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O'THELLO

THE BRANDES SHAKESPEARE

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With Introductions by GEORGE BRANDES

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
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and a Plate representing HENDERSON
as 'Iago.



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INTRODUCTION.

I.

Othello is, in the popular conception, simply the tragedy of jealousy, as *Macbeth* is simply the tragedy of ambition. Naïve readers and critics fancy in their innocence that Shakespeare, at a certain period of his life, determined to study one or two interesting and dangerous passions, and to put us on our guard against them. Following out this intention, he wrote a play on ambition and its dangers, and another of the same kind on jealousy and all the evils that attend it. But that is not how things happen in the inner life of a creative spirit. A poet does not write exercises on a given subject. His activity is not the result of determination or choice. A nerve in him is touched, vibrates, and re-acts.

What Shakespeare here attempts to realise is neither jealousy nor credulity, but simply and solely the tragedy of life; whence does it arise? what are its causes? what its laws?

He was deeply impressed with the power and significance of evil. *Othello* is much less a study of jealousy than a new and more powerful study of wickedness in its might. The umbilical cord that connects the master with his work leads, not to the character of *Othello*, but to that of *Iago*.

Simple-minded critics have been of opinion that Shakespeare constructed *Iago* on the lines of the historic Richard III.—that is to say, found him in literature, in the pages of a chronicler.

Believe me, Shakespeare met *Iago* in his own life,

saw portions and aspects of him on every hand throughout his manhood, encountered him piecemeal, as it were, on his daily path, till one fine day, when he thoroughly felt and understood what malignant cleverness and baseness can effect, he melted down all these fragments, and out of them cast this figure.

Iago—there is more of the grand manner in this figure than in the whole of *Macbeth*. Iago—there is more depth, more penetrating knowledge of human nature in this one character than in the whole of *Macbeth*. Iago is the very embodiment of the grand manner.

He is not the principle of evil, not an old-fashioned, stupid devil ; nor a Miltonic devil, who loves independence and has invented firearms ; nor a Goethe's Mephistopheles, who talks cynicism, makes himself indispensable, and is generally in the right. Neither has he the magnificently foolhardy wickedness of a Cæsar Borgia, who lives his life in open defiance and reckless atrocity.

Iago has no other aim than his own advantage. It is the circumstance that not he, but Cassio, has been appointed second in command to Othello, which first sets his craft to work on subtle combinations. He coveted this post, and he will stick at nothing in order to win it. In the meantime, he takes advantage of every opportunity of profit that offers itself ; he does not hesitate to fool Roderigo out of his money and his jewels. He is always masked in falsehood and hypocrisy ; and the mask he has chosen is the most impenetrable one, that of rough outspokenness, the straightforward, honest bluntness of the soldier who does not care what others think or say of him. He never flatters Othello or Desdemona, or even Roderigo. He is the free-spoken, honest friend.

He does not seek his own advantage without side-glances at others. He is mischievousness personified. He does evil for the pleasure of hurting, and takes active delight in the adversity and anguish of others. He is that eternal envy which merit or success in others never fails to irritate—not the petty envy which is content with coveting another's honours or possessions, or with holding itself more deserving of another's good fortune. No; he is an ideal personification. He is blar-eyed rancour itself, figuring as a great power—nay, as *the* motive force—in human life. He embodies the detestation for others' excellences which shows itself in obstinate disbelief, suspicion, or contempt; the instinct of hatred for all that is open, beautiful, bright, good, and great.

II.

In Cinthio's Italian collection of tales, where he had found the plot of *Measure for Measure*, Shakespeare at the same time (in Decade 3, Novella 7) came upon the material for *Othello*. The story in the *Hecatommitti* runs as follows:—A young Venetian lady named Disdemona falls in love with a Moor, a military commander—'not from feminine desire,' but because of his great qualities—and marries him in spite of the opposition of her relatives. They live in Venice in complete happiness; 'no word ever passed between them that was not loving.' When the Moor is ordered to Cyprus to take command there, his one anxiety is about his wife; he is equally unwilling to expose her to the dangers of the sea voyage and to leave her alone. She settles the question by declaring that she will rather follow him anywhere, into any danger, than live in safety apart from him; whereupon he rapturously

kisses her, with the ejaculation, 'May God long preserve you so loving, my dearest wife!' Thus the perfect initial harmony between the pair which Shakespeare depicts is suggested by his original.

The Ensign undermines their happiness. He is described as remarkably handsome, but 'as wicked by nature as any man that ever lived in the world.' He was dear to the Moor, 'who had no idea of his baseness.' For although he was an arrant coward, he managed by means of proud and blustering talk, aided by his fine appearance, so to conceal his cowardice that he passed for a Hector or Achilles. His wife, whom he had taken with him to Cyprus, was a fair and virtuous young woman, much beloved by Disdemona, who spent the greater part of the day in her company. The Lieutenant (*il capo di squadra*) came much to the Moor's house, and often supped with him and his wife.

