

# OTHELLO



WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

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AMAZON CLASSICS

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

## **PERSONS REPRESENTED**

**D** UKE of Venice.

**B** RABANTIO , a Senator.

Other Senators.

**G** RATIANO , Brother to Brabantio.

**L** ODOVICO , Kinsman to Brabantio.

**O** THELLO , a noble Moor, in the service of Venice.

**C** ASSIO , his Lieutenant.

**I** AGO , his Ancient.

**M** ONTANO , Othello's predecessor in the government of Cyprus.

**R** ODERIGO , a Venetian Gentleman.

**C** LOWN , Servant to Othello.

**H** ERALD .

**D** ESDEMONA , Daughter to Brabantio and Wife to Othello.

**E** MILIA , Wife to Iago.

**B** IANCA , Mistress to Cassio.

**O** FFICERS , **G** ENTLEMEN , **M** ESSENGER , **M** USICIANS , **H** ERALD ,  
**S** AILOR , **A** TTENDANTS , &C .

SCENE—The First Act in Venice; during the rest of the Play at a Seaport in Cyprus.

# ACT 1.

## SCENE 1. VENICE . A STREET .

[*Enter R ODERIGO and I AGO .*]

**R ODERIGO**

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,  
—

**I AGO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

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

**I AGO**

10 Despise me, if I do not. Three great ones of the city,  
In personal suit to make me his lieutenant,  
Off-capp'd to him:—and, by the faith of man,  
I know my price, I am worth no worse a place:—  
But he, as loving his own pride and purposes,  
Evades them, with a bumbast circumstance

Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war:  
15 And, in conclusion, nonsuits  
My mediators: for, "Certes," says he,  
"I have already chose my officer."  
And what was he?  
Forsooth, a great arithmetician,  
20 One Michael Cassio, a Florentine,  
A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;  
That never set a squadron in the field,  
Nor the division of a battle knows  
More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoretic,  
25 Wherein the toged consuls can propose  
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,  
Is all his soldiership. But he, sir, had the election:  
And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof  
At Rhodes, at Cyprus, and on other grounds,  
30 Christian and heathen,—must be belee'd and calm'd  
By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster;  
He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,  
And I—God bless the mark! his Moorship's ancient.

**R ODERIGO**

By heaven, I rather would have been his hangman.

**I A G O**

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

**R ODERIGO**

I would not follow him, then.



**I A G O**

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 follow'd. You shall mark  
Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave  
That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,  
Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,  
For nought but provender; and when he's old,  
cashier'd:

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

55 coats,  
Do themselves homage: these fellows have some  
soul;

And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,

It is as sure as you are Roderigo,

Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:

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 complement extern, 'tis not long after  
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve  
For daws to peck at: I am not what I am.

**R O D E R I G O**

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

**I AGO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

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

**I AGO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

What, ho, Brabantio! Signior Brabantio, ho!

**I AGO**

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

[**B RABANTIO** *appears above at a window.* ]

**B RABANTIO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

Signior, is all your family within?

**I A G O**

Are your doors locked?

**B R A B A N T I O**

Why, wherefore ask you this?

**I A G O**

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

**B R A B A N T I O**

What, have you lost your wits?

**R O D E R I G O**

Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

**B R A B A N T I O**

Not I; what are you?

**R O D E R I G O**

100 My name is Roderigo.

**B R A B A N T I O**

The worser welcome:

I have charged thee not to haunt about my doors;  
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say  
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,

105                    Being full of supper and distempering draughts,  
                         Upon malicious bravery dost thou come  
                         To start my quiet.

**R ODERIGO**

Sir, sir, sir,—

**B RABANTIO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

Patience, good sir.

**B RABANTIO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

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

**I AGO**

                         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  
120                    covered with a Barbary horse; you'll have your  
                         nephews neigh to you; you'll have coursers for  
                         cousins and gennets for germans.

**B RABANTIO**

What profane wretch art thou?

