Narrator
It was a sunny afternoon. William Shakespeare is working on his play The Merchant of Venice. His daughter comes to see him.

Daughter
Father, look at my new ring! Isn't it lovely, gold and shiny…

Will
Dear daughter, it is very beautiful. Where did you get such a pretty thing?

Daughter
From the market. It was much cheaper than the gold merchant!

Will
Is it real gold?

Daughter
Yes, of course!

Will
So, my dear daughter, why is your finger green?

Daughter
Oohhhh!

Will
My dear daughter, you have a lot to learn… sit with me while I work. The Merchant of Venice. The Prince of Morocco wants to marry the beautiful Portia. But first, he must choose between three boxes: one made of gold, the second of silver, and the third, of cheap lead. Only one of the boxes contains a picture of Portia, and if the Prince chooses the wrong one, he cannot marry her. So, dear daughter, which box does he choose?

Daughter
The gold box! Is it real gold?
Will
He chooses the gold box indeed, and indeed it is real gold. The Prince believes that only the most beautiful box can hold the painting of the beautiful Portia. But in fact, it holds not a picture, but a scroll with these words: All that glisters is not gold…

Robert Harley as The Prince of Morocco
All that glisters is not gold;
Often have you heard that told:
Many a man his life hath sold
But my outside to behold:

Daughter
He thought that because the box is beautiful on the outside, something beautiful must be inside… he was wrong.

Narrator
We’ll leave them there for now. The Merchant of Venice is a play about money, money, money, and the phrase all that glisters is not gold warns us not to be fooled by people or things that look good - because they might not be as good as they look on the surface! In modern English, the word glisters is often changed to glistens or glitters.

Clip 1
Well that car looks fantastic, but all that glitters is not gold. Check the engine before you buy it.

Daughter
Oh father, will you buy me a real gold ring? Pleeesease?

Will
Hmmm… to buy, or not to buy: that is the question.