

The Merchant of Venice

The Caskets Riddles



Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* (act II, scene 7 - the 3 caskets riddles), the C' class students composed their own riddles to use in a representation of the scene. With some alterations concerning the third casket – since we couldn't give away Portia- we replaced the inscription on the lead casket and her portrait inside, with one, more fitting to our prize. Whoever chose the lead casket would gain the Bard's wisdom and the dvd of the 2004 film directed by Michael Radford.

The inscriptions on our caskets read:

Who chooseth me, shall get what every man desires (gold casket)

Who chooseth me, shall get what he deserves (silver casket)

Who chooseth me, shall get His wisdom (lead casket)

The Gold Casket

*Those who seek only gold
are the ones who have sold their souls
If this is your life's goal
then you'll get nothing at all
cause all that glitters isn't gold.
There isn't much space for you
and if you don't change your attitude
nothing more will you have found
nothing serious or profound
You're as shallow as your sight,
unable to see the meaning of true life!*

The Silver Casket

*Who chooses me shall get as much as he deserves
though you are not as ambitious to go as far as it gets
To earn the princess, you think you should be humble
and not follow the path of risks and trouble
One must have a little bit of this and that
to make his wishes turn into an act
So you should find what it takes,
to be or not to be, might be the change.
Lead the life you truly long for,
make a story no one has ever heard of ...*

The Lead Casket

*You, who have chosen this box
won't be guaranteed no power nor gold
Instead, you'll have to take some risks
and many a thing you shall miss
But true treasure awaits in the end,
for what you stand to get
is what the Bard had deep in his heart
and shared with us to find out that
Wisdom is the only path.*

The Gold Casket

*Don't believe everything you see
 whatever shines isn't gold.
 Want less and let it be
 and don't be so greedy.
 You will get your shiny gold
 but, alas, gold it shan't be.*

The Silver Casket

*It seems that you are afraid to lose
 that's why this box you choose.
 If you want to win the prize
 risk you must and thus, get a surprise.
 Don't forget, we make our own fate
 So take the pen and your own story
 create.*

The Lead Casket

*You chose me, not for silver or gold
 It is wisdom you seek and that of a God!
 But be warned, HE is not only one,
 nor is wisdom the property of just one man.
 To gain it you must risk
 and on the way, a lot to miss.
 But in the end, the Bard will reward
 all the troubles you have forgone...*

The Gold Casket

*You, who chose me,
gold you seek, but gold you will not get,
nothing more than just a fake.
All that glitters isn't gold,
the more you seek, the less you'll hold
and for evermore your heart is cold.
When you see behind the shine
you might gain much more than this,
rich you'll be, but not in dime,
but you will have earned a fuller life.*

The Silver Casket

*You, who chose me,
chances you don't take
nor do you risk to lose
everything that you have gained.
Fate will not award you
with nothing more or less
than what you yourself have
brought you
and not a penny less.
So, write away your story
and leave to us the rest.*

The Lead Casket

*You who chose me,
Since neither gold nor silver is what you desire
Courage is your mystery and after that you dire
If wisdom is what you do seek
Then wisdom you shall gain
Cause wisdom isn't only His
But for all of us to bear.
So read away His play of Venice
To learn of Shylock the Jew's menace
And be of all there is aware
and if in Antonio's place, prepare!*