to Antonio.