

**УИЛЬЯМ
ШЕКСПИР**

OTHELLO, THE
MOOR OF
VENICE

Уильям Шекспир

Othello, the Moor of Venice

«Public Domain»

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William Shakespeare

Othello, the Moor of Venice

Persons Represented

DUKE OF VENICE

BRABANTIO, a Senator

Other Senators

GRATIANO, Brother to Brabantio

LODOVICO, Kinsman to Brabantio

OTHELLO, a noble Moor, in the service of Venice

CASSIO, his Lieutenant

IAGO, his Ancient

MONTANO, Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus

RODERIGO, a Venetian Gentleman

CLOWN, Servant to Othello

Herald

DESDEMONA, Daughter to Brabantio and Wife to Othello

EMILIA, Wife to Iago

BIANCA, Mistress to Cassio

Officers, Gentlemen, Messenger, Musicians, Herald, Sailor, Attendants, &c.

SCENE:

The First Act in Venice;

during the rest of the Play at a Seaport in Cyprus

ACT I

SCENE I. Venice. A street

[Enter Roderigo and Iago.]

RODERIGO

Tush, never tell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this, —

IAGO

'Sblood, but you will not hear me: —
If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.

RODERIGO

Thou told'st me thou didst hold him in thy hate.

IAGO

Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capp'd to him: — and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place: —
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bumbast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war:
And, in conclusion, nonsuits
My mediators: for, "Certes," says he,
"I have already chose my officer."
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoretic,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I, — of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds,
Christian and heathen, — must be belee'd and calm'd

By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster;
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I – God bless the mark! his Moorship's ancient.

RODERIGO

By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

IAGO

Why, there's no remedy; 'tis the curse of service,
Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself
Whether I in any just term am affin'd
To love the Moor.

RODERIGO

I would not follow him, then.

IAGO

O, sir, content you;
I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
For nought but provender; and when he's old, cashier'd:
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and when they have lin'd their coats,
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In complement extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

RODERIGO

What a full fortune does the thick lips owe,
If he can carry't thus!

IAGO

Call up her father,
Rouse him: – make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't
As it may lose some color.

RODERIGO

Here is her father's house: I'll call aloud.

IAGO

Do; with like timorous accent and dire yell
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

RODERIGO

What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

IAGO

Awake! what, ho, Brabantio! thieves! thieves! thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

[Brabantio appears above at a window.]

BRABANTIO

What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

RODERIGO

Signior, is all your family within?

IAGO

Are your doors locked?

BRABANTIO

Why, wherefore ask you this?

IAGO

Zounds, sir, you're robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

BRABANTIO

What, have you lost your wits?

RODERIGO

Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

BRABANTIO

Not I; what are you?

RODERIGO

My name is Roderigo.

BRABANTIO

The worser welcome:
I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors;
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper and distempering draughts,
Upon malicious bravery dost thou come
To start my quiet.

RODERIGO

Sir, sir, sir, —

BRABANTIO

But thou must needs be sure
My spirit and my place have in them power

To make this bitter to thee.

RODERIGO

Patience, good sir.

BRABANTIO

What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is Venice;
My house is not a grange.

RODERIGO

Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

IAGO

Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve God if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you service, and you think we are ruffians, you'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for cousins and gennets for Germans.

BRABANTIO

What profane wretch art thou?

IAGO

I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

BRABANTIO

Thou art a villain.

IAGO

You are – a senator.

BRABANTIO

This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

RODERIGO

Sir, I will answer anything. But, I beseech you,
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent, —
As partly I find it is, — that your fair daughter,
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor, —
If this be known to you, and your allowance,

We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter, – if you have not given her leave, —
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber or your house
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

BRABANTIO

Strike on the tinder, ho!
Give me a taper! – Call up all my people! —
This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already. —
Light, I say! light!

[Exit from above.]

IAGO

Farewell; for I must leave you:
It seems not meet nor wholesome to my place
To be produc'd, – as if I stay I shall, —
Against the Moor: for I do know the state, —
However this may gall him with some check, —
Cannot with safety cast him; for he's embark'd
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars, —
Which even now stand in act, – that, for their souls,
Another of his fathom they have none
To lead their business: in which regard,
Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell.

[Exit.]

[Enter, below, Brabantio, and Servants with torches.]

BRABANTIO

It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despisèd time

Is naught but bitterness. – Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? – O unhappy girl! —
With the Moor, say'st thou? – Who would be a father!
How didst thou know 'twas she? – O, she deceives me
Past thought. – What said she to you? – Get more tapers;
Raise all my kindred. – Are they married, think you?

RODERIGO

Truly, I think they are.

BRABANTIO

O heaven! – How got she out? – O treason of the blood! —
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. – Are there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

RODERIGO

Yes, sir, I have indeed.

