

## ACT IV • Scene 1

The environs of the castle.

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?

5 OTHELLO: Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm?  
It is hypocrisy against the devil.<sup>o</sup>

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?

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!

20 Thou said'st — O, it comes o'er my memory  
As doth the raven o'er the infected<sup>o</sup> house,  
Boding to all! — he had my handkerchief.

IAGO: Ay, what of that?

OTHELLO: That's not so good now.

IAGO: What

25 If I had said I had seen him do you wrong?  
Or heard him say — as knaves be such abroad  
Who having, by their own importunate suit,  
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,  
Convincèd or supplièd<sup>o</sup> them, cannot choose  
But they must blab —

OTHELLO: Hath he said anything?

30 IAGO: He hath, my lord; but be you well assured,  
No more than he'll unswear.

OTHELLO: What hath he said?

IAGO: Faith, that he did — I know not what he did.

OTHELLO: What? what?

IAGO: Lie —

OTHELLO: With her?

35 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! Zounds,  
that's fulsome. — Handkerchief — confessions —  
handkerchief! — To confess, and be hanged for his

labor — first to be hanged, and then to confess! 40  
I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in  
such shadowing passion without some instruction.<sup>o</sup>  
It is not words that shakes me thus. — Pish! Noses,  
ears, and lips? Is't possible? — Confess? — Hand-  
kerchief? — O devil! 45

(Falls in a trance.)

IAGO: Work on,

My med'cine, 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? 50

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<sup>o</sup> must have his quiet course.

55 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.

He will recover straight. When he is gone,

I would on great occasion speak with you. 60

[Exit Cassio.]

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

OTHELLO: Dost thou mock me?

IAGO: I mock you? No, by heaven.

Would you would bear your fortune like a man!

OTHELLO: A hornèd man's<sup>o</sup> a monster and a beast.

IAGO: There's many a beast then in a populous city,

And many a civil monster. 65

OTHELLO: Did he confess it?

IAGO: Good sir, be a man.

Think every bearded fellow that's but yoked

May draw with you. There's millions now alive

70 That nightly lie in those unproper<sup>o</sup> beds

Which they dare swear peculiar:<sup>o</sup> your case is better.

O, 'tis the spite of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,

To lip a wanton in a secure<sup>o</sup> couch,

And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;

And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be. 75

OTHELLO: O, thou art wise! 'Tis certain.

IAGO: Stand you

awhile apart;

Confine yourself but in a patient list.<sup>o</sup>

Whilst you were here, o'erwhelmèd with your  
grief —

41–42. Nature . . . instruction: My natural faculties would not  
be so overcome by passion without reason. 55. lethargy:  
Coma. 64. hornèd man: Cuckold. 70. unproper: Not ex-  
clusively their own. 71. peculiar: Exclusively their own.  
73. secure: Free from fear of rivalry. 77. in a patient list:  
Within the limits of self-control.

IV, I. 6. hypocrisy . . . devil: I.e., feigned sin instead of feigned  
virtue. 21. infected: Plague-stricken. 28. Convincèd or sup-  
plied: Overcome or gratified.

80 A passion most unsuited such a man —  
Cassio came hither. I shifted him away  
And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy,<sup>81</sup>  
Bade him anon return, and here speak with me;  
The which he promised. Do but encave<sup>82</sup> yourself  
And mark the fliers, the gibes, and notable scorns  
85 That dwell in every region of his face;  
For I will make him tell the tale anew —  
Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when  
He hath, and is again to cope<sup>83</sup> your wife.  
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience!  
90 Or I shall say y'are all in all in spleen,<sup>84</sup>  
And nothing of a man.

OTHELLO: Dost thou hear, Iago?  
I will be found most cunning in my patience;  
But — dost thou hear? — most bloody.

IAGO: That's not amiss:  
But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?  
*[Othello retires.]*

95 Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,  
A huswife<sup>85</sup> 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.  
100 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<sup>86</sup> jealousy must conster<sup>87</sup>  
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behavior  
Quite in the wrong. How do you now, lieutenant?  
105 CASSIO: The worse that you give me the addition<sup>88</sup>  
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!

110 CASSIO: Alas, poor caitiff!<sup>89</sup>  
OTHELLO: Look how he laughs already!  
IAGO: I never knew a woman love man so.  
CASSIO: Alas, poor rogue! I think, i' faith, she loves me.  
OTHELLO: Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.  
IAGO: Do you hear, Cassio?

115 OTHELLO: Now he importunes him  
To tell it o'er. Go to! Well said, well said!  
IAGO: She gives out that you shall marry her.  
Do you intend it?  
CASSIO: Ha, ha, ha!

120 OTHELLO: Do you triumph, Roman? Do you triumph?  
CASSIO: I marry her? What, a customer?<sup>90</sup> Prithee bear  
some charity to my wit; do not think it so unwhole-  
some. Ha, ha, ha!

81. ecstasy: Trance. 83. encave: Conceal. 88. cope: Meet.  
90. all in all in spleen: Wholly overcome by your passion.  
96. huswife: Hussy. 103. unbookish: Uninstructed. conster:  
Construe, interpret. 106. addition: Title. 110. caitiff: Wretch.  
121. customer: Prostitute.

