

Courage to Act Nobly



Othello

A victim of sly treachery

A play by William Shakespeare • Adapted by Bryon Cahill

Illustrations by Lisa Webber

CHARACTERS

(main characters in **boldface**)

Narrators 1, 2, 3

Roderigo, a gentleman of Venice

Iago, *Othello's right-hand man*

Brabantio, a senator

Othello, *a noble Moor, in the service of Venice*

Michael Cassio, *Othello's lieutenant*

The Duke of Venice

Desdemona, *Brabantio's daughter and Othello's wife*

Emilia, Iago's wife and Desdemona's servant

Lodovico, a gentleman of Venice

SCENE 1

Narrator 1: On a street in Venice, Italy, in the middle of the night, a gentleman by the name of Roderigo meets Iago. Iago has just told Roderigo unbelievable news.

Roderigo: Never tell me. I cannot believe it. Do you really hate him?

Iago: Believe it for it is true. He has made Cassio his lieutenant. Cassio! A man who knows no battles. I tell you, there is no justice. The good spoils of life go by way of affection. And the **Moor** has none for me, so why should I love him?

Roderigo: You were wronged by Othello. Besides that, I love the fair Desdemona and I shall no longer follow Othello.

Narrator 2: Iago turns suddenly and speaks to Roderigo.

Iago: O, but I do follow him. We cannot all be masters any more than our masters can be followers. I serve the Moor to serve my own purpose. In following him, I follow myself. I am not what I am.

Narrator 3: An idea is planted in Iago's head. He acts on it immediately.

Iago: Let us rouse up the girl's father and plague him with flies.

Narr 1: Roderigo and Iago head toward Brabantio's house. When they arrive, Iago asks Roderigo to shout as if there were a fire.

vocab

MOOR: a person of the mixed Berber and Arab heritage living in northwest Africa

Roderigo: Awake! Brabantio!

Iago: Thieves! Thieves! Thieves!
Look to your house! Your
daughter! Thieves!

Narr 2: Brabantio appears at
the window.

Brabantio: What's all this? What is
the reason for this terrible noise?

Iago: Zounds, sir! You were
robbed yet do not know it! Your
heart is burst, and you have lost
half your soul! Even now, an
old black ram is stealing your
white ewe.

Brabantio: Is that you, Roderigo?
I have told you that my
daughter is not for you. Now, I
insist you speak clearly and tell
me what you mean by this
alarming midnight call?

Roderigo: I am here in good
faith, sir.

Narr 3: Iago cannot stand to
delay his cause any further.

Iago: We come to tell you, sir.
Your daughter and the Moor
are, right now, within each
other's arms.

Brabantio: Thou art a villain!

Iago: You are—a senator.

Roderigo: You do not have to
take our word, sir. But come
with us and see for yourself.

Narr 1: Brabantio rushes away
from the window. He puts on
his coat and shoes in a hurry
and **summons** his men.

Narr 2: Iago runs off to be
by his master's side when
Brabantio and his men arrive.

Narr 3: Brabantio appears on the
street with several of his servants.

Brabantio: Where has the other
man gone?

Roderigo: He has led the way
and we shall follow.

Narr 1: They all storm off
toward Othello's house.

SCENE 2

Narr 2: Iago arrives and tells
his master that trouble is on
the way.

Othello: 'Tis better as it is.

Iago: But master, they are coming
with anger against your honor.

Othello: Let them come. For I
love the gentle Desdemona and
nothing, not even her father,
can stand in the way of that.

Iago: Then ... have you married
her?

Othello: Aye. She is my bride.

Narr 3: Iago takes a deep
breath. His plan to ruin his
master is not as perfect as he
had imagined.

Narr 1: Shouting voices are heard
from outside Othello's walls.

Iago: Come, my lord. You
must away.

Othello: Not I. I must be found.

Narr 2: Othello's newly named
lieutenant, Michael Cassio,
enters.

Michael Cassio: My lord, there is
news from Cyprus.* The duke is
in council with the senate, and
you are called to attend.

Othello: In good faith, I will
attend, Cassio. But first, there is
other business I am about.

Narr 3: Othello leaves the room.



*'I love the gentle
Desdemona
and nothing,
not even her
father, can
stand in the
way of that.'*

Cassio: Other business, Iago?
What does he mean?

Narr 1: Iago shrugs and gives
unsatisfactory answer.

Iago: He is married.

Narr 2: Othello meets Roderig
Brabantio, and his men in the
street. Iago and Cassio follow.

