

Othello

3.4

Enter Desdemona, Emilia, and the 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 me to say a soldier lies, 'tis 5
stabbing.

DESDEMONA Go to. Where lodges he?

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

DESDEMONA Can anything be made of this? 10

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 enquire him out, and be edified by
report? 15

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. 20

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

Exit

DESDEMONA

Where should I lose the handkerchief, Emilia?

EMILIA I know not, madam.

DESDEMONA

Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse 25
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 30

Drew all such humours from him.

Enter Othello

EMILIA

Look where he comes.

DESDEMONA

I will not leave him now till Cassio

Be called to him. How is't with you, my lord?

OTHELLO

Well, my good lady. (*Aside*) O hardness to dissemble!±±

How do you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA

Well, my good lord. 35

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, 40

Much castigation, exercise devout,

For here's a young and sweating devil here

That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,

A frank one.

DESDEMONA You may indeed say so,

For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart. 45

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. 50

OTHELLO

I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me.

Lend me thy handkerchief.

DESDEMONA (*offering a handkerchief*) Here, my lord.

OTHELLO

That which I gave you.

DESDEMONA I have it not about me.

OTHELLO Not?

DESDEMONA

No, faith, my lord.

OTHELLO That's a fault. That handkerchief 55
Did an Egyptian to my mother give.
She was a charmer, and could almost read
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, 60
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathe'd, 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. 65
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 70
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 skilful
Conserved of maidens' hearts.

DESDEMONA I'faith, is't true? 75

OTHELLO
Most veritable. Therefore look to't well.

DESDEMONA
Then would to God that I had never seen it!

OTHELLO Ha, wherefore?

DESDEMONA
Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

OTHELLO
Is't lost? Is't gone? Speak, is't out o'th' way? 80

DESDEMONA Heaven bless us!

OTHELLO Say you?

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

OTHELLO How?

DESDEMONA
I say it is not lost.

OTHELLO Fetch't, let me see't. 85

DESDEMONA
 Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now.
 This is a trick to put me from my suit.
 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. 90

OTHELLO
 The handkerchief.

DESDEMONA I pray, talk me of Cassio.

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. 95

DESDEMONA I'faith, you are to blame.

OTHELLO 'Swounds!
Exit

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. 100

EMILIA
 'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.
 They are all but stomachs, and we all but food.
 They eat us hungrily, and when they are full,
 They belch us.
Enter Iago and Cassio

Look you, Cassio and my husband.

IAGO (to Cassio)
 There is no other way. 'Tis she must do't, 105
 And lo, the happiness! Go and importune her.

DESDEMONA
 How now, good Cassio? What's the news with you?

CASSIO
 Madam, my former suit. I do beseech you
 That by your virtuous means I may again

Exist and be a member of his love	110
Whom I, with all the office of my heart,	
Entirely honour. I would not be delayed.	
If my offence be of such mortal kind	
That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,	
Nor purposed merit in futurity	115
Can ransom me into his love again,	
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.	
DESDEMONA Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio!	120
My advocacy is not now in tune.	
My lord is not my lord, nor should I know him	
Were he in favour as in humour altered.	
So help me every spirit sanctified	
As I have spoken for you all my best,	125
And stood within the blank of his displeasure	
For my free speech! You must a while 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,	130
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?	135
Something of moment then. I will go meet him.	
There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry.	
DESDEMONA	
I prithee do so.	
<i>Exit Iago</i>	
Something sure of state,	
Either from Venice or some unhatched practice	
Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,	140
Hath puddled his clear spirit; and in such cases	
Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,	

Though great ones are their object. 'Tis even so;
 For let our finger ache and it indues
 Our other, healthful members even to a sense 145
 Of pain. Nay, we must think men are not gods,
 Nor of them look for such observancy
 As fits the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,
 I was±±unhandsome warrior as I am±±
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul; 150
 But now I find I had suborned the witness,
 And he's indicted falsely.

EMILIA Pray heaven it be
 State matters, as you think, and no conception
 Nor no jealous toy concerning you.

DESDEMONA
 Alas the day, I never gave him cause. 155

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. 160

EMILIA Lady, amen.

DESDEMONA
 I will go seek him. Cassio, walk here about.
 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. 165
Exeunt Desdemona and Emilia
Enter Bianca

BIANCA
 Save you, friend Cassio.

CASSIO What make you from home?
 How is't with you, my most fair Bianca?
 I'faith, 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, 170
 Eightscore-eight hours, and lovers' absent hours
 More tedious than the dial eightscore times!

O weary reckoning!

CASSIO Pardon me, Bianca,
I have this while with leaden thoughts been pressed,
But I shall in a more continue time 175
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,
Take me this work out.

He gives her Desdemona's napkin

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. 180
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance.
No, by my faith, Bianca.

BIANCA Why, whose is it?

CASSIO
I know not, neither. I found it in my chamber. 185
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, 190
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me womaned.

BIANCA Why, I pray you?

CASSIO
Not that I love you not.

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. 195

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.
Exeunt