OTHELLO: So, so, so, so! They laugh that win!  
IAGO: Faith, the cry goes that you shall marry her. 125  
CASSIO: Prithee say true.  
IAGO: I am a very villain else.  
OTHELLO: Have you scored me?<sup>91</sup> Well.  
CASSIO: This is the monkey's own giving out. She is per-  
suaded I will marry her out of her own love and flat- 130  
tery, not out of my promise.  
OTHELLO: Iago beckons<sup>92</sup> me; now he begins the story.  
CASSIO: She was here even now; she haunts me in every  
place. I was t' other day talking on the sea bank with  
certain Venetians, and thither comes the bauble,<sup>93</sup> 135  
and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck —  
OTHELLO: Crying "O dear Cassio!" as it were. His ges-  
ture imports it.  
CASSIO: So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me; so  
shakes and pulls me! Ha, ha, ha! 140  
OTHELLO: Now he tells how she plucked him to my  
chamber. O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog  
I shall throw it to.  
CASSIO: Well, I must leave her company.  
*Enter Bianca.*  
IAGO: Before me! Look where she comes. 145  
CASSIO: 'Tis such another fitchew!<sup>94</sup> marry, a perfumed  
one. What do you mean by this haunting of me?  
BIANCA: 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 150  
the whole work? A likely piece of work that you  
should find it in your chamber and know not who  
left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must  
take out the work? There! Give it your hobby-horse.<sup>95</sup>  
Wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't. 155  
CASSIO: How now, my sweet Bianca? How now? how  
now?  
OTHELLO: By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!  
BIANCA: An you'll come to supper to-night, you may; an  
you will not, come when you are next prepared for. 160  
*Exit.*  
IAGO: After her, after her!  
CASSIO: Faith, 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 165  
fain speak with you.  
CASSIO: Prithee come. Will you?  
IAGO: Go to! say no more. *Exit Cassio.*  
OTHELLO [*comes forward*]: How shall I murder him,  
Iago? 170  
IAGO: Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?<sup>96</sup>  
OTHELLO: O Iago!  
IAGO: And did you see the handkerchief?  
OTHELLO: Was that mine?

128. scored me: Settled my account (?). 132. beckons: Sig-  
nals. 135. bauble: Plaything. 146. fitchew: Polecat (slang for  
whore). 154. hobby-horse: Harlot. 171. vice: I.e., vicious  
conduct.

175 IAGO: Yours, by this hand! And to see how he prizes<sup>o</sup> the foolish woman your wife! She gave it him, and he hath giv'n it his whore.  
 OTHELLO: I would have him nine years a-killing — A fine woman! a fair woman! a sweet woman!

180 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. O, the world hath not a sweeter creature! She might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

185 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! O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear! Of so high and plenteous wit and invention<sup>o</sup> —

190 IAGO: She's the worse for all this.  
 OTHELLO: O, a thousand thousand times! And then, of so gentle a condition!<sup>o</sup>  
 IAGO: Ay, too gentle.

195 OTHELLO: Nay, 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<sup>o</sup> to offend; for if it touch not you, it comes near nobody.

200 OTHELLO: I will chop her into messes! Cuckold me!  
 IAGO: O, 'tis foul in her.  
 OTHELLO: With mine officer!  
 IAGO: That's fouler.

205 OTHELLO: Get me some poison, Iago, this night. I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide<sup>o</sup> my mind again. This night, 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!

210 IAGO: And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker,<sup>o</sup> you shall hear more by midnight.  
 OTHELLO: Excellent good!

*A trumpet.*  
 What trumpet is that same?  
 IAGO: I warrant something from Venice.

*Enter Lodovico, Desdemona, and Attendants.*

215 'Tis Lodovico.  
 This comes from the Duke; and see, your wife is with him.  
 LODOVICO: God save you, worthy general!  
 OTHELLO: With all my heart, sir.  
 LODOVICO: The Duke and senators of Venice greet you.

[*Gives him a letter.*]

175. prizes: Values. 190. invention: Imagination. 193. condition: Disposition. 198. patent: License. 205. unprovide: Disarm. 211. be his undertaker: Undertake to deal with him.

OTHELLO: I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

[*Opens the letter and reads.*]

DESDEMONA: And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico? 220

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

LODOVICO: I thank you. How does Lieutenant Cassio?

IAGO: Lives, sir.

DESDEMONA: Cousin, there's fall'n between him and my lord

An unkind breach; but you shall make all well. 225

OTHELLO: Are you sure of that?

DESDEMONA: My lord?

OTHELLO [*reads*]: "This fail you not to do, as you will —"

LODOVICO: He did not call; he's busy in the paper. Is there division 'twixt thy lord and Cassio? 230

DESDEMONA: A most unhappy one. I would do much T' atone<sup>o</sup> 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: May be the letter moved him;

For, as I think, they do command him home, Deputing Cassio in his government. 235

DESDEMONA: By my troth, I am glad on't.

OTHELLO: Indeed?

DESDEMONA: My lord?

OTHELLO: I am glad to see you mad.<sup>o</sup>

DESDEMONA: Why, sweet Othello —

OTHELLO: Devil!

[*Strikes her.*]

DESDEMONA: I have not deserved this. 240

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: O devil, devil!

If that the earth could teem<sup>o</sup> with woman's tears,

Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.<sup>o</sup> 245

Out of my sight!

DESDEMONA: I will not stay to offend you.

[*Going.*]

LODOVICO: Truly, an obedient lady.

I do beseech your lordship call her back.

OTHELLO: Mistress!

DESDEMONA: My lord?

OTHELLO: What would you with her, sir? 250

LODOVICO: Who? I, my lord?

232. atone: Reconcile. 238. mad: I.e., waggish. 244. teem: Breed. 245. crocodile: (Crocodiles were supposed to shed hypocritical tears to lure men to destruction).

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;  
255 And she's obedient; as you say, obedient,  
Very obedient. — Proceed you in your tears. —  
Concerning this, sir — O well-painted passion!° —  
I am commanded home. — Get you away;  
I'll send for you anon. — Sir, I obey the mandate  
260 And will return to Venice. — Hence, avaunt!

[Exit Desdemona.]

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

Exit.

LODOVICO: Is this the noble Moor whom our full  
Senate  
265 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?

270 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?°

275 Or did the letters work upon his blood  
And new-create this fault?

IAGO: Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me to speak  
What I have seen and known. You shall observe  
him,

280 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.

Exeunt.

### Scene II

Within the castle.

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  
5 Each syllable that breath made up between them.

OTHELLO: What, did they never whisper?

257. passion: Grief. 274. use: Custom.

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.

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 and Emilia.

DESDEMONA: 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.

Leave procreants° alone and shut the door;

Cough or cry hem if anybody come.

Your mystery, your mystery!° Nay, dispatch!

Exit Emilia.