Narr 3: As soon as he lays ey
on Othello, Brabantio draws

*Cyprus: an island in the Mediterranean sea that lies south of Turkey and north of Egypt

his sword. Brabantio's men do the same.

Narr 1: Behind Othello, Cassio too draws his sword, ready to fight to the death for Othello's honor.

Othello: Hold your swords, all! Brabantio, I know why you are here. Let us go to the council and plead both our cases. The senators are in session, as you may have heard. There is news from Cyprus at this late hour. Come.

Brabantio: Thou art a villain who hath stolen my daughter! We shall go to the duke himself. If he or any other members of the state cannot feel this wrong as if it were his own, then **pagans** they all be.

SCENE 3

Narr 2: The entire group arrives at the senate. The duke addresses Othello.

Duke: Valiant Othello! We must employ you immediately. The Turks have set sail for Cyprus, no doubt to make war with us. You must go at once.

Narr 3: The duke's eyes fall upon Brabantio.

Duke: Why, Senator Brabantio, we lacked your service tonight.

Brabantio: Forgive me, your grace. I have come to the council to profess my personal grief.

vocab

SUMMONS: calls for

PAGANS: people who either have little or no religion or believe in many gods

Duke: Why? What's this?

Brabantio: My daughter! O my daughter!

Duke: Dead?

Brabantio: Aye, to me. She was stolen from me by this Moor. This Moor, whom now it seems, you have summoned for state affairs.

Duke: And what can you say to this, Othello?

Othello: My most noble masters, what Brabantio speaks is most true. I have taken away the old man's daughter, and I have married her. I have won Desdemona's heart through the course of love and love only.

Duke: She never would have married you willingly! You must have won her heart with some wicked charms or drugs.

Othello: I do beseech you, send for the lady and let her speak of me before her father.

Narr 1: The duke orders a servant to wake Desdemona. While they wait, Othello tells how he won Desdemona's heart—by confiding in her his life story.

Narr 2: The servant returns with Desdemona.

Brabantio: My daughter, tell the truth.

Desdemona: My noble father, to you I am bound for life and education. I am your daughter. But Othello is my husband.

Brabantio: (*enraged*) God be with you, for I am done with you!

Narr 3: As Othello holds his new wife in his eyes, the duke

decrees that Othello sail to Cyprus to fight a war against the Turks.

Desdemona: Good duke, dear lords, if you do send my husband off to war, let me go with him.

Duke: Let it be so.

Brabantio: (*to Othello*) Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see. She has deceived her father, and may thee.

Narr 1: Iago overhears this warning and rejoices within himself. A new plan for Othello's downfall is sparked.

SCENE 4

Narr 2: On the way to Cyprus, Othello's ship encounters a great storm. As it turns out, a fleet of Turks have come to meet him at sea. Othello's ship weathers the storm, but the Turks are drowned.

Narr 3: When he lands at Cyprus, Othello meets his wife, Desdemona; his lieutenant, Cassio; Iago and his wife, Emilia; and Roderigo. They rejoice that they have survived the storm, and Othello and Desdemona retreat to their temporary bedroom in the castle.

Narr 1: That night, there is much revelry. Iago convinces Cassio to drink. As a result, Cassio becomes quite drunk and picks a fight with Montano, another of Othello's men. The fight wakes Othello, and he comes down to see what is going on.

Othello: Who began this foul rout? Iago, tell me true.

Iago: I should rather have my tongue cut out of my mouth than to offend Michael Cassio. Yet I persuade myself to speak the truth. I heard Montano cry out for help, and when I turned to look, it was Cassio who was after him with a sword.

Narr 2: Cassio is out of breath and very drunk, but he knows his fate is sealed.

Othello: I know you to be honest, Iago. And I know too that your love for Cassio makes this truth even harder for you.

Narr 3: Iago nods.

Othello: Cassio, I love thee ... but never more be an officer of mine.

Narr 1: Othello retreats to his bedroom, leaving Cassio in shame.

Narr 2: Everyone except Iago and Cassio retire.

Iago: Are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cassio: Ay, past all surgery.

Iago: Heaven forbid!

Cassio: Reputation, reputation, reputation! O I have lost that immortal part of myself, and what is left is beastly! My reputation, Iago! My reputation!

Iago: Reputation is often gotten without **merit** and lost without deserving. You may have lost your reputation now. But there are ways to get it back.

Cassio: A drunken squabble! O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name I call thee devil!

Iago: My dear friend, I will tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general. Othello has given himself completely to the fair Desdemona. Confess yourself freely to her, and get in her good graces. She will speak on your behalf, and you will once again be Othello's man.

Narr 3: On hearing this plan, Cassio begins to perk up.