BRABANTIO

Call up my brother. – O, would you had had her! —
Some one way, some another. – Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

RODERIGO

I think I can discover him, if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

BRABANTIO

Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most. – Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night. —
On, good Roderigo: – I'll deserve your pains.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. Venice. Another street

[Enter Othello, Iago, and Attendants with torches.]

IAGO

Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
To do no contrivèd murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

OTHELLO

'Tis better as it is.

IAGO

Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honor,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assured of this,
That the magnifico is much beloved;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the duke's: he will divorce you;
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law, – with all his might to enforce it on, —
Will give him cable.

OTHELLO

Let him do his spite:
My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know, —
Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,
I shall promulgate, – I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege; and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhousèd free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yond?

IAGO

Those are the raised father and his friends:
You were best go in.

OTHELLO

Not I; I must be found;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO

By Janus, I think no.

[Enter Cassio and certain Officers with torches.]

OTHELLO

The servants of the duke and my lieutenant. —
The goodness of the night upon you, friends!
What is the news?

CASSIO

The duke does greet you, general;
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance
Even on the instant.

OTHELLO

What is the matter, think you?

CASSIO

Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels;
And many of the consuls, rais'd and met,
Are at the duke's already: you have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.

OTHELLO

'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you.

[Exit.]

CASSIO

Ancient, what makes he here?

IAGO

Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack:
If it prove lawful prize, he's made forever.

CASSIO

I do not understand.

IAGO

He's married.

CASSIO

To who?

[Re-enter Othello.]

IAGO

Marry, to – Come, captain, will you go?

OTHELLO

Have with you.

CASSIO

Here comes another troop to seek for you.

IAGO

It is Brabantio. – General, be advis'd;
He comes to bad intent.

[Enter Brabantio, Roderigo, and Officers with torches and weapons.]

OTHELLO

Holla! stand there!

RODERIGO

Signior, it is the Moor.

BRABANTIO

Down with him, thief!

[They draw on both sides.]

IAGO

You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

OTHELLO

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them. —
Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

BRABANTIO

O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?
Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curlèd darlings of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, – to fear, not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense
That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms;
Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion: – I'll have't disputed on;
'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant. —
Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

OTHELLO

Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining and the rest:
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. – Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge?

BRABANTIO

To prison; till fit time
Of law and course of direct session
Call thee to answer.

OTHELLO

What if I do obey?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state,
To bring me to him?

FIRST OFFICER

'Tis true, most worthy signior;
The duke's in council, and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

BRABANTIO

How! the duke in council!
In this time of the night! – Bring him away:
Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;
For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Venice. A council chamber

[The Duke and Senators sitting at a table; Officers attending.]

DUKE

There is no composition in these news
That gives them credit.

FIRST SENATOR

Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

DUKE

And mine a hundred and forty.

SECOND SENATOR

And mine two hundred:
But though they jump not on a just account, —
As in these cases, where the aim reports,
'Tis oft with difference, — yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

DUKE

Nay, it is possible enough to judgement:
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

SAILOR

[*Within.*] What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!

FIRST OFFICER

A messenger from the galleys.

[Enter a Sailor.]

DUKE

Now, — what's the business?

SAILOR

Their purposes toward Cyprus. – Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.

DUKE

'Tis certain, then, for Cyprus. —
Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

FIRST SENATOR

He's now in Florence.

DUKE

Write from us to him; post-post-haste despatch.

FIRST SENATOR

Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

[Enter Brabantio, Othello, Iago, Roderigo, and Officers.]

DUKE

Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman. —
[To Brabantio.] I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

BRABANTIO

So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general care
Take hold on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

DUKE

Why, what's the matter?

BRABANTIO

My daughter! O, my daughter!

DUKE and SENATORS

Dead?

BRABANTIO

Ay, to me;
She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks;
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not.

DUKE

Whoe'er he be that, in this foul proceeding,
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

BRABANTIO

Humbly I thank your grace.
Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate for the state affairs
Hath hither brought.

DUKE and SENATORS

We are very sorry for't.

DUKE

[To Othello.] What, in your own part, can you say to this?

BRABANTIO

Nothing, but this is so.

OTHELLO

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters, —
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,

And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
Of my whole course of love: what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration, and what mighty magic, —
For such proceeding I am charged withal, —
I won his daughter.

BRABANTIO

A maiden never bold:
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she, — in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, everything, —
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!
It is judgement maim'd and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
He wrought upon her.

DUKE

To vouch this is no proof;
Without more wider and more overt test
Than these thin habits and poor likelihoods
Of modern seeming do prefer against him.

FIRST SENATOR

But, Othello, speak:
Did you by indirect and forcèd courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

OTHELLO

I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary,

And let her speak of me before her father.
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office I do hold of you,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

DUKE

Fetch Desdemona hither.

OTHELLO

Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place. —

[Exeunt Iago and Attendants.]

And, till she come, as truly as to heaven
I do confess the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How I did thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

DUKE

Say it, Othello.

OTHELLO

Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, — the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days
To the very moment that he bade me tell it:
Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance in my travels' history:
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak, — such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;

Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse; which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intently; I did consent;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore, – in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:
She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me;
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd;
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd: —
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.

[Enter Desdemona, Iago, and Attendants.]

DUKE

I think this tale would win my daughter too. —
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best.
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

BRABANTIO

I pray you, hear her speak:
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man! – Come hither, gentle mistress:
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

DESDEMONA

My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn me

How to respect you; you are the lord of duty, —
I am hitherto your daughter: but here's my husband;
And so much duty as my mother show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

BRABANTIO

God be with you! – I have done. —
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs:
I had rather to adopt a child than get it. —
Come hither, Moor:
I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee. – For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them. – I have done, my lord.

DUKE

Let me speak like yourself; and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

BRABANTIO

So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not so long as we can smile;
He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar or to gall,
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruis'd heart was piercèd through the ear. —
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

DUKE

The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus. – Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice on you: you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

OTHELLO

The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly, therefore, bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife;
Due reference of place and exhibition;
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.

DUKE

If you please,
Be't at her father's.

BRABANTIO

I'll not have it so.

OTHELLO

Nor I.

DESDEMONA

Nor I. I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend your prosperous ear;
And let me find a charter in your voice
To assist my simpleness.

DUKE

What would you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA

That I did love the Moor to live with him,
My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdu'd

Even to the very quality of my lord:
I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
And to his honors and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rites for which I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.

OTHELLO

Let her have your voices.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not
To please the palate of my appetite;
Nor to comply with heat, – the young affects
In me defunct, – and proper satisfaction;
But to be free and bounteous to her mind:
And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me: no, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and offic'd instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!

DUKE

Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going: the affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.

FIRST SENATOR

You must away to-night.

OTHELLO

With all my heart.

DUKE

At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again. —
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
With such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.

OTHELLO

So please your grace, my ancient, —
A man he is of honesty and trust, —
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

DUKE

Let it be so. —
Good night to everyone. — [*To Brabantio.*] And, noble signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

FIRST SENATOR

Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.

BRABANTIO

Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers. &c.*]

OTHELLO

My life upon her faith! — Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her;
And bring them after in the best advantage. —
Come, Desdemona, I have but an hour
Of love, of worldly matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.*]

RODERIGO

Iago, —

IAGO

What say'st thou, noble heart?

RODERIGO

What will I do, thinkest thou?

IAGO

Why, go to bed and sleep.

RODERIGO

I will incontinently drown myself.

IAGO

If thou dost, I shall never love thee after. Why, thou silly gentleman!

RODERIGO

It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.

IAGO

O villainous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven years, and since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would say I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

RODERIGO

What should I do? I confess it is my shame to be so fond, but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

IAGO

Virtue! a fig! 'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or thus. Our bodies are gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: But we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you call love, to be a sect or scion.

RODERIGO

It cannot be.

IAGO

It is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will. Come, be a man: drown thyself! drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favour with an usurped beard; I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor, – put money in thy purse, – nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration; – put but money in thy purse. – These Moors are changeable in their wills: – fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts shall be to him shortly as acerb as the coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: she must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse. – If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst; if sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe

of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

RODERIGO

Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?

IAGO

Thou art sure of me: – go, make money: – I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: my cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time which will be delivered. Traverse; go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

RODERIGO

Where shall we meet i' the morning?

IAGO

At my lodging.

RODERIGO

I'll be with thee betimes.

IAGO

Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

RODERIGO

What say you?

IAGO

No more of drowning, do you hear?

RODERIGO

I am changed: I'll go sell all my land.

[Exit.]

IAGO

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane
If I would time expend with such a snipe
But for my sport and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad that 'twixt my sheets

He has done my office: I know not if 't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do as if for surety. He holds me well,
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man: let me see now;
To get his place, and to plume up my will
In double knavery, – How, how? – Let's see: —
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear
That he is too familiar with his wife: —
He hath a person, and a smooth dispose,
To be suspected; fram'd to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature,
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose
As asses are.
I have't; – it is engender'd: – hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

[Exit.]

ACT II

SCENE I. A seaport in Cyprus. A Platform

[Enter Montano and two Gentlemen.]

MONTANO

What from the cape can you discern at sea?

FIRST GENTLEMAN

Nothing at all: it is a high-wrought flood;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.

