

# Example of why is antonio sad in the merchant of venice essay

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



At the beginning of Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*, Antonio reveals to his friends that he is sad, but does not know the reason for his sadness. Solanio and Solarino, Antonio's friends, look baffled as Antonio admits, "In sooth, I know not why I am so sad; I am to learn; and such want-with sadness makes of me". Solanio and Solarino can only think of three things which can make Antonio sad: money, love, or a strange temperament. However, Antonio dismisses all these propositions. Although Antonio dismisses love as the main source of his worries, a deep analysis of Shakespeare's play, *The Merchant of Venice*, reveals that Antonio is love-sick.

*The Merchant of Venice* begins on a low note as Antonio admits of being sad. However, he quickly dispels the idea that he is worrying about his ventures as he says, "Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it, one bottom trusted, Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate". This is an argument which appears plausible and well-reasoned; it convinces the reader that investments are the least of his worries because he has diversified his ventures. However, when asked about whether love bothers him, he offers a faint response "fie, fie".

Antonio's response to Solarino is not convincing at all. He just says, "Fie, fie". The truth of the matter is that Antonio secretly fears for the loss of his best friend: Bassanio. Before Bassanio travels to Belmont to woo Portia, he has a short conversation with Antonio, and it becomes clear that Antonio will miss him. Antonio wants to know more about the lady charming Bassanio's heart and when the two are left alone, he inquires, "Well, tell me now what lady is the same to whom you swore a secret pilgrimage, that you to-day

promised to tell me of?"

As Bassanio confides in Antonio of his love for Portia, it is clear that Antonio worries about the loss of a lifelong companion. This becomes evident when he offers to sacrifice anything for Bassanio, " my purse, my person, my extremist means, lie all unlock'd in your possessions." This statement alone proves that Antonio cares about friend's well-being, but it is not quite clear whether he harbors sexual feelings towards his friend. Nonetheless, it is comfortable to speculate that the idea of love could be the motivating factor which makes Antonio to risk everything for Bassanio. It important to note that although Bassanio owes Antonio a lot, Antonio is patient with him and affirms his support to do everything in his power to make Bassanio woo the woman of his dreams. Nevertheless, we are sure about one thing: he has the interests of his friend, Bassanio, at his heart and would do anything for him. Antonio even goes ahead to ask Bassanio to request for anything he can offer to make his journey to Belmont a success. He says, " then do but say to me what I should do that in your knowledge may by me be done, and I am prest unto it: therefore, speak". Bassanio shyly admits that he does not have much with him on his journey, but Antonio offers " To raise a present sum: therefore go forth; try what my credit can in Venice do: that shall be rack'd, even to the uttermost, to furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia" . The merchant's love for his friend prompts him to guarantee the loan taken from the shylock.

The Merchant of Venice begins on a melancholic tone as Antonio complains of being sad without a good reason. In a quick rejoinder, his friends try to suggest some reasons why he is sad; Solanio offers that Antonio is thinking

about his offshore investments, while Solarino offers that he worries because of love. However, Antonio makes it clear to his friends (Solario and Solarino) that he is not worried of his ventures. A faint response to Solarino's question could be construed to mean that Antonio is love-sick, and will miss his best friend Bassanio.

## **Works Cited**

Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice*. Ed. Alan Durband.  
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