Cassio: You advise me well, Iago. In the morning I will call upon the fair Desdemona. Good night, honest Iago. I thank thee!

Narr 1: Cassio stumbles off to bed. Iago stays behind and talks to himself.

Iago: Who says that I play a villain? This advice I give is free and honest and should win the Moor's love. However ... while Desdemona pleads Cassio's case strongly to her husband, I'll pour pestilence into his ear. As much as she tries to do good, she shall undo her credit with the Moor. So shall I turn her virtue into sin! And out of her own goodness make the net that shall entangle them all.

SCENE 5

Narr 2: In the morning, Iago's wife, Emilia, encounters Cassio at her lady's door.

Emilia: Good morning, good lieutenant. I am sorry for your displeasure.

Cassio: I beseech you, if you see fit, to give me the advantage to speak with Desdemona alone.

Emilia: Pray you, come in. I will tell my lady you seek her counsel.

Cassio: I am much bound to you, fair Emilia.

Narr 3: Cassio follows Emilia. Soon, he is presented to Desdemona.

Desdemona: Be thou assured, Cassio, I know why you are here. I will, to the best of my abilities, speak on your behalf with my husband.

Cassio: Good madam, whatever shall become of Michael Cassio, he is nothing but your true servant.

Desdemona: I know it, and I thank you. You do love my lord well. You have known him long, and he shall not stand at a distance from you for much longer. Before Emilia here, I give the peace that my lord shall not rest without my speaking highly of you in his presence.

Narr 1: Emilia hears Othello approaching.

Emilia: Madam, here comes my lord now.

Cassio: A million thanks, fair Desdemona. I take my leave.

Narr 2: Cassio sneaks away as Othello and Iago enter.

Othello: (*to Iago*) Was that not Michael Cassio who just parted from my wife?

Iago: (*to Othello*) Cassio, my lord? I know not. Surely it would not be he who steals away so guilty-like, seeing you coming.

Othello: (*to Iago*) I do believe it was he.

Desdemona: How now, my lord! I have been talking with your

lieutenant, Cassio. If I have the power to move you, my husband, the man truly regrets his actions, and I beg thee call him back into your favor.

Othello: Not now, sweet Desdemona, some other time.

Desdemona: Shortly?

Othello: The sooner, sweet, for you.

Desdemona: Tonight at supper then?

Othello: No, not tonight.

Desdemona: Tomorrow night then? Or Tuesday morn? Or Tuesday noon, or night? Or Wednesday? I pray thee name the time, but let it not exceed three days. The man truly loves you.

Othello: Very well. Let him come when he will and I will forgive. I should deny you nothing, Desdemona.

Desdemona: O thank you, my lord! I am forever yours!

Narr 3: Desdemona kisses her husband and then leaves. Her servant, Emilia, follows.

Narr 1: Iago can hardly believe his good fortune.

Iago: My noble lord—

Othello: What dost thou say, honest Iago?

Iago: When you were courting

vocab

ROUT: a disturbance of the public peace

MERIT: qualities or conduct that serve as a basis for honor and esteem

BESEECH: beg



*'So shall I turn
her virtue into
sin! And out
of her own
goodness make
the net that
shall entangle
them all.'*

Desdemona, did Michael Cassio know of your love for her?

Othello: He did indeed. From the first to the last. Why dost thou ask?

Iago: Just to satisfy my thoughts. I did not know he knew her.

Narr 2: Othello turns to face Iago. He is suddenly suspicious.

Othello: Cassio often acted as a messenger between Desdemona and myself to help move our love forward.

Iago: Indeed.

Othello: Indeed? Aye, indeed! Do you see anything wrong in that? Is he not honest?

Iago: Honest, my lord?

Othello: Honest! Aye, honest!

Iago: My lord, I do not know.

Othello: What dost thou think?

Iago: Think, my lord?

Othello: Think, my lord! By heaven, he echoes me! As if there were some monster in his thought too hideous to be shown! Thou dost mean something. If thou dost love me, show me thy thought.

Iago: My lord, you know I love you.

Othello: I think thou dost. For I know thou art full of love and honesty. Tell me your thought on Michael Cassio.

Narr 3: Iago takes a deliberate breath.

Iago: I daresay I think Cassio is honest.

Othello: Very well. ... I think so too.

Iago: Men should be what they seem.

Othello: Certainly. Men should be what they seem. Yet there's more in this. I pray thee, give the worst of thy thoughts. The worst of words.

Iago: Pardon me, my lord. I am

bound to every act of duty.

Othello: By heaven, I'll know thy thoughts!

