Original Text

Act 1, Scene 1

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'll not hear me! If ever I did dream of
such a matter, abhor me.

RODERIGO
Thou didst hold him in thy hate.

IAGO
Despise me
If I do not. Three great ones of the city
(\textit{In personal suit to make me his lieutenant})
Off-capped 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 bombast circumstance
Horribly stuffed 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 damned 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,

Modern Text

RODERIGO
Come on, don't tell me that. I don't like it that you
knew about this, Iago. All this time I've thought
you were such a good friend that I've let you
spend my money as if it was yours.

IAGO
Damn it, you're not listening to me! I never
dreamed this was happening—if you find out I
did, you can go ahead and hate me.

RODERIGO
You told me you hated him.

IAGO
I do hate him, I swear. Three of Venice's most
important noblemen took their
hats off to him and
asked him humbly to make me his lieutenant, the
second in command. And I know my own worth
well enough to know I deserve that position. But
he wants to have things his own way, so he
sidesteps the issue with a lot of military talk and
refuses their request. "I've already chosen my
lieutenant," he says. And who does he choose? A
guy who knows more about numbers then
fighting! This guy from Florence named Michael
Cassio. He has a pretty wife but he can't even
control her. And he's definitely never commanded
men in battle. He's got no more hands-on
knowledge of warfare than an old woman—
unless you count what he's read in books,

whichever any peace-lover can do. His military
understanding is all theory, no practice. But
Cassio's been chosen over me. My career is cut
short by some bookkeeper, even though the
general saw my fighting skills first-hand in
Rhodes and Cyprus. This accountant is now
lieutenant, while I end up as the \textit{Moor's} flag-bearer.

RODERIGO
By God, I'd rather be his executioner.

IAGO
And there's nothing I can do about it. That's the
curse of military service. You get promoted when
someone likes you, not because you're next in
line. Now, you tell me: should I feel loyal to the
Moor?
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 followed. You shall mark
Many a dutiful and knee-crooking knave
That (doting on his own obsequious bondage)
Wears out his time much like his master’s ass
For naught but provender, and when he’s old,
cashiered.
Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimmed 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 lined
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 compliment 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.

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!

RODERIGO
Thick-lips sure is lucky if he can pull this off!

IAGO
Let’s shout up to Desdemona’s father, wake him,
pester him, spoil his happiness, spread rumors
about him in the streets, enrage his relatives, and
irritate him endlessly. However real his happiness
is, it will vanish in light of this.

RODERIGO
Here’s her father’s house. I’ll call out.

IAGO
Do it, and shout like the city’s on fire.

RODERIGO
Hey, Brabantio! Signor Brabantio, hey!
**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 4**

**IAGO**
Awake! What, ho, Brabantio! Thieves! Thieves! Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags! Thieves! thieves!

**Enter BRABANTIO, above**

**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 robbed! 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 drafts, Upon malicious knavery dost thou come To start my quiet?

**RODERIGO**
Sir, sir, sir—

**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 5**

**BRABANTIO**
But thou must needs be sure My spirits and my place have in their power To make this bitter to thee.

**RODERIGO**
Sir, sir, sir—

**BRABANTIO**
You know I’m powerful enough to make you pay for this.
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
courser 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 any thing. 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' th' night
Transported with no worse nor better guard
But with a knave of common hire, a gondoliere,
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,

Please wait, sir.

**BRABANTIO**
Why are you talking about robbery? This is
Venice. My house isn't in some remote
countryside.

**RODERIGO**
Brabantio, with all due respect, I'm here out of
courtesy and good will. I've come to tell you—

**IAGO**
My God, sir, you're stubborn and suspicious. We
come here to help you and you treat us like
thugs, but you let an African horse climb all over
your daughter. Your grandsons will neigh to you
like horses. Your whole family will be ruined.

**BRABANTIO**
What kind of crude jerk are you?

**IAGO**
The kind that tells you that the Moor is having
sex with your daughter right now.

**BRABANTIO**
You're a villain!

**IAGO**
You're a senator!

**BRABANTIO**
You're going to pay for this, Roderigo. I know
who you are.

**RODERIGO**
I'll answer for everything. I don't know if you
know or approve of this, but in the wee hours of
the morning your daughter left your house, with
no better escort than a hired gondoliere, to go into
the rough embrace of a lustful Moor. If all of this
happened with your

approval, then we've been very rude to bother
you like this. But if you didn't know about it, then
you were wrong to get mad at us. I'd never play
pranks on you. If you didn't allow your daughter
to do what she's doing, then she's rebelling
against you. She's throwing her life away on
some stranger. Go ahead, see for yourself if
she's in her bedroom. If she is, you can sue me
for lying to you.
**Original Text**

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 above

**IAGO**

(to **RODERIGO**)

Farewell, for I must leave you.
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be producted (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 embarked
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.

**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?—Oh, unhappy girl!—
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a father?—

How didst thou know 'twas she?—Oh, 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**

Oh, heaven, how got she out? Oh, treason of the blood!

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters’ minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood

**Modern Text**

BRABANTIO

Light the candles! Wake up my whole household!
I dreamt about this. I’m starting to worry it’s true.
Give me some light!

BRABANTIO

It’s time for me to say goodbye to you. It would be inappropriate—dangerous, even—for me to be seen working against the Moor, as I would if I stayed. The Venetian government might reprimand him for this, but it can’t safely get rid of him, since it needs him urgently for the imminent Cyprus wars. They couldn’t find another man with his abilities to lead their armed forces—not if their souls depended on it. I hate him, but I’ve got to show him signs of loyalty

and affection, even if it’s just an act. If you want to find him, send the search party to the Sagittarius Inn. He and I will be there.

BRABANTIO

It’s true. She’s gone. The rest of my life will be nothing but bitterness. Now, Roderigo, where did you see her?—Oh, that miserable wretch!—You say you saw her with the Moor?—Oh, who would want to be a father?—How did you know it was her?—To think she tricked me so easily!—What did she say to you?—Get me more candles, and wake up all my relatives. Do you think they’re married?

RODERIGO

Yes, I really think so.

BRABANTIO

Oh, heaven, how did she get out? My own flesh and blood rebels against me! Fathers, never trust your daughters just because they act obedient and innocent. Are there magic spells that can lead young virgins astray? Have you ever heard
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo, of anything like that, Roderigo?
RODERIGO
Yes, sir, I have indeed.

BRABANTIO
Call up my brother—Oh, would you had had her!

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.

RODERIGO
I think I can find him. Get together a group of armed men and follow me.

BRABANTIO
Lead the way. I'll stop at every house. I'm respected enough that most of them will do what I say.—Get your weapons! And get the officers who guard the city at night.—Let's go, Roderigo. I'll reward you for your troubles.

Exeunt
They exit

Act 1, Scene 2
Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and attendants with torches

IAGO
I should in the trade of war I have slain men, Yet do I hold it very stuff o' th' conscience To do no contrived murder. I lack iniquity Sometimes to do me service. Nine or ten times I had thought t' have yerked 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 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,
Original Text

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 reached. For know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine
For the sea's worth. But look, what lights come yond?

Modern Text

and I'm as noble as the woman I've married. And let me tell you, Iago, if I didn't love Desdemona as much as I do, I'd never agree to get married and lose my freedom at all. But look at those lights. Who's coming?

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2

IAGO
Those are the raised father and his friends.

OTHELLO
You were best go in.

IAGO
Not I, I must be found.

OTHELLO
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO
By Janus, I think no.

Enter CASSIO, with officers and torches

CASSIO enters with officers and men carrying torches.

OTHELLO
The servants of the Duke and my lieutenant?

CASSIO
The Duke does greet you, general,

OTHELLO
What's the news?

CASSIO
The Duke sends his regards. He needs to see you right away.

OTHELLO
What do you think he wants?

CASSIO
Something from Cyprus as I may divine.

OTHELLO
It is a business of some heat. The galleys

CASSIO
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers

OTHELLO
This very night at one another's heels,

CASSIO
And many of the consuls, raised and met,

OTHELLO
Are at the Duke's already. You have been hotly
called for.

CASSIO
When being not at your lodging to be found

OTHELLO
The Senate hath sent about three several guests
To search you out.

CASSIO
'Tis well I am found by you.

OTHELLO
I will but spend a word here in the house
And go with you.

Exit

CASSIO
Ancient, what makes he here?

Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3

CASSIO
Ensign, what's he doing in there?
Original Text | Modern Text
--- | ---

**IAGO**

50 Faith, he tonight hath boarded a land carrack. If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

**CASSIO**

I do not understand.

**IAGO**

He's married.

**CASSIO**

To who?

**IAGO**

Marry, to—

*Enter OTHELLO*

Come, captain, will you go?

**OTHELLO**

Have with you.

**CASSIO**

Here comes another troop to seek for you.

*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and officers with torches and weapons*

**IAGO**

It is Brabantio. General, be advised, He comes to bad intent.

**OTHELLO**

Holla! Stand there!

**RODERIGO**

Signior, it is the Moor.

**BRABANTIO**

Down with him, thief!

They draw their swords

**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 stowed my daughter? Damned 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 shunned The wealthy curled darlings of our nation, Would ever have, 't incurred a general mock, Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom Of such a thing as thou—to fear, not to delight.

**IAGO**

Tonight he boarded a treasure ship. If he can keep it, he'll be set forever.

**CASSIO**

I don't understand.

**IAGO**

He's married.

**CASSIO**

To whom?

**IAGO**

To—

*Enter OTHELLO*

Are you ready?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, I'll go with you now.

**CASSIO**

Here comes another group looking for you.

*BRABANTIO and RODERIGO enter, followed by OFFICERS and men with torches*

**IAGO**

It's Brabantio. Look out, sir. He intends to do something bad to you.

**OTHELLO**

Hey! Stop right there!

**RODERIGO**

Sir, it's the Moor.

**BRABANTIO**

Get him, he's a thief!

*Both sides draw their swords*

**IAGO**

You evil thief, where have you hidden my daughter? You devil, you've put a spell on her! Anybody with eyes could tell you that a beautiful and happy young girl like her, who's refused to marry all of the handsome young men of the city, wouldn't run off with a black thing like you unless she'd been bewitched. You're something to fear, not to love. It's obvious to everyone that you've tricked her, drugged her, or kidnapped her. That's probably what happened, so I'm arresting you.—Arrest this man as a practitioner of black magic.
### Original Text vs. Modern Text

#### Act 1, Scene 2, Page 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75 Judge me the world if 'tis not gross in sense</td>
<td>Grab him. If he struggles, use force!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That thou hast practiced on her with foul charms,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals</td>
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<tr>
<td>That weakens motion. I'll have 't disputed on.</td>
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<tr>
<td>'Tis probable and palpable to thinking.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>80 I therefore apprehend and do attach thee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For an abuser of the world, a practitioner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lay hold upon him. If he do resist,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subdue him at his peril!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHELLO Hold your hands,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Both you of my inclining and the rest.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without a prompter. Whither will you that I go</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To answer this your charge?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Act 1, Scene 3

Enter DUKE, SENATORS, and OFFICERS

DUKE There's no composition in this news That gives them credit.  
FIRST SENATOR Indeed, they are disproportioned. My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

### Act 1, Scene 3

Enter DUKE, SENATORS, and OFFICERS

DUKE These reports are inconsistent. You can't trust them.  
FIRST SENATOR It's true, they're inconsistent. My letters say there are a hundred and seven ships.
Original Text

DUKE
5  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
10  Nay, it is possible enough to judgment.
    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!
OFFICER
15  A messenger from the galleys.

Enter SAILOR

DUKE
   Now, what’s the business?
SAILOR
   The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes,
       So was I bid report here to the state
       By Signor Angelo.

Modern Text

DUKE
   And mine say a hundred and forty.
SECOND SENATOR
   And mine say two hundred. But often in these
   cases, reports are just estimates. The important
   thing is that they all say a Turkish fleet is
   approaching Cyprus.
DUKE
   Yes, we get the idea. The inconsistency doesn’t
   make me think that the reports are all wrong. I
   have no doubt about what they’re basically
   saying, and it’s frightening.
SAILOR
   (offstage) Hello! Hey, hello!
OFFICER
   It’s a messenger from the warships.

Enter a MESSENGER

DUKE
   Why are you here?
SAILOR
   Signor Angelo told me to come here and tell you
       that the Turkish fleet is heading for Rhodes, not
       Cyprus.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2

DUKE
20  How say you by this change?
FIRST SENATOR
   This cannot be,
       By no assay of reason. 'Tis a pageant,
       To keep us in false gaze. When we consider
       Th' importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,
       And let ourselves again but understand
25  That as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes
       So may he with more facile question bear it,
       For that it stands not in such warlike brace
       But altogether lacks th' abilities
       That Rhodes is dressed in. If we make thought of this
30  We must not think the Turk is so unskillful
       To leave that latest which concerns him first,
       Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain
       To wake and wage a danger profitless.
DUKE
   Nay, in all confidence, he’s not for Rhodes.
OFFICER
35  Here is more news.

Enter a MESSENGER

MESSENGER

DUKE
   No, I think we can be confident that the Turks
   aren’t really headed for Rhodes.
OFFICER
   Here’s some more news coming in.
The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

FIRST SENATOR
Ay, so I thought. How many, as you guess?

MESSENGER
40 Of thirty sail. And now they do re-stem
Their backward course, bearing with frank appearance
Their purposes toward Cyprus. Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
45 With his free duty recommends you thus,
And prays you to believe him.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3

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, dispatch.
FIRST SENATOR
Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.
   Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, CASSIO, 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 lacked your counsel and your help tonight.
BRABANTIO
So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me.
Neither my place nor aught I heard of business
Hath raised 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 engluts and swallows other sorrows
And it is still itself.

DUKE
Why, what’s the matter?
BRABANTIO
My daughter! Oh, my daughter!
ALL
Dead?
BRABANTIO
Ay, to me.

DUKE
Then it’s certain they’re heading for Cyprus. Is Marcus Luccicos in town?
FIRST SENATOR
No, he’s in Florence.
DUKE
Write to him immediately. Hurry.
FIRST SENATOR
Here come Brabantio and the brave Moor.
BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, CASSIO, IAGO, RODERIGO and the officers enter.

DUKE
Brave Othello, I have to send you right away to fight the Turks, our great enemy.—(to BRABANTIO) Oh, I didn’t see you there. Welcome, sir. I could have used your wisdom and help tonight.
BRABANTIO
I could have used yours as well. Forgive me, your grace. I didn’t get out of bed and come here in the dead of night because I heard about the war or because I was worried about the city’s defense. I have a personal problem so painful and gut-wrenching that it overwhelms everything else.

DUKE
Why, what’s the matter?
BRABANTIO
It’s my daughter! Oh, my daughter!
FIRST SENATOR
Is she dead?
BRABANTIO
She’s dead to me. She’s been tricked and stolen.
### Original Text

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.

### Modern Text

from me, enchanted by black magic spells. She must've

### Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4

<table>
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<tr>
<td>She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted</td>
<td>from me, enchanted by black magic spells. She must've</td>
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<tr>
<td>By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.</td>
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**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4**

65 For nature so prepost'rously 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  

70 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 it seems,  

75 Your special mandate for the state affairs  
Hath hither brought.  

**ALL**  
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 approved 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 blessed with the soft phrase of peace,  
For since these arms of mine had seven years’ pith  
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have used  
Their dearest action in the tented field,  
And little of this great world can I speak,  

**BRABANTIO**  
I humbly thank you, sir. Here is the man, the Moor. It seems you had your own reasons for summoning him here.  

**ALL**  
We're sorry to hear this.  

**DUKE**  
(to OTHELLO) What do you have to say for yourself?  

**BRABANTIO**  
Nothing, but this is true.  

**OTHELLO**  
Noble, honorable gentlemen whom I serve: it's true that I've taken this man's daughter from him and married her. But that's my only offense.  
There's nothing more. I'm awkward in my speech and I'm not a smooth talker. From the time I was seven years old until nine months ago I've been fighting in battles. I don't know much about the world apart from fighting. So I won't do myself much good by speaking in my own defense. But if you'll let me, I'll tell you the plain story of how we fell in love, and what drugs, charms, spells, and powerful magic—because that's what I'm being accused of—I used to win his daughter.  

**BRABANTIO**
A maiden never bold,  
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion  
Blushed at herself. And she, in spite of nature,  
Of years, of country, credit, everything,  
To fall in love with what she feared to look on?  
It is a judgment maimed 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, conjured to this effect,  
He wrought up on her.

She's a good girl, quiet and obedient. She  
blushes at the slightest thing. And you want me  
to believe that despite her young age and proper  
upbringing she fell in love with a man she'd be  
afraid to look at? The very thought of it is  
ridiculous. You'd have to be stupid to think that  
someone so perfect could make such an  
unnatural mistake as that. The devil must be  
behind this. Therefore I say again that he must  
have used some powerful drug or magic potion  
on her.

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.

To tell us, Othello. Did you trick or  
deceive this lady in some way? Or did you agree to this as  
equals?

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

In the meantime I'll tell you all, as honestly as I  
confess my sins to God, how I wooed this  
beautiful lady, and how she came to love me.

Her father loved me, oft invited me,  
Still questioned me the story of my life  
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have passed.
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To th' very moment that he bade me tell it,
Wherein I spoke of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' th' imminent deadly breach,
Of being taken by the insolent foe
And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence
And portance in my traveler's history.
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, hills whose heads touch heaven
It was my hint to speak—such was my process
And of the Cannibals that each others eat,

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 7

The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Grew beneath their shoulders. These things to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline.
But still the house affairs would draw her hence,
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
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 intentively. I did consent,
And often did beguile her of her tears
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffered. 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 wished she had not heard it, yet she wished
That heaven had made her such a man. She thanked me
And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake.
She loved me for the dangers I had passed,
And I loved her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have used.
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.

When I was relaxing, she'd pull me aside and ask to hear some part of a story she had missed. Her eyes would fill with tears at the bad things I went through in my younger years. When my stories were done, she'd sigh and tell me how strangely wonderful and sad my life had been. She said she wished she hadn't heard it, but she also wished there was a man like me for her. She thanked me and told me that if a friend of mine had a story like mine to tell, she'd fall in love with him. I took the hint and spoke to her. She said she loved me for the dangers I'd survived, and I loved her for feeling such strong emotions about me. That's the only witchcraft I ever used. Here comes my wife now. She'll confirm everything.

DESDEMONA, IAGO, and attendants enter.

DUKE
I think a story like that would win my own daughter over. Brabantio, I urge you to make the best of this. Try to accept what's happened.
Act 1, Scene 3, Page 8

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
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 showed
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.
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 9

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 mock’ry makes.
The robbed 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,

BRABANTIO
I’m finished, then. Duke, please go ahead with
your state business. I’d rather adopt a child than
have one of my own.—Come here, Moor. I’m
forced to give my blessing to this marriage. With
all my heart, I give you that thing which, if you
didn’t already have it, I’d try with all my heart to
keep from you. Desdemona, I’m glad you’re my
only child, since if I had others I’d keep them all
locked up. You would have made me treat them
like a tyrant.—I’m done, my lord.

DUKE
Let me refer to a proverb that may help you
forgive these lovers: if you can’t change
something, don’t cry about it. When you lament
something bad that’s already happened, you’re
setting yourself up for more bad news. A robbery victim who can smile about
his losses is superior to the thief who robbed
him, but if he cries he’s just wasting time.

BRABANTIO
So if the Turks steal Cyprus from us, it won’t be
bad as long as we keep smiling. It’s easy to
accept platitudes like that if you haven’t lost
anything. But I’ve lost something precious, and I
have to put up with the platitude as well as
suffering my loss. Talk is cheap. I’ve never heard
of someone feeling better because of someone
Original Text

Being strong on both sides, are equivocal. 
But words are words. I never yet did hear 
That the bruised heart was piercèd through the ears. 
I humbly beseech you, proceed to th' 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 boist'rous 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,

Modern Text

else’s words. Please, I’m asking you, go ahead and get back to your state affairs.

DUKE
The Turks are heading for Cyprus with a powerful fleet. Othello, you understand better than anyone how the defenses for Cyprus work. Even though we have a very good officer in charge there already, everyone says you’re the better man for the job. So I’ll have to ask you to put a damper on your marriage celebrations and take part in this dangerous expedition.

OTHELLO
I’ve gotten used to the hardships of a military life. I rise to the occasion when faced with difficulties. I will take charge of this war against the Turks. But I humbly ask you to make appropriate arrangements for my wife,

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 10

I crave fit disposition for my wife. 
Due reference of place and exhibition, 
With such accommodation and besort 
As levels with her breeding.

DUKE
Why, at her father's.

BRABANTIO
I'll not have it so.

OTHELLO
Nor I.

DESDEMONA
Nor would I 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, 
T' 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 subdued 
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, 

DESDEMONA
And I wouldn't stay there. I don't want to upset my father by being in his house. Dear Duke, please listen to what I have to say.

DUKE
What do you want to do, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA
When I fell in love with Othello I made up my mind that I wanted to live with him. You can see how much I wanted to be with him by how violently I threw away my old life. I feel like I'm a part of him now, and that means I'm part of a soldier. I saw Othello’s true face when I saw his mind. I gave my whole life to him because of his honor and bravery. If I were left at home uselessly while he went off to war, then I’m
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 voice. 
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not 
To please the palate of my appetite,

separated from my husband in his natural element. I’d be miserable without him. Let me go with him.

OTHELLO

Please allow her to do this. I’m not asking to have her near me for sex—I’m too old for that, and my sexual

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 11

Nor to comply with heat the young affects 
In my 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 
When she is with me. No, when light-winged toys 
Of feathered Cupid seel with wanton dullness 
My speculative and officed instrument, 
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. Th’ affair cries haste 
And speed must answer it.

FIRST SENATOR

You must away tonight.

OTHELLO

With all my heart.

DUKE

At nine i’ th’ morning here we’ll meet again.

OTHELLO

So please your grace, my ancient. 
A man he is of honesty and trust.

FIRST SENATOR

To his conveyance I assign my wife, 
With what else needful your good grace shall think 
To be sent after me.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 12

DUKE

Let it be so. 
Good night to every one.—(to BRABANTIO) 
And, noble signior, 
If virtue no delighted beauty lack, 
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

FIRST SENATOR

DUKE

All right, then. Good night, everyone.—
(toBRABANTIO) Sir, if goodness is beautiful, 
your son-in-law is beautiful, not black.

FIRST SENATOR
Adieu, brave Moor. Use Desdemona well.

BRABANTIO
Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see.
She has deceived her father, and may thee.

Exeunt DUKE, BRABANTIO, CASSIO, SENATORS, and officers

OTHELLO
My life upon her faith!—Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee.
I prithee, 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 matter 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, think’st thou?
IAGO
Why, go to bed, and sleep.
RODERIGO
I will incontinently drown myself.

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 13

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
Oh, 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.

IAGO
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 our 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

Goodbye, black Moor. Treat Desdemona well.

BRABANTIO
Keep an eye on her, Moor. She lied to me, and she may lie to you.

The DUKE, BRABANTIO, CASSIO, SENATORS, and officers exit.

