

OTHELLO - MOOR OF VENICE

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *

by William Shakespeare

PERSONS REPRESENTED:

DUKE OF VENICE.

BRABANTIO, a Senator.

Other Senators.

GRATIANO, Brother to Brabantio.

LODOVICO, Kinsman to Brabantio.

OTHELLO, a noble Moor, in the service of Venice.

CASSIO, his Lieutenant.

IAGO, his Ancient.

RODERIGO, a Venetian Gentleman.

MONTANO, Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus.

CLOWN, Servant to Othello.

Herald.

DESDEMONA, Daughter to Brabantio, and Wife to Othello.

EMILIA, Wife to Iago.

BIANCA, Mistress to Cassio.

Officers, Gentlemen, Messenger, Musicians, Herald, Sailor,

Attendants, &c.

**SCENE: The First Act in Venice; during the rest
of the Play at a**

Seaport in Cyprus.

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ACT I.

SCENE I. Venice. A street.

[Enter Roderigo and Iago.]

RODERIGO.

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

'Sblood, but you will not hear me:—
If ever I did dream of such a matter,
Abhor me.

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-capp'd to him:—and, by the faith of man,
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:—
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,
Evades them, with a bumbast circumstance
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war:

And, in conclusion, nonsuits
My mediators: for, "Certes," says he,
"I have already chose my officer."

And what was he?

Forsooth, a great arithmetician,
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;
That never set a squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoretic,
Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:
And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds,
Christian and heathen,—must be be-lee'd and calm'd
By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster;
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
And I—God bless the mark! his Moorship's ancient.

2

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,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself
Whether I in any just term am affn'd

To love the Moor.

RODERIGO.

I would not follow him, then.

IAGO.

O, sir, content you;

I follow him to serve my turn upon him:

We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
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 nought but provender; and when he's old, cashier'd:

Whip me such honest knaves. Others there are
Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;
And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
Do well thrive by them, and when they have lin'd their coats,
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some soul;
And such a one do I profess myself.

For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In complement extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

RODERIGO.

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

IAGO.

Call up her father,
Rouse him:—make after him, poison his delight,
3

Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't
As it may lose some color.

RODERIGO.

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

IAGO.

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

RODERIGO.

What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

IAGO.

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

[Brabantio appears above at a window.]

BRABANTIO.

What is the reason of this terrible summons?

What is the matter there?

RODERIGO.

Signior, is all your family within?

IAGO.

Are your doors locked?

BRABANTIO.

Why, wherefore ask you this?

IAGO.

Zounds, sir, you're robb'd; for shame, put on your gown;
Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you:
Arise, I say.

BRABANTIO.

What, have you lost your wits?

4

RODERIGO.

Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

BRABANTIO.

Not I; what are you?

RODERIGO.

My name is Roderigo.

BRABANTIO.

The worser welcome:

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

RODERIGO.

Sir, sir, sir,—
BRABANTIO.

But thou must needs be sure
My spirit and my place have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

RODERIGO.

Patience, good sir.

BRABANTIO.

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

RODERIGO.

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

IAGO.

Zounds, sir, you are one of those that will not serve
God if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you service, and
you think we are ruffians, you'll have your daughter covered with
a Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews neigh to you; you'll
have coursers for cousins and gennets for germans.

BRABANTIO.

What profane wretch art thou?

IAGO.

I am one, sir, that comes to tell you your daughter and the

5

Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

BRABANTIO.

Thou art a villain.

IAGO.

You are—a senator.

BRABANTIO.

This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

RODERIGO.

Sir, I will answer 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' the night,
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;
But if you know not this, my manners tell me
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe
That, from the sense of all civility,
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes
In an extravagant and wheeling stranger
Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself:
If she be in her chamber or your house
Let loose on me the justice of the state
For thus deluding you.

BRABANTIO.

Strike on the tinder, ho!

Give me a taper!—Call up all my people!—

This accident is not unlike my dream:
Belief of it oppresses me already.—
Light, I say! light!

[Exit from above.]

IAGO.