Iago: Beware my lord ... of jealousy. It is the green-eyed monster which doth mock the meat it feeds on.

Othello: Thou speakest of jealousy?

Iago: Look to your wife. Observe her well with Cassio. She did deceive her father, marrying you.

Othello: So she did.

Iago: I see that this idea hath dashed your spirits a little. I hope that you will consider that what I have spoken of comes from my love. And Cassio is my worthy friend too. I am sure these thoughts will come to nothing.

Othello: I do not think Desdemona anything but honest.

Iago: Long live she so! And long live you for thinking so!

Othello: Leave me now, Iago.

Iago: As you wish, master.

Narr 1: Iago leaves Othello alone with his poisonous new thoughts.

Narr 2: Desdemona enters again to call her lord to supper.

Othello: I have a pain, Desdemon, upon my forehead, here.

Desdemona: I am sorry to hear you are not well, my lord.

Narr 3: She removes her handkerchief from her sleeve and gently wipes Othello's forehead.

Othello: Leave it alone. Come, let's away.

Narr 1: Othello pushes away her hand and her handkerchief drops to the ground. The newly-weds retire to the dining hall of the castle.

Narr 2: Emilia enters the room and sees her lady's handkerchief on the ground.

Emilia: My husband has often asked of me to steal my lady's handkerchief. I know not why, and I have never tried to do so ... but now that it is here in front of me, I will honor his request.

Narr 3: Emilia picks up Desdemona's handkerchief and takes it to her bedroom where she finds Iago.

Iago: How now, wife. What do you want?

Emilia: I have a thing for you.

Iago: A thing for me?

Emilia: It is my lady's handkerchief that you have often requested of me to filch.

Iago: Why, is that the handkerchief the Moor gave Desdemona? Hast thou stolen it from her?

Emilia: Nay, she merely dropped it, and I picked it off the ground.

Iago: A good wench! Give it here!

Narr 1: Iago snatches the handkerchief from his wife's fingers.

Emilia: What are you going to do with it anyway? My poor lady will go mad with grief when she realizes she has lost it.

Iago: That is none of your concern. All you must know is that I have use for it. Now leave me.

Narr 2: Emilia leaves.

Iago: I will lose this handkerchief in Cassio's room to let him find it. The Moor already changes with my poison.

Narr 3: Othello enters Iago's room.

Othello: (*going mad*) Ha! Ha! Is she false to me?

Iago: Why, how now, general! No more of that.

Othello: Thou hast set me on the rack! I swear, I would rather know for sure than to guess. I have never felt Cassio's kisses on her lips. Farewell the tranquil mind! Farewell content!

Narr 1: Iago is silent. Othello grabs him by the throat.

Othello: Villain, be sure thou prove my love unfaithful!

Iago: Has it come to this? My noble lord ...

Narr 2: Othello releases him.

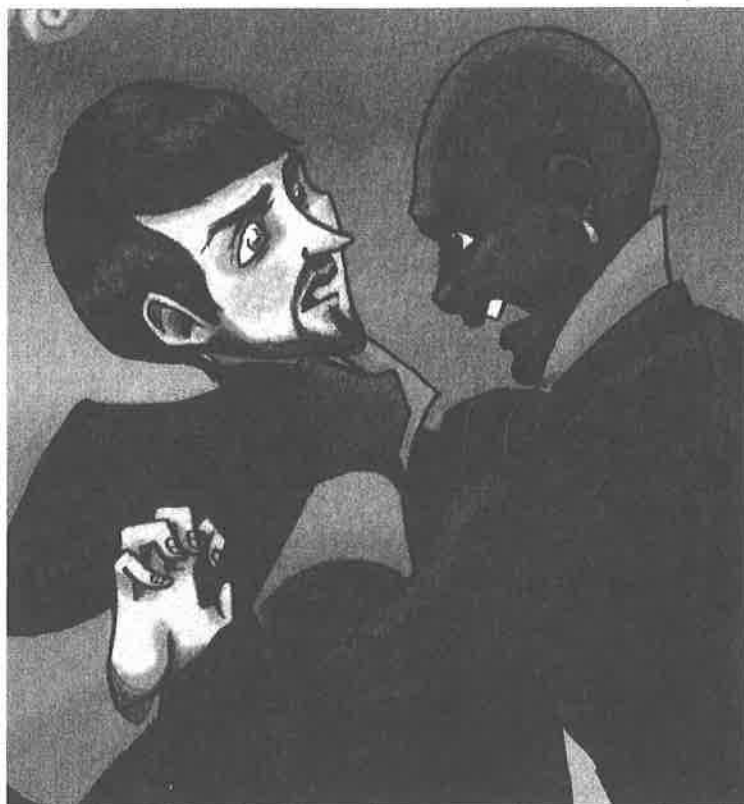
Othello: By the world, I think my wife is honest and think she is not. I think that thou art just and think thou art not. I'll have some proof!

