

Othello

1.3

*Enter the Duke and Senators set at a table, with
lights and officers*

DUKE

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

FIRST SENATOR Indeed, they are disproportioned.
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

DUKE

And mine a hundred-forty.

SECOND SENATOR And mine two hundred.
But though they jump not on a just account±± 5
As, in these cases, where the aim reports
'Tis oft with difference±±yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

DUKE

Nay, it is possible enough to judgement.
I do not so secure me in the error, 10
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

SAILOR (*within*) What ho, what ho, what ho!
Enter a Sailor

OFFICER

A messenger from the galleys.

DUKE Now, what's the business?

SAILOR

The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes.
So was I bid report here to the state 15
By Signor Angelo.

DUKE (*to Senators*) 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 20
The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,
And let ourselves again but understand
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, 25
But altogether lacks th'abilities
That Rhodes is dressed in±±if we make thought of this,
We must not think the Turk is so unskilful
To leave that latest which concerns him first,
Neglecting an attempt of ease and gain 30
To wake and wage a danger profitless.

DUKE

Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.

OFFICER Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger

MESSENGER

The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
Steering with due course toward the Isle of Rhodes, 35
Have there enjoined them with an after fleet.

FIRST SENATOR

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

MESSENGER

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

DUKE 'Tis certain then for Cyprus.

Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

FIRST SENATOR He's now in Florence. 45

DUKE

Write from us to him post-post-haste. Dispatch.
Enter Brabantio, Othello, Roderigo, Iago, Cassio,
and officers

FIRST SENATOR

Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

DUKE

Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.
(*To Brabantio*) I did not see you. Welcome, gentle
signor. 50

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 55
Is of so floodgate and o'erbearing nature
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

DUKE Why, what's the matter?

BRABANZIO

My daughter, O, my daughter!

[SENATORS] Dead?

BRABANZIO Ay, to me.

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted 60
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not.

DUKE

Whoe'er he be that in this foul proceeding 65
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter
After your own sense, yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

BRABANZIO Humbly I thank your grace. 70

Here is the man, this Moor, whom now it seems
Your special mandate for the state affairs
Hath hither brought.

SENATORS We are very sorry for't.

DUKE (*to Othello*)

What in your own part can you say to this?

BRABANZIO Nothing but this is so. 75

OTHELLO

Most potent, grave, and reverend signors,
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 80
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, 85
And little of this great world can I speak
More than pertains to feats of broils and battle.
And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnished tale deliver 90
Of my whole course of love, what drugs, what charms,
What conjuration and what mighty magic±±
For such proceeding I am charged withal±±
I won his daughter.

BRABANZIO A maiden never bold,
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion 95
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 judgement maimed and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err 100
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, 105
He wrought upon her.

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

A SENATOR But Othello, speak. 110
Did you by indirect and forceÁd courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections,
Or came it by request and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

OTHELLO I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary, 115
And let her speak of me before her father.
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office I do hold of you
Not only take away, but let your sentence

Even fall upon my life.

DUKE (to officers) Fetch Desdemona hither. 120

OTHELLO

Ensign, conduct them. You best know the place.

Exit Iago with two or three officers

And till she come, as truly as to heaven

I do confess the vices of my blood,

So justly to your grave ears I'll present

How I did thrive in this fair lady's love, 125

And she in mine.

DUKE Say it, Othello.

OTHELLO

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. 130

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, 135

Of being taken by the insolent foe

And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence,

And portance in my traveller's history,

Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,

Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch

heaven, 140

It was my hint to speak. Such was my process,

And of the cannibals that each other eat,

The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads

Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to hear

Would Desdemona seriously incline, 145

But still the house affairs would draw her thence,

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 150

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 155
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 kisses.
She swore in faith 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange,
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful. 160
She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished
That heaven had made her such a man. She thankeÁd
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. 165
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.

Enter Desdemona, Iago, and attendants

Here comes the lady. Let her witness it.

DUKE

I think this tale would win my daughter, too.±± 170
Good Brabantio,
Take up this mangled matter at the best.
Men do their broken weapons rather use
Than their bare hands.

BRABANZIO

I pray you hear her speak.

If she confess that she was half the wooer, 175
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. 180
To you I am bound for life and education.
My life and education both do learn me
How to respect you. You are the lord of duty,
I am hitherto your daughter. But here's my husband,
And so much duty as my mother showed 185
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor my lord.