Farewell; for I must leave you:
It seems not meet nor wholesome to my place
To be produc'd,—as if I stay I shall,—
Against the Moor: for I do know the state,—
However this may gall him with some check,—
Cannot with safety cast him; for he's embark'd

6

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,
Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely find him,
Lead to the Sagittary the raised search;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell.

[Exit.]

[Enter, below, Brabantio, and Servants with torches.]

BRABANTIO.

It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is naught but bitterness.—Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her?—O unhappy girl!—
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a father!
How didst thou know 'twas she?—O, she deceives me
Past thought.—What said she to you?—Get more tapers;
Raise all my kindred.—Are they married, think you?

RODERIGO.

Truly, I think they are.

BRABANTIO.

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.—Are there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

RODERIGO.

Yes, sir, I have indeed.

BRABANTIO.

Call up my brother.—O, would you had had her!—
Some one way, some another.—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

RODERIGO.

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

BRABANTIO.

Pray you, lead on. At every house I'll call;

7

I may command at most.—Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of night.—

On, good Roderigo:—I'll deserve your pains.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II. Venice. Another street.

[Enter Othello, Iago, and Attendants with torches.]

IAGO.

Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
To do no contriv'd murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerk'd him here under the ribs.

OTHELLO.

'Tis better as it is.

IAGO.

Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honor,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast married? Be assured of this,
That the magnifico is much beloved;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the duke's: he will divorce you;
Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law,—with all his might to enforce it on,—
Will give him cable.

OTHELLO.

Let him do his spite:

My services which I have done the signiory
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,—
Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,
I shall promulgate,—I fetch my life and being
From men of royal siege; and my demerits
May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
I would not my unhoused free condition
Put into circumscription and confine

8

For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come yond?

IAGO.

Those are the raised father and his friends:

You were best go in.

OTHELLO.

Not I; I must be found;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO.

By Janus, I think no.

[Enter Cassio and certain Officers with torches.]

OTHELLO.

The servants of the duke and my lieutenant.—
The goodness of the night upon you, friends!
What is the news?

CASSIO.

The duke does greet you, general;

And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance
Even on the instant.

OTHELLO.

What is the matter, think you?

CASSIO.

Something from Cyprus, as I may divine:
It is a business of some heat: the galleys
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers
This very night at one another's heels;
And many of the consuls, rais'd and met,
Are at the duke's already: you have been hotly call'd for;
When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.

OTHELLO.

'Tis well I am found by you.

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

[Exit.]

CASSIO.

Ancient, what makes he here?

9

IAGO.

Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land carack:
If it prove lawful prize, he's made forever.

CASSIO.

I do not understand.

IAGO.

He's married.

CASSIO.

To who?

[Re-enter Othello.]

IAGO.

Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

OTHELLO.

Have with you.

CASSIO.

Here comes another troop to seek for you.

IAGO.

It is Brabantio.—General, be advis'd;

He comes to bad intent.

[Enter Brabantio, Roderigo, and Officers with torches and
weapons.]

OTHELLO.

Holla! stand there!

RODERIGO.

Signior, it is the Moor.

BRABANTIO.

Down with him, thief!

[They draw on both sides.]

IAGO.

You, Roderigo! come, sir, I am for you.

OTHELLO.

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.—
Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.

10

BRABANTIO.

O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd my daughter?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;

For I'll refer me to all things of sense,

If she in chains of magic were not bound,

Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,

So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd

The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,

Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom

Of such a thing as thou,—to fear, not to delight.

Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense

That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms;

Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs or minerals

That weaken motion:—I'll have't disputed on;

'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.

I therefore apprehend and do attach thee

For an abuser of the world, a practiser

Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.—

Lay hold upon him: if he do resist,

Subdue him at his peril.

OTHELLO.

Hold your hands,

Both you of my inclining and the rest:

Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it

Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go

To answer this your charge?

BRABANTIO.

To prison; till fit time

Of law and course of direct session

Call thee to answer.

OTHELLO.

What if I do obey?

How may the duke be therewith satisfied,

Whose messengers are here about my side,

Upon some present business of the state,

To bring me to him?

FIRST OFFICER.

'Tis true, most worthy signior;

The duke's in council, and your noble self,

I am sure, is sent for.

