

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 1

*Enter RODMERIGO and IAGO**RODERIGO and IAGO enter.***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.

**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  
10 (In personal suit to make me his lieutenant)  
Off-capped 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 bombast circumstance  
15 Horribly stuffed with epithets of war,  
And in conclusion  
Nonsuits my mediators. For "Certes," says he,  
"I have already chose my officer."  
And what was he?  
20 Forsooth, a great arithmetician,  
One Michael Cassio, a Florentine  
(A fellow almost damned in a fair wife)  
That never set a squadron in the field,  
Nor the division of a battle knows  
25 More than a spinster—unless the bookish theoretic,

**RODERIGO**

Come on, don't tell me that. I don't like it that you  
knew about this, Iago. All this time I've thought  
you were such a good friend that I've let you  
spend my money as if it was yours.

**IAGO**

Damn it, you're not listening to me! I never  
dreamed this was happening—if you find out I  
did, you can go ahead and hate me.

**RODERIGO**

You told me you hated him.

**IAGO**

I do hate [him](#), I swear. Three of Venice's most  
important noblemen took their hats off to him and  
asked him humbly to make me his lieutenant, the  
second in command. And I know my own worth  
well enough to know I deserve that position. But  
he wants to have things his own way, so he  
sidesteps the issue with a lot of military talk and  
refuses their request. "I've already chosen my  
lieutenant," he says. And who does he choose? A  
guy who knows more about numbers than  
fighting! This guy from Florence named Michael  
Cassio. He has a pretty wife but he can't even  
control her. And he's definitely never commanded  
men in battle. He's got no more hands-on  
knowledge of warfare than an old woman—  
unless you count what he's read in books,

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 2

Wherein the togged consuls can propose  
As masterly as he. Mere prattle without practice  
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had th' election  
And I, of whom his eyes had seen the proof  
30 At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds  
Christian and heathen, must be belee'd and calmed  
By debtor and creditor. This counter-caster  
He (in good time) must his lieutenant be  
And I, bless the mark, his Moorship's ancient.

**RODERIGO**

35 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 th' first. Now sir, be judge yourself,  
40 Whether I in any just term am affined

which any peace-lover can do. His military  
understanding is all theory, no practice. But  
Cassio's been chosen over me. My career is cut  
short by some bookkeeper, even though the  
general saw my fighting skills first-hand in  
Rhodes and Cyprus. This accountant is now  
lieutenant, while I end up as the [Moor's](#) flag-  
bearer.

**RODERIGO**

By God, I'd rather be his executioner.

**IAGO**

And there's nothing I can do about it. That's the  
curse of military service. You get promoted when  
someone likes you, not because you're next in  
line. Now, you tell me: should I feel loyal to the  
Moor?

**Original Text**

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.

- 45 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters  
Cannot be truly followed. 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  
50 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,  
Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves  
55 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,  
Do well thrive by them. And when they have lined  
their coats,  
Do themselves homage. These fellows have some  
soul,

**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 3**

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.

- 60 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  
65 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.

**RODERIGO**

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

**IAGO**

Call up her father.

- 70 Rouse him. Make after him, Poison his delight,  
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,  
75 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**

- 80 What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

**Modern Text****RODERIGO**

If you don't like him you should quit.

**IAGO**

No, calm down. I'm serving under him to take  
advantage of him. We can't all be masters, and  
not all masters should be followed. Look at all the  
devoted servants who work for their masters their  
whole lives for nothing but their food, and then  
when they get old they're terminated. They ought  
to be whipped for being so stupid. But then  
there's another kind of servant who looks dutiful  
and devoted, but who's really looking out for  
himself. By pretending to serve their lords, these  
men get rich, and when they've saved up enough  
they can be their own masters. Guys like that  
have soul, and that's the kind of guy I am. Let me  
tell

you, as sure as your name's Roderigo, if I were  
the Moor I wouldn't want to be Iago. I may seem  
to love and obey him, but in fact, I'm just serving  
him to get what I want. If my outward appearance  
started reflecting what I really felt, soon enough  
I'd be wearing my heart on my sleeve for birds to  
peck at. No, it's better to hide it. I'm not who I  
appear to be.

**RODERIGO**

**Thick-lips** sure is lucky if he can pull this off!

**IAGO**

Let's shout up to Desdemona's father, wake him,  
pester him, spoil his happiness, spread rumors  
about him in the streets, enrage his relatives, and  
irritate him endlessly. However real his happiness  
is, it will vanish in light of this.

**RODERIGO**

Here's her father's house. I'll call out.

**IAGO**

Do it, and shout like the city's on fire.

**RODERIGO**

Hey, Brabantio! Signor Brabantio, hey!

## Original Text

**IAGO**

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

*Enter BRABANTIO, above*

## Modern Text

**IAGO**

Wake up, Brabantio! Wake up! Thieves! Thieves!  
Check on your daughter, your house, your  
money! Thieves! Thieves!

*BRABANTIO enters, above.*

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 4

**BRABANTIO**

What is the reason of this terrible summons?

85 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 robbed! For shame, put on your  
gown.

90 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 snoring citizens with the bell  
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you.  
Arise, I say!

**BRABANTIO**

What, have you lost your wits?

**RODERIGO**

95 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.

100 In honest plainness thou hast heard me say  
My daughter is not for thee. And now in madness,  
Being full of supper and distempering drafts,  
Upon malicious knavery dost thou come  
To start my quiet?

**RODERIGO**

105 Sir, sir, sir—

**BRABANTIO**

What's the reason for this horrible shouting?

What's the matter?

**RODERIGO**

Sir, is everyone in your family at home?

**IAGO**

Are your doors locked?

**BRABANTIO**

Why are you asking me that?

**IAGO**

For God's sake, sir, you've been robbed. Get  
dressed. Your heart's going to break. It's like half  
your soul's been ripped out. At this very minute  
an old black ram is having sex with your little  
white lamb. Wake up, wake up, ring a bell and  
wake up all the snoring citizens. If you wait too  
long you'll have black grandchildren. Get up, I tell  
you!

**BRABANTIO**

Are you crazy?

**RODERIGO**

Do you recognize my voice, noble lord?

**BRABANTIO**

Not me. Who are you?

**RODERIGO**

My name's Roderigo.

**BRABANTIO**

I told you not to hang around my house. I've  
already told you quite plainly that my daughter  
will never marry you. Now you come here drunk  
to make trouble and startle me out of a sound  
sleep?

**RODERIGO**

Sir, sir, sir—

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 5

**BRABANTIO**

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

**RODERIGO****BRABANTIO**

You know I'm powerful enough to make you pay  
for this.

**RODERIGO**

**Original Text**

Patience, good sir.

**BRABANTIO**

What tell'st thou me of robbing? This is Venice,  
110 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 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 any thing. But, I beseech you,  
If't be your pleasure and most wise consent  
120 (As partly I find it is) that your fair daughter  
At this odd-even and dull watch o' th' night

**Modern Text**

Please wait, sir.

**BRABANTIO**

Why are you talking about robbery? This is  
Venice. My house isn't in some remote  
countryside.

**RODERIGO**

Brabantio, with all due respect, I'm here out of  
courtesy and good will. I've come to tell you—

**IAGO**

My God, sir, you're stubborn and suspicious. We  
come here to help you and you treat us like  
thugs, but you let an African horse climb all over  
your daughter. Your grandsons will neigh to you  
like horses. Your whole family will be ruined.

**BRABANTIO**

What kind of crude jerk are you?

**IAGO**

The kind that tells you that the Moor is having  
sex with your daughter right now.

**BRABANTIO**

You're a villain!

**IAGO**

You're a senator!

**BRABANTIO**

You're going to pay for this, Roderigo. I know  
who you are.

**RODERIGO**

I'll answer for everything. I don't know if you  
know or approve of this, but in the wee hours of  
the morning your daughter left your house, with  
no better escort than a hired gondolier, to go into  
the rough embrace of a lustful Moor. If all of this  
happened with your

**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 6**

Transported with no worse nor better guard  
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,  
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,  
125 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,  
130 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  
135 Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself.  
If she be in her chamber or your house,

approval, then we've been very rude to bother  
you like this. But if you didn't know about it, then  
you were wrong to get mad at us. I'd never play  
pranks on you. If you didn't allow your daughter  
to do what she's doing, then she's rebelling  
against you. She's throwing her life away on  
some stranger. Go ahead, see for yourself if  
she's in her bedroom. If she is, you can sue me  
for lying to you.

## Original Text

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

*Exit above*

**IAGO**

(to RODERIGO)

Farewell, for I must leave you.  
It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,  
145 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)  
Cannot with safety cast him, for he's embarked  
With such loud reason to the Cyprus wars  
150 (Which even now stand in act) that, for their souls,  
Another of his fathom they have none  
To lead their business. In which regard,

## Modern Text

**BRABANTIO**

Light the candles! Wake up my whole household!  
I dreamt about this. I'm starting to worry it's true.  
Give me some light!

*BRABANTIO exits.*

**IAGO**

(to RODERIGO)

It's time for me to say goodbye to you. It would be inappropriate—dangerous, even—for me to be seen working against the Moor, as I would if I stayed. The Venetian government might reprimand him for this, but it can't safely get rid of him, since it needs him urgently for the imminent Cyprus wars. They couldn't find another man with his abilities to lead their armed forces—not if their souls depended on it. I hate him, but I've got to show him signs of loyalty

## Act 1, Scene 1, Page 7

Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,  
Yet for necessity of present life  
155 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 BRABANTIO, with servants and torches*

**BRABANTIO**

It is too true an evil. Gone she is.  
160 And what's to come of my despisèd time  
Is naught but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,  
Where didst thou see her?—Oh, unhappy girl!—  
With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a  
father?—  
165 How didst thou know 'twas she?—Oh, 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**

Oh, heaven, how got she out? Oh, treason of the  
blood!  
170 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

and affection, even if it's just an act. If you want to find him, send the search party to the Sagittarius Inn. He and I will be there.

*IAGO exits.*

*BRABANTIO enters with servants and torches.*

**BRABANTIO**

It's true. She's gone. The rest of my life will be nothing but bitterness. Now, Roderigo, where did you see her?—Oh, that miserable wretch!—You say you saw her with the Moor?—Oh, who would want to be a father?—How did you know it was her?—To think she tricked me so easily!—What did she say to you?—Get me more candles, and wake up all my relatives. Do you think they're married?

**RODERIGO**

Yes, I really think so.

**BRABANTIO**

Oh, heaven, how did she get out? My own flesh and blood rebels against me! Fathers, never trust your daughters just because they act obedient and innocent. Are there magic spells that can lead young virgins astray? Have you ever heard

**Original Text**

May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,  
Of some such thing?

**RODERIGO**

Yes, sir, I have indeed.

**BRABANTIO**

Call up my brother—Oh, would you had had her!  
175 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.

**Act 1, Scene 1, Page 8**

**BRABANTIO**

Pray you lead on. At every house I'll call.  
180 I may command at most.—Get weapons, ho!  
And raise some special officers of might.—  
On, good Roderigo. I will deserve your pains.

*Exeunt*

**Modern Text**

of anything like that, Roderigo?

**RODERIGO**

Yes, sir, I have.

**BRABANTIO**

Call my brother.—Now I wish you'd married  
her!—Some of you go one way, some the other  
way.—Do you know where we can find her and  
the Moor?

**RODERIGO**

I think I can find him. Get together a group of  
armed men and follow me.

**BRABANTIO**

Lead the way. I'll stop at every house. I'm  
respected enough that most of them will do what  
I say.—Get your weapons! And get the officers  
who guard the city at night.—Let's go, Roderigo.  
I'll reward you for your troubles.

*They exit*

**Act 1, Scene 2**

*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' th' conscience  
To do no contrived murder. I lack iniquity  
Sometimes to do me service. Nine or ten times  
5 I had thought t' have yerked 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,  
10 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,  
15 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—  
20 Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,

*OTHELLO and IAGO enter, followed by attendants with torches.*

**IAGO**

I've killed many men in battle, but I still believe it's  
deeply wrong to murder someone. Sometimes I  
worry I'm not cruel enough for this job. Nine or  
ten times I wanted to stab him under the ribs.

**OTHELLO**

It's better that you didn't kill him.

**IAGO**

But he kept chattering so foolishly, talking about  
you in such insulting and despicable terms, that it  
was hard for me to restrain myself. But please tell  
me, sir, is your marriage [secure](#)? Brabantio is an  
important man in this city, almost as powerful as  
the duke himself. He'll try to annul your marriage,  
or else inflict whatever punishment the law and  
his power will allow him to.

**OTHELLO**

Let him do his worst. The services I have done for  
the Venetian government will count for more than  
his complaints will. No one knows this yet—and I  
don't like to brag, but I come from a royal family,

**Original Text**

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 reached. For know, Iago,  
 25 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,  
 I would not my unhoused free condition  
 Put into circumscription and confine  
 For the sea's worth. But look, what lights come yond?

**Modern Text**

and I'm as noble as the woman I've married. And  
 let me tell you, Iago, if I didn't love Desdemona as  
 much as I do, I'd never agree to get married and  
 lose my freedom at all. But look at those lights.  
 Who's coming?

**Act 1, Scene 2, Page 2****IAGO**

Those are the raised father and his friends.  
 30 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, with officers and torches*

**OTHELLO**

The servants of the Duke and my lieutenant?  
 35 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's the matter, think you?

**CASSIO**

Something from Cyprus as I may divine.  
 40 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, raised and met,  
 Are at the Duke's already. You have been hotly  
 45 called for.  
 When being not at your lodging to be found  
 The Senate hath sent about three several guests  
 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.

**IAGO**

That's her father and his friends, who've been  
 roused out of bed. You'd better go inside.

**OTHELLO**

No, I must let them find me. My good qualities,  
 my legal status as Desdemona's husband, and  
 my innocence will protect me. Is it them?

**IAGO**

I don't think so.

*CASSIO enters with officers and men carrying torches.*

**OTHELLO**

The servants of the Duke and my lieutenant?  
 Hello, everyone! What's going on?

**CASSIO**

The Duke sends his regards. He needs to see  
 you right away.

**OTHELLO**

What do you think he wants?

**CASSIO**

Something about Cyprus. I think it's important.  
 The warships have sent a dozen messages  
 tonight, one after the other, and many of the  
 senators have been awakened and are at the  
 Duke's already. They're very anxious for you to  
 get there. When you weren't at home, the Senate  
 sent out three different search parties to find you.

**OTHELLO**

It's good you found me. I'll just speak a word or  
 two here in the house and then I'll go with you.

*Exit*

*OTHELLO exits.*

**Act 1, Scene 2, Page 3****CASSIO**

Ancient, what makes he here?

**CASSIO**

Ensign, what's he doing in there?

## Original Text

**IAGO**  
 50 Faith, he tonight hath boarded a land carrack.  
 If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

**CASSIO**  
 I do not understand.

**IAGO**  
 He's married.

**CASSIO**  
 To who?

**IAGO**  
 Marry, to—

*Enter OTHELLO*

Come, captain, will you go?

**OTHELLO**  
 55 Have with you.

**CASSIO**  
 Here comes another troop to seek for you.  
*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and officers with  
 torches and weapons*

**IAGO**  
 It is Brabantio. General, be advised,  
 He comes to bad intent.

**OTHELLO**  
 Holla! Stand there!

**RODERIGO**  
 Signior, it is the Moor.

**BRABANTIO**  
 Down with him, thief!

*They draw their swords*

## Modern Text

**IAGO**  
 Tonight he boarded a treasure ship. If he can  
 keep it, he'll be set forever.

**CASSIO**  
 I don't understand.

**IAGO**  
 He's married.

**CASSIO**  
 To whom?

**IAGO**  
 To—

*OTHELLO enters.*

Are you ready?

**OTHELLO**  
 Yes, I'll go with you now.

**CASSIO**  
 Here comes another group looking for you.  
*BRABANTIO and RODERIGO enter, followed  
 by OFFICERS and men with torches.*

**IAGO**  
 It's Brabantio. Look out, sir. He intends to do  
 something bad to you.

**OTHELLO**  
 Hey! Stop right there!

**RODERIGO**  
 Sir, it's the Moor.

**BRABANTIO**  
 Get him, he's a thief!

*Both sides draw their swords.*

## Act 1, Scene 2, Page 4

**IAGO**  
 60 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.

**BRABANTIO**  
 O thou foul thief, where hast thou stowed my  
 65 daughter?  
 Damned 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,  
 70 So opposite to marriage that she shunned  
 The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,  
 Would ever have, t' incur a general mock,  
 Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom  
 Of such a thing as thou—to fear, not to delight.

**IAGO**  
 You, Roderigo! Come on, I'll fight you.

**OTHELLO**  
 Put away your swords. They'll get rusty in the  
 dew. Sir, your age and status inspire more  
 respect than your weapons do.

**BRABANTIO**  
 You evil thief, where have you hidden my  
 daughter? You devil, you've put a spell on her!  
 Anybody with eyes could tell you that a beautiful  
 and happy young girl like her, who's refused to  
 marry all of the handsome young men of the city,  
 wouldn't run off with a black thing like you unless  
 she'd been bewitched. You're something to fear,  
 not to love. It's obvious to everyone that you've  
 tricked her, drugged her, or kidnapped her. That's  
 probably what happened, so I'm arresting you.—  
 Arrest this man as a practitioner of black magic.



**Original Text****Modern Text**

75 Judge me the world if 'tis not gross in sense  
That thou hast practiced on her with foul charms,  
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals  
That weakens motion. I'll have 't disputed on.  
'Tis probable and palpable to thinking.

80 I therefore apprehend and do attach thee  
For an abuser of the world, a practicer  
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.

85 Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it  
Without a prompter. Whither will you that I go  
To answer this your charge?

Grab him. If he struggles, use force!

**OTHELLO**

Just a minute. I don't need anyone to tell me  
when to fight. You've accused me of some  
serious crimes. Where do you want me to go to  
respond to these charges?

**Act 1, Scene 2, Page 5****BRABANTIO**

To prison, till fit time  
Of law and course of direct session  
Call thee to answer.

**OTHELLO**

What if I do obey?  
90 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?

**OFFICER**

'Tis true, most worthy signior.  
The Duke's in council and your noble self,  
95 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,  
Or any of my brothers of the state,  
Cannot but feel this wrong as 'twere their own.  
100 For if such actions may have passage free,  
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.

*Exeunt*

**BRABANTIO**

To prison, until you're called into court.

**OTHELLO**

What if I do what you say? How would I satisfy  
the Duke then? His messengers are waiting here  
to take me to him immediately, on pressing state  
business.

**OFFICER**

It's true. The Duke's in a meeting right now, and  
he's sent for you too.

**BRABANTIO**

The Duke's in a meeting? At this time of night?  
Bring him with us. The law's on my side. The  
Duke and any of my fellow senators will take this  
wrong as seriously as if it were their own. If we  
let crimes like this happen, slaves and heathens  
will be our rulers.

*They all exit.*

**Act 1, Scene 3**

*Enter DUKE, SENATORS, and OFFICERS*

*The DUKE enters  
with SENATORS and OFFICERS.*

**DUKE**

There's no composition in this news  
That gives them credit.

**FIRST SENATOR**

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

**DUKE**

These reports are inconsistent. You can't trust  
them.

**FIRST SENATOR**

It's true, they're inconsistent. My letters say there  
are a hundred and seven ships.

**Original Text**

**DUKE**  
5 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**  
10 Nay, it is possible enough to judgment.  
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!

**OFFICER**  
15 A messenger from the galleys.

*Enter SAILOR*

**DUKE**  
Now, what's the business?

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

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 2**

**DUKE**  
20 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  
Th' importancy of Cyprus to the Turk,  
And let ourselves again but understand  
25 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 th' abilities  
That Rhodes is dressed in. If we make thought of this  
30 We must not think the Turk is so unskillful  
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.

**OFFICER**  
35 Here is more news.

*Enter a MESSENGER***MESSENGER****Modern Text**

**DUKE**  
And mine say a hundred and forty.

**SECOND SENATOR**  
And mine say two hundred. But often in these  
cases, reports are just estimates. The important  
thing is that they all say a Turkish fleet is  
approaching Cyprus.

**DUKE**  
Yes, we get the idea. The inconsistency doesn't  
make me think that the reports are all wrong. I  
have no doubt about what they're basically  
saying, and it's frightening.

**SAILOR**  
(*offstage*) Hello! Hey, hello!

**OFFICER**  
It's a messenger from the warships.

*A SAILOR enters.*

**DUKE**  
Why are you here?

**SAILOR**  
Signor Angelo told me to come here and tell you  
that the Turkish fleet is heading for Rhodes, not  
Cyprus.

**DUKE**  
What do you think about this change?

**FIRST SENATOR**  
They can't have changed; there's no way this  
could be true. It's a trick to confuse us. Think  
about how important Cyprus is to the Turks, and  
remember that they could capture Cyprus more  
easily, since it isn't as well protected as Rhodes  
is. If we keep these things in mind, we can't  
possibly imagine that the Turks would be so  
incompetent as to put off for last what they want  
to achieve first, setting aside something easy and  
profitable to do something dangerous and  
pointless.

**DUKE**  
No, I think we can be confident that the Turks  
aren't really headed for Rhodes.

**OFFICER**  
Here's some more news coming in.

*A MESSENGER enters.***MESSENGER**

**Original Text**

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**

- 40 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,  
45 With his free duty recommends you thus,  
And prays you to believe him.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 3****DUKE**

'Tis certain then for Cyprus.  
Marcus Luccicos, is not he in town?

**FIRST SENATOR**

He's now in Florence.

**DUKE**

Write from us to him. Post-post-haste, dispatch.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Here comes Brabantio and the valiant Moor.

*Enter BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, CASSIO, IAGO, RODERIGO, and officers*

**DUKE**

- 5 Valiant Othello, we must straight employ you  
0 Against the general enemy Ottoman—  
(to BRABANTIO) I did not see you. Welcome, gentle  
signior.  
We lacked your counsel and your help tonight.

**BRABANTIO**

- So did I yours. Good your grace, pardon me.  
5 Neither my place nor aught I heard of business  
5 Hath raised 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  
6 And it is still itself.  
0

**DUKE**

Why, what's the matter?

**BRABANTIO**

My daughter! Oh, my daughter!

**ALL**

Dead?

**BRABANTIO**

Ay, to me.

**Modern Text**

Sir, the Turks sailed to Rhodes, where they joined  
with another fleet.

**FIRST SENATOR**

That's just what I thought. How many, can you  
guess?

**MESSENGER**

Thirty ships. Now they've turned around and are  
clearly heading for Cyprus. Signor Montano, your  
brave and loyal servant, gives you this  
information and asks you to send reinforcements  
to relieve him.

**DUKE**

Then it's certain they're heading for Cyprus. Is  
Marcus Luccicos in town?

**FIRST SENATOR**

No, he's in Florence.

**DUKE**

Write to him immediately. Hurry.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Here come Brabantio and the brave Moor.

*BRABANTIO, OTHELLO, CASSIO, IAGO, RODERIGO enter.*

**DUKE**

Brave Othello, I have to send you right away to fight  
the Turks, our great enemy.—(to BRABANTIO) Oh, I  
didn't see you there. Welcome, sir. I could have  
used your wisdom and help tonight.

**BRABANTIO**

I could have used yours as well. Forgive me, your  
grace. I didn't get out of bed and come here in the  
dead of night because I heard about the war or  
because I was worried about the city's defense. I  
have a personal problem so painful and gut-  
wrenching that it overwhelms everything else.

**DUKE**

Why, what's the matter?

**BRABANTIO**

It's my daughter! Oh, my daughter!

**FIRST SENATOR**

Is she dead?

**BRABANTIO**

She's dead to me. She's been tricked and stolen

**Original Text**

She is abused, stol'n from me, and corrupted  
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks.

**Modern Text**

from me, enchanted by black magic spells. She  
must've

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 4**

65 For nature so prepost'rously 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

70 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.

**BRABANTIO**

Humbly I thank your grace.

Here is the man, this Moor, whom now it seems,

75 Your special mandate for the state affairs  
Hath hither brought.

**ALL**

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,

80 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  
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,

85 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,  
And little of this great world can I speak,

been tricked or drugged, because there's no way  
she could have made this mistake on her own.

**DUKE**

Whoever tricked your daughter and stole her from  
you will pay for it. And you yourself will determine  
the sentence as you see fit, and impose the death  
penalty if you choose to, even if the criminal were  
my own son.

**BRABANTIO**

I humbly thank you, sir. Here is the man, the  
Moor. It seems you had your own reasons for  
summoning him here.

**ALL**

We're sorry to hear this.

**DUKE**

(to OTHELLO)What do you have to say for  
yourself?

**BRABANTIO**

Nothing, but this is true.

**OTHELLO**

Noble, honorable gentlemen whom I serve: it's  
true that I've taken this man's daughter from him  
and married her. But that's my only offense.  
There's nothing more. I'm awkward in my speech  
and I'm not a smooth talker. From the time I was  
seven years old until nine months ago I've been  
fighting in battles. I don't know much about the  
world apart from fighting. So I won't do myself  
much good by speaking in my own defense. But if  
you'll let me, I'll tell you the plain

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 5**

90 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

95 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**

story of how we fell in love, and what drugs,  
charms, spells, and powerful magic—because  
that's what I'm being accused of—I used to win  
his daughter.

**BRABANTIO**

**Original Text**

A maiden never bold,  
Of spirit so still and quiet that her motion  
Blushed at herself. And she, in spite of nature,  
100 Of years, of country, credit, everything,  
To fall in love with what she feared to look on?  
It is a judgment maimed and most imperfect  
That will confess perfection so could err.  
Against all rules of nature, and must be driven  
105 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,  
He wrought upon her.

**DUKE**

To vouch this is no proof,  
110 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 forcèd courses  
115 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,

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 6**

And let her speak of me before her father.  
120 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*

125 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**

130 Her father loved me, oft invited me,  
Still questioned me the story of my life  
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,

**Modern Text**

She's a good girl, quiet and obedient. She blushes at the slightest thing. And you want me to believe that despite her young age and proper upbringing she fell in love with a man she'd be afraid to look at? The very thought of it is ridiculous. You'd have to be stupid to think that someone so perfect could make such an unnatural mistake as that. The devil must be behind this. Therefore I say again that he must have used some powerful drug or magic potion on her.

**DUKE**

Your saying this isn't proof. There has to be clear evidence that he's done this, not just these accusations.

**FIRST SENATOR**

Tell us, Othello. Did you trick or deceive this lady in some way? Or did you agree to this as equals?

**OTHELLO**

Please, send for Desdemona to come here from the Sagittarius Inn and ask her to speak about me in front

of her father. If she has anything bad to say about me, then you can sentence me to death.

**DUKE**

Bring Desdemona here.

**OTHELLO**

Iago, bring Desdemona here. You know where she is.

*IAGO and attendants exit.*

In the meantime I'll tell you all, as honestly as I confess my sins to God, how I wooed this beautiful lady, and how she came to love me.

**DUKE**

Tell us, Othello.

**OTHELLO**

Her father loved me and used to invite me to his house often, continually asking me about my life and all the battles I've fought. I told him

## Original Text

That I have passed.  
 I ran it through, even from my boyish days,  
 135 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,  
 140 Of being taken by the insolent foe  
 And sold to slavery, of my redemption thence  
 And portance in my traveler's history.  
 Wherein of antres vast and deserts idle,  
 Rough quarries, rocks, hills whose heads touch  
 145 heaven  
 It was my hint to speak—such was my process—  
 And of the Cannibals that each others eat,

## Modern Text

everything, from my boyhood up until the time  
 when I was talking to him. I told him about  
 unfortunate disasters, hair-raising adventures on  
 sea and on land, and near-catastrophes and  
 dangerous adventures I've been through. I told  
 him how I was captured and sold as a slave, how  
 I bought my freedom, and how I wandered  
 through caves and deserts. I was able to tell him  
 about cannibals who eat each other, and men  
 with heads growing below their shoulders. When  
 I talked about all these things, Desdemona used  
 to listen attentively. If she had to go do some  
 household chore, I noticed that she'd always  
 come back quickly to hear more of my stories.

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 7

The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads  
 Grew beneath their shoulders. These things to hear  
 Would Desdemona seriously incline.  
 But still the house affairs would draw her hence,  
 150 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  
 To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart  
 155 That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,  
 Whereof by parcels she had something heard  
 But not intently. I did consent,  
 And often did beguile her of her tears  
 When I did speak of some distressful stroke  
 160 That my youth suffered. 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.  
 165 She wished she had not heard it, yet she wished  
 That heaven had made her such a man. She  
 thanked me  
 And bade me, if I had a friend that loved her,  
 I should but teach him how to tell my story  
 170 And that would woo her. Upon this hint I spake.  
 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.  
 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  
 175 best.  
 Men do their broken weapons rather use  
 Than their bare hands.

When I was relaxing, she'd pull me aside and  
 ask to hear some part of a story she had missed.  
 Her eyes would fill with tears at the bad things I  
 went through in my younger years. When my  
 stories were done, she'd sigh and tell me how  
 strangely wonderful and sad my life had been.  
 She said she wished she hadn't heard it, but she  
 also wished there was a man like me for her.  
 She thanked me and told me that if a friend of  
 mine had a story like mine to tell, she'd fall in  
 love with him. I took the hint and spoke to her.  
 She said she loved me for the dangers I'd  
 survived, and I loved her for feeling such strong  
 emotions about me. That's the only witchcraft I  
 ever used. Here comes my wife now. She'll  
 confirm everything.

*DESDEMONA, IAGO, and attendants enter.*

**DUKE**

I think a story like that would win my own  
 daughter over. Brabantio, I urge you to make the  
 best of this. Try to accept what's happened.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 8

**BRABANTIO**

I pray you, hear her speak.  
If she confess that she was half the wooer,  
Destruction on my head if my bad blame  
Light on the man.—Come hither, gentle mistress.

180 Do you perceive in all this noble company  
Where most you owe obedience?

**DESEMONA**

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

185 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  
To you, preferring you before her father,  
So much I challenge that I may profess

190 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

195 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**

200 Let me speak like yourself and lay a sentence  
Which, as a grise or step, may help these lovers.  
When remedies are past, the griefs are ended  
By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.

**BRABANTIO**

Please let her speak. If she admits she wanted  
this, then I won't blame Othello.—Come here, my  
child. Who do you obey here?

**DESEMONA**

Father, this isn't easy for me. I'm torn. I owe you  
respect because you gave me life and education.  
You're the one I have to obey. I'm your daughter.  
But this man here is my husband now, and I owe  
him as much as my mother owed you, just as  
she preferred you to her own father. So I have to  
give my obedience to the Moor, my husband.

**BRABANTIO**

I'm finished, then. Duke, please go ahead with  
your state business. I'd rather adopt a child than  
have one of my own.—Come here, Moor. I'm  
forced to give my blessing to this marriage. With  
all my heart, I give you that thing which, if you  
didn't already have it, I'd try with all my heart to  
keep from you. Desdemona, I'm glad you're my  
only child, since if I had others I'd keep them all  
locked up. You would have made me treat them  
like a tyrant.—I'm done, my lord.

**DUKE**

Let me refer to a proverb that may help you  
forgive these lovers: if you can't change  
something, don't cry about it. When you lament  
something bad that's already happened, you're  
setting yourself up for more

## Act 1, Scene 3, Page 9

To mourn a mischief that is past and gone  
205 Is the next way to draw new mischief on.  
What cannot be preserved when fortune takes,  
Patience her injury a mock'ry makes.  
The robbed that smiles steals something from the  
thief,  
He robs himself that spends a bootless grief.

**BRABANTIO**

210 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  
215 That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow.  
These sentences to sugar or to gall,

bad news. A robbery victim who can smile about  
his losses is superior to the thief who robbed  
him, but if he cries he's just wasting time.

**BRABANTIO**

So if the Turks steal Cyprus from us, it won't be  
bad as long as we keep smiling. It's easy to  
accept platitudes like that if you haven't lost  
anything. But I've lost something precious, and I  
have to put up with the platitude as well as  
suffering my loss. Talk is cheap. I've never heard  
of someone feeling better because of someone

**Original Text**

Being strong on both sides, are equivocal.  
But words are words. I never yet did hear  
That the bruised heart was piercèd through the ears.

220 I humbly beseech you, proceed to th' 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 boist'rous 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

225 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,

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 10**

I crave fit disposition for my wife.

230 Due reference of place and exhibition,  
With such accommodation and besort  
As levels with her breeding.

**DUKE**

Why, at her father's.

**BRABANTIO**

I'll not have it so.

**OTHELLO**

235 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

240 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  
245 May trumpet to the world. My heart's subdued  
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.

250 So that, dear lords, if I be left behind  
A moth of peace and he go to the war,

**Modern Text**

else's words. Please, I'm asking you, go ahead  
and get back to your state affairs.

**DUKE**

The Turks are heading for Cyprus with a  
powerful fleet. Othello, you understand better  
than anyone how the defenses for Cyprus work.  
Even though we have a very good officer in  
charge there already, everyone says you're the  
better man for the job. So I'll have to ask you to  
put a damper on your marriage celebrations and  
take part in this dangerous expedition.

**OTHELLO**

I've gotten used to the hardships of a military life.  
I rise to the occasion when faced with difficulties.  
I will take charge of this war against the Turks.  
But I humbly ask you to make appropriate  
arrangements for my wife,

giving her a place to live and people to keep her  
company that suit her high rank.

**DUKE**

She can stay at her father's house.

**BRABANTIO**

I won't allow it.

**OTHELLO**

Neither will I.

**DESDEMONA**

And I wouldn't stay there. I don't want to upset  
my father by being in his house. Dear Duke,  
please listen to what I have to say.

**DUKE**

What do you want to do, Desdemona?

**DESDEMONA**

When I fell in love with Othello I made up my  
mind that I wanted to live with him. You can see  
how much I wanted to be with him by how  
violently I threw away my old life. I feel like I'm a  
part of him now, and that means I'm part of a  
soldier. I saw Othello's true face when I saw his  
mind. I gave my whole life to him because of his  
honor and bravery. If I were left at home  
uselessly while he went off to war, then I'm



**Original Text**

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**

- 255 Let her have your voice.  
Vouch with me, heaven, I therefore beg it not  
To please the palate of my appetite,

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 11**

Nor to comply with heat the young affects  
In my defunct and proper satisfaction,  
260 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  
When she is with me. No, when light-winged toys  
Of feathered Cupid seel with wanton dullness  
265 My speculative and officed instrument,  
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**

- 270 Be it as you shall privately determine,  
Either for her stay or going. Th' affair cries haste  
And speed must answer it.

**FIRST SENATOR**

You must away tonight.

**OTHELLO**

With all my heart.

**DUKE**

- At nine i' th' morning here we'll meet again.  
275 Othello, leave some officer behind  
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 ancient.  
A man he is of honesty and trust.

- 280 To his conveyance I assign my wife,  
With what else needful your good grace shall think  
To be sent after me.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 12****DUKE**

Let it be so.  
Good night to every one.—(to BRABANTIO)  
And, noble signior,

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

**FIRST SENATOR****Modern Text**

separated from my husband in his natural  
element. I'd be miserable without him. Let me go  
with him.

**OTHELLO**

Please allow her to do this. I'm not asking to  
have her near me for sex—I'm too old for that,  
and my sexual

urges are dead. I want this because she wants  
it—I love her for her mind. And I'd never want  
you to think that I'd neglect my serious official  
duties while she was there with me. If I ever let  
love blind me so that I choose to lounge around  
in bed with my loved one instead of going off to  
war, then you can let a housewife use my helmet  
as a frying pan. My reputation would be  
disgraced if I ever acted like that.

**DUKE**

You can decide that privately. I don't care  
whether she stays or goes. What's important is  
the urgency of this mission. You've got to act  
fast.

**FIRST SENATOR**

You'll have to leave tonight.

**OTHELLO**

With all my heart, I'll go right away.

**DUKE**

We'll meet again at nine in the morning. Othello,  
have one of your officers stay behind to bring  
you your commission and whatever else is  
important to you.

**OTHELLO**

My lord, my ensign is an honest and trustworthy  
man. He'll accompany my wife, and bring  
whatever else you think I might need.

**DUKE**

All right, then. Good night, everyone.—  
(to BRABANTIO) Sir, if goodness is beautiful,  
your son-in-law is beautiful, not black.

**FIRST SENATOR**

**Original Text**

Adieu, brave Moor. Use Desdemona well.

**BRABANTIO**

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**

- 290 My life upon her faith!—Honest Iago,  
My Desdemona must I leave to thee.  
I prithee, let thy wife attend on her,  
And bring them after in the best advantage.  
Come, Desdemona, I have but an hour  
295 Of love, of worldly matter 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, think'st thou?

**IAGO**

- 300 Why, go to bed, and sleep.

**RODERIGO**

I will incontinently drown myself.

**Modern Text**

Goodbye, black Moor. Treat Desdemona well.

**BRABANTIO**

Keep an eye on her, Moor. She lied to me, and she may lie to you.

*The DUKE, BRABANTIO, CASSIO, SENATORS,  
and officers exit.*

**OTHELLO**

I'd bet my life she'd never lie to me. Iago, I'm leaving my dear Desdemona with you. Have your wife attend to her, and bring them along as soon as you can. Come on, Desdemona, I've only got an hour of love to spend with you, to tell you what you need to do. We're on a tight schedule.

*OTHELLO and DESDEMONA exit.*

**RODERIGO**

Iago.

**IAGO**

What do you have to say, noble friend?

**RODERIGO**

What do you think I should do?

**IAGO**

Go to bed, and sleep.

**RODERIGO**

I'm going to go drown myself.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 13**

**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.

**IAGO**

Oh, 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**

- 305 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 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

**IAGO**

If you do that, I'll never respect you again. Why, you silly man!

**RODERIGO**

It's silly to live when life is torture. The only cure is death.

**IAGO**

Oh, how stupid! I've been alive for twenty-eight years, and I've never met a man who knew what was good for him. I'd rather be a baboon than kill myself out of love for some woman I can't have.

**RODERIGO**

What should I do? I know it's foolish to be so much in love, but I can't help it.

**IAGO**

Can't help it? Nonsense! What we are is up to us. Our bodies are like gardens and our willpower is like the gardener. Depending on what we plant—weeds or lettuce, or one kind of herb rather than a variety, the garden will either be barren and useless, or rich and productive. If

**Original Text**

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 prepost'rous 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.

**Modern Text**

we didn't have rational minds to counterbalance our emotions and desires, our bodily urges would take over. We'd end up in ridiculous situations. Thankfully, we have reason to cool our raging lusts. In my opinion, what you call love is just an offshoot of lust.

**RODERIGO**

I don't believe it.

**IAGO**

You feel love because you feel lust and you have no willpower. Come on, be a man. Drown yourself? Drowning is for cats or blind puppies—don't drown yourself! I've told you I'm your friend, and I'll stick by you.

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 14**

I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse. Follow thou the wars, defeat thy favor 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. 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 errors 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 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! 'Tis clean out of the way. Seek thou rather to be hanged in compassing thy joy than to be drowned and go without her.

**RODERIGO**

310 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

I've never been more useful to you than I will be now. Here's what you'll do. Sell all your assets and your land, and turn it into cash. Desdemona can't continue loving the Moor any more than he can continue loving her. She fell in love with him very suddenly, and they'll break up just as suddenly. Moors are moody people.—So sell your lands and raise a lot of cash. What seems sweet to him now will soon turn bitter. She'll dump Othello for a younger man. When she's had enough of the Moor's body, she'll realize her mistake. She'll need to have a new lover. She'll have to have it. So have your money ready. If you want to go to hell, there are better ways to do it than killing yourself. Raise all the money you can. I can get the better of religion and a few flimsy vows between a misguided barbarian and a depraved Venetian girl. You'll get to sleep with her—just put together some money. And to hell with drowning yourself! That's completely beside the point. If you're ready to die, you can risk death by committing crimes in an attempt to get the woman you want. Don't just give up on her and drown yourself.

**RODERIGO**

Can I count on you if I wait to see what happens?

**IAGO**

You can trust me. Go now and get cash. I told you before, and I'll tell you again and again: I hate the Moor. I'm devoted to my cause of hating him, just as devoted as you are to yours. So let's join forces and get revenge. If you seduce Desdemona and make a fool out of him, it'll be fun for both of us. Many things may happen. Go get money. We'll speak again tomorrow.

**Original Text**

tomorrow. Adieu.

**RODERIGO**

Where shall we meet i' th' morning?

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 15**

**IAGO**

At my lodging.

**RODERIGO**

I'll be with thee betimes.

**IAGO**

Go to, farewell.

Do you hear, Roderigo?

**RODERIGO**

315 What say you?

**IAGO**

No more of drowning, do you hear?

**RODERIGO**

I am changed.

**IAGO**

Go to, farewell. Put money enough in your purse.

**RODERIGO**

I'll sell all my land.

*Exit*

**IAGO**

320 Thus do I ever make my fool my purse.

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

325 He's done my office. I know not if 't be true,

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,

**Modern Text**

Goodbye.

**RODERIGO**

Where will we meet in the morning?

**IAGO**

At my house.

**RODERIGO**

I'll be there early.

**IAGO**

Go home. Goodbye. Oh, and one more thing—

**RODERIGO**

What is it?

**IAGO**

No more talk about killing yourself, okay?

**RODERIGO**

I've changed my mind about that.

**IAGO**

Go then, goodbye. Put a lot of cash together.

**RODERIGO**

I'm going to sell all my land.

*RODERIGO exits.*

**IAGO**

That's how I always do it, getting money from fools. I'd be wasting my skills dealing with an idiot like that if I couldn't get something useful out of him. I hate the Moor, and there's a widespread rumor that he's slept with my wife. I'm not sure it's true, but just the suspicion is enough for me. He thinks highly of me. That'll help. Cassio's a handsome man. Let's see, how can I

**Act 1, Scene 3, Page 16**

330 To get his place and to plume up my will  
In double knavery. How? How? Let's see.

After some time, to abuse Othello's ear

That he is too familiar with his wife.

He hath a person and a smooth dispose

335 To be suspected, framed to make women false.

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.

340 I have 't. It is engendered! Hell and night

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

*Exit*

get his position and use him to hurt Othello at the same time? How? How? Let's see. After a while I'll start telling Othello that Cassio is too intimate with Desdemona. Cassio is a smooth talker and a good-looking guy, the sort of man that people would expect to be a seducer. The Moor is open and straightforward. He thinks any man who seems honest is honest. People like that are easy to manipulate. So it's all decided. I've worked it out. With a little help from the devil, I'll bring this monstrous plan to success.

*He exits.*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 2, Scene 1

*Enter MONTANO and two GENTLEMEN**MONTANO and two GENTLEMEN enter.***MONTANO**

What from the cape can you discern at sea?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Nothing at all. It is a high-wrought flood.  
I cannot 'twixt the heaven and the main  
Descry a sail.

**MONTANO**

- 5 Methinks the wind hath spoke aloud at land,  
A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements.  
If it hath ruffianed so upon the sea  
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,  
Can hold the mortise? What shall we hear of this?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

- 10 A segregation of the Turkish fleet.  
For do but stand upon the foaming shore,  
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds,  
The wind-shaked surge, with high and monstrous mane,  
15 Seems to cast water on the burning bear,  
And quench the guards of th' ever-fixèd pole.  
I never did like molestation view  
On the enchaîned flood.

**MONTANO**

- If that the Turkish fleet  
Be not ensheltered and embayed, they are drowned.  
20 It is impossible they bear it out.

*Enter a THIRD GENTLEMAN***MONTANO**

What can you see out on the ocean?

**FIRST GENTLEMAN**

Nothing. The water's so rough that I can't see any  
sails, either in the bay or on the ocean.

**MONTANO**

It was windy on shore too. A big blast of wind  
shook our fortifications. How could a ship made  
out of wood hold together in those mountainous  
waves? What do you think will be the result of this  
storm?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

The Turkish navy will be broken up. The wind's  
whipping up the waves so high you expect them  
to reach the clouds and splash against the stars  
in the sky. I've never seen the waters so  
disturbed.

**MONTANO**

If the Turkish fleet isn't protected in some harbor,  
their men must all be drowned. No ship could  
survive this storm.

*A THIRD GENTLEMAN enters.*

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 2

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

- News, lads, Our wars are done!  
The desperate tempest hath so banged the Turks,  
That their designment halts. A noble ship of Venice  
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance  
25 On most part of their fleet.

**MONTANO**

How? Is this true?

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

- The ship is here put in,  
A Veronesa. Michael Cassio,  
Lieutenant to the warlike Moor Othello,  
Is come on shore. The Moor himself at sea  
30 And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

**MONTANO**

I am glad on 't. 'Tis a worthy governor.

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

But this same Cassio, though he speak of comfort  
Touching the Turkish loss, yet he looks sadly  
And prays the Moor be safe. For they were parted

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

I've got news, boys, the war's over! This terrible  
storm has smashed the Turks so badly that their  
plans are ruined. One of our ships has reported  
that it saw most of their fleet shipwrecked.

**MONTANO**

What? Is this true?

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

The ship's sailing into harbor now; it's from  
Verona. Michael Cassio, lieutenant of the Moor  
Othello, has arrived on shore. The Moor himself  
is still at sea. He's been commissioned to come  
here to Cyprus.

**MONTANO**

I'm happy about that. He'll be a good governor.

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

Cassio brings good news about the Turkish  
defeat, but he's worried about the Othello's  
safety. The two of them were separated during

**Original Text****Modern Text**

35 With foul and violent tempest.

**MONTANO**

Pray heavens he be,  
For I have served him, and the man commands  
Like a full soldier. Let's to the seaside, ho!  
As well to see the vessel that's come in  
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello,  
40 Even till we make the main and th' aerial blue  
An indistinct regard.

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

Come, let's do so.  
For every minute is expectancy  
Of more arrivance.

*Enter CASSIO*

the storm.

**MONTANO**

I hope to God Othello's all right. I served under  
him, and I know what an excellent commander he  
is. Let's go to the shore to get a look at the ship  
that came in, and to look out for Othello's ship.  
We'll stare out at the sea until the sea and the sky  
blur together.

**THIRD GENTLEMAN**

Let's do that. Every minute we expect more ships  
to arrive.

*CASSIO enters.*

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 3**

**CASSIO**

Thanks, you the valiant of this warlike isle  
45 That so approve the Moor. Oh, let the heavens  
Give him defense against the elements,  
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea.

**MONTANO**

Is he well shipped?

**CASSIO**

His bark is stoutly timbered and his pilot  
50 Of very expert and approved allowance  
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,  
Stand in bold cure.

**A VOICE**

*(within)* A sail, a sail, a sail!

*Enter a MESSENGER*

**CASSIO**

What noise?

**MESSENGER**

55 The town is empty. On the brow o' th' sea  
Stand ranks of people, and they cry "A sail!"

**CASSIO**

My hopes do shape him for the governor.

*A shot*

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

They do discharge their shot of courtesy.  
Our friends at least.

**CASSIO**

60 I pray you sir, go forth  
And give us truth who 'tis that is arrived.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

I shall.

*Exit*

**CASSIO**

Thanks, you brave men who defend this island  
and respect Othello. I hope heaven protects him  
from the weather, because I lost sight of him on  
the stormy sea.

**MONTANO**

Is his ship sturdy?

**CASSIO**

Yes, it's well built, and the ship's pilot is very  
expert and experienced. For that reason I still  
have some hope for him, even though I don't  
have my hopes up too high.

**A VOICE**

*(offstage)* A sail! A sail! A sail!

*A MESSENGER enters.*

**CASSIO**

What's all that shouting about?

**MESSENGER**

Everybody in town is down at the shore shouting  
"A sail!"

**CASSIO**

I hope it's Othello.

*A shot is heard.*

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

They've fired a greeting shot, so at least it's a  
friendly ship.

**CASSIO**

Please go find out for certain who has arrived.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

I'll do that.

*SECOND GENTLEMAN exits.*

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 4**

**Original Text****MONTANO**

But good lieutenant, is your general wived?

**CASSIO**

Most fortunately. He hath achieved a maid

- 6 That paragons description and wild fame,  
5 One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,  
And in th' essential vesture of creation  
Does tire the ingener.

*Enter SECOND GENTLEMAN*

How now? Who has put in?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

- 7 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.  
0

**CASSIO**

He's had most favorable and happy speed.  
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,  
The guttered rocks and congregated sands,  
Traitors ensteeped to enclog the guiltless keel,  
7 As having sense of beauty, do omit  
5 Their mortal natures, letting go safely by  
The divine Desdemona.

**MONTANO**

What is she?

**CASSIO**

- She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,  
8 Left in the conduct of the bold Iago,  
0 Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts  
A se'nnight's speed. Great Jove, Othello guard,  
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath,  
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,  
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,  
8 Give renewed fire to our extincted spirits  
5 And bring all Cyprus comfort!

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, IAGO, RODERIGO with attendants*

**Modern Text****MONTANO**

Good lieutenant, is your general married?

**CASSIO**

Yes, and he's very lucky to have married the woman he did. His wife defies description. She's God's masterpiece, and she'd exhaust whoever tried to do her justice while praising her.

*The SECOND GENTLEMAN enters.*

Who's arrived in the harbor?

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

A man named Iago, the general's ensign.

**CASSIO**

He made good time. You see how the storm, the jagged rocks, and the sand banks that trap ships all appreciate a beautiful woman. They let the heavenly Desdemona arrive safe and sound.

**MONTANO**

Who's that?

**CASSIO**

She's the one I was talking about, the general's wife. The brave Iago was put in charge of bringing her here, and he's arrived a week sooner than we expected. Dear God, please protect Othello and help him arrive here safely, so he and Desdemona can be in each other's arms, and Othello can cheer us up and bring comfort to Cyprus.

*DESDEMONA, IAGO, RODERIGO and EMILIA enter*

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 5**

- Oh, behold,  
The riches of the ship is come on shore!  
You men of Cyprus, let her have your knees.  
90 Hail to thee, lady, and the grace of heaven,  
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,  
Enwheel thee round!

**DESDEMONA**

I thank you, valiant Cassio.  
What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

**CASSIO**

- 95 He is not yet arrived. Nor know I aught  
But that he's well and will be shortly here.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, but I fear. How lost you company?

Look, the precious Desdemona has arrived on shore. We should all kneel before her, men of Cyprus! Greetings, my lady, and may God always be with you.

**DESDEMONA**

Thank you, brave Cassio. Is there any news about my husband?

**CASSIO**

He hasn't arrived yet. As far as I know, he's okay and will arrive here soon.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, but I'm worried. How did you two get separated?

## Original Text

**CASSIO**

The great contention of the sea and skies  
Parted our fellowship—

**A VOICE**

100 *(within)* A sail, a sail!

**CASSIO**

But, hark! a sail.

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

They give this greeting to the citadel.  
This likewise is a friend.

**CASSIO**

See for the news.

*Exit a SECOND GENTLEMAN*

Good ancient, you are welcome.—Welcome,  
105 mistress.

*(kisses EMILIA)*

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,  
That I extend my manners. 'Tis my breeding  
That gives me this bold show of courtesy.

## Modern Text

**CASSIO**

The storm separated us.

**A VOICE**

*(offstage)* A sail! A sail!

**CASSIO**

Listen, they've spotted another ship!

*A shot*

*A gunshot is heard.*

**SECOND GENTLEMAN**

They fired a greeting shot too, so this is also a  
friendly ship.

**CASSIO**

Go find out the news.

*SECOND GENTLEMAN exits.*

Ensign Iago, welcome.—And welcome to you,  
too, madam. *(he kisses EMILIA)* Don't be upset  
that I kissed your wife hello, Iago. It's a courtesy  
where I come from.

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 6

**IAGO**

Sir, would she give you so much of her lips  
110 As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,  
You'll have enough.

**DESDEMONA**

Alas, she has no speech!

**IAGO**

In faith, too much.  
I find it still, when I have leave to sleep.  
115 Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,  
She puts her tongue a little in her heart  
And chides with thinking.

**EMILIA**

You have little cause to say so.

**IAGO**

Come on, come on. You are pictures out of door,  
bells in your parlors, wild-cats in your kitchens,  
saints in your injuries, devils being offended, players  
in your housewifery, and housewives in your beds.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, fie upon thee, slanderer!

**IAGO**

120 Nay, it is true, or else I am a Turk.

**IAGO**

If she gave you as much lip as she gives me,  
you'd be sick of her by now.

**DESDEMONA**

On the contrary, she's a soft-spoken woman.

**IAGO**

No, she talks too much. She's always talking  
when I want to sleep. I admit that in front of you,  
my lady, she keeps a bit quiet. But she's scolding  
me silently.

**EMILIA**

You have no reason to say that.

**IAGO**

Come on, come on. You women are all the  
same. You're as pretty as pictures when you're  
out in public, but in your own houses you're as  
noisy as jangling bells. In your own kitchens you  
act like wildcats. You make yourselves sound  
like saints when you're complaining about  
something, but you act like devils when someone  
offends you. You don't take your jobs as  
housewives seriously, and you're shameless  
hussies in bed.

**DESDEMONA**

Shame on you, you slanderer!

**IAGO**

No, it's true, or if it's not, I'm a villain. You wake



**Original Text**

You rise to play and go to bed to work.

**EMILIA**

You shall not write my praise.

**IAGO**

No, let me not.

**DESDEMONA**

What wouldst thou write of me, if thou should'st praise me?

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 7**

**IAGO**

O gentle lady, do not put me to 't,  
125 For I am nothing, if not critical.

**DESDEMONA**

Come on, assay. There's one gone to the harbor?

**IAGO**

Ay, madam.

**DESDEMONA**

I am not merry, but I do beguile  
The thing I am by seeming otherwise.  
130 Come, how wouldst thou praise me?

**IAGO**

I am about it, but indeed my invention  
Comes from my pate as birdlime does from frieze,  
It plucks out brains and all. But my Muse labors  
And thus she is delivered:  
135 If she be fair and wise, fairness and wit,  
The one's for use, the other useth it.

**DESDEMONA**

Well praised! How if she be black and witty?

**IAGO**

If she be black, and thereto have a wit,  
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit.

**DESDEMONA**

140 Worse and worse!

**EMILIA**

How if fair and foolish?

**IAGO**

She never yet was foolish that was fair,  
For even her folly helped her to an heir.

**DESDEMONA**

These are old fond paradoxes to make fools laugh i'  
th' alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou for her  
That's foul and foolish?

**IAGO**

145 There's none so foul and foolish thereunto,  
But does foul pranks which fair and wise ones do.

**Modern Text**

up to have fun, and you start work when you go to bed.

**EMILIA**

You clearly have nothing good to say about me.

**IAGO**

No, I don't.

**DESDEMONA**

But if you had to say something nice about me, what would you say?

**IAGO**

Don't make me do it, my lady. I'm critical by nature.

**DESDEMONA**

Come on, just try.—By the way, has someone gone down to the harbor?

**IAGO**

Yes, madam.

**DESDEMONA**

I'm not as happy as I seem. I'm just trying not to show how worried I am about Othello's safety. Come on, what would you say about me?

**IAGO**

I'm trying to think of something, but I'm not good at inventing clever things. It takes time. Ah, I've got it. If a woman is pretty and smart, she uses her good looks to get what she wants.

**DESDEMONA**

Very clever! But what if the woman is smart but ugly?

**IAGO**

Even if she's ugly, she'll be smart enough to find a guy to sleep with her.

**DESDEMONA**

This is getting worse and worse!

**EMILIA**

What if she's pretty but stupid?

**IAGO**

No pretty woman is stupid, because her stupidity will make her more attractive to men.

**DESDEMONA**

These are stupid old jokes that men tell each other in bars. What horrible thing do you have to say about a woman who's both ugly and stupid?

**IAGO**

No matter how ugly or stupid the woman is, she plays the same dirty tricks that the smart and pretty ones do.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 8

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, heavy ignorance! Thou praisest the worst best.  
But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving  
woman indeed, one that in the authority of her merit  
did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

**IAGO**

She that was ever fair and never proud,  
Had tongue at will and yet was never loud,  
150 Never lacked gold and yet went never gay,  
Fled from her wish and yet said "Now I may,"  
She that being angered, her revenge being nigh,  
Bade her wrong stay and her displeasure fly,  
She that in wisdom never was so frail  
155 To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail,  
She that could think and ne'er disclose her mind,  
See suitors following and not look behind,  
She was a wight, if ever such wights were—

**DESDEMONA**

To do what?

**IAGO**

160 To suckle fools and chronicle small beer.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion! Do not  
learn of him, Emilia, though he be thy husband. How  
say you, Cassio? Is he not a most profane and  
liberal counselor?

**CASSIO**

He speaks home, madam. You may relish him more  
in the soldier than in the scholar.

*CASSIO takes DESDEMONA'S hand*

**IAGO**

(*aside*) He takes her by the palm. Ay, well said,  
whisper! With as little a web as this will I ensnare as  
great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do, I will  
gyve thee in thine own courtship. You say true, 'Tis  
so, indeed.

**DESDEMONA**

You don't know a thing! You give your best  
praise to the worst women. But how would you  
praise a truly good woman, someone who had no  
reason to worry about what anyone said about  
her?

**IAGO**

A woman who was beautiful but never proud,  
who could speak well but knew when to be quiet,  
who dressed well but was never overdressed,  
who had self-restraint even when she could get  
what she wanted, a woman who never took  
revenge, who overlooked it when people hurt  
her, who was too wise to do anything stupid, who  
could think without revealing her thoughts, and  
who could refrain from flirting with men in love  
with her, that kind of woman, if she ever existed,  
would—

**DESDEMONA**

Would do what?

**IAGO**

Would raise babies and clip coupons.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, that's pathetic! Don't listen to him, Emilia,  
even though he's your husband. What do you  
think about him, Cassio? Isn't he a horrible man?

**CASSIO**

He speaks bluntly, madam. He's more of a  
soldier than a wise man.

*CASSIO takes DESDEMONA'S hand.*

**IAGO**

(*to himself*) He's taking her hand. That's right, go  
ahead and whisper together. This is all I need to  
get Cassio. Yes, keep smiling at her, Cassio.  
Your fine manners around women will be your  
downfall. Oh, I'm sure you're saying something  
very clever.

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 9

If such tricks as these strip you out of your  
lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kissed  
your three fingers so oft, which now again you are  
most apt to play the sir in. Very good, well kissed,  
and excellent courtesies! 'tis so, indeed. Yet again  
your fingers to your lips? Would they were clyster-  
pipes for your sake!—

*Trumpet within*

165 The Moor! I know his trumpet.

**CASSIO**

If you lose your job because of little flirtations like  
this, you'll wish you hadn't been so courteous  
with her. Oh, how nice, you're [kissing](#) your own  
hand, one finger at a time? I wish those fingers  
were enema tubes!—

*A trumpet plays offstage.*

That's the Moor! I recognize his trumpet.

**CASSIO**

## Original Text

'Tis truly so.

**DESDEMONA**

Let's meet him and receive him.

**CASSIO**

Lo, where he comes!

*Enter OTHELLO and attendants*

**OTHELLO**

Oh my fair warrior!

**DESDEMONA**

My dear Othello!

**OTHELLO**

It gives me wonder great as my content  
To see you here before me. Oh, my soul's joy!

170 If after every tempest come such calms,  
May the winds blow till they have wakened death,  
And let the laboring bark climb hills of seas  
Olympus-high, and duck again as low  
As hell's from heaven! If I were now to die,

175 'Twere now to be most happy, for I fear  
My soul hath her content so absolute  
That not another comfort like to this  
Succeeds in unknown fate.

**DESDEMONA**

The heavens forbid

But that our loves and comforts should increase,

180 Even as our days do grow.

## Modern Text

Yes, it is.

**DESDEMONA**

Let's go greet him when he lands.

**CASSIO**

Look, here he comes.

*OTHELLO enters with attendants.*

**OTHELLO**

My beautiful warrior!

**DESDEMONA**

My darling Othello!

**OTHELLO**

I'm amazed you got here before me. But I'm overjoyed! My love, if the calm after the storm could always be this wonderful, I'd want the wind to blow until it waked the dead, and whipped up waves as tall as mountains! If I died right now I'd be completely happy, since I'll probably never be as happy as this again in my life.

**DESDEMONA**

God willing, our love and our happiness will only increase as we get older.

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 10

**OTHELLO**

Amen to that, sweet powers!  
I cannot speak enough of this content.  
It stops me here, it is too much of joy.  
And this, and this, the greatest discords be (*kissing her*)  
That e'er our hearts shall make!

**IAGO**

185 (*aside*)  
Oh, you are well tuned now,  
But I'll set down the pegs that make this music,  
As honest as I am.

**OTHELLO**

Come, let us to the castle.  
News, friends! Our wars are done, the Turks are drowned.  
190 How does my old acquaintance of this isle?—  
Honey, you shall be well desired in Cyprus,  
I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,  
I prattle out of fashion, and I dote  
In mine own comforts.—I prithee, good Iago,  
195 Go to the bay and disembark my coffers.  
Bring thou the master to the citadel.  
He is a good one, and his worthiness

**OTHELLO**

Amen to that! I can't talk about my happiness anymore. It's too much. I hope these kisses I'm about to give you are the closest we ever come to fighting. (*they kiss*)

**IAGO**

(*to himself*) Oh, you're happy now, but I'll ruin your happiness, for all my supposed honesty.

**OTHELLO**

Let's go up to the castle. Good news, friends. The war's over and the Turks are drowned. How are my old friends from this island doing?—Honey, they'll love you here in Cyprus. They've been very good to me here. Oh, my dear, I'm blabbing on and on because I'm so happy.—Iago, would you be good enough to go get my trunks from the ships? And bring the ship's captain to the castle. He's a good man.—Let's go, Desdemona. I'll say it again: I'm so happy to see you here in Cyprus!

**Original Text**

Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,  
Once more, well met at Cyprus.

*Exeunt OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and attendants*

**IAGO**

Do thou meet me presently at the harbor.—Come  
hither. If thou be'st valiant, as they say base men  
being in love have then a nobility in their natures  
more than is native to them, list me. The lieutenant  
tonight watches on the court of guard. First, I must  
tell thee this: Desdemona is directly in love with him.

**Act 2, Scene 1, Page 11****RODERIGO**

200 With him? Why, 'tis not possible.

**IAGO**

Lay thy finger thus, and let thy soul be instructed.  
Mark me with what violence she first loved the Moor,  
but for bragging and telling her fantastical lies. To  
love him still for prating? Let not thy discreet heart  
think it. Her eye must be fed, and what delight shall  
she have to look on the devil? When the blood is  
made dull with the act of sport, there should be a  
game to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh  
appetite, loveliness in favor, sympathy in years,  
manners and beauties. All which the Moor is  
defective in. Now for want of these required  
conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself  
abused, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and  
abhor the Moor. Very nature will instruct her in it and  
compel her to some second choice. Now sir, this  
granted—as it is a most pregnant and unforced  
position—who stands so eminent in the degree of  
this fortune as Cassio does? A knave very voluble,  
no further conscionable than in putting on the mere  
form of civil and humane seeming, for the better  
compassing of his salt and most hidden loose  
affection. Why, none, why, none! A slipper and  
subtle knave, a finder of occasions that has an eye,  
can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true  
advantage never present itself. A devilish knave.  
Besides, the knave is handsome, young, and hath all  
those requisites in him that folly and green minds  
look after. A pestilent complete knave, and the  
woman hath found him already.

**RODERIGO**

I cannot believe that in her. She's full of most  
blessed condition.

**IAGO**

Blessed fig's-end! The wine she drinks is made of  
grapes. If she had been blessed, she would never  
have loved the Moor. Blessed pudding! Didst thou  
not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? Didst  
not mark that?

**Modern Text**

*OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and attendants exit.*

**IAGO**

Meet me down at the harbor.—Come here. They  
say love makes cowards brave. So if you're  
brave, listen to me. Lieutenant Cassio will be on  
guard duty tonight. But first, I have to tell you that  
Desdemona's completely in love with him.

**RODERIGO**

With Cassio? That's impossible.

**IAGO**

Be quiet and listen to me. Remember how she  
fell madly in love with the Moor because he  
bragged and told her made-up stories? Did you  
expect her to keep on loving him for his  
chattering? You're too smart to think that. No,  
she needs someone nice-looking. Othello's ugly,  
what pleasure could she find in him?  
Lovemaking gets boring after a while. To keep  
things hot, she'll need to see someone with a  
handsome face, someone close to her in age,  
someone who looks and acts like her. Othello  
isn't any of those things. Since he doesn't have  
these advantages to make him attractive to her,  
she'll get sick of him until he makes her want to  
puke. She'll start looking around for a second  
choice. Now, if that's true—and it's obviously  
true—who's in a better position than Cassio?  
He's a smooth talker, and uses sophistication  
and fine manners to hide his lust. Nobody's as  
crafty as he is. Besides, he's young and  
handsome, and he's got all the qualities that  
naïve and silly girls go for. He's a bad boy, and  
Desdemona's got her eye on him already.

**RODERIGO**

I can't believe that. She's not that kind of woman.  
She's very moral.

**IAGO**

Like hell she is! She's made of the same flesh  
and blood as everyone else. If she were so  
moral, she would never have fallen in love with  
the Moor in the first place. Good lord! Did you  
notice how she and Cassio were fondling each

## Original Text

## Modern Text

other's hands? Did you see that?

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 12

**RODERIGO**

Yes, that I did, but that was but courtesy.

**IAGO**

205 Lechery, by this hand, an index and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips that their breaths embraced together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! When these mutabilities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, th' incorporate conclusion. Pish! But, sir, be you ruled by me. I have brought you from Venice. Watch you tonight for the command, I'll lay 't upon you. Cassio knows you not. I'll not be far from you. Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline, or from what other course you please, which the time shall more favorably minister.

**RODERIGO**

Well.

**IAGO**

Sir, he's rash and very sudden in choler, and haply may strike at you. Provoke him that he may. For even out of that will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny, whose qualification shall come into no true taste again but by the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires by the means I shall then have to prefer them, and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

**RODERIGO**

I will do this, if you can bring it to any opportunity.

**IAGO**

I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel. I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewell.

**RODERIGO**

210 Adieu.

*Exit*

**RODERIGO exits.**

## Act 2, Scene 1, Page 13

**IAGO**

That Cassio loves her, I do well believe 't.  
That she loves him, 'tis apt and of great credit.  
The Moor, howbeit that I endure him not,  
Is of a constant, loving, noble nature,

215 And I dare think he'll prove to Desdemona  
A most dear husband. Now, I do love her too,

**RODERIGO**

Yes, I did. But that wasn't romantic, it was just polite manners.

**IAGO**

They were lusting after each other. You could tell by how they were acting that they're going to be lovers. They were so close that their breath was mingling. When two people get that intimate, sex will soon follow. Disgusting! But listen to me; let me guide you. I brought you here from Venice. Be on guard duty tonight. I'll put you in charge. Cassio doesn't know you. I'll be nearby. Make Cassio angry somehow, either by speaking too loud, or insulting his military skills, or however else you want.

**RODERIGO**

All right.

**IAGO**

He's hot-tempered, and he might try to hit you with his staff. Try to get him to do that. That'll allow me to stir up public sentiment against him here in Cyprus. I'll get them so riled up that they'll only calm down when Cassio's fired. To get what you want, you need to get Cassio out of the way. If you don't do that, things are hopeless for you.

**RODERIGO**

I'll do it, if you help me out.

**IAGO**

I promise I will. Meet me in a little while at the citadel. I need to get Othello's things from the ship. Goodbye.

**RODERIGO**

Goodbye.

**IAGO**

I think Cassio really does love her, and it's perfectly likely that she loves him too. I can't stand the Moor, but I have to admit that he's a reliable, loving, and good-natured man. He'd probably be a good husband to Desdemona. I love her too, not simply out of lust, but also to

**Original Text**

Not out of absolute lust—though peradventure  
I stand accountant for as great a sin—  
But partly led to diet my revenge,  
220 For that I do suspect the lusty Moor  
Hath leaped into my seat. The thought whereof  
Doth, like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards,  
And nothing can or shall content my soul  
Till I am evened with him, wife for wife.  
225 Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor  
At least into a jealousy so strong  
That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,  
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace  
For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,  
230 I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip,  
Abuse him to the Moor in the right garb  
(For I fear Cassio with my night-cape too)  
Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me  
For making him egregiously an ass  
235 And practicing upon his peace and quiet  
Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confused.  
Knavery's plain face is never seen till used.

*Exit***Modern Text**

feed my revenge. I have a feeling the Moor slept with my wife. That thought keeps gnawing at me, eating me up inside. I won't be satisfied until I get even with him, wife for wife. If I can't do that, I can at least make the Moor so jealous that he can't think straight. If that piece of Venetian trash Roderigo can do what I need to carry out my plan, I'll have power over Cassio. I'll say bad things about him to the Moor. I have a feeling Cassio seduced my wife as well. I'll make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me, even though the joke will be on him the whole time. I've got a good plan, though I haven't worked out the details yet. You can never see the end of an evil plan until the moment comes.

*IAGO exits.***Act 2, Scene 2***Enter Othello's HERALD, with a proclamation***HERALD**

It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and valiant general, that, upon certain tidings now arrived, importing the mere perdition of the Turkish fleet, every man put himself into triumph: some to dance, some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and revels his addiction leads him. For besides these beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptial. So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All offices are open, and there is full liberty of feasting from this present hour of five till the bell have told eleven. Bless the isle of Cyprus and our noble general Othello!

*Exit**Othello's HERALD enters with a proclamation.***HERALD**

Our noble and courageous general Othello having been informed that the Turkish fleet has been completely destroyed, invites every man to celebrate our victory. Some of you dance, some of you make bonfires, and every man celebrate in whatever way he likes to. For besides the good news, we are also celebrating his marriage. That's the end of the announcement. There will be a feast from five o'clock until eleven. God bless the island of Cyprus and our noble general Othello!

*The HERALD exits.***Act 2, Scene 3***Enter OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and attendants***OTHELLO**

Good Michael, look you to the guard tonight.  
Let's teach ourselves that honorable stop  
Not to outsport discretion.

**CASSIO**

Iago hath direction what to do,  
5 But notwithstanding with my personal eye  
Will I look to 't.

**OTHELLO**

Iago is most honest.

*OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, CASSIO and attendants enter.***OTHELLO**

Good Michael, keep a careful eye on the guards tonight. Let's exercise restraint and not let the party get too wild.

**CASSIO**

Iago has orders what to do. But I'll see to it personally anyway.

**OTHELLO**

Iago's a good man. Goodnight, Michael. Come

**Original Text**

Michael, good night. Tomorrow with your earliest  
Let me have speech with you.—  
Come, my dear love,

- 10 The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue:  
That profit's yet to come 'tween me and you.  
Good night.

*Exeunt OTHELLO, DESDEMONA, and attendants*

*Enter IAGO*

**CASSIO**

Welcome, Iago. We must to the watch.

**IAGO**

Not this hour, lieutenant, 'tis not yet ten o' the clock.  
Our general cast us thus early for the love of his  
Desdemona—who let us not therefore blame. He  
hath not yet made wanton the night with her, and she  
is sport for Jove.

**CASSIO**

- 15 She's a most exquisite lady.

**IAGO**

And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 2**

**CASSIO**

Indeed she's a most fresh and delicate creature.

**IAGO**

What an eye she has! Methinks it sounds a parley to  
provocation.

**CASSIO**

An inviting eye, and yet methinks right modest.

**IAGO**

- 20 And when she speaks, is it not an alarum to love?

**CASSIO**

She is indeed perfection.

**IAGO**

Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I  
have a stoup of wine, and here without are a brace of  
Cyprus gallants that would fain have a measure to  
the health of black Othello.

**CASSIO**

Not tonight, good Iago. I have very poor and unhappy  
brains for drinking. I could well wish courtesy would  
invent some other custom of entertainment.

**IAGO**

Oh, they are our friends. But one cup. I'll drink for  
you.

**CASSIO**

- 25 I have drunk but one cup tonight, and that was craftily  
qualified too, and behold what innovation it makes

**Modern Text**

talk to me tomorrow as early as you can.—Come  
with me, my dear love. Now that the wedding's  
over, we can have the pleasure of consummating  
our marriage. Good night, everyone.

*OTHELLO and DESDEMONA exit with their  
attendants.*

*IAGO enters.*

**CASSIO**

Hello, Iago. It's time for us to stand guard.

**IAGO**

Not yet, lieutenant. It's not even ten o'clock. The  
general got rid of us early tonight so he could be  
with Desdemona.—I can't blame him. He hasn't  
spent the night with her yet, and she's beautiful  
enough to be Jove's lover.

**CASSIO**

She's an exquisitely beautiful lady.

**IAGO**

And I bet she's good in bed too.

**CASSIO**

Yes, she's young and tender.

**IAGO**

And such pretty eyes! Like an invitation.

**CASSIO**

Yes, she's pretty. But she's modest and ladylike  
too.

**IAGO**

- And when she speaks, doesn't her voice stir up  
passion?

**CASSIO**

She's a perfect woman, it's true.

**IAGO**

Well, good luck to them tonight in bed! Come with  
us, lieutenant. I've got a jug of wine, and these  
two Cyprus gentlemen want to drink a toast to the  
black Othello.

**CASSIO**

Not tonight, Iago. I'm not much of a drinker. I wish  
there was less social pressure to drink.

**IAGO**

Oh, but these are our friends. Just one glass. I'll  
do most of the drinking for you.

**CASSIO**

I've already had a glass of wine tonight, watered  
down, but look how drunk I am. I'm not a heavy

**Original Text**

here. I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

**IAGO**

What, man, 'tis a night of revels! The gallants desire it.

**CASSIO**

Where are they?

**IAGO**

Here at the door. I pray you call them in.

**CASSIO**

I'll do 't, but it dislikes me.

*Exit*

**Modern Text**

drinker. I wouldn't dare drink much more than that.

**IAGO**

What are you talking about, man? Tonight is for celebrating! The gentlemen are waiting.

**CASSIO**

Where are they?

**IAGO**

By the door. Please invite them in.

**CASSIO**

I'll do it, but I don't like it.

**CASSIO exits.**

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 3**

**IAGO**

30 If I can fasten but one cup upon him,  
With that which he hath drunk tonight already,  
He'll be as full of quarrel and offense  
As my young mistress' dog. Now my sick fool  
Roderigo,

35 Whom love hath turned almost the wrong side out,  
To Desdemona hath tonight caroused  
Potations pottle-deep, and he's to watch.  
Three lads of Cyprus, noble swelling spirits  
(That hold their honors in a wary distance,

40 The very elements of this warlike isle)  
Have I tonight flustered with flowing cups,  
And they watch too. Now 'mongst this flock of  
drunkards

Am I to put our Cassio in some action  
That may offend the isle.

45 But here they come.  
If consequence do but approve my dream  
My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

*Enter CASSIO, MONTANO and gentlemen*

**CASSIO**

'Fore heaven, they have given me a rouse already.

**MONTANO**

Good faith, a little one, not past a pint, As I am a soldier.

**IAGO**

Some wine, ho!

*(sings)*

*And let me the cannikin clink, clink,*

50 *And let me the cannikin clink.*

*A soldier's a man,*

*A life's but a span,*

*Why then let a soldier drink.*

*Some wine, boys!*

**IAGO**

If I can just get him to drink one more glass after what he's drunk already, he'll be as argumentative and eager to fight as a little dog. That fool Roderigo, all twisted up inside with love, has been drinking toasts to Desdemona by the gallon, and he's on guard duty. I've gotten the rest of the guards drunk, as well as several gentlemen from Cyprus who are quick to take offense. Now I'll get Cassio to do something in front of all these drunkards that will offend everyone on the island. Here they come. If the future turns out as I hope it will, I'm all set for success.

*CASSIO, MONTANO, and GENTLEMEN enter, followed by servants with wine.*

**CASSIO**

My God, they've given me a lot to drink.

**MONTANO**

No, it was a little one, not more than a pint.

**IAGO**

Bring in more wine!

*(he sings)*

*And clink your glasses together,*

*And clink your glasses together.*

*A soldier's a man,*

*And a man's life is short,*

*So let the soldier drink.*

*Have some more wine, boys!*

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 4**



## Original Text

- CASSIO**  
55 Fore heaven, an excellent song.
- IAGO**  
I learned it in England where indeed they are most potent in potting. Your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander—Drink, ho!—are nothing to your English.
- CASSIO**  
Is your Englishman so expert in his drinking?
- IAGO**  
Why, he drinks you with facility your Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your Almain. He gives your Hollander a vomit ere the next pottle can be filled.
- CASSIO**  
To the health of our general!
- MONTANO**  
60 I am for it, lieutenant, and I'll do you justice.
- IAGO**  
Oh, sweet England!  
*(sings)*  
*King Stephen was a worthy peer,  
His breeches cost him but a crown,  
He held them sixpence all too dear,  
With that he called the tailor lown.  
He was a wight of high renown,  
And thou art but of low degree,  
'Tis pride that pulls the country down,  
Then take thine auld cloak about thee.  
Some wine, ho!*
- CASSIO**  
Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.
- IAGO**  
Will you hear 't again?
- CASSIO**  
No, for I hold him to be unworthy of his place that does those things. Well, heaven's above all, and there be souls must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.
- IAGO**  
75 It's true, good lieutenant.

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 5

- CASSIO**  
For mine own part, no offence to the general nor any man of quality, I hope to be saved.
- IAGO**  
And so do I too, lieutenant.
- CASSIO**  
Ay, but (by your leave) not before me. The lieutenant

## Modern Text

- CASSIO**  
My God, what a great song!
- IAGO**  
I learned it England, where they have a talent for drinking. The Danes, the Germans, and the Dutch—come on, drink, drink!—are nothing compared to the English.
- CASSIO**  
Are Englishmen really such heavy drinkers?
- IAGO**  
They drink Danes under the table, and it takes them no effort at all to out-drink Germans. And the Dutch are vomiting while the English are asking for refills.
- CASSIO**  
Let's drink to our general!
- MONTANO**  
Hear, hear! I'll drink as much as you do!
- IAGO**  
Oh, sweet England!  
*(he sings)*  
*King Stephen was a good king, and his pants were very cheap,  
But he thought his tailor overcharged him, so he called him a peasant.  
And that was a man of noble rank, much higher than you are.  
So be happy with your worn-out cloak,  
Since pride is ruining the nation.  
More wine!*
- CASSIO**  
God, that song's even better than the other one.
- IAGO**  
Do you want to hear it again?
- CASSIO**  
No, because we shouldn't be doing that—stuff. Oh well, God's in charge, and some people have to go to heaven, while other people have to go to hell.
- IAGO**  
That's true, lieutenant.

- CASSIO**  
Speaking for myself—and no offense to the general or anyone else—I hope I'm going to heaven.
- IAGO**  
Me too, lieutenant.
- CASSIO**  
Okay, but please not before me. The lieutenant

**Original Text****Modern Text**

is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this, let's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk. This is my ancient, this is my right hand, and this is my left. I am not drunk now. I can stand well enough, and I speak well enough.

**ALL**

Excellent well!

**CASSIO**

80 Why, very well then. You must not think then that I am drunk.

*Exit***MONTANO**

To th' platform, masters. Come, let's set the watch.

*Exit GENTLEMEN***IAGO**

You see this fellow that is gone before,  
He is a soldier fit to stand by Caesar  
And give direction. And do but see his vice,  
85 'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,  
The one as long as th' other. 'Tis pity of him.  
I fear the trust Othello puts him in  
On some odd time of his infirmity  
Will shake this island.

**MONTANO**

But is he often thus?

has to get to heaven before the ensign. But let's stop this drinking and get down to business.—God forgive our sins!—Gentlemen, let's get down to business. By the way, I don't want anyone thinking I'm drunk. This is my ensign. This is my right hand, and this is my left hand.  
I'm not drunk. I can stand well enough, and I can speak just fine.

**ALL**

Yes, you're speaking very well.

**CASSIO**

Yes, very well. So don't think that I'm drunk.

*CASSIO exits.***MONTANO**

Let's go to the platform where we'll stand guard. Come on.

*GENTLEMEN exit.***IAGO**

You see that man who just left? He's a good soldier, good enough to be Caesar's right-hand man. But he has a serious weakness. It's too bad. I'm worried that Othello trusts him too much, and it'll be bad for Cyprus eventually.

**MONTANO**

But is he often like this?

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 6****IAGO**

90 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep.  
He'll watch the horologe a double set  
If drink rock not his cradle.

**MONTANO**

It were well  
The general were put in mind of it.  
Perhaps he sees it not, or his good nature  
95 Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio  
And looks not on his evils. Is not this true?

*Enter RODERIGO***IAGO**

(*aside*) How now, Roderigo?  
I pray you, after the lieutenant, go!

*Exit RODERIGO***MONTANO**

And 'tis great pity that the noble Moor  
100 Should hazard such a place as his own second  
With one of an ingraft infirmity.

**IAGO**

He drinks like this every night before he goes to sleep. He'd stay up all night and all day if he didn't drink himself to sleep.

**MONTANO**

The general should be informed about this.  
Maybe he's never noticed, or he only wants to see Cassio's good side. Don't you think so?

*RODERIGO enters.***IAGO**

(*speaking so that only RODERIGO can hear*)  
Hello, Roderigo. Please, follow the lieutenant.  
Hurry! Go!

*RODERIGO exits.***MONTANO**

And it's too bad that the Moor chose a man with such a deep-rooted drinking problem as his second-in-command. We should definitely say

## Original Text

It were an honest action to say  
So to the Moor.

**IAGO**

Not I, for this fair island.

I do love Cassio well, and would do much

105 To cure him of this evil—

*Cry within "Help! help!"*

**IAGO**

But, hark! What noise?

*Enter CASSIO, pursuing RODERIGO*

## Modern Text

something to the Moor.

**IAGO**

I wouldn't say anything, not if you gave me the whole island for doing so. I respect Cassio and I'd like to help cure his alcoholism—

*A voice offstage calls "Help! Help!"*

**IAGO**

What's that noise?

*CASSIO enters, chasing RODERIGO.*

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 7

**CASSIO**

Zounds! You rogue! You rascal!

**MONTANO**

What's the matter, lieutenant?

**CASSIO**

A knave teach me my duty?

110 I'll beat the knave into a twiggen bottle.

**RODERIGO**

Beat me?

**CASSIO**

Dost thou prate, rogue? *(strikes him)*

**MONTANO**

Nay, good lieutenant! I pray you, sir, hold your hand. *(stays him)*

**CASSIO**

Let me go, sir, or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

**MONTANO**

115 Come, come, you're drunk.

**CASSIO**

Drunk?

*They fight*

**IAGO**

*(aside to RODERIGO)*

Away, I say, go out, and cry a mutiny.—

*Exit RODERIGO*

Nay, good lieutenant! Alas, gentlemen—

120 Help, ho!—Lieutenant—sir, Montano—

Help, masters!—Here's a goodly watch indeed!

*Bell rings*

**CASSIO**

Damn you, you villain, you rascal!

**MONTANO**

What's the matter, lieutenant?

**CASSIO**

To think that fool had the nerve to try to teach me manners! I'll beat him until the welts look like basket-weave!

**RODERIGO**

You'll beat me?

**CASSIO**

Are you talking, you villain? *(he hits RODERIGO)*

**MONTANO**

No, don't hit him, lieutenant! Please, sir, restrain yourself. *(he restrains CASSIO)*

**CASSIO**

Let me go, or I'll knock you on the head.

**MONTANO**

Come on, you're drunk.

**CASSIO**

Drunk?

*MONTANO and CASSIO fight.*

**IAGO**

*(speaking so that only RODERIGO can hear)* Go tell everyone there's a riot.—

*RODERIGO exits.*

No, lieutenant—God, gentlemen—Help—

Lieutenant—sir, Montano—Help, men!—The

night guard is coming!

*Someone rings a bell.*

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 8

Who's that which rings the bell?—Diablo, ho!

The town will rise. Fie, Fie, lieutenant,

You'll be ashamed for ever.

*Enter OTHELLO and attendants*

Who's sounding that alarm? The whole town will

riot! God, lieutenant, please stop! You'll be

ashamed of this forever!

*OTHELLO enters with attendants.*

**Original Text****OTHELLO**

125 What is the matter here?

**MONTANO**

I bleed still,  
I am hurt to the death. He dies!

**OTHELLO**

Hold, for your lives!

**IAGO**

Hold, ho! Lieutenant—sir, Montano—gentlemen,  
130 Have you forgot all place of sense and duty?  
Hold! The general speaks to you. Hold, for shame!

**OTHELLO**

Why, how now, ho! From whence ariseth this?  
Are we turned Turks? And to ourselves do that  
Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?  
135 For Christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl.  
He that stirs next to carve for his own rage  
Holds his soul light, he dies upon his motion.  
Silence that dreadful bell, it frights the isle  
From her propriety. What is the matter, masters?—  
140 Honest Iago, that looks dead with grieving,  
Speak, who began this? On thy love, I charge thee.

**IAGO**

I do not know. Friends all but now, even now,  
In quarter, and in terms like bride and groom  
Divesting them for bed. And then, but now,  
145 As if some planet had unwitting men,

**Modern Text****OTHELLO**

What is the matter here?

**MONTANO**

My God, I'm bleeding! I've been mortally  
wounded. I'll kill him!

**OTHELLO**

Stop right now!

**IAGO**

Stop! Lieutenant—sir, Montano—gentlemen!  
Have you forgotten your duty and your sense of  
decorum? Stop! The general is talking to you!  
Stop, for God's sake!

**OTHELLO**

How did this all start? Have we all become as  
savage as the Turks, treating each other as  
badly as they would have treated us? For  
heaven's sake, stop this savage brawl! The next  
man who swings his sword must not care about  
his life, because the instant he strikes, he dies.  
Stop that alarm from ringing, it's scaring the  
islanders. What's the matter here, gentlemen?—  
Honest Iago, you look upset. Speak up and tell  
me who started this. Answer me.

**IAGO**

I don't know. We were all having fun until just a  
minute ago; we were as happy as a bride and  
groom taking off their clothes. But then the mood  
suddenly changed. It was as if something had  
driven the men insane and made them point their  
swords at one another. I don't

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 9**

Swords out, and tilting one at other's breasts  
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak  
Any beginning to this peevish odds,  
And would in action glorious I had lost  
150 Those legs that brought me to a part of it.

**OTHELLO**

How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot?

**CASSIO**

I pray you pardon me, I cannot speak.

**OTHELLO**

Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil.  
The gravity and stillness of your youth  
155 The world hath noted, and your name is great  
In mouths of wisest censure. What's the matter  
That you unlace your reputation thus  
And spend your rich opinion for the name  
Of a night-brawler? Give me answer to it.

**MONTANO**

160 Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger.

know what could have started this. I'd rather  
have lost my legs in battle than be a part of this!

**OTHELLO**

How did you manage to lose your self-control like  
this, Michael?

**CASSIO**

Please, excuse me, sir. I can't speak.

**OTHELLO**

Montano, you're supposed to be calm and  
collected. You're famous for it. Wise people  
respect you. What in the world made you risk  
your reputation like this and become a street  
brawler? Tell me.

**MONTANO**

Othello, I've been seriously hurt. Your officer

**Original Text**

Your officer Iago can inform you,  
 While I spare speech, which something now offends  
 me,  
 Of all that I do know. Nor know I aught  
 165 By me that's said or done amiss this night,  
 Unless self-charity be sometimes a vice,  
 And to defend ourselves it be a sin  
 When violence assails us.

**OTHELLO**

Now, by heaven,  
 My blood begins my safer guides to rule,  
 And passion, having my best judgment collid,  
 170 Assays to lead the way. If I once stir,

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 10**

Or do but lift this arm, the best of you  
 Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know  
 How this foul rout began, who set it on,  
 And he that is approved in this offence,  
 175 Though he had twinned with me, both at a birth,  
 Shall lose me. What, in a town of war  
 Yet wild, the people's hearts brimful of fear,  
 To manage private and domestic quarrel?  
 In night, and on the court and guard of safety?  
 180 'Tis monstrous. Iago, who began 't?

**MONTANO**

If partially affined or leagued in office  
 Thou dost deliver more or less than truth  
 Thou art no soldier.

**IAGO**

Touch me not so near.  
 I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth  
 185 Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio.  
 Yet I persuade myself to speak the truth  
 Shall nothing wrong him. This it is, general:  
 Montano and myself being in speech,  
 There comes a fellow crying out for help  
 190 And Cassio following him with determined sword  
 To execute upon him. Sir, this gentleman  
 Steps in to Cassio and entreats his pause,  
 Myself the crying fellow did pursue,  
 Lest by his clamor—as it so fell out—  
 195 The town might fall in fright. He, swift of foot,  
 Outran my purpose, and I returned then rather  
 For that I heard the clink and fall of swords  
 And Cassio high in oath, which till tonight  
 I ne'er might say before. When I came back—  
 200 For this was brief—I found them close together  
 At blow and thrust, even as again they were  
 When you yourself did part them.  
 More of this matter cannot I report.

**Modern Text**

Iago can tell you what happened. I should save  
 my breath, since it hurts to talk. I didn't do  
 anything wrong that I know of, unless it was a sin  
 to defend myself when someone attacked me.

**OTHELLO**

All right, now I'm starting to lose my cool. By  
 God, if you don't tell me what happened you'll all  
 suffer. Tell me how this fight began, who started  
 it. Whoever is guilty, even if he were my twin  
 brother, I swear I'm through with him. We're in a  
 town that's just

avoided a war, everyone's still on edge, and  
 you're getting into private fights while you're  
 supposed to be on guard duty? That's  
 unbelievably bad. Iago, who started it?

**MONTANO**

I know you're close to Cassio, but if you diverge  
 from the truth in any way, you're not a true  
 soldier.

**IAGO**

You're hitting close to home there. I'd rather cut  
 my tongue out of my mouth than say anything  
 bad about Michael Cassio. But I don't think it'll  
 hurt him to tell the truth. This is what happened,  
 General. Montano and I were talking when a  
 man came running, crying for help. Cassio was  
 chasing him with his sword out, trying to kill the  
 guy. This gentleman stopped Cassio and told  
 him to put away his sword. I followed the guy  
 who was crying for help, to keep him from  
 scaring the public. But he was fast and outran  
 me. When I got back, I heard the swords clinking  
 and Cassio swearing. I'd never heard him swear  
 before. They were nearly killing each other, as  
 you saw when you pulled them apart. I can't tell  
 you anything else.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 11

But men are men, the best sometimes forget.  
 205 Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,  
 As men in rage strike those that wish them best,  
 Yet surely Cassio, I believe, received  
 From him that fled some strange indignity  
 Which patience could not pass.

**OTHELLO**

I know, Iago,  
 210 Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,  
 Making it light to Cassio. Cassio, I love thee  
 But never more be officer of mine.—

*Enter DESDEMONA, attended*

Look, if my gentle love be not raised up!  
 I'll make thee an example.

**DESDEMONA**

215 What's the matter, dear?

**OTHELLO**

All's well, sweeting,  
 Come away to bed.—(to MONTANO) Sir, for your  
 hurts  
 Myself will be your surgeon. Lead him off.

*MONTANO is led off*

Iago, look with care about the town  
 220 And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.—  
 Come, Desdemona, 'tis the soldiers' life  
 To have their balmy slumbers waked with strife.

*Exeunt all but IAGO and CASSIO***IAGO**

What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

**CASSIO**

Ay, past all surgery.

**IAGO**

225 Marry, heaven forbid!

But nobody's perfect, and even the best man  
 sometimes loses control and strikes out in rage.  
 Cassio was wrong to hurt Montano, who was  
 only trying to help him, but I'm sure the guy who  
 ran away must have offended Cassio in some  
 terrible way, and Cassio couldn't let it pass.

**OTHELLO**

Iago, I know you're fond of Cassio and are  
 downplaying this for his benefit. Cassio, I love  
 you, but you're never again going to be one of  
 my officers.—

*DESDEMONA enters with attendants.*

Look, you've woken my wife! I'll make you an  
 example for the others to learn from.

**DESDEMONA**

What's the matter, dear?

**OTHELLO**

Everything's fine, now, sweetheart. Go back to  
 bed.— (to MONTANO) I'll see to it personally  
 that your wounds are treated. Lead him off.

*MONTANO is carried off.*

Iago, go and calm down the townspeople.—  
 Come with me, Desdemona. Unfortunately, it's  
 part of the soldier's life to be woken up by  
 trouble.

*Everyone except CASSIO and IAGO exits.***IAGO**

Are you hurt, lieutenant?

**CASSIO**

Yes, but no doctor can help me.

**IAGO**

Oh I hope that's not true!

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 12

**CASSIO**

Reputation, reputation, reputation! Oh, I have lost my  
 reputation! I have lost the immortal part of myself,  
 and what remains is bestial. My reputation, Iago, my  
 reputation!

**IAGO**

As I am an honest man, I thought you had received  
 some bodily wound. There is more sense in that than  
 in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false  
 imposition, oft got without merit and lost without  
 deserving. You have lost no reputation at all unless  
 you repute yourself such a loser. What, man, there  
 are ways to recover the general again. You are but  
 now cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy  
 than in malice, even so as one would beat his

**CASSIO**

My reputation, my reputation! I've lost my  
 reputation, the longest-living and truest part of  
 myself! Everything else in me is just animal-like.  
 Oh, my reputation, Iago, my reputation!

**IAGO**

I swear I thought you meant you'd been hurt  
 physically. Your physical health matters more  
 than your reputation. A reputation is a useless  
 and fake quality that others impose on us. You  
 haven't lost it unless you think you have. There  
 are lots of ways to get on the general's good side  
 again. You've been discharged because he's  
 angry, and because he's obliged to do so for  
 policy reasons, not because he dislikes you. He's

**Original Text**

offenseless dog to affright an imperious lion. Sue to him again and he's yours.

**CASSIO**

I will rather sue to be despised than to deceive so good a commander with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk? And speak parrot? And squabble? Swagger? Swear? And discourse fustian with one's own shadow? O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

**IAGO**

What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

**CASSIO**

230 I know not.

**IAGO**

Is 't possible?

**CASSIO**

I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly. A quarrel, but nothing wherefore. Oh, that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! That we should, with joy, pleasance revel and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

**Modern Text**

got to beat up the weak to frighten the strong. Go to him, petition him. He'll change his mind.

**CASSIO**

I'd rather ask him to hate me than ask such a good commander to accept such a worthless, drunk, stupid officer as myself. Drunk? Babbling senselessly? Squabbling? Swaggering? Swearing? Ranting and raving to my own shadow! Oh, wine is the devil!

**IAGO**

Who were you chasing with your sword? What did he do to you?

**CASSIO**

I don't know.

**IAGO**

Is that possible?

**CASSIO**

I remember a jumble of impressions, but nothing distinctly. I remember a fight, but not why we were fighting. Oh God, why do men drink and lose their minds? Why do we party until we're like animals?

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 13****IAGO**

Why, but you are now well enough. How came you thus recovered?

**CASSIO**

It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath. One unperfectness shows me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

**IAGO**

235 Come, you are too severe a moraler. As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen. But since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

**CASSIO**

I will ask him for my place again, he shall tell me I am a drunkard. Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! Oh, strange! Every inordinate cup is unblest and the ingredient is a devil.

**IAGO**

Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used. Exclaim no more against it. And, good lieutenant, I think you think I love you.

**CASSIO**

I have well approved it, sir. I drunk!

**IAGO**

You seem all right now. How did you get better?

**CASSIO**

My drunkenness went away when anger took over. One weakness led to another, to make me hate myself.

**IAGO**

Come on, you're being too hard on yourself. I wish none of this had happened, given the situation here, and your rank. But since this has happened, you should fix it for your own good.

**CASSIO**

I'll ask him for my position back again, and he'll tell me I'm a drunk. Even if I had a whole bunch of mouths, I wouldn't be able to answer that. I was a reasonable man, then I became a fool, and finally a beast! Oh, how strange! Every glass of liquor is damned, and the devil's the main ingredient!

**IAGO**

Come on now, wine is good for you, if you know how to use it. Don't say anything bad about wine anymore. Lieutenant, I think you know I'm your friend.

**CASSIO**

I know that, sir. Imagine, me, a drunk!

## Original Text

**IAGO**

You or any man living may be drunk at a time, man. I tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general. I may say so in this respect, for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement of her parts and graces. Confess yourself freely to her, importune her help to put you in your place again. She is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, she holds it a vice in her goodness not to do more than she is requested. This broken joint between you and her husband entreat her to splinter, and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

## Act 2, Scene 3, Page 14

**CASSIO**

240 You advise me well.

**IAGO**

I protest, in the sincerity of love and honest kindness.

**CASSIO**

I think it freely, and betimes in the morning I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me. I am desperate of my fortunes if they check me.

**IAGO**

You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant, I must to the watch.

**CASSIO**

Good night, honest Iago.

**IAGO**

245 And what's he then that says I play the villain?

When this advice is free I give and honest,  
Probal to thinking and indeed the course  
To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy  
Th' inclining Desdemona to subdue

250 In any honest suit. She's framed as fruitful

As the free elements. And then for her  
To win the Moor, were to renounce his baptism,  
All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,  
His soul is so enfeathered to her love,

255 That she may make, unmake, do what she list,

Even as her appetite shall play the god  
With his weak function. How am I then a villain  
To counsel Cassio to this parallel course,  
Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!

260 When devils will the blackest sins put on

They do suggest at first with heavenly shows  
As I do now. For whiles this honest fool  
Plies Desdemona to repair his fortune  
And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,

## Modern Text

**IAGO**

Any man can get drunk sometime. I'll tell you what to do. Othello's wife has a lot of influence now. He's completely devoted to her. Go open your heart to her. Ask her to help you get back your position. She is so generous, kind, and ready to help that she thinks it's wrong not to do everything she can, even more than she is asked to do. Ask her to help you heal the rift between her husband and you. I'd bet my lucky stars your problem will be forgotten, and your relationship will be stronger than ever.

**CASSIO**

That's good advice.

**IAGO**

I'm helping you because I like and respect you.

**CASSIO**

I believe it completely. Early in the morning I'll go visit Desdemona and plead my case. My situation is desperate.

**IAGO**

You're doing the right thing. Good night, lieutenant. I've got to go to the guard tower.

**CASSIO**

Good night, honest Iago.

*Exit*

**CASSIO exits.**

**IAGO**

Who can say I'm evil when my advice is so good? That's really the best way to win the Moor back again. It's easy to get Desdemona on your side. She's full of good intentions. And the Moor loves her so much he would renounce his Christianity to keep her happy. He's so enslaved by love that she can make him do whatever she wants. How am I evil to advise Cassio to do exactly what'll do him good? That's the kind of argument you'd expect from Satan! When devils are about to commit their biggest sins they put on their most heavenly faces, just like I'm doing now. And while this fool is begging Desdemona to help him, and while she's pleading his case to the Moor, I'll poison the Moor's ear against her, hinting that she's taking Cassio's side because of her lust for him. The more she



**Original Text****Modern Text**

265 I'll pour this pestilence into his ear:

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 15**

That she repeals him for her body's lust.  
And by how much she strives to do him good  
She shall undo her credit with the Moor.  
So will I turn her virtue into pitch

270 And out of her own goodness make the net  
That shall enmesh them all.

*Enter RODERIGO*

How now, Roderigo!

**RODERIGO**

I do follow here in the chase not like a hound that  
hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is  
almost spent, I have been tonight exceedingly well  
cudged, and I think the issue will be I shall have so  
much experience for my pains. And so, with no  
money at all and a little more wit, return again to  
Venice.

**IAGO**

How poor are they that have not patience!  
What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

275 Thou know'st we work by wit and not by witchcraft,  
And wit depends on dilatory time.  
Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee.

And thou, by that small hurt, hath cashiered Cassio.  
Though other things grow fair against the sun,

280 Yet fruits that blossom first will first be ripe.  
Content thyself awhile. In troth, 'tis morning.  
Pleasure and action make the hours seem short.  
Retire thee, go where thou art billeted.

Away, I say, thou shalt know more hereafter.

285 Nay, get thee gone.

*Exit RODERIGO*

tries to help Cassio, the more she'll shake  
Othello's confidence in her. And that's how I'll  
turn her good intentions into a big trap to snag  
them all.

*RODERIGO enters.*

Hello, Roderigo!

**RODERIGO**

I'm totally worn out. My chase is too much for  
me. I've spent most of my money, and tonight I  
got beaten up. The upshot is that I've got a little  
more experience. So with no money, but a little  
more wisdom, I'm going back to Venice.