DESDEMONA: Upon my knees, what doth your speech  
import?

I understand a fury in your words,

[But not the words.]

OTHELLO: Why, what art thou?

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-  
damned —

Swear thou art honest.°

DESDEMONA: Heaven doth truly know it.

OTHELLO: Heaven truly knows that thou art false as  
hell.

IV, ii. 14. abuse . . . bosom: Deceive your heart. 16. serpent's  
curse: (Cf. Genesis 3:14). 28. procreants: Mating couples.  
30. mystery: Trade, occupation. 36. being . . . heaven: Look-  
ing like an angel. 38. honest: Chaste.

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

OTHELLO: Ah, Desdemona! away! away! away!

DESDEMONA: Alas the heavy day! Why do you weep?  
Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?

If haply you my father do suspect  
An instrument<sup>o</sup> 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  
A fixèd figure for the time of scorn<sup>o</sup>

To point his slow unmoving finger at!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well.

But there where I have garnered up my heart,  
Where either I must live or bear no life,

The fountain from the 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,<sup>o</sup>  
Patience, thou young and rose-lipped cherubin!

Ay, there look grim as hell!

DESDEMONA: I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

OTHELLO: O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,<sup>o</sup>  
That quicken<sup>o</sup> 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?

Committed? O thou public commoner!<sup>o</sup>

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;<sup>o</sup>

The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,  
Is hushed within the hollow mine of earth

And will not hear it. What committed?

Impudent strumpet!

DESDEMONA: By heaven, you do me wrong!

OTHELLO: Are not you 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.

45. An instrument: To be the cause. 54. time of scorn: Scornful world. 62. turn thy complexion there: Change thy color at that point. 66. shambles: Slaughterhouse. 67. quicken: Come to life. 73. commoner: Harlot. 77. winks: Closes her eyes.

OTHELLO: What, not a whore?

DESDEMONA: No, as I shall be saved!

OTHELLO: Is't possible?

DESDEMONA: O, heaven forgive us!

OTHELLO: I cry you mercy<sup>o</sup> then.

I took you for that cunning whore of Venice

That married with Othello. — [Calling.] 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.<sup>o</sup>

EMILIA: Good madam, what's the matter with my lord?

DESDEMONA: With who?

EMILIA: Why, with my lord, madam.

DESDEMONA: Who is thy lord?

EMILIA:

He that is yours, sweet lady.

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

I cannot weep; nor answer have I none

But what should go by water. Prithee to-night

Lay on my bed my wedding sheets, remember;

And call thy husband hither.

EMILIA:

Here's a change indeed!

*Exit.*

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

How have I been behaved, that he might stick

The small'st opinion<sup>o</sup> on my least misuse?<sup>o</sup>

*Enter Iago and Emilia.*

IAGO: What is your pleasure, madam? How is't with  
you?

DESDEMONA: I cannot tell. Those that do teach young  
babes

Do it with gentle means and easy tasks:

He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,

I am a child to chiding.

IAGO:

What is the matter, lady?

EMILIA: Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,

Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her  
As true hearts cannot bear.

DESDEMONA: Am I that name, Iago?

IAGO:

What name, fair lady?

DESDEMONA: Such as she said my lord did say I was.

EMILIA: He called her whore. A beggar in his drink

Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.<sup>o</sup>

IAGO: Why did he so?

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

88. cry you mercy: Beg your pardon. 97. half asleep: I.e., stunned. 109. small'st opinion: Least suspicion. least misuse: Slightest misconduct. 121. callet: Whore.

- IAGO: Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!
- 125 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: It is my wretched fortune.
- IAGO: Beshrew him for't!  
How comes this trick° upon him?
- DESDEMONA: Nay, heaven doth know.
- 130 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'll be hanged else.
- IAGO: Fie, there is no such man! It is impossible.
- 135 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,  
140 Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.  
O heaven, 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.°
- 145 EMILIA: O, 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?  
150 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  
155 Delighted them in 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;  
160 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.
- 165 IAGO: I pray you be content. 'Tis but his humor.  
The business of the state does him offense,  
[And he does chide with you.]
- DESDEMONA: If 'twere no other —
- IAGO: 'Tis but so, I warrant.

[Trumpets within.]

129. trick: Freakish behavior. 132. cogging, cozening: Cheating, defrauding. 141. companions: Rogues. unfold: Expose. 144. within door: With restraint. 153. discourse: Course. 159. Comfort forswear: Happiness forsake. 160. defeat: Destroy.

Hark how these instruments summon you to supper.  
The messengers of Venice stay 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. I will indeed no longer endure it; nor am I yet persuaded to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

IAGO: Will you hear me, Roderigo?

RODERIGO: Faith, I have heard too much; for your words and performances are no kin together.

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 to Desdemona would half have corrupted a votarist.° 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, go to; very well.

RODERIGO: Very well! go to! I cannot go to, man; nor 'tis not very well. By this hand, I say 'tis very scurvy, and begin to find myself fopped° in it.

IAGO: Very well.

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.

IAGO: You have said now.

RODERIGO: Ay, and said nothing but what I protest intendment of doing.

IAGO: Why, now I see there's mettle in thee; and even from this instant do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo. Thou 'has taken against me a most just exception; but yet I protest I have dealt most directly° in thy affair.

RODERIGO: It hath not appeared.

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.

175-76. thou . . . device: You put me off with some trick. 177. conveniency: Favorable opportunities. 188. votarist: Nun. 190. sudden respect: Immediate notice. 194. fopped: Duped. 208. directly: Straightforwardly. 217. engines for: Plots against.

RODERIGO: Well, what is it? Is it within reason and compass?

220 IAGO: Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

RODERIGO: Is that true? Why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

225 IAGO: O, no; he goes into Mauritania and takes away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here<sup>o</sup> by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate<sup>o</sup> as the removing of Cassio.

RODERIGO: How do you mean removing of him?

230 IAGO: Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place — knocking out his brains.

RODERIGO: And that you would have me to do?

180 IAGO: Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups to-night 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 supper time, and the night grows to waste. About it!