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

Othello: Give me a living reason she's disloyal!

Iago: I hesitate to tell you ... but I did lie next to Cassio lately. In his sleep, I heard him say, "Sweet Desdemona, let us be wary, let us hide our loves." And then, sir, he grabbed my hand and kissed it, saying, "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"

Othello: O monstrous! Monstrous!



**'Villain, be sure
thou prove my
love unfaithful!'**

Iago: Nay, this was but his dream.

Othello: I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago: She may be honest yet. ... But tell me—have you sometimes seen a handkerchief spotted with strawberries in your wife's hand?

Othello: I gave her such a one.

Iago: I saw such a handkerchief today. Cassio wiped his beard with it. If that is the same handkerchief, it speaks against her with the other proofs.

Othello: O that I had forty thousand lives! One is too poor, to weak for my revenge. Now do I see it is true: Look here, Iago. All my fond love thus do I blow to heaven. 'Tis gone. Arise, black vengeance, from the hollow hell!

Iago: Yet, be content.

Othello: Blood, Iago! Blood!

Iago: Patience, I say. Your mind perhaps may change.

Othello: *(kneeling)* By the heavens I vow ...

Iago: *(kneeling)* I am your servant ... to wronged Othello's service! Command me and I shall obey in whatever bloody business is at hand.

Othello: I greet thy love, Iago,

and will instantly put you to it. 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! O, damn her! Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago: I am your own forever.

SCENE 6

Narr 3: Iago drops Desdemona's handkerchief in Cassio's room. Cassio finds it and gives it to his girlfriend, Bianca.

Narr 1: Later, in the street, Iago makes sure that Othello sees the handkerchief in Bianca's possession. If Othello's mind was not made up before, it is now.

Narr 2: Lodovico, one of Brabantio's men, arrives from Venice. Desdemona walks with him. They come upon Othello and Iago.

Lodovico: Save you, worthy general! The duke and senators of Venice greet you.

Narr 3: Lodovico hands Othello a letter from the duke.

Othello: *(kissing the letter)* I kiss their worthy instrument.

Narr 1: Othello reads the letter.

Iago: I am very glad to see you, signor. Welcome to Cyprus.

Lodovico: I thank you. How is Lieutenant Cassio?

vocab

TRANQUIL: peaceful

LEWD: obscene or indecent

Iago: He lives.

Desdemona: There has been a falling-out between Cassio and my lord. But all will be well.

Othello: Are you sure of that?

Desdemona: My lord?

Narr 2: Othello folds the letter.

Othello: The duke has called us back to Venice.

Lodovico: The duke regrets that he could not come to deliver the message himself. Is there truly a rift between you and Cassio?

Narr 3: Othello is about to answer, but Desdemona beats him to it.

Desdemona: A most unhappy rift! I would do much to make it right, for I do love dear Cassio.

Othello: Fire and brimstone!

Desdemona: My sweet Othello?

Othello: Devil!

Narr 1: Othello strikes Desdemona.

Othello: Out of my sight!

Narr 2: Desdemona runs away. Lodovico is stunned.

Lodovico: Is this the same patient Othello I once knew?

Othello: I will obey the order and return to Venice. You may tell the duke this, Lodovico.

Narr 3: Othello leaves. Iago tries to ease Lodovico's worry.

Iago: He is much changed.

Lodovico: But to strike his wife! Is he mad?

Iago: Have a safe return trip, sir.

SCENE 7

Narr 1: Back in her room, Desdemona consults with Emilia. She cannot understand why Othello would treat her like this.

Narr 2: Meanwhile, Roderigo meets with Iago. He is frustrated because he loves Desdemona and can do nothing about it. Iago lies to Roderigo, telling him that Othello is being sent to Africa and that the only way to stop him from taking Desdemona with him is to kill Cassio. That way, Othello will once again be charged with watching over Cyprus and Desdemona will stay too.

Narr 3: Night falls. Roderigo attacks Cassio in the street. Cassio sees him coming and stabs Roderigo. As Roderigo slowly gets to his feet, Iago sneaks up from behind and slices Cassio's leg. He falls to the ground, bleeding.

Narr 1: Before a crowd can form, Cassio takes his opportunity. He stabs and kills Roderigo.