**IAGO**

You're a poor man if you're this impatient! If you  
get hurt, does your wound heal immediately? No,  
it heals gradually. We achieve things with our  
intelligence, not by magic, and intelligent  
planning takes time. Aren't things going well?  
Cassio's beaten you up, but with that tiny  
sacrifice on your part, you got Cassio  
discharged! If we're patient, we'll be rewarded  
with the fruits of our labors. My God, it's morning.  
All this excitement has made the time fly by. Go  
back to where you're staying and go to sleep. Go  
on, I'm telling you. You'll understand better later.  
Go.

*RODERIGO exits.*

**Act 2, Scene 3, Page 16**

Two things are to be done:

My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress.  
I'll set her on.

Myself, the while, to draw the Moor apart  
And bring him jump when he may Cassio find

290 Soliciting his wife. Ay, that's the way.  
Dull not device by coldness and delay.

*Exit*

Now two things still need to be done. My wife  
has to help make Desdemona take Cassio's  
side. I'll put her on that. And I need to take the  
Moor aside right at the moment when Cassio's  
talking to Desdemona, so he'll see them  
together. Yes, that's the way I'll do it. Let's not  
ruin a brilliant plan by being slow to act.

*IAGO exits.*

**Act 3, Scene 1**

*Enter CASSIO and MUSICIANS*

*CASSIO enters with MUSICIANS.*

**CASSIO**

Masters, play here, I will content your pains.  
Something that's brief, and bid "Good morrow,

**CASSIO**

Musicians, start playing here. I'll pay you for your  
trouble. Play something short that will put the

## Original Text

general.”

*They play. Enter CLOWN*

**CLOWN**

Why masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak i' th' nose thus?

**MUSICIAN**

How, sir? How?

**CLOWN**

5 Are these, I pray you, wind instruments?

**MUSICIAN**

Ay, marry, are they, sir.

**CLOWN**

Oh, thereby hangs a tail.

**MUSICIAN**

Whereby hangs a tale, sir?

**CLOWN**

Marry sir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you, and the general so likes your music that he desires you, for love's sake, to make no more noise with it.

**MUSICIAN**

10 Well, sir, we will not.

## Act 3, Scene 1, Page 2

**CLOWN**

If you have any music that may not be heard, to 't again. But, as they say, to hear music the general does not greatly care.

**MUSICIAN**

We have none such, sir.

**CLOWN**

Then put up your pipes in your bag, for I'll away. Go, vanish into air, away!

*Exeunt MUSICIANS*

**CASSIO**

Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

**CLOWN**

15 No, I hear not your honest friend, I hear you.

**CASSIO**

Prithee, keep up thy quillets. There's a poor piece of gold for thee. If the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife be stirring, tell her there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech. Wilt thou do this?

**CLOWN**

She is stirring, sir. If she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

*Exit CLOWN*

*Enter IAGO*

In happy time, Iago.

## Modern Text

general in a good mood.

*The MUSICIANS play. The CLOWN enters.*

**CLOWN**

Your instruments all have a nasal twang. Have they been to [Naples](#)?

**MUSICIAN**

Excuse me?

**CLOWN**

Are these wind instruments?

**MUSICIAN**

Yes, they are.

**CLOWN**

Oh, there's the problem.

**MUSICIAN**

What's the problem?

**CLOWN**

Anyone full of hot air is a problem. But here's some money. The general likes your music a lot, but he asks you to stop playing now.

**MUSICIAN**

Well, we'll stop, then.

**CLOWN**

If you've got any music that can't be heard, then play that. But as I said, the general isn't really in the mood to hear music now.

**MUSICIAN**

We don't have any music that can't be heard.

**CLOWN**

Then pack up your instruments and go away. Go!

*The MUSICIANS exit.*

**CASSIO**

Do you hear, my friend?

**CLOWN**

No, I don't hear your friend. I hear you.

**CASSIO**

Please don't play games. (CASSIO gives CLOWN money). There's a bit of gold for you. When the woman taking care of the general's wife wakes up, could you please tell her that Cassio asks to speak with her?

**CLOWN**

She's awake, sir. If she feels like coming over here, I'll give her your message.

*The CLOWN exits.*

*IAGO enters.*

Good to see you, Iago.

**Original Text****IAGO**

You have not been abed, then?

**CASSIO**

Why, no. The day had broke  
 Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,  
 20 To send in to your wife. My suit to her  
 Is that she will to virtuous Desdemona  
 Procure me some access.

**Act 3, Scene 1, Page 3****IAGO**

I'll send her to you presently,  
 And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor  
 25 Out of the way, that your converse and business  
 May be more free.

**CASSIO**

I humbly thank you for't.

*Exit IAGO*

I never knew a Florentine more kind and honest.

*Enter EMILIA***EMILIA**

Good morrow, good Lieutenant. I am sorry  
 30 For your displeasure, but all will sure be well.  
 The general and his wife are talking of it,  
 And she speaks for you stoutly. The Moor replies  
 That he you hurt is of great fame in Cyprus  
 And great affinity, and that in wholesome wisdom  
 35 He might not but refuse you. But he protests he loves  
 you  
 And needs no other suitor but his likings  
 To take the safest occasion by the front  
 To bring you in again.

**CASSIO**

Yet I beseech you,  
 If you think fit, or that it may be done,  
 40 Give me advantage of some brief discourse  
 With Desdemona alone.

**EMILIA**

Pray you come in.  
 I will bestow you where you shall have time  
 To speak your bosom freely.

**CASSIO**

I am much bound to you.

*Exeunt***Act 3, Scene 2***Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and GENTLEMEN***OTHELLO**

These letters give, Iago, to the pilot,

**Modern Text****IAGO**

You didn't go to sleep, then?

**CASSIO**

No. When I left you it was already morning. I've  
 been bold, Iago. I've asked to talk to your wife.  
 I'm going to ask her to let me talk to Desdemona.

**IAGO**

I'll send her out to you now. I'll think of a plan to  
 get the Moor out of the way, so you can speak  
 more openly.

**CASSIO**

I humbly thank you.

*IAGO exits.*

Even for a Florentine, I never knew someone so  
 kind and honest.

*EMILIA enters.***EMILIA**

Good morning, lieutenant. I'm sorry about what  
 happened, but I'm sure everything will turn out all  
 right. The general and his wife are talking about it  
 now, and she's defending you strongly. The Moor  
 says the man you hurt is very important in  
 Cyprus, and that under the circumstances he has  
 no choice but to refuse to reinstate you. But he  
 says he still loves and respects you, and based  
 on his own feelings alone he's looking for an  
 opportunity to safely take you back.

**CASSIO**

Please find a way to give me some time alone  
 with Desdemona, if you think that's all right.

**EMILIA**

Please come in. I'll take you to a place where you  
 can speak freely.

**CASSIO**

Thank you very much.

*They exit.**OTHELLO, IAGO and GENTLEMEN enter.***OTHELLO**

Iago, give these letters to the ship's captain who

**Original Text**

And by him do my duties to the senate.  
That done, I will be walking on the works,  
Repair there to me.

**IAGO**

5 Well, my good lord, I'll do 't.

**OTHELLO**

This fortification, gentlemen, shall we see 't?

**GENTLEMEN**

We'll wait upon your lordship.

*Exeunt*

**Modern Text**

brought me here, and ask him to pay my respects to the Senate of Venice. Now that's done, I'm going to walk on the fortification walls. Look for me there when you come back.

**IAGO**

I will, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

Shall we go see this fortification, men?

**GENTLEMEN**

We're at your service, my lord.

*They all exit.*

**Act 3, Scene 3**

*Enter DESDEMONA, CASSIO, and EMILIA*

**DESDEMONA**

Be thou assured, good Cassio, I will do  
All my abilities in thy behalf.

**EMILIA**

Good madam, do. I warrant it grieves my husband  
As if the cause were his.

**DESDEMONA**

5 Oh, that's an honest fellow. Do not doubt, Cassio,  
But I will have my lord and you again  
As friendly as you were.

**CASSIO**

Bounteous madam,  
Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,  
He's never anything but your true servant.

**DESDEMONA**

10 I know 't, I thank you. You do love my lord.  
You have known him long, and be you well assured  
He shall in strangeness stand no farther off  
Than in a polite distance.

**CASSIO**

Ay, but, lady,  
That policy may either last so long,  
15 Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,  
Or breed itself so out of circumstances,  
That, I being absent and my place supplied,  
My general will forget my love and service.

**DESDEMONA**

Do not doubt that. Before Emilia here  
20 I give thee warrant of thy place. Assure thee,  
If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it  
To the last article. My lord shall never rest,  
I'll watch him tame and talk him out of patience.

*DESDEMONA, CASSIO and EMILIA enter.*

**DESDEMONA**

I'll do everything I can for you, Cassio.

**EMILIA**

Please do, madam. My husband's so upset about  
Cassio's problem you'd think it was his own.

**DESDEMONA**

Your husband's such a good man. Don't worry,  
Cassio. I'm sure you and my husband will be as  
friendly as you were before.

**CASSIO**

My dear beautiful lady, whatever happens to  
Michael Cassio, he'll always be your humble  
servant.

**DESDEMONA**

I know that. Thank you. You're my husband's  
friend and you've known him a long time. I assure  
you the only reason he's keeping away from you  
now is political.

**CASSIO**

Yes, my lady. But those political considerations  
might last such a long time that the general will  
forget my love and service, especially if I'm gone  
and someone else has my job.

**DESDEMONA**

That'll never happen. Emilia here will be my  
witness: I promise you that you'll get your position  
back again. And if I promise to help someone, I  
do everything I can. My husband will never get a  
moment's rest, I'll keep him up at night talking  
about you until he runs out

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 2**

His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift,

of patience. He will think that his bed has become

## Original Text

25 I'll intermingle everything he does  
With Cassio's suit. Therefore be merry, Cassio,  
For thy solicitor shall rather die  
Than give thy cause away.

*Enter OTHELLO and IAGO*

**EMILIA**

Madam, here comes my lord.

**CASSIO**

Madam, I'll take my leave.

**DESDEMONA**

Why, stay and hear me speak.

**CASSIO**

30 Madam, not now. I am very ill at ease,  
Unfit for mine own purposes.

**DESDEMONA**

Well, do your discretion.

*Exit CASSIO*

**IAGO**

Ha! I like not that.

**OTHELLO**

What dost thou say?

**IAGO**

35 Nothing, my lord, or if—I know not what.

**OTHELLO**

Was not that Cassio parted from my wife?

**IAGO**

Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it  
That he would steal away so guilty-like  
Seeing you coming.

**OTHELLO**

40 I do believe 'twas he.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 3

**DESDEMONA**

How now, my lord?  
I have been talking with a suitor here,  
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

**OTHELLO**

Who is 't you mean?

**DESDEMONA**

Why, your lieutenant, Cassio. Good my lord,  
45 If I have any grace or power to move you  
His present reconciliation take.  
For if he be not one that truly loves you,  
That errs in ignorance and not in cunning,  
I have no judgment in an honest face.

50 I prithee, call him back.

**OTHELLO**

Went he hence now?

## Modern Text

a conference table for discussing your problem—  
he won't be able to get away from it. I'll bring up  
your name at every moment. So cheer up. I'm  
your advocate, and I'd rather die than give up on  
you.

*OTHELLO and IAGO enter.*

**EMILIA**

Madam, here comes your husband.

**CASSIO**

Madam, I'd better leave now.

**DESDEMONA**

Why not stay and hear me talk to him?

**CASSIO**

No, madam. I'm very uncomfortable, and that  
won't help my case.

**DESDEMONA**

Well, do whatever you think best.

*CASSIO exits.*

**IAGO**

Hey! I don't like that.

**OTHELLO**

What did you say?

**IAGO**

Nothing, my lord, or if I did—I don't know what.

**OTHELLO**

Wasn't that Cassio leaving my wife?

**IAGO**

Cassio, my lord? No, I don't think so. He wouldn't  
sneak away looking so guilty when he saw you  
coming.

**OTHELLO**

I really think it was him.

**DESDEMONA**

What's this, my lord? I was talking to a petitioner  
here just now, someone who's suffering from your  
anger.

**OTHELLO**

Who do you mean?

**DESDEMONA**

Your lieutenant, Cassio. Oh, if I've got any  
influence over you at all, please patch things up  
with him. In my judgment, this man truly loves  
you, and his mistake was innocent rather than  
wicked. Please call him and tell him to come back  
here.

**OTHELLO**

Was that him just now?

## Original Text

**DESDEMONA**

Ay, sooth, so humbled  
That he hath left part of his grief with me  
To suffer with him. Good love, call him back.

**OTHELLO**

55 Not now, sweet Desdemona. Some other time.

**DESDEMONA**

But shall 't be shortly?

**OTHELLO**

The sooner, sweet, for you.

**DESDEMONA**

Shall 't be tonight at supper?

**OTHELLO**

No, not tonight.

**DESDEMONA**

Tomorrow dinner, then?

**OTHELLO**

I shall not dine at home,  
I meet the captains at the citadel.

## Modern Text

**DESDEMONA**

Yes. He feels so bad and humble that I feel bad  
along with him. My love, call him back in here.

**OTHELLO**

Not now, my sweet Desdemona. Some other  
time.

**DESDEMONA**

But will it be soon?

**OTHELLO**

Very soon, because you want it.

**DESDEMONA**

Will it be tonight at supper?

**OTHELLO**

No, not tonight.

**DESDEMONA**

Then tomorrow at dinner?

**OTHELLO**

I won't be eating dinner at home. I'll be meeting  
the captains at the citadel.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 4

**DESDEMONA**

60 Why, then, tomorrow night, or Tuesday morn.  
On Tuesday noon, or night, or Wednesday morn.  
I prithee name the time, but let it not  
Exceed three days. In faith, he's penitent,  
And yet his trespass, in our common reason  
65 (Save that, they say, the wars must make example  
Out of her best) is not, almost, a fault  
T' incur a private check. When shall he come?  
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul  
What you would ask me that I should deny  
70 Or stand so mamm'ring on. What? Michael Cassio  
That came a-wooing with you, and so many a time,  
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,  
Hath ta'en your part, to have so much to do  
To bring him in? Trust me, I could do much—

**OTHELLO**

75 Prithee, no more. Let him come when he will,  
I will deny thee nothing.

**DESDEMONA**

Why, this is not a boon,  
'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,  
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm,  
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit  
80 To your own person. Nay, when I have a suit  
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed  
It shall be full of poise and difficult weight  
And fearful to be granted.

**OTHELLO**

I will deny thee nothing!

**DESDEMONA**

Well then, tomorrow night, or Tuesday morning.  
Or Tuesday noon or at night, or Wednesday  
morning. Please just name a time, but don't wait  
more than three days. He's very sorry. His  
mistake was hardly worth punishing him for in the  
first place—though in wartime it is sometimes  
necessary to make examples out of even the best  
soldiers. So when should he come? Tell me,  
Othello. I can't imagine you asking me for  
something and me telling you no or standing  
there muttering. Michael Cassio came with you  
when you were trying to win my love. Sometimes  
I'd criticize you to him, and he'd defend you. And  
now I have to make this big fuss about bringing  
him back? I swear, I could do so much—

**OTHELLO**

Please, no more. He can come whenever he  
wants. I won't refuse you anything.

**DESDEMONA**

Don't act like you're doing me a favor! This is like  
if I asked you to wear your gloves when it's cold  
outside, or eat nutritious food, or do something  
that's good for you. If I ever have to ask you for  
something that will put your luck to the test, it'll be  
something difficult and terrible.

**OTHELLO**

I won't deny you anything! But in return, please,

**Original Text**

Whereon I do beseech thee, grant me this,  
85 To leave me but a little to myself.

**DESDEMONA**

Shall I deny you? No. Farewell, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

Farewell, my Desdemona. I'll come to thee straight.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 5****DESDEMONA**

Emilia, come.—Be as your fancies teach you.  
Whate'er you be, I am obedient.

*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA***OTHELLO**

90 Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul  
But I do love thee! And when I love thee not  
Chaos is come again.

**IAGO**

My noble lord—

**OTHELLO**

What dost thou say, Iago?

**IAGO**

95 Did Michael Cassio, when you wooed my lady,  
Know of your love?

**OTHELLO**

He did, from first to last.

Why dost thou ask?

**IAGO**

But for a satisfaction of my thought,

100 No further harm.

**OTHELLO**

Why of thy thought, Iago?

**IAGO**

I did not think he had been acquainted with her.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, yes, and went between us very oft.

**IAGO**

Indeed?

**OTHELLO**

Indeed? Ay, indeed! Discern'st thou aught in that?

105 Is he not honest?

**IAGO**

Honest, my lord?

**Modern Text**

do one thing for me: leave me alone for a little  
while.

**DESDEMONA**

Would I ever deny you anything? No. Goodbye,  
my husband.

**OTHELLO**

Goodbye, my Desdemona. I'll come see you right  
away.

**DESDEMONA**

Come here, Emilia.—Do whatever you feel like  
doing, my husband, and I'll obey you.

*DESDEMONA and EMILIA exit.***OTHELLO**

What a wonderful girl! God help me, I love you!  
And when I stop loving you, the universe will fall  
back into the chaos that was there when time  
began.

**IAGO**

My noble lord—

**OTHELLO**

What is it, Iago?

**IAGO**

When you were wooing Desdemona, did Michael  
Cassio know about it?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, he knew about it the whole time. Why do  
you ask?

**IAGO**

I was just curious. No reason.

**OTHELLO**

Why are you curious, Iago?

**IAGO**

I didn't realize he knew her.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, yes. He carried messages back and forth  
between us very often.

**IAGO**

Oh, really?

**OTHELLO**

Oh, really? Yes, really. Do you see something  
wrong with that? Isn't he an honest man?

**IAGO**

Honest, my lord?

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 6****OTHELLO****OTHELLO**

**Original Text**

Honest, ay, honest.

**IAGO**

My lord, for aught I know.

**OTHELLO**

What dost thou think?

**IAGO**

Think, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

- 110 “Think, my lord?” Alas, thou echo’st me  
As if there were some monster in thy thought  
Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean  
something.  
I heard thee say even now thou lik’st not that  
115 When Cassio left my wife. What didst not like?  
And when I told thee he was of my counsel  
Of my whole course of wooing, thou cried’st  
“Indeed?”  
And didst contract and purse thy brow together  
120 As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain  
Some horrible conceit. If thou dost love me  
Show me thy thought.

**IAGO**

My lord, you know I love you.

**OTHELLO**

- I think thou dost.  
And for I know thou ’rt full of love and honesty  
And weigh’st thy words before thou giv’st them  
125 breath,  
Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more.  
For such things in a false disloyal knave  
Are tricks of custom, but in a man that’s just  
They are close dilations, working from the heart,  
That passion cannot rule.

**IAGO**

For Michael Cassio,

- 130 I dare be sworn, I think, that he is honest.

**OTHELLO**

I think so too.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 7**

**IAGO**

Men should be what they seem,  
Or those that be not, would they might seem none!

**OTHELLO**

Certain, men should be what they seem.

**IAGO**

Why then I think Cassio’s an honest man.

**OTHELLO**

- 135 Nay, yet there’s more in this.  
I prithee speak to me as to thy thinkings,

**Modern Text**

Honest, yes, honest.

**IAGO**

As far as I know, sir.

**OTHELLO**

What are you thinking?

**IAGO**

Thinking, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

“Thinking, my lord?” My God, you keep repeating everything I say as if you were thinking something too horrible to say out loud. You’re thinking something. Just a minute ago I heard you say you didn’t like it when Cassio left my wife. What didn’t you like? And when I told you he was involved the whole time I was trying to get Desdemona, you were like, “Oh, really?” And then you frowned and wrinkled up your forehead as if you were imagining something horrible. If you’re my friend, tell me what you’re thinking.

**IAGO**

My lord, you know I’m your friend.

**OTHELLO**

I think you are. And I know you’re full of love and honesty, and you think carefully before you speak. That’s why these pauses of yours frighten me. If some fool were withholding things from me, I wouldn’t think twice about it. If some lying, cheating villain acted like that, it would just be a trick. But when an honest man acts like that, you know he’s wrestling with bad thoughts and can’t help it.

**IAGO**

As for Michael Cassio, I think it would be safe for me to swear that he’s honest.

**OTHELLO**

I think so too.

**IAGO**

People should be what they appear to be. If they’re not honest, they shouldn’t look like they are!

**OTHELLO**

Absolutely, people should be what they appear to be.

**IAGO**

In that case, I think Cassio’s an honest man.

**OTHELLO**

No, I think there’s more to this than you’re letting on. Please tell me what you’re thinking—even



**Original Text****Modern Text**

As thou dost ruminate, and give thy worst of thoughts  
The worst of words.

your worst suspicions.

**IAGO**

Good my lord, pardon me,  
Though I am bound to every act of duty  
140 I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.  
Utter my thoughts? Why, say they are vile and false,  
As where's that palace whereinto foul things  
Sometimes intrude not? Who has that breast so pure  
Wherein uncleanly apprehensions  
145 Keep leets and law-days and in sessions sit  
With meditations lawful?

**IAGO**

Please don't make me do that, sir. I have to obey all your orders, but surely I'm not obligated to reveal my deepest thoughts—even slaves aren't expected to do that. You want me to say what I'm thinking? What if my thoughts are disgusting and wrong? Even good people think horrible things sometimes. Who is so pure that they never think a bad thought?

**OTHELLO**

Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,  
If thou but think'st him wronged and mak'st his ear  
A stranger to thy thoughts.

**OTHELLO**

You're not being a good friend, Iago, if you *eventhink* your friend has been wronged and you don't tell him about it.

**IAGO**

I do beseech you,  
150 Though I perchance am vicious in my guess,  
As, I confess, it is my nature's plague  
To spy into abuses, and oft my jealousy  
Shapes faults that are not, that your wisdom,  
From one that so imperfectly conceits,  
155 Would take no notice, nor build yourself a trouble  
Out of his scattering and unsure observance.  
It were not for your quiet nor your good,

**IAGO**

Please don't ask me to tell you. I might be completely wrong. I have a bad tendency to be suspicious of people and to look too closely into what they're doing. Often I imagine crimes that aren't really there. You would be wise to ignore my weak guesses and imaginary suspicions, and don't worry yourself about the meaningless things I've noticed. For me to tell you my thoughts would only destroy your peace of mind, and

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 8**

Nor for my manhood, honesty, and wisdom  
To let you know my thoughts.

it wouldn't be wise, honest, or responsible for me to tell them.

**OTHELLO**

What dost thou mean?

**OTHELLO**

What are you talking about?

**IAGO**

160 Good name in man and woman, dear my lord,  
Is the immediate jewel of their souls.  
Who steals my purse steals trash. 'Tis something,  
nothing:  
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to  
165 thousands.  
But he that filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him  
And makes me poor indeed.

**IAGO**

A good reputation is the most valuable thing we have—men and women alike. If you steal my money, you're just stealing trash. It's something, it's nothing: it's yours, it's mine, and it'll belong to thousands more. But if you steal my reputation, you're robbing me of something that doesn't make you richer, but makes me much poorer.

**OTHELLO**

I'll know thy thoughts.

**OTHELLO**

I'm going to find out what you're thinking.

**IAGO**

You cannot, if my heart were in your hand,  
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

**IAGO**

You can't find that out, even if you held my heart in your hand you couldn't make me tell you. And as long as my heart's inside my body, you never will.

**OTHELLO****OTHELLO**

**Original Text**

Ha!

**IAGO**

170 Oh, beware, my lord, of jealousy!  
It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock  
The meat it feeds on. That cuckold lives in bliss  
Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger,  
But, oh, what damnèd minutes tells he o'er  
175 Who dotes, yet doubts— suspects, yet soundly  
loves!

**OTHELLO**

Oh, misery!

**IAGO**

Poor and content is rich, and rich enough,  
But riches fineless is as poor as winter  
To him that ever fears he shall be poor.  
180 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend  
From jealousy!

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 9**

**OTHELLO**

Why, why is this?  
Think'st thou I'd make a life of jealousy,  
To follow still the changes of the moon  
With fresh suspicions? No! To be once in doubt  
185 Is to be resolved. Exchange me for a goat  
When I shall turn the business of my soul  
To such exsufficate and blowed surmises,  
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous  
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,  
190 Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances.  
Where virtue is, these are more virtuous.  
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw  
The smallest fear or doubt of her revolt,  
For she had eyes and chose me. No, Iago,  
195 I'll see before I doubt, when I doubt, prove,  
And on the proof there is no more but this:  
Away at once with love or jealousy!

**IAGO**

I am glad of this, for now I shall have reason  
To show the love and duty that I bear you  
200 With franker spirit. Therefore, as I am bound,  
Receive it from me. I speak not yet of proof.  
Look to your wife, observe her well with Cassio.  
Wear your eyes thus, not jealous nor secure.  
I would not have your free and noble nature  
205 Out of self-bounty be abused. Look to 't.  
I know our country disposition well.  
In Venice they do let God see the pranks  
They dare not show their husbands. Their best  
conscience  
Is not to leave 't undone, but keep't unknown.

**OTHELLO**

**Modern Text**

What?

**IAGO**

Beware of jealousy, my lord! It's a green-eyed monster that makes fun of the victims it devours. The man who knows his wife is cheating on him is happy, because at least he isn't friends with the man she's sleeping with. But think of the unhappiness of a man who worships his wife, yet doubts her faithfulness. He suspects her, but still loves her.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, what misery!

**IAGO**

The person who's poor and contented is rich enough. But infinite riches are nothing to someone who's always afraid he'll be poor. God, help us not be jealous!

**OTHELLO**

Why are you telling me this? Do you think I would live a life of jealousy, tormented by new suspicions every hour? No. If there's any doubt, there is no doubt. I might as well be a goat if I ever let myself become obsessed with the kind of suspicions you're implying. If you say my wife is beautiful, eats well, loves good company, speaks freely, sings, plays music, and dances well, you're not making me jealous. When a woman is virtuous, talents like these just make her better. And I'm not going to start feeling inferior. She had her eyes wide open when she chose me. No, Iago, I'll have to see some real evidence before I start suspecting her of anything bad, and when I suspect her, I'll look for proof, and if there's proof, that's when I'll let go of my love and my jealousy.

**IAGO**

I'm glad to hear you say that. Now I can show you my devotion and my duty with more honesty. So please listen to me. I'm not talking about proof yet. Watch your wife. Watch how she is with Cassio. Just watch—don't be either completely suspicious or completely trustful. I wouldn't want to see you taken advantage of because you're such an open and trusting guy. Watch out! I know the people of Venice well. They let God see things they wouldn't show their husbands. They don't avoid doing things that are wrong, they just try not to get caught.

**OTHELLO**

**Original Text****Modern Text**

210 Dost thou say so?

Do you really think so?

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 10****IAGO**

She did deceive her father, marrying you,  
And when she seemed to shake and fear your looks,  
She loved them most.

**OTHELLO**

And so she did.

**IAGO**

Why, go to then.

She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,

215 To seel her father's eyes up close as oak,  
He thought 'twas witchcraft. But I am much to blame.  
I humbly do beseech you of your pardon  
For too much loving you.

**OTHELLO**

I am bound to thee forever.

**IAGO**

I see this hath a little dashed your spirits.

**OTHELLO**

220 Not a jot, not a jot.

**IAGO**

Trust me, I fear it has.

I hope you will consider what is spoke  
Comes from my love. But I do see you're moved.  
I am to pray you not to strain my speech  
To grosser issues nor to larger reach

225 Than to suspicion.

**OTHELLO**

I will not.

**IAGO**

Should you do so, my lord,  
My speech should fall into such vile success  
Which my thoughts aimed not at. Cassio's my worthy  
230 friend—

My lord, I see you're moved.

**IAGO**

She lied to her father to marry you. And when  
she pretended to be afraid of you, she loved you  
the most.

**OTHELLO**

That's right, she did.

**IAGO**

Well, there you go. She was so young, but she  
deceived her father so thoroughly he thought it  
was witchcraft! But I'm sorry I've blurted all this  
out. I beg your pardon for loving you too much.

**OTHELLO**

I'm indebted to you forever.

**IAGO**

You seem a little depressed about this.

**OTHELLO**

Not at all, not at all.

**IAGO**

Really, I'm afraid you are. I hope you remember  
that I said all this because I love you. But I see  
you're troubled. Please don't take what I said  
more seriously than it deserves to be taken.

**OTHELLO**

I won't.

**IAGO**

If you take it too seriously, it'll have bad effects  
that I didn't want it to have. Cassio's a good  
friend of mine—My lord, I can see you're upset.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 11****OTHELLO**

No, not much moved.

I do not think but Desdemona's honest.

**IAGO**

Long live she so. And long live you to think so.

**OTHELLO**

And yet how nature, erring from itself—

**IAGO**

Ay, there's the point. As, to be bold with you,

**OTHELLO**

No, not too upset. I'm sure Desdemona would  
never cheat on me.

**IAGO**

I hope she never does! And I hope you keep on  
thinking she wouldn't.

**OTHELLO**

But still, it's true that good things can go bad,  
away from their true natures—

**IAGO**

That's the point I'm trying to make. If I can be

## Original Text

- 235 Not to affect many proposèd matches  
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree,  
Whereto we see in all things nature tends—  
Foh! One may smell in such a will most rank,  
Foul disproportions, thoughts unnatural.
- 240 But—pardon me—I do not in position  
Distinctly speak of her, though I may fear  
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,  
May fall to match you with her country forms,  
And happily repent.

**OTHELLO**

Farewell, farewell.

- 245 If more thou dost perceive, let me know more.  
Set on thy wife to observe. Leave me, Iago.

**IAGO**

My lord, I take my leave. (*going*)

**OTHELLO**

(*aside*) Why did I marry? This honest creature  
doubtless  
Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

**IAGO**

- 250 (*returns*) My lord, I would I might entreat your honor  
To scan this thing no farther. Leave it to time.  
Although 'tis fit that Cassio have his place,  
For sure, he fills it up with great ability,  
Yet, if you please to hold him off awhile,
- 255 You shall by that perceive him and his means.  
Note if your lady strain his entertainment

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 12

With any strong or vehement importunity.  
Much will be seen in that. In the meantime,  
Let me be thought too busy in my fears—

- 260 As worthy cause I have to fear I am—  
And hold her free, I do beseech your honor.

**OTHELLO**

Fear not my government.

**IAGO**

I once more take my leave.

**OTHELLO**

- This fellow's of exceeding honesty  
And knows all quantities, with a learnèd spirit,
- 265 Of human dealings. If I do prove her haggard,  
Though that her jesses were my dear heartstrings,  
I'd whistle her off and let her down the wind  
To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black  
And have not those soft parts of conversation
- 270 That chamberers have, or for I am declined  
Into the vale of years—yet that's not much—  
She's gone, I am abused, and my relief  
Must be to loathe her. Oh, curse of marriage

## Modern Text

frank with you, she veered away from her own nature in turning down all those young men from her own country, with her skin color, with her status—everything her nature would have drawn her to—Ugh! You can almost smell the dark and ugly desires inside her, the unnatural thoughts—But—I'm sorry—I didn't mean to refer to her specifically just now. I only worry that she might snap back to her natural taste in men one day, and compare you unfavorably to other Italians.

**OTHELLO**

Goodbye, goodbye. If you see anything else, let me know. Tell your wife to watch her. Leave me alone now, Iago.

**IAGO**

My lord, I'll say goodbye now. (*beginning to exit*)

**OTHELLO**

(*to himself*) Why did I ever get married? I'm sure this good and honest man sees and knows more, much more, than he's telling me.

**IAGO**

(*returning*) My lord, please don't think about this any more. Time will tell. It's right for Cassio to have his lieutenantcy back—he's very talented. But keep him away for a while, and you'll see how he goes about getting it back. Notice whether your wife insists on your

giving it back to him. That will tell you a lot. But in the meantime, just assume that I'm paranoid—as I'm pretty sure I am—and keep thinking she's innocent, please.

**OTHELLO**

Don't worry about how I handle it.

**IAGO**

I'll say goodbye once more.

*Exit*

**IAGO exits.**

**OTHELLO**

This Iago is extremely honest and good, and he knows a lot about human behavior. If it turns out that she really is running around on me, I'll send her away, even though it'll break my heart. Maybe because I'm black, and I don't have nice manners like courtiers do, or because I'm getting old—but that's not much—She's gone, and I've been cheated on. I have no choice but to hate her. Oh what a curse marriage is! We think our beautiful wives belong to us, but their desires are free! I'd rather be a toad in a moldy basement

## Original Text

That we can call these delicate creatures ours  
 275 And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad  
 And live upon the vapor of a dungeon  
 Than keep a corner in the thing I love  
 For others' uses. Yet 'tis the plague to great ones,  
 Prerogated are they less than the base.  
 280 'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death.  
 Even then this forkèd plague is fated to us  
 When we do quicken. Look where she comes.

*Enter DESDEMONA and EMILIA*

If she be false, heaven mocked itself.  
 I'll not believe 't.

## Modern Text

than to have only a part of someone I love,  
 sharing the rest of her with others. This is the  
 plague of important men—our wives betray us  
 more than those of poor men. It's our destiny,  
 like death. We are destined to be betrayed when  
 we are born. Oh, here she comes.

*DESDEMONA and EMILIA enter.*

If she's cheated on me, then heaven itself is a  
 fake. I don't believe it.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 13

**DESDEMONA**

How now, my dear Othello?  
 285 Your dinner, and the generous islanders  
 By you invited, do attend your presence.

**OTHELLO**

I am to blame.

**DESDEMONA**

Why do you speak so faintly?  
 Are you not well?

**OTHELLO**

290 I have a pain upon my forehead, here.

**DESDEMONA**

Why that's with watching, 'twill away again.  
 Let me but bind it hard, within this hour  
 It will be well. *(pulls out a handkerchief)*

**OTHELLO**

Your napkin is too little,  
 295 Let it alone.

*Her handkerchief drops*

Come, I'll go in with you.

**DESDEMONA**

I am very sorry that you are not well.

*Exeunt OTHELLO and DESDEMONA*

**EMILIA**

*(picks up the handkerchief)*

I am glad I have found this napkin,  
 300 This was her first remembrance from the Moor.  
 My wayward husband hath a hundred times

**DESDEMONA**

What's going on, Othello, darling? The nobles of  
 Cyprus whom you invited to dinner are waiting  
 for you.

**OTHELLO**

I'm sorry.

**DESDEMONA**

Why are you whispering? Are you sick?

**OTHELLO**

I have a **headache**, right here in my forehead.

**DESDEMONA**

That's from lack of sleep. It'll go away. Let me  
 wrap up your head, and it will feel okay in less  
 than an hour. *(she pulls out a handkerchief)*

**OTHELLO**

No, your handkerchief's too little. Leave my head  
 alone.

*The handkerchief falls to the floor.*

Come on, I'll escort you to dinner.

**DESDEMONA**

I'm very sorry you're not feeling well.

*OTHELLO and DESDEMONA exit.*

**EMILIA**

*(picking up the handkerchief)* I'm glad I found this  
 handkerchief. It's the first keepsake the Moor  
 gave her. My stubborn husband has asked me to  
 steal it a

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 14

Wooed me to steal it, but she so loves the token  
 (For he conjured her she should ever keep it)  
 That she reserves it evermore about her  
 305 To kiss and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out  
 And give 't Iago. What he will do with it  
 Heaven knows, not I.

hundred times. But she loves it so much (since  
 Othello told her she should always keep it with  
 her) that she always keeps it near her to kiss it  
 and talk to it. I'll copy the embroidery pattern and  
 then give it to Iago. Heaven knows what he's  
 going to do with it. I only try to satisfy his whims.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

I nothing but to please his fantasy.

*Enter IAGO*

*IAGO enters.*

**IAGO**

How now! What do you here alone?

**IAGO**

What's going on? What are you doing here alone?

**EMILIA**

310 Do not you chide. I have a thing for you.

**EMILIA**

Don't snap at me. I've got something for you.

**IAGO**

A thing for me? It is a common thing—

**IAGO**

You've got something for me? It's a common thing—

**EMILIA**

Ha?

**EMILIA**

What?

**IAGO**

To have a foolish wife.

**IAGO**

—to have a stupid wife.

**EMILIA**

Oh, is that all? What will you give me now

**EMILIA**

Oh, is that so? And what would you give me for the handkerchief?

315 For the same handkerchief?

**IAGO**

What handkerchief?

**IAGO**

What handkerchief?

**EMILIA**

What handkerchief?

**EMILIA**

What handkerchief? The one the Moor gave to Desdemona, which you asked me to steal so many times.

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona,  
That which so often you did bid me steal.

**IAGO**

320 Hast stolen it from her?

**IAGO**

You stole it from her?

**EMILIA**

No, but she let it drop by negligence  
And, to th' advantage, I being here, took 't up.  
Look, here it is.

**EMILIA**

No, actually. She dropped it carelessly, and, seizing the opportunity, since I was here, I picked it up. Look, here it is.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 15

**IAGO**

A good wench, give it me.

**IAGO**

Good girl, give it to me.

**EMILIA**

What will you do with 't, that you have been so  
325 earnest  
To have me filch it?

**EMILIA**

And what are you going to do with it? Why did you want it so much that you begged me to steal it?

**IAGO**

Why, what is that to you?

**IAGO**

What's it to you?

**EMILIA**

If it be not for some purpose of import,  
Give 't me again. Poor lady, she'll run mad  
When she shall lack it.

**EMILIA**

If you don't need it for some important reason, then give it back to me. Poor lady, she'll go crazy when she sees it's missing.

**IAGO**

Be not acknown on 't,  
330 I have use for it. Go, leave me.

**IAGO**

Don't admit to knowing anything about it. I need it. Now go, leave me.

*Exit EMILIA*

*EMILIA exits.*

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin  
And let him find it. Trifles light as air  
Are to the jealous confirmations strong

I'll leave this handkerchief at Cassio's house and let him find it. To a jealous man, a meaningless little thing like this looks like absolute proof. This

**Original Text**

As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.  
 335 The Moor already changes with my poison.  
 Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons  
 Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,  
 But with a little act upon the blood  
 Burn like the mines of sulfur.

*Enter OTHELLO*

I did say so.  
 340 Look, where he comes. Not poppy nor mandragora  
 Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,  
 Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep  
 Which thou owedst yesterday.

**OTHELLO**

Ha! Ha! False to me?

**IAGO**

Why, how now, general? No more of that.

**Modern Text**

handkerchief may be useful to me. The Moor's  
 mind has already become infected with my  
 poisonous suggestions. Ideas can be like  
 poisons. At first they hardly even taste bad, but  
 once they get into your blood they start burning  
 like hot lava.

*OTHELLO enters.*

Here he comes. No drugs or sleeping pills will  
 ever give you the restful sleep that you had last  
 night.

**OTHELLO**

Argh! She's cheating on me?

**IAGO**

Oh, general, please, no more of that!

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 16**

**OTHELLO**

345 Avaunt! Be gone! Thou hast set me on the rack.  
 I swear 'tis better to be much abused  
 Than but to know 't a little.

**IAGO**

How now, my lord!

**OTHELLO**

What sense had I in her stol'n hours of lust?  
 I saw 't not, thought it not, it harmed not me.  
 350 I slept the next night well, fed well, was free and  
 merry.  
 I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.  
 He that is robbed, not wanting what is stol'n,  
 Let him not know't, and he's not robbed at all.

**IAGO**

I am sorry to hear this.

**OTHELLO**

355 I had been happy if the general camp,  
 Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,  
 So I had nothing known. Oh, now forever  
 Farewell the tranquil mind! Farewell content!  
 Farewell the plumèd troops and the big wars  
 360 That makes ambition virtue! Oh, farewell!  
 Farewell the neighing steed and the shrill trump,  
 The spirit-stirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife,  
 The royal banner, and all quality,  
 Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!  
 365 And O you mortal engines, whose rude throats  
 The immortal Jove's dead clamors counterfeit,  
 Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone.

**IAGO**

Is 't possible, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore,

**OTHELLO**

Get lost! You've tortured me with these thoughts.  
 It is better to be tricked completely than to only  
 suspect a little.

**IAGO**

What's with you, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

I had no idea she was cheating on me. I never  
 saw it or suspected it, so it never hurt me. I slept  
 well, ate well, and was happy. I never saw  
 Cassio's kisses on her lips. A man who's robbed,  
 but doesn't miss what's stolen, isn't robbed at all.

**IAGO**

I'm sorry to hear this.

**OTHELLO**

I would've been happy if the whole army had had  
 sex with her, the lowest-ranking grunts and all,  
 as long as I didn't know anything about it. Oh,  
 goodbye to my peace of mind! Goodbye to my  
 happiness! Goodbye to the soldiers and to the  
 wars that make men great! Goodbye! Goodbye  
 to the horses and the trumpets and the drums,  
 the flute and the splendid banners, and all those  
 proud displays and pageantry of war! And you  
 deadly cannons that roar like thunderbolts  
 thrown by the gods, goodbye! Othello's career is  
 over.

**IAGO**

Is this possible, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

You villain, you'd better be able to prove my

**Original Text**

370 Be sure of it. Give me the ocular proof  
Or by the worth of mine eternal soul  
Thou hadst been better have been born a dog  
Than answer my waked wrath!

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 17****IAGO**

Is 't come to this?

**OTHELLO**

Make me to see 't, or at the least so prove it  
375 That the probation bear no hinge nor loop  
To hang a doubt on, or woe upon thy life!

**IAGO**

My noble lord—

**OTHELLO**

If thou dost slander her and torture me,  
Never pray more. Abandon all remorse.  
380 On horror's head horrors accumulate,  
Do deeds to make heaven weep, all earth amazed,  
For nothing canst thou to damnation add  
Greater than that.

**IAGO**

Oh, grace! Oh, heaven forgive me!  
Are you a man? Have you a soul or sense?  
385 God buy you, take mine office. O wretched fool  
That lov'st to make thine honesty a vice!  
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world,  
To be direct and honest is not safe.  
I thank you for this profit, and from hence  
390 I'll love no friend, sith love breeds such offence.

**OTHELLO**

Nay, stay. Thou shouldst be honest.

**IAGO**

I should be wise, for honesty's a fool  
And loses that it works for.

**OTHELLO**

By the world,  
I think my wife be honest and think she is not.  
395 I think that thou art just and think thou art not.  
I'll have some proof. Her name, that was as fresh  
As Dian's visage, is now begrimed and black  
As mine own face. If there be cords or knives,  
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,  
400 I'll not endure it. Would I were satisfied!

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 18****IAGO**

I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion.  
I do repent me that I put it to you.

**Modern Text**

wife's a whore! Be sure of it. Get me proof I can  
see. If you can't, trust me, you won't want to feel  
my rage!

**IAGO**

Has it come to this?

**OTHELLO**

Show me, or at least prove it beyond the shadow  
of a doubt. If you can't, your life is worthless!

**IAGO**

My noble lord—

**OTHELLO**

If you're slandering her just to torture me, then  
it'll be no use to pray for mercy or say you're  
sorry. You might as well go ahead and commit  
every unspeakable crime you can think of,  
because there's nothing you could do that would top  
what you've already done!

**IAGO**

Oh, heaven help me! Aren't you a rational human  
being? Don't you have any sense at all?  
Goodbye. I resign my official position. I'm such  
an idiot for always telling the truth! What a  
horrible world we live in! Listen, pay attention,  
everybody. It's not safe to be straightforward and  
honest. I'm glad you've taught me this valuable  
lesson. From now on, I'll never try to help a friend  
when it hurts him so much to hear the truth.

**OTHELLO**

No, stop. You should always be honest.

**IAGO**

I should always be wise. Honesty's stupid, it  
makes me lose my friends even when I'm trying  
to help them.

**OTHELLO**

I swear, I think my wife's faithful, and I think she's  
not. I think you're trustworthy one minute and  
then not the next. I need proof! Her reputation  
was as pure as the snow, but now it's as dirty  
and black as my own face. As long as there  
are [ropes, knives, poison, fire, or streams to  
drown in](#), I won't stand for this. Oh, how I wish I  
knew the truth!

**IAGO**

I see you're all eaten up with emotion. I'm sorry I  
said anything. You want proof?



**Original Text****Modern Text**

You would be satisfied?

**OTHELLO**

Would? Nay, and I will.

**IAGO**

And may, but how? How satisfied, my lord?

405 Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on,  
Behold her topped?

**OTHELLO**

Death and damnation! Oh!

**IAGO**

It were a tedious difficulty, I think,  
To bring them to that prospect. Damn them then,  
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster

410 More than their own! What then? How then?  
What shall I say? Where's satisfaction?

It is impossible you should see this,  
Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,  
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross

415 As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,  
If imputation and strong circumstances  
Which lead directly to the door of truth  
Will give you satisfaction, you may have 't.

**OTHELLO**

Give me a living reason she's disloyal.

**IAGO**

420 I do not like the office.

But, sith I am entered in this cause so far,  
Pricked to 't by foolish honesty and love,  
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately

And, being troubled with a raging tooth,

425 I could not sleep. There are a kind of men  
So loose of soul that in their sleeps will mutter

**OTHELLO**

Want? Yes, I want it, and I'll get it.

**IAGO**

But how? How will you get proof? Are you going  
to hide and watch them having sex?

**OTHELLO**

Death and damnation! Oh!

**IAGO**

I think it would be very hard to arrange for them  
to have sex while you watched. If anyone sees  
them in bed together besides themselves, I  
guess we could damn them then. So what can  
we do? What can I say? What proof is there? It'd  
be impossible for you to watch them, even if they  
were as horny as animals in heat and as stupid  
as drunks. But if you would be willing to accept  
circumstantial evidence as proof, we can get  
that.

**OTHELLO**

Give me one good reason to think she's cheating  
on me.

**IAGO**

I don't like what you're asking me to do. But  
since I've gotten myself involved this far,  
because I'm so stupidly honest and because I  
like you so much, I'll keep going. I recently  
shared a bed with Cassio, and I couldn't sleep  
because of a raging toothache. Well, some  
people talk in their sleep, and Cassio is one of  
them. I heard him saying, "Sweet Desdemona,  
let's be careful and hide our love," in his sleep.  
And then he grabbed my hand and said, "Oh, my  
darling!" and

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 19**

Their affairs. One of this kind is Cassio.  
In sleep I heard him say "Sweet Desdemona,  
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves."

430 And then, sir, would he gripe and wring my hand,  
Cry "O sweet creature!" and then kiss me hard,

As if he plucked up kisses by the roots

That grew upon my lips, lay his leg

Over my thigh, and sigh, and kiss, and then

435 Cry "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"

**OTHELLO**

Oh, monstrous! Monstrous!

**IAGO**

Nay, this was but his dream.

kissed me hard, as if he were trying to suck my  
lips off. Then he put his leg over mine, and  
sighed and kissed me, and said, "Damn fate for  
giving you to the Moor!"

**OTHELLO**

Oh, that's monstrous! Monstrous!

**IAGO**

No, it was just a dream.

## Original Text

**OTHELLO**

But this denoted a foregone conclusion.

**IAGO**

'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

440 And this may help to thicken other proofs  
That do demonstrate thinly.

**OTHELLO**

I'll tear her all to pieces!

**IAGO**

Nay, yet be wise, yet we see nothing done,  
She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,  
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief  
445 Spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?

**OTHELLO**

I gave her such a one, 'twas my first gift.

**IAGO**

I know not that, but such a handkerchief—  
I am sure it was your wife's—did I today  
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

**OTHELLO**

If it be that—

**IAGO**

450 If it be that, or any that was hers,  
It speaks against her with the other proofs.

## Modern Text

**OTHELLO**

But it shows that something has already happened.

**IAGO**

It's a reason for suspicion, even though it's just a dream. And it might back up other evidence that may seem too flimsy.

**OTHELLO**

I'll tear her to pieces!

**IAGO**

No, be reasonable. We don't have any proof yet. She might still be faithful. Just tell me this: have you ever seen her holding a handkerchief with an embroidered strawberry pattern on it?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, I gave her one like that. It was my first gift to her.

**IAGO**

I don't know about that, but I saw a handkerchief like that today. I'm sure it belongs to your wife, and I saw Cassio use it to wipe his beard.

**OTHELLO**

If it's the same one—

**IAGO**

If it's the same one, or any one that belongs to her, then together with the other evidence it's pretty strong.

## Act 3, Scene 3, Page 20

**OTHELLO**

Oh, that the slave had forty thousand lives!  
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge.  
Now do I see 'tis true. Look here, Iago,  
455 All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven.  
'Tis gone.  
Arise, black vengeance, from the hollow hell!  
Yield up, O love, thy crown and hearted throne  
To tyrannous hate! Swell, bosom, with thy fraught,  
460 For 'tis of aspics' tongues!

**IAGO**

Yet be content.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, blood, blood, blood!

**IAGO**

Patience, I say. Your mind may change.

**OTHELLO**

Never, Iago. Like to the Pontic sea,  
Whose icy current and compulsive course  
Ne'er keeps retiring ebb but keeps due on  
465 To the Propontic and the Hellespont,  
Even so my bloody thoughts with violent pace

**OTHELLO**

Oh, I'd kill that bastard Cassio forty thousand times if I could! Killing him once is not enough revenge. Now I see it's true. Oh, Iago, all the love I felt is gone, vanished in the wind. Welcome, hatred and vengeance! Get out of my heart, love! My heart feels like it's full of poisonous snakes!

**IAGO**

Calm down—

**OTHELLO**

I want blood!

**IAGO**

Be patient, I'm telling you. You may change your mind later.

**OTHELLO**

Never, Iago. My thoughts of revenge are flowing through me like a violent river, never turning back to love, only flowing toward full revenge that'll swallow them up. I swear to God I'll get revenge. (*he kneels*)

**Original Text**

Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love  
Till that a capable and wide revenge  
Swallow them up. Now, by yon marble heaven,  
470 In the due reverence of a sacred vow  
I here engage my words. (*he kneels*)

**IAGO**

Do not rise yet.  
Witness, you ever-burning lights above,  
You elements that clip us round about,  
Witness that here Iago doth give up  
475 The execution of his wit, hands, heart,  
To wronged Othello's service. Let him command,  
And to obey shall be in me remorse,  
What bloody business ever.

**Act 3, Scene 3, Page 21****OTHELLO**

I greet thy love  
Not with vain thanks but with acceptance bounteous,  
480 And will upon the instant put thee to 't.  
Within these three days let me hear thee say  
That Cassio's not alive.

**IAGO**

My friend is dead,  
'Tis done at your request. But let her live.

**OTHELLO**

Damn her, lewd minx! Oh, damn her, damn her!  
485 Come, go with me apart. I will withdraw  
To furnish me with some swift means of death  
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

**IAGO**

I am your own for ever.

*Exeunt*

**Modern Text****IAGO**

Don't get up yet. Let heaven be my witness—I'm putting my mind, my heart, and my hands in Othello's control. Let him command me, and I'll do whatever he asks, no matter how violent.

**OTHELLO**

I accept your devotion with my deepest love. I'll put you to the test right away. Within the next three days I want to hear you tell me that Cassio's dead.

**IAGO**

My friend Cassio is dead. It's done, because you request it. But let her live.

**OTHELLO**

Damn her, the wicked whore! Oh, damn her, damn her! Come away with me. I'm going inside to think up some way to kill that beautiful devil. You're my lieutenant now.

**IAGO**

I'm yours forever.

*They exit.*

**Act 3, Scene 4**

*Enter DESDEMONA, EMILIA, and 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 one to say a soldier lies, 'tis stabbing.

**DESDEMONA**

5 Go to. Where lodges he?

**CLOWN**

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

*DESDEMONA, EMILIA and the CLOWN enter.*

**DESDEMONA**

Excuse me, do you know which room Lieutenant Cassio lies in?

**CLOWN**

I wouldn't dare say he lies anywhere.

**DESDEMONA**

Why do you say that?

**CLOWN**

He's a soldier. If I accused a soldier of lying, he'd stab me.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, come on. Where does he sleep?

**CLOWN**

Telling you where he's sleeping is like telling you

## Original Text

**DESDEMONA**

Can anything be made of this?

**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 inquire him out and be edified by report?

**CLOWN**

10 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.

**CLOWN**

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

*Exit*

## Modern Text

where I'm lying.

**DESDEMONA**

What on earth does that mean?

**CLOWN**

I don't know where he's staying, so if I told you he's sleeping here or there, I'd be lying.

**DESDEMONA**

Can you ask around and find out?

**CLOWN**

I'll go ask questions everywhere.

**DESDEMONA**

Find him and tell him to come here. Tell him I've spoken to my husband on his behalf, and I think everything will be all right.

**CLOWN**

I think I can do that. It's not too much to ask.

**CLOWN** exits.

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 2

**DESDEMONA**

Where should I lose that handkerchief, Emilia?

**EMILIA**

I know not, madam.

**DESDEMONA**

15 Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse 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**

20 Is he not jealous?

**DESDEMONA**

Who, he? I think the sun where he was born Drew all such humors from him.

**EMILIA**

Look where he comes.

*Enter OTHELLO*

**DESDEMONA**

I will not leave him now till Cassio  
25 Be called to him.—How is 't with you, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Well, my good lady.—*(aside)* Oh, hardness to dissemble!—

How do you, Desdemona?

**DESDEMONA**

Well, my good lord.

**DESDEMONA**

Where could I have lost that handkerchief, Emilia?

**EMILIA**

I don't know, madam.

**DESDEMONA**

Believe me, I'd rather have lost a purse full of gold coins. This would be enough to make my husband suspect me, if he wasn't so free of jealousy.

**EMILIA**

He's not jealous?

**DESDEMONA**

Who, him? I think all tendencies to jealousy were burned out of him by the sun of his native land.

**EMILIA**

Look, here he comes.

**OTHELLO** enters.

**DESDEMONA**

I won't leave him alone until he gives Cassio his job back.—How are you, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

I'm fine, my lady.—*(to himself)* Oh, it's so hard to pretend!—How are you, Desdemona?

**DESDEMONA**

I'm fine, my lord.

**Original Text****OTHELLO**

Give me your hand. This hand is moist, my lady.

**DESDEMONA**

It hath felt no age nor known no sorrow.

**OTHELLO**

30 This argues fruitfulness and liberal heart.  
Hot, hot, and moist. This hand of yours requires  
A sequester from liberty, fasting, and prayer,

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 3**

Much castigation, exercise devout,  
For here's a young and sweating devil here,  
35 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.

**OTHELLO**

A liberal hand. The hearts of old gave hands,  
But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.

**DESDEMONA**

40 I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

**OTHELLO**

What promise, chuck?

**DESDEMONA**

I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

**OTHELLO**

I have a salt and sorry rheum offends me.  
Lend me thy handkerchief.

**DESDEMONA**

Here, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

45 That which I gave you.

**DESDEMONA**

I have it not about me.

**OTHELLO**

Not?

**DESDEMONA**

No, indeed, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

That's a fault. That handkerchief  
Did an Egyptian to my mother give,  
She was a charmer and could almost read

**Modern Text****OTHELLO**

Give me your **hand**. Your hand's moist, my lady.

**DESDEMONA**

It's moist because it's still young and inexperienced.

**OTHELLO**

It says you're fertile, and you've got a giving heart. Hot, hot and moist. With a hand like this you need to

fast and pray to stave off temptations. Someone with a young sweating hand like this one is bound to act up sooner or later. It's a nice hand, an open one.

**DESDEMONA**

You're right to say that. This was the hand that gave you my heart.

**OTHELLO**

This hand gives itself away very freely. In the old days, people used to give their hearts to each other when they joined their hands in marriage. But these days, people give each other their hands without their hearts.

**DESDEMONA**

I don't know about that. Now, don't forget, you promised me something.

**OTHELLO**

What did I promise, my dear?

**DESDEMONA**

I sent for Cassio to come talk with you.

**OTHELLO**

I have a bad cold that's bothering me. Lend me your handkerchief.

**DESDEMONA**

Here, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

No, the one I gave you.

**DESDEMONA**

I don't have it with me.

**OTHELLO**

You don't?

**DESDEMONA**

No, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

That's not good. An Egyptian woman gave that handkerchief to my mother. She was a witch, and she could

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 4**

**Original Text**

The thoughts of people. She told her, while she kept  
 50 it  
 'Twould make her amiable and subdue my father  
 Entirely to her love, but if she lost it  
 Or made gift of it, my father's eye  
 Should hold her loathed and his spirits should hunt  
 55 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,  
 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**

60 'Tis true. There's magic in the web of it.  
 A sibyl, that had numbered in the world  
 The sun to course two hundred compasses,  
 In her prophetic fury sewed the work.  
 The worms were hallowed that did breed the silk,  
 65 And it was dyed in mummy which the skillful  
 Conserved of maidens' hearts.

**DESDEMONA**

Indeed? Is 't true?

**OTHELLO**

Most veritable, therefore look to 't well.

**DESDEMONA**

Then would to Heaven that I had never seen 't!

**OTHELLO**

Ha! Wherefore?

**DESDEMONA**

70 Why do you speak so startingly and rash?

**OTHELLO**

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

**DESDEMONA**

Bless us!

**Modern Text**

almost read people's thoughts. She told my  
 mother that as long as she kept it with her, my  
 father would love and desire her. But if she lost it  
 or gave it away, my father would start hating her  
 and looking at other women. When she was dying  
 she gave it to me and told me to give it to my wife  
 when I got married. I did. So pay attention. Treat  
 it as something precious. Losing it or giving it  
 away would be an unspeakable loss, a loss like  
 none other.

**DESDEMONA**

Is that possible?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, it's true. There's magic in its fabric. A two-  
 hundred-year-old witch sewed it while she was in  
 a fevered trance. The silk came from sacred  
 silkworms, and it was dyed with fluid made from  
 embalmed virgins' hearts.

**DESDEMONA**

Really? Is that true?

**OTHELLO**

It's absolutely true, so take good care of it.

**DESDEMONA**

I wish I had never seen it!

**OTHELLO**

Ha! Why?

**DESDEMONA**

Why are you yelling at me so angrily?

**OTHELLO**

Is it lost? Is it gone? Tell me, is it missing?

**DESDEMONA**

God help me!

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 5****OTHELLO**

Say you?

**DESDEMONA**

It is not lost, but what and if it were?

**OTHELLO**

75 How!

**DESDEMONA**

I say, it is not lost.

**OTHELLO**

Fetch 't, let me see 't.

**DESDEMONA**

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

**OTHELLO**

What do you have to say for yourself?

**DESDEMONA**

It's not lost, but what if it were?

**OTHELLO**

What do you mean?

**DESDEMONA**

I'm telling you, it's not lost.

**OTHELLO**

Then bring it here. Let me see it.

**DESDEMONA**

I could, sir. But I don't want to now. This is just a  
 trick to take my mind off what I'm asking you for.

## Original Text

Pray you, let Cassio be received again.

**OTHELLO**

80 Fetch me the handkerchief—my mind misgives.

**DESDEMONA**

Come, come,  
You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

**OTHELLO**

The handkerchief!

**DESDEMONA**

A man that all his time  
Hath founded his good fortunes on your love,

85 Shared dangers with you—

**OTHELLO**

The handkerchief!

**DESDEMONA**

In sooth, you are to blame.

**OTHELLO**

Away!

**EMILIA**

Is not this man jealous?

## Modern Text

Please hire Cassio again.

**OTHELLO**

Bring me the handkerchief—My mind is full of  
doubt.

**DESDEMONA**

Come on. You know you'll never find a more  
capable man.

**OTHELLO**

The handkerchief!

**DESDEMONA**

He's counted on your friendship for his success.  
He's shared dangers with you—

**OTHELLO**

The handkerchief!

**DESDEMONA**

Really, I don't think you're behaving very well.

**OTHELLO**

Damn it!

*Exit*

*OTHELLO exits.*

**EMILIA**

And you say he's not jealous?

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 6

**DESDEMONA**

I ne'er saw this before.

90 Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief,  
I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

**EMILIA**

'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.  
They are all but stomachs, and we all but food.  
To eat us hungerly, and when they are full,

95 They belch us. Look you, Cassio and my husband!

*Enter CASSIO and IAGO*

**IAGO**

There is no other way. 'Tis she must do 't,  
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  
100 That by your virtuous means I may again  
Exist, and be a member of his love  
Whom I, with all the office of my heart  
Entirely honor. I would not be delayed.

If my offence be of such mortal kind  
105 That nor my service past, nor present sorrows,  
Nor purposed merit in futurity,  
Can ransom me into his love again,

**DESDEMONA**

I never saw him like this before. There must be  
some magic in that handkerchief. I'm miserable  
that I lost it.

**EMILIA**

Men are all the same, but it takes longer than a  
year or two to see how bad they are. They're like  
stomachs and we're just the food. They eat us up  
hungrily, and when they're full, they vomit us up.  
Look, here comes Cassio and my husband.

*IAGO and CASSIO enter.*

**IAGO**

There's no other way. She's the one who's got to  
do it. And what luck, she's here! Go ahead and  
ask her.

**DESDEMONA**

Hello, Cassio. How are you?

**CASSIO**

Nothing, madam. Just my earlier request. I'm  
begging you to help me get back on his good  
side. I'm devoted to him with all my heart. I can't  
wait any longer. If my wrongdoing was so serious  
that I can't get back into his good graces either  
by my past service, or my present situation, or  
the promise of devoted service in the future, just  
knowing that would help me. Then I could stop  
wondering, and find some other career.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

But to know so must be my benefit.  
 So shall I clothe me in a forced content,  
 110 And shut myself up in some other course,  
 To fortune's alms.

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 7

**DESDEMONA**

Alas, thrice-gentle Cassio,  
 My advocacy is not now in tune.  
 My lord is not my lord, nor should I know him  
 Were he in favor as in humor altered.  
 115 So help me every spirit sanctified  
 As I have spoken for you all my best  
 And stood within the blank of his displeasure  
 For my free speech. You must awhile be patient.  
 What I can do I will, and more I will  
 120 Than for myself I dare. Let that suffice you.

**IAGO**

Is my lord angry?

**EMILIA**

He went hence but now,  
 And certainly in strange unquietness.

**IAGO**

Can he be angry? I have seen the cannon  
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air  
 125 And, like the devil, from his very arm  
 Puffed his own brother—and is he angry?  
 Something of moment then, I will go meet him.  
 There's matter in 't indeed, if he be angry.

**DESDEMONA**

I prithee, do so.

*Exit IAGO*

Something, sure, of state,  
 130 Either from Venice, or some unhatched practice  
 Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,  
 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,  
 135 For let our finger ache and it endues  
 Our other healthful members even to that sense  
 Of pain. Nay, we must think men are not gods,  
 Nor of them look for such observances  
 As fit the bridal. Beshrew me much, Emilia,  
 140 I was, unhandsome warrior as I am,  
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul,  
 But now I find I had suborned the witness,  
 And he's indicted falsely.

**DESDEMONA**

I'm sorry, dear Cassio, but now is not the right  
 time to bring up your case. My husband's not  
 himself. If his face changed as much as his  
 personality has, I wouldn't recognize him. God  
 knows I have done my best to argue for you, and  
 made him angry at me for being so aggressive.  
 You'll just have to be patient for a little while. I'll  
 do what I can, more than I'd do for myself. Let  
 that be enough for you.

**IAGO**

Is Othello angry?

**EMILIA**

He just left, clearly upset about something.

**IAGO**

Can he even get angry? It's hard to believe. I've  
 seen him stay calm when cannons were blowing  
 his soldiers to bits, even killing his own brother  
 without him batting an eyelid—is he really upset?  
 It must be about something important. I'll go talk  
 to him. If he's angry, there must be something  
 seriously wrong.

**DESDEMONA**

Please, do so.

*IAGO exits.*

There must be some political news from Venice,  
 or some dangerous plot here in Cyprus has  
 ruined his good mood. Men always get angry  
 about little things when they're really worried  
 about bigger ones. That's the way it goes. When  
 our finger hurts, it makes the rest of the body  
 hurt too. We shouldn't expect men to be perfect,  
 or for them to be as polite as on the weddingday.  
 Oh, Emilia, I'm so inexperienced that I thought  
 he was being unkind, but actually I was judging  
 him harshly.

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 8

**EMILIA**

Pray heaven it be

**EMILIA**

I hope to God it's something political, like you



## Original Text

State matters, as you think, and no conception  
145 Nor no jealous toy concerning you.

**DESDEMONA**

Alas the day! I never gave him cause.

**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  
150 Begot upon itself, born on itself.

**DESDEMONA**

Heaven keep the monster from Othello's mind!

**EMILIA**

Lady, amen.

**DESDEMONA**

I will go seek him.—Cassio, walk hereabout.  
If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit  
155 And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

**CASSIO**

I humbly thank your ladyship.

*Exeunt DESDEMONA and EMILIA*

*Enter BIANCA*

**BIANCA**

Save you, friend Cassio!

## Modern Text

think, and not jealousy involving you.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh no! I never gave him reason to be jealous.

**EMILIA**

But jealous people don't think like that. They're never jealous for a reason; they're just jealous. It's like a monster that just grows and grows, out of nothing.

**DESDEMONA**

I hope God keeps that monster from growing in Othello's mind!

**EMILIA**

Amen to that, lady.

**DESDEMONA**

I'll go look for him—Cassio, stay around here. If he's in a good mood I'll mention you again, and do everything I can.

**CASSIO**

I thank you, lady.

*DESDEMONA and EMILIA exit.*

*BIANCA enters.*

**BIANCA**

Hello, Cassio!

## Act 3, Scene 4, Page 9

**CASSIO**

What make you from home?  
How is 't with you, my most fair Bianca?  
Indeed, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

**BIANCA**

160 And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.  
What, keep a week away? Seven days and nights?  
Eight score eight hours? And lovers' absent hours  
More tedious than the dial eightscore times!  
Oh weary reckoning!

**CASSIO**

Pardon me, Bianca,  
165 I have this while with leaden thoughts been pressed,  
But I shall, in a more continue time,  
Strike off this score of absence. Sweet Bianca,  
(*giving her DESDEMONA's handkerchief*)  
Take me this work out.

**BIANCA**

O Cassio, whence came this?  
170 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,  
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth

**CASSIO**

Why are you so far from home? How are you, my pretty Bianca? To tell you the truth, I was just going to your house.

**BIANCA**

And I was just going to yours. You've kept away from me for a week? Seven days and seven nights? A hundred and sixty-eight hours? And lovers' hours are a hundred and sixty times longer than normal ones! What a tedious wait!

**CASSIO**

I'm sorry, Bianca. All this time I've been depressed and had problems on my mind. When I get some free time I'll make it up to you. (*he gives her DESDEMONA's handkerchief*) Sweet Bianca, would you copy this embroidery pattern for me?

**BIANCA**

Oh, Cassio, where did you get this? This is a gift from another woman, a new lover! Now I know why you've been staying away from me. Has it come to this? Well, well.

**CASSIO**

Oh, come on, woman. Stop jumping to silly conclusions. Now you're jealous, thinking that

**Original Text****Modern Text**

From whence you have them. You are jealous now  
 175 That this is from some mistress, some  
 remembrance.

No, in good troth, Bianca.

**BIANCA**

Why, whose is it?

**CASSIO**

I know not neither, I found it in my chamber.  
 I like the work well. Ere it be demanded,  
 As like enough it will, I would have it copied.  
 180 Take it and do 't, and leave me for this time.

**BIANCA**

Leave you! Wherefore?

this is from some mistress of mine, but I swear  
 it's not, Bianca.

**BIANCA**

Well, whose is it?

**CASSIO**

I don't even know. I found it in my room. It's  
 pretty. Someone is certainly looking for it, and I'll  
 have to give it back. So I'd like it copied. Take it  
 and do that for me, and leave me alone for a  
 while.

**BIANCA**

Leave you alone! Why?

**Act 3, Scene 4, Page 10**

**CASSIO**

I do attend here on the general  
 And think it no addition, nor my wish,  
 To have him see me womaned.

**BIANCA**

Why, I pray you?

**CASSIO**

185 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.

**CASSIO**

'Tis but a little way that I can bring you,  
 For I attend here. But I'll see you soon.

**BIANCA**

190 'Tis very good. I must be circumstanced.

**CASSIO**

I'm waiting here for the general, and I don't want  
 him to see me with a woman.

**BIANCA**

And why's that?

**CASSIO**

It's not because I don't love you.

**BIANCA**

But you don't love me. Please, just walk with me  
 a little ways, and tell me if I'll see you later  
 tonight.

**CASSIO**

I can only walk a little way with you, since I'm  
 waiting here. But I'll see you soon.

**BIANCA**

All right, have it your way. I have to make do.

*Exeunt*

*They exit.*

**Act 4, Scene 1**

*Enter OTHELLO and IAGO*

*OTHELLO and IAGO enter.*

**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?

**IAGO**

Do you really think so?

**OTHELLO**

What do you mean, do I think so?

**IAGO**

What, just because they kissed in private?

**OTHELLO**

An illicit kiss!

**IAGO**

Maybe she was just naked in bed with him for an  
 hour or so, but they didn't do anything.

**Original Text****OTHELLO**

- 5 Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm!  
It is hypocrisy against the devil.  
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?

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 2****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 saidst—Oh, it comes o'er my memory,  
As doth the raven o'er the infectious house,  
Boding to all—he had my handkerchief.

**IAGO**

Ay, what of that?

**OTHELLO**

That's not so good now.

**IAGO**

- What if I had said I had seen him do you wrong?  
25 Or heard him say—as knaves be such abroad,  
Who having, by their own importunate suit,  
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,  
Convincèd or supplied them, cannot choose  
But they must blab—

**OTHELLO**

Hath he said any thing?

**IAGO**

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

**OTHELLO**

What hath he said?

**IAGO**

Why, that he did—I know not what he did.

**Modern Text****OTHELLO**

Naked in bed together, but without doing anything? Come on, Iago. That would be like playing a trick on the devil: they'd make him think they're going to commit adultery, but then back off. Anyone who acted like that would be letting the devil tempt them, and tempting God to condemn them.

**IAGO**

As long as they didn't do anything, it would only be a minor sin. But if I gave my wife a handkerchief—

**OTHELLO**

Then what?

**IAGO**

Then it's hers. And if it's hers, I guess she can give it to any man she wants.

**OTHELLO**

Her reputation is also her own. Can she give that away too?

**IAGO**

You can't see a reputation. A lot of people don't even deserve the reputations they have. But a handkerchief—

**OTHELLO**

God, I wish I could forget about the handkerchief! What you told me it haunts me like a nightmare—he's got my handkerchief!

**IAGO**

Yes, what about it?

**OTHELLO**

That's not good.

**IAGO**

What if I'd said I saw him do something to hurt you? Or heard him say something about it. You know there are jerks out there who have to brag about bedding some woman.—

**OTHELLO**

Has he said anything?

**IAGO**

Yes, but he'd deny it all.

**OTHELLO**

What did he say?

**IAGO**

He said he did—I don't know.

## Original Text

**OTHELLO**

What? what?

**IAGO**

Lie—

**OTHELLO**

With her?

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 3

**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—that’s fulsome. Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief! To confess, and be hanged for his labor. First to be hanged, and then to confess—I tremble at it. Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction. It is not words that shake me thus. Pish! Noses, ears, and lips. Is ’t possible? Confess!—Handkerchief!—Oh, devil!—

*(falls in a trance)***IAGO**

35 Work on, My medicine, 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!

**CASSIO**

What’s the matter?

**IAGO**

40 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 must have his quiet course.  
If not, he foams at mouth and by and by

45 Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs.  
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,

## Modern Text

**OTHELLO**

He what?

**IAGO**

He was in bed with—

**OTHELLO**

With her?

**IAGO**

With her, on top of her—however you want to say it.

**OTHELLO**

In bed with her? On top of her? I would have thought people were telling lies about her rather than believe he was lying on her. My God, it’s nauseating! Handkerchief—confessions—handkerchief! I’ll kill him first, and then let him confess—I’m trembling with rage. I wouldn’t be trembling like this if I didn’t know deep down this was all true. Noses, ears, lips. Is it possible? Tell me the truth—Handkerchief—Damn it!

*(he falls into a trance)***IAGO**

Keep working, poison! This is the way to trick gullible fools. Many good and innocent women are punished for reasons like this.—My lord? My lord, Othello!

*CASSIO enters.*

Hey, Cassio!

**CASSIO**

What’s the matter?

**IAGO**

Othello’s having some kind of epileptic fit. This is his second fit like this. He had one yesterday.

**CASSIO**

Rub his temples.

**IAGO**

No, don’t. This fit has to run its course. If you interrupt it, he’ll foam at the mouth and go crazy. Look, he’s moving. Why don’t you go away for a bit? He’ll get

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 4

He will recover straight. When he is gone  
I would on great occasion speak with you.

*Exit CASSIO*

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

**OTHELLO**

better right away. When he leaves, it’s very  
important that I talk to you.

*CASSIO exits.*

What happened, general? Did you hit your head?

**OTHELLO**

**Original Text****Modern Text**

50 Dost thou mock me?

**IAGO**

I mock you not, by heaven.  
Would you would bear your fortune like a man!

**OTHELLO**

A hornèd man's a monster and a beast.

**IAGO**

There's many a beast then in a populous city,  
And many a civil monster.

**OTHELLO**

55 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  
That nightly lie in those unproper beds  
Which they dare swear peculiar. Your case is better.

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

To lip a wanton in a secure couch,  
And to suppose her chaste. No, let me know,  
And knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, thou art wise! 'Tis certain.

**IAGO**

Stand you awhile apart,

65 Confine yourself but in a patient list.

Whilst you were here o'erwhelmèd with your grief—  
A passion most resulting such a man—  
Cassio came hither. I shifted him away  
And laid good 'scuses upon your ecstasy,

Are you making fun of me?

**IAGO**

Making fun of you? No, I swear! I wish you could  
face your bad news like a man!

**OTHELLO**

A man who's been cheated on isn't a real man.  
He's subhuman, like an animal.

**IAGO**

In that case there are a lot of animals on the  
loose in this city.

**OTHELLO**

Did he confess?

**IAGO**

Sir, be a man. Every married man has been  
cheated on. Millions of men sleep with wives who  
cheat on them, wrongly believing they belong to  
them alone. Your case is better than that. At least  
you're not ignorant. The worst thing of all is to  
kiss your wife thinking she's innocent, when in  
fact she's a whore. No, I'd rather know the truth.  
Then I'll know exactly what she is, just as I know  
what I am.

**OTHELLO**

You're wise! That's for sure.

**IAGO**

Go somewhere else for a while. Calm down.  
While you were dazed by grief—which isn't  
appropriate for a man like you—Cassio showed  
up here. I got him to leave, and made up an  
excuse for your trance. I told him to come back  
and talk to me in a bit, and he promised he would.  
So hide here and watch how he sneers

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 5**

70 Bade him anon return and here speak with me,  
The which he promised. Do but encave yourself,  
And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns  
That dwell in every region of his face.  
For I will make him tell the tale anew

75 Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when

He hath, and is again to cope your wife.  
I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience,  
Or I shall say you are all in all in spleen,  
And nothing of a man.

**OTHELLO**

Dost thou hear, Iago?

80 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?

at you. I'll make him tell me the whole story  
again—where, how often, how long ago—and  
when he plans to sleep with your wife in the  
future. I'm telling you, just watch his face. But  
stay calm, and don't get carried away by rage, or  
I'll think you're not a man.

**OTHELLO**

Do you hear what I'm saying, Iago? I'll be very  
patient, but—do you hear me?—I'm not done with  
him yet

**IAGO**

That's fine, but for now keep your cool. Will you  
go hide?

**OTHELLO** *withdraws*

**OTHELLO** *hides.*

**Original Text**

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,  
A huswife that by selling her desires  
85 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.  
He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain  
From the excess of laughter. Here he comes.

*Enter CASSIO*

90 As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad.  
And his unbookish jealousy must construe  
Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behavior  
Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

**Modern Text**

Now I'll ask Cassio about Bianca, a prostitute  
who sells her body for food and clothes. She's  
crazy about Cassio. That's the whore's curse, to  
seduce many men, but to be seduced by one.  
Whenever he talks about her he can't stop  
laughing.

*CASSIO enters.*

And when he laughs, Othello will go crazy. In his  
ignorant jealousy, he'll totally misunderstand  
Cassio's smiles, gestures, and jokes.—How are  
you, lieutenant?

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 6**

**CASSIO**

The worse that you give me the addition  
95 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!

**CASSIO**

Alas, poor caitiff!

**OTHELLO**

Look how he laughs already!

**IAGO**

100 I never knew woman love man so.

**CASSIO**

Alas, poor rogue, I think indeed she loves me.

**OTHELLO**

Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

**IAGO**

Do you hear, Cassio?

**OTHELLO**

Now he importunes him  
To tell it o'er. Go to, well said, well said.

**IAGO**

105 She gives it out that you shall marry her.  
Do you intend it?

**CASSIO**

Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

Do ye triumph, Roman? Do you triumph?

**CASSIO**

I marry her! What? A customer? Prithee bear some  
charity to my wit. Do not think it so unwholesome.  
Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

**CASSIO**

It doesn't make me feel any better when you call  
me lieutenant. I'm dying to have that title back  
again.

**IAGO**

Just keep asking Desdemona, and it'll be yours.  
If it was up to Bianca to get you your job back,  
you'd have had it already!

**CASSIO**

The poor thing!

**OTHELLO**

He's laughing already!

**IAGO**

I never knew a woman who loved a man so  
much.

**CASSIO**

The poor thing, I really think she loves me.

**OTHELLO**

Now he denies it a bit, and tries to laugh it off.

**IAGO**

Have you heard this, Cassio?

**OTHELLO**

He's asking him to tell the story again. Go on, tell  
it.

**IAGO**

She says you're going to marry her. Are you?

**CASSIO**

Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

Are you laughing because you've won? Do you  
think you've won?

**CASSIO**

Me, marry her? That whore? Please give me a  
little credit! I'm not that stupid. Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

**Original Text****Modern Text**

110 So, so, so, so! They laugh that win!

So, so, so, so! The winner's always got the last laugh, hasn't he?

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 7****IAGO**

Why the cry goes that you shall marry her.

**CASSIO**

Prithee say true!

**IAGO**

I am a very villain else.

**OTHELLO**

Have you scored me? Well.

**CASSIO**

115 This is the monkey's own giving out. She is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

**OTHELLO**

Iago beckons me. Now he begins the story.

**CASSIO**

She was here even now. She haunts me in every place. I was the other day talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians, and thither comes the bauble and, by this hand, she falls me thus about my neck—

**OTHELLO**

Crying "O dear Cassio!" as it were. His gesture imports it.

**CASSIO**

So hangs and lolls and weeps upon me, so shakes, and pulls me! Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

120 Now he tells how she plucked him to my chamber. Oh, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

**CASSIO**

Well, I must leave her company.

**IAGO**

Before me! Look, where she comes.

*Enter BIANCA*

**IAGO**

I swear, there's a rumor going around that you'll marry her.

**CASSIO**

You're kidding!

**IAGO**

If it's not true, you can call me a villain.

**OTHELLO**

Have you given me bastard children to raise? All right, then.

**CASSIO**

The little monkey must have started that rumor herself. She thinks I'll marry her because she loves me. She's just flattering herself. I never promised her anything.

**OTHELLO**

Iago is gesturing for me to come closer. Now he's telling the story.

**CASSIO**

She was here just now. She hangs around me all the time. I was talking to some Venetians down by the shore, and the fool showed up. I swear to you, she put her arms around me like this—

**OTHELLO**

Saying, "Oh, Cassio," it seems, judging by his gestures.

**CASSIO**

She hangs around me and dangles from my neck and cries, shaking me and pulling at me. Ha, ha, ha!

**OTHELLO**

Now he's saying how she took him into our bedroom. Oh, I can see your nose now. But I can't see the dog I'm going to throw it to.

**CASSIO**

I have to get rid of her.

**IAGO**

Look out, here she comes.

*BIANCA enters.*

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 8****CASSIO**

'Tis such another fitchew. Marry, a perfumed one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me?

**BIANCA****CASSIO**

It's a whore like all the others, stinking of cheap perfume.—Why are you always hanging around me?

**BIANCA**

## Original Text

## Modern Text

125 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 the work? A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There, give it your hobby-horse. Wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on 't.

**CASSIO**

How now, my sweet Bianca! How now, how now?

**OTHELLO**

By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

**BIANCA**

If you'll come to supper tonight, you may. If you will not, come when you are next prepared for.

*Exit*

**IAGO**

After her, after her.

**CASSIO**

130 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 fain speak with you.

**CASSIO**

Prithee come, will you?

**IAGO**

135 Go to! Say no more.

*Exit CASSIO*

Damn you! What did you mean by giving me this handkerchief? I was an idiot to take it! You want me to copy the embroidery pattern? That was a likely story, that you found it in your room and didn't know who it belonged to. This is a love token from some other slut, and you want me to copy its pattern for you? Give it back to her, I won't do anything with it.

**CASSIO**

What is it, my dear Bianca? What's wrong?

**OTHELLO**

My God, that's my handkerchief!

**BIANCA**

If you want to come have dinner with me, you can. If you don't want to, then good riddance.

*BIANCA exits.*

**IAGO**

Go after her, go.

**CASSIO**

Actually, I should. She'll scream in the streets if I don't.

**IAGO**

Will you be having dinner with her tonight?

**CASSIO**

Yes, I will.

**IAGO**

Well, maybe I'll see you there. I'd really like to speak with you.

**CASSIO**

Please come. Will you?

**IAGO**

Don't talk anymore, go after her.

*CASSIO exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 9

**OTHELLO**

*(advancing)* How shall I murder him, Iago?

**IAGO**

Did you perceive how he laughed at his vice?

**OTHELLO**

O Iago!

**IAGO**

And did you see the handkerchief?

**OTHELLO**

140 Was that mine?

**IAGO**

Yours by this hand. And to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! She gave it him, and he

**OTHELLO**

*(coming forward)* How should I murder him, Iago?

**IAGO**

Did you see how he laughed about sleeping with her?

**OTHELLO**

Oh Iago!

**IAGO**

And did you see the handkerchief?

**OTHELLO**

Was it mine?

**IAGO**

It was yours, I swear. And do you see how much your foolish wife means to him? She gave it to



**Original Text**

hath given it his whore.

**OTHELLO**

I would have him nine years a-killing. A fine woman!  
A fair woman! A sweet woman!

**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. Oh, the world hath not a sweeter creature, she might lie by an emperor's side and command him tasks.

**IAGO**

145 Nay, that's not your way.

**OTHELLO**

Hang her! I do but say what she is. So delicate with her needle, an admirable musician. Oh, she will sing the savageness out of a bear! Of so high and plenteous wit and invention!

**IAGO**

She's the worse for all this.

**Act 4, Scene 1, Page 10****OTHELLO**

Oh, a thousand thousand times—and then of so gentle a condition!

**IAGO**

Ay, too gentle.

**OTHELLO**

150 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 to offend, for if it touch not you it comes near nobody.

**OTHELLO**

I will chop her into messes! Cuckold me?

**IAGO**

Oh, 'tis foul in her.

**OTHELLO**

With mine officer!

**IAGO**

155 That's fouler.

**OTHELLO**

Get me some poison, Iago, this night. I'll not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty unprovide my mind again—This night, Iago!

**IAGO****Modern Text**

him, and he gave it to his whore.

**OTHELLO**

I wish I could keep killing him for nine years straight. Oh, she's a fine woman! A fair woman! A sweet woman!

**IAGO**

No, you have to forget all that now.

**OTHELLO**

Yes, let her die and rot and go to hell tonight. She won't stay alive for long. No, my heart's turned to stone—when I hit it, it hurts my hand. Oh, the world never saw a sweeter creature. She could be married to an emperor, and he'd be like her slave!

**IAGO**

But that's not how you're going to be.

**OTHELLO**

Damn her, I'm just describing her truthfully! She's so good at sewing, and a wonderful musician. Oh, she could sing a wild bear to sleep! Oh, she's so witty and creative!

**IAGO**

All the worse that she stooped this low, then.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, a thousand times worse, a thousand times—and what a sweet personality she has!

**IAGO**

Yes, a little too sweet.

**OTHELLO**

Yes, that's for sure. Oh, it's dreadful, dreadful, Iago!

**IAGO**

If you still feel so affectionate toward her, then why not give her permission to cheat on you? If it doesn't bother you, it won't bother anyone else.

**OTHELLO**

I'll chop her into pieces. How could she cheat on me?

**IAGO**

Oh, it's horrible of her.

**OTHELLO**

And with my own officer!

**IAGO**

That's worse.

**OTHELLO**

Get me some poison tonight, Iago. I won't argue with her, so her beautiful body won't disarm me.—Tonight, Iago.

**IAGO**

## Original Text

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!

**IAGO**

And for Cassio, let me be his undertaker. You shall hear more by midnight.

**OTHELLO**

160 Excellent good.

*A trumpet within*

## Modern Text

Don't do it with poison. Strangle her in her bed, the same bed she's contaminated.

**OTHELLO**

Good, good, I like that—it's only fair! Very good!

**IAGO**

And let me kill Cassio. You'll hear more from me by midnight.

**OTHELLO**

Excellent, good.

*A trumpet sounds offstage.*

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 11

What trumpet is that same?

**IAGO**

I warrant something from Venice. 'Tis Lodovico, this, comes from the duke. See, your wife's with him.

*Enter LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, and attendants*

**LODOVICO**

Save you, worthy general!

**OTHELLO**

With all my heart, sir.

**LODOVICO**

The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

*(gives him a letter)*

**OTHELLO**

165 I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

**DESDEMONA**

And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

**IAGO**

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

**LODOVICO**

I thank you. How does lieutenant Cassio?

**IAGO**

Lives, sir.

**DESDEMONA**

170 Cousin, there's fall'n between him and my lord  
An unkind breach, but you shall make all well.

**OTHELLO**

Are you sure of that?

**DESDEMONA**

My lord?

**OTHELLO**

*(reads)* "This fail you not to do, as you will—"

What's that trumpet for?

**IAGO**

I think someone's coming from Venice. It's Lodovico. He must be coming from the duke. Look, your wife is with him.

*LODOVICO, DESDEMONA and attendants enter.*

**LODOVICO**

Greetings, good general!

**OTHELLO**

Greetings, sir.

**LODOVICO**

The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

*(he hands OTHELLO a piece of paper)*

**OTHELLO**

I'll do whatever they order me to do in this letter.

**DESDEMONA**

What's new, cousin Lodovico?

**IAGO**

Very nice to see you, sir. Welcome to Cyprus.

**LODOVICO**

Thank you. How is lieutenant Cassio?

**IAGO**

Well, he's alive.

**DESDEMONA**

Cousin, there's been a falling out between him and Othello. An unfortunate rift, but you can fix it.

**OTHELLO**

Are you sure of that?

**DESDEMONA**

Excuse me?

**OTHELLO**

*(reading)* "Don't fail to do this, since you'll—"

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 12

## Original Text

**LODOVICO**  
175 He did not call, he's busy in the paper.  
Is there division 'twixt my lord and Cassio?

**DESDEMONA**  
A most unhappy one. I would do much  
T' atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

**OTHELLO**  
Fire and brimstone!

**DESDEMONA**  
My lord?

**OTHELLO**  
Are you wise?

**DESDEMONA**  
180 What, is he angry?

**LODOVICO**  
Maybe the letter moved him,  
For, as I think, they do command him home,  
Deputing Cassio in his government.

**DESDEMONA**  
Trust me, I am glad on 't.

**OTHELLO**  
Indeed!

**DESDEMONA**  
185 My lord?

**OTHELLO**  
I am glad to see you mad.

**DESDEMONA**  
Why, sweet Othello—

**OTHELLO**  
(*striking her*) Devil!

**DESDEMONA**  
I have not deserved this.

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 13

**LODOVICO**  
190 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**  
Oh, devil, devil!  
If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,  
Each drop she falls would prove a crocodile.  
195 Out of my sight!

**DESDEMONA**  
I will not stay to offend you.

**LODOVICO**  
Truly, an obedient lady.  
I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

## Modern Text

**LODOVICO**  
He didn't say anything, he's reading. So there's a  
rift between Othello and Cassio?

**DESDEMONA**  
Yes, unfortunately. I'd do anything to bring them  
back together, since I really care for Cassio.

**OTHELLO**  
Damn it all!

**DESDEMONA**  
Excuse me, my lord?

**OTHELLO**  
Are you in your right mind?

**DESDEMONA**  
Is he angry?

**LODOVICO**  
Maybe the letter upset him. I think they want him  
to go home and appoint Cassio governor in his  
place.

**DESDEMONA**  
I'm happy about that.

**OTHELLO**  
Oh, are you really!

**DESDEMONA**  
My lord?

**OTHELLO**  
I'm glad you're insane enough to admit it in front  
of me.

**DESDEMONA**  
Why, sweet Othello—

**OTHELLO**  
(*striking her*) You devil!

**DESDEMONA**  
I haven't done anything to deserve this!

**LODOVICO**  
My lord, no one will believe this in Venice, even  
though I'd swear I saw it with my own eyes. That  
was too much. You should apologize. She's  
crying.

**OTHELLO**  
Oh, you devil, you devil! You can cry all day and  
all night, and I still won't believe you're sad. Get  
out of my sight!

**DESDEMONA**  
I wouldn't want to stay here and make you angry.

**LODOVICO**  
She's obedient—a fine lady. Please, my lord, call  
her back.

## Original Text

**OTHELLO**

Mistress!

**DESDEMONA**

200 My lord?

**OTHELLO**

What would you with her, sir?

**LODOVICO**

Who, I, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Ay, you did wish that I would make her turn.

Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,

205 And turn again. And she can weep, sir, weep.

And she's obedient, as you say, obedient,

Very obedient.—Proceed you in your tears.—

Concerning this, sir—Oh, well-painted passion!—

I am commanded home.—Get you away,

210 I'll send for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate

And will return to Venice.—Hence, avaunt!

*Exit DESDEMONA*

## Modern Text

**OTHELLO**

Madam!

**DESDEMONA**

My lord?

**OTHELLO**

What do you want with her, sir?

**LODOVICO**

Who, me?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, you asked me to call her back. See how

well she can turn? She can turn and turn, and

then turn on you again. And she can cry, sir—oh,

how she can cry! And she's obedient, as you

say, obedient. Very obedient—keep crying.—

Concerning this—oh, what fake emotion!—I am

being ordered home—Get away from me, I'll

send for you later.—Sir, I'll obey the order and

return to Venice. Get away from me, you witch!

*DESDEMONA exits.*

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 14

Cassio shall have my place. And, sir, tonight

I do entreat that we may sup together.

You are welcome, sir, to Cyprus. Goats and  
monkeys!*Exit***LODOVICO**

215 Is this the noble Moor whom our full senate

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**

220 Are his wits safe? Is he not light of brain?

**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

225 That stroke would prove the worst!

**LODOVICO**

Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood

And new-create his fault?

Cassio can have my job. And tonight, sir, I invite

you have dinner with me. Welcome to Cyprus.

Horny animals!

*OTHELLO exits.***LODOVICO**

Is this the same Moor whom the senate

considers so capable? Is this the guy who's

supposed to never get emotional, and who never

gets rattled, no matter what disaster happens?

**IAGO**

He's changed a great deal.

**LODOVICO**

Is he sane? Is he losing his mind?

**IAGO**

He is what he is. I won't say anything negative

about what he might be. If he isn't what he might

be, then I wish to God he were!

**LODOVICO**

Hitting his wife?

**IAGO**

It's true, that wasn't such a nice thing to do. But I

wish I could say that's the last time he'll do it!

**LODOVICO**

Is it a habit of his? Or did the letter make him

emotional somehow, and this is the first time he's

done it?

## Act 4, Scene 1, Page 15

## Original Text

**IAGO**

Alas, alas!

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

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*

## Modern Text

**IAGO**

Oh, it's too bad! It wouldn't be right for me to tell you everything I've seen and heard. You'll see what he's like. His own actions will show you what kind of person he is, so I won't have to bother telling you. Just go after him and watch what he does next.

**LODOVICO**

I'm sorry I was so wrong about him.

*They exit.*

## Act 4, Scene 2

*Enter OTHELLO and EMILIA*

*OTHELLO and EMILIA enter.*

**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?

**EMILIA**

Never, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

Nor send you out o' th' way?

**EMILIA**

Never.

**OTHELLO**

10 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  
15 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  
20 Is foul as slander.

**OTHELLO**

You haven't seen anything, then?

**EMILIA**

No, and I didn't hear anything either, or suspect anything at all.

**OTHELLO**

But you've seen her and Cassio together.

**EMILIA**

Yes, but I didn't see anything wrong, and I heard every syllable they said.

**OTHELLO**

Didn't they ever whisper?

**EMILIA**

Never, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

Or ask you to leave the room?

**EMILIA**

Never.

**OTHELLO**

Not even to get her fan, or her gloves, or her mask, or anything?

**EMILIA**

No, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

That's strange.

**EMILIA**

I'd swear to you on my soul that she's a good, honest person, sir. If you suspect otherwise, stop thinking that right now because you're wrong. If any jerk has tried to convince you she's bad, I hope God curses him. If she's not honest, faithful, and true, then there's no such thing as a faithful wife or a happy husband.

## Original Text

**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 with EMILIA***DESDEMONA**

25 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,

30 Leave procreants alone and shut the door.

Cough or cry "hem" if any body come.

Your mystery, your mystery! Nay, dispatch!

*Exit EMILIA***DESDEMONA**

Upon my knee, what doth your speech import?

I understand a fury in your words,

35 But not the words.

**OTHELLO**

Why, what art thou?

## Modern Text

**OTHELLO**

Tell her to come here. Go.

*EMILIA exits.*

She says all the right things, but the dumbest  
brothel-keeper would tell the same story.  
Desdemona's a tricky whore with a closet full of  
awful secrets, but still she'll kneel and pray like an  
honest woman. I've seen her do it.

*DESDEMONA and EMILIA enter.***DESDEMONA**

My lord, what do you want?

**OTHELLO**

Please, dear, come here.

**DESDEMONA**

What can I do for you?

**OTHELLO**

Let me see your eyes. Look at my face.

**DESDEMONA**

What horrible thing are you imagining?

**OTHELLO***(to EMILIA)* Go do what you do best, madam.

Leave us alone for our hanky-panky, and shut the

door behind you. If somebody comes, give a

shout. That's your **job**, your job. Go on, hurry!*EMILIA exits.***DESDEMONA**

I'm begging you on my knees to tell me what your

words mean. I can tell you're furious, but I don't

understand what you're saying.

**OTHELLO**

Why? Who are you?

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 3

**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

40 damned,

Swear thou art honest!

**DESDEMONA**

Heaven doth truly know it.

**OTHELLO**

Heaven truly knows that thou art false as hell.

**DESDEMONA**

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

**OTHELLO****DESDEMONA**

I'm your wife, your true and loyal wife.

**OTHELLO**

Go ahead, swear to that, so you'll be damned to

hell for lying. Otherwise the devils will mistake

you for an angel and be too scared to grab you.

Go ahead, make sure you damn yourself by

swearing you've been faithful to me.

**DESDEMONA**

Heaven knows I am.

**OTHELLO**

Heaven knows you're as unfaithful as hell.

**DESDEMONA**

Unfaithful, my lord? With whom? How am I

unfaithful?

**OTHELLO**

**Original Text**

Ah, Desdemona, away, away, away!

**DESDEMONA**

Alas the heavy day, why do you weep?

45 Am I the motive of these tears, my lord?

If haply you my father do suspect

An instrument 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

50 To try me with affliction, had they rained

All kinds of sores and shames on my bare head,

Steept 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

55 A drop of patience. But, alas, to make me

**Modern Text**

Leave me alone, Desdemona, go away!

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, what a horrible day! Why are you crying?

Because of me? If you've been ordered back to

Venice because of my father, don't blame me.

You may have lost his respect, but so have I.

**OTHELLO**

If God had decided to treat me like Job, making

me sick and covered with sores, reducing me to

abject poverty, selling me into slavery and

destroying all my hopes, I would have found

some way to accept it with patience. But instead

He's made me a laughingstock for everyone in

our time to point at and scorn! Even that I could

put up with. But instead, my wife, who's supposed

to

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 4**

The fixèd figure for the time of scorn

To point his slow and moving finger at!

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

But there where I have garnered up my heart,

60 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,

65 Patience, thou young and rose-lipped cherubin,—

Ay, there, look grim as hell!

**DESDEMONA**

I hope my noble lord esteems me honest.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, ay, as summer flies are in the shambles,

That quicken even with blowing. O thou weed,

70 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?

75 Committed? O thou public commoner!

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,

80 The bawdy wind that kisses all it meets

Is hushed within the hollow mine of earth

And will not hear 't. What committed!

be like the fountain that my children and all my

descendants flow from, has rejected me! Worse

than that, she's polluted herself, so that the

fountain is a place where disgusting toads

copulate and reproduce! Even the goddess of

patience couldn't look at this and be patient—it's

too horrifying!

**DESDEMONA**

I hope you think I'm faithful to you.

**OTHELLO**

As faithful as flies in rotting meat, which give birth

to maggots every time the wind blows. You're like

a weed pretending to be a flower, so beautiful

and sweet-smelling that I ache when I look at

you. Oh, I wish you'd never been born!

**DESDEMONA**

Have I done something to offend you without

knowing it?

**OTHELLO**

Was someone as beautiful as you meant to be a

whore? What have you done? What have you

done? Oh, you streetwalker! If I said out loud

what you've done, you'd burn up with shame.

What have you done? Heaven has to hold its

nose when it sees you! The pure moon in the sky

has to shut its eyes when you go by! Even the

wind that blows over everything on earth is

ashamed to visit you. You brazen whore!

## Original Text

## Modern Text

Impudent strumpet!

**DESDEMONA**

By heaven, you do me wrong!

**DESDEMONA**

I swear to God you're accusing me wrongly!

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 5

**OTHELLO**

85 Are you not 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.

**OTHELLO**

90 What, not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**

No, as I shall be saved.

**OTHELLO**

Is 't possible?

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, heaven forgive us!

**OTHELLO**

I cry you mercy, then,  
I took you for that cunning whore of Venice  
95 That married with Othello.—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**

100 Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?  
How do you, madam? How do you, my good lady?

**DESDEMONA**

Faith, half asleep.

**EMILIA**

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

**OTHELLO**

So you're saying you're not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**

No, I'm as honest as I am Christian. If only letting  
my husband touch my body means I'm not a  
whore, I'm not a whore.

**OTHELLO**

What, you're not a whore?

**DESDEMONA**

No, I swear it.

**OTHELLO**

Is that possible?

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, heaven help us!

**OTHELLO**

I beg your pardon then. I must have the wrong  
woman. I mistook you for that sly Venetian  
woman who married Othello.—You whorehouse-  
keeper.

*EMILIA enters.*

You're in charge of this hell! You! We've finished  
our business. Here's some money for you.  
Please lock the door and keep quiet.

*OTHELLO exits.*

**EMILIA**

What's he talking about? How are you, madam?

**DESDEMONA**

I'm stunned, to tell you the truth.

**EMILIA**

My lady, what's wrong with your husband?

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 6

**DESDEMONA**

With who?

**EMILIA**

Why, with my lord, madam.

**DESDEMONA**

105 Who is thy lord?

**EMILIA**

He that is yours, sweet lady.

**DESDEMONA**

With who?

**EMILIA**

Why, with your husband, madam. My lord.

**DESDEMONA**

Who's your lord?

**EMILIA**

My lord is your lord.



## Original Text

**DESEMONA**

I have none. Do not talk to me, Emilia.  
I cannot weep, nor answers have I none,  
But what should go by water. Prithee, tonight  
Lay on my bed my wedding sheets. Remember,  
110 And call thy husband hither.

**EMILIA**

Here's a change indeed!

*Exit*

**DESEMONA**

'Tis meet I should be used so, very meet.  
How have I been behaved that he might stick  
The small'st opinion on my least misuse?

*Enter EMILIA with IAGO*

**IAGO**

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

**DESEMONA**

115 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?

## Act 4, Scene 2, Page 7

**EMILIA**

Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhored her,  
120 Thrown such despite and heavy terms upon her,  
That true hearts cannot bear it.

**DESEMONA**

Am I that name, Iago?

**IAGO**

What name, fair lady?

**DESEMONA**

Such as she says my lord did say I was.

**EMILIA**

125 He called her "whore." A beggar in his drink  
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.

**IAGO**

Why did he so?