OTHELLO
I’d bet my life she’d never lie to me. Iago, I’m leaving my dear Desdemona with you. Have your wife attend to her, and bring them along as soon as you can. Come on, Desdemona, I’ve only got an hour of love to spend with you, to tell you what you need to do. We’re on a tight schedule.

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
Can’t help it? Nonsense! What we are is up to us. Our bodies are like gardens and our willpower is like the gardener. Depending on what we plant—weeds or lettuce, or one kind of herb rather than a variety, the garden will either be barren and useless, or rich and productive. If
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 prepost’rous 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.

we didn’t have rational minds to counterbalance our emotions and desires, our bodily urges would take over. We’d end up in ridiculous situations. Thankfully, we have reason to cool our raging lusts. In my opinion, what you call love is just an offshoot of lust.

RODERIGO
It cannot be.

RODERIGO
I don’t believe it.

IAGO
You feel love because you feel lust and you have no willpower. Come on, be a man. Drown yourself? Drowning is for cats or blind puppies—don’t drown yourself! I’ve told you I’m your friend, and I’ll stick by you.

I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse. Follow thou the wars, defeat thy favor with an usurped beard. I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be long that Desdemona should continue her love to the Moor—put money in thy purse—nor he his to her. It was a violent commencement in her, 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 bitter as coloquintida. She must change for youth. When she is sated with his body she will find the errors of her choice. 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 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! ’Tis clean out of the way. Seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

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.

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

IAGO
Can I count on you if I wait to see what happens?

IAGO
You can trust me. Go now and get cash. I told you before, and I’ll tell you again and again: I hate the Moor. I’m devoted to my cause of hating him, just as devoted as you are to yours. So let’s join forces and get revenge. If you seduce Desdemona and make a fool out of him, it’ll be fun for both of us. Many things may happen. Go get money. We’ll speak again tomorrow.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RODERIGO</td>
<td>RODERIGO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Where shall we meet i' th' morning?</td>
<td>Where will we meet in the morning?</td>
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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.

IAGO
Go to, farewell. Put money enough in your purse.

RODERIGO
I'll sell all my land.

IAGO
Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.
For I mine own gained 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's 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
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, framed 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 th' nose
As asses are.
I have 't. It is engendered! Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

Exit

Act 1, Scene 3, Page 16

Exit

He exits.
Act 2, Scene 1

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 ruffianed 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-shaked surge, with high and monstrous mane,

Seems to cast water on the burning bear, And quench the guards of th' ever-fixèd pole. I never did like molestation view On the enchafèd flood.

MONTANO
If that the Turkish fleet Be not ensheltered and embayed, they are drowned. It is impossible they bear it out.

THIRD GENTLEMAN
Enter a THIRD GENTLEMAN

MONTANO and two GENTLEMEN enter.

MONTANO
What can you see out on the ocean?

FIRST GENTLEMAN
Nothing. The water’s so rough that I can’t see any sails, either in the bay or on the ocean.

MONTANO
It was windy on shore too. A big blast of wind shook our fortifications. How could a ship made out of wood hold together in those mountainous waves? What do you think will be the result of this storm?

SECOND GENTLEMAN
The Turkish navy will be broken up. The wind’s whipping up the waves so high you expect them to reach the clouds and splash against the stars in the sky. I’ve never seen the waters so disturbed.

MONTANO
If the Turkish fleet isn’t protected in some harbor, their men must all be drowned. No ship could survive this storm.

THIRD GENTLEMAN
I’ve got news, boys, the war’s over! This terrible storm has smashed the Turks so badly that their plans are ruined. One of our ships has reported that it saw most of their fleet shipwrecked.

MONTANO
What? Is this true?

THIRD GENTLEMAN
The ship’s sailing into harbor now; it’s from Verona. Michael Cassio, lieutenant of the Moor Othello, has arrived on shore. The Moor himself is still at sea. He’s been commissioned to come here to Cyprus.

MONTANO
I’m happy about that. He’ll be a good governor.

THIRD GENTLEMAN
Cassio brings good news about the Turkish defeat, but he’s worried about the Othello’s safety. The two of them were separated during
35 With foul and violent tempest.

**MONTANO**
Pray heavens he be,
For I have served him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let’s to the seaside, ho!
As well to see the vessel that’s come in
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,
40 Even till we make the main and th’ aerial blue
An indistinct regard.

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**
Come, let’s do so.
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

**CASSIO**
Thanks, you the valiant of this warlike isle
That so approve the Moor. Oh, let the heavens
Give him defense against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.

**MONTANO**
Is he well shipped?

**CASSIO**
His bark is stoutly timbered and his pilot
Of very expert and approved allowance
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.

**A VOICE**
(Within) A sail, a sail, a sail!

**CASSIO**
What noise?

**MESSENGER**
The town is empty. On the brow o’ th’ sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry “A sail!”

**CASSIO**
My hopes do shape him for the governor.

**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 arrived.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**
I shall.

---

**CASSIO**
Thanks, you brave men who defend this island
and respect Othello. I hope heaven protects him
from the weather, because I lost sight of him on
the stormy sea.

**MONTANO**
Is his ship sturdy?

**CASSIO**
Yes, it’s well built, and the ship’s pilot is very
expert and experienced. For that reason I still
have some hope for him, even though I don’t
have my hopes up too high.

**A VOICE**
(Offstage) A sail! A sail! A sail!

**CASSIO**
What’s all that shouting about?

**MESSENGER**
Everybody in town is down at the shore shouting
“A sail!”

**CASSIO**
I hope it’s Othello.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**
They’ve fired a greeting shot, so at least it’s a
friendly ship.

**CASSIO**
Please go find out for certain who has arrived.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**
I’ll do that.
MONTANO
But good lieutenant, is your general wived?

CASSIO
Most fortunately. He hath achieved a maid
That paragons description and wild fame,
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And in th’ essential vesture of creation
Does tire the ingener.

CASSIO
Yes, and he’s very lucky to have married the woman he did. His wife defies description. She’s God’s masterpiece, and she’d exhaust whoever tried to do her justice while praising her.

SECOND GENTLEMAN enters.
Who’s arrived in the harbor?

SECOND GENTLEMAN
A man named Iago, the general’s ensign.

CASSIO
He made good time. You see how the storm, the jagged rocks, and the sand banks that trap ships all appreciate a beautiful woman. They let the heavenly Desdemona arrive safe and sound.

MONTANO
What is she?

MONTANO
Who’s that?

CASSIO
She’s the one I was talking about, the general’s wife. The brave Iago was put in charge of bringing her here, and he’s arrived a week sooner than we expected. Dear God, please protect Othello and help him arrive here safely, so he and Desdemona can be in each other’s arms, and Othello can cheer us up and bring comfort to Cyprus.

DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO and EMILIA enter.

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
Oh, but I fear. How lost you company?

Look, the precious Desdemona has arrived on shore. We should all kneel before her, men of Cyprus! Greetings, my lady, and may God always be with you.

DESDEMONA
Thank you, brave Cassio. Is there any news about my husband?

CASSIO
He hasn’t arrived yet. As far as I know, he’s okay and will arrive here soon.

DESDEMONA
Oh, but I’m worried. How did you two get separated?
Original Text

CASSIO
The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship—

A VOICE
100 (within) A sail, a sail!

CASSIO
But, hark! a sail.

SECOND GENTLEMAN
They give this greeting to the citadel.
This likewise is a friend.

CASSIO
See for the news.

Exit a SECOND GENTLEMEN

Good ancient, you are welcome.—Welcome, mistress.
(kisses EMILIA)
Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners. ’Tis my breeding
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

Modern Text

CASSIO
The storm separated us.

A VOICE
(offstage) A sail! A sail!

CASSIO
Listen, they’ve spotted another ship!

SECOND GENTLEMAN
They fired a greeting shot too, so this is also a friendly ship.

CASSIO
Go find out the news.

SECOND GENTLEMAN exits.

Ensign Iago, welcome.—And welcome to you, too, madam. (he kisses EMILIA) Don’t be upset that I kissed your wife hello, Iago. It’s a courtesy where I come from.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 6

IAGO
Sir, would she give you so much of her lips
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You’ll have enough.

DESDEMONA
Alas, she has no speech!

IAGO
In faith, too much.
I find it still, when I have leave 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 door,
bells in your parlors, wild-cats in your kitchens,
saints in your injuries, devils being offended, players
in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

DESDEMONA
Oh, fie upon thee, slanderer!

IAGO
Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk.
### Original Text

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 should’st praise me?

---

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 7**

**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.

**IAGO**
I am about it, but indeed my invention
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frieze,
It plucks out brains and all. But my Muse labors
And thus she is delivered:
If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,
The one’s for use, the other useth it.

**DESDEMONA**
Well praised! 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 helped her to an heir.

**DESDEMONA**
These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i’ th’ 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.

---

**Modern Text**

up to have fun, and you start work when you go to bed.

**EMILIA**
You clearly have nothing good to say about me.

**IAGO**
No, I don’t.

**DESDEMONA**
But if you had to say something nice about me, what would you say?

**IAGO**
Don’t make me do it, my lady. I’m critical by nature.

**DESDEMONA**
Come on, just try.—By the way, has someone gone down to the harbor?

**IAGO**
Yes, madam.

**DESDEMONA**
I’m not as happy as I seem. I’m just trying not to show how worried I am about Othello’s safety. Come on, what would you say about me?

**IAGO**
I’m trying to think of something, but I’m not good at inventing clever things. It takes time. Ah, I’ve got it. If a woman is pretty and smart, she uses her good looks to get what she wants.

**DESDEMONA**
Very clever! But what if the woman is smart but ugly?

**IAGO**
Even if she’s ugly, she’ll be smart enough to find a guy to sleep with her.

**DESDEMONA**
This is getting worse and worse!

**EMILIA**
What if she’s pretty but stupid?

**IAGO**
No pretty woman is stupid, because her stupidity will make her more attractive to men.

**DESDEMONA**
These are stupid old jokes that men tell each other in bars. What horrible thing do you have to say about a woman who’s both ugly and stupid?

**IAGO**
No matter how ugly or stupid the woman is, she plays the same dirty tricks that the smart and pretty ones do.
Act 2, Scene 1, Page 8

DESDEMONA
Oh, 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 lacked gold and yet went never gay, Fled from her wish and yet said “Now I may,” She that being angered, 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 wights were—

DESDEMONA
To do what?

IAGO
To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

DESDEMONA
Oh, 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 counselor?

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.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 9

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, and excellent courtesy! ’tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? Would they were oyster-pipes for your sake!—

Trumpet within

The Moor! I know his trumpet.

CASSIO

If you lose your job because of little flirtations like this, you’ll wish you hadn’t been so courteous with her. Oh, how nice, you’re kissing your own hand, one finger at a time? I wish those fingers were enema tubes!—

A trumpet plays offstage.

That’s the Moor! I recognize his trumpet.

CASSIO
### Original Text

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<td>'Tis truly so.</td>
<td>Yes, it is.</td>
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<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Let's meet him and receive him.</td>
<td>Let's go greet him when he lands.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CASSIO</td>
<td>CASSIO</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lo, where he comes!</td>
<td>Look, here he comes.</td>
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Enter OTHELLO and attendants

### Modern Text

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<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
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<tr>
<td>My beautiful warrior!</td>
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<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My darling Othello!</td>
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OTHELLO

I’m amazed you got here before me. But I’m overjoyed! My love, if the calm after the storm could always be this wonderful, I’d want the wind to blow until it waked the dead, and whipped up waves as tall as mountains! If I died right now I’d be completely happy, since I’ll probably never be as happy as this again in my life.

### Act 2, Scene 1, Page 10

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<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
<td>Amen to that! I can’t talk about my happiness anymore. It’s too much. I hope these kisses I’m about to give you are the closest we ever come to fighting. (they kiss)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amen to that, sweet powers!</td>
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<tr>
<td>I cannot speak enough of this content.</td>
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<td>It stops me here, it is too much of joy.</td>
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<td>And this, and this, the greatest discords be (kissing her)</td>
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<td>That e’er our hearts shall make!</td>
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<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
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<tr>
<td>The heavens forbid</td>
<td>God willing, our love and our happiness will only increase as we get older.</td>
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<tr>
<td>But that our loves and comforts should increase,</td>
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<td>Even as our days do grow.</td>
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IAGO

(aside) Oh, you’re well tuned now, But I’ll set down the pegs that make this music, As honest as I am.

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Act 2, Scene 1, Page 11

RODERIGO

With him? Why, 'tis not possible.

IAGO

Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed. Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor, but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies. To love him still for prating? Let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye must be fed, and what delight shall she have to look on the devil? When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be a game to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh appetite, loveliness in favor, sympathy in years, manners and beauties. All which the Moor is defective in. Now for want of these required conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor. Very nature will instruct her in it and compel her to some second choice. Now sir, this granted—as it is a most pregnant and unforced position—who stands so eminent in the degree of this fortune as Cassio does? A knave very voluble, no further conscionable than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection. Why, none, why, none! A slipper and subtle knave, a finder of occasions that has an eye, can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself. A devilish knave. Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all those requisites in him that folly and green minds look after. A pestilent complete knave, and the woman hath found him already.

RODERIGO

I cannot believe that in her. She's full of most blessed condition.

IAGO

Blessed fig's-end! The wine she drinks is made of grapes. If she had been blessed, she would never have loved the Moor. Blessed pudding! Didst thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? Didst not mark that?

RODERIGO

With Cassio? That's impossible.

IAGO

Be quiet and listen to me. Remember how she fell madly in love with the Moor because he bragged and told her made-up stories? Did you expect her to keep on loving him for his chattering? You’re too smart to think that. No, she needs someone nice-looking. Othello’s ugly, what pleasure could she find in him? Lovemaking gets boring after a while. To keep things hot, she’ll need to see someone with a handsome face, someone close to her in age, someone who looks and acts like her. Othello isn’t any of those things. Since he doesn’t have these advantages to make him attractive to her, she’ll get sick of him until she makes her want to puke. She’ll start looking around for a second choice. Now, if that’s true—and it’s obviously true—who’s in a better position than Cassio? He’s a smooth talker, and uses sophistication and fine manners to hide his lust. Nobody’s as crafty as he is. Besides, he’s young and handsome, and he’s got all the qualities that naïve and silly girls go for. He’s a bad boy, and Desdemona’s got her eye on him already.

RODERIGO

I can’t believe that. She’s not that kind of woman. She’s very moral.

IAGO

Like hell she is! She’s made of the same flesh and blood as everyone else. If she were so moral, she would never have fallen in love with the Moor in the first place. Good lord! Did you notice how she and Cassio were fondling each
Act 2, Scene 1, Page 12

RODERIGO
Yes, that I did, but that was but courtesy.

IAGO
Lechery, by this hand, an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embraced together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! When these mutabilities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, th' incorporate conclusion. Pish! But, sir, be you ruled by me. I have brought you from Venice. Watch you tonight for the command, I'll lay 't upon you. Cassio knows you not. I'll not be far from you. Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline, or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favorably minister.

RODERIGO
Well.

IAGO
Sir, he's rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you. Provoke him that he may. For even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny, whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them, and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

RODERIGO
I will do this, if you can bring it to any opportunity.

IAGO
I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel. I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

RODERIGO
Adieu.

Act 2, Scene 1, Page 13

IAGO
That Cassio loves her, I do well believe 't. That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit. The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not, Is of a constant, loving, noble nature, And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too,
Not out of absolute lust—though peradventure I stand accountable for as great a sin— But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leaped into my seat. The thought whereof Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards, And nothing can or shall content my soul Till I am evened with him, wife for wife. Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do, If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace For his quick hunting, stand the putting on, I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip, Abuse him to the Moor in the right garb (For I fear Cassio with my night-cape too) Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me For making him egregiously an ass And practicing upon his peace and quiet Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confused. Knavery's plain face is never seen till used.

Exit

IAGO exits.

Act 2, Scene 2

Enter Othello's HERALD, with a proclamation

HERALD

It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph: some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him. For besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble general Othello!

Exit

The HERALD exits.

Act 2, Scene 3

Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and attendants

OTHELLO

Good Michael, look you to the guard tonight. Let's teach ourselves that honorable stop Not to outsport discretion.

CASSIO

Iago hath direction what to do, But notwithstanding with my personal eye Will I look to 't.

OTHELLO

Iago is most honest.
Michael, good night. Tomorrow with your earliest
Let me have speech with you.—
Come, my dear love,
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue:
That profit’s yet to come ‘tween me and you.
Good night.

Exeunt OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and attendants

Enter IAGO

CASSIO
Welcome, Iago. We must to the watch.

IAGO
Not this hour, lieutenant, ‘tis not yet ten o’ the clock.
Our general cast us thus early for the love of his
Desdemona—who let us not therefore blame. He
hath not yet made wanton the night with her, and she
is sport for Jove.

CASSIO
She’s a most exquisite lady.

IAGO
And, I’ll warrant her, full of game.

CASSIO
Indeed she’s a most fresh and delicate creature.

IAGO
What an eye she has! Methinks it sounds a parley to
provocation.

CASSIO
An inviting eye, and yet methinks right modest.

IAGO
And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

CASSIO
She is indeed perfection.

IAGO
Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I
have a stoup of wine, and here without are a brace of
Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to
the health of black Othello.

CASSIO
Not tonight, good Iago. I have very poor and unhappy
brains for drinking. I could well wish courtesy would
invent some other custom of entertainment.

IAGO
Oh, they are our friends. But one cup. I’ll drink for
you.

CASSIO
I have drunk but one cup tonight, and that was craftily
qualified too, and behold what innovation it makes
talk to me tomorrow as early as you can.—Come
with me, my dear love. Now that the wedding’s
over, we can have the pleasure of consummating
our marriage. Good night, everyone.

OTHELLO and DESDEMONA exit with their
attendants.

IAGO enters.

CASSIO
Hello, Iago. It’s time for us to stand guard.

IAGO
Not yet, lieutenant. It’s not even ten o’clock. The
general got rid of us early tonight so he could be
with Desdemona.—I can’t blame him. He hasn’t
spent the night with her yet, and she’s beautiful
enough to be Jove’s lover.

CASSIO
She’s an exquisitely beautiful lady.

IAGO
And I bet she’s good in bed too.

CASSIO
Yes, she’s young and tender.

IAGO
And such pretty eyes! Like an invitation.

CASSIO
Yes, she’s pretty. But she’s modest and ladylike
too.

IAGO
And when she speaks, doesn’t her voice stir up
passion?

CASSIO
She’s a perfect woman, it’s true.

IAGO
Well, good luck to them tonight in bed! Come with
us, lieutenant. I’ve got a jug of wine, and these
two Cyprus gentlemen want to drink a toast to the
black Othello.

CASSIO
Not tonight, Iago. I’m not much of a drinker. I wish
there was less social pressure to drink.

IAGO
Oh, but these are our friends. Just one glass. I’ll
do most of the drinking for you.

CASSIO
I’ve already had a glass of wine tonight, watered
down, but look how drunk I am. I’m not a heavy
here. I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

IAGO
What, man, 'tis a night of revels! The gallants desire it.

CASSIO
Where are they?

IAGO
Here at the door. I pray you call them in.

CASSIO
I'll do 't, but it dislikes me.

Exit CASSIO exits.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3

IAGO
If I can fasten but one cup upon him, With that which he hath drunk tonight already, He'll be as full of quarrel and offense As my young mistress' dog. Now my sick fool Roderigo, Whom love hath turned almost the wrong side out, To Desdemona hath tonight caroused Potations pottle-deep, and he's to watch. Three lads of Cyprus, noble swelling spirits (That hold their honors in a wary distance, The very elements of this warlike isle) Have I tonight flustered with flowing cups, And they watch too. Now 'mongst this flock of drunkards Am I to put our Cassio in some action That may offend the isle.

But here they come.
If consequence do but approve my dream My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Enter CASSIO, MONTANO and gentlemen

CASSIO
'Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse already.

MONTANO
Good faith, a little one, not past a pint, As I am a soldier.

IAGO
Some wine, ho!
(sings)
And let me the cannikin clink, clink,
And let me the cannikin clink.
A soldier's a man,
A life's but a span,
Why then let a soldier drink.
Some wine, boys!

CASSIO
My God, they've given me a lot to drink.

MONTANO
No, it was a little one, not more than a pint.

IAGO
Bring in more wine!
(he sings)
And clink your glasses together,
A soldier's a man,
And a man's life is short,
Have some more wine, boys!
CASSIO
55 Fore heaven, an excellent song.
IAGO
I learned it in England where indeed they are most potent in potting. Your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander—Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.
CASSIO
Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?
IAGO
Why, he drinks you with facility your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain. He gives your Hollander a vomit ere the next pottle can be filled.
CASSIO
To the health of our general!
MONTANO
60 I am for it, lieutenant, and I'll do you justice.
IAGO
Oh, sweet England!
(sings)
King Stephen was a worthy peer,
His breeches cost him but a crown,
He held them sixpence all too dear,
With that he called the tailor lown.
He was a wight of high renown,
And thou art but of low degree,
'Tis pride that pulls the country down,
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.
Some wine, ho!
CASSIO
Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.
IAGO
Will you hear 't again?
CASSIO
No, for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well, heaven's above all, and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.
IAGO
75 It's true, good lieutenant.
is to be saved before the ancient. Let’s have no more of this, let’s to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—
Gentlemen, let’s look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk. This is my ancient, this is my right hand, and this is my left. I am not drunk now. I can stand well enough, and I speak well enough.

ALL
Excellent well!

CASSIO
Why, very well then. You must not think then that I am drunk.

Exit

MONTANO
To th’ platform, masters. Come, let’s set the watch.

Exit GENTLEMEN

IAGO
You see this fellow that is gone before,
He is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar
And give direction. And do but see his vice,
’Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as th’ other. ‘Tis pity of him.
I fear the trust Othello puts him in
On some odd time of his infirmity
Will shake this island.

MONTANO
But is he often thus?

IAGO
You see that man who just left? He’s a good soldier, good enough to be Caesar’s right-hand man. But he has a serious weakness. It’s too bad. I’m worried that Othello trusts him too much, and it’ll be bad for Cyprus eventually.

MONTANO
But is he often like this?

IAGO
He drinks like this every night before he goes to sleep. He’d stay up all night and all day if he didn’t drink himself to sleep.

MONTANO
The general should be informed about this. Maybe he’s never noticed, or he only wants to see Cassio’s good side. Don’t you think so?

Enter RODERIGO

(aside) How now, Roderigo?
I pray you, after the lieutenant, go!

Exit RODERIGO

MONTANO
And ‘tis great pity that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place as his own second
With one of an ingraft infirmity.
Original Text

It were an honest action to say
So to the Moor.

IAGO

Not I, for this fair island.
I do love Cassio well, and would do much
To cure him of this evil—

Cry within “Help! help!”

IAGO

But, hark! What noise?

Enter CASSIO, pursuing RODERIGO

Modern Text

something to the Moor.

IAGO

I wouldn’t say anything, not if you gave me the whole island for doing so. I respect Cassio and I’d like to help cure his alcoholism—

A voice offstage calls “Help! Help!”

IAGO

What’s that noise?

CASSIO enters, chasing RODERIGO.

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 7

CASSIO

Zounds! You rogue! You rascal!

MONTANO

What’s the matter, lieutenant?

CASSIO

A knife teach me my duty?

RODERIGO

Beat me?

CASSIO

Dost thou prate, rogue? (strikes him)

MONTANO

Nay, good lieutenant! I pray you, sir, hold your hand. (stays him)

CASSIO

Let me go, sir, or I’ll knock you o’er the mazzard.

MONTANO

Come, come, you’re drunk.

CASSIO

Drunk?

IAGO

(aside to RODERIGO)

Away, I say, go out, and cry a mutiny,—

Exit RODERIGO

Nay, good lieutenant! Alas, gentlemen—

120 Help, ho!—Lieutenant—sir, Montano—Help, masters!—Here’s a goodly watch indeed!

Bell rings

CASSIO

Damn you, you villain, you rascal!

MONTANO

What’s the matter, lieutenant?

CASSIO

To think that fool had the nerve to try to teach me manners! I’ll beat him until the welts look like basket-weave!

RODERIGO

You’ll beat me?

CASSIO

Are you talking, you villain?(he hits RODERIGO)

MONTANO

No, don’t hit him, lieutenant! Please, sir, restrain yourself. (he restrains CASSIO)

CASSIO

Let me go, or I’ll knock you on the head.

MONTANO

Come on, you’re drunk.

CASSIO

Drunk?

IAGO

(speaking so that only RODERIGO can hear) Go tell everyone there’s a riot.—

RODERIGO exits.

No, lieutenant—God, gentlemen—Help—Lieutenant—sir, Montano—Help, men!—The night guard is coming!

Bell rings

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 8

Who’s that which rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!
The town will rise. Fie, Fie, lieutenant,
You’ll be ashamed for ever.

Enter OTHELLO and attendants

Who’s sounding that alarm? The whole town will riot! God, lieutenant, please stop! You’ll be ashamed of this forever!

OTHELLO enters with attendants.
Original Text | Modern Text

125 OTHELLO
What is the matter here?

126 MONTANO
I bleed still,
I am hurt to the death. He dies!

127 OTHELLO
Hold, for your lives!

134 IAGO
Hold, ho! Lieutenant—sir, Montano—gentlemen,
Have you forgot all place of sense and duty?
Hold! The general speaks to you. Hold, for shame!

139 OTHELLO
Hold, for your lives!

139 IAGO
Stop! Lieutenant—sir, Montano—gentlemen!
Have you forgotten your duty and your sense of
decorum? Stop! The general is talking to you!
Stop, for God’s sake!

144 OTHELLO
How did this all start? Have we all become as
savage as the Turks, treating each other as
badly as they would have treated us? For
heaven’s sake, stop this savage brawl! The next
man who swings his sword must not care about
his life, because the instant he strikes, he dies.
Stop that alarm from ringing, it’s scaring the
islanders. What is the matter here, gentlemen?

145 IAGO
I do not know. Friends all but now, even now,
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom
Divesting them for bed. And then, but now,
As if some planet had unwitted men,

150 OTHELLO
How does it come, Michael, you are thus forgot?

151 CASSIO
I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

154 OTHELLO
Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil.
The gravity and stillness of your youth

155 IAGO
For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl.
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage
Holds his soul light, he dies upon his motion.
Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle
From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?—

158 OTHELLO
Why, how now, ho! From whence ariseth this?
Are we turned Turks? And to ourselves do that
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?

159 IAGO
Iago, that looks dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? On thy love, I charge thee.

160 OTHELLO
How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?

163 CASSIO
I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

165 OTHELLO
Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil.
The gravity and stillness of your youth

167 OTHELLO
What is the matter here?

170 MONTANO
My God, I’m bleeding! I’ve been mortally
wounded. I’ll kill him!

171 OTHELLO
Stop right now!

176 IAGO
Stop! Lieutenant—sir, Montano—gentlemen!
Have you forgotten your duty and your sense of
decorum? Stop! The general is talking to you!
Stop, for God’s sake!

181 OTHELLO
How did this all start? Have we all become as
savage as the Turks, treating each other as
badly as they would have treated us? For
heaven’s sake, stop this savage brawl! The next
man who swings his sword must not care about
his life, because the instant he strikes, he dies.
Stop that alarm from ringing, it’s scaring the
islanders. What is the matter here, gentlemen?

186 IAGO
I don’t know. We were all having fun until just a
minute ago; we were as happy as a bride and
groom taking off their clothes. But then the mood
suddenly changed. It was as if something had
driven the men insane and made them point their
swords at one another. I don’t

191 OTHELLO
Those legs that brought me to a part of it.

194 OTHELLO
How does it come, Michael, you are thus forgot?

196 CASSIO
I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

200 MONTANO
Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger.
Your officer Iago can inform you,  
While I spare speech, which something now offends me,  
Of all that I do know. Nor know I aught  
By me that's said or done amiss this night,  
Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,  
And to defend ourselves it be a sin  
When violence assails us.

Iago can tell you what happened. I should save my breath, since it hurts to talk. I didn’t do anything wrong that I know of, unless it was a sin to defend myself when someone attacked me.

OTHELLO

Now, by heaven,  
My blood begins my safer guides to rule,  
And passion, having my best judgment collied,  
Assays to lead the way. If I once stir,

OTHELLO

All right, now I’m starting to lose my cool. By God, if you don’t tell me what happened you’ll all suffer. Tell me how this fight began, who started it. Whoever is guilty, even if he were my twin brother, I swear I’m through with him. We’re in a town that’s just avoided a war, everyone’s still on edge, and you’re getting into private fights while you’re supposed to be on guard duty? That’s unbelievably bad. Iago, who started it?

MONTANO

If partially affined or leagued in office  
Thou dost deliver more or less than truth  
Thou art no soldier.

IAGO

Touch me not so near.  
I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth  
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio.  
Yet I persuade myself to speak the truth  
Shall nothing wrong him. This it is, general:  
Montano and myself being in speech,  
There comes a fellow crying out for help

IAGO

You're hitting close to home there. I'd rather cut my tongue out of my mouth than say anything bad about Michael Cassio. But I don't think it'll hurt him to tell the truth. This is what happened, General. Montano and I were talking when a man came running, crying for help. Cassio was chasing him with his sword out, trying to kill the guy. This gentleman stopped Cassio and told him to put away his sword. I followed the guy who was crying for help, to keep him from scaring the public. But he was fast and outran me. When I got back, I heard the swords clinking and Cassio swearing. I’d never heard him swear before. They were nearly killing each other, as you saw when you pulled them apart. I can’t tell you anything else.
Original Text

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 11

But men are men, the best sometimes forget.

Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,
Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received
From him that fled some strange indignity
Which patience could not pass.

OTHELLO

I know, Iago,

Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee
But never more be officer of mine.—

Enter DESDEMONA, attended

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up!
I'll make thee an example.

DESDEMONA

What's the matter, dear?

OTHELLO

All's well, sweeting,
Come away to bed.——(to MONTANO) Sir, for your
hurts
Myself will be your surgeon. Lead him off.

MONTANO is led off

Iago, look with care about the town

And silence those whom this vile
brawl distracted.—
Come, Desdemona, 'tis the soldiers' life
To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO

IAGO

What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

CASSIO

Ay, past all surgery.

IAGO

Marry, heaven forbid!

Modern Text

But nobody's perfect, and even the best man
sometimes loses control and strikes out in rage.

Cassio was wrong to hurt Montano, who was
only trying to help him, but I'm sure the guy who
ran away must have offended Cassio in some
terrible way, and Cassio couldn't let it pass.

OTHELLO

Iago, I know you're fond of Cassio and are
downplaying this for his benefit. Cassio, I love
you, but you're never again going to be one of
my officers.—

DESDEMONA enters with attendants.

Look, you've woken my wife! I'll make you an
example for the others to learn from.

DESDEMONA

What's the matter, dear?

OTHELLO

Everything's fine, now, sweetheart. Go back to
bed.— (to MONTANO) I'll see to it personally
that your wounds are treated. Lead him off.

MONTANO is carried off.

Iago, go and calm down the townspeople.—
Come with me, Desdemona. Unfortunately, it's
part of the soldier's life to be woken up by
trouble.

Everyone except CASSIO and IAGO exits.

IAGO

Are you hurt, lieutenant?

CASSIO

Yes, but no doctor can help me.

IAGO

Oh I hope that's not true!

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 12

CASSIO

Reputation, reputation, reputation! Oh, I have lost my
reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself,
and what remains is bestial. My reputation, Iago, my
reputation!

IAGO

As I am an honest man, I thought you had received
some bodily wound. There is more sense in that than
in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false
imposition, oft got without merit and lost without
deserving. You have lost no reputation at all unless
you repute yourself such a loser. What, man, there
are ways to recover the general again. You are but
now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy
than in malice, even so as one would beat his
offenseless dog to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him again and he’s yours.

CASSIO
I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? And speak parrot? And squabble? Swagger? Swear? And discourse fustian with one’s own shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

IAGO
What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

CASSIO
I don’t know.

IAGO
Is ’t possible?

CASSIO
I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly. A quarrel, but nothing wherefore. Oh, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, pleasance revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

IAGO
What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

CASSIO
I don’t know.

IAGO
Is that possible?

CASSIO
I remember a jumble of impressions, but nothing distinctly. I remember a fight, but not why we were fighting. Oh God, why do men drink and lose their minds? Why do we party until we’re like animals?

Act 2, Scene 3, Page 13

IAGO
Why, but you are now well enough. How came you thus recovered?

CASSIO
It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath. One unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

IAGO
Come, you are too severe a moraler. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen. But since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

CASSIO
I will ask him for my place again, he shall tell me I am a drunkard. Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Oh, strange! Every inordinate cup is unblessed and the ingredient is a devil.

IAGO
You seem all right now. How did you get better?

CASSIO
My drunkenness went away when anger took over. One weakness led to another, to make me hate myself.

IAGO
Come on, you’re being too hard on yourself. I wish none of this had happened, given the situation here, and your rank. But since this has happened, you should fix it for your own good.

CASSIO
I’ll ask him for my position back again, and he’ll tell me I’m a drunk. Even if I had a whole bunch of mouths, I wouldn’t be able to answer that. I was a reasonable man, then I became a fool, and finally a beast! Oh, how strange! Every glass of liquor is damned, and the devil’s the main ingredient!

IAGO
Come on now, wine is good for you, if you know how to use it. Don’t say anything bad about wine anymore. Lieutenant, I think you know I’m your friend.

CASSIO
I know that, sir. Imagine, me, a drunk!
### Original Text

**IAGO**

You or any man living may be drunk at a time, man. I tell you what you shall do. Our general’s wife is now the general. I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces. Confess yourself freely to her, importune her help to put you in your place again. She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter, and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

### Modern Text

**IAGO**

Any man can get drunk sometime. I'll tell you what to do. Othello's wife has a lot of influence now. He's completely devoted to her. Go open your heart to her. Ask her to help you get back your position. She is so generous, kind, and ready to help that she thinks it's wrong not to do everything she can, even more than she is asked to do. Ask her to help you heal the rift between her husband and you. I'd bet my lucky stars your problem will be forgotten, and your relationship will be stronger than ever.

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**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 14**

**CASSIO**

240 You advise me well.

**IAGO**

I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

**CASSIO**

I think it freely, and betimes in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me.

**IAGO**

You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant, I must to the watch.

**CASSIO**

Good night, honest Iago.

**Exit**

---

**IAGO**

245 And what's he then that says I play the villain? When this advice is free I give and honest, Probable to thinking and indeed the course To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy Th' inclining Desdemona to subdue In any honest suit. She's framed as fruitful As the free elements. And then for her To win the Moor, were to renounce his baptism, All seals and symbols of redeemed sin, His soul is so enpered to her love,

250 That she may make, unmake, do what she list, Even as her appetite shall play the god With his weak function. How am I then a villain To counsel Cassio to this parallel course, Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!

255 When devils will the blackest sins put on They do suggest at first with heavenly shows As I do now. For Whiles this honest fool Piles Desdemona to repair his fortune And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
I'll pour this pestilence into his ear:

tries to help Cassio, the more she'll shake Othello's confidence in her. And that's how I'll turn her good intentions into a big trap to snag them all.

That she repeals him for her body's lust.
And by how much she strives to do him good
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
So will I turn her virtue into pitch
And out of her own goodness make the net
That shall enmesh them all.

Enter RODERIGO

How now, Roderigo!

RODERIGO
I do follow here in the chase not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent, I have been tonight exceedingly well cudgeled, and I think the issue will be I shall have so much experience for my pains. And so, with no money at all and a little more wit, return again to Venice.

IAGO
How poor are they that have not patience!
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft,
And wit depends on dilatory time.
Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee.
And thou, by that small hurt, hath cashiered Cassio.
Though other things grow fair against the sun,
Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.
Content thyself awhile. In troth, 'tis morning.
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.
Retire thee, go where thou art billeted.
Away, I say, thou shalt know more hereafter.
Nay, get thee gone.

Exit RODERIGO

Now two things still need to be done. My wife has to help make Desdemona take Cassio's side. I'll put her on that. And I need to take the Moor aside right at the moment when Cassio's talking to Desdemona, so he'll see them together. Yes, that's the way I'll do it. Let's not ruin a brilliant plan by being slow to act.

Two things are to be done:
My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress.
I'll set her on.
Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find

Soliciting his wife. Ay, that's the way.
Dull not device by coldness and delay.

Exit RODERIGO

Act 3, Scene 1

Enter CASSIO and MUSICIANS

CASSIO
Masters, play here, I will content your pains.
Something that's brief, and bid "Good morrow,

CASSIO
Musicians, start playing here. I'll pay you for your trouble. Play something short that will put the
**Original Text**

*They play. Enter CLOWN*

CLOWN

Why masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i’ th’ nose thus?

MUSICIAN

How, sir? How?

CLOWN

Are these, I pray you, wind instruments?

MUSICIAN

Ay, marry, are they, sir.

CLOWN

Oh, thereby hangs a tail.

MUSICIAN

Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

CLOWN

Marry sir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here’s money for you, and the general so likes your music that he desires you, for love’s sake, to make no more noise with it.

MUSICIAN

Well, sir, we will not.

---

**Modern Text**

*The MUSICIANS play. The CLOWN enters.*

CLOWN

Your instruments all have a nasal twang. Have they been to Naples?

MUSICIAN

Excuse me?

CLOWN

Are these wind instruments?

MUSICIAN

Yes, they are.

CLOWN

Oh, there’s the problem.

MUSICIAN

What’s the problem?

CLOWN

Anyone full of hot air is a problem. But here’s some money. The general likes your music a lot, but he asks you to stop playing now.

MUSICIAN

Well, we’ll stop, then.

---

**Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2**

CLOWN

If you have any music that may not be heard, to ‘t again. But, as they say, to hear music the general does not greatly care.

MUSICIAN

We have none such, sir.

CLOWN

Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I’ll away. Go, vanish into air, away!

*Exeunt MUSICIANS*

---

CASSIO

Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

CLOWN

No, I hear not your honest friend, I hear you.

CASSIO

Prithee, keep up thy quillets. There’s a poor piece of gold for thee. If the gentlewoman that attends the general’s wife be stirring, tell her there’s one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech. Wilt thou do this?

CLOWN

She is stirring, sir. If she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

*Exit CLOWN*

Enter IAGO

---

CASSIO

Do you hear, my friend?

CLOWN

No, I don’t hear your friend. I hear you.

CASSIO

Please don’t play games. (CASSIO gives CLOWN money). There’s a bit of gold for you. When the woman taking care of the general’s wife wakes up, could you please tell her that Cassio asks to speak with her?

CLOWN

She’s awake, sir. If she feels like coming over here, I’ll give her your message.

*Exit CLOWN*

**Good to see you, Iago.**
Original Text

IAGO
You have not been abed, then?

CASSIO
Why, no. The day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in to your wife. My suit to her
Is that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

IAGO
You didn’t go to sleep, then?

CASSIO
No. When I left you it was already morning. I’ve been bold, Iago. I’ve asked to talk to your wife. I’m going to ask her to let me talk to Desdemona.

Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3

IAGO
I’ll send her to you presently,
And I’ll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free.

CASSIO
I humbly thank you for’t.

Exit IAGO

Iago exits.

I never knew a Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter EMILIA

EMILIA
Good morrow, good Lieutenant. I am sorry
For your displeasure, but all will sure be well.
The general and his wife are talking of it,
And she speaks for you stoutly. The Moor replies
That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus
And great affinity, and that in wholesome wisdom
He might not but refuse you. But he protests he loves you
And needs no other suitor but his likings
To take the safest occasion by the front
To bring you in again.

CASSIO
Yet I beseech you,
If you think fit, or that it may be done,
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

EMILIA
Pray you come in.
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

CASSIO
I am much bound to you.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 3, Scene 2

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and GENTLEMEN

OTHELLO
These letters give, Iago, to the pilot,

IAGO
I’ll send her out to you now. I’ll think of a plan to get the Moor out of the way, so you can speak more openly.

CASSIO
I humbly thank you.

EMILIA
Good morning, lieutenant. I’m sorry about what happened, but I’m sure everything will turn out all right. The general and his wife are talking about it now, and she’s defending you strongly. The Moor says the man you hurt is very important in Cyprus, and that under the circumstances he has no choice but to refuse to reinstate you. But he says he still loves and respects you, and based on his own feelings alone he’s looking for an opportunity to safely take you back.

CASSIO
Please find a way to give me some time alone with Desdemona, if you think that’s all right.

EMILIA
Please come in. I’ll take you to a place where you can speak freely.

CASSIO
Thank you very much.

Exeunt
Original Text

And by him do my duties to the senate.
That done, I will be walking on the works,
Repair there to me.

IAGO
5 Well, my good lord, I'll do 't.

OTHELLO
This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

GENTLEMEN
We'll wait upon your lordship.

Modern Text

brought me here, and ask him to pay my respects
to the Senate of Venice. Now that's done, I'm
going to walk on the fortification walls. Look for
me there when you come back.

IAGO
I will, my lord.

OTHELLO
Shall we go see this fortification, men?

GENTLEMEN
We're at your service, my lord.

Exeunt

They all exit.

Act 3, Scene 3

Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA

DESDEMONA
Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do
All my abilities in thy behalf.

EMILIA
Good madam, do. I warrant it grieves my husband
As if the cause were his.

DESDEMONA
5 Oh, that's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,
But I will have my lord and you again
As friendly as you were.

CASSIO
Bounteous madam,
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
He's never anything but your true servant.

DESDEMONA
10 I know 't, I thank you. You do love my lord.
You have known him long, and be you well assured
He shall in strangeness stand no farther off
Than in a polite distance.

CASSIO
Ay, but, lady,
That policy may either last so long,
15 Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
Or breed itself so out of circumstances,
That, I being absent and my place supplied,
My general will forget my love and service.

DESDEMONA
Do not doubt that. Before Emilia here
20 I give thee warrant of thy place. Assure thee,
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
To the last article. My lord shall never rest,
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience.

DESDEMONA, CASSIO and EMILIA enter.

DESDEMONA
I'll do everything I can for you, Cassio.

EMILIA
Please do, madam. My husband's so upset about
Cassio's problem you'd think it was his own.

DESDEMONA
Your husband's such a good man. Don't worry,
Cassio. I'm sure you and my husband will be as
friendly as you were before.

CASSIO
My dear beautiful lady, whatever happens to
Michael Cassio, he'll always be your humble
servant.

DESDEMONA
I know that. Thank you. You're my husband's
friend and you've known him a long time. I assure
you the only reason he's keeping away from you
now is political.

CASSIO
Yes, my lady. But those political considerations
might last such a long time that the general will
forget my love and service, especially if I'm gone
and someone else has my job.

DESDEMONA
That'll never happen. Emilia here will be my
witness: I promise you that you'll get your position
back again. And if I promise to help someone, I
do everything I can. My husband will never get a
moment's rest, I'll keep him up at night talking
about you until he runs out of patience. He will think that his bed has become
Original Text

25 I’ll intermingle everything he does
With Cassio’s suit. Therefore be merry, Cassio,
For thy solicitor shall rather die
Than give thy cause away.

Enter OTHELLO and IAGO

EMILIA
Madam, here comes my lord.

CASSIO
Madam, I’ll take my leave.

DESDEMONA
Why, stay and hear me speak.

CASSIO
Madam, not now. I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.

DESDEMONA
Well, do your discretion.

Exit CASSIO

IAGO
Ha! I like not that.

OTHELLO
What dost thou say?

IAGO
Nothing, my lord, or if—I know not what.

OTHELLO
Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

IAGO
Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it
That he would steal away so guilty-like
Seeing you coming.

OTHELLO
I do believe ’twas he.

Modern Text

a conference table for discussing your problem—he won’t be able to get away from it. I’ll bring up your name at every moment. So cheer up. I’m your advocate, and I’d rather die than give up on you.

EMILIA
Madam, here comes your husband.

CASSIO
Madam, I’d better leave now.

DESDEMONA
Why not stay and hear me talk to him?

CASSIO
No, madam. I’m very uncomfortable, and that won’t help my case.

DESDEMONA
Well, do whatever you think best.

CASSIO exits.

IAGO
Hey! I don’t like that.

OTHELLO
What did you say?

IAGO
Nothing, my lord, or if I did—I don’t know what.

OTHELLO
Wasn’t that Cassio leaving my wife?

IAGO
Cassio, my lord? No, I don’t think so. He wouldn’t sneak away looking so guilty when he saw you coming.

OTHELLO
I really think it was him.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 3

DESDEMONA
How now, my lord?
I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

OTHELLO
Who is ’t you mean?

DESDEMONA
Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace or power to move you
His present reconciliation take.
For if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face.

OTHELLO
I prithee, call him back.

DESDEMONA
What’s this, my lord? I was talking to a petitioner here just now, someone who’s suffering from your anger.

OTHELLO
Who do you mean?

DESDEMONA
Your lieutenant, Cassio. Oh, if I’ve got any influence over you at all, please patch things up with him. In my judgment, this man truly loves you, and his mistake was innocent rather than wicked. Please call him and tell him to come back here.

OTHELLO
Was that him just now?
DESDEMONA
Ay, sooth, so humbled
That he hath left part of his grief with me
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

OTHELLO
Not now, sweet Desdemona. Some other time.

DESDEMONA
But shall 't be shortly?

OTHELLO
The sooner, sweet, for you.

DESDEMONA
Shall 't be tonight at supper?

OTHELLO
No, not tonight.

DESDEMONA
Tomorrow dinner, then?

OTHELLO
I shall not dine at home,
I meet the captains at the citadel.

DESDEMONA
Why, then, tomorrow night, or Tuesday morn.
On Tuesday noon, or night, or Wednesday morn.
I prithee name the time, but let it not
Exceed three days. In faith, he's penitent,
And yet his trespass, in our common reason
(Save that, they say, the wars must make example
Out of her best) is not, almost, a fault
'T incur a private check. When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul
What you would ask me that I should deny
Or stand so mamm'ring on. What? Michael Cassio
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you disparisingly,
Hath ta'en your part, to have so much to do
To bring him in? Trust me, I could do much—

OTHELLO
Prithee, no more. Let him come when he will,
I will deny thee nothing.

DESDEMONA
Why, this is not a boon,
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit
To your own person. Nay, when I have a suit
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight
And fearful to be granted.

OTHELLO
I will deny thee nothing!

DESDEMONA
Well then, tomorrow night, or Tuesday morning.
Or Tuesday noon or at night, or Wednesday morning. Please just name a time, but don’t wait
more than three days. He’s very sorry. His mistake was hardly worth punishing him for in the
first place—though in wartime it is sometimes
necessary to make examples out of even the best
soldiers. So when should he come? Tell me,
Othello. I can’t imagine you asking me for
something and me telling you no or standing
there muttering. Michael Cassio came with you
when you were trying to win my love. Sometimes
I’d criticize you to him, and he’d defend you. And
now I have to make this big fuss about bringing
him back? I swear, I could do so much—

OTHELLO
Please, no more. He can come whenever he
wants. I won’t refuse you anything.

DESDEMONA
Don’t act like you’re doing me a favor! This is like
if I asked you to wear your gloves when it’s cold
outside, or eat nutritious food, or do something
that’s good for you. If I ever have to ask you for
something that will put your luck to the test, it’ll be
something difficult and terrible.

OTHELLO
I won’t deny you anything! But in return, please,
### Original Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>Whereon I do beseech thee, grant me this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To leave me but a little to myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DESDEMONA</td>
<td>Shall I deny you? No. Farewell, my lord.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
<td>Farewell, my Desdemona. I’ll come to thee straight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Modern Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85</td>
<td>do one thing for me: leave me alone for a little while.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
<td>Goodbye, my Desdemona. I’ll come see you right away.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Act 3, Scene 3, Page 5

**DESDEMONA**  
Emilia, come.—Be as your fancies teach you.  
Whate’er you be, I am obedient.  

*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA*

**OTHELLO**  
Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul  
But I do love thee! And when I love thee not  
Chaos is come again.

**IAGO**  
My noble lord—

**OTHELLO**  
What dost thou say, Iago?

**IAGO**  
Did Michael Cassio, when you wooed my lady,  
Know of your love?

**OTHELLO**  
He did, from first to last.  
Why dost thou ask?

**IAGO**  
But for a satisfaction of my thought,  
No further harm.

**OTHELLO**  
Why of thy thought, Iago?

**IAGO**  
I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

**OTHELLO**  
Oh, yes, and went between us very oft.

**IAGO**  
Indeed?

**OTHELLO**  
Indeed? Ay, indeed! Discern’st thou aught in that?  
Is he not honest?

**IAGO**  
Honest, my lord?

---

### Act 3, Scene 3, Page 6

**OTHELLO**
Original Text

Honest, ay, honest.

IAGO
My lord, for aught I know.

OTHELLO
What dost thou think?

IAGO
Think, my lord?

OTHELLO
Think, my lord? Alas, thou echo’st me As if there were some monster in thy thought Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something. I heard thee say even now thou lik’st not that

When Cassio left my wife. What didst not like? And when I told thee he was of my counsel Of my whole course of wooing, thou cried’st “Indeed?” And didst contract and purse thy brow together As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me Show me thy thought.

IAGO
My lord, you know I love you.

OTHELLO
I think thou dost. And for I know thou ’rt full of love and honesty And weigh’st thy words before thou giv’st them breath, Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more. For such things in a false disloyal knave Are tricks of custom, but in a man that’s just They are close dilations, working from the heart, That passion cannot rule.

IAGO
For Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn, I think, that he is honest.

OTHELLO
I think so too.

IAGO
Men should be what they seem, Or those that be not, would they might seem none!

OTHELLO
Certain, men should be what they seem.

IAGO
Why then I think Cassio’s an honest man.

OTHELLO
Nay, yet there’s more in this. I prithee speak to me as to thy thinkings,

Modern Text

Honest, yes, honest.

IAGO
As far as I know, sir.

OTHELLO
What are you thinking?

IAGO
Thinking, my lord?

OTHELLO
“Thinking, my lord?” My God, you keep repeating everything I say as if you were thinking something too horrible to say out loud. You’re thinking something. Just a minute ago I heard you say you didn’t like it when Cassio left my wife. What didn’t you like? And when I told you he was involved the whole time I was trying to get Desdemona, you were like, “Oh, really?” And then you frowned and wrinkled up your forehead as if you were imagining something horrible. If you’re my friend, tell me what you’re thinking.

IAGO
My lord, you know I’m your friend.

OTHELLO
I think you are. And I know you’re full of love and honesty, and you think carefully before you speak. That’s why these pauses of yours frighten me. If some fool were withholding things from me, I wouldn’t think twice about it. If some lying, cheating villain acted like that, it would just be a trick. But when an honest man acts like that, you know he’s wrestling with bad thoughts and can’t help it.

IAGO
As for Michael Cassio, I think it would be safe for me to swear that he’s honest.

OTHELLO
I think so too.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 7

IAGO
Men should be what they seem, Or those that be not, would they might seem none!

OTHELLO
Absolutely, people should be what they appear to be.

IAGO
In that case, I think Cassio’s an honest man.

OTHELLO
No, I think there’s more to this than you’re letting on. Please tell me what you’re thinking—even
As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts
The worst of words.

IAGO
Good my lord, pardon me,
Though I am bound to every act of duty
140 I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and false,
As where’s that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? Who has that breast so pure
Wherein uncleanly apprehensions

IAGO
Keep leets and law-days and in sessions sit
With meditations lawful?

OTHELLO
Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but thinkst him wronged and mak’st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

IAGO
I do beseech you,
Though I perchance am vicious in my guess,
As, I confess, it is my nature’s plague
To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not, that your wisdom,
From one that so imperfectly conceits,
Would take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.
It were not for your quiet nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, and wisdom
To let you know my thoughts.

IAGO
Please don’t make me do that, sir. I have to obey all your orders, but surely I’m not obligated to reveal my deepest thoughts—even slaves aren’t expected to do that. You want me to say what I’m thinking? What if my thoughts are disgusting and wrong? Even good people think horrible things sometimes. Who is so pure that they never think a bad thought?

OTHELLO
You’re not being a good friend, Iago, if you even think your friend has been wronged and you don’t tell him about it.

IAGO
Please don’t ask me to tell you. I might be completely wrong. I have a bad tendency to be suspicious of people and to look too closely into what they’re doing. Often I imagine crimes that aren’t really there. You would be wise to ignore my weak guesses and imaginary suspicions, and don’t worry yourself about the meaningless things I’ve noticed. For me to tell you my thoughts would only destroy your peace of mind, and it wouldn’t be wise, honest, or responsible for me to tell them.

OTHELLO
What are you talking about?

IAGO
A good reputation is the most valuable thing we have—men and women alike. If you steal my money, you’re just stealing trash. It’s something, it’s nothing: it’s yours, it’s mine, and it’ll belong to thousands more. But if you steal my reputation, you’re robbing me of something that doesn’t make you richer, but makes me much poorer.

OTHELLO
I’m going to find out what you’re thinking.

IAGO
You can’t find that out, even if you held my heart in your hand you couldn’t make me tell you. And as long my heart’s inside my body, you never will.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Ha!**
**IAGO**  
170 Oh, beware, my lord, of jealousy!  
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss  
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger,  
But, oh, what damned minutes tells he o'er  
Who dotes, yet doubts—suspects, yet soundly loves! |
| **What?**
**IAGO**  
Beware of jealousy, my lord! It's a green-eyed monster that makes fun of the victims it devours.  
The man who knows his wife is cheating on him is happy, because at least he isn’t friends with the man she’s sleeping with. But think of the unhappiness of a man who worships his wife, yet doubts her faithfulness. He suspects her, but still loves her. |
| **Oh, misery!**
**IAGO**  
Poor and content is rich, and rich enough,  
But riches fineless is as poor as winter  
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.  
Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend  
From jealousy! |
| **Oh, misery!**
**IAGO**  
The person who’s poor and contented is rich enough. But infinite riches are nothing to someone who’s always afraid he’ll be poor. God, help us not be jealous! |

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 9**

**OTHELLO**  
*Why, why is this?*
Think’st thou I’d make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon  
With fresh suspicions? No! To be once in doubt  
Is to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat  
When I shall turn the business of my soul  
To such exsufficate and blowed surmises,  
Matching thy inference. ‘Tis not to make me jealous  
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,  
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances.  
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.  
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw  
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt,  
For she had eyes and chose me. No, Iago,  
I’ll see before I doubt, when I doubt, prove,  
And on the proof there is no more but this:  
Away at once with love or jealousy!  

**IAGO**  
I am glad of this, for now I shall have reason  
To show the love and duty that I bear you  
With franker spirit. Therefore, as I am bound,  
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.  
Look to your wife, observe her well with Cassio.  
Wear your eyes thus, not jealous nor secure.  
I would not have your free and noble nature  
Out of self-bounty be abused. Look to ‘t.  
I know our country disposition well.  
In Venice they do let God see the pranks  
They dare not show their husbands. Their best conscience  
Is not to leave ‘t undone, but keep’t unknown.  

**OTHELLO**  
Why are you telling me this? Do you think I would live a life of jealousy, tormented by new suspicions every hour? No. If there’s any doubt, there is no doubt. I might as well be a goat if I ever let myself become obsessed with the kind of suspicions you’re implying. If you say my wife is beautiful, eats well, loves good company, speaks freely, sings, plays music, and dances well, you’re not making me jealous. When a woman is virtuous, talents like these just make her better. And I’m not going to start feeling inferior. She had her eyes wide open when she chose me. No, Iago, I’ll have to see some real evidence before I start suspecting her of anything bad, and when I suspect her, I’ll look for proof, and if there’s proof, that’s when I’ll let go of my love and my jealousy.  

**IAGO**  
I’m glad to hear you say that. Now I can show you my devotion and my duty with more honesty. So please listen to me. I’m not talking about proof yet. Watch your wife. Watch how she is with Cassio. Just watch—don’t be either completely suspicious or completely trustful. I wouldn’t want to see you taken advantage of because you’re such an open and trusting guy. Watch out! I know the people of Venice well. They let God see things they wouldn’t show their husbands. They don’t avoid doing things that are wrong, they just try not to get caught.  

**OTHELLO**
Act 3, Scene 3, Page 10

IAGO
She did deceive her father, marrying you, And when she seemed to shake and fear your looks, She loved them most.

OTHELLO
And so she did.

IAGO
Why, go to then.
She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,
To see her father’s eyes up close as oak,
He thought ’twas witchcraft. But I am much to blame.
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon
For too much loving you.

OTHELLO
I am bound to thee forever.

IAGO
Trust me, I fear it has.
I hope you will consider what is spoke
Comes from my love. But I do see you’re moved.
I am to pray you not to strain my speech
To grosser issues nor to larger reach
Than to suspicion.

OTHELLO
I will not.

IAGO
Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
Which my thoughts aimed not at. Cassio’s my worthy friend—
My lord, I see you’re moved.

OTHELLO
No, not much moved.
I do not think but Desdemona’s honest.

IAGO
Long live she so. And long live you to think so.

OTHELLO
And yet how nature, erring from itself—

IAGO
Ay, there’s the point. As, to be bold with you,
Original Text

235 Not to affect many proposèd matches
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
Whereto we see in all things nature tends—
Foh! One may smell in such a will most rank,
Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural.
240 But—pardon me—I do not in position
Distinctly speak of her, though I may fear
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And happily repent.

OTHELLO
Farewell, farewell.
245 If more thou dost perceive, let me know more.
Set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, Iago.

IAGO
My lord, I take my leave.

OTHELLO
(aside) Why did I marry? This honest creature
doubtless
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

IAGO
(returns) My lord, I would I might entreat your honor
To scan this thing no farther. Leave it to time.
Although 'tis fit
That Cassio have his place,
For sure, he fills it up with great ability,
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
You shall by that perceive him and his means.
Note if your lady strain his entertainment

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 12

With any strong or vehement importunity.
Much will be seen in that. In the meantime,
Let me be thought too busy in my fears—
260 As worthy cause I have to fear I am—
And hold her free, I do beseech your honor.

OTHELLO
Fear not my government.

IAGO
I once more take my leave.

Exit

IAGO exits.

Original Text  Modern Text

235 Not to affect many proposed matches
frank with you, she veered away from her own
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,
nature in turning down all those young men from
Whereto we see in all things nature tends—
her own country, with her skin color, with her
Foh! One may smell in such a will most rank,
status—everything her nature would have drawn
Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural.
her to—Ugh! You can almost smell the dark and
240 But—I'm sorry—I didn't mean to refer to her
ugly desires inside her, the unnatural thoughts—
specifically just now. I only worry that she might
But—I'm sorry—I didn't mean to refer to her
snap back to her natural taste in men one day,
specifically just now. I only worry that she might
and compare you unfavorably to other Italians.

OTHELLO
Goodbye, goodbye. If you see anything else, let
me know. Tell your wife to watch her. Leave me
alone now, Iago.

IAGO
My lord, I'll say goodbye now. (beginning to exit)

OTHELLO
(to himself) Why did I ever get married? I'm sure
this good and honest man sees and knows more,
much more, than he's telling me.

IAGO
(returning) My lord, please don't think about
this any more. Time will tell. It's right for Cassio to
have his lieutenancy back—he's very talented.
But keep him away for a while, and you'll see
how he goes about getting it back. Notice
whether your wife insists on your
giving it back to him. That will tell you a lot. But in
the meantime, just assume that I'm paranoid—as
I'm pretty sure I am—and keep thinking she's
innocent, please.

OTHELLO
Don't worry about how I handle it.

IAGO
I'll say goodbye once more.

OTHELLO
This Iago is extremely honest and good, and he
knows a lot about human behavior. If it turns out
that she really is running around on me, I'll send
her away, even though it'll break my heart.
Maybe because I'm black, and I don't have nice
manners like courtiers do, or because I'm getting
old—but that's not much—She's gone, and I've
been cheated on. I have no choice but to hate
her. Oh what a curse marriage is! We think our
beautiful wives belong to us, but their desires are
free! I'd rather be a toad in a moldy basement
Original Text

That we can call these delicate creatures ours
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad
And live upon the vapor of a dungeon
Than keep a corner in the thing I love
For others' uses. Yet 'tis the plague to great ones,
Prerogatived are they less than the base.

'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death.
Even then this forkèd plague is fated to us
When we do quicken. Look where she comes.

Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA

If she be false, heaven mocked itself.
I'll not believe 't.

Modern Text

than to have only a part of someone I love,
sharing the rest of her with others. This is the
plague of important men—our wives betray us
more than those of poor men. It's our destiny,
like death. We are destined to be betrayed when
we are born. Oh, here she comes.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 13

DESDEMONA
How now, my dear Othello?

Your dinner, and the generous islanders
By you invited, do attend your presence.

OTHELLO
I am to blame.

DESDEMONA
Why do you speak so faintly?
Are you not well?

OTHELLO
I have a pain upon my forehead, here.

DESDEMONA
Why that's with watching, 'twill away again.
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well. (pulls out a handkerchief)

OTHELLO
Your napkin is too little,

DESDEMONA
Her handkerchief drops

EMILIA
(picks up the handkerchief)
I am glad I have found this napkin,

This was her first remembrance from the Moor.

My wayward husband hath a hundred times

Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA

EMILIA
(picking up the handkerchief) I'm glad I found this
handkerchief. It's the first keepsake the Moor
gave her. My stubborn husband has asked me to
steal it.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 14

Wooed me to steal it, but she so loves the token
(For he conjured her she should ever keep it)
That she reserves it evermore about her

To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out
And give 't lago. What he will do with it

EMILIA
(picking up the handkerchief) I'm glad I found this
handkerchief. It's the first keepsake the Moor
gave her. My stubborn husband has asked me to
steal it.

But she loves it so much (since
Othello told her she should always keep it with
her) that she always keeps it near her to kiss it
to lago. Heaven knows what he's
going to do with it. I only try to satisfy his whims.
Original Text

I nothing but to please his fantasy.

Enter IAGO

IAGO
How now! What do you here alone?

EMILIA
Do not you chide. I have a thing for you.

IAGO
A thing for me? It is a common thing—

EMILIA
Ha?

IAGO
To have a foolish wife.

EMILIA
Oh, is that all? What will you give me now For the same handkerchief?

IAGO
What handkerchief?

EMILIA
What handkerchief? Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona, That which so often you did bid me steal.

IAGO
Hast stolen it from her?

EMILIA
No, but she let it drop by negligence And, to th' advantage, I being here, took 't up. Look, here it is.

IAGO
A good wench, give it me.

EMILIA
What will you do with 't, that you have been so earnest To have me filch it?

IAGO
Why, what is that to you?

EMILIA
If it be not for some purpose of import, Give 't me again. Poor lady, she'll run mad When she shall lack it.

IAGO
Be not acknown on 't, I have use for it. Go, leave me.

Exit EMILIA

I will in Cassio’s lodging lose this napkin And let him find it. Trifles light as air Are to the jealous confirmations strong

Modern Text

IAGO enters.

IAGO
What’s going on? What are you doing here alone?

EMILIA
Don’t snap at me. I’ve got something for you.

IAGO
You’ve got something for me? It’s a common thing—

EMILIA
What?

IAGO
—to have a stupid wife.

EMILIA
Oh, is that so? And what would you give me for the handkerchief?

IAGO
What handkerchief?

EMILIA
What handkerchief? The one the Moor gave to Desdemona, which you asked me to steal so many times.

IAGO
You stole it from her?

EMILIA
No, actually. She dropped it carelessly, and, seizing the opportunity, since I was here, I picked it up. Look, here it is.

IAGO
Good girl, give it to me.

EMILIA
And what are you going to do with it? Why did you want it so much that you begged me to steal it?

IAGO
What’s it to you?

EMILIA
If you don’t need it for some important reason, then give it back to me. Poor lady, she’ll go crazy when she sees it’s missing.

IAGO
Don’t admit to knowing anything about it. I need it. Now go, leave me.

EMILIA exits.

I’ll leave this handkerchief at Cassio’s house and let him find it. To a jealous man, a meaningless little thing like this looks like absolute proof. This
Original Text

As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
The Moor already changes with my poison.
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But with a little act upon the blood
Burn like the mines of sulfur.

Enter OTHELLO

OTHELLO

I did say so.

Look, where he comes. Not poppy nor mandragora
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou owedst yesterday.

OTHELLO

Ha! Ha! False to me?

IAGO

Why, how now, general? No more of that.

IAGO

Here he comes. No drugs or sleeping pills will ever give you the restful sleep that you had last night.

OTHELLO

Argh! She’s cheating on me?

IAGO

Oh, general, please, no more of that!

OTHELLO

What sense had I in her stol'n hours of lust?
I saw 't not, thought it not, it harmed not me.
I slept the next night well, fed well, was free and merry.
I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.
He that is robbed, not wanting what is stol'n,
Let him not know't, and he's not robbed at all.

IAGO

I am sorry to hear this.

OTHELLO

I had been happy if the general camp,
Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
So I had nothing known. Oh, now forever
Farewell the tranquil mind! Farewell content!
Farewell the plumed troops and the big wars

IAGO

Is 't possible, my lord?

OTHELLO

Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,
Original Text

370 Be sure of it. Give me the ocular proof
Or by the worth of mine eternal soul
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog
Than answer my waked wrath!

Modern Text

wife's a whore! Be sure of it. Get me proof I can see. If you can't, trust me, you won't want to feel my rage!

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 17

IAGO
Is 't come to this?

OTHELLO
Make me to see 't, or at the least so prove it
That the probation bear no hinge nor loop
To hang a doubt on, or woe upon thy life!

IAGO
My noble lord—

OTHELLO
If thou dost slander her and torture me,
Never pray more. Abandon all remorse.
On horror's head horrors accumulate,
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed,
For nothing canst thou to damnation add
Greater than that.

IAGO
Oh, grace! Oh, heaven forgive me!
Are you a man? Have you a soul or sense?
God buy you, take mine office. O wretched fool
That lov'st to make thine honesty a vice!

IAGO
I should be wise, for honesty's a fool
And loses that it works for.

OTHELLO
By the world,
I think my wife be honest and think she is not.
I think that thou art just and think thou art not.
I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black
As mine own face. If there be cords or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied!

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 18

IAGO
I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion.
I do repent me that I put it to you.

IAGO
I see you're all eaten up with emotion. I'm sorry I said anything. You want proof?
You would be satisfied?

**OTHELLO**

Would? Nay, and I will.

**IAGO**

And may, but how? How satisfied, my lord?

Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on, Behold her topped?

**OTHELLO**

Death and damnation! Oh!

**IAGO**

It were a tedious difficulty, I think, To bring them to that prospect. Damn them then, If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster

More than their own! What then? How then? What shall I say? Where’s satisfaction? It is impossible you should see this, Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys, As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross

As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say, If imputation and strong circumstances Which lead directly to the door of truth Will give you satisfaction, you may have ’t.

**OTHELLO**

Give me a living reason she’s disloyal.

**IAGO**

I do not like the office. But, sith I am entered in this cause so far, Pricked to ’t by foolish honesty and love, I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately And, being troubled with a raging tooth, I could not sleep. There are a kind of men So loose of soul that in their sleeps will mutter

Their affairs. One of this kind is Cassio. In sleep I heard him say “Sweet Desdemona, Let us be wary, let us hide our loves.”

And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand, Cry “O sweet creature!” and then kiss me hard, As if he plucked up kisses by the roots That grew upon my lips, lay his leg Over my thigh, and sigh, and kiss, and then

Cry “Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!”

**OTHELLO**

Oh, monstrous! Monstrous!

**IAGO**

Nay, this was but his dream.
OTHELLO
But this denoted a foregone conclusion.

IAGO
'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.
And this may help to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate thinly.

OTHELLO
I'll tear her all to pieces!

IAGO
Nay, yet be wise, yet we see nothing done,
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief
Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?

OTHELLO
I gave her such a one, 'twas my first gift.

IAGO
I know not that, but such a handkerchief—
I am sure it was your wife's—did I today
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

OTHELLO
If it be that—

IAGO
If it be that, or any that was hers,
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 20

OTHELLO
Oh, that the slave had forty thousand lives!
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.
Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago,
All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.
'Tis gone.
Arise, black vengeance, from the hollow hell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,
For 'tis of aspics' tongues!

IAGO
Yet be content.

OTHELLO
Oh, blood, blood, blood!

IAGO
Patience, I say. Your mind may change.

OTHELLO
Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er keeps retiring ebb but keeps due on
To the Propontic and the Hellespont,
Even so my bloody thoughts with violent pace

IAGO
Calm down—

OTHELLO
I want blood!

IAGO
Be patient, I'm telling you. You may change your
mind later.

OTHELLO
Never, Iago. My thoughts of revenge are flowing
through me like a violent river, never turning
back to love, only flowing toward full revenge
that'll swallow them up. I swear to God I'll get
revenge. (he kneels)
Original Text

Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love
Till that a capable and wide revenge
Swallow them up. Now, by yon marble heaven,

470 In the due reverence of a sacred vow
I here engage my words. (he kneels)

IAGO
Do not rise yet.
Witness, you ever-burning lights above,
You elements that clip us round about,
Witness that here Iago doth give up
The execution of his wit, hands, heart,
To wronged Othello's service. Let him command,
And to obey shall be in me remorse,
What bloody business ever.

Modern Text

IAGO
Don't get up yet. Let heaven be my witness—I'm putting my mind, my heart, and my hands in Othello's control. Let him command me, and I'll do whatever he asks, no matter how violent.

Act 3, Scene 3, Page 21

OTHELLO
I greet thy love
Not with vain thanks but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to 't.
Within these three days let me hear thee say
That Cassio's not alive.

IAGO
My friend is dead,
'Tis done at your request. But let her live.

OTHELLO
Damn her, lewd minx! Oh, damn her, damn her!
Come, go with me apart. I will withdraw
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

IAGO
I am your own for ever.

Exeunt

Act 3, Scene 4

Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and CLOWN

DESDEMONA
Do you know, sirrah, where Lieutenant Cassio lies?

CLOWN
I dare not say he lies anywhere.

DESDEMONA
Why, man?

CLOWN
He's a soldier, and for one to say a soldier lies, 'tis stabbing.

DESDEMONA
Go to. Where lodges he?

CLOWN
To tell you where he lodges is to tell you where I lie.

DESDEMONA, EMILIA and the CLOWN enter.

DESDEMONA
Excuse me, do you know which room Lieutenant Cassio lies in?

CLOWN
I wouldn't dare say he lies anywhere.

DESDEMONA
Why do you say that?

CLOWN
He's a soldier. If I accused a soldier of lying, he'd stab me.

DESDEMONA
Oh, come on. Where does he sleep?

CLOWN
Telling you where he's sleeping is like telling you
DESDEMONA
Can anything be made of this?

CLOWN
I know not where he lodges, and for me to devise a
lodging and say he lies here, or he lies there, were to
lie in mine own throat.

DESDEMONA
Can you inquire him out and be edified by report?

CLOWN
I will catechize the world for him, that is, make
questions, and by them answer.

DESDEMONA
Seek him, bid him come hither. Tell him I have
moved my lord on his behalf, and hope all will be
well.

CLOWN
To do this is within the compass of man’s wit, and
therefore I will attempt the doing it.

Exit

CLOWN exits.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2

DESDEMONA
Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?

EMILIA
I know not, madam.

DESDEMONA
Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse
Full of crusadoes. And but my noble Moor
Is true of mind and made of no such baseness
As jealous creatures are, it were enough
To put him to ill thinking.

EMILIA
Is he not jealous?

DESDEMONA
Who, he? I think the sun where he was born
Drew all such humors from him.

EMILIA
Look where he comes.

Enter OTHELLO

OTHELLO
Well, my good lady.—(aside) Oh, hardness to
dissemble—
How do you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA
Well, my good lord.

DESDEMONA
Where could I have lost that handkerchief,
Emilia?

EMILIA
I don’t know, madam.

DESDEMONA
Believe me, I’d rather have lost a purse full of
gold coins. This would be enough to make my
husband suspect me, if he wasn’t so free of
jealousy.

EMILIA
He’s not jealous?

DESDEMONA
Who, him? I think all tendencies to jealousy were
burned out of him by the sun of his native land.

EMILIA
Look, here he comes.

OTHELLO enters.

DESDEMONA
I won’t leave him alone until he gives Cassio his
job back.—How are you, my lord?

OTHELLO
I’m fine, my lady.—(to himself) Oh, it’s so hard to
pretend!—How are you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA
I’m fine, my lord.
Original Text

OTHELLO
Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady.

DESDEMONA
It hath felt no age nor known no sorrow.

OTHELLO
This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart.
Hot, hot, and moist. This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting, and prayer,

DESDEMONA
You may indeed say so,
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

OTHELLO
A liberal hand. The hearts of old gave hands,
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

DESDEMONA
I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

OTHELLO
What promise, chuck?

DESDEMONA
I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

OTHELLO
I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me.
Lend me thy handkerchief.

DESDEMONA
Here, my lord.

OTHELLO
That which I gave you.

DESDEMONA
I have it not about me.

OTHELLO
Not?

DESDEMONA
No, indeed, my lord.

OTHELLO
That’s a fault. That handkerchief
Did an Egyptian to my mother give,
She was a charmer and could almost read

Modern Text

OTHELLO
Give me your hand. Your hand’s moist, my lady.

DESDEMONA
It’s moist because it’s still young and inexperienced.

OTHELLO
It says you’re fertile, and you’ve got a giving heart. Hot, hot and moist. With a hand like this you need to

fast and pray to stave off temptations. Someone with a young sweating hand like this one is bound to act up sooner or later. It’s a nice hand, an open one.

DESDEMONA
You’re right to say that. This was the hand that gave you my heart.

OTHELLO
This hand gives itself away very freely. In the old days, people used to give their hearts to each other when they joined their hands in marriage. But these days, people give each other their hands without their hearts.

DESDEMONA
I don’t know about that. Now, don’t forget, you promised me something.

OTHELLO
What did I promise, my dear?

DESDEMONA
I sent for Cassio to come talk with you.

OTHELLO
I have a bad cold that’s bothering me. Lend me your handkerchief.

DESDEMONA
Here, my lord.

OTHELLO
No, the one I gave you.

DESDEMONA
I don’t have it with me.

OTHELLO
You don’t?

DESDEMONA
No, my lord.

OTHELLO
That’s not good. An Egyptian woman gave that handkerchief to my mother. She was a witch, and she could
The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept it
'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father
Entirely to her love, but if she lost it
Or made gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies. She, dying, gave it me
And bid me, when my fate would have me wived,
To give it her. I did so, and take heed on 't,
Make it a darling like your precious eye.
To lose 't or give 't away were such perdition
As nothing else could match.

DESDEMONA
Is 't possible?

OTHELLO
'Tis true. There's magic in the web of it.
A sibyl, that had numbered in the world
The sun to course two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sewed the work.
The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk,
And it was dyed in mummy which the skillful
Conserved of maidens' hearts.

DESDEMONA
Indeed? Is 't true?

OTHELLO
Most veritable, therefore look to 't well.

DESDEMONA
Then would to Heaven that I had never seen 't!

OTHELLO
Ha! Wherefore?

DESDEMONA
Why do you speak so startlingly and rash?

OTHELLO
Is 't lost? Is 't gone? Speak, is 't out o' th' way?

DESDEMONA
Bless us!

OTHELLO
What do you have to say for yourself?

DESDEMONA
It is not lost, but what and if it were?

OTHELLO
How!

DESDEMONA
I say, it is not lost.

OTHELLO
Fetch 't, let me see 't.

DESDEMONA
Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.
This is a trick to put me from my suit.

OTHELLO
I could, sir. But I don't want to now. This is just a
trick to take my mind off what I'm asking you for.

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 5

Almost read people's thoughts. She told my mother that as long as she kept it with her, my father would love and desire her. But if she lost it or gave it away, my father would start hating her and looking at other women. When she was dying she gave it to me and told me to give it to my wife when I got married. I did. So pay attention. Treat it as something precious. Losing it or giving it away would be an unspeakable loss, a loss like none other.
Pray you, let Cassio be received again.

OTHELLO

Fetch me the handkerchief—my mind misgives.

DESDEMONA

Come, come,
You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

OTHELLO

The handkerchief!

DESDEMONA

A man that all his time
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,
Shared dangers with you—

OTHELLO

The handkerchief!

DESDEMONA

He's counted on your friendship for his success.
He's shared dangers with you—

OTHELLO

The handkerchief!

DESDEMONA

Really, I don't think you're behaving very well.

OTHELLO

Damn it!

Exit OTHELLO exits.

EMILIA

Is not this man jealous?

DESDEMONA

I ne'er saw this before.
Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief,
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

EMILIA

'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food.
To eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
They belch us. Look you, Cassio and my husband!

Enter CASSIO and IAGO

IAGO

There is no other way. 'Tis she must do 't,
And, lo, the happiness! Go and importune her.

DESDEMONA

I never saw him like this before. There must be
some magic in that handkerchief. I'm miserable
that I lost it.

EMILIA

Men are all the same, but it takes longer than a
year or two to see how bad they are. They're like
stomachs and we're just the food. They eat us up
hungrily, and when they're full, they vomit us up.
Look, here comes Cassio and my husband.

IAGO and CASSIO enter.

IAGO

There's no other way. She's the one who's got to
do it. And what luck, she's here! Go ahead and
ask her.

DESDEMONA

Hello, Cassio. How are you?

CASSIO

Nothing, madam. Just my earlier request. I'm
begging you to help me get back on his good
side. I'm devoted to him with all my heart. I can't
wait any longer. If my wrongdoing was so serious
that I can't get back into his good graces either
by my past service, or my present situation, or
the promise of devoted service in the future, just
knowing that would help me. Then I could stop
wondering, and find some other career.
Original Text

But to know so must be my benefit.
So shall I clothe me in a forced content,

And shut myself up in some other course,

To fortune’s alms.

Modern Text

DESDEMONA

Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio,
My advocation is not now in tune.
My lord is not my lord, nor should I know him
Were he in favor as in humor altered.

So help me every spirit sanctified
As I have spoken for you all my best
And stood within the blank of his displeasure
For my free speech. You must awhile be patient.

What I can do I will, and more I will

Than for myself I dare. Let that suffice you.

IAGO

Is my lord angry?

EMILIA

He went hence but now,
And certainly in strange unquietness.

IAGO

Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon
When it hath blown his ranks into the air

And, like the devil, from his very arm
Puffed his own brother—and is he angry?
Something of moment then, I will go meet him.
There’s matter in ’t indeed, if he be angry.

DESDEMONA

I prithee, do so.

IAGO

Is Othello angry?

EMILIA

He just left, clearly upset about something.

IAGO

Can he even get angry? It’s hard to believe. I’ve
seen him stay calm when cannons were blowing
his soldiers to bits, even killing his own brother
without him batting an eyelid—is he really upset?

It must be about something important. I’ll go talk
to him. If he’s angry, there must be something
seriously wrong.

DESDEMONA

Please, do so.

Exit IAGO

There must be some political news from Venice,
or some dangerous plot here in Cyprus has
ruined his good mood. Men always get angry
about little things when they’re really worried
about bigger ones. That’s the way it goes. When
our finger hurts, it makes the rest of the body
hurt too. We shouldn’t expect men to be perfect,
or for them to be as polite as on the weddingday.

Oh, Emilia, I’m so inexperienced that I thought
he was being unkind, but actually I was judging
him harshly.

EMILIA

Pray heaven it be

EMILIA

I hope to God it’s something political, like you
State matters, as you think, and no conception
Nor no jealous toy concerning you.

DESDEMONA
Alas the day! I never gave him cause.

EMILIA
But jealous souls will not be answered so.
They are not ever jealous for the cause,
But jealous for they’re jealous. It is a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself.

DESDEMONA
Heaven keep the monster from Othello’s mind!

EMILIA
Lady, amen.

DESDEMONA
I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout.
If I do find him fit, I’ll move your suit
And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

CASSIO
I humbly thank your ladyship.

Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA

Enter BIANCA

BIANCA
Save you, friend Cassio!

Act 3, Scene 4, Page 9

CASSIO
What make you from home?
How is ’t with you, my most fair Bianca?
Indeed, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

BIANCA
And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.
What, keep a week away? Seven days and nights?
Eight score eight hours? And lovers’ absent hours
More tedious than the dial eightscore times!
Oh weary reckoning!

CASSIO
Pardon me, Bianca,
I have this while with leaden thoughts been pressed,
But I shall, in a more continuate time,
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
(giving her DESDEMONA’s handkerchief)
Take me this work out.

BIANCA
O Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend!
To the felt absence now I feel a cause.
Is ’t come to this? Well, well.

CASSIO
Go to, woman,
Throw your vile guesses in the devil’s teeth
think, and not jealousy involving you.

DESDEMONA
Oh no! I never gave him reason to be jealous.

EMILIA
But jealous people don’t think like that. They’re
never jealous for a reason; they’re just jealous.
It’s like a monster that just grows and grows, out
of nothing.

DESDEMONA
I hope God keeps that monster from growing in
Othello’s mind!

EMILIA
Amen to that, lady.

DESDEMONA
I’ll go look for him—Cassio, stay around here. If
he’s in a good mood I’ll mention you again, and
do everything I can.

CASSIO
I thank you, lady.

DESDEMONA and EMILIA exit.

BIANCA enters.

BIANCA
Hello, Cassio!
From whence you have them. You are jealous now
That this is from some mistress, some
remembrance.
No, in good troth, Bianca.

BIANCA
Why, whose is it?

CASSIO
I know not neither, I found it in my chamber.
I like the work well. Ere it be demanded,
As like enough it will, I would have it copied.

Take it and do ‘t, and leave me for this time.

BIANCA
Leave you! Wherefore?

CASSIO
I do attend here on the general
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me womaned.

BIANCA
But that you do not love me.
I pray you bring me on the way a little
And say if I shall see you soon at night.

CASSIO
’Tis but a little way that I can bring you,
For I attend here. But I’ll see you soon.

BIANCA
’Tis very good. I must be circumstanced.

BIANCA
I pray you bring me on the way a little
And say if I shall see you soon at night.

Enter OTHELLO and IAGO

IAGO
Will you think so?

OTHELLO
Think so, Iago?

IAGO
What,
To kiss in private?

OTHELLO
An unauthorized kiss!

IAGO
Or to be naked with her friend in bed
An hour or more, not meaning any harm?

IAGO
Do you really think so?

OTHELLO
What do you mean, do I think so?

IAGO
What, just because they kissed in private?

OTHELLO
An illicit kiss!

IAGO
Maybe she was just naked in bed with him for an
hour or so, but they didn’t do anything.
Original Text

OTHELLO

5 Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!
   It is hypocrisy against the devil.
   They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,
   The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.

IAGO

So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip.

10 But if I give my wife a handkerchief—

OTHELLO

What then?

IAGO

Why then 'tis hers, my lord, and, being hers,
   She may, I think, bestow 't on any man.

OTHELLO

She is protectress of her honor too.

15 May she give that?

Modern Text

OTHELLO

Naked in bed together, but without doing anything? Come on, Iago. That would be like playing a trick on the devil: they'd make him think they're going to commit adultery, but then back off. Anyone who acted like that would be letting the devil tempt them, and tempting God to condemn them.

IAGO

As long as they didn’t do anything, it would only be a minor sin. But if I gave my wife a handkerchief—

OTHELLO

Then what?

IAGO

Then it's hers. And if it's hers, I guess she can give it to any man she wants.

OTHELLO

Her reputation is also her own. Can she give that away too?

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 2

IAGO

Her honor is an essence that's not seen,
   They have it very oft that have it not.
   But for the handkerchief—

OTHELLO

By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot it.

Thou saidst—Oh, it comes o'er my memory,
   As doth the raven o'er the infectious house,
   Boding to all—

IAGO

He had my handkerchief.

IAGO

Heath he said any thing?

IAGO

Hath he said anything?

IAGO

Yes, but he’d deny it all.

OTHELLO

What did he say?

IAGO

He said he did—I don’t know.
Act 4, Scene 1, Page 3

IAGO
With her, on her, what you will.

OTHELLO
Lie with her? lie on her? We say “lie on her” when they belie her! Lie with her—that’s fulsome. Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief! To confess, and be hanged for his labor. First to be hanged, and then to confess—I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips. Is ’t possible? Confess!—Handkerchief!—Oh, devil—

(falls in a trance)

IAGO
Work on, My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are caught, And many worthy and chaste dames even thus, All guiltless, meet reproach.—What, ho! My lord! My lord, I say! Othello!

Enter CASSIO

How now, Cassio!

CASSIO
What’s the matter?

IAGO
My lord is fall’n into an epilepsy. This is his second fit. He had one yesterday.

CASSIO
Rub him about the temples.

IAGO
No, forbear. The lethargy must have his quiet course. If not, he foams at mouth and by and by Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs. Do you withdraw yourself a little while,

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4

He will recover straight. When he is gone I would on great occasion speak with you.

Exit CASSIO

How is it, general? Have you not hurt your head?

OTHELLO

better right away. When he leaves, it’s very important that I talk to you.

CASSIO exits.

What happened, general? Did you hit your head?

OTHELLO
Original Text | Modern Text
---|---
50 Dost thou mock me? | Are you making fun of me?
IAGO | Iago
I mock you not, by heaven. | Making fun of you? No, I swear! I wish you could face your bad news like a man!
Would you would bear your fortune like a man! | OTHELLO
A hornèd man's a monster and a beast. | A man who's been cheated on isn't a real man. He's subhuman, like an animal.
IAGO | OTHELLO
There's many a beast then in a populous city, | In that case there are a lot of animals on the loose in this city.
And many a civil monster. | OTHELLO
Did he confess it? | Did he confess?
IAGO | OTHELLO
Good sir, be a man, | Sir, be a man. Every married man has been cheated on. Millions of men sleep with wives who cheat on them, wrongly believing they belong to them alone. Your case is better than that. At least you're not ignorant. The worst thing of all is to kiss your wife thinking she's innocent, when in fact she's a whore. No, I'd rather know the truth. Then I'll know exactly what she is, just as I know what I am.
Think every bearded fellow that's but yoked | OTHELLO
May draw with you. There's millions now alive | You're wise! That's for sure.
That nightly lie in those unproper beds | IAGO
Which they dare swear peculiar. Your case is better. | OTHELLO
Oh, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock, | Go somewhere else for a while. Calm down.
To lip a wanton in a secure couch, | While you were dazed by grief—which isn't appropriate for a man like you—Cassio showed up here. I got him to leave, and made up an excuse for your trance. I told him to come back and talk to me in a bit, and he promised he would. So hide here and watch how he sneers
And to suppose her chaste. No, let me know, | OTHELLO
And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be. |
And knowing what I am, | OTHELLO
IAGO | OTHELLO
Stand you awhile apart, | You're wise! That's for sure.
Confine yourself but in a patient list. | IAGO
Whilst you were here o'erwhelmèd with your grief— | OTHELLO
A passion most resulting such a man— | Go somewhere else for a while. Calm down.
Cassio came hither. I shifted him away | Cassio showed up here. I got him to leave, and made up an excuse for your trance. I told him to come back and talk to me in a bit, and he promised he would. So hide here and watch how he sneers
And laid good 'scuses upon your ecstasy, | So hide here and watch how he sneers
70 Bade him anon return and here speak with me, | at you. I'll make him tell me the whole story again—where, how often, how long ago—and when he plans to sleep with your wife in the future. I'm telling you, just watch his face. But stay calm, and don't get carried away by rage, or I'll think you're not a man.
The which he promised. Do but encaive yourself, | OTHELLO
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns | Do you hear what I'm saying, Iago? I'll be very patient, but—do you hear me?—I'm not done with him yet
That dwell in every region of his face. | OTHELLO
For I will make him tell the tale anew | That's fine, but for now keep your cool. Will you go hide?
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when | IAGO
He hath, and is again to cope your wife. | OTHELLO
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience, | Dost thou hear, Iago?
Or I shall say you are all in all in spleen, | OTHELLO
And nothing of a man. | OTHELLO withdraws

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 5

75 Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when | at you. I'll make him tell me the whole story again—where, how often, how long ago—and when he plans to sleep with your wife in the future. I'm telling you, just watch his face. But stay calm, and don't get carried away by rage, or I'll think you're not a man.
He hath, and is again to cope your wife. | OTHELLO
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience, | Dost thou hear, Iago?
Or I shall say you are all in all in spleen, | OTHELLO
And nothing of a man. | OTHELLO withdraws

IAGO
That's not amiss, | That's not amiss,
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw? | But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?
Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,  
A huswife that by selling her desires  
Buys herself bread and clothes. It is a creature  
That dotes on Cassio, as 'tis the strumpet's plague  
To beguile many and be beguiled by one.  
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain  
From the excess of laughter. Here he comes.  

Enter Cassio  

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad.  
And his unbookish jealousy must construe  
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behavior  
Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

---

CASSIO: The worser that you give me the addition  
Whose want even kills me.  

IAGO:  
Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on 't.  
Now if this suit lay in Bianca's power  
How quickly should you speed!  

CASSIO:  
Alas, poor caitiff!  

OTHELLO:  
Look how he laughs already!  

CASSIO:  
Alas, poor rogue, I think indeed she loves me.  

OTHELLO:  
Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.  

IAGO:  
Do you hear, Cassio?  

OTHELLO:  
Now he importunes him  
To tell it o'er. Go to, well said, well said.  

CASSIO:  
She gives it out that you shall marry her.  
Do you intend it?  

IAGO:  
Do ye triumph, Roman? Do you triumph?  

CASSIO:  
I marry her! What? A customer? Prithee bear some  
charity to my wit. Do not think it so unwholesome.  
Ha, ha, ha!  

OTHELLO:  

---

Now I'll ask Cassio about Bianca, a prostitute  
who sells her body for food and clothes. She's  
crazy about Cassio. That's the whore's curse, to  
seduce many men, but to be seduced by one.  
Whenever he talks about her he can't stop  
laughing.  

CASSIO enters.  

And when he laughs, Othello will go crazy. In his  
ignorant jealousy, he'll totally misunderstand  
Cassio's smiles, gestures, and jokes.—How are  
you, lieutenant?
Original Text |

110 So, so, so, so! They laugh that win!

Modern Text |

So, so, so, so! The winner's always got the last laugh, hasn't he?

---

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 7

**IAGO**
Why the cry goes that you shall marry her.

**CASSIO**
Prithee say true!

**IAGO**
I am a very villain else.

**OTHELLO**
Have you scored me? Well.

**CASSIO**
This is the monkey's own giving out. She is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

**OTHELLO**
lago beckons me. Now he begins the story.

**CASSIO**
She was here even now. She haunts me in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians, and thither comes the bauble and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck—

**OTHELLO**
Crying “O dear Cassio!” as it were. His gesture imports it.

**CASSIO**
So hangs and lolls and weeps upon me, so shakes, and pulls me! Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**
Now he tells how she plucked him to my chamber. Oh, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

**CASSIO**
Well, I must leave her company.

**IAGO**
Before me! Look, where she comes.

---

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 8

**CASSIO**
'Tis such another fitchew. Marry, a perfumed one.— What do you mean by this haunting of me?

**BIANCA**

**CASSIO**
It's a whore like all the others, stinking of cheap perfume.—Why are you always hanging around me?

**BIANCA**
125 Let the devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the work? A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx’s token, and I must take out the work? There, give it your hobby-horse. Wheresoever you had it, I’ll take out no work on ’t.

CASSIO
How now, my sweet Bianca! How now, how now?

OTHELLO
By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

BIANCA
If you’ll come to supper tonight, you may. If you will not, come when you are next prepared for.

Exit

IAGO
After her, after her.

CASSIO
I must, she’ll rail in the street else.

IAGO
Will you sup there?

CASSIO
Yes, I intend so.

IAGO
Well, I may chance to see you, for I would very fain speak with you.

CASSIO
Prithée come, will you?

IAGO
Go to! Say no more.

Exit CASSIO

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 9

OTHELLO
(advancing) How shall I murder him, Iago?

IAGO
Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

OTHELLO
O Iago!

IAGO
And did you see the handkerchief?

OTHELLO
Was that mine?

IAGO
Yours by this hand. And to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! She gave it him, and he

OTHELLO
(coming forward) How should I murder him, Iago?

IAGO
Did you see how he laughed about sleeping with her?

OTHELLO
Oh Iago!

IAGO
And did you see the handkerchief?

OTHELLO
Was it mine?

IAGO
It was yours, I swear. And do you see how much your foolish wife means to him? She gave it to
Original Text

hath given it his whore.

OTHELLO
I would have him nine years a-killing. A fine woman! A fair woman! A sweet woman!

IAGO
Nay, you must forget that.

OTHELLO
Ay, let her rot and perish and be damned tonight, for she shall not live. No, my heart is turned to stone. I strike it and it hurts my hand. Oh, the world hath not a sweeter creature, she might lie by an emperor’s side and command him tasks.

IAGO
Nay, that’s not your way.

OTHELLO
Hang her! I do but say what she is. So delicate with her needle, an admirable musician. Oh, she will sing the savageness out of a bear! Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!

IAGO
She’s the worse for all this.

IAGO
Ay, that’s certain. But yet the pity of it, Iago! O Iago, the pity of it, Iago!

IAGO
If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her patent to offend, for if it touch not you it comes near nobody.

OTHELLO
I will chop her into messes! Cuckold me?

IAGO
Oh, ’tis foul in her.

OTHELLO
With mine officer!

IAGO
That’s fouler.

OTHELLO
Get me some poison, Iago, this night. I’ll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again—This night, Iago!

IAGO

Modern Text

him, and he gave it to his whore.

OTHELLO
I wish I could keep killing him for nine years straight. Oh, she’s a fine woman! A fair woman! A sweet woman!

IAGO
No, you have to forget all that now.

OTHELLO
Yes, let her die and rot and go to hell tonight. She won’t stay alive for long. No, my heart’s turned to stone—when I hit it, it hurts my hand. Oh, the world never saw a sweeter creature. She could be married to an emperor, and he’d be like her slave!

IAGO
But that’s not how you’re going to be.

OTHELLO
Damn her, I’m just describing her truthfully! She’s so good at sewing, and a wonderful musician. Oh, she could sing a wild bear to sleep! Oh, she’s so witty and creative!

IAGO
All the worse that she stooped this low, then.

OTHELLO
Oh, a thousand thousand times—and what a sweet personality she has!

IAGO
Yes, a little too sweet.

OTHELLO
Yes, that’s for sure. Oh, it’s dreadful, dreadful, Iago!

IAGO
If you still feel so affectionate toward her, then why not give her permission to cheat on you? If it doesn’t bother you, it won’t bother anyone else.

OTHELLO
I’ll chop her into pieces. How could she cheat on me?

IAGO
Oh, it’s horrible of her.

OTHELLO
And with my own officer!

IAGO
That’s worse.

OTHELLO
Get me some poison tonight, Iago. I won’t argue with her, so her beautiful body won’t disarm me.—Tonight, Iago.

IAGO
Do it not with poison. Strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

OTHELLO
Good, good, the justice of it pleases! Very good!

IAGO
And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker. You shall hear more by midnight.

OTHELLO
Excellent good.

---

Do it not with poison. Strangle her in her bed, the same bed she’s contaminated.

OTHELLO
Good, good, I like that—it’s only fair! Very good!

IAGO
And let me kill Cassio. You’ll hear more from me by midnight.

OTHELLO
Excellent, good.

A trumpet within

---

A trumpet sounds offstage.

---

Act 4, Scene 1, Page 11

What trumpet is that same?

IAGO
I warrant something from Venice. ’Tis Lodovico, this, comes from the duke. See, your wife’s with him.

Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and attendants enter.

LODOVICO
Save you, worthy general!

OTHELLO
With all my heart, sir.

LODOVICO
The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

(gives him a letter)

OTHELLO
I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

DESERMONA
And what’s the news, good cousin Lodovico?

IAGO
I am very glad to see you, signior. Welcome to Cyprus.

LODOVICO
I thank you. How does lieutenant Cassio?

IAGO
Lives, sir.

DESERMONA
Cousin, there’s fall’n between him and my lord An unkind breach, but you shall make all well.

OTHELLO
Are you sure of that?

DESERMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
(reads) “This fail you not to do, as you will—”

---

What’s that trumpet for?

IAGO
I think someone’s coming from Venice. It’s Lodovico. He must be coming from the duke. Look, your wife is with him.

LODOVICO
Greetings, good general!

OTHELLO
Greetings, sir.

LODOVICO
The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

(he hands OTHELLO a piece of paper)

OTHELLO
I’ll do whatever they order me to do in this letter.

DESERMONA
What’s new, cousin Lodovico?

IAGO
Very nice to see you, sir. Welcome to Cyprus.

LODOVICO
Thank you. How is lieutenant Cassio?

IAGO
Well, he’s alive.

DESERMONA
Cousin, there’s been a falling out between him and Othello. An unfortunate rift, but you can fix it.

OTHELLO
Are you sure of that?

DESERMONA
Excuse me?

OTHELLO
(reading) “Don’t fail to do this, since you’ll—”
LODOVICO
He did not call, he's busy in the paper.
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

DESDEMONA
A most unhappy one. I would do much
T' atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

OTHELLO
Fire and brimstone!

DESDEMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
Are you wise?

DESDEMONA
What, is he angry?

LODOVICO
Maybe the letter moved him,
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

DESDEMONA
Trust me, I am glad on 't.

OTHELLO
Indeed!

DESDEMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
I am glad to see you mad.

DESDEMONA
Why, sweet Othello—

OTHELLO
(striking her) Devil!

DESDEMONA
I have not deserved this.

LODOVICO
He didn't say anything, he's reading. So there's a rift between Othello and Cassio?

DESDEMONA
Yes, unfortunately. I'd do anything to bring them back together, since I really care for Cassio.

OTHELLO
Damn it all!

DESDEMONA
Excuse me, my lord?

OTHELLO
Are you in your right mind?

DESDEMONA
Is he angry?

LODOVICO
Maybe the letter upset him. I think they want him to go home and appoint Cassio governor in his place.

DESDEMONA
I'm happy about that.

OTHELLO
Oh, are you really!

DESDEMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
I'm glad you're insane enough to admit it in front of me.

DESDEMONA
Why, sweet Othello—

OTHELLO
(striking her) You devil!

DESDEMONA
I haven't done anything to deserve this!

LODOVICO
My lord, this would not be believed in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw 't. 'Tis very much.
Make her amends, she weeps.

OTHELLO
Oh, devil, devil!
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.

Out of my sight!

DESDEMONA
I will not stay to offend you.

LODOVICO
Truly, an obedient lady.
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

LODOVICO
My lord, no one will believe this in Venice, even though I'd swear I saw it with my own eyes. That was too much. You should apologize. She's crying.

OTHELLO
Oh, you devil, you devil! You can cry all day and all night, and I still won't believe you're sad. Get out of my sight!

DESDEMONA
I wouldn't want to stay here and make you angry.

LODOVICO
She's obedient—a fine lady. Please, my lord, call her back.
OTHELLO
Mistress!

DESDEMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
What would you with her, sir?

LODOVICO
Who, I, my lord?

OTHELLO
Ay, you did wish that I would make her turn.
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,
And turn again. And she can weep, sir, weep.
And she’s obedient, as you say, obedient,
Very obedient.—Proceed you in your tears.—
Concerning this, sir—Oh, well-painted passion!—
I am commanded home.—Get you away,
I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate
And will return to Venice.—Hence, avaunt!

Exit DESDEMONA

Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, tonight
I do entreat that we may sup together.
You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. Goats and
monkeys!

LODOVICO
Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate
Call all in all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake? Whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce?

IAGO
He is much changed.

LODOVICO
Are his wits safe? Is he not light of brain?

IAGO
He’s that he is. I may not breathe my censure
What he might be. If what he might he is not,
I would to heaven he were!

LODOVICO
What? Strike his wife?

IAGO
‘Faith, that was not so well. Yet would I knew
That stroke would prove the worst!

LODOVICO
Is it his use?
Or did the letters work upon his blood
And new-create his fault?

LODOVICO
Is this the same Moor whom the senate
considers so capable? Is this the guy who’s
supposed to never get emotional, and who never
gets rattled, no matter what disaster happens?

IAGO
He’s changed a great deal.

LODOVICO
Is he sane? Is he losing his mind?

IAGO
He is what he is. I won’t say anything negative
about what he might be. If he isn’t what he might
be, then I wish to God he were!

LODOVICO
Hitting his wife?

IAGO
It’s true, that wasn’t such a nice thing to do. But I
wish I could say that’s the last time he’ll do it!

LODOVICO
Is it a habit of his? Or did the letter make him
emotional somehow, and this is the first time he’s
done it?
Original Text

IAGO
Alas, alas!
It is not honesty in me to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe
him,
And his own courses will denote him so
That I may save my speech. Do but go after
And mark how he continues.

LODOVICO
I am sorry that I am deceived in him.

Modern Text

IAGO
Oh, it’s too bad! It wouldn’t be right for me to tell you everything I’ve seen and heard. You’ll see what he’s like. His own actions will show you what kind of person he is, so I won’t have to bother telling you. Just go after him and watch what he does next.

LODOVICO
I’m sorry I was so wrong about him.

Exeunt

Act 4, Scene 2

Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA

OTHELLO
You have seen nothing then?

EMILIA
Nor ever heard, nor ever did suspect.

OTHELLO
Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

EMILIA
But then I saw no harm, and then I heard
Each syllable that breath made up between them.

OTHELLO
What, did they never whisper?

EMILIA
Never, my lord.

OTHELLO
Nor send you out o’ th’ way?

EMILIA
Never.

OTHELLO
To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor nothing?

EMILIA
Never, my lord.

OTHELLO
That’s strange.

EMILIA
I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake. If you think other
Remove your thought, it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch have put this in your head
Let heaven requite it with the serpent’s curse
For if she be not honest, chaste, and true
There’s no man happy. The purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 2
Original Text

OTHELLO
Bid her come hither. Go.

Exit EMILIA

She says enough, yet she's a simple bawd
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet, lock and key, of villainous secrets.
And yet she'll kneel and pray, I have seen her do 't.

Enter DESDEMONA with EMILIA

DESDEMONA
25 My lord, what is your will?

OTHELLO
Pray, chuck, come hither.

DESDEMONA
What is your pleasure?

OTHELLO
Let me see your eyes.
Look in my face.

DESDEMONA
What horrible fancy's this?

OTHELLO
(to EMILIA) Some of your function, mistress,

30 Leave procreants alone and shut the door.
Cough or cry “hem” if any body come.
Your mystery, your mystery! Nay, dispatch!

Exit EMILIA

DESDEMONA
Upon my knee, what doth your speech import?
I understand a fury in your words,

35 But not the words.

OTHELLO
Why, what art thou?

Modern Text

OTHELLO
Tell her to come here. Go.

EMILIA exits.

She says all the right things, but the dumbest brothel-keeper would tell the same story.
Desdemona’s a tricky whore with a closet full of awful secrets, but still she’ll kneel and pray like an honest woman. I’ve seen her do it.

DESDEMONA and EMILIA enter.

DESDEMONA
My lord, what do you want?

OTHELLO
Please, dear, come here.

DESDEMONA
What can I do for you?

OTHELLO
Let me see your eyes. Look at my face.

DESDEMONA
What horrible thing are you imagining?

OTHELLO
(to EMILIA) Go do what you do best, madam.

30 Leave us alone for our hanky-panky, and shut the door behind you. If somebody comes, give a shout. That’s your job, your job. Go on, hurry!

EMILIA exits.

DESDEMONA
I’m begging you on my knees to tell me what your words mean. I can tell you’re furious, but I don’t understand what you’re saying.

OTHELLO
Why? Who are you?

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3

DESDEMONA
Your wife, my lord. Your true and loyal wife.

OTHELLO
Come, swear it, damn thyself.
Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee. Therefore be double
dammed,
Swear thou art honest!

40

DESDEMONA
Heaven doth truly know it.

OTHELLO
Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

DESDEMONA
To whom, my lord? With whom? How am I false?

OTHELLO
I’m your wife, your true and loyal wife.

OTHELLO
Go ahead, swear to that, so you’ll be damned to hell for lying. Otherwise the devils will mistake you for an angel and be too scared to grab you.
Go ahead, make sure you damn yourself by swearing you’ve been faithful to me.

DESDEMONA
Heaven knows I am.

OTHELLO
Heaven knows you’re as unfaithful as hell.

DESDEMONA
Unfaithful, my lord? With whom? How am I unfaithful?

OTHELLO
Original Text

Ah, Desdemona, away, away, away!

DESDEMONA
Alas the heavy day, why do you weep?

45 Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?
If haply you my father do suspect
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me. If you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

OTHELLO
Had it pleased heaven

To try me with affliction, had they rained
All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head,
Steeped me in poverty to the very lips,
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes,
I should have found in some place of my soul

A drop of patience. But, alas, to make me

Modern Text

Leave me alone, Desdemona, go away!

DESDEMONA
Oh, what a horrible day! Why are you crying?
Because of me? If you’ve been ordered back to
Venice because of my father, don’t blame me.
You may have lost his respect, but so have I.

OTHELLO
If God had decided to treat me like Job, making
me sick and covered with sores, reducing me to
abject poverty, selling me into slavery and
destroying all my hopes, I would have found
some way to accept it with patience. But instead
He’s made me a laughingstock for everyone in
our time to point at and scorn! Even that I co

be like the fountain that my children and all my
descendants flow from, has rejected me! Worse
than that, she’s polluted herself, so that the
fountain is a place where disgusting toads
copulate and reproduce! Even the goddess of
patience couldn’t look at this and be patient—it’s
too horrifying!

DESDEMONA
I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

OTHELLO
Oh, ay, as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell’st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst ne’er
been born!

DESDEMONA
I hope you think I’m faithful to you.

OTHELLO
As faithful as flies in rotting meat, which give birth
to maggots every time the wind blows. You’re like
a weed pretending to be a flower, so beautiful
and sweet-smelling that I ache when I look at
you. Oh, I wish you’d never been born!

DESDEMONA
Have I done something to offend you without
knowing it?

OTHELLO
Was someone as beautiful as you meant to be a
whore? What have you done? What have you
done? Oh, you streetwalker! If I said out loud
what you’ve done, you’d burn up with shame.
What have you done? Heaven has to hold its
nose when it sees you! The pure moon in the sky
has to shut its eyes when you go by! Even the
wind that blows over everything on earth is
ashamed to visit you. You brazen whore!

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 4

The fixèd figure for the time of scorn
To point his slow and moving finger at!
Yet could I bear that too, well, very well.
But there where I have garnered up my heart,

60 Where either I must live or bear no life,
The fountain from which my current runs
Or else dries up—to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern for foul toads
To knot and gender in! Turn thy complexion there,

105 Patience, thou young and rose-lipped cherubin,—
Ay, there, look grim as hell!

DESDEMONA
I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

OTHELLO
Oh, ay, as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing, O thou weed,
Who art so lovely fair and smell’st so sweet
That the sense aches at thee, would thou hadst ne’er
been born!

DESDEMONA
Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

OTHELLO
Was this fair paper, this most goodly book,
Made to write “whore” upon? What committed?

75 Committed? O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks
That would to cinders burn up modesty
Did I but speak thy deeds. What committed?
Heaven stops the nose at it and the moon winks,
The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets
Is hushed within the hollow mine of earth
And will not hear ’t. What committed!
**Original Text**

**DESDEMONA**
By heaven, you do me wrong!

**OTHELLO**
Are you not a strumpet?

**DESDEMONA**
No, as I am a Christian. If to preserve this vessel for my lord From any other foul unlawful touch Be not to be a strumpet, I am none.

**OTHELLO**
What, not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**
No, as I shall be saved.

**OTHELLO**
Is 't possible?

**DESDEMONA**
Oh, heaven forgive us!

**OTHELLO**
I cry you mercy, then, I took you for that cunning whore of Venice That married with Othello.—You, mistress, That have the office opposite to Saint Peter And keep the gate of hell!

*Enter EMILIA*

You, you, ay, you! We have done our course. There’s money for your pains. I pray you, turn the key and keep our counsel.

*Exit*

**EMILIA**
Alas, what does this gentleman conceive? How do you, madam? How do you, my good lady?

**DESDEMONA**
Faith, half asleep.

**EMILIA**
Good madam, what’s the matter with my lord?

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 6**

**DESDEMONA**
With who?

**EMILIA**
Why, with my lord, madam.

**DESDEMONA**
Who is thy lord?

**EMILIA**
He that is yours, sweet lady.

**DESDEMONA**
I swear to God you’re accusing me wrongly!

**OTHELLO**
So you’re saying you’re not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**
No, I’m as honest as I am Christian. If only letting my husband touch my body means I’m not a whore, I’m not a whore.

**OTHELLO**
What, you’re not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**
No, I swear it.

**OTHELLO**
Is that possible?

**DESDEMONA**
Oh, heaven help us!

**OTHELLO**
I beg your pardon then. I must have the wrong woman. I mistook you for that sly Venetian woman who married Othello.—You whoreshouse-keeper.

**EMILIA**
You’re in charge of this hell! You! We’ve finished our business. Here’s some money for you. Please lock the door and keep quiet.

*Exit OTHELLO*

**EMILIA**
What’s he talking about? How are you, madam?

**DESDEMONA**
I’m stunned, to tell you the truth.

**EMILIA**
My lady, what’s wrong with your husband?
Original Text

DESDEMONA
I have none. Do not talk to me, Emilia.

EMILIA
Here's a change indeed!

DESDEMONA
Tis meet I should be used so, very meet.

EMILIA
Things have certainly changed!

EMILIA
Exit

DESDEMONA
Iago, what is your pleasure? How is 't with you?

IAGO
What is the matter, lady?

DESDEMONA
Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO
Why did he do that?

DESDEMONA
That name, Iago?

IAGO
What name, fair lady?

DESDEMONA
What name, madam?

IAGO
What name, madam?

DESDEMONA
Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO
Why did he do that?

DESDEMONA
I am sure I am none such.

IAGO
What did he say?

DESDEMONA
I do not know. I am sure I am none such.

IAGO
Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

EMILIA
Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father and her country, and her friends,
To be called "whore"? Would it not make one weep?

DESDEMONA
He called her a whore so many times, and
heaped up so much abuse on her that good
people can't stand to hear it.

DESDEMONA
Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO
What name, madam?

DESDEMONA
What my lord said I was.

EMILIA
He called her a whore. A beggar couldn't have
called his slut worse names.

IAGO
Why did he do that?

DESDEMONA
I don't know. I just know I'm not one.

IAGO
Don't cry, don't cry. What a day this is!

EMILIA
Did she give up all those chances to marry
noblemen, give up her father and country and
friends, just to be called a whore? Doesn't that
make you want to cry?

DESDEMONA

Modern Text

DESDEMONA
I don't have a lord. Don't talk to me, Emilia. I
can't even cry, though tears are the only answers
I could give to all your questions. Tonight put my
wedding sheets on my bed, and tell your
husband to come to me now.

EMILIA
Things have certainly changed!

EMILIA
Exit

DESDEMONA
It's fair for him to treat me like this, very fair.
What have I ever done that he has anything to
complain about?

IAGO
What can I do for you, madam? How are you?

DESDEMONA
I don't know. When grown-ups teach little
children, they do it gently and easily. He might
have treated me like that, because I'm as unused
to abuse as a little child.

IAGO
What's the matter, lady?

EMILIA
He called her a whore so many times, and
heaped up so much abuse on her that good
people can't stand to hear it.

DESDEMONA
Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO
What name, madam?

DESDEMONA
What my lord said I was.

EMILIA
He called her a whore. A beggar couldn't have
called his slut worse names.

IAGO
Why did he do that?

DESDEMONA
I don't know. I just know I'm not one.

IAGO
Don't cry, don't cry. What a day this is!

EMILIA
Did she give up all those chances to marry
noblemen, give up her father and country and
friends, just to be called a whore? Doesn't that
make you want to cry?
IAGO
  Beshrew him for 't!
  How comes this trick upon him?

DESDEMONA
  Nay, heaven doth know.

EMILIA
  I will be hanged, if some eternal villain,
  Some busy and insinuating rogue,
  Some cogging, cozening slave, to get some office,
  Have not devised this slander. I will be hanged else!

IAGO
  Fie, there is no such man. It is impossible.

DESDEMONA
  If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

EMILIA
  A halter pardon him and hell gnaw his bones!
  Why should he call her "whore"? Who keeps her company?
  What place? What time? What form? What likelihood?
  The Moor's abused by some most villainous knave,
  Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.
  O heavens, that such companions thou'dst unfold,
  And put in every honest hand a whip
  To lash the rascals naked through the world
  Even from the east to th' west!

IAGO
  Speak within door.

EMILIA
  Oh, fie upon them! Some such squire he was
  That turned your wit the seamy side without
  And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

IAGO
  You are a fool. Go to.

DESDEMONA
  Alas Iago,
  What shall I do to win my lord again?
  Good friend, go to him. For, by this light of heaven,
  I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel:
  If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
  Either in discourse of thought or actual deed,
  Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
  Delighted them, or any other form,
  Or that I do not yet, and ever did,

And ever will—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,
Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much,
And his unkindness may defeat my life,
But never taint my love. I cannot say “whore,”
It does abhor me now I speak the word.
To do the act that might the addition earn
Not the world’s mass of vanity could make me.

IAGO
170 I pray you, be content, ’tis but his humor.
The business of the state does him offence,
And he does chide with you.

DESDEMONA
If ’were no other—

IAGO
’Tis but so, I warrant.

Trumpets sound
175 Hark, how these instruments summon to supper.
The messengers of Venice stays the meat.
Go in, and weep not. All things shall be well.

Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA
Enter RODERIGO

How now, Roderigo!

RODERIGO
I do not find that thou deal’st justly with me.

IAGO
What in the contrary?

RODERIGO
Every day thou daff’st me with some device, Iago,
and rather, as it seems to me now, keep’st from me
all conveniency than suppliest me with the least
advantage of hope.

IAGO
You charge me most unjustly.

RODERIGO
With naught but truth. I have wasted myself out of
my means. The jewels you have had from me to
deliver Desdemona would half have corrupted a
votaress. You have told me she hath received them
and returned me expectations and comforts of
sudden respect and acquaintance, but I find none.

IAGO

Well, I won’t take it any longer. And I’m not going
to sit back and accept what you’ve done.

IAGO
Will you hear me, Roderigo?

RODERIGO
I have heard too much, and your words and
performances are no kin together.

IAGO
You charge me most unjustly.