Narr 2: Othello hears the shouts of "Murder!" from the castle. He runs down to the street and is impressed to see that Iago has been true to his word. He is inspired to kill his wife.

SCENE 8

Narr 3: Othello trudges slowly to his bedchamber. He arrives to find Desdemona asleep in their bed.

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.

Narr 1: He moves closer to the bed.

Othello: Yet I'll not shed her blood. Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow, and smooth as monumental alabaster.

Narr 2: He removes a sword from his belt.

Othello: Yet, she must die, else she'll betray more men.

Narr 3: He approaches a lit candle and blows it out.

Othello: Put out the light, and then put out the light.

Narr 1: He looks down upon his wife.

Othello: When I have plucked thy rose, I cannot give it vital growth again. It needs must wither. I'll smell it from the tree.

Narr 2: He leans down and gently kisses Desdemona. She continues to sleep.

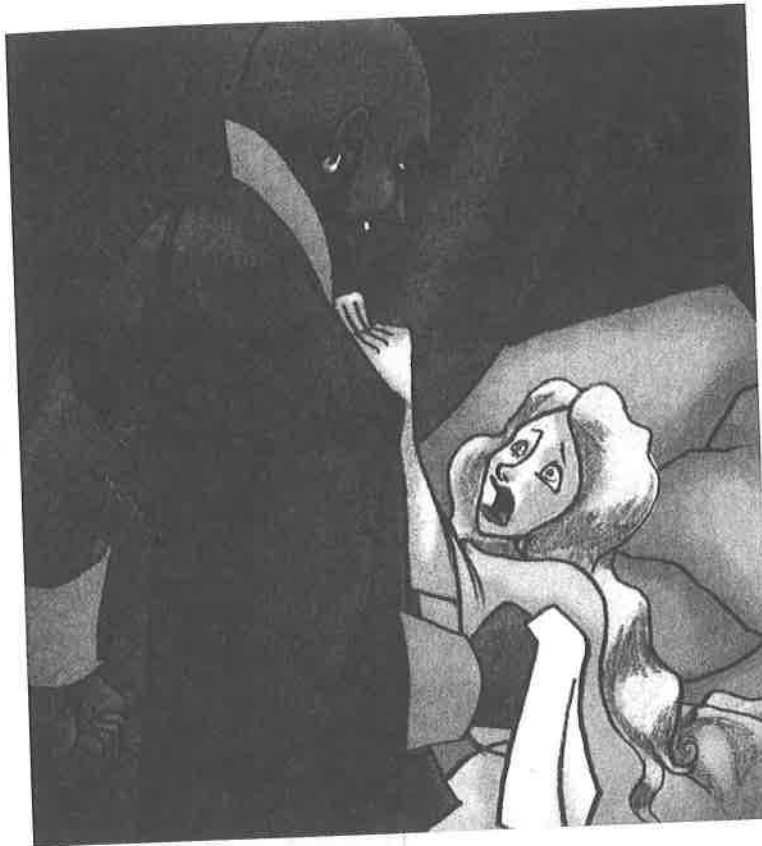
Othello: O balmy breath! It dost almost persuade justice to break the sword! One more, one more! Be thus when thou art dead and I will kill thee and love thee after. ... One more, and this the last. So sweet was never so fatal. I must weep. But they are cruel tears! O this sorrow's heavenly! It strikes where it doth love!

Narr 3: Desdemona wakes.

Desdemona: Who's there? Othello?

Othello: Aye, Desdemona.

Desdemona: Will you come to bed, my lord?



**'Put out the light,
and then put
out the light.'**

Othello: Have you prayed tonight, Desdemona?

Desdemona: Aye, my lord.

Othello: If you bethink yourself of any crime, confess now.

Desdemona: What do you mean by that, my lord?

Othello: Do it and be brief. I will

*** vocab**

RIFT: a difference in opinion that comes between friends

ALABASTER: a white stone

not kill your unprepared spirit.

Desdemona: Talk thou of killing?

Othello: Aye, I do.

Desdemona: Then heaven have mercy on me!

Othello: Amen, with all my heart!

Desdemona: Why should I fear you, my husband, I know not. And guilt I know not. But yet I feel I fear.

Othello: Think on thy sins!

Desdemona: They are but loves I bear to you.

Othello: And for that, thou diest!

Desdemona: Some bloody passion shakes your very frame.

Othello: That handkerchief which I loved so dear and gave

to thee ... thou gave it to Cassio!

Desdemona: No, by my life and soul! Send for the man and he will tell you!

Othello: Sweet soul, take heed. Thou art on thy deathbed.

Desdemona: Then Lord have mercy on me.

Othello: I say, amen.

Desdemona: And you have mercy too! I never did offend you in my life! Never loved Cassio! Never gave him any token!

Othello: By heaven, I saw the handkerchief in his hand! O lying woman, thou dost stone my heart and make me call what I intend to do a murder! ... which I thought a sacrifice.

Desdemona: Bring him here, and have him confess the truth.

Othello: No, his mouth is stopped. Honest Iago hath taken order for it.

Desdemona: What? Is he dead?

Othello: Had all his hairs been lives, my revenge had stomach for them all.

Desdemona: Alas, he is betrayed, and I am undone.

Othello: (*enraged*) Strumpet! Dare thou weep for him in my face?

Desdemona: O banish me, my lord, but kill me not!

Narr 1: Desdemona clings to Othello's robes and begs for her life.

Othello: Down, strumpet!

Desdemona: Kill me tomorrow, but let me live tonight!

Othello: Being done there is no pause.

Desdemona: But let me say one prayer.

Othello: It is too late.

Narr 2: Othello pushes her to the bed and smothers her with a pillow.

Narr 3: From outside the room, Emilia is calling.

Emilia: My lord! My lord! What is all this noise?

Narr 1: Othello gets up to let her in. She enters but does not yet see Desdemona's dying body.

Emilia: My lord! Roderigo is dead in the street! Cassio killed him!

Narr 2: Othello pretends to act surprised.

Othello: What? Roderigo and Cassio dead?

Emilia: No, Cassio is not killed.

Othello: (*puzzled*) Cassio not killed? Then murder's out of tune!

Narr 3: From her bed, the dying Desdemona speaks softly.

Desdemona: O falsely, falsely murdered!

Emilia: What is that?

Narr 1: Emilia now sees Desdemona.

Emilia: O sweet Desdemona! Help! Help!

Desdemona: A guiltless death I die.

Emilia: Who has done this deed?

Desdemona: Nobody ... I myself. Farewell. Commend me to my kind lord. O farewell.

Narr 2: Desdemona dies in Emilia's arms.

Emilia: Who has murdered my lady?

Othello: You heard her say herself it was not I. She is a liar, gone to burning hell. 'Twas I that killed her! She was unfaithful! As false as water!

Emilia: Never was she thus!

Othello: Ask your husband—she was unfaithful with Cassio.

Emilia: My husband?

Othello: Aye, he told me all.

Emilia: My husband!

Othello: Ay, was he who told me first. An honest man he is, who hates the slime that sticks to filthy deeds!

Emilia: My husband!

Othello: Aye, woman. I say thy husband, my friend, honest, honest Iago.

Emilia: If he called my lady unfaithful he lies from his heart! O you gull, you dolt! Thou art as ignorant as dirt! Help! Murder!

Narr 3: A group of people come running into the room. Among them are Iago and Lodivicio.

Lodivicio: What is the matter?

Emilia: See Iago? You have done well that men must lay murders on your neck! Did you tell the general that Desdemona was false?

Iago: I did.

Emilia: You told a lie! Upon my soul a wicked lie!

Lodivicio: O monstrous act!

Emilia: Villainy, villainy, villainy!

Othello: It was no lie. I saw the handkerchief I gave her in Cassio's hand.

Emilia: I found that handkerchief and gave it to my husband! O that I wish I hadn't!

Iago: Hold your peace, vile woman!

Narr 1: Iago rushes at Emilia and stabs her. She falls to the bed next to Desdemona. Iago then runs out of the room. Lodivicio chases after him.

Emilia: O she was faithful! And she did love thee, cruel Moor! As my soul leaves me now, I speak true. And speaking as I think, I die ... I die.

Narr 2: Emilia dies on the bed next to Desdemona.

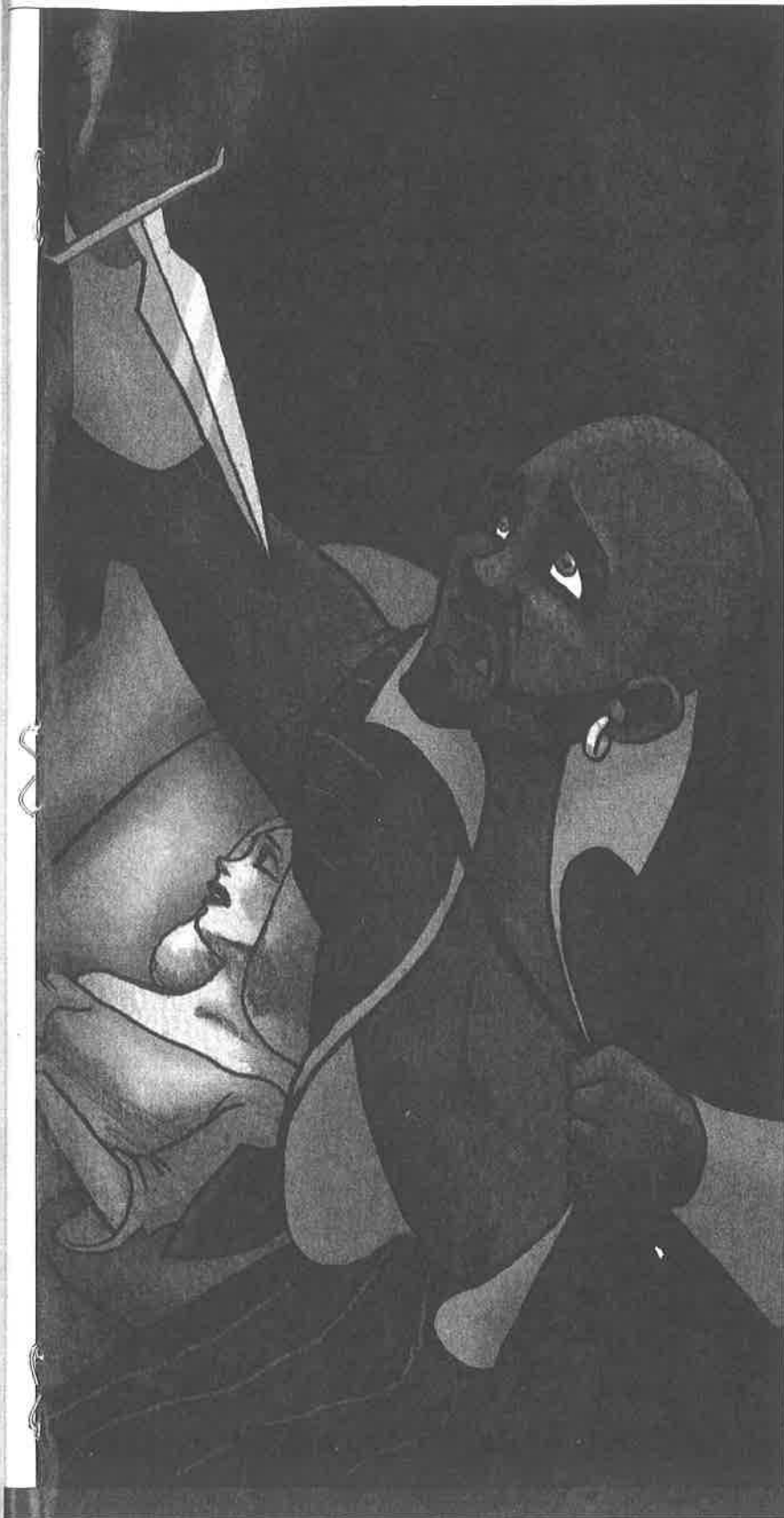
Narr 3: Othello begins to realize what he has done. He begins to weep openly.

'O falsely, falsely murdered!'

Othello: O whip me, ye devils, from the possession of this heavenly sight! Blow me about in the winds and roast me in sulphur! Wash me in gulfs of liquid fire! O Desdemona! Dead! Desdemona! O!

Narr 1: Lodivicio returns. He has caught Iago and is holding him with the help of a very bloody Cassio.

vocab
ENSNARED: captured



Narr 2: Othello rushes at Iago and stabs him. The wound is not fatal.

Lodivico: O what has happened to you, Othello? Is it true that you and this wretch here conspired to kill Cassio?

Othello: Aye.

Cassio: Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Othello: I do believe it, and I ask your pardon. I also ask that you demand that demi-devil to speak as to why he **ensnared** my soul and body?

Iago: Demand me nothing. What you know, you know. From this time forth I never will speak a word.

Othello: O villain!

Narr 3: Othello is tired. He slowly makes his way to Desdemona's bed.

Othello: I pray you, gentlemen. When you shall relate these unlucky deeds, speak of me as I am. I have done the state some service.

Narr 1: Othello, unnoticed, takes a dagger from his boot as he speaks one last time to his wife.

Othello: I kissed thee, and I killed thee. There is no way but this. Killing myself, I die upon a kiss.

Narr 2: Othello stabs himself in the heart. He falls upon Desdemona's body and dies.

Lodivico: (*to Iago*) O Spartan dog! Look on this tragic scene. This is thy work, hellish villain! And you shall answer for it. ■