

TITLE SEQUENCE

EXT. VENICE PIAZZA. DAY

We track along a colonnade and right angles; the columns of the arches pass through the frame. People are walking inside the colonnade. The camera clears the corner so that ~~xxxxxx~~ at the end of the track we have a long beautiful, Renaissance perspective shot of the continuation of the colonnade at right angles to the first. We see people walking up and down it. To one side of frame we begin to perceive the square or piazza with numerous crowd in foreground and background going about their business. The day is sunny with clouds intervening and changing the light in a moody way. The CAMERA PANS very slowly to reveal the piazza bordering on the water. There are gondolas, barges, an ocean-going sailing ship of the seventeenth century. There are piles of merchandise. At ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ a place hallowed by custom there is an assembly of Venetian merchants bankers trading in futures and shipments. They sit on wooden benches arranged in formal positions. There is a considerable noise of bids and offers just like the floor of a stock exchange only outside and the merchants are dressed in costume of the period, otherwise their behaviour is as frantic and urgent as modern brokers. The bustle and hysteria is seen from a crane shot which shows the press around one particular bench. Cutaway to SHYLOCK standing at the edge watching. Every few seconds he nods and makes a signal to his clerk bidding on the floor. CUT TO one of the great clocks of Venice with elaborate hour figures. The clock strikes five in the afternoon; the mechanical figures come swinging round. Cut back to the market. An official picks up a bell and rings it. The noise stops instantly. The bidders retreat, check their notebooks or sheets of paper and confer in groups. A man comes to Shylock. They confer. A buzz of excitement is developing around one bench. There a merchant is gesticulating in despair. Creditors clamour for payment. The merchant looks at Shylock. In L.S. a group of men approach among them ANTONIO. The official approaches. There is a lot of noise and indistinguishable argument. The official rings his bell. The merchants wait. The debtor merchant cannot meet his creditors. He shakes his head. Two of the merchants on a signal pick up his wooden bench and break in two. There is murmur, the bankrupt (banca rupta+ broken bench) merchant retires. This Venetian practice gave us the word "bankrupt." The crowd thins out. In L.S. we see ANTONIO come up to SHYLOCK. THEY argue heatedly; ANTONIO seems to blame the bankrupt on SHYLOCK continually pointing to him. In closer we see Antonio spit on SHYLOCK. CUT TO C.U. of the spittle glistening on SHYLOCK'S beard and coat. It is the long black coat of the orthodox JEW. He wears a tall yellow hat prescribed by Venetian law for Jews. He looks back at Antonio with a cold fury saying nothing. ANTONIO looks on him with supercilious contempt. Some onlookers laugh or sneer; others are merely curious about the dispute and look from one to the other. Eventually, ANTONIO and a couple of companions leave passing down the long colonnade. The market disperses. TRACK with ANTONIO from behind. One of them looks back. cut to reverse angle. Antonio and companions ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ walk toward camera and out of frame; in the background is SHYLOCK silhouetted in an archway watching them from the end of the colonnade. ZOOM to M.S. of SHYLOCK. He turns. As he does a nobleman carried in a chair by four Nubian slaves passes and nods to Shyl ck who bows .

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who bows and smiles. We follow the nobleman who is obviously in debt to Shylock for his standard of living pass through St. Mark's. we see in the description of a contemporary traveller "such a multitude of Jews, Turks, and Christians; lawyers, knaves, and pickpockets; mountebanks, old women, and physicians." This is a city state one of the wealthiest and most powerful in Europe, a cosmopolitan scene. The nobleman gives a look back to Shylock. A beggar pesters him for money, in vain. Then relenting, Shylock throws him a small coin which the beggar picks. ~~Exit~~ Shylock watches the chair retreat. Cut back to the chair. At the waterside, we see slaves lashed into labour tethered on a line of chains. They unload a barge or gondola. The nobleman passes a gate where the heads of traitors to the state are stuck on pikes bearing the standard of the city--a winged golden lion.

2. INT. SHYLOCK'S HOUSE: JESSICA'S ROOM. DAY

JESSICA AND LORENZO are in an embrace. A noise of a door slamming downstairs alarms them and they break off their embrace and sit up tense. We see that Jessica is a very young (17 or 18) and very beautiful girl. Lorenzo is older. She is infatuated and in love for the first time. Lorenzo begins to move away reluctantly but nervous. Cut to.

3. INT. SHYLOCK'S HOUSE: HALLWAY. DAY

Shylock comes in and hands his cloak and hat to LAUNCELOT GOBBO His clownish servant. Under the tall yellow hat is a yamakah or black skull cap. Shylock, being an average religious man, observes the traditional Jewish piety of keeping his head covered. Shylock is grim and tense. He goes into his parlour office and sits at his desk and turns to his accounts. There is a noise upstairs of something knocked over. Shylock looks up. Cut to.

4. INT. JESSICA'S ROOM. DAY

LORENZO has fallen knocking a chair over as he climbs out of the window. LORENZO AND JESSICA exchange wordless farewells. Cut to.

5. IN EXT. SHYLOCK'S HOUSE. DAY

From a low angle we see LORENZO leaving the window one storey up and climbing to the next door house. People in the street look up. As today in Italian towns there is a local community that lives much of its life in the street or at the window. The locals watch with amusement, calling and jeering, at this deception of ~~the~~ Shylock. A man makes a vulgar sign with his arm. Cut to.

6. INT. SHYLOCK'S PARLOUR. DAY

SHYLOCK absorbed in his accounts hears noise in the street, he calls and yells. He gets up in irritation and closes the casement. Cut to.

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7. EXT. VENICE. EXPIAZZA. DAY

We see a scene out to the bay of Venice. PAN to the pensive figure of ANTONIO looking out to sea standing with one leg on an iron mooring cleat. His chin in his hand, he sighs. SALERIO and SOLANIO two friends come up and mimic his posture. ANTONIO An older man is the kind who likes to be around younger men to attract youthfulness and life to him. He becomes self-conscious, changes his posture and speaks.

ANTONIO

In sooth I know not why I am so sad. It wearies me.

He looks around smiling.

Yo You say it wearies you. But how I caught it, found it, or came by it, what stuff 'tis made of, whereof it is born, I am to learn. And such a want-wit sadness makes of me, that I have much ado to know myself.

He gets up and starts strolling. They pass merchants who bow to them. They bow to others who pass, as they walk and talk.

SALERIO

Your mind is tossing on the ocean, there ~~where~~ where your argosies with portly sail like signiors and rich burghers on the flood do overpeer the petty traffickers that curtsy to them

Some bow to them, passing.

do them reverence as they fly by them with their woven wings.

ANTONIO is a successful merchant and a wealthy man whose estate has run down perhaps through unlucky investment. The two men are free in tone but their address is based on admiration for a wealthy and successful man who spends money on those around him. They aspire to his success.

SOLANIO

Believe me sir, had I such venture forth, the better part of my affections would bewith my hopes abroad. I should be still plucking the grass to know where sits the wind, peering in maps for ports, and piers and roads. And every object that might make me fear misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt would make me sad.