**DESEMONA**

I do not know. I am sure I am none such.

**IAGO**

Do not weep, do not weep. Alas the day!

**EMILIA**

130 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?

**DESEMONA**

## Modern Text

**DESEMONA**

I don't have a lord. Don't talk to me, Emilia. I  
can't even cry, though tears are the only answers  
I could give to all your questions. Tonight put my  
wedding sheets on my bed, and tell your  
husband to come to me now.

**EMILIA**

Things have certainly changed!

*EMILIA exits.*

**DESEMONA**

It's fair for him to treat me like this, very fair.  
What have I ever done that he has anything to  
complain about?

*IAGO and EMILIA enter.*

**IAGO**

What can I do for you, madam? How are you?

**DESEMONA**

I don't know. When grown-ups teach little  
children, they do it gently and easily. He might  
have treated me like that, because I'm as unused  
to abuse as a little child.

**IAGO**

What's the matter, lady?

**EMILIA**

He called her a whore so many times, and  
heaped up so much abuse on her that good  
people can't stand to hear it.

**DESEMONA**

Am I that name, Iago?

**IAGO**

What name, madam?

**DESEMONA**

What my lord said I was.

**EMILIA**

He called her a whore. A beggar couldn't have  
called his slut worse names.

**IAGO**

Why did he do that?

**DESEMONA**

I don't know. I just know I'm not one.

**IAGO**

Don't cry, don't cry. What a day this is!

**EMILIA**

Did she give up all those chances to marry  
noblemen, give up her father and country and  
friends, just to be called a whore? Doesn't that  
make you want to cry?

**DESEMONA**

**Original Text**

It is my wretched fortune.

**IAGO**

Beshrew him for 't!

How comes this trick upon him?

**DESEMONA**

Nay, heaven doth know.

**EMILIA**

135 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 will be hanged else!

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 8**

**IAGO**

Fie, there is no such man. It is impossible.

**DESEMONA**

140 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

145 likelihood?

The Moor's abused by some most villainous knave,  
Some base notorious knave, some scurvy fellow.  
O heavens, 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.

**EMILIA**

150 Oh, 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.

**DESEMONA**

Alas Iago,

What shall I do to win my lord again?

155 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,

160 Delighted them, or any other form,  
Or that I do not yet, and ever did,

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 9**

And ever will—though he do shake me off  
To beggarly divorcement—love him dearly,

**Modern Text**

It's just my bad luck.

**IAGO**

Damn him! How did he get such an idea?

**DESEMONA**

Heaven knows.

**EMILIA**

I bet my life some evil busybody, some meddling,  
lying jerk made up this rumor to get some  
position. I bet my life on it.

**IAGO**

Nobody's that bad. It's impossible.

**DESEMONA**

If there is, then heaven help him!

**EMILIA**

A hangman's noose will help him! Let hell chew  
him up! Why should he call her a whore? Who's  
been with her? When has she had the time, the  
place, or the means to sleep with anyone? How  
is this at all likely? The Moor is being tricked by  
some crook, some terrible villain, some rotten  
bastard. Oh, I wish we could unmask scoundrels  
like that, and give a whip to every good man to  
beat them senseless with!

**IAGO**

Keep your voice down.

**EMILIA**

Oh, to hell with those people! It's the same kind  
of guy who got you upset and made you suspect  
I'd cheated on you with the Moor.

**IAGO**

You're a fool. Shut up.

**DESEMONA**

Oh God, Iago, what can I do to win my husband  
back again? Please go to him, my friend. I swear  
I have no idea why he stopped loving me. Here  
I'm kneeling to swear that if I ever did anything to  
destroy his love for me, either by thoughts or  
actions, or if I ever took pleasure in anyone else,  
or if I never did love him, or don't love him now—  
even though he tries to shake me off—

then I hope I have a life of misery! Unkindness is  
powerful, and his unkindness may kill me, but it'll

**Original Text**

Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much,  
 165 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.

**IAGO**

170 I pray you, be content, ’tis but his humor.  
 The business of the state does him offence,  
 And he does chide with you.

**DESDEMONA**

If ’twere no other—

**IAGO**

’Tis but so, I warrant.

*Trumpets sound*

175 Hark, how these instruments summon to supper.  
 The messengers of Venice stays 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**

180 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.

**Modern Text**

never destroy my love. I can’t say “whore.” It  
 makes me sick to say the word even now. I  
 wouldn’t do the thing that would make me a  
 whore for all the money in the world.

**IAGO**

Please calm down. He’s just in a bad mood.  
 Political business is bothering him, and he’s just  
 taking it out on you.

**DESDEMONA**

If only that were all it is—

**IAGO**

It is, I promise.

*Trumpets sound.*

Those trumpets are calling us in to dinner. The  
 Venetians are waiting for their food. Go in, and  
 don’t cry. Everything will be all right.

*DESDEMONA and EMILIA exit.**RODERIGO enters.*

How are you, Roderigo?

**RODERIGO**

I don’t think you’re treating me fairly.

**IAGO**

What makes you say that?

**RODERIGO**

Every day you put me off with some trick. Instead  
 of finding opportunities for me, you seem to be  
 preventing me from making any progress.

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 10**

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**

I have heard too much, and your words and  
 performances are no kin together.

**IAGO**

185 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 Desdemona would half have corrupted a  
 votaress. 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, I won’t take it any longer. And I’m not going  
 to sit back and accept what you’ve done.

**IAGO**

Will you listen to me, Roderigo?

**RODERIGO**

I’ve listened to you too much already. Your  
 words and actions don’t match up.

**IAGO**

That’s not fair.

**RODERIGO**

It’s the truth. I’ve got no money left. The jewels  
 you took from me to deliver to Desdemona  
 would’ve made even a nun want to sleep with  
 me. You told me she got them, and that she  
 promised to give me a little something in return  
 soon, but nothing like that ever happens.

**IAGO**

**Original Text**

Well, go to. Very well.

**RODERIGO**

“Very well,” “go to!” I cannot go to, man, nor ’tis not very well. Nay, I think it is scurvy, and begin to find myself fopped in it.

**IAGO**

Very well.

**RODERIGO**

190 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.

**Modern Text**

Well, all right then. Fine.

**RODERIGO**

“Fine!” he says. “All right!” It’s not fine, and I’m not all right! It’s wrong, and I’m starting to realize I’m being cheated!

**IAGO**

Okay.

**RODERIGO**

It’s not okay! I’m going to tell Desdemona my feelings. If she returns my jewels, I’ll stop pursuing her and apologize to her. If not, I’ll challenge you to a duel.

**IAGO**

You’ve said what you have to say now.

**RODERIGO**

Yes, and I’ll do everything I just said.

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 11****IAGO**

Why, now I see there’s mettle in thee, and even from this instant to build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo. Thou hast 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**

195 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.

**RODERIGO**

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

**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.

**IAGO**

Oh, no, he goes into Mauritania and taketh away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be lingered here by some accident—wherein none can be so determinate as the removing of Cassio.

**RODERIGO****IAGO**

Well, all right then. Now I see that you have some guts. From this moment on I have a higher opinion of you than before. Give me your hand, Roderigo. Your complaint against me is perfectly understandable, but I still insist I’ve done everything I could to help you.

**RODERIGO**

It doesn’t look that way to me.

**IAGO**

I admit it doesn’t look that way to me, and the fact that you suspect me shows that you’re smart. But Roderigo, if you’re as courageous and determined as I think you are, then wait just a bit longer. If you’re not having sex with Desdemona tomorrow night, then I suggest you find some way to stab me in the back and kill me.

**RODERIGO**

Well, what’s your plan? Is it feasible?

**IAGO**

Venice has made Cassio governor here on Cyprus.

**RODERIGO**

Is that true? Then Desdemona and Othello will go back to Venice.

**IAGO**

Oh, no. He’ll go to Mauritania and take the beautiful Desdemona with him, unless he gets stuck here for some reason. The best way to extend his stay here is to get rid of Cassio.

**RODERIGO**

**Original Text****Modern Text**

200 How do you mean, removing of him?

**IAGO**

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

**RODERIGO**

And that you would have me to do!

What do you mean, get rid of him?

**IAGO**

I mean knock his brains out, so he can't take Othello's place.

**RODERIGO**

And that's what you want me to do!

**Act 4, Scene 2, Page 12**

**IAGO**

Ay, if you dare do yourself a profit and a right. He sups tonight 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 supertime, and the night grows to waste. About it!

**RODERIGO**

I will hear further reason for this.

**IAGO**

205 And you shall be satisfied.

**IAGO**

Yes, if you want to help yourself. He's having dinner tonight with a prostitute, and I'll go visit him. He doesn't know he's been appointed governor yet. When you see him walking by here (as I'll make sure he does between twelve and one) you can nab him. I'll be nearby to help you, and between the two of us we can handle him. Come on, don't stand there in a daze. Come along with me. I'll give you such reasons for killing him that you'll feel obliged to snuff him out. It's nearly dinner time, and the night's going to be wasted. Let's go!

**RODERIGO**

I want to hear more about this.

**IAGO**

You will. You'll hear all you want to hear.

*Exeunt*

*They exit.*

**Act 4, Scene 3**

*Enter OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA, EMILIA  
A and attendants*

*OTHELLO, LODOVICO, DESDEMONA and EMILIA  
enter, with attendants.*

**LODOVICO**

I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, pardon me, 'twill do me good to walk.

**LODOVICO**

Madam, good night. I humbly thank your ladyship.

**DESDEMONA**

Your honor is most welcome.

**OTHELLO**

5 Will you walk, sir?—O Desdemona—

**DESDEMONA**

My lord?

**OTHELLO**

Get you to bed on th' instant, I will be returned forthwith. Dismiss your attendant there, look 't be done.

**DESDEMONA**

I will, my lord.

*Exeunt OTHELLO, LODOVICO, and attendants*

**LODOVICO**

Please, sir, don't trouble yourself.

**OTHELLO**

I beg your pardon; walking will make me feel better.

**LODOVICO**

Good night, madam. Thank you.

**DESDEMONA**

You're most welcome.

**OTHELLO**

Would you walk out with me, sir?—Oh, Desdemona—

**DESDEMONA**

Yes, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Go to bed right this minute. I'll be there shortly. Send your maid Emilia away. Make sure you do what I say.

**DESDEMONA**

I will, my lord.

*OTHELLO, LODOVICO, and attendants*

## Original Text

## Modern Text

*exit.***EMILIA**

1 How goes it now? He looks gentler than he did.  
0

**DESDEMONA**

He says he will return incontinent,  
And hath commanded me to go to bed  
And bid me to dismiss you.

**EMILIA**

Dismiss me?

**DESDEMONA**

It was his bidding. Therefore, good Emilia,  
1 Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu.  
5 We must not now displease him.

How are things now? He looks calmer than he did  
before.

**DESDEMONA**

He says he'll come back right away. He asked me to  
go to bed and to send you away.

**EMILIA**

Send me away?

**DESDEMONA**

That's what he said. So give me my nightgown,  
Emilia, and I'll say goodnight. We shouldn't displease  
him.

## Act 4, Scene 3, Page 2

**EMILIA**

Ay. Would you had never seen him!

**DESDEMONA**

So would not I. My love doth so approve him  
That even his stubbornness, his checks, his frowns—  
20 Prithee, unpin me—have grace and favor.

**EMILIA**

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

**DESDEMONA**

All's one. Good Father, how foolish are our minds!  
If I do die before thee, prithee, shroud me  
In one of these same sheets.

**EMILIA**

Come, come! You talk!

**DESDEMONA**

25 My mother had a maid called Barbary,  
She was in love, and he she loved proved mad  
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 tonight  
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?

**DESDEMONA**

No, unpin me here.  
This Lodovico is a proper man.

**EMILIA**

35 A very handsome man.

**DESDEMONA**

He speaks well.

**EMILIA****EMILIA**

Yes. I wish you'd never met him.

**DESDEMONA**

That's not what I wish. I love him even when he's  
harsh and mean—Help me unpin this, would  
you?—I love even his stubbornness, his frowns,  
his bad moods.

**EMILIA**

I put those wedding sheets on your bed, as you  
asked.

**DESDEMONA**

It doesn't matter. Oh, how silly we are! If I die  
before you do make sure I'm wrapped in those  
sheets in my coffin.

**EMILIA**

Listen to you! Don't be silly!

**DESDEMONA**

My mother had a maid named Barbary. She was  
in love, and her lover turned out to be wild and  
left her. She knew an old song called "Willow"  
that reminded her of her own story, and she died  
singing it. I can't get that song out of my head  
tonight. It's all I can do to keep myself from  
hanging my head down in despair and singing it  
like poor Barbary. Please, hurry up.

**EMILIA**

Should I get your nightgown?

**DESDEMONA**

No, just help me unpin this. That Lodovico is a  
good-looking man.

**EMILIA**

He's very handsome.

**DESDEMONA**

He speaks well.

**EMILIA**

**Original Text**

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

**Modern Text**

I know a lady in Venice who'd walk all the way to  
Palestine for a kiss from him.

**Act 4, Scene 3, Page 3****DESDEMONA**

*(singing)*

*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,  
Sing willow, willow, willow.  
Her salt tears fell from her, and softened the stones  
Sing willow, willow, willow—  
Lay by these—  
Willow, willow—  
Prithee, hie thee, he'll come anon—  
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**

40 *(sings)*

*I called my love false love but what said he then?  
Sing willow, willow, willow.*  
If I court more women you'll couch with more men—  
So, get thee gone, good night. Mine eyes do itch,  
Doth that bode weeping?

**EMILIA**

'Tis neither here nor there.

**DESDEMONA**

45 I have heard it said so. Oh, these men, these men!  
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**

*(singing)*

*The poor soul sat singing by the sycamore tree,  
Everyone sing the green willow,  
She had her hand on her breast and her head  
on her knee,  
Sing willow, willow, willow.  
The fresh streams ran by her and murmured  
her moans,  
Sing willow, willow, willow.  
Her salt tears fell from her and softened the  
stones,  
Sing willow, willow, willow.—  
Put these things over there.—  
Please, hurry, he'll come right away.—  
Everyone sing, a green willow must be my  
garland.*

*Nobody blame him, he's right to hate me—  
No, that's not how it goes.—Who's knocking?*

**EMILIA**

It's the wind.

**DESDEMONA**

*(singing) I told my lover he didn't love me, but  
what did he say? Sing willow, willow, willow.*  
If I chase more women, you'll sleep with more  
men—Okay, go away now. Good night. My eyes  
itch—is that an omen I'll be crying soon?

**EMILIA**

No, it doesn't mean anything.

**DESDEMONA**

I heard someone say that's what it means. Oh,  
these men, these men! Do you honestly think—  
tell me, Emilia—there are women who'd cheat on  
their husbands in such a disgusting manner?

**EMILIA**

There are women like that out there, no question.

**Act 4, Scene 3, Page 4****DESDEMONA**

Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

**EMILIA**

50 Why, would not you?

**DESDEMONA**

No, by this heavenly light!

**EMILIA**

Nor I neither, by this heavenly light.

**DESDEMONA**

Would you ever do such a thing for all the world?

**EMILIA**

Why, wouldn't you?

**DESDEMONA**

By the light of heaven, no, I would not!

**EMILIA**

I wouldn't either, by daylight. It would be easier to

**Original Text**

I might do 't as well i' th' dark.

**DESDEMONA**

Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

**EMILIA**

The world's a huge thing. It is a great price for a small vice.

**DESDEMONA**

55 In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

**EMILIA**

In troth, I think I should, and undo 't when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a thing for a joint-ring, nor for measures of lawn, nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty exhibition. But for the whole world? Why, who would not make her husband a cuckold to make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for 't.

**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.

**DESDEMONA**

60 I do not think there is any such woman.

**EMILIA**

Yes, a dozen, and as many to th' vantage as would store the world they played for.  
But I do think it is their husbands' faults  
If wives do fall. Say that they slack their duties

**Modern Text**

do it in the dark.

**DESDEMONA**

Could you really do such a thing, for all the world?

**EMILIA**

The world's huge. It's a big prize for such a small sin.

**DESDEMONA**

I don't think you would.

**EMILIA**

Actually I think I would, and then I'd undo it after I did it. I wouldn't do it for a nice ring, or fine linen, or pretty gowns or petticoats or hats. But for the whole world? Who wouldn't cheat on her husband to make him king? I'd risk my soul for that.

**DESDEMONA**

I'd never do such a bad thing, not for the whole world!

**EMILIA**

Why, a bad action is just a wrong in this world, but when you've won the whole world, it's a wrong in your own world, so you can make it right then.

**DESDEMONA**

I don't think any woman like that exists.

**EMILIA**

Yes, a dozen of them—as many as there are women in the world, in fact. But I do think it's the husband's fault if we wives cheat on them. For instance, our husbands

**Act 4, Scene 3, Page 5**

And pour our treasures into foreign laps,

65 Or else break out in peevish jealousies,  
Throwing restraint upon us. Or say they strike us,  
Or scant our former having in despite.  
Why, we have galls, and though we have some grace,

70 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

75 When they change us for others? Is it sport?

I think it is. And doth affection breed it?

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

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.

may stop sleeping with us, and give it out to other women instead. Or they may get insanely jealous, and keep us from going anywhere. Or let's say they hit us, or cut back on the money they give us out of spite. We have feelings. We may be able to forgive them, but we want to get back at them too. Husbands need to know that their wives are human beings too. They see, smell, and taste sweet and sour just like their husbands. Why do they replace us with other women? Do they do it for fun? I think they do. Is it out of lust? I think so. Is it a weakness? It is. And don't we have passions, and a taste for fun, and weaknesses, just like men? Then tell them to treat us well. Or let them figure out that the bad things we do are just what we learned from them.



## Original Text

**DESDEMONA**

80 Good night, good night. Heaven me such uses send,  
Not to pick bad from bad, but by bad mend!

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

**DESDEMONA**

Good night, good night. I pray that God will let me learn from women like that—not to follow their bad example, but to avoid it!

*They exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 1

*Enter IAGO and RODERIGO*

**IAGO**

Here, stand behind this bulk, 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,  
5 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.

*Withdraws*

**RODERIGO**

I have no great devotion to the deed  
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons.  
10 'Tis but a man gone. Forth, my sword: he dies.

**IAGO**

*(aside)* I have rubbed this young quat almost to the sense,  
And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio  
Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,  
15 Every way makes my gain. Live Roderigo,  
He calls me to a restitution large  
Of gold and jewels that I bobbed from him  
As gifts to Desdemona.  
It must not be. If Cassio do remain  
20 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. But so, I hear him coming.

*IAGO and RODERIGO enter.*

**IAGO**

Here, stand behind this wall; he'll come right away. Keep your sword out, and then stick it in as far as it'll go. Quick, quick. Don't be afraid. I'll be right next to you. This will either make us or break us. Keep that in mind, and be steady.

**RODERIGO**

Stay right near me. I may mess it up.

**IAGO**

I'm right behind you. Be bold, and get ready.

*IAGO moves aside.*

**RODERIGO**

I don't really want to do this, but he's given me good reasons. I guess it's only one man—no big deal. My sword comes out, and he dies.

**IAGO**

*(to himself)* I've rubbed this young pimple until he's ready to pop, and now he's angry. Whether he kills Cassio, or Cassio kills him, or they kill each other, it all works in my favor. If Roderigo survives, though, he'll ask me for all the gold and jewelry that I stole from him and said I gave to Desdemona. I can't let that happen. If Cassio survives, he's so handsome and well-spoken that he makes me look ugly. And besides, the Moor might tell him about my lies about him.—That would be very dangerous for me. No, he's got to die. Let it be so. I hear him coming.

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 2

*Enter CASSIO*

**RODERIGO**

I know his gait, 'tis he.—Villain, thou diest!

*Thrusts at CASSIO*

**CASSIO**

That thrust had been mine enemy indeed  
25 But that my coat is better than thou know'st  
I will make proof of thine.

*Draws, and wounds RODERIGO*

**RODERIGO**

Oh, I am slain!

*CASSIO enters.*

**RODERIGO**

I know the sound of his walk.—Die, villain!

*RODERIGO thrusts his sword at CASSIO.*

**CASSIO**

That thrust might really have hurt me if I didn't have this armor on under my cloak. Now let's see what you've got on.

*CASSIO draws his sword and stabs Roderigo.*

**RODERIGO**

Oh, I'm dead!

## Original Text

**IAGO** from behind wounds **CASSIO** in the legs, exits

**CASSIO**

I am maimed for ever. Help, ho! Murder! Murder!

Enter **OTHELLO**

**OTHELLO**

The voice of Cassio. Iago keeps his word.

**RODERIGO**

Oh, villain that I am!

**OTHELLO**

30 It is even so.

**CASSIO**

Oh, help, ho! Light! A surgeon!

**OTHELLO**

'Tis he. Oh, brave Iago, honest and just,  
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!

## Modern Text

From behind, **IAGO** stabs **CASSIO** in the leg and then exits.

**CASSIO**

I'll be crippled forever! Help! Murder! murder!

**OTHELLO** enters.

**OTHELLO**

That's Cassio's voice. Iago has kept his word.

**RODERIGO**

Oh, what a villain I am!

**OTHELLO**

That's the truth.

**CASSIO**

Help me! Get some light! Get me a surgeon!

**OTHELLO**

It's him! Brave Iago, how honest and trustworthy you are! You even went as far as murder to help your friend in his misfortune. You teach me how I should act.

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 3

Thou teachest me. Minion, your dear lies dead,  
35 And your unblest fate hies. Strumpet, I come.  
For, of my heart, those charms, thine eyes, are  
blotted.  
Thy bed, lust-stained, shall with lust's blood be  
spotted.

Exit

Enter **LODOVICO** and **GRATIANO**

**CASSIO**

What, ho! No watch? No passage? Murder! Murder!

**GRATIANO**

'Tis some mischance, the cry is very direful.

**CASSIO**

40 Oh, help!

**LODOVICO**

Hark!

**RODERIGO**

Oh, wretched villain!

**LODOVICO**

Two or three groan. 'Tis heavy night,  
These may be counterfeits. Let's think 't unsafe  
45 To come in to the cry without more help.

**RODERIGO**

Nobody come? Then shall I bleed to death.

**LODOVICO**

Hark!

Enter **IAGO**

**GRATIANO**

Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and

Whore, your lover's dead now, and you'll be  
going to hell soon. I'm coming, slut! I've shut the  
memory of your beautiful eyes out of my heart.  
You've already stained our sheets with your lust;  
now I'll stain them with your whore's blood.

**OTHELLO** exits.

**LODOVICO** and **GRATIANO** enter.

**CASSIO**

Help! Isn't there a guard around? No one passing  
by? Murder! Murder!

**GRATIANO**

Something's wrong, the man sounds panicked.

**CASSIO**

Oh, help!

**LODOVICO**

Listen!

**RODERIGO**

I've acted like such a villain!

**LODOVICO**

Two or three men are groaning. But it's dark out,  
and it could be a trap. It's not safe to go near  
them till we get more help.

**RODERIGO**

Nobody's coming? I'll bleed to death.

**LODOVICO**

Look!

**IAGO** enters.

**GRATIANO**

Here's someone coming in his pajamas, with a

## Original Text

weapons.

**IAGO**

Who's there? Whose noise is this that ones on murder?

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 4

**LODOVICO**

50 We do not know.

**IAGO**

Do not you hear a cry?

**CASSIO**

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

**IAGO**

What's the matter?

**GRATIANO**

(to LODOVICO) This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

**LODOVICO**

The same indeed, a very valiant fellow.

**IAGO**

(to CASSIO) What are you here that cry so grievously?

**CASSIO**

55 Iago? Oh, I am spoiled, undone by villains!  
Give me some help.

**IAGO**

Oh, me, lieutenant! What villains have done this?

**CASSIO**

I think that one of them is hereabout,  
And cannot make away.

**IAGO**

Oh, treacherous villains!—

60 (to LODOVICO and GRATIANO)

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

**RODERIGO**

Oh, help me there!

**CASSIO**

That's one of them.

**IAGO**

O murd'rous slave! O villain!

*Stabs RODERIGO*

## Modern Text

candle and weapons.

**IAGO**

Who's there? Who's shouting "murder"?

**LODOVICO**

We don't know.

**IAGO**

Didn't you hear someone shouting?

**CASSIO**

I'm here, here! For heaven's sake, help me!

**IAGO**

What's the matter?

**GRATIANO**

(to LODOVICO) That's Othello's ensign, I think.

**LODOVICO**

It is. He's a good man.

**IAGO**

(to CASSIO) Who's shouting so loudly?

**CASSIO**

Is that you, Iago? I'm here, I've been destroyed  
by villains! Help me.

**IAGO**

Oh, lieutenant! What villains did this to you?

**CASSIO**

I think one of them is nearby and can't get away.

**IAGO**

The treacherous criminals!—

(to LODOVICO and GRATIANO) Who's there?

Come here and help!

**RODERIGO**

Somebody help me over here!

**CASSIO**

That's one of them.

**IAGO**

(to RODERIGO) Murderer! Villain!

*IAGO stabs RODERIGO.*

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 5

**RODERIGO**

O damned Iago! O inhuman dog!

**IAGO**

65 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?

**RODERIGO**

Damned Iago! You inhuman dog!

**IAGO**

Killing men in the dark? Where are these  
murderers? This is such a quiet, sleepy town!—  
Murder, murder!—Who's that coming? Are you  
good or evil?

## Original Text

**LODOVICO**  
As you shall prove us, praise us.

**IAGO**  
Signior Lodovico?

**LODOVICO**  
70 He, sir.

**IAGO**  
I cry you mercy. Here's Cassio hurt by villains.

**GRATIANO**  
Cassio!

**IAGO**  
How is 't, brother!

**CASSIO**  
My leg is cut in two.

**IAGO**  
75 Marry, 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?

**BIANCA**  
Oh, my dear Cassio!  
My sweet Cassio! O Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

**IAGO**  
80 O notable strumpet! Cassio, may you suspect  
Who they should be that have thus mangled you?

## Modern Text

**LODOVICO**  
Judge for yourself.

**IAGO**  
Signor Lodovico?

**LODOVICO**  
That's me.

**IAGO**  
I beg your pardon. Cassio's been wounded.

**GRATIANO**  
Cassio!

**IAGO**  
How are you doing, brother?

**CASSIO**  
My leg's been cut in two.

**IAGO**  
God forbid! Bring me some light, gentlemen, I'll  
bind the wound with my shirt.

*BIANCA enters.*

**BIANCA**  
What's the matter? Who's shouting?

**IAGO**  
Who's shouting?

**BIANCA**  
Oh, my dear Cassio! My sweet Cassio! Oh,  
Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

**IAGO**  
You notorious whore! Cassio, do you know who  
might have stabbed you like this?

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 6

**CASSIO**  
No.

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

**IAGO**  
Lend me a garter. So.—Oh, for a chair,  
85 To bear him easily hence!

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

**IAGO**  
Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash  
To be a party in this injury.—  
Patience awhile, good Cassio.—Come, come,  
90 Lend me a light. Know we this face or no?  
Alas, my friend and my dear countryman  
Roderigo! No—yes, sure! Yes, 'tis Roderigo.

**GRATIANO**  
What, of Venice?

**IAGO**

**CASSIO**  
No.

**GRATIANO**  
I'm sorry to find you like this. I've been looking all  
over for you.

**IAGO**  
Lend me your sash—Oh, if we only had a  
stretcher to carry him out of here!

**BIANCA**  
He's fainted! Oh Cassio, Cassio, Cassio!

**IAGO**  
Sir, I believe this piece of trash, Bianca, has  
something to do with all this trouble.—Hang in  
there, Cassio.—Come here, bring the light. Do  
you recognize this face? Oh, no, it's my friend  
and countryman, Roderigo.—Yes, it's Roderigo!

**GRATIANO**  
What, Roderigo from Venice?

**IAGO**

## Original Text

Even he, sir. Did you know him?

**GRATIANO**

95 Know him? Ay.

**IAGO**

Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon,  
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners  
That so neglected you.

**GRATIANO**

I am glad to see you.

**IAGO**

How do you, Cassio?—Oh, a chair, a chair!

**GRATIANO**

100 Roderigo!

**IAGO**

He, he, 'tis he.

*A chair is brought in*

## Modern Text

That's the one, sir. Do you know him?

**GRATIANO**

Know him? Yes.

**IAGO**

Signor Gratiano, I beg your pardon. I didn't mean  
to ignore you—it's just because of this bloody  
uproar.

**GRATIANO**

I'm glad to see you.

**IAGO**

How are you doing, Cassio?—Someone bring  
me a stretcher!

**GRATIANO**

Roderigo!

**IAGO**

It's him, it's him.

*A stretcher is brought in.*

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 7

Oh, that's well said—the chair!  
Some good man bear him carefully from hence.  
I'll fetch the general's surgeon.—(to BIANCA) For  
you, mistress,

105 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?—Oh, bear him out o' the air.—

*CASSIO and RODERIGO are borne off*

110 Do you perceive the gastness of her eye?—Stay  
you, good gentlemen.—Look you pale, mistress?—  
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**

Alas, what is the matter? What is the matter,  
husband?

**IAGO**

115 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 gentleman! Alas, good Cassio!

**IAGO**

Good—here's the stretcher. Get somebody  
strong to carry him out of here. I'll get the  
general's surgeon. (to BIANCA) As for you,  
ma'am, don't bother. The man lying here was my  
dear friend, Roderigo.—What was the problem  
between you?

**CASSIO**

There wasn't any problem. I don't even know  
him.

**IAGO**

(to BIANCA) You're pale?—Get Cassio out of  
here.—You look awfully pale, Bianca.

*CASSIO and RODERIGO are carried away.*

Do you see how afraid she is? Watch her, we'll  
get the whole story. Keep an eye on her. Do you  
see? The guilty speak volumes even when  
they're silent.

*EMILIA enters.*

**EMILIA**

What's the matter? What's the matter, husband?

**IAGO**

Cassio was attacked here in the dark by  
Roderigo and men who escaped. He's near  
death, and Roderigo's dead already.

**EMILIA**

Oh, no, good gentleman! Oh no, good Cassio!

**IAGO**

## Original Text

This is the fruits of whoring. Prithee, Emilia,  
120 Go know of Cassio where he supped tonight.—  
(to BIANCA) What, do you shake at that?

## Act 5, Scene 1, Page 8

**BIANCA**

He supped at my house, but I therefore shake not.

**IAGO**

Oh, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

**EMILIA**

Oh, fie upon thee, strumpet!

**BIANCA**

125 I am no strumpet, but of life as honest  
As you that thus abuse me.

**EMILIA**

As !! Fie upon thee!

**IAGO**

Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio dressed.—  
Come, mistress, you must tell 's another tale.  
Emilia, run you to the citadel

130 And tell my lord and lady what hath happed.—  
Will you go on afore?  
(*aside*)

This is the night  
That either makes me or fordoes me quite.

*Exeunt*

## Modern Text

This is what happens when you visit whores.  
Please, Emilia, ask Cassio where he was at  
dinner tonight.—(to BIANCA) What, does that  
make you nervous?

**BIANCA**

He ate at my house, but that doesn't make me  
nervous.

**IAGO**

Oh, did he? I order you to come with me.

**EMILIA**

Go to hell, you whore!

**BIANCA**

I'm no whore. I'm as moral as you are.

**EMILIA**

As moral as me! Damn you!

**IAGO**

Gentlemen, let's go make sure Cassio's wounds  
are properly dressed.—Come on, ma'am, you  
can tell us another story. Emilia, go to the castle  
and tell Othello and Desdemona what  
happened.—Will you please go now? (*to  
himself*) This is the night that'll either make me or  
break me.

*They all exit.*

## Act 5, Scene 2

*DESDEMONA asleep in bed Enter OTHELLO with a  
light*

**OTHELLO**

It is the cause, it is the cause, 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  
5 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,  
I can again thy former light restore  
10 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  
That can thy light relume. When I have plucked thy  
rose  
15 I cannot give it vital growth again,  
It must needs wither. I'll smell thee on the tree.  
Oh, balmy breath, that dost almost persuade  
Justice to break her sword! One more, one more.

*DESDEMONA is asleep in bed. OTHELLO enters  
with a candle.*

**OTHELLO**

I have to do it, I have to do it. I have to keep my  
reason in mind. I won't say out loud what my  
reason is, but I have to do it. But I won't shed any  
of her blood or scar that beautiful skin, whiter  
than snow and smooth as the finest marble. But  
she's got to die, or she'll cheat on other men. Put  
out the light of the candle, and then put out the  
light of her heart. If I extinguish the candle, I can  
light it again if I regret it. But once I kill you, you  
beautiful, fake woman, I do not know the magic  
that could bring you back. When I've plucked this  
rose, I can't make it grow again; it will have no  
choice but to wither and die. Let me smell you  
while you're still on the tree. (*he kisses her*) Oh,  
that sweet breath almost convinces me not to kill  
you and carry out justice. One more, one more  
kiss. If you're this beautiful when you're dead, I'll  
kill you and then love you afterward. (*kissing*)

## Original Text

Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee  
 20 And love thee after. (*kissing her*) 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.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 2

**DESDEMONA**

25 Will you come to bed, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Have you prayed tonight, Desdemona?

**DESDEMONA**

Ay, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

If you bethink yourself of any crime  
 Unreconciled as yet to heaven and grace,  
 30 Solicit for it straight.

**DESDEMONA**

Alack, my lord, what do you mean by that?

**OTHELLO**

Well, do it, and be brief. I will walk by.  
 I would not kill thy unprepared spirit.  
 No, heavens forfend, I would not kill thy soul!

**DESDEMONA**

35 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, I hope you will not kill me.

**OTHELLO**

Humh!