BRABANTIO.

How! the duke in council!

In this time of the night!—Bring him away:

Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,

11

Or any of my brothers of the state,

Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own;

For if such actions may have passage free,

Bond slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III. Venice. A council chamber.

[The Duke and Senators sitting at a table; Officers attending.]

DUKE.

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

FIRST SENATOR.

Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say a hundred and seven galleys.

DUKE.

And mine a hundred and forty.

SECOND SENATOR.

And mine two hundred:

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

DUKE.

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

SAILOR.

[Within.] What, ho! what, ho! what, ho!

FIRST OFFICER.

A messenger from the galleys.

[Enter a Sailor.]

DUKE.

Now,—what's the business?

12

SAILOR.

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

DUKE.

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
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,
But altogether lacks the abilities
That Rhodes is dress'd 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,
To wake and wage a danger profitless.

DUKE.

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

FIRST OFFICER.

Here is more news.

[Enter a Messenger.]

MESSENGER.

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

FIRST SENATOR.

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

MESSENGER.

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

DUKE.

'Tis certain, then, for Cyprus.—

13

Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

FIRST SENATOR.

He's now in Florence.

DUKE.

Write from us to him; post-post-haste despatch.

FIRST SENATOR.

Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

[Enter Brabantio, Othello, Iago, Roderigo, and Officers.]

DUKE.

Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you
Against the general enemy Ottoman.—

[To Brabantio.] I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior;
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

BRABANTIO.

So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the general care
Take hold on me; for my particular grief
Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature
That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows,
And it is still itself.

DUKE.

Why, what's the matter?

BRABANTIO.

My daughter! O, my daughter!

DUKE and SENATORS.

Dead?

BRABANTIO.

Ay, to me;

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted
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,
Hath thus beguiled your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter

14

After your own sense; yea, though our proper son
Stood in your action.

BRABANTIO.

Humbly I thank your grace.

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

DUKE and SENATORS.

We are very sorry for't.

DUKE.

[To Othello.] What, in your own part, can you say to this?

BRABANTIO.

Nothing, but this is so.

OTHELLO.

Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters, –
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her:
The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
Till now some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause
In speaking for myself. Yet, by your gracious patience,
I will a round unvarnish'd tale deliver
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.

BRABANTIO.

A maiden never bold:

Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion
Blush'd at herself; and she, – in spite of nature,
Of years, of country, credit, everything, –
To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!
It is judgement maim'd and most imperfect
That will confess perfection so could err
Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
To find out practices of cunning hell,
Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,

15

That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
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.

FIRST SENATOR.

But, Othello, speak:

Did you by indirect and forced 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,
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.

Fetch Desdemona hither.

OTHELLO.

Ancient, conduct them; you best know the place.—

[Exeunt Iago and Attendants.]

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,
And she in mine.

DUKE.

Say it, Othello.

OTHELLO.

Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year,—the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd.

I ran it through, even from my boyish days
To the very moment that he bade me tell it:

16

Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field;
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;
Of being taken by the insolent foe,
And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence,
And portance in my travels' history:
Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,
Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,
It was my hint to speak,—such was the process;
And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. This to hear
Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever as she could with haste despatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear
Devour up my discourse; which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
But not intentively; I did consent;
And often did beguile her of her tears,
When I did speak of some distressful stroke
That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
She swore,—in faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange;
'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:

She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd
That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd me;
And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
I should but teach him how to tell my story,
And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake:
She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd;
And I lov'd her that she did pity them.
This only is the witchcraft I have us'd:—
Here comes the lady; let her witness it.
[Enter Desdemona, Iago, and Attendants.]
DUKE.

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

BRABANTIO.

I pray you, hear her speak:
If she confess that she was half the wooer,
17

Destruction on my head, if my bad blame
Light on the man!—Come hither, gentle mistress:
Do you perceive in all this noble company
Where most you owe obedience?

DESDEMONA.

My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty:
To you I am bound for life and education;
My life and education both do learn 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 show'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

BRABANTIO.

God be with you!—I have done.—
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs:
I had rather to adopt a child than get it.—
Come hither, Moor:
I here do give thee that with all my heart
Which, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.
DUKE.