190 RODERIGO: I will hear further reason for this.

IAGO: And you shall be satisfied. *Exeunt.*

Scene III

195 *Within the castle.*

*Enter Othello, Lodovico, Desdemona, Emilia, and Attendants.*

200 LODOVICO: I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

OTHELLO: O, pardon me; 'twill do me good to walk.

LODOVICO: Madam, good night. I humbly thank your ladyship.

205 DESDEMONA: Your honor is most welcome.

OTHELLO: Will you walk, sir?

5 O, Desdemona —

DESDEMONA: My lord?

210 OTHELLO: Get you to bed on th' instant; I will be returned forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there. Look't be done.

10 DESDEMONA: I will, my lord.

*Exit [Othello, with Lodovico and Attendants].*

215 EMILIA: How goes it now? He looks gentler than he did.

DESDEMONA: He says he will return incontinent.<sup>o</sup>

225-26. abode . . . here: Stay here be extended. 226. determinate: Effective. IV, iii. 12. incontinent: At once.

He hath commanded me to go to bed,  
And bade me to dismiss you.

EMILIA: Dismiss me?

DESDEMONA: It was his bidding; therefore, good Emilia,

15 Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu. We must not now displease him.

EMILIA: I would you had never seen him!

DESDEMONA: So would not I. My love doth so approve him

20 That even his stubbornness,<sup>o</sup> his checks,<sup>o</sup> his frowns —

Prithee unpin me — have grace and favor in them.

EMILIA: I have laid those sheets you bade me on the bed.

DESDEMONA: All's one. Good faith, how foolish are our minds!

If I do die before thee, prithee shroud me  
In one of those same sheets.

EMILIA: Come, come! You talk.

DESDEMONA: My mother had a maid called Barbary.

She was in love; and he she loved proved mad<sup>o</sup>

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 to-night

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. Prithee dispatch.

EMILIA: Shall I go fetch your nightgown?<sup>o</sup>

DESDEMONA: No, unpin me here. 35

This Lodovico is a proper man.

EMILIA: A very handsome man.

DESDEMONA: He speaks well.

EMILIA: I know a lady in Venice would have walked barefoot to Palestine for a touch of his nether lip.

DESDEMONA (*sings*): 40

"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;

45 Sing willow, willow, willow;

Her salt tears fell from her, and soft'ned the stones" —

Lay by these.

"Sing willow, willow, willow" —

Prithee hie thee;<sup>o</sup> he'll come anon.

50 "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*):

55 "I call my love false love; but what said he then?

Sing willow, willow, willow:

20. stubbornness: Roughness. checks: Rebukes. 27. mad: Wild, faithless. 34. nightgown: Dressing gown. 50. hie thee: Hurry.

If I court moe women, you'll couch with moe 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. O, these men,  
these men!

60 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.

DESDEMONA: Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the  
world?

EMILIA: Why, would not you?

65 DESDEMONA: No, by this heavenly light!

EMILIA: Nor I neither by this heavenly light.  
I might do't as well i' th' dark.

DESDEMONA: Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the  
world?

70 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 it. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a

75 joint-ring,<sup>o</sup> nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns,  
petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition;<sup>o</sup> but,  
for all the whole world — 'Ud's pity! who would not  
make her husband a cuckold to make him a mon-  
arch? I should venture purgatory for't.

80 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.

85 DESDEMONA: I do not think there is any such woman.

EMILIA: Yes, a dozen; and as many to th' vantage<sup>o</sup> as  
Would store<sup>o</sup> the world they played for.

But I do think it is their husbands' faults

If wives do fall. Say that they slack their duties

90 And pour our treasures into foreign laps;  
Or else break out in peevish<sup>o</sup> jealousies,

Throwing restraint upon us; or say they strike us,  
Or scant our former having<sup>o</sup> in despite —

Why, we have galls;<sup>o</sup> and though we have some  
grace,

95 Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know  
Their wives have sense like them. They see, and  
smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,  
As husbands have. What is it that they do

When they change us for others? Is it sport?

100 I think it is. And doth affection breed it?

I think it doth. Is't frailty that thus errs?

75. joint-ring: Ring made in separable halves. 76. exhibi-  
tion: Gift. 86. to th' vantage: Besides. 87. store: Populate.  
91. peevish: Senseless. 93. having: Allowance. 94. galls:  
Spirits to resent.

It is so too. And have not we affections,  
Desires for sport, and frailty, as men have?  
Then let them use us well; else let them know,  
The ills we do, their ills instruct us so.

DESDEMONA: Good night, good night. God me such  
usage<sup>o</sup> send,

Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!

*Exeunt.*

### ACT V • Scene 1

*A street in Cyprus.*

*Enter Iago and Roderigo.*

IAGO: Here, stand behind this bulk;<sup>o</sup> 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.

*[Stands aside.]*

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: I have rubbed this young quat<sup>o</sup> almost to the  
sense,<sup>o</sup>

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<sup>o</sup> 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. Be't so! I hear him coming.

*Enter Cassio.*

RODERIGO: I know his gait. 'Tis he. Villain, thou diest!

*[Makes a pass at Cassio.]*

CASSIO: That thrust had been mine enemy indeed

But that my coat<sup>o</sup> is better than thou know'st.

I will make proof of thine.

*[Draws, and wounds Roderigo.]*

RODERIGO: O, I am slain!

*[Iago darts from concealment behind Cassio,  
wounds him in the leg, and exits.]*

106. usage: Habits. V, 1. 1. bulk: Projecting shop-front.  
11. quat: Pimple. sense: Quick. 16. bobbed: Swindled.  
25. coat: Undershirt of mail.



CASSIO: I am maimed for ever. Help, ho! Murder!  
murder!

[Falls.]

Enter Othello.

OTHELLO: The voice of Cassio. Iago keeps his word.

RODERIGO: O, villain—that I am!

OTHELLO: It is even so.

30 CASSIO: O, help, ho! light! a surgeon!

OTHELLO: 'Tis he. O brave Iago, honest and just,  
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!  
Thou teachest me. Minion,<sup>o</sup> your dear lies dead,  
And your unblest fate hies.<sup>o</sup> Strumpet, I come.  
Forth of my heart those charms, thine eyes, are  
35 blotted.

Thy bed, lust-stained, shall with lust's blood be  
spotted. *Exit Othello.*

Enter Lodovico and Gratiano.

CASSIO: What, ho? No watch? No passage?<sup>p</sup> Murder!  
murder!

GRATIANO: 'Tis some mischance. The cry is very  
direful.

CASSIO: O, help!

40 LODOVICO: Hark!

RODERIGO: O wretched villain!

LODOVICO: Two or three groan. It is a heavy<sup>o</sup> night.

These may be counterfeits. Let's think't unsafe  
To come in to the cry without more help.

45 RODERIGO: Nobody come? Then shall I bleed to death.

LODOVICO: Hark!

Enter Iago, with a light.

GRATIANO: Here's one comes in his shirt, with light  
and weapons.

IAGO: Who's there? Whose noise is this that cries on<sup>o</sup>  
murder?

LODOVICO: We do not know.

IAGO: Did not you hear a cry?

CASSIO: Here, here! For heaven's sake, help me!

IAGO: What's  
50 the matter?

GRATIANO: This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

LODOVICO: The same indeed, a very valiant fellow.

IAGO: What are you here that cry so grievously?

CASSIO: Iago? O, I am spoiled, undone by villains!

55 Give me some help.

IAGO: O me, lieutenant! What villains have done this?

CASSIO: I think that one of them is hereabout

And cannot make<sup>o</sup> away.

IAGO: O treacherous villains!

[To Lodovico and Gratiano.]

What are you there? Come in, and give some help.

33. Minion: Mistress. 34. hies: Hurries on. 37. passage:  
Passersby. 42. heavy: Cloudy, dark. 48. cries on: Raises the  
cry of. 58. make: Get.

RODERIGO: O, help me here!

60

CASSIO: That's one of them.

IAGO: O murd'rous slave! O villain!

[Stabs Roderigo.]

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?

65

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?

70

IAGO: How is't, brother?

CASSIO: My leg is cut in two.

IAGO: Marry,<sup>o</sup> heaven forbid!

Light, gentlemen. I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter Bianca.

BIANCA: What is the matter, ho? Who is't that cried?

IAGO: Who is't that cried?

75

BIANCA: O 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?

CASSIO: No.

80

GRATIANO: I am sorry to find you thus. I have been to  
seek you.

IAGO: Lend me a garter. So. O for a chair<sup>o</sup>

To bear him easily hence!

BIANCA: Alas, he faints! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

IAGO: Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash

85

To be a party in this injury. —

Patience a while, 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. — O heaven, Roderigo!

90

GRATIANO: What, of Venice?

IAGO: Even he, sir. Did you know him?

GRATIANO: Know him? Ay.

IAGO: Signior Gratiano? I cry your gentle pardon.

These bloody accidents must excuse my manners

That so neglected you.

GRATIANO: I am glad to see you.

95

IAGO: How do you, Cassio? — O, a chair, a chair!

GRATIANO: Roderigo?

IAGO: He, he, 'tis he!

[A chair brought in.]

O, that's well said;<sup>o</sup> the chair.

Some good man bear him carefully from hence.

100

I'll fetch the general's surgeon. [To Bianca.] For you,  
mistress,

72. Marry: (From "By Mary"). 82. chair: Litter. 99. well  
said: Well done.

105

5

10

15

20

iril.

liest!

25

Cassio,  
exits.]

p-front.  
vindled.

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? — O, bear him  
out o' th' air.

[Cassio and Roderigo are borne off.]

Stay you, good gentlemen. — Look you pale,  
mistress? —

Do you perceive the gastness<sup>o</sup> of her eye? —

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.

Enter Emilia.

EMILIA: 'Las, what's the matter? What's the matter,  
husband?

IAGO: Cassio hath here been set on in the dark

By Roderigo, and fellows that are scaped.

He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

EMILIA: Alas, good gentlemen! alas, good Cassio!

IAGO: This is the fruits of whoring. Prithee, Emilia,  
Go know of Cassio where he supped to-night.

[To Bianca.]

What, do you shake at that?

BIANCA: He supped at my house; but I therefore shake  
not.

IAGO: O, did he so? I charge you go with me.

EMILIA: Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!

BIANCA: I am no strumpet, but of life as honest<sup>o</sup>  
As you that thus abuse me.

EMILIA: As I? Foh! fie upon thee!

IAGO: Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dressed.

[To Bianca.]

Come, mistress, you must tell 's another tale.  
Emilia, run you to the citadel

And tell my lord and lady what hath happed.

[Exit Emilia.]

Will you go on afore? *Exeunt [all but Iago].*

This is the night

That either makes me or fordoes<sup>o</sup> me quite. [Exit.]

## Scene II

A bedchamber in the castle.

Desdemona [asleep] in her bed. Enter Othello with a light.

OTHELLO: It is the cause, it is the cause,<sup>o</sup> 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,<sup>o</sup>

I can again thy former light restore,

Should I repent me; but once put out thy light,

Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,

I know not where is that Promethean heat<sup>o</sup>

That can thy light relume.<sup>o</sup> When I have plucked the  
rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again;

It needs must wither. I'll smell thee on the tree.

(He kisses her.)

O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade

Justice to break her sword! One more, one more!

Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,

And love thee after. 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.

DESDEMONA: Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO: Have you prayed to-night, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA: Ay,  
my lord.

OTHELLO: If you bethink yourself of any crime<sup>o</sup>

Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,

Solicit for it straight.

DESDEMONA: Alack, my lord, what may you mean by  
that?

OTHELLO: Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by.

I would not kill thy unprepared spirit.

No, heaven forbid! 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 so, I hope you will not kill me.

OTHELLO: Hum!

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.

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.

107. gastness: Terror. 123. honest: Chaste. 130. fordoes: Destroys. V, ii. 1. cause: Cause of justice.

8. minister: Servant. 12. Promethean heat: Divine fire. 13. relume: Relight. 26. crime: Sin. 32. forbid: Forbid.

45 These are portents,<sup>o</sup> 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.  
50 OTHELLO: Sweet soul, take heed,  
Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy deathbed.  
DESDEMONA: Ay, but not yet to die.  
OTHELLO: Yes, presently.<sup>o</sup>  
Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;  
For to deny each article with oath  
55 Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception<sup>o</sup>  
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.  
DESDEMONA: Then Lord have mercy on me!  
OTHELLO: I say amen.  
DESDEMONA: And have you mercy too! I never did  
Offend<sup>o</sup> you in my life; never loved Cassio  
60 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,<sup>o</sup>  
And mak'st me call what I intend to do  
65 A murder, which I thought 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 used thee.  
30 DESDEMONA: How? Unlawfully?  
OTHELLO: Ay.  
DESDEMONA: He will not say so.  
OTHELLO: No, his mouth is stopped.  
Honest Iago hath ta'en order<sup>o</sup> for't.  
DESDEMONA: O, my fear interprets. What, is he dead?  
OTHELLO: Had all his hairs been lives, my great  
revenge  
75 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: O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!  
OTHELLO: Down, strumpet!  
80 DESDEMONA: Kill me to-morrow; let me live to-night!  
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.

45. portents: Signs of impending violence. 52. presently: At once. 55. conception: Belief. 59. Offend: Wrong. 63. stone my heart: Turn my heart to stone. 72. ta'en order: Taken measures.

(*Smothers her.*)

[DESDEMONA: O Lord, Lord, Lord!]

*Emilia at the door.*

EMILIA (*calls within*): My lord, my lord! What, ho! my lord, my lord! 85

OTHELLO: What noise is this? Not dead? not yet quite dead?

I that am cruel am yet merciful;  
I would not have thee linger in thy pain.  
So, so.

EMILIA (*within*): What, ho! my lord, my lord!

OTHELLO: Who's there? 90

EMILIA (*within*): O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you!

OTHELLO: Yes, 'tis Emilia. — By and by.<sup>o</sup> — She's dead. —

'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death.  
The noise was here. Ha! no more moving?  
Still as the grave. — Shall she come in? Were't good! — 95

I think she stirs again. No. — What's best to do?  
If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife.  
My wife! my wife! what wife! I have no wife.  
O, insupportable! O heavy hour!

Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse 100  
Of sun and moon, and that th' affrighted globe  
Should yawn<sup>o</sup> at alteration.

EMILIA (*within*): I do beseech you  
That I may speak with you, O good my lord!

OTHELLO: I had forgot thee. O, come in, Emilia.  
Soft, by and by. — Let me the curtains draw. — 105

[*Closes the bed-curtains.*]

Where art thou?

[*Opens the door.*]

*Enter Emilia.*

What's the matter with thee now?

EMILIA: O my good lord, yonder's foul murder done!

OTHELLO: What? Now?

EMILIA: But now, my lord.

OTHELLO: It is the very error<sup>o</sup> of the moon. 110  
She comes more nearer earth than she was wont  
And makes men mad.

EMILIA: Cassio, my lord, hath killed a young Venetian  
Called Roderigo.

OTHELLO: Roderigo killed?  
And Cassio killed?

EMILIA: No, Cassio is not killed. 115

OTHELLO: Not Cassio killed? Then murder's out of  
tune,

And sweet revenge grows harsh.

DESDEMONA: O, falsely, falsely murdered?

92. By and by: Just a moment (addressed to Emilia).  
102. yawn: Open, as in an earthquake. 110. error: Straying off course.

EMILIA: O, Lord!  
 what cry is that?  
 OTHELLO: That? What?  
 120 EMILIA: Out and alas! that was my lady's voice.  
 Help! help, ho! help! O lady, speak again!  
 Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!  
 DESDEMONA: A guiltless death I die.  
 EMILIA: O, who hath done this deed?  
 125 DESDEMONA: Nobody — I myself. Farewell.  
 Commend<sup>o</sup> me to my kind lord. O, farewell!  
 (*She dies.*)  
 OTHELLO: Why, how should she be murd' red?  
 EMILIA: Alas,  
 who knows?  
 OTHELLO: You heard her say herself, it was not I.  
 EMILIA: She said so. I must needs report the truth.  
 130 OTHELLO: She's like a liar gone to burning hell!  
 'Twas I that killed her.  
 EMILIA: O, 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: She was false as water.<sup>o</sup>  
 EMILIA: Thou art rash as fire  
 135 to say  
 That she was false. O, she was heavenly true!  
 OTHELLO: Cassio did top her. Ask thy husband else.  
 O, I were damned beneath all depth in hell  
 But that I did proceed upon just grounds  
 140 To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.  
 EMILIA: My husband?  
 OTHELLO: Thy husband.  
 EMILIA: That she was false to wedlock?  
 OTHELLO: Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,  
 145 If heaven would make me such another world  
 Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,<sup>o</sup>  
 I'd not have sold her for it.  
 EMILIA: My husband?  
 OTHELLO: Ay 'twas he that told me first.  
 An honest man he is, and hates the slime  
 That sticks on filthy deeds.  
 150 EMILIA: My husband?  
 OTHELLO: What needs this iterance,<sup>o</sup> woman? I say thy  
 husband.  
 EMILIA: O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with  
 love!  
 My husband say that she was false?  
 OTHELLO: He, woman.  
 I say, thy husband. Dost understand the word?  
 155 My friend, thy husband; honest, honest Iago.  
 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: Ha!

126. Commend: Remember. 135. water: (Which is yielding).  
 146. chrysolite: (Precious topaz). 151. iterance: Repetition.