BRABANZIO God b'wi'you, I ha' done.
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs.
I had rather to adopt a child than get it. 190
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. (*To Desdemona*) For your sake,
jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child, 195
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on 'em. I have done, my lord.

DUKE
Let me speak like yourself, and lay a sentence
Which, as a grece or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour. 200
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended
By seeing the worst which late on hopes depended.
To mourn a mischief that is past and gone
Is the next way to draw new mischief on.
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes, 205
Patience her injury a mockery makes.
The robbed that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

BRABANZIO
So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile,
We lose it not so long as we can smile. 210
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, 215
Being strong on both sides, are equivocal.
But words are words. I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierceÁd through the ear.
I humbly beseech you proceed to th'affairs of state.

DUKE The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes 220
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 more
sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer voice

on you. You must therefore be content to slubber the 225
gloss of your new fortunes with this more stubborn
and boisterous expedition.

OTHELLO

The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down. I do agnize 230
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness, and do undertake
This present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife, 235
Due reference of place and exhibition,
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.

DUKE Why, at her father's!

BRABANZIO I will not have it so. 240

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, 245
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 250
Even to the very quality of my lord.
I saw Othello's visage in his mind,
And to his honours and his valiant parts
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate;
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind, 255
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rites for why I love him are bereft me,
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence. Let me go with him.

OTHELLO (*to the Duke*) Let her have your voice. 260
Vouch with me heaven, I therefor beg it not

To please the palate of my appetite,
Nor to comply with heat±±the young affects
In me defunct±±and proper satisfaction,
But to be free and bounteous to her mind; 265
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 instruments, 270
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, 275
Either for her stay or going. Th'affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.

A SENATOR (*to Othello*) You must away tonight.

DESDEMONA

Tonight, my lord?

DUKE This night.

OTHELLO With all my heart.

DUKE

At nine i'th' morning here we'll meet again.
Othello, leave some officer behind, 280
And he shall our commission bring to you,
And such things else of quality and respect
As doth import you.

OTHELLO So please your grace, my ensign.

A man he is of honesty and trust.
To his conveyance I assign my wife, 285
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

DUKE Let it be so.

Good night to everyone. (*To Brabantio*) And, noble
signor,

If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black. 290

A SENATOR

Adieu, brave Moor. Use Desdemona well.

BRABANZIO

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. 295

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. 300

Exeunt Othello and Desdemona

RODERIGO Iago.

IAGO What sayst thou, noble heart?

RODERIGO What will I do, think'st thou?

IAGO Why, go to bed and sleep.

RODERIGO I will incontinently drown myself. 305

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. 310

IAGO O, villainous! I ha' 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 315
my humanity with a baboon.

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

IAGO Virtue? A fig! 'Tis in ourselves that we are thus or
thus. Our bodies are our gardens, to the which our 320
wills are gardeners; so that if we will plant nettles or
sow lettuce, set hyssop and weed up thyme, supply it
with one gender of herbs or distract it with many,
either to have it sterile with idleness or manured with
industry, why, the power and corrigible authority of 325
this lies in our wills. If the beam of our lives had not

one scale of reason to peise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions. But we have reason to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this that you call love to be a sect or scion. 330

RODERIGO It cannot be.

IAGO It is merely a lust of the blood and a permission of the will. Come, be a man. Drown thyself? Drown cats and blind puppies. I have professed me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness. I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse. Follow thou the wars, defeat thy favour with an usurped beard. I say, put money in thy purse. It cannot be 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. 335
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 error 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 a super-subtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; 340
therefore make money. A pox o' drowning thyself±±it is clean out of the way. Seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her. 345 360

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

IAGO Thou art sure of me. Go, make money. I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor. My cause is hearted, thine hath no less reason. Let us be conjunctive in our revenge against 355

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 tomorrow. Adieu. 370

RODERIGO

Where shall we meet i'th' morning?

IAGO

At my lodging.

RODERIGO

I'll be with thee betimes.

IAGO

Go to, farewell±±

Do you hear, Roderigo?

RODERIGO

I'll sell all my land.

Exit

IAGO

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse±± 375

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 has done my office. I know not if't be true, 380

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 385

In double knavery±±how, how? Let's see.

After some time to abuse Othello's ears

That he is too familiar with his wife;

He hath a person and a smooth dispose

To be suspected, framed to make women false. 390

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 ha't. It is ingendered. Hell and night 395

Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.

Exit