MONTANO

Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land;
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements:
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds;
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous main,
Seems to cast water on the burning Bear,
And quench the guards of the ever-fixèd pole;
I never did like molestation view
On the enchafèd flood.

MONTANO

If that the Turkish fleet
Be not enshelter'd and embay'd, they are drown'd;
It is impossible to bear it out.

[Enter a third Gentleman.]

THIRD GENTLEMAN

News, lads! our wars are done.
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks

That their designment halts; a noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

MONTANO

How! is this true?

THIRD GENTLEMAN

The ship is here put in,
A Veronessa; Michael Cassio,
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

MONTANO

I am glad on't; 'tis a worthy governor.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

But this same Cassio, – though he speak of comfort
Touching the Turkish loss, – yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.

MONTANO

Pray heavens he be;
For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let's to the sea-side, ho!
As well to see the vessel that's come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
Even till we make the main and the aerial blue
An indistinct regard.

THIRD GENTLEMAN

Come, let's do so;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

[Enter Cassio.]

CASSIO

Thanks you, the valiant of this warlike isle,
That so approve the Moor! O, let the heavens

Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea!

MONTANO

Is he well shipp'd?

CASSIO

His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of very expert and approv'd allowance;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.

[*Within.*] A sail, a sail, a sail!

[Enter a fourth Gentleman.]

CASSIO

What noise?

FOURTH GENTLEMAN

The town is empty; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry, "A sail!"

CASSIO

My hopes do shape him for the governor.

[Guns within.]

SECOND GENTLEMAN

They do discharge their shot of courtesy:
Our friends at least.

CASSIO

I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

SECOND GENTLEMAN

I shall.

[Exit.]

MONTANO

But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd?

CASSIO

Most fortunately: he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragon's description and wild fame,
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in the essential vesture of creation
Does tire the ingener. —

[Re-enter second Gentleman.]

How now! who has put in?

SECOND GENTLEMAN

'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

CASSIO

He has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands, —
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel, —
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

MONTANO

What is she?

CASSIO

She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts
A se'nnight's speed. — Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,
And bring all Cyprus comfort!

[Enter Desdemona, Emilia, Iago, Roderigo, and Attendants.]

O, behold,
The riches of the ship is come on shore!

Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees. —
Hall to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

DESDEMONA

I thank you, valiant Cassio.
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

CASSIO

He is not yet arrived nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

DESDEMONA

O, but I fear – How lost you company?

CASSIO

The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship: – but, hark! a sail.

[Within.] A sail, a sail!

[Guns within.]

SECOND GENTLEMAN

They give their greeting to the citadel:
This likewise is a friend.

CASSIO

See for the news.

[Exit Gentleman.]

Good ancient, you are welcome: – *[To Emilia.]* Welcome, mistress: —
Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

[Kissing her.]

IAGO

Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,

You'd have enough.

DESDEMONA

Alas, she has no speech.

IAGO

In faith, too much;
I find it still when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,
She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

EMILIA

You have little cause to say so.

IAGO

Come on, come on; you are pictures out of doors,
Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

DESDEMONA

O, fie upon thee, slanderer!

IAGO

Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk:
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

EMILIA

You shall not write my praise.

IAGO

No, let me not.

DESDEMONA

What wouldst thou write of me, if thou shouldst praise me?

IAGO

O gentle lady, do not put me to't;

For I am nothing if not critical.

DESDEMONA

Come on, assay – There's one gone to the harbor?

IAGO

Ay, madam.

DESDEMONA

I am not merry; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise. —
Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

IAGO

I am about it; but, indeed, my invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frize, —
It plucks out brains and all: but my Muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.
If she be fair and wise, – fairness and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

DESDEMONA

Well prais'd! How if she be black and witty?

IAGO

If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

DESDEMONA

Worse and worse.

EMILIA

How if fair and foolish?

IAGO

She never yet was foolish that was fair;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

DESDEMONA

These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her that's foul and foolish?

IAGO

There's none so foul and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

DESDEMONA

O heavy ignorance! – thou praisest the worst best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed, – one that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

IAGO

She that was ever fair and never proud;
Had tongue at will and yet was never loud;
Never lack'd gold and yet went never gay;
Fled from her wish, and yet said, "Now I may";
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being nigh,
Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly;
She that in wisdom never was so frail
To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail;
She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind;
See suitors following and not look behind;
She was a wight, if ever such wight were; —

DESDEMONA

To do what?

IAGO

To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

DESDEMONA

O most lame and impotent conclusion! – Do not learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. – How say you, Cassio? is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?

CASSIO

He speaks home, madam: you may relish him more in the soldier than in the scholar.

IAGO

[Aside.] He takes her by the palm: ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the sir in. Very good; well kissed! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? Would they were clyster-pipes for your sake!

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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