Directions: Read, review, annotate, and analyze the speeches below from Act 2. Consider each of the suitor’s comments about the chests and Portia’s hand in marriage…

**MOROCCO**

Some god direct my judgment! Let me see.

I will survey th' inscriptions back again.

What says this leaden casket?

“Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.”

Must give—for what? For lead? Hazard for lead?

This casket threatens. Men that hazard all

Do it in hope of fair advantages.

A golden mind stoops not to shows of dross.

I’ll then nor give nor hazard aught for lead.

What says the silver with her virgin hue?

“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.”

“As much as he deserves!”—pause there, Morocco,

And weigh thy value with an even hand.

If thou beest rated by thy estimation,

Thou dost deserve enough, and yet enough

May not extend so far as to the lady,

And yet to be afeard of my deserving

Were but a weak disabling of myself.

As much as I deserve! Why, that’s the lady.

I do in birth deserve her, and in fortunes,

In graces, and in qualities of breeding.

But more than these, in love I do deserve.

What if I strayed no further, but chose here?

Let’s see once more this saying graved in gold,

“Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.”

Why, that’s the lady. All the world desires her.

From the four corners of the earth they come

To kiss this shrine, this mortal breathing saint.

The Hyrcanian deserts and the vasty wilds

Of wide Arabia are as thoroughfares now

For princes to come view fair Portia.

The watery kingdom, whose ambitious head

Spits in the face of heaven, is no bar

To stop the foreign spirits, but they come

As o'er a brook to see fair Portia.

One of these three contains her heavenly picture.

Is ’t like that lead contains her? 'Twere damnation

To think so base a thought. It were too gross

To rib her cerecloth in the obscure grave.

Or shall I think in silver she’s immured,

Being ten times undervalued to tried gold?

O sinful thought! Never so rich a gem

Was set in worse than gold. They have in England

A coin that bears the figure of an angel

Stamped in gold, but that’s insculped upon.

But here an angel in a golden bed

Lies all within.—Deliver me the key.

Here do I choose, and thrive I as I may!

**ARRAGON**

And so have I addressed me. Fortune now

To my heart’s hope! Gold, silver, and base lead.

“Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath.”

You shall look fairer ere I give or hazard.

What says the golden chest? Ha, let me see.

“Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.”

“What many men desire”—that “many” may be meant

By the fool multitude that choose by show,

Not learning more than the fond eye doth teach;

Which pries not to th' interior, but like the martlet

Builds in the weather on the outward wall,

Even in the force and road of casualty.

I will not choose what many men desire

Because I will not jump with common spirits

And rank me with the barbarous multitudes.

Why then, to thee, thou silver treasure house.

Tell me once more what title thou dost bear.

“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.”

And well said too—for who shall go about

To cozen fortune and be honorable

Without the stamp of merit? Let none presume

To wear an undeservèd dignity.

Oh, that estates, degrees and offices

Were not derived corruptly, and that clear honor

Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!

How many then should cover that stand bare!

How many be commanded that command!

How much low peasantry would then be gleaned

From the true seed of honor! And how much honor

Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times

To be new varnished! Well, but to my choice.

“Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves.”

I will assume desert.—Give me a key for this,

And instantly unlock my fortunes here.