

St. Thomas School, Dhurwa, Ranchi

Std 8 : English Literature

Book : The Merchant of Venice

Chapter : 8

(Portia arrives to save Antonio's life)

Q1) What had Dr. Bellario written in the letter?

Ans) Dr. Bellario had written in the letter that he would have come himself to plead for Antonio but was prevented by sickness. He further requested the Duke in his letter that the learned, young Dr. Balthazar (Portia in disguise) might be permitted to plead in his place.

Q2) How did Portia plead to Shylock to show mercy?

Ans) When the important trial began in the court in Venice, Portia talked to Shylock and spoke about the noble quality of mercy. She said that mercy has two fold blessings. It blesses the one who shows mercy and also the one who receives it. It is a symbol of God Himself. In our prayers, we always ask for forgiveness. Thus, in this way she requested Shylock to show mercy.

Q3) What made Shylock proclaim Portia as 'Daniel' ?

Ans) In the court, when Bassanio offered Shylock as much payment as he desired, Shylock refused the offer. Bassanio then begged the young lawyer, Dr. Balthazar (Portia in disguise) to try to change the law a little to save Antonio's life. But Portia seriously answered that the laws could not

be changed. On hearing the lawyer speak in favour of him, Shylock proclaimed Portia as 'Daniel'.

Q4) What made Portia and Nerissa make sarcastic remarks?

Ans) Antonio bid farewell to Bassanio just before preparing himself for the knife. He told Bassanio that he should not think he was dying for him. Antonio also wished to convey his regards to Bassanio's wife.

(Portia) . Hearing Antonio's words, Bassanio answered emotionally to Antonio that he loved his wife but life itself, his wife and all the world are not as valuable as he (Antonio) was. He was ready to lose everything to save him. (Antonio). Though not being really offended, Portia answered sarcastically saying that his (Bassanio's)

wife won't thank him if she heard that. Gratiano also expressed his wish similar to Bassanio's. Nerissa then remarked that it was good he wished this behind her back otherwise there would have been marital trouble.

Chapter: 9

Portia wins the case

Q1) To which request of Portia's did Shylock say, " It's not mentioned in the bond? "

Ans: Portia asked Shylock to have a surgeon ready in case Antonio bled to death. To this request of Portia, Shylock said those words.

Q2) Which two points raised by Portia tilted the scale in Antonio's favour?

Ans: The following two points raised by Portia tilted the scale in Antonio's favour.

During the case Portia said that while cutting off the flesh from Antonio's body, Shylock must not shed a drop of blood nor cut a smaller or larger amount than an exact pound. She further said should the flesh weigh lighter or heavier by the merest fraction, he should pay the penalty with his own life and his property will be confiscated.

Q3) Why could Shylock not get any money?

Ans) Shylock could not get any money because Portia insisted that he had to keep to the strict terms of the bond. She further said that she would allow him only a pound of flesh no more no less.

Q4) What made Shylock totally devastated?

Ans) Shylock was devastated when Portia attacked him again. She said if any alien

plotted against the life of a Venetian then half his possession would go to that citizen and the other half to the state. The life of the offender was at the mercy of the Duke. So she asked Shylock to kneel down and pray for forgiveness.

Q5) On which condition did Antonio give up his share of Shylock's wealth?

Ans) Antonio gave up his share of Shylock's wealth on the condition that he (Shylock) would sign a deed to make it over at his death to his daughter Jessica and her husband Lorenzo. Antonio knew that Shylock had disinherited his daughter for marrying a Christian.

Q6) Why did Portia not accept (a) the Duke's invitation and (b) fees from Antonio?

Ans) Portia did not accept the Duke's invitation as she had to leave for Padua that night. Actually she had to rush back to Belmont before Bassanio arrived with his friends.

Portia did not accept the fees from Antonio saying that Antonio's acquittal was reward enough.

Chapter: 10

Antonio's ships return; all live happily ever after

Q1) Which two things did Portia ask for?

Ans) Portia asked for Bassanio's gloves. She also asked for the ring which she herself had given to him.

Q2) Why could Bassanio not give the ring?

Ans) Bassanio could not part with the ring because it was his wife's gift and he had promised never to part with it.

Q3) For which two reasons did Bassanio ultimately give the ring to the lawyer?

Ans) Bassanio ultimately gave the ring to the lawyer because of the following reasons- he felt ashamed to appear so ungrateful to the lawyer and also because Antonio urged him to give the ring to the lawyer for his great service.

Q4) How did Portia learn of the loss of the ring?

Ans) A quarrel had begun between Gratiano and Nerissa as the ring given by Nerissa was missing from Gratiano's finger. Portia was annoyed and told Gratiano that he should not have parted with his wife's first gift.

Seeing this as a chance, Gratiano grabbed it and said that his lord Bassanio also gave his ring to the lawyer. This is how Portia learnt of the loss of the ring.

Q5) How did Bassanio plead his case?

Ans) When Portia and Nerissa pretended to believe that their husband's had given the ring to some women , Bassanio honestly tried to plea his case. He said that no woman had the ring but the lawyer who refused 3000 ducats and begged for the ring . When he (Bassanio) refused to part with his ring , the lawyer went away in displeasure. He did not like to appear so ungrateful.

Q6) How did Antonio (a) feel and (b) stop the quarrel?

Ans) Antonio felt embarrassed as he was the cause of this domestic quarrel (between Bassanio and Portia and between Gratiano and Nerissa) .

Antonio stopped the quarrel by saying that once he had lent his body for Bassanio's sake. That lawyer who took the ring had saved him. Now he pledged his soul that Bassanio will never break an oath with her.

Q7) How did they learn the truth?

Ans) Portia handed out the same ring which she had received from Bassanio in the court. Nerissa also followed her. Both the friends Antonio and Bassanio were surprised . Then Portia told them how she herself was the young lawyer and Nerissa was her clerk. She also produced

Dr. Bellario's letter as a proof. This is how the truth was learnt.

Q8) What good news did Portia give Antonio?

Ans) The good news which Portia shared with Antonio was that his ships which were supposedly lost had returned to the harbour.

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