

SCENE 3:

A South London Street / Outside Nick & Bea's House

TOWNSPEOPLE *mill about.*

NICK

New idea... new idea... we need a new idea.

NIGEL

I still say we should write our life story—two orphaned brothers, their father lost at sea, whose mother died of a broken heart. How you, at age 14, carried me, your sickly little brother on your back—all the way from Cornwall.

NICK

No. We gotta think bigger! We have to *innovate*. The world is changing. I recently heard about a man who has a toilet that *flushes*.

NIGEL

Really?? He doesn't throw his ^{POOP} ~~shit~~ into the street?

NICK

No. He pulls a lever and it gets *whooshed* down a pipe... and then into the street. And that's what we need. Something *new*.

NIGEL

But that's what you're good at—big ideas. I'm really just a poet at heart. You were doing better without me, oh God am I the problem?

NICK

No. Shakespeare is! Why did I ever suggest he become a writer? I was just trying to get him out of our troupe because he was so annoying. Now he's like this giant sun... that... that...

NIGEL

"Shines so bright, no other star is seen."

NICK

See? That's good! Which is why we work together. Now let's get to it.

NIGEL enters Nick's house (which has just moved into place). Before Nick enters, SHYLOCK steps out from around the corner.

SHYLOCK

Nicholas Bottom.

NICK

Shylock! What are you doing at my house?

SHYLOCK

Your debt is due.

NICK

Shhhh...

(pulls him away from house)

I've, uh... hit a little setback with the play. But—if you give me another week—I'll name a character after you.

SHYLOCK

Too late. Shakespeare already promised that. I can see it now. "Shylock—the really nice Jew." Here's a better offer. Cut me in as an investor in your play and I'll cancel your debt.

NICK

You're not a patron, you're a money lender!

SHYLOCK

BECAUSE THAT'S THE ONLY JOB THEY'LL LET JEWS DO! But what I really love—ohhhhh, what gives me nachus in my pupik—is *the theater*. I LOVE IT! I-love-it I-love-it I-love-it. I love the sights, the smells, the roar of the crowd, the splat of the fruit as it hits the actors. It's a temple to me, I tell you. A temple! Catholic, Protestant, Jew—I don't give a rats *tuchus*. My religion—is *theater*.

NICK

Wow, I had no idea. But I can't, it's illegal. If I let you invest we'd both be *hanged* at Tyburn.

SHYLOCK

At least you'd finally have an audience. Take the weekend. Mull it over. Because on Monday, your interest doubles.

#3B—Nick & Bea's Flat

SHYLOCK exits. NICK rubs his brow, feeling the pressure. TRANSITION MUSIC

HE enters his house.