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 the power to do me harm  
 As I have to be hurt.<sup>o</sup> O gull! O dolt!  
 165 As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed —  
 I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,  
 Though I lost twenty lives. Help! help! Ho! help!  
 The Moor hath killed my mistress! Murder!  
 murder!  
*Enter Montano, Gratiano, Iago, and others.*  
 MONTANO: What is the matter? How now, general?  
 EMILIA: O, are you come, Iago? You have done well,  
 170 That men must lay their murders on your neck.  
 GRATIANO: What is the matter?  
 EMILIA: 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'rt not such a villain.  
 175 Speak, for my heart is full.  
 IAGO: I told him what I thought, and told no more  
 Than what he found himself was apt and true.  
 EMILIA: But did you ever tell him she was false?  
 IAGO: I did.  
 180 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<sup>o</sup> your  
 tongue.  
 EMILIA: I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to  
 speak:  
 My mistress here lies murdered in her bed —  
 ALL: O heavens forbend!  
 EMILIA: And your reports have set the murder on.  
 OTHELLO: Nay, stare not, masters. It is true indeed.  
 185 GRATIANO: 'Tis a strange truth.  
 MONTANO: O monstrous act!  
 EMILIA: Villainy, villainy, villainy!  
 I think upon't — I think I smell't! — O villainy!  
 I thought so then. — I'll kill myself for grief. —  
 O villainy, villainy!  
 IAGO: What, are you mad? I charge you get you home.  
 EMILIA: Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak.  
 'Tis proper I obey him, but not now.  
 Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.  
 OTHELLO: O! O! O! (*Falls on the bed.*)  
 EMILIA: Nay, lay thee down and roar!  
 For thou hast killed the sweetest innocent  
 That e'er did lift up eye.  
 OTHELLO: O, she was foul!  
 [Rises.]  
 I scarce did know you, uncle. There lies your niece,  
 Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly  
 stopped.

164. to be hurt: To endure hurt. 184. charm: Cast a spell on.

I know this act shows<sup>o</sup> horrible and grim.  
 GRATIANO: Poor Desdemon! I am glad thy father's  
 205 dead.

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief  
 Shore his old thread in twain. Did he live now,  
 This sight would make him do a desperate turn;<sup>o</sup>  
 165 Yea, curse his better angel from his side,  
 210 And fall to reprobation.<sup>o</sup>

OTHELLO: 'Tis pitiful; but yet Iago knows  
 That she with Cassio hath the act of shame  
 A thousand times committed. Cassio confessed it;  
 And she did gratify<sup>o</sup> his amorous works  
 215 With that recognizance<sup>o</sup> and pledge of love  
 Which I first gave her. I saw it in his hand.  
 170 It was a handkerchief, an antique token  
 My father gave my mother.

EMILIA: O God! O heavenly God!

IAGO: Zounds, hold your peace!

220 EMILIA: 'Twill out, 'twill out! I peace?  
 No, I will speak as liberal as the north,<sup>o</sup>  
 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.

[Iago draws and threatens Emilia.]

GRATIANO: Fie!  
 225 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;  
 185 For often with a solemn earnestness —  
 More than indeed belonged to such a trifle —  
 He begged of me to steal't.

230 IAGO: Villainous whore!

EMILIA: She give it Cassio? No, alas, I found it,  
 And I did give't my husband.

IAGO: Filth, thou liest!

EMILIA: By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.  
 O murd'rous coxcomb! what should such a fool  
 Do with so good a wife?

235 OTHELLO: Are there no stones<sup>o</sup> in heaven  
 But what serves for the thunder? Precious villain!

*The Moor runs at Iago [but is disarmed by Montano].  
 Iago kills his wife.*

GRATIANO: The woman falls. Sure he hath killed his  
 wife.

EMILIA: Ay, ay, O, lay me by my mistress' side.  
 200 *Exit Iago.*

GRATIANO: He's gone, but his wife's killed.

240 MONTANO: 'Tis a notorious<sup>o</sup> villain. Take you this  
 weapon,

Which I have here recovered from the Moor.  
 Come, guard the door without. Let him not pass,  
 But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain,  
 For 'tis a damnèd slave.

*Exit [Montano, with all but Othello and Emilia].*

OTHELLO: I am not valiant neither;  
 But every puny whipster<sup>o</sup> gets my sword. 245  
 But why should honor outlive honesty?  
 Let it go all.

EMILIA: What did thy song bode, lady?  
 Hark, canst thou hear me? I will play the swan,  
 And die in music. [*Sings.*] "Willow, willow, willow."  
 Moor, she was chaste. She loved thee, cruel Moor: 250  
 So come my soul to bliss as I speak true.  
 So speaking as I think, alas, I die.

*(She dies.)*

OTHELLO: I have another weapon in this chamber;  
 It is a sword of Spain, the ice brook's<sup>o</sup> temper.  
 O, here it is. — Uncle, I must come forth. 255

GRATIANO (*within*): If thou attempt it, it will cost thee  
 dear.

Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

OTHELLO: Look in upon me then and speak with me,  
 Or, naked<sup>o</sup> as I am, I will assault thee.

[*Enter Gratiano.*]

GRATIANO: What is the matter?

OTHELLO: Behold, I have a weapon; 260

A better never did itself sustain  
 Upon a soldier's thigh. I have seen the day  
 That with this little arm and this good sword  
 I have made my way through more impediments  
 Than twenty times your stop.<sup>o</sup> But O vain boast! 265  
 Who can control his fate? 'Tis not so now.  
 Be not afraid, though you do see me weaponed.  
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,<sup>o</sup>  
 And very sear-mark<sup>o</sup> of my utmost sail:  
 Do you go back dismayed? 'Tis a lost<sup>o</sup> fear. 270  
 Man but a rush<sup>o</sup> against Othello's breast,  
 And he retires. Where should Othello go?  
 Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starred  
 wench!

Pale as thy smock! When we shall meet at compt,<sup>o</sup>  
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven, 275  
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl?  
 Even like thy chastity.

O cursèd, cursèd slave! Whip me, ye devils,  
 From the possession of this heavenly sight!  
 Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur! 280

204. shows: Appears. 207. turn: Act. 209. reprobation: Rejection by God, damnation. 214. gratify: Reward. 215. recognizance: Token. 221. liberal as the north: Unchecked as the north wind blows. 235. stones: Bolts like those used for thunderbolts. 240. notorious: Notable.