**DESDEMONA**

40 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.

## Modern Text

*her*) One more, and this is the last. Such a sweet  
 kiss was never so deadly. I have to cry, but I have  
 to be cruel too. I'm acting like God in the Old  
 Testament—I have to punish the one I love.  
 She's waking up.

**DESDEMONA**

Who's there? Othello?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, Desdemona.

**DESDEMONA**

Will you come to bed, my lord?

**OTHELLO**

Have you said your prayers tonight, Desdemona?

**DESDEMONA**

Yes, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

If you can think of any crime you haven't  
 confessed, then pray for forgiveness right away.

**DESDEMONA**

Oh, my lord, what do you mean by that?

**OTHELLO**

Well, hurry up and confess. Be quick about it. I'll  
 wait over here. I don't want to kill you before  
 you've readied your soul. No, I don't want to send  
 your soul to hell when I kill you.

**DESDEMONA**

You're talking about killing?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, I am.

**DESDEMONA**

Then heaven have mercy on me.

**OTHELLO**

Amen to that, from the bottom of my heart.

**DESDEMONA**

If you really feel that way, then I hope you won't  
 kill me.

**OTHELLO**

Hmmp!

**DESDEMONA**

You're scaring me. You terrify me when you have  
 that look in your eyes. I don't know why I should  
 be afraid, since I haven't done anything wrong.  
 But I'm still afraid.

**OTHELLO**

Think of your sins.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 3

**DESDEMONA**

They are loves I bear to you.

**OTHELLO**

45 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.  
 These are portents, but yet I hope, I hope

50 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**

55 No, by my life and soul!  
 Send for the man and ask him.

**OTHELLO**

Sweet soul, take heed, take heed of perjury.  
 Thou art on thy deathbed.

**DESDEMONA**

Ay—but not yet to die!

**OTHELLO**

60 Presently.  
 Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin,  
 For to deny each article with oath  
 Cannot remove nor choke the strong conception  
 That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

**DESDEMONA**

65 Oh, heaven have mercy on me!

**OTHELLO**

I say "amen."

**DESDEMONA**

My only sin was loving you too much.

**OTHELLO**

Yes, that's why you have to die.

**DESDEMONA**

You're wrong to kill me for loving you. Why are  
 you chewing on your lower lip like that? You're  
 shaking with emotion. These are bad omens, but  
 I hope, I hope, they don't predict my future.

**OTHELLO**

Quiet. Stay still.

**DESDEMONA**

I will. What's this all about?

**OTHELLO**

You gave that handkerchief, the one I loved and  
 gave to you, to Cassio.

**DESDEMONA**

No, I swear by my life and soul! Bring him here  
 and ask him.

**OTHELLO**

My sweet darling, don't lie. You're on your  
 deathbed.

**DESDEMONA**

I am? But I'm not dying yet!

**OTHELLO**

Yes, right now. So confess your sin freely now.  
 Even if you swear you're innocent of every  
 accusation, you won't change my mind or remove  
 the thought that's tormenting me. You're going to  
 die.

**DESDEMONA**

Then heaven have mercy on me!

**OTHELLO**

Amen to that.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 4

**DESDEMONA**

And have you mercy too! I never did  
 Offend you in my life, never loved Cassio  
 But with such general warranty of heaven  
 As I might love. I never gave him token.

**OTHELLO**

70 By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in 's hand.  
 O perjured woman, thou dost stone my heart,  
 And mak'st me call what I intend to do  
 A murder, which I thought a sacrifice!  
 I saw the handkerchief.

**DESDEMONA**

And you have mercy on me too! I never did  
 anything wrong to you in my life. I never loved  
 Cassio, except with the pure love that I feel for  
 humankind. I never gave him any token of  
 romantic love.

**OTHELLO**

I saw him holding the handkerchief! You liar,  
 you're turning my heart to stone, and making me  
 call what I'll do murder, when I had been thinking  
 of it as a sacrifice! I saw the handkerchief.



## Original Text

**DESDEMONA**  
He found it then,  
75 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 usèd thee.

**DESDEMONA**  
How? Unlawfully?

**OTHELLO**  
Ay.

**DESDEMONA**  
80 He will not say so.

**OTHELLO**  
No, his mouth is stopped. Honest Iago  
Hath ta'en order for 't.

**DESDEMONA**  
Oh! My fear interprets. What, is he dead?

**OTHELLO**  
Had all his hairs been lives  
85 My great revenge had stomach for them all.

## Modern Text

**DESDEMONA**  
He found it somewhere, then. I never gave it to  
him. Tell him to come here. He'll tell the truth.

**OTHELLO**  
He's already done so.

**DESDEMONA**  
What, my lord?

**OTHELLO**  
That he had sex with you.

**DESDEMONA**  
What? Had sex with me?

**OTHELLO**  
Yes.

**DESDEMONA**  
He wouldn't say that.

**OTHELLO**  
No. He won't say anything anymore. Honest  
Iago's arranged that.

**DESDEMONA**  
Oh, I'm scared. What, is he dead?

**OTHELLO**  
If he had as many lives as he's got hairs on his  
head, I would've killed them all in revenge.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 5

**DESDEMONA**  
Alas, he is betrayed and I undone.

**OTHELLO**  
Out, strumpet! weep'st thou for him to my face?

**DESDEMONA**  
Oh, banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

**OTHELLO**  
Down, strumpet!

**DESDEMONA**  
90 Kill me tomorrow—let me live tonight!

**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**  
95 It is too late. *(he smothers her)*

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

**DESDEMONA**  
Oh, he's been betrayed, and I've been ruined.

**OTHELLO**  
What, you whore, are you crying for him right in  
front of me?

**DESDEMONA**  
Send me away, my lord, but don't kill me!

**OTHELLO**  
*Down*, whore!

**DESDEMONA**  
Kill me tomorrow—but let me live tonight.

**OTHELLO**  
No, if you struggle with me—

**DESDEMONA**  
Just half an hour!

**OTHELLO**  
While I'm doing this, I can't pause for a moment.

**DESDEMONA**  
Just let me say one prayer!

**OTHELLO**  
It's too late. *(he smothers her)*

**EMILIA**  
*(offstage)* My lord, my lord! Hello! My lord, my  
lord!

## Original Text

**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.

100 So, so.

**EMILIA**

*(within)* What, ho! My lord, my lord!

**OTHELLO**

Who's there?

**EMILIA**

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

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 6

**OTHELLO**

Yes, 'tis Emilia.—*(to EMILIA)* By and by.—She's  
dead.—

105 'Tis like she comes to speak of Cassio's death,  
The noise was high. Ha! No more moving?  
Still as the grave. Shall she come in? Were 't good?  
I think she stirs again—No. What's best to do?  
If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife—

110 My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife.  
Oh, insupportable! Oh, heavy hour!  
Methinks it should be now a huge eclipse  
Of sun and moon, and that th' affrighted globe  
Should yawn at alteration.

**EMILIA**

*(within)*

I do beseech you

115 That I may speak with you, O good my lord!

**OTHELLO**

I had forgot thee—Oh, come in, Emilia.  
Soft, by and by. Let me the curtains draw.  
Where art thou?

*Unlocks the door. Enter EMILIA*

What's the matter with thee now?

**EMILIA**

O my good lord, yonder's foul murders done!

**OTHELLO**

120 What, now?

**EMILIA**

But now, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

It is the very error of the moon,  
She comes more nearer earth than she was wont  
And makes men mad.

**EMILIA**

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

## Modern Text

**OTHELLO**

What's that noise? Aren't you dead yet? I know  
I'm cruel, but I'm merciful too. I don't want you to  
linger in pain.

**EMILIA**

*(offstage)* Hello! My lord, my lord!

**OTHELLO**

Who's there?

**EMILIA**

*(offstage)* Oh my lord, I need to speak to you!

**OTHELLO**

Yes, it's Emilia. *(to EMILIA)*—Just a minute!—  
She's dead now.—Emilia's probably come to tell  
me that Cassio's been killed. The fight outside  
was loud. So! You're not moving anymore? No,  
you're as still as a grave. Should I let her in? Is  
that a good idea? I think she's moving again—  
No. What should I do? If she comes in, she'll try  
to speak to my wife. My wife, my wife! What  
wife? I don't have a wife. Oh, this is unbearable!  
Oh, the horror! There should be a huge eclipse of  
the sun and the moon, now that Desdemona's no  
longer on this earth.

**EMILIA**

*(offstage)* Please, my lord. I need to speak with  
you. Oh, my good lord!

**OTHELLO**

I'd forgotten about you—Emilia, wait a moment,  
let me draw the curtains. *(closes the bed  
curtains)* Where are you? *(unlocks the door)*

*EMILIA enters.*

What's the matter with you now?

**EMILIA**

Oh, my lord, terrible murders have been  
committed over there!

**OTHELLO**

What? Just now?

**EMILIA**

Yes, just now, my lord.

**OTHELLO**

It's because of the full moon. It comes too close  
to the earth and drives men crazy.

**EMILIA**

Cassio's killed a young Venetian named  
Roderigo.

## Original Text

## Modern Text

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 7

**OTHELLO**

Roderigo killed? And Cassio killed!

**EMILIA**

No, Cassio is not killed.

**OTHELLO**Not Cassio killed! Then murder's out of tune,  
And sweet revenge grows harsh.**DESDEMONA**

130 Oh, falsely, falsely murdered!

**EMILIA**

Alas, what cry is that?

**OTHELLO**

That? What?

**EMILIA**

Out and alas, that was my lady's voice.

*Opens the bedcurtains*

Help! Help, ho, help! O lady, speak again!

135 Sweet Desdemona! O sweet mistress, speak!

**DESDEMONA**

A guiltless death I die.

**EMILIA**

Oh, who hath done this deed?

**DESDEMONA**Nobody. I myself. Farewell.  
Commend me to my kind lord. Oh, farewell!**OTHELLO**

Why, how should she be murdered?

**EMILIA**

Alas, who knows?

**OTHELLO**

140 You heard her say herself it was not I.

**OTHELLO**

Roderigo's been killed? And Cassio's killed?

**EMILIA**

No, Cassio wasn't killed.

**OTHELLO**Cassio's not dead? Then the wrong man is dead,  
and sweet revenge has gone wrong.**DESDEMONA**

Oh, I've been murdered unfairly!

**EMILIA**

Oh Lord, who's that crying?

**OTHELLO**

That? What?

**EMILIA**

Oh, no, that was my lady's voice.

*EMILIA opens the bedcurtains.*

Help! Help! Oh, lady, speak again.

Sweet Desdemona! Oh sweet mistress, speak!

**DESDEMONA**

I'm dying an innocent woman.

**EMILIA**

Oh, who did this thing?

**DESDEMONA**No one. I did it myself. Give my love to my kind  
husband. Oh, goodbye!*Dies**DESDEMONA dies.***OTHELLO**

Why, how could she have been murdered?

**EMILIA**

My God, who knows?

**OTHELLO**

You heard her say it wasn't me.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 8

**EMILIA**

She said so. I must needs report the truth.

**OTHELLO**She's like a liar gone to burning hell.  
'Twas I that killed her.**EMILIA**Oh, the more angel she,  
145 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****EMILIA**Yes, she said that. I must go report what  
happened.**OTHELLO**She was lying even as she was going down to  
hell. I did kill her.**EMILIA**Then she was even more an angel, and you're  
an even blacker devil!**OTHELLO**

She cheated on me, and she was a whore.

**EMILIA**

You slander her, you devil.

**OTHELLO**

**Original Text**

She was false as water.

**EMILIA**

Thou art rash as fire,  
To say that she was false. Oh, she was heavenly true!

**OTHELLO**

150 Cassio did top her, ask thy husband else.  
Oh, I were damned beneath all depth in hell,  
But that I did proceed upon just grounds  
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.

**EMILIA**

My husband!

**OTHELLO**

Thy husband.

**EMILIA**

That she was false to wedlock?

**OTHELLO**

155 Ay, with Cassio. Had she been true,  
If heaven would make me such another world  
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,  
I'd not have sold her for it.

**EMILIA**

My husband?

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 9**

**OTHELLO**

Ay, 'twas he that told me on her first.

160 An honest man he is, and hates the slime  
That sticks on filthy deeds.

**EMILIA**

My husband!

**OTHELLO**

What needs this iteration, woman? I say thy husband.

**EMILIA**

O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love!  
My husband say that she was false!

**OTHELLO**

He, woman.

165 I say "thy husband"—dost understand the word?  
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 draws his sword*

**OTHELLO**

170 Ha!

**EMILIA**

Do thy worst.

**Modern Text**

She was fickle and unfaithful, like water.

**EMILIA**

You've lost your mind to accuse her of cheating.  
She was utterly true to you!

**OTHELLO**

Cassio had sex with her. Ask your husband if you doubt me. If I didn't have a good reason to do this, damn me to the very bottom of hell. Your husband knew about everything.

**EMILIA**

My husband!

**OTHELLO**

Your husband.

**EMILIA**

He said she was unfaithful?

**OTHELLO**

Yes, with Cassio. If she'd been faithful to me, I never would have given her up, not even if God himself offered me a jewel as big as a planet in exchange for her.

**EMILIA**

My husband.

**OTHELLO**

Yes, he's the one who first told me about her.

He's an honest man who detests evil actions.

**EMILIA**

My husband?

**OTHELLO**

Why do you keep repeating that, woman? I'm telling you, your husband.

**EMILIA**

Oh, my mistress, a villain has made a mockery of your love! My husband said she was unfaithful!

**OTHELLO**

Yes, him, woman. I said "your husband."—Do you understand that word? My friend, your husband, the honest, honest Iago.

**EMILIA**

If he said that, then I hope his malicious soul rots in hell forever. He's lying through his teeth! She was too attached to her filthy marriage ever to do a thing like that!

*OTHELLO draws his sword.*

**OTHELLO**

Ha!

**EMILIA**

Go ahead, do your worst. Killing me won't send

**Original Text**

This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven  
Than thou wast worthy her.

**OTHELLO**

Peace, you were best.

**EMILIA**

Thou hast not half that power to do me harm  
175 As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!  
As ignorant as dirt! Thou hast done a deed—  
I care not for thy sword, I'll make thee known

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 10**

Though I lost twenty lives.—Help! Help, ho! Help!  
The Moor hath killed my mistress! Murder, murder!

*Enter MONTANO, GRATIANO, and IAGO*

**MONTANO**

180 What is the matter? How now, general?

**EMILIA**

Oh, are you come, Iago? You have done well,  
That men must lay their murders on your neck.

**GRATIANO**

What is the matter?

**EMILIA**

(to IAGO) Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man.  
185 He says thou told'st him that his wife was false.  
I know thou didst not, thou'rt not such a villain.  
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**

190 But did you ever tell him she was false?

**IAGO**

I did.

**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**

195 With Cassio, mistress. Go to, charm your tongue.

**EMILIA**

I will not charm my tongue, I am bound to speak.  
My mistress here lies murdered in her bed—

**ALL**

Oh, heavens forbend!

**Modern Text**

you to heaven. You weren't good enough for her.

**OTHELLO**

You'd better shut up!

**EMILIA**

I can endure far more pain than you could ever  
give me! Oh, you idiot! You stupid fool! As dumb  
as dirt! You've committed a terrible evil—I'm not  
afraid of your sword. I'll tell everyone what you  
did, even if it

costs me my life twenty times over.—Help, help,  
help! The Moor's killed my mistress! Murder,  
murder!

*MONTANO, GRATIANO, and IAGO enter.*

**MONTANO**

What's the matter? What's going on here,  
general?

**EMILIA**

Oh, are you here, Iago? You've done a good job,  
that other men can attribute their murders to you!

**GRATIANO**

What's the matter?

**EMILIA**

(to IAGO) Tell this villain he's wrong, if you're  
man enough. He says you told him his wife  
cheated on him. I know you didn't. You're not  
that much of a villain. Speak, because I'm too  
emotional to say any more.

**IAGO**

I told him what I thought. I didn't tell him anything  
that didn't make sense or ring true to him.

**EMILIA**

But did you tell him she cheated on him?

**IAGO**

I did.

**EMILIA**

Then you told a lie, a sick, wicked lie. I swear on  
my soul it was a lie. You said she slept with  
Cassio. Did you say Cassio?

**IAGO**

Yes, with Cassio. Now be quiet.

**EMILIA**

I will not be quiet! I have to speak. My mistress  
here lies murdered in her bed—

**ALL**

No, heaven forbid!

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 11**

## Original Text

**EMILIA**

And your reports have set the murder on.

**OTHELLO**

200 Nay, stare not, masters, it is true, indeed.

**GRATIANO**

'Tis a strange truth.

**MONTANO**

Oh, monstrous act!

**EMILIA**

Villainy, villainy, villainy!

I think upon 't, I think I smell 't, Oh, villainy!

I thought so then, I'll kill myself for grief.

205 Oh, 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**

210 Oh! Oh! Oh!

**EMILIA**

Nay, lay thee down and roar,

For thou hast killed the sweetest innocent

That e'er did lift up eye.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, she was foul!—

I scarce did know you, uncle. There lies your niece,

Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly

215 stopped.

I know this act shows horrible and grim.

**GRATIANO**

Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead,

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief

Shore his old thread in twain. Did he live now,

## Modern Text

**EMILIA**

And your lies caused this murder.

**OTHELLO**

Don't stand there gaping, everyone. It's true.

**GRATIANO**

It may be true, but it's unbelievable.

**MONTANO**

Oh, what a horrible deed!

**EMILIA**

Evil, evil, evil! I can smell it! I suspected it earlier.

I'll kill myself out of grief! Oh, evil, evil!

**IAGO**

Are you crazy? I'm ordering you, go home.

**EMILIA**

Good gentlemen, give me permission to speak. I

know I ought to obey my husband, but not now.

Maybe I'll never go home again, Iago!

**OTHELLO**

Oh! Oh! Oh!

**EMILIA**

Yes, go ahead and moan, because you killed the

sweetest, most innocent woman who ever lived!

**OTHELLO**

She was filthy! I barely knew you, Uncle [Gratiano](#).

Here's your niece lying here dead. I killed her

with these hands. I know this looks horrible.

**GRATIANO**

Poor Desdemona! I'm glad your father isn't alive

to see this. Your marriage made him die of grief

before his time. If he was alive now, this sight

would hurt

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 12

This sight would make him do a desperate turn,

220 Yea, curse his better angel from his side

And fall to reprobation.

**OTHELLO**

'Tis pitiful, but yet Iago knows

That she with Cassio hath the act of shame

A thousand times committed. Cassio confessed it,

225 And she did gratify his amorous works

With that recognizance and pledge of love

Which I first gave her. I saw it in his hand,

It was a handkerchief, an antique token

My father gave my mother.

**EMILIA**

him terribly. It would make him curse the

heavens and be damned to hell.

**OTHELLO**

It's sad, but Iago knows she had sex with Cassio

a thousand times. Cassio confessed it, and she

pledged her love to him by giving him the

handkerchief I'd given her. I saw it in his hand.

It was an old memento that my father gave to my

mother.

**EMILIA**

## Original Text

Oh, heaven! Oh, heavenly powers!

**IAGO**

230 Zounds, hold your peace.

**EMILIA**

'Twill out, 'twill out.—I peace?

No, I will speak as liberal as the north.

Let heaven and men and devils, let them all,

All, all cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

**IAGO**

235 Be wise, and get you home.

*Draws his sword*

**EMILIA**

I will not.

**GRATIANO**

Fie! 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.

240 For often, with a solemn earnestness—  
More than indeed belonged to such a trifle—  
He begged of me to steal it.

## Modern Text

Oh, God! Dear God in heaven!

**IAGO**

Damn it, shut your mouth.

**EMILIA**

No, the truth will come out—Me, shut my mouth?

Let heaven and men and devils tell me to shut  
me up. I'll say what I have to say.

**IAGO**

If you're smart, you'll go home.

*IAGO draws his sword.*

**EMILIA**

I won't.

**GRATIANO**

Shame on you! Drawing your sword on a  
woman?

**EMILIA**

Oh, you stupid Moor! I found that handkerchief  
by accident and gave it to my husband. He'd  
begged me to steal it many times.

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 13

**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**

245 By heaven, I do not, I do not, gentlemen.—  
(to OTHELLO)

O murderous coxcomb! What should such a fool

Do with so good a wife?

**OTHELLO**

Are there no stones in heaven

But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!

*He runs at IAGO IAGO stabs EMILIA*

**GRATIANO**

250 The woman falls! Sure he hath killed his wife.

**EMILIA**

Ay, ay. Oh, lay me by my mistress' side.

*Exit IAGO*

**GRATIANO**

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

**MONTANO**

'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,  
Which I have recovered from the Moor.

**IAGO**

You evil whore!

**EMILIA**

You think she gave it to Cassio? No, I found it

and gave it to my husband.

**IAGO**

You piece of filth, you're lying!

**EMILIA**

I swear I'm not lying. (to OTHELLO) Oh, you  
murderous fool! How did you ever get such a  
good wife?

**OTHELLO**

Won't heaven strike this Iago dead? You  
absolute villain!

*OTHELLO runs at IAGO. IAGO stabs EMILIA.*

**GRATIANO**

The woman's falling down! He's killed his wife!

**EMILIA**

Yes, yes! Lay me next to my mistress.

*IAGO exits.*

**GRATIANO**

He's gone, and his wife's dead.

**MONTANO**

He's a wicked, horrible criminal. Take the Moor's  
sword and guard the door from the outside. Kill

## Original Text

255 Come, guard the door without. Let him not pass,  
But kill him rather. I'll after that same villain,  
For 'tis a damnèd slave.

*Exeunt MONTANO and GRATIANO*

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 14

**OTHELLO**

I am not valiant neither,  
But ever puny whipster gets my sword.  
But why should honor outlive honesty?

260 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.  
*(singing) Willow, willow, willow—*  
Moor, she was chaste, she loved thee, cruel Moor.  
So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true.

265 So speaking as I think, alas, I die.

*Dies*

**OTHELLO**

I have another weapon in this chamber,  
It was a sword of Spain, the ice-brook's temper.  
Oh, here it is. Uncle, I must come forth.

**GRATIANO**

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

270 Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

**OTHELLO**

Look in upon me then and speak with me,  
Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

*Enter GRATIANO*

**GRATIANO**

What is the matter?

**OTHELLO**

Behold, I have a weapon.

A better never did itself sustain

275 Upon a soldier's thigh. I have seen the day

## Modern Text

him rather than let him leave this room. I'm going  
after Iago. He's a horrid criminal.

*MONTANO and GRATIANO exit.*

**OTHELLO**

I'm not that strong, if a puny nobody can grab my  
sword. But why should my reputation for honor  
last longer than my honor did? Let it all go.

**EMILIA**

What did your song mean, lady? Can you hear  
me? I'll die like a swan. They sing when they die.  
*(singing) Willow, willow, willow.—*  
Moor, she never cheated on you. She loved you,  
you cruel man. I swear on my soul I'm telling the  
truth, and as I say this, I die.

*EMILIA dies.*

**OTHELLO**

I've got another weapon in the room. It's a  
Spanish sword, hardened in ice cold water and  
razor sharp. Here it is. Uncle, I'm coming out!

**GRATIANO**

*(offstage)* If you try that, you'll pay for it. You've  
got no weapon, so you'll have to suffer.

**OTHELLO**

Look in on me, and talk with me, or I'll attack  
even without a weapon.

*GRATIANO enters.*

**GRATIANO**

What's the matter?

**OTHELLO**

Look, I have a weapon, the best sword a soldier  
could have. I've fought my way through  
obstacles twenty times more terrifying than you  
with this weapon. But

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 15

That with this little arm and this good sword  
I have made my way through more impediments  
Than twenty times your stop. But, oh, vain boast!  
Who can control his fate? 'tis not so now.

280 Be not afraid, though you do see me weaponed.

Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,  
And very sea-mark of my utmost sail.

Do you go back dismayed? 'tis a lost fear.

Man but a rush against Othello's breast,

285 And he retires. Where should Othello go?—

Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starred wench,

who can control his fate? I'm not like that now.  
Don't be afraid, even though you see me with a  
weapon. This is the end of my journey, the end  
of my life. Are you backing away in fear? There's  
no reason to be afraid. You could tap me with a  
feather and I'd back away. Where would Othello  
go?—Oh, look at you! Such cruel luck! You're as  
pale as your nightgown! When we meet on  
Judgment Day, that look of yours will send me  
from heaven to hell, where devils will grab me.  
You're cold, cold, and you were never hot with



## Original Text

Pale as thy smock! When we shall meet at compt  
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven  
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl,  
 290 Even like thy chastity. O cursed, cursed slave!  
 Whip me, ye devils,  
 From the possession of this heavenly sight!  
 Blow me about in winds, roast me in sulfur,  
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!—  
 295 Oh, Desdemona! Desdemona! dead! Oh! Oh!

*Enter **LODOVICO**, **MONTANO**, **CASSIO** carried in a chair, and officers with **IAGO**, prisoner*

**LODOVICO**

Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

**OTHELLO**

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

**LODOVICO**

Where is that viper? Bring the villain forth.

***IAGO** is brought forward*

## Modern Text

lust. Oh you damned villain! Whip me, you devils, so I don't have to look at this heavenly sight! Blow on me with hot winds, roast me in lava, drown me in liquid fire! Oh, Desdemona! Dead Desdemona! Oh, oh!

***LODOVICO** and **MONTANO** enter, followed by **CASSIO** on a stretcher, and officers with **IAGO**, prisoner.*

**LODOVICO**

Where is that poor rash man?

**OTHELLO**

You mean the man who used to be Othello?

Here I am.

**LODOVICO**

Where's that snake? Bring the villain forward.

***IAGO** is brought forward.*

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 16

**OTHELLO**

I look down towards his feet, but that's a fable.  
 300 If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

*Stabs **IAGO***

**LODOVICO**

Wrench his sword from him.

*They take **OTHELLO**'s sword*

**IAGO**

I bleed, sir, but not killed.

**OTHELLO**

I am not sorry neither. I'd have thee live,  
 For in my sense 'tis happiness to die.

**LODOVICO**

O thou Othello, thou was once so good,  
 305 Fall'n in the practice of a cursèd slave,  
 What shall be said to thee?

**OTHELLO**

Why, anything.  
 An honorable murderer, if you will,  
 For naught I did in hate, but all in honor.

**LODOVICO**

This wretch hath part confessed his villainy.  
 310 Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

**OTHELLO**

Ay.

**CASSIO**

Dear general, I never gave you cause.

**OTHELLO**

I'm looking to see if you have cloven hooves like the devil. But that's just a fairy tale. If you are a devil, I won't be able to kill you.

***OTHELLO** stabs **IAGO**.*

**LODOVICO**

Take his sword away from him.

*They take **OTHELLO**'s sword away.*

**IAGO**

I'm bleeding, but you didn't kill me.

**OTHELLO**

I'm not sorry, either. I want you to live, since to me, death is happiness.

**LODOVICO**

Oh Othello, you were once so good, then you were tricked by this villain. What can I say to you?

**OTHELLO**

Say anything. Call me an honorable murderer if you like. I did nothing out of hate, only out of honor.

**LODOVICO**

This poor guy's partly confessed his plan. Did you plan Cassio's death with him?

**OTHELLO**

Yes.

**CASSIO**

Dear general, I never gave you any reason to hate me.

**Original Text****OTHELLO**

I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.  
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil

315 Why he hath thus ensnared my soul and body?

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 17****IAGO**

Demand me nothing. What you know, you know.  
From this time forth I never will speak word.

**LODOVICO**

What, not to pray?

**GRATIANO**

Torments will ope your lips.

**OTHELLO**

320 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,  
And here another. The one of them imports

325 The death of Cassio to be undertook  
By Roderigo.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, villain!

**CASSIO**

Most heathenish and most gross!

**LODOVICO**

Now here's another discontented paper  
330 Found in his pocket too, and this, it seems,  
Roderigo meant to have sent this damnèd villain  
But that, belike, Iago in the interim  
Came in and satisfied him.

**OTHELLO**

O thou pernicious caitiff!

335 How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief  
That was my wife's?

**CASSIO**

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

**Act 5, Scene 2, Page 18****OTHELLO**

O fool! fool! fool!

**CASSIO**

340 There is besides in Roderigo's letter  
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him  
Brave me upon the watch, whereon it came  
That I was cast. And even but now he spake,

**Modern Text****OTHELLO**

I believe you, and I ask you to forgive me. Will  
you please make this half-devil say why he  
tricked me and damned my soul?

**IAGO**

Don't ask me anything. You know what you  
know. From this moment on, I'll never say  
another word.

**LODOVICO**

What, not even to pray?

**GRATIANO**

Torture will make you talk.

**OTHELLO**

Well, do your best.

**LODOVICO**

Sir, you'll understand everything that has  
happened. I don't think you know now. Here is a  
letter we found in Roderigo's pocket. And here's  
another. This one talks about how Roderigo  
should kill Cassio.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, you villain!

**CASSIO**

Ungodly and monstrous!

**LODOVICO**

Here's another letter from his pocket, addressed  
to Iago and full of complaints. We think he was  
going to send it to Iago, but then Iago stepped in  
and answered his complaints by killing him.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, you wicked scoundrel! Cassio, how did you  
get my wife's handkerchief?

**CASSIO**

I found it in my room, and Iago just confessed  
that he put it there for his own purposes.

**OTHELLO**

Oh, what a fool I am!

**CASSIO**

Also, in his letter to Iago, Roderigo criticizes Iago  
for telling him to get me angry while I was on  
guard duty, and get me demoted. And just now  
he admitted it, even though he'd seemed to be

## Original Text

After long seeming dead—Iago hurt him,  
 345 Iago set him on.

**LODOVICO**  
 (to OTHELLO) You must forsake this room and go  
 with us.  
 Your power and your command is taken off  
 And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,  
 350 If there be any cunning cruelty  
 That can torment him much and hold him long,  
 It shall be his. You shall close prisoner rest  
 Till that the nature of your fault be known  
 To the Venetian state.—Come, bring him away.

**OTHELLO**  
 Soft you, a word or two before you go.  
 355 I have done the state some service, and they  
 know 't.  
 No more of that. I pray you, in your letters,  
 When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,  
 Speak of me as I am. Nothing extenuate,  
 360 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 in the extreme. Of one whose hand,  
 Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away  
 365 Richer than all his tribe. Of one whose subdued  
 eyes,  
 Albeit unused to the melting mood,  
 Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees  
 Their medicinal gum. Set you down this,

## Act 5, Scene 2, Page 19

And say besides that in Aleppo once,  
 Where a malignant and a turbaned Turk  
 370 Beat a Venetian and traduced the state,  
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog,  
 And smote him, thus.

*Stabs himself*

**LODOVICO**  
 Oh, bloody period!

**GRATIANO**  
 All that is spoke is marred.

**OTHELLO**  
 375 (to DESDEMONA)  
 I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this,  
 Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.  
*Kisses DESDEMONA, dies*

**CASSIO**  
 This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon,  
 For he was great of heart.

**LODOVICO**  
 380 (to IAGO)

## Modern Text

dead for a long while—Iago tricked him, Iago  
 urged him to do it.

**LODOVICO**  
 (to OTHELLO)  
 You'll have to leave this room and come with us.  
 You're stripped of your power and your  
 command, and Cassio will govern Cyprus. As for  
 this slave, Iago, if we can think of any torture that  
 will hurt him a lot but keep him alive a long time,  
 he'll have it. You'll remain a prisoner until we  
 bring your crimes to the Venetian government.—  
 Okay, take him away.

**OTHELLO**  
 Wait. A word or two before you go. I've given the  
 state of Venice a bit of help in the past, and they  
 know it. But enough about that. When you record  
 these sad events in your letters, please describe  
 me exactly as I am. Don't tone things down or  
 exaggerate them out of hostility. If you're being  
 fair, you'll have to describe me as someone who  
 loved too much, but who wasn't wise about it. I  
 was not easily made jealous, but once I was  
 tricked and manipulated, I worked myself into a  
 frenzy. Describe me as a fool who threw away a  
 precious pearl with his own hands, like a silly  
 Indian who didn't know what it was worth. As  
 someone who was not emotional, but who then  
 cried a lot. Write all this

down, and then say also that in Aleppo I once  
 saw a Turk beating a Venetian, so I grabbed the  
 Turk by the throat and hit him like this.

*OTHELLO stabs himself.*

**LODOVICO**  
 Oh, what a bloody end to all this!

**GRATIANO**  
 Everything we've heard is bad.

**OTHELLO**  
 (to DESDEMONA) I kissed you before I killed  
 you. Now, killing myself, I'm dying while I kiss  
 you again.  
*OTHELLO kisses DESDEMONA and dies.*

**CASSIO**  
 I was afraid this would happen, because he was  
 a noble, brave man, but I didn't think he had a  
 weapon.

**LODOVICO**  
 (to IAGO) You bloodthirsty dog, you're crueler

**Original Text**

O Spartan dog,  
More fell 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.—Gratiano, keep the house  
385 And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,  
For they succeed on you.—To you, lord governor,  
Remains the censure of this hellish villain:  
The time, the place, the torture. Oh, enforce it!  
Myself will straight aboard, and to the state  
390 This heavy act with heavy heart relate.

*Exeunt*

**Modern Text**

than sadness or hunger, crueller than the sea.  
Look at these dead people on this bed. You did  
all this. He makes me sick. Take him away.  
Gratiano, take care of the house, and take the  
Moor's property. You've inherited everything.—  
(to CASSIO) Governor, I leave it in your hands to  
punish this evil villain: just decide the time, the  
place and the means of torture. And then carry it  
out! I have to go back to Venice, and tell them  
about these sad events.

*They all exit.*