

Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be season'd with such viands : you will answer,
The slaves are ours. 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 judgment ; answer ; shall I have it ?

Duke. Upon my pow'r I may dismiss this court,
Unless *Bellarion*, a learned doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Sal. My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from *Padua*.

Duke. Bring us the letters ; call the messengers.

Bass. Good cheer, *Anthony* ! what, man, courage yet !
The *Jew* shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Anth. I am a tainted weather of the flock,
Meetest for death : the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me.
You cannot better be employ'd, *Bassanio*,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

SCENE II.

Enter Nerissa dress'd like a lawyer's clerk.

Duke. Came you from *Padua*, from *Bellarion* ?

Ner. From both, my lord : *Bellarion* greets your grace.

Bass. Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly ?

[*the Jew whetting his knife on the sole of his shoe.*]

Shy. To cut the forfeit from that bankrupt there.]

Gra. Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh *Jew*,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen ; for no metal can,
No not the hangman's axe, bear half the keenness