RODERIGO
It’s the truth. I’ve got no money left. The jewels
you took from me to deliver to Desdemona
would’ve made even a nun want to sleep with
me. You told me she got them, and that she
promised to give me a little something in return
soon, but nothing like that ever happens.

IAGO
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Text</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well, go to. Very well.</td>
<td>Well, all right then. Fine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RODERIGO “Very well,” “go to”! I cannot go to, man, nor ’tis not very well. Nay, I think it is scurvy, and begin to find myself fopped in it.</td>
<td>RODERIGO “Fine!” he says. “All right!” It’s not fine, and I’m not all right! It’s wrong, and I’m starting to realize I’m being cheated!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAGO Very well.</td>
<td>IAGO Okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RODERIGO I tell you ’tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona. If she will return me my jewels I will give over my suit and repent my unlawful solicitation. If not, assure yourself I will seek satisfaction of you.</td>
<td>RODERIGO It’s not okay! I’m going to tell Desdemona my feelings. If she returns my jewels, I’ll stop pursuing her and apologize to her. If not, I’ll challenge you to a duel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAGO You have said now.</td>
<td>IAGO You’ve said what you have to say now.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RODERIGO Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.</td>
<td>RODERIGO Yes, and I’ll do everything I just said.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 11**

| IAGO Why, now I see there’s mettle in thee, and even from this instant to build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo. Thou hast taken against me a most just exception, but yet I protest I have dealt most directly in thy affair. | IAGO Well, all right then. Now I see that you have some guts. From this moment on I have a higher opinion of you than before. Give me your hand, Roderigo. Your complaint against me is perfectly understandable, but I still insist I’ve done everything I could to help you. |
| RODERIGO It hath not appeared. | RODERIGO It doesn’t look that way to me. |
| IAGO I grant indeed it hath not appeared, and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that in thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever—I mean purpose, courage and valor—this night show it. If thou the next night following enjoy not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery and devise engines for my life. | IAGO I admit it doesn’t look that way to me, and the fact that you suspect me shows that you’re smart. But Roderigo, if you’re as courageous and determined as I think you are, then wait just a bit longer. If you’re not having sex with Desdemona tomorrow night, then I suggest you find some way to stab me in the back and kill me. |
| RODERIGO Well, what is it? Is it within reason and compass? | RODERIGO Well, what’s your plan? Is it feasible? |
| IAGO Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello’s place. | IAGO Venice has made Cassio governor here on Cyprus. |
| RODERIGO Is that true? Why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice. | RODERIGO Is that true? Then Desdemona and Othello will go back to Venice. |
| IAGO Oh, no, he goes into Mauritania and taketh away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident—wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio. | IAGO Oh, no. He’ll go to Mauritania and take the beautiful Desdemona with him, unless he gets stuck here for some reason. The best way to extend his stay here is to get rid of Cassio. |
| RODERIGO |
Original Text

200 How do you mean, removing of him?
IAGO
Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place:
knocking out his brains.
RODERIGO
And that you would have me to do!

Act 4, Scene 2, Page 12

IAGO
Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He
sups tonight with a harlotry, and thither will I go to
him. He knows not yet of his honorable fortune. If
you will watch his going thence (which I will fashion
to fall out between twelve and one) you may take
him at your pleasure. I will be near to second your
attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand
not amazed at it, but go along with me. I will show
you such a necessity in his death that you shall think
yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high
suppertime, and the night grows to waste. About it!

RODERIGO
I will hear further reason for this.
IAGO
And you shall be satisfied.

Modern Text

What do you mean, get rid of him?
IAGO
I mean knock his brains out, so he can't take
Othello's place.
RODERIGO
And that's what you want me to do!

IAGO
Yes, if you want to help yourself. He's having
dinner tonight with a prostitute, and I'll go visit
him. He doesn't know he's been appointed
governor yet. When you see him walking by here
(as I'll make sure he does between twelve and
one) you can nab him. I'll be nearby to help you,
and between the two of us we can handle him.
Come on, don't stand there in a daze. Come
along with me. I'll give you such reasons for
killing him that you'll feel obliged to snuff him out.
It's nearly dinner time, and the night's going to be
wasted. Let's go!

RODERIGO
I want to hear more about this.
IAGO
You will. You'll hear all you want to hear.

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 4, Scene 3

Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA
A and attendants

LODOVICO
I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

OTHELLO
Oh, pardon me, 'twill do me good to walk.

LODOVICO
Madam, good night. I humbly thank your ladyship.

DESDEMONA
Your honor is most welcome.

OTHELLO
Will you walk, sir?—O Desdemona—

DESDEMONA
My lord?

OTHELLO
Get you to bed on th' instant, I will be returned
Forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there, look 't be
done.

DESDEMONA
I will, my lord.

Exeunt OTHELLO, LODOVICO, and attendants

OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and EMILIA

LODOVICO
Please, sir, don't trouble yourself.

OTHELLO
I beg your pardon; walking will make me feel better.

LODOVICO
Good night, madam. Thank you.

DESDEMONA
You're most welcome.

OTHELLO
Would you walk out with me, sir?—Oh,

DESDEMONA
Yes, my lord?

OTHELLO
Go to bed right this minute. I'll be there shortly. Send
your maid Emilia away. Make sure you do what I say.

DESDEMONA
I will, my lord.

Exeunt OTHELLO, LODOVICO, and attendants
EMILIA
1  How goes it now? He looks gentler than he did.

DESDEMONA
He says he will return incontinent,
And hath commanded me to go to bed
And bid me to dismiss you.

EMILIA
Dismiss me?

DESDEMONA
It was his bidding. Therefore, good Emilia,
1  Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu.
5  We must not now displease him.

DESDEMONA
He says he'll come back right away. He asked me to
go to bed and to send you away.

EMILIA
Send me away?

DESDEMONA
That's what he said. So give me my nightgown,
Emilia, and I'll say goodnight. We shouldn't displease
him.

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 2

EMILIA
Ay. Would you had never seen him!

DESDEMONA
So would not I. My love doth so approve him
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns—
20  Prithée, unpin me—have grace and favor.

EMILIA
I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

DESDEMONA
All's one. Good Father, how foolish are our minds!
If I do die before thee, prithée, shroud me
In one of these same sheets.

EMILIA
Come, come! You talk!

DESDEMONA
25  My mother had a maid called Barbary,
She was in love, and she loved proved mad
And did forsake her. She had a song of "Willow,"
An old thing 'twas, but it expressed her fortune
And she died singing it. That song tonight
30  Will not go from my mind. I have much to do
But to go hang my head all at one side
And sing it like poor Barbary. Prithée, dispatch.

EMILIA
I put those wedding sheets on your bed, as you
asked.

DESDEMONA
It doesn't matter. Oh, how silly we are! If I die
before you do make sure I'm wrapped in those
sheets in my coffin.

EMILIA
Listen to you! Don't be silly!

DESDEMONA
My mother had a maid named Barbary. She was
in love, and her lover turned out to be wild and
left her. She knew an old song called "Willow" that
reminded her of her own story, and she died
singing it. I can't get that song out of my head
tonight. It's all I can do to keep myself from
hanging my head down in despair and singing it
like poor Barbary. Please, hurry up.

EMILIA
Should I get your nightgown?

DESDEMONA
No, unpin me here. This Lodovico is a proper man.

EMILIA
A very handsome man.

DESDEMONA
He speaks well.

EMILIA
He's very handsome.
Original Text

I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip.

Modern Text

I know a lady in Venice who’d walk all the way to Palestine for a kiss from him.

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 3

DESDEMONA
(singing)
The poor soul sat sighing by a sycamore tree, Sing all a green willow. Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee, Sing willow, willow, willow. The fresh streams ran by her, and murmured her moans, Sing willow, willow, willow. Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones Sing willow, willow, willow— Lay by these— Willow, willow— Prithee, hie thee, he’ll come anon— Sing all a green willow must be my garland. Let nobody blame him, his scorn I approve— Nay, that’s not next—Hark! Who is ’t that knocks?

EMILIA
It’s the wind.

DESDEMONA
(sings)
I called my love false love but what said he then? Sing willow, willow, willow. If I court more women you’ll couch with more men— So, get thee gone, good night. Mine eyes do itch, Doth that bode weeping?

EMILIA
’Tis neither here nor there.

DESDEMONA
I have heard it said so. Oh, these men, these men! Dost thou in conscience think—tell me, Emilia— That there be women do abuse their husbands In such gross kind?

EMILIA
There be some such, no question.

Act 4, Scene 3, Page 4

DESDEMONA
Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

EMILIA
Why, would not you?

DESDEMONA
No, by this heavenly light!

EMILIA
Nor I neither, by this heavenly light.

DESDEMONA
Would you ever do such a thing for all the world?

EMILIA
Why, wouldn’t you?

DESDEMONA
By the light of heaven, no, I would not!

EMILIA
I wouldn’t either, by daylight. It would be easier to
I might do 't as well i' th' dark.

DESDEMONA
Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

EMILIA
The world's a huge thing. It is a great price for a small vice.

DESDEMONA
In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

EMILIA
In troth, I think I should, and undo 't when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition. But for the whole world? Why, who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

DESDEMONA
Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong For the whole world.

EMILIA
Why the wrong is but a wrong i' th' world, and having the world for your labor, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

DESDEMONA
I do not think there is any such woman.

EMILIA
Yes, a dozen, and as many to th' vantage as would store the world they played for.

55 But I do think it is their husbands' faults If wives do fall. Say that they slack their duties

EMILIA
Yes, a dozen of them— as many as there are women in the world, in fact. But I do think it's the husband's fault if we wives cheat on them. For instance, our husbands may stop sleeping with us, and give it out to other women instead. Or they may get insanely jealous, and keep us from going anywhere. Or let's say they hit us, or cut back on the money they give us out of spite. We have feelings. We may be able to forgive them, but we want to get back at them too. Husbands need to know that their wives are human beings too. They see, smell, and taste sweet and sour just like their husbands. Why do they replace us with other women? Do they do it for fun? I think they do. Is it out of lust? I think so. Is it a weakness? It is. And don't we have passions, and a taste for fun, and weaknesses, just like men? Then tell them to treat us well. Or let them figure out that the bad things we do are just what we learned from them.
DESDEMONA
Good night, good night. Heaven me such uses send,
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!

Exeunt

They exit.

Act 5, Scene 1

Enter IAGO and RODERIGO

IAGO
Here, stand behind this bulk; straight will he come.
Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home.
Quick, quick! Fear nothing. I'll be at thy elbow.
It makes us, or it mars us. Think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

RODERIGO
Be near at hand, I may miscarry in 't.

IAGO
Here, at thy hand. Be bold, and take thy stand.

RODERIGO
I have no great devotion to the deed
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons.
'Tis but a man gone. Forth, my sword: he dies.

IAGO
(aside) I have rubbed this young quat almost to the sense,
And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
Every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,
He calls me to a restitution large
Of gold and jewels that I bobbed from him
As gifts to Desdemona.
It must not be. If Cassio do remain
He hath a daily beauty in his life
That makes me ugly. And besides, the Moor
May unfold me to him—there stand I in much peril.
No, he must die. But so, I hear him coming.

RODERIGO
I don't really want to do this, but he's given me
good reasons. I guess it's only one man—no big deal. My sword comes out, and he dies.

IAGO
(to himself) I've rubbed this young pimple until
he's ready to pop, and now he's angry. Whether
he kills Cassio, or Cassio kills him, or they kill
each other, it all works in my favor. If Roderigo
survives, though, he'll ask me for all the gold and
jewelry that I stole from him and said I gave to
Desdemona. I can't let that happen. If Cassio
survives, he's so handsome and well-spoken that
he makes me look ugly. And besides, the Moor
might tell him about my lies about him.—That
would be very dangerous for me. No, he's got to
die. Let it be so. I hear him coming.

CASSIO enters.

RODERIGO
I know his gait, 'tis he.—Villain, thou diest!

Thrusts at CASSIO

CASSIO
That thrust had been mine enemy indeed
But that my coat is better than thou know'st
I will make proof of thine.

Draws, and wounds RODERIGO

CASSIO draws his sword and stabs Roderigo.

RODERIGO
Oh, I am slain!

RODERIGO
Oh, I'm dead!
Original Text

IAGO from behind wounds CASSIO in the legs, exits

CASSIO
I am maimed for ever. Help, ho! Murder! Murder!

Enter OTHELLO

OTHELLO
The voice of Cassio. Iago keeps his word.

RODERIGO
Oh, villain that I am!

OTHELLO
It is even so.

CASSIO
Oh, help, ho! Light! A surgeon!

OTHELLO
'Tis he. Oh, brave Iago, honest and just, That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!

Thou teachest me. Minion, your dear lies dead, And your unblest fate hies. Strumpet, I come. For, of my heart, those charms, thine eyes, are blotted. Thy bed, lust-stained, shall with lust's blood be spotted.

Exit

Enter LODOVICO and GRATIANO

CASSIO
What, ho! No watch? No passage? Murder! Murder!

GRATIANO
'Tis some mischance, the cry is very direful.

CASSIO
Oh, help!

LODOVICO
Hark!

RODERIGO
Oh, wretched villain!

LODOVICO
Two or three groan. 'Tis heavy night, These may be counterfeits. Let's think 't unsafe To come in to the cry without more help.

RODERIGO
Nobody come? Then shall I bleed to death.

LODOVICO
Hark!

Enter IAGO

GRATIANO
Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and

Modern Text

From behind, IAGO stabs CASSIO in the leg and then exits.

CASSIO
I'll be crippled forever! Help! Murder! murder!

OTHELLO enters.

OTHELLO
That's Cassio's voice. Iago has kept his word.

RODERIGO
Oh, what a villain I am!

OTHELLO
That's the truth.

CASSIO
Help me! Get some light! Get me a surgeon!

OTHELLO
It's him! Brave Iago, how honest and trustworthy you are! You even went as far as murder to help your friend in his misfortune. You teach me how I should act.

Whore, your lover's dead now, and you'll be going to hell soon. I'm coming, slut! I've shut the memory of your beautiful eyes out of my heart. You've already stained our sheets with your lust; now I'll stain them with your whore's blood.

Exit

LODOVICO and GRATIANO enter.

CASSIO
Help! Isn't there a guard around? No one passing by? Murder! Murder!

GRATIANO
Something's wrong, the man sounds panicked.

CASSIO
Oh, help!

LODOVICO
Listen!

RODERIGO
I've acted like such a villain!

LODOVICO
Two or three men are groaning. But it's dark out, and it could be a trap. It's not safe to go near them till we get more help.

RODERIGO
Nobody's coming? I'll bleed to death.

LODOVICO
Look!

IAGO enters.

GRATIANO
Here's someone coming in his pajamas, with a
Act 5, Scene 1, Page 4

LODOVICO
We do not know.
IAGO
Do not you hear a cry?
CASSIO
Here, here! For heaven’s sake, help me!
IAGO
What’s the matter?
GRATIANO
(to LODOVICO) This is Othello’s ancient, as I take it.
LODOVICO
The same indeed, a very valiant fellow.
IAGO
(to CASSIO) What are you here that cry so grievously?
CASSIO
Iago? Oh, I am spoiled, undone by villains!
Give me some help.
IAGO
Oh, me, lieutenant! What villains have done this?
CASSIO
I think that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.
IAGO
Oh, treacherous villains!—
(to LODOVICO and GRATIANO)
What are you there? Come in, and give some help.
RODERIGO
Oh, help me there!
CASSIO
That’s one of them.
IAGO
O murd’rous slave! O villain!

Act 5, Scene 1, Page 5

RODERIGO
O damned Iago! O inhuman dog!
IAGO
Kill men i’ th’ dark! Where be these bloody thieves?
How silent is this town!—Ho! murder! murder!—
What may you be? Are you of good or evil?

Stabs RODERIGO

RODERIGO
Damned Iago! You inhuman dog!
IAGO
Killing men in the dark? Where are these murderers? This is such a quiet, sleepy town!—
Murder, murder!—Who’s that coming? Are you good or evil?
LODOVICO
As you shall prove us, praise us.

IAGO
Signior Lodovico?

LODOVICO
He, sir.

IAGO
I cry you mercy. Here’s Cassio hurt by villains.

GRATIANO
Cassio!

IAGO
How is ‘t, brother!

CASSIO
My leg is cut in two.

IAGO
Marry, heaven forbid!

Original Text
Modern Text

BIANCA
What is the matter, ho? Who is ‘t that cried?

IAGO
Who is ‘t that cried?

BIANCA
Oh, my dear Cassio!
My sweet Cassio! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

IAGO
O notable strumpet! Cassio, may you suspect
Who they should be that have thus mangled you?

Enter BIANCA

BIANCA
What is the matter? Who’s shouting?

IAGO
Who’s shouting?

BIANCA
Oh, my dear Cassio! My sweet Cassio! Oh, Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

IAGO
You notorious whore! Cassio, do you know who
might have stabbed you like this?

Act 5, Scene 1, Page 6

CASSIO
No.

GRATIANO
I am sorry to find you thus. I have been to seek you.

IAGO
Lend me a garter. So.—Oh, for a chair,
To bear him easily hence!

BIANCA
Alas, he faints! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

IAGO
Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.—
Patience awhile, good Cassio.—Come, come,
Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?
Alas, my friend and my dear countryman
Roderigo! No—yes, sure! Yes, ’tis Roderigo.

GRATIANO
What, of Venice?

IAGO

CASSIO
No.

GRATIANO
I’m sorry to find you like this. I’ve been looking all
over for you.

IAGO
Lend me your sash—Oh, if we only had a
stretcher to carry him out of here!

BIANCA
He’s fainted! Oh Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

IAGO
Sir, I believe this piece of trash, Bianca, has
something to do with all this trouble.—Hang in
there, Cassio.—Come here, bring the light. Do
you recognize this face? Oh, no, it’s my friend
and countryman, Roderigo.—Yes, it’s Roderigo!

GRATIANO
What, Roderigo from Venice?

IAGO
Even he, sir. Did you know him?

**GRATIANO**

Know him? Ay.

**IAGO**

Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon, These bloody accidents must excuse my manners That so neglected you.

**GRATIANO**

I am glad to see you.

**IAGO**

How do you, Cassio?—Oh, a chair, a chair!

**GRATIANO**

Roderigo!

**IAGO**

He, he, 'tis he.

A chair is brought in

A stretcher is brought in.

---

**Act 5, Scene 1, Page 7**

Oh, that’s well said—the chair!
Some good man bear him carefully from hence. I’ll fetch the general’s surgeon.—(to BIANCA) For you, mistress,  
Save you your labor.—He that lies slain here, Cassio, Was my dear friend. What malice was between you?

**CASSIO**

None in the world, nor do I know the man.

**IAGO**

(to BIANCA)  
What, look you pale?—Oh, bear him out o’ the air.—**CASSIO** and **RODERIGO** are borne off  
Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?—Stay you, good gentlemen.—Look you pale, mistress?—Nay, if you stare, we shall hear more anon.—Behold her well. I pray you, look upon her. Do you see, gentlemen? Nay, guiltiness Will speak, though tongues were out of use.

**EMILIA**

Alas, what is the matter? What is the matter, husband?

**IAGO**

Cassio hath here been set on in the dark By Roderigo and fellows that are 'scape. He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

**EMILIA**

Alas, good gentleman! Alas, good Cassio!

**IAGO**

That’s the one, sir. Do you know him?  
**GRATIANO**

Know him? Yes.

**IAGO**

Signor Gratiano, I beg your pardon. I didn’t mean to ignore you—it’s just because of this bloody uproar.

**GRATIANO**

I’m glad to see you.

**IAGO**

How are you doing, Cassio?—Someone bring me a stretcher!

**GRATIANO**

Roderigo!

**IAGO**

It’s him, it’s him.

**CASSIO**

There wasn’t any problem. I don’t even know him.

**IAGO**

(to BIANCA) You’re pale?—Get Cassio out of here.—You look awfully pale, Bianca. **CASSIO** and **RODERIGO** are carried away. 
Do you see how afraid she is? Watch her, we’ll get the whole story. Keep an eye on her. Do you see? The guilty speak volumes even when they’re silent.

**EMILIA**

What’s the matter? What’s the matter, husband?

**IAGO**

Cassio was attacked here in the dark by Roderigo and men who escaped. He’s near death, and Roderigo’s dead already.

**EMILIA**

Oh, no, good gentleman! Oh no, good Cassio!
This is the fruits of whoring. Prithee, Emilia, go know of Cassio where he supped tonight.—(to BIANCA) What, do you shake at that?

**Act 5, Scene 1, Page 8**

**BIANCA**
He supped at my house, but I therefore shake not.

**IAGO**
Oh, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

**EMILIA**
Oh, fie upon thee, strumpet!

I am no strumpet, but of life as honest
As you that thus abuse me.

**EMILIA**
As I! Fie upon thee!

**IAGO**
Kind gentlemen, let’s go see poor Cassio dressed.—Come, mistress, you must tell ’s another tale.
Emilia, run you to the citadel
And tell my lord and lady what hath happped.—Will you go on afore?
(aside)
This is the night
That either makes me or fordoes me quite.

_Exeunt_

**Act 5, Scene 2**

**DESDEMONA** asleep in bed Enter OTHELLO with a light

**OTHELLO**
It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul.
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars,
It is the cause. Yet I’ll not shed her blood,
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow
And smooth as monumental alabaster.
Yet she must die, else she’ll betray more men.
Put out the light, and then put out the light.
If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,
I can again thy former light restore

**DESDEMONA** is asleep in bed. **OTHELLO** enters with a candle.

**OTHELLO**
I have to do it, I have to do it. I have to keep my reason in mind. I won’t say out loud what my reason is, but I have to do it. But I won’t shed any of her blood or scar that beautiful skin, whiter than snow and smooth as the finest marble. But she’s got to die, or she’ll cheat on other men. Put out the light of the candle, and then put out the light of her heart. If I extinguish the candle, I can light it again if I regret it. But once I kill you, you beautiful, fake woman, I do not know the magic that could bring you back. When I’ve plucked this rose, I can’t make it grow again; it will have no choice but to wither and die. Let me smell you while you’re still on the tree. _he kisses her_ Oh, that sweet breath almost convinces me not to kill you and carry out justice. One more, one more kiss. If you’re this beautiful when you’re dead, I’ll kill you and then love you afterward._(kissing_
Original Text

Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee
And love thee after. (kissing her) One more, and that’s the last.
So sweet was ne’er so fatal. I must weep,
But they are cruel tears. This sorrow’s heavenly,
It strikes where it doth love. She wakes.

DESDEMONA
Who’s there? Othello?

OTHELLO
Ay, Desdemona.

Modern Text

her) One more, and this is the last. Such a sweet kiss was never so deadly. I have to cry, but I have to be cruel too. I’m acting like God in the Old Testament—I have to punish the one I love.
She’s waking up.

DESDEMONA
Who’s there? Othello?

OTHELLO
Yes, Desdemona.

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 2

DESDEMONA
Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO
Have you prayed tonight, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA
Ay, my lord.

OTHELLO
If you bethink yourself of any crime
Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,
Solicit for it straight.