**I AGO**

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

**B RABANTIO**

Thou art a villain.

**I AGO**

You are—a senator.

**B RABANTIO**

This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

**R ODERIGO**

130 Sir, I will answer anything. But, I beseech you,  
If 't be your pleasure and most wise consent,—  
As partly I find it is,—that your fair daughter,  
At this odd-even and dull watch o' the night,  
Transported with no worse nor better guard  
But with a knave of common hire, a gondolier,  
135 To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor,—  
If this be known to you, and your allowance,  
We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;  
But if you know not this, my manners tell me  
We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe  
140 That, from the sense of all civility,  
I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:  
Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—  
I say again, hath made a gross revolt;  
Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes  
145 In an extravagant and wheeling stranger  
Of here and everywhere. Straight satisfy yourself:  
If she be in her chamber or your house

Let loose on me the justice of the state  
For thus deluding you.

**B RABANTIO**

150 Strike on the tinder, ho!  
Give me a taper!—Call up all my people!—  
This accident is not unlike my dream:  
Belief of it oppresses me already.—  
Light, I say! light!

[*Exit from above.* ]

**I AGO**

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

[*Exit.* ]

[*Enter, below, B RABANTIO , and S ERVANTS with torches.* ]

**B RABANTIO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

Truly, I think they are.

**B RABANTIO**

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

**R ODERIGO**

Yes, sir, I have indeed.

**B RABANTIO**

Call up my brother.—O, would you had had her!—  
Some one way, some another.—Do you know

Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

**R ODERIGO**

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

**B RABANTIO**

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

[*Exeunt.* ]

## SCENE 2. VENICE . ANOTHER STREET .

[*Enter O THELLO , I AGO , and A TTENDANTS with torches.* ]

**I AGO**

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

**O THELLO**

'Tis better as it is.

**I AGO**

Nay, but he prated,  
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms



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

**O THELLO**

Let him do his spite:  
20 My services which I have done the signiory  
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,—  
Which, when I know that boasting is an honor,  
I shall promulgate,—I fetch my life and being  
From men of royal siege; and my demerits  
25 May speak unbonneted to as proud a fortune  
As this that I have reach'd: for know, Iago,  
But that I love the gentle Desdemona,  
I would not my unhousèd free condition  
Put into circumscription and confine  
30 For the sea's worth. But, look! what lights come  
yond?

**I AGO**

Those are the raised father and his friends:  
You were best go in.

**O THELLO**

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

**I AGO**

By Janus, I think no.

[*Enter C ASSIO and certain O FFICERS with torches.* ]

**O THELLO**

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

**C ASSIO**

40 The duke does greet you, general;  
And he requires your haste-post-haste appearance  
Even on the instant.

**O THELLO**

What is the matter, think you?

**C ASSIO**

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

**O THELLO**

'Tis well I am found by you.  
I will but spend a word here in the house,

55

And go with you.

[*Exit.* ]

**C ASSIO**

Ancient, what makes he here?

**I AGO**

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

**C ASSIO**

I do not understand.

**I AGO**

60

He's married.

**C ASSIO**

To who?

[*Re-enter O THELLO .* ]

**I AGO**

Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

**O THELLO**

Have with you.

**C ASSIO**

Here comes another troop to seek for you.

**I AGO**

65

It is Brabantio.—General, be advis'd;

He comes to bad intent.

[*Enter* **B RABANTIO** , **R ODERIGO** , and **O FFICERS** *with torches and weapons.* ]

**O THELLO**

Holla! stand there!

**R ODERIGO**

Signior, it is the Moor.

**B RABANTIO**

Down with him, thief!

[*They draw on both sides.* ]

**I AGO**

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

**O THELLO**

Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.—

Good signior, you shall more command with years  
Than with your weapons.

**B RABANTIO**

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

75 Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;  
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,  
If she in chains of magic were not bound,  
Whether a maid so tender, fair, and happy,  
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd