

IL
PECORONE

DI SER GIOVANNI

FIorentINO,

NEL QUALE SI CONTENGONO
CINQUANTA NOVELLE
ANTICHE, BELLE D'IN-
VENTIONE ET
DI STILE.



IN VENEZIA, APPRESSO
DOMENICO FARRI.
M D L X V.

Fiorentino, Giovanni. *Il Pecorone / di ser Giouanni Fiorentino ; nel quale si contengono cinq uanta nouelle antiche, belle d'inuentione et di stile*. Venice: Appresso Domenico Farri, 1565. Folger PQ4472 .G2 1565 Cage

Il Pecorone (or "The Simpleton") is one of the key sources for *The Merchant of Venice*. A collection of stories from the 14th century, it includes one with striking similarities to Shakespeare's version: a Venetian merchant and his young friend, a Jewish moneylender, and a lady of Belmonte. In Fiorentino's version, Geannetto (the Bassiano character) hales from Florence, not Venice, and woos lady of Belmonte for her wealth. Rather than defeating caskets and a father's dying wish, he must stay awake in bed despite the Lady's use of sleeping potions to foil would-be suitors. Once his wife, the lady uses magic to help disguise herself as a lawyer and save her husband's friend. The resolution would be familiar to any of Shakespeare's audiences.

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