DESDEMONA
Alack, my lord, what do you mean by that?

OTHELLO
Well, do it, and be brief. I will walk by,
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit.
No, heavens forfend, I would not kill thy soul!

DESDEMONA
Talk you of killing?

OTHELLO
Ay, I do.

DESDEMONA
Then heaven
Have mercy on me!

OTHELLO
Amen, with all my heart.

DESDEMONA
If you say, I hope you will not kill me.

OTHELLO
Humh!

DESDEMONA
And yet I fear you, for you’re fatal then
When your eyes roll so. Why I should fear I know not,
Since guiltiness I know not. But yet I feel I fear.

OTHELLO
Think on thy sins.
Act 5, Scene 2, Page 3

DESDEMONA
They are loves I bear to you.

OTHELLO
Ay, and for that thou diest.

DESDEMONA
That death’s unnatural that kills for loving. 
Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip? 
Some bloody passion shakes your very frame. 
These are portents, but yet I hope, I hope 
They do not point on me.

OTHELLO
Peace, and be still.

DESDEMONA
I will so. What’s the matter?

OTHELLO
That handkerchief 
Which I so loved and gave thee, thou gav’st 
To Cassio.

DESDEMONA
No, by my life and soul! 
Send for the man and ask him.

OTHELLO
Sweet soul, take heed, take heed of perjury. 
Thou art on thy deathbed.

DESDEMONA
Ay—but not yet to die!

OTHELLO
Presently. 
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin, 
For to deny each article with oath 
Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception 
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

DESDEMONA
Oh, heaven have mercy on me!

OTHELLO
I say “amen.”

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 4

DESDEMONA
And have you mercy too! I never did 
Offend you in my life, never loved Cassio 
But with such general warranty of heaven 
As I might love. I never gave him token.

OTHELLO
By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in ’s hand. 
O perjured woman, thou dost stone my heart, 
And mak’st me call what I intend to do 
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice! 
I saw the handkerchief.

DESDEMONA
And you have mercy on me too! I never did 
anything wrong to you in my life. I never loved 
Cassio, except with the pure love that I feel for 
humankind. I never gave him any token of 
romantic love.

OTHELLO
I saw him holding the handkerchief! You liar, 
you’re turning my heart to stone, and making me 
call what I’ll do murder, when I had been thinking 
of it as a sacrifice! I saw the handkerchief.
DESDEMONA
He found it then,
I never gave it him. Send for him hither,
Let him confess a truth.

OTHELLO
He hath confessed.

DESDEMONA
What, my lord?

OTHELLO
That he hath usèd thee.

DESDEMONA
How? Unlawfully?

OTHELLO
Ay.

DESDEMONA
He will not say so.

OTHELLO
No, his mouth is stopped. Honest lago
Hath ta’en order for ‘t.

DESDEMONA
Oh! My fear interprets. What, is he dead?

OTHELLO
Had all his hairs been lives
My great revenge had stomach for them all.

DESDEMONA
Alas, he is betrayed and I undone.

OTHELLO
Out, strumpet! weep’st thou for him to my face?

DESDEMONA
Oh, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

OTHELLO
Down, strumpet!

DESDEMONA
Kill me tomorrow—let me live tonight!

OTHELLO
Nay, if you strive—

DESDEMONA
But half an hour!

OTHELLO
Being done, there is no pause.

DESDEMONA
But while I say one prayer!

OTHELLO
It is too late. (he smothers her)

EMILIA
(within) My lord, my lord! What, ho! My lord, my lord!

EMILIA
(offstage) My lord, my lord! Hello! My lord, my lord!
### Original Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What noise is this?—Not dead? Not yet quite dead?</td>
<td>What's that noise? Aren't you dead yet? I know I'm cruel, but I'm merciful too. I don’t want you to linger in pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I that am cruel am yet merciful,</td>
<td>I would not have thee linger in thy pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would not have thee linger in thy pain.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
<th>O new, my lord, my lord!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(within)</td>
<td>Who's there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(within)</td>
<td>O good my lord, I would speak a word with you!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Modern Text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, 'tis Emilia.—(to EMILIA) By and by.—She's dead.—</td>
<td>Yes, it's Emilia.(to EMILIA)—Just a minute!—She's dead now.—Emilia's probably come to tell me that Cassio's been killed. The fight outside was loud. So! You’re not moving anymore? No, you’re as still as a grave. Should I let her in? Is that a good idea? I think she’s moving again—No. What should I do? If she comes in, she’ll try to speak to my wife. My wife, my wife! What wife? I don’t have a wife. Oh, this is unbearable! Oh, the horror! There should be a huge eclipse of the sun and the moon, now that Desdemona’s no longer on this earth.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
<th>Please, my lord. I need to speak with you. Oh, my good lord!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(within)</td>
<td>I do beseech you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHELLO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(within)</td>
<td>That I may speak with you, O good my lord!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<th>OTHELLO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had forgot thee—Oh, come in, Emilia.</td>
<td>I’d forgotten about you—Emilia, wait a moment, let me draw the curtains. (closes the bed curtains)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft, by and by. Let me the curtains draw.</td>
<td>Where are you? (unlocks the door)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where art thou?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlocks the door. Enter EMILIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What’s the matter with thee now?</td>
<td>What’s the matter with you now?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>O my good lord, yonder’s foul murders done!</td>
<td>Oh, my lord, terrible murders have been committed over there!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What, now?</td>
<td>What? Just now?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>But now, my lord.</td>
<td>Yes, just now, my lord.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OTHELLO</th>
<th>Modern Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is the very error of the moon,</td>
<td>It's because of the full moon. It comes too close to the earth and drives men crazy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She comes more nearer earth than she was wont</td>
<td>And makes men mad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>And makes men mad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMILIA</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cassio, my lord, hath killed a young Venetian Called Roderigo.</td>
<td>Cassio’s killed a young Venetian named Roderigo.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Act 5, Scene 2, Page 7

**Original Text**

**OTHELLO**
Roderigo killed? And Cassio killed!

**EMILIA**
No, Cassio is not killed.

**OTHELLO**
Not Cassio killed! Then murder’s out of tune,
And sweet revenge grows harsh.

**DESDEMONA**
Oh, falsely, falsely murdered!

**EMILIA**
Alas, what cry is that?

**OTHELLO**
That? What?

**EMILIA**
Out and alas, that was my lady’s voice.

*Opens the bedcurtains*

Help! Help, ho, help! O lady, speak again!

**DESDEMONA**
A guiltless death I die.

**EMILIA**
Oh, who hath done this deed?

**DESDEMONA**
Nobody. I myself. Farewell.
Commend me to my kind lord. Oh, farewell!

**OTHELLO**
Why, how should she be murdered?

**EMILIA**
Alas, who knows?

**OTHELLO**
You heard her say herself it was not I.

**Modern Text**

**OTHELLO**
Roderigo’s been killed? And Cassio’s killed?

**EMILIA**
No, Cassio wasn’t killed.

**OTHELLO**
Cassio’s not dead? Then the wrong man is dead,
and sweet revenge has gone wrong.

**DESDEMONA**
Oh, I’ve been murdered unfairly!

**EMILIA**
Oh Lord, who’s that crying?

**OTHELLO**
That? What?

**EMILIA**
Oh, no, that was my lady’s voice.

*EMILIA opens the bedcurtains.*

Help! Help! Oh, lady, speak again.

**DESDEMONA**
I’m dying an innocent woman.

**EMILIA**
Oh, who did this thing?

**DESDEMONA**
No one. I did it myself. Give my love to my kind husband. Oh, goodbye!

**DESLMONA dies.**

**OTHELLO**
Why, how could she have been murdered?

**EMILIA**
My God, who knows?

**OTHELLO**
You heard her say it wasn’t me.

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 8

**EMILIA**
She said so. I must needs report the truth.

**OTHELLO**
She’s like a liar gone to burning hell.
’Twas I that killed her.

**EMILIA**
Oh, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

**OTHELLO**
She turned to folly, and she was a whore.

**EMILIA**
Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.

**OTHELLO**

**EMILIA**
Yes, she said that. I must go report what happened.

**OTHELLO**
She was lying even as she was going down to hell. I did kill her.

**EMILIA**
Then she was even more an angel, and you’re an even blacker devil!

**OTHELLO**
She cheated on me, and she was a whore.

**EMILIA**
You slander her, you devil.

**OTHELLO**
She was false as water.

**EMILIA**
Thou art rash as fire,
To say that she was false. Oh, she was heavenly true!

**OTHELLO**
Cassio did top her, ask thy husband else.
Oh, I were damned beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

**EMILIA**
My husband!

**OTHELLO**
That she was false to wedlock?

**EMILIA**
My husband!

**OTHELLO**
Ay, with Cassio. Had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I’d not have sold her for it.

**EMILIA**
He said she was unfaithful?

**OTHELLO**
Yes, with Cassio. If she’d been faithful to me, I
never would have given her up, not even if God
himself offered me a jewel as big as a planet in
exchange for her.

**EMILIA**
My husband!

**OTHELLO**
Aye, ‘twas he that told me on her first. An honest man he is, and hates
the slime That sticks on filthy deeds.

**EMILIA**
My husband!

**OTHELLO**
What needs this iterance, woman? I say thy husband.

**EMILIA**
O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love!
My husband say that she was false!

**OTHELLO**
He, woman.

**EMILIA**
If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! He lies to th’ heart.
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain.

**OTHELLO** draws his sword

**EMILIA**
Do thy worst.
This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven
Than thou wast worthy her.

**OTHELLO**
Peace, you were best.

**EMILIA**
Thou hast not half that power to do me harm
As I have to be hurt. O gull! O doit!
As ignorant as dirt! Thou hast done a deed—
I care not for thy sword, I'll make thee known

---

EMILIA
I care not for your sword. I'll make you known

---

EMILIA
I can endure far more pain than you could ever
give me! Oh, you idiot! You stupid fool! As dumb
as dirt! You've committed a terrible evil—I'm not
afraid of your sword. I'll tell everyone what you
did, even if it costs me my life twenty times over.—Help, help, help! The Moor's killed my mistress! Murder, murder!

---

MONTANO
What's the matter? What's going on here,
general?

**EMILIA**
Oh, are you here, Iago? You've done a good job,
that other men can attribute their murders to you!

**GRATIANO**
What's the matter?

**EMILIA**
(to IAGO) Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man.
He says thou told'st him that his wife was false.
I know thou didst not, thou'ret not such a villain.
Speak, for my heart is full.

**IAGO**
I told him what I thought. I didn't tell him anything
that didn't make sense or ring true to him.

**EMILIA**
But did you ever tell him she was false?

**IAGO**
I did.

**EMILIA**
You told a lie, an odious, damnèd lie.
Upon my soul, a lie, a wicked lie.
She false with Cassio! Did you say with Cassio?

**IAGO**
With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.

**EMILIA**
I will not charm my tongue, I am bound to speak.
My mistress here lies murdered in her bed—

**ALL**
Oh, heavens forfend!

---

EMILIA
I will not be quiet! I have to speak. My mistress
here lies murdered in her bed—

**ALL**
No, heaven forbid!
EMILIA
And your reports have set the murder on.

OTHELLO
Nay, stare not, masters, it is true, indeed.

GRATIANO
’Tis a strange truth.

MONTANO
Oh, monstrous act!

EMILIA
Villainy, villainy, villainy!
I think upon ’t, I think I smell ’t, Oh, villainy!
I thought so then, I'll kill myself for grief.

OTHELLO
Don’t stand there gaping, everyone. It's true.

GRATIANO
It may be true, but it's unbelievable.

MONTANO
Oh, what a horrible deed!

EMILIA
Evil, evil, evil! I can smell it! I suspected it earlier.
I'll kill myself out of grief! Oh, evil, evil!

IAGO
Are you crazy? I’m ordering you, go home.

EMILIA
Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak.

IAGO
What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.

EMILIA
Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak.

OTHELLO
Oh! Oh! Oh!

EMILIA
Nay, lay thee down and roar,
For thou hast killed the sweetest innocent
That e’er did lift up eye.

OTHELLO
Oh, she was foul!—
I scarce did know you, uncle. There lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopped.
I know this act shows horrible and grim.

GRATIANO
Poor Desdenon! I am glad thy father’s dead,
Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain. Did he live now,

OTHELLO
She was filthy! I barely knew you, Uncle Gratiano.
Here’s your niece lying here dead. I killed her with these hands. I know this looks horrible.

GRATIANO
Poor Desdenona! I’m glad your father isn’t alive to see this. Your marriage made him die of grief before his time. If he was alive now, this sight would hurt

EMILIA
EMILIA
EMILIA
EMILIA
EMILIA
EMILIA
Oh, heaven! Oh, heavenly powers!

IAGO
Zounds, hold your peace.

EMILIA
'Twill out, 'twill out.—I peace?
No, I will speak as liberal as the north.
Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,
All, all cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

IAGO
Be wise, and get you home.

EMILIA
I will not.

GRATIANO
Fie! Your sword upon a woman?

EMILIA
O thou dull Moor! That handkerchief thou speak'st of
I found by fortune and did give my husband.

240
For often, with a solemn earnestness—
More than indeed belonged to such a trifle—
He begged of me to steal it.

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 13

IAGO
You evil whore!

EMILIA
You think she gave it to Cassio? No, I found it
And I did give 't my husband.

IAGO
Filth, thou liest!

EMILIA
O murderous coxcomb! What should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

245
By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.—
(to OTHELLO)
O murderous coxcomb! What should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

OTHELLO
Are there no stones in heaven
But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!

He runs at IAGO IAGO stabs EMILIA
GRATIANO
The woman falls! Sure he hath killed his wife.

EMILIA
Ay, ay. Oh, lay me by my mistress' side.

GRATIANO
He's gone, but his wife's killed.

MONTANO
'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,
Which I have recovered from the Moor.

OTHELLO
Won't heaven strike this Iago dead? You absolute villain!

GRATIANO
The woman's falling down! He's killed his wife!

EMILIA
Yes, yes! Lay me next to my mistress.

GRATIANO
He's gone, and his wife's dead.

MONTANO
He's a wicked, horrible criminal. Take the Moor's sword and guard the door from the outside. Kill
Original Text | Modern Text
---|---
255 Come, guard the door without. Let him not pass, him rather than let him leave this room. I'm going
But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain, after Iago. He's a horrid criminal.
For 'tis a damned slave.

Exeunt MONTANO and GRATIANO

MONTANO and GRATIANO exit.

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 14

OTHELLO | OTHHELLO
---|---
I am not valiant neither, I'm not that strong, if a puny nobody can grab my
But ever puny whipster gets my sword. sword. But why should my reputation for honor
But why should honor outlive honesty? last longer than my honor did? Let it all go.

Let it go all.

EMILIA | EMILIA
---|---
What did thy song bode, lady? What did your song mean, lady? Can you hear
Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan. me? I'll die like a swan. They sing when they die.
And die in music. (singing) Willow, willow, willow— Moor, she never cheated on you. She loved you,
Moor, she was chaste, she loved thee, cruel Moor. you cruel man. I swear on my soul I'm telling the
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true. truth, and as I say this, I die.

So speaking as I think, alas, I die. Dies

EMILIA dies.

OTHELLO | OTHHELLO
---|---
I have another weapon in this chamber, I've got another weapon in the room. It's a
It was a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper. Spanish sword, hardened in ice cold water and
Oh, here it is. Uncle, I must come forth. razor sharp. Here it is. Uncle, I'm coming out!

OTHELLO | OTHHELLO
---|---
Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer. (within) If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear.

GRATIANO | GRATIANO
---|---
(Offstage) If you try that, you'll pay for it. You've

GRATIANO | GRATIANO
---|---
Look in upon me then and speak with me, Look in on me, and talk with me, or I'll attack
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee. even without a weapon.

Enter GRATIANO

Enter GRATIANO

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 15

That with this little arm and this good sword who can control his fate? I'm not like that now.
I have made my way through more impediments Don't be afraid, even though you see me with a
Than twenty times your stop. But, oh, vain boast! weapon. This is the end of my journey, the end
Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now. of my life. Are you backing away in fear? There's

Be not afraid, though you do see me weaponed. no reason to be afraid. You could tap me with a
Here is my journey's end, here is my butt, feather and I'd back away. Where would Othello
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail. go?—Oh, look at you! Such cruel luck! You're as
Do you go back dismayed? 'tis a lost fear. pale as your nightgown! When we meet on
Man but a rush against Othello's breast, Judgment Day, that look of yours will send me
And he retires. Where should Othello go?— from heaven to hell, where devils will grab me.
Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starred wenches, You're cold, cold, and you were never hot with

Upon a soldier's thigh. I have seen the day
Original Text

Pale as thy smock! When we shall meet at compt
This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven
And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl,
Even like thy chastity. O cursed, cursed slave!
Whip me, ye devils,
From the possession of this heavenly sight!
Blow me about in winds, roast me in sulfur,
Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!—

Oh, Desdemona! Desdemona! dead! Oh, oh!

Enter LODOVICO, MONTANO, CASSIO carried in a chair, and officers with IAGO, prisoner

LODOVICO
Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

OTHELLO
That's he that was Othello. Here I am.

LODOVICO
Where is that viper? Bring the villain forth.

IAGO is brought forward

LODOVICO and MONTANO enter, followed by CASSIO on a stretcher, and officers with IAGO, prisoner.

LODOVICO
Where is that poor rash man?

OTHELLO
You mean the man who used to be Othello? Here I am.

LODOVICO
Where's that snake? Bring the villain forward.

IAGO is brought forward.

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 16

OTHELLO
I look down towards his feet, but that's a fable.

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

Stabs

LODOVICO
Wrench his sword from him.

They take OTHELLO's sword

IAGO
I bleed, sir, but not killed.

OTHELLO
I am not sorry neither. I'd have thee live,
For in my sense 'tis happiness to die.

LODOVICO
O thou Othello, thou was once so good,
Fall'n in the practice of a cursed slave,
What shall be said to thee?

OTHELLO
Why, anything.
An honorable murderer, if you will,
For naught I did in hate, but all in honor.

LODOVICO
This wretch hath part confessed his villainy.

Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

OTHELLO
Ay.

CASSIO
Dear general, I never gave you cause.

OTHELLO
I'm looking to see if you have cloven hooves like the devil. But that's just a fairy tale. If you are a devil, I won't be able to kill you.

OTHELLO stabs IAGO.

LODOVICO
Take his sword away from him.

They take OTHELLO's sword away.

IAGO
I'm bleeding, but you didn't kill me.

OTHELLO
I'm not sorry, either. I want you to live, since to me, death is happiness.

LODOVICO
Oh Othello, you were once so good, then you were tricked by this villain. What can I say to you?

OTHELLO
Say anything. Call me an honorable murderer if you like. I did nothing out of hate, only out of honor.

LODOVICO
This poor guy's partly confessed his plan. Did you plan Cassio's death with him?

OTHELLO
Yes.

CASSIO
Dear general, I never gave you any reason to hate me.
OTHELLO
I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil
Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 17

IAGO
Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.
From this time forth I never will speak word.

LODOVICO
What, not to pray?

GRATIANO
Torments will ope your lips.

OTHELLO
Well, thou dost best.

LODOVICO
Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not. Here is a letter
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo,
And here another. The one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

OTHELLO
Oh, villain!

CASSIO
Most heathenish and most gross!

LODOVICO
Now here’s another discontented paper
Found in his pocket too, and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damnèd villain
But that, belike, Iago in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.

OTHELLO
O thou pernicious caitiff!

CASSIO
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife’s?

CASSIO
I found it in my chamber,
And he himself confessed but even now
That there he dropped it for a special purpose
Which wrought to his desire.

OTHELLO
Oh fool! fool! fool!

CASSIO
There is besides in Roderigo’s letter
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch, whereon it came
That I was cast. And even but now he spake,
Original Text

After long seeming dead—Iago hurt him, Iago set him on.

LODOVICO
(to OTHELLO) You must forsake this room and go with us.
Your power and your command is taken off
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,
If there be any cunning cruelty
That can torment him much and hold him long,
It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest
Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state.—Come, bring him away.

OTHELLO
Soft you, a word or two before you go.
I have done the state some service, and they know 't.
No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am. Nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice. Then must you speak
Of one that loved not wisely, but too well.
Of one not easily jealous, but being wrought,
Perplexed in the extreme. Of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe. Of one whose subdued eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their medicinal gum. Set you down this,
And say besides that in Aleppo once,
Where a malignant and a turbaned Turk
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,
I took by the throat the circumcisèd dog,
And smote him, thus.

LODOVICO
(to OTHELLO) You bloodthirsty dog, you're crueler
dead for a long while—Iago tricked him, Iago urged him to do it.

LODOVICO
(to OTHELLO) You'll have to leave this room and come with us. You're stripped of your power and your command, and Cassio will govern Cyprus. As for this slave, Iago, if we can think of any torture that will hurt him a lot but keep him alive a long time, he'll have it. You'll remain a prisoner until we bring your crimes to the Venetian government.—Okay, take him away.

OTHELLO
Wait. A word or two before you go. I've given the state of Venice a bit of help in the past, and they know it. But enough about that. When you record these sad events in your letters, please describe me exactly as I am. Don't tone things down or exaggerate them out of hostility. If you're being fair, you'll have to describe me as someone who loved too much, but who wasn't wise about it. I was not easily made jealous, but once I was tricked and manipulated, I worked myself into a frenzy. Describe me as a fool who threw away a precious pearl with his own hands, like a silly Indian who didn't know what it was worth. As someone who was not emotional, but who then cried a lot. Write all this down, and then say also that in Aleppo I once saw a Turk beating a Venetian, so I grabbed the Turk by the throat and hit him like this.

LODOVICO
Oh, bloody period!

GRATIANO
All that is spoke is marred.

OTHELLO
I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this,
Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

Kisses DESDEMONA, dies

CASSIO
This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon,
For he was great of heart.

LODOVICO
(to IAGO)

Act 5, Scene 2, Page 19

Modern Text

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LODOVICO
(to OTHELLO)
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LODOVICO
Oh, what a bloody end to all this!

GRATIANO
Everything we've heard is bad.

OTHELLO
(to DESDEMONA) I kissed you before I killed you. Now, killing myself, I'm dying while I kiss you again.

OTHELLO kisses DESDEMONA and dies.

CASSIO
I was afraid this would happen, because he was a noble, brave man, but I didn't think he had a weapon.

LODOVICO
(to IAGO) You bloodthirsty dog, you're crueler...
**Original Text**

O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea,
Look on the tragic loading of this bed.
This is thy work. The object poisons sight,
Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house

And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you.—To you, lord governor,
Remains the censure of this hellish villain:
The time, the place, the torture. Oh, enforce it!
Myself will straight aboard, and to the state

**Modern Text**

than sadness or hunger, crueler than the sea.

Look at these dead people on this bed. You did all this. He makes me sick. Take him away.

Gratiano, take care of the house, and take the Moor’s property. You’ve inherited everything.—

(to CASSIO) Governor, I leave it in your hands to punish this evil villain: just decide the time, the place and the means of torture. And then carry it out! I have to go back to Venice, and tell them about these sad events.

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Exeunt

They all exit.