Let me speak like yourself; and lay a sentence
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers
Into your favour.

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,
Patience her injury a mockery makes.

The robb'd that smiles steals something from the thief;
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

BRABANTIO.

So let the Turk of Cyprus us beguile;
We lose it not so long as we can smile;
He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
But the free comfort which from thence he hears;
But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow
That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.
These sentences, to sugar or to gall,

18

Being strong on both sides, are equivocal:
But words are words; I never yet did hear
That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.—
I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

DUKE.

The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus.—
Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you; and
though we have there a substitute of most allowed sufficiency,
yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safer
voice on you: you must therefore be content to slubber the gloss
of your new fortunes with this more stubborn and 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
A natural and prompt alacrity
I find in hardness; and do undertake
These present wars against the Ottomites.
Most humbly, therefore, bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife;
Due reference of place and exhibition;
With such accommodation and besort
As levels with her breeding.

DUKE.

If you please,
Be't at her father's.

BRABANTIO.

I'll not have it so.

OTHELLO.

Nor I.

DESDEMONA.

Nor I. I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend a gracious ear;
And let me find a charter in your voice
To assist my simpleness.

DUKE.

What would you, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA.

That I did love the Moor to live with him,

19

My downright violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world: my heart's subdu'd

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

Let her have your voices.
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore 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:
And heaven defend your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant
For she is with me: no, when light-wing'd toys
Of feather'd Cupid seel with wanton dullness
My speculative and off't' d instruments,
That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
And all indign and base adversities
Make head against my estimation!
DUKE.

Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay or going: the affair cries haste,
And speed must answer it.

FIRST SENATOR.

You must away to-night.

OTHELLO.

With all my heart.

DUKE.

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

OTHELLO.

So please your grace, my ancient,—
A man he is of honesty and trust,—
20

To his conveyance I assign my wife,
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 signior,
If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

FIRST SENATOR.

Adieu, brave Moor; use Desdemona well.

BRABANTIO.

Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see:
She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[Exeunt Duke, Senators, Officers. &c.]

OTHELLO.

My life upon her faith!—Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:
I pr'ythee, 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 matters and direction,
To spend with thee: we must obey the time.

[Exeunt Othello and Desdemona.]

RODERIGO.

Iago,—

IAGO.

What say'st thou, noble heart?

RODERIGO.

What will I do, thinkest thou?

IAGO.

Why, go to bed and sleep.

RODERIGO.

I will incontinently drown myself.

IAGO.

If thou dost, I shall never love thee after. Why, thou silly
gentleman!

21

RODERIGO.

It is silliness to live when to live is torment; and
then have we a prescription to die when death is our physician.

IAGO.

O villainous! I have looked upon the world for four times seven
years, and since I could distinguish betwixt a benefit and an
injury, I never found man that knew how to love himself. Ere I
would say I would drown myself for the love of a Guinea-hen, I
would change my humanity with a baboon.

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 gardens, to the which our wills are gardeners;
so that if we will plant nettles or sow lettuce, set hyssop and
weed up thyme, supply it with one gender of herbs or distract it
with many, either to have it sterile with idleness or manured
with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this
lies in our wills. If the balance of our lives had not one scale
of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness
of our natures would conduct us to most 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.

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 that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse,—nor he his to her: it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration;—put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills:—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is as luscious as locusts shall be to him shortly as acerb as the coloquintida. She must change for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice: she must have change, she must: 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;

22

if sanctimony and a frail vow betwixt an erring barbarian and a supersubtle Venetian be not too hard for my wits and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! 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.

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 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 to-morrow. Adieu.

RODERIGO.

Where shall we meet i' the morning?

IAGO.

At my lodging.

RODERIGO.

I'll be with thee betimes.

IAGO.

Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

RODERIGO.

What say you?

IAGO.

No more of drowning, do you hear?

RODERIGO.

I am changed: I'll go sell all my land.

[Exit.]

IAGO.

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse;
For I mine own gain'd 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;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,

23

Will do as if for surety. He holds me well,
The better shall my purpose work on him.

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