245. puny whipster: Whippersnapper. 254. ice brook: I.e., a Spanish blade, tempered in cold running water. 259. naked: Disarmed. 265. stop: Power to stop. 268. butt: Limit. 269. sear-mark: Beacon, destination. 270. lost: Wasted. 271. Man but a rush: Wield only a reed. 274. compt: Final accounting, Last Judgment.

Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!  
Oh Desdemona! dead Desdemona! dead! Oh! Oh!

*Enter Lodovico, Montano, Iago [as prisoner], and Officers; Cassio in a chair.*

LODOVICO: Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

OTHELLO: That's he that was Othello. Here I am.

285 LODOVICO: Where is that viper? Bring the villain forth.

OTHELLO: I look down towards his feet<sup>o</sup> — but that's a fable.

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[*Wounds Iago.*]

LODOVICO: Wrench his sword from him.

[*Othello is disarmed.*]

IAGO: I bleed, sir, but not killed.

OTHELLO: I am not sorry neither. I'd have thee live;

290 For in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.

LODOVICO: O thou Othello that wert once so good,  
Fall'n in the practice<sup>o</sup> of a damnèd slave,  
What shall be said to thee?

OTHELLO: Why, anything;

An honorable murderer, if you will;

295 For naught did I in hate, but all in honor.

LODOVICO: This wretch hath part confessed his villainy.

Did you and he consent in<sup>o</sup> Cassio's death?

OTHELLO: Ay.

CASSIO: Dear general, I never gave you cause.

300 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?

IAGO: Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.

From this time forth I never will speak word.

LODOVICO: What, not to pray?

305 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;

310 And here another. The one of them imports

The death of Cassio to be undertook

By Roderigo.

OTHELLO: O villain!

CASSIO: Most heathenish and most gross!

LODOVICO: Now here's another discontented paper

315 Found in the pocket too; and this, it seems,

Roderigo mean t' have sent this damnèd villain;

But that, belike, Iago in the nick<sup>o</sup>

Came in and satisfied him.

286. I . . . feet: I.e., to see if they are cloven, like the Devil's.  
292. practice: Plot. 297. consent in: Agree upon. 317. nick:  
Nick of time.

OTHELLO: O thou pernicious caitiff! —  
How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief  
That was my wife's?

CASSIO: I found it in my chamber; 320  
And he himself confessed but even now  
That there he dropped it for a special purpose  
Which wrought to his desire.

OTHELLO: O fool! fool! fool!

CASSIO: There is besides in Roderigo's letter, 325  
How he upbraids Iago that he made him  
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came  
That I was cast;<sup>o</sup> and even but now he spake,  
After long seeming dead — Iago hurt him,  
Iago set him on.

LODOVICO: You must forsake this room and go with 330  
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 335  
Till that the nature of your fault be known  
To the Venetian state. Come, bring 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, 340  
When you shall these unlucky<sup>o</sup> 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<sup>o</sup> in the extreme; of one whose hand, 345  
Like the base Judean,<sup>o</sup> threw a pearl away  
Richer than all his tribe; of one whose subdued<sup>o</sup>  
eyes,

Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
Their med'cinable gum. Set you down this. 350  
And say besides that in Aleppo once,  
Where a malignant and a turbaned Turk  
Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,  
I took by th' throat the circumcisèd dog 355  
And smote him — thus.

(*He stabs himself.*)

LODOVICO: O bloody period!<sup>o</sup>

GRATIANO: All that's spoke is marred.

OTHELLO: I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but  
this,

Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.

(*He [falls upon the bed and] dies.*)

327. cast: Dismissed. 341. unlucky: Fatal. 346. Perplexed:  
Distracted. 347. Judean: Judas Iscariot (?) (quarto reads "In-  
dian"). 348. subdued: I.e., conquered by grief. 357. period:  
Ending.

CASSIO: This did I fear, but thought he had no  
 weapon;

For he was great of heart.

LODOVICO [to Iago]: O Spartan dog,  
 More fell<sup>o</sup> 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.<sup>o</sup> Gratiano, keep the house,

And seize upon<sup>o</sup> the fortunes of the Moor,  
 For they succeed on you. To you, lord governor,  
 Remains the censure<sup>o</sup> of this hellish villain,  
 The time, the place, the torture. O, enforce it!  
 Myself will straight aboard, and to the state  
 This heavy act with heavy heart relate.

*Exeunt.*

362. fell: Cruel. 365. Let it be hid: I.e., draw the bed curtains.

366. seize upon: Take legal possession of. 368. censure: Judicial sentence.

## COMMENTARIES

The great Shakespeare critic A. C. Bradley examines Othello's character in a portion of his series of lectures on the play. His approach is to probe Othello's essential nature, beginning with the premise that Othello is not by nature jealous but that Iago makes him so. Virginia Mason Vaughan offers insights into the way in which one of the greatest nineteenth-century English actors prepared for the role and what he felt he had to trim from the text in order to satisfy midcentury audiences. John Holstrom's review of Laurence Olivier's singular performance in the newly founded Royal Shakespeare Company in 1964 is mixed. He praises Olivier but complains of the ensemble around him. This review touches on the ways in which even a memorable performance can be marred by a questionable production.

*A. C. Bradley (1851-1935)*

OTHELLO'S CHARACTER

1904

*Among his distinguished lectures on Shakespearean tragedy, A. C. Bradley meditated on the essential nature of Othello. He sees him as a relatively simple man, especially in contrast to Iago, whom Bradley sees as more highly charged and luminous in the play. But what he sees in Othello is nobility, the same nobility that scores of theatergoers have seen on stages throughout the world.*

The character of Othello is comparatively simple, but, as I have dwelt on the prominence of intrigue and accident in the play, it is desirable to show how essentially the success of Iago's plot is connected with this character. Othello's description of himself as

one not easily jealous, but, being wrought,  
 Perplexed in the extreme,