

Othello

1.1

Enter Iago and Roderigo

RODERIGO

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

IAGO 'Sblood, but you'll not hear me!

If ever I did dream of such a matter, abhor me. 5

RODERIGO

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

IAGO Despise me

If I do not. Three great ones of the city,
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,
Off-capped to him; and by the faith of man 10
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place.

But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them with a bombast circumstance
Horribly stuffed with epithets of war,
Nonsuits my mediators; for 'Certes,' says he, 15
'I have already chose my officer.'

And what was he?

Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damned in a fair wife, 20
That never set a squadron in the field
Nor the division of a battle knows

More than a spinster±±unless the bookish theoric,
Wherein the togaed consuls can propose
As masterly as he. Mere prattle without practice 25

Is all his soldiership; but he, sir, had th'election,
And I±±of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds
Christened and heathen±±must be beleed and calmed
By debtor and creditor. This counter-caster, 30

He in good time must his lieutenant be,
And I±±God bless the mark!±±his Moorship's ensign.

RODERIGO

By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

IAGO

Why, there's no remedy. 'Tis the curse of service.
Preferment goes by letter and affection, 35
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to th' first. Now, sir, be judge yourself
Whether I in any just term am affined
To love the Moor.

RODERIGO I would not follow him then. 40

IAGO O sir, content you.

I follow him to serve my turn upon him.
We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly followed. You shall mark 45
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
Wears out his time much like his master's ass
For naught but provender, and when he's old,
cashiered.

Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimmed in forms and visages of duty, 50
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves,
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by 'em, and when they have lined their
coats,

Do themselves homage. These fellows have some soul,
And such a one do I profess myself±±for, sir, 55

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor I would not be Iago.

In following him I follow but myself.
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty, 60
But seeming so for my peculiar end.

For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at. I am not what I am. 65

RODERIGO

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

IAGO

Call up her father,

Rouse him, make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell, 70
Plague him with flies. Though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such chances of vexation on't
As it may lose some colour.

RODERIGO

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

IAGO

Do, with like timorous accent and dire yell 75
As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spied in populous cities.

RODERIGO (*calling*)

What ho, Brabantio, Signor Brabantio, ho!

IAGO (*calling*)

Awake, what ho, Brabantio, thieves, thieves, thieves!
Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags. 80
Thieves, thieves!

*Enter Brabantio in his nightgown at a window
above*

BRABANZIO

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

RODERIGO

Signor, is all your family within?

IAGO

Are your doors locked?

BRABANZIO

Why, wherefore ask you this? 85

IAGO

'Swounds, sir, you're robbed. For shame, put on your
gown.

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul.

Even now, now, very now, an old black ram

Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise!

Awake the snorting citizens with the bell, 90

Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.

Arise, I say.

BRABANZIO What, have you lost your wits?

RODERIGO

Most reverend signor, do you know my voice?

BRABANZIO Not I. What are you?

RODERIGO My name is Roderigo. 95

BRABANZIO The worser welcome.
 I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors.
 In honest plainness thou hast heard me say
 My daughter is not for thee, and now in madness,
 Being full of supper and distempering draughts, 100
 Upon malicious bravery dost thou come
 To start my quiet.

RODERIGO Sir, sir, sir.

BRABANZIO But thou must needs be sure
 My spirits and my place have in their power 105
 To make this bitter to thee.

RODERIGO Patience, good sir.

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

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

IAGO (*to Brabantio*) 'Swounds, sir, you are one of those 110
 that will not serve God if the devil bid you. Because we
 come to do you service and you think we are ruffians,
 you'll have your daughter covered with a Barbary
 horse, you'll have your nephews neigh to you, you'll
 have coursers for cousins and jennets for Germans. 115

BRABANZIO What profane wretch art thou?

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

BRABANZIO
 Thou art a villain.

IAGO You are a senator. 120

BRABANZIO
 This thou shalt answer. I know thee, Roderigo.

RODERIGO
 Sir, I will answer anything. But I beseech you,
 If't be your pleasure and most wise consent±±
 As partly I find it is±±that your fair daughter,
 At this odd-even and dull watch o'th' night, 125
 Transported with no worse nor better guard
 But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,

To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor±±
 If this be known to you, and your allowance,
 We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs. 130
 But if you know not this, my manners tell me
 We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
 That, from the sense of all civility,
 I thus would play and trifle with your reverence.
 Your daughter, if you have not given her leave, 135
 I say again hath made a gross revolt,
 Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes
 In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
 Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself.
 If she be in her chamber or your house, 140
 Let loose on me the justice of the state
 For thus deluding you.

BRABANZIO (*calling*) Strike on the tinder, ho!
 Give me a taper, call up all my people.
 This accident is not unlike my dream;
 Belief of it oppresses me already. 145
 Light, I say, light!

Exit

IAGO Farewell, for I must leave you.
 It seems not meet nor wholesome to my place
 To be producted±±as, if I stay, I shall±±
 Against the Moor, for I do know the state,
 However this may gall him with some check, 150
 Cannot with safety cast him, for he's embarked
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars,
 Which even now stands in act, that, for their souls,
 Another of his fathom they have none
 To lead their business, in which regard±± 155
 Though I do hate him as I do hell pains±±
 Yet for necessity of present life
 I must show out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find
 him,
 Lead to the Sagittary the raiseÁd search, 160
 And there will I be with him. So farewell.

Exit

Enter below Brabantio in his nightgown, and

servants with torches

BRABANZIO

It is too true an evil. Gone she is,
And what's to come of my despise? Ad time
Is naught but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? ±± O unhappy girl! ±± 165
With the Moor, sayst thou? ±± Who would be a
father? ±±
How didst thou know 'twas she? ±± O, she deceives me
Past thought! ±± What said she to you? *(To servants)*
Get more tapers,
Raise all my kindred.

[Exit one or more]

(To Roderigo) Are they married, think you?

RODERIGO Truly, I think they are. 170

BRABANZIO

O heaven, how got she out? O, treason of the blood!
Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo, 175
Of some such thing?

RODERIGO Yes, sir, I have indeed.

BRABANZIO *(to servants)*

Call up my brother. *(To Roderigo)* O, would you had
had her.

(To servants) Some one way, some another.

[Exit one or more]

(To Roderigo)

Do you

know

Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

RODERIGO

I think I can discover him, if you please 180
To get good guard and go along with me.

BRABANZIO

Pray you lead on. At every house I'll call;
I may command at most. *(Calling)* Get weapons, ho,
And raise some special officers of night.
On, good Roderigo. I will deserve your pains. 185

Exeunt