The Merchant of Venice

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The Merchant of Venice is one of the most famous plays by William Shakespeare, probably written in 1596. Nominally, the play is designated as a comedy, but the tragedy of one of the main characters makes this work be regarded more as a drama. The first production took place presumably in 1598.
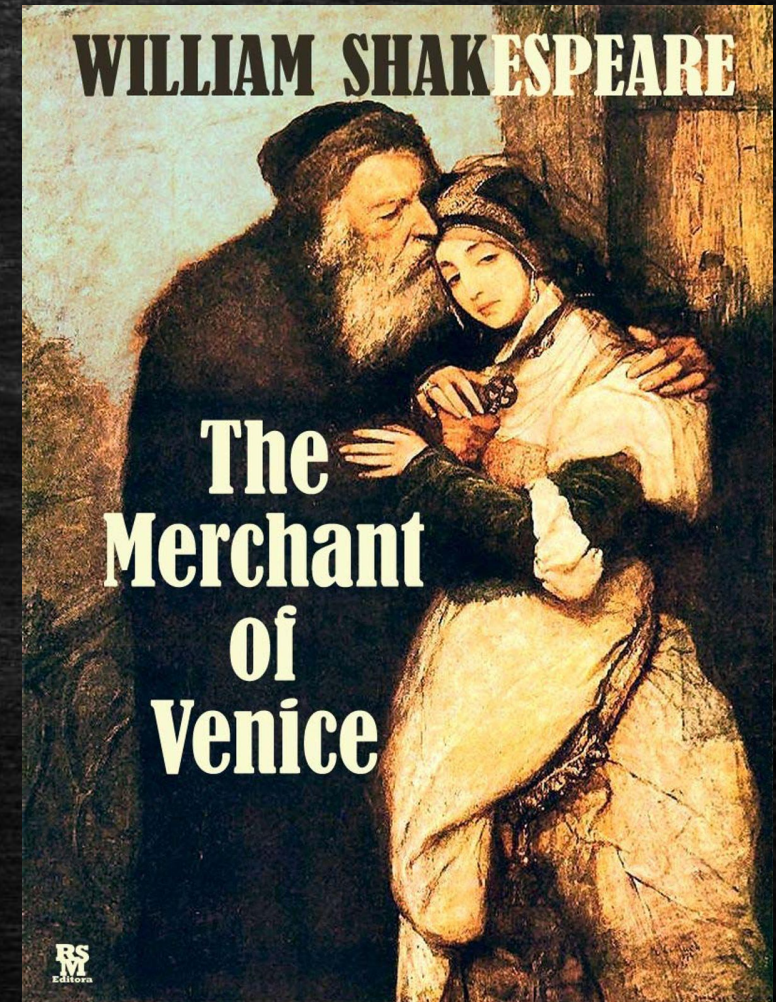
Plot

The action takes place partly in Venice. Young Bassanio, who is in debt, decided to marry the rich beauty Portia and asks for help from his friend — the Venetian merchant Antonio. Antonio does not refuse him and borrows money from the Jewish pawnbroker Shylock. According to the terms of the bill, if he does not repay the debt on time, then Shylock has the right to cut a pound of meat from the merchant's body.

Plot

Bassanio, having received the necessary amount, goes to Portia and marries her. With them goes his friend Lorenzo with Shylock's daughter Jessica, who ran away from her father. Meanwhile, the deadline for payment of the bill will expire. Bassanio, learning of this, rushes to the aid of his friend. To resolve the issue with the payment of the bill, a court session will be held.

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- The court recognizes the legal right of Shylock to receive a penalty. Portia and her maid Nerissa, having secretly left their estate, arrive at the court session under the guise of a lawyer and his scribe. Portia manages to turn the case so that Shylock from the plaintiff is accused of attempted murder.

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