The wicked Ensign is passionately in love with Disdemona, but all his attempts to win her love are entirely unsuccessful, as she has not a thought for any one but the Moor. The Ensign, however, imagines that the reason for her rejection of him must be that she is in love with the Lieutenant, and therefore determines to rid himself of this rival, while his love for Disdemona is changed into the bitterest hatred. From this time forward, his object is not only to bring about the death of the Lieutenant, but to prevent the Moor from finding the pleasure in Disdemona's love which is denied to himself. He goes to work as in the drama, though of course with some differences of detail. In the novel, for example, the Ensign steals Disdemona's handkerchief while she is visiting his wife, and playing with their little girl. Disdemona's death-scene is more horrible in the tale than in the tragedy. By command of the Moor, the Ensign hides himself in a room

adjoining Othello's and Disdemona's bedchamber. He makes a noise, and Disdemona rises to see what it is; whereupon the Ensign gives her a violent blow on the head with a stocking filled with sand. She calls to her husband for help, but he answers by accusing her of infidelity; she in vain protests her innocence, and dies at the third blow of the stocking. The murder is concealed, but the Moor now begins to hate his Ensign, and dismisses him. The Ensign is so exasperated by this, that he lets the Lieutenant know who is responsible for the night assault that has just been made upon him. The Lieutenant accuses the Moor before the council, and Othello is put to torture. He refuses to confess, and is sent into banishment. The wicked Ensign, who has brought a false accusation of murder against one of his comrades, is himself in turn accused by the innocent man, and subjected to torture until he dies.

To the characters in the novel, Shakespeare has added two, Brabantio and Roderigo. Only one of the names he uses is found in the original. Disdemona, which seems made to designate the victim of an evil destiny, Shakespeare has changed into the sweeter-sounding Desdemona. The other names are of Shakespeare's own choosing. Most of them are Italian (Othello itself is a Venetian noble name of the sixteenth century); others, such as Iago and Roderigo, are Spanish.

With his customary adherence to his original, Shakespeare, like Cinthio, calls his protagonist a Moor; but it is quite unreasonable to suppose from this that he thought of him as a negro. It was, of course, inconceivable that a negro should attain the rank of general and admiral in the service of the Venetian Republic; and Iago's mention of Mauritania as the country to which Othello intends to retire, shows plainly enough

that the 'Moor' ought to be represented as an Arab. It is no argument against this that men who hate and envy him apply to him epithets that would befit a negro. Thus Roderigo in the first scene of the play calls him 'thick-lips,' and Iago, speaking to Brabantio, calls him 'an old black ram.' But a little later Iago compares him with 'a Barbary horse'—that is to say, an Arab from North Africa. It is always animosity and hate that exaggerate the darkness of his hue, as when Brabantio talks of his 'sooty bosom.' That Othello calls himself *black* only means that he is dark. In this very play Iago says of dark women :

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

It may be noticed that, in the Sonnets and in *Love's Labour's Lost*, 'black' is constantly employed in the sense of dark-complexioned. As a Moor, Othello has a complexion sufficiently swarthy to form a striking contrast to the white and even blonde Desdemona, and there is also a sufficiently marked race-contrast between him, as a Semite, and the Aryan girl. It is quite conceivable, too, that a Christianised Moor should reach a high position in the army and fleet of the Republic.

Othello's is an inartificial soul, a simple, straightforward, soldier nature. He has no worldly wisdom, for he has lived his whole life in camps :

'And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle.'

A good and true man himself, he believes in goodness in others, especially in those who make a show of outspokenness, bluntness, undaunted determination to blame where blame is due—like Iago, who characteristically says of himself to Desdemona :

'For I am nothing, if not critical.'

And Othello not only believes in Iago's honesty, but is inclined to take him for his guide, as being far superior to himself in knowledge of men and of the world.

Again, Othello belongs to the noble natures that are never preoccupied with the thought of their own worth. He is devoid of vanity. He has never said to himself that such exploits, such heroic deeds, as have won him his renown, must make a far deeper impression on the fancy of a young girl of Desdemona's disposition than the smooth face and pleasant manners of a Cassio. He is so little impressed with the idea of his greatness that it almost at once appears quite natural to him that he should be scorned.

His speech of self-vindication in the council-chamber, in which he explains to the Duke how he came to win Desdemona's sympathy and tenderness, has been universally admired.

Having gained her father's favour, he was often asked by him to tell the story of his life, of its dangers and adventures. He told of sufferings and hardships, of hairbreadth 'scapes from death, of imprisonment by cruel enemies, of far-off strange countries he had journeyed through. (The fantastic catalogue, it may be noted, is taken from the fabulous books of travel of the day.) Desdemona loved to listen, but was often called away by household cares, always returning when these were despatched to follow his story with a greedy ear. He 'found means' to draw from her a request to tell her his history, not in fragments, but entire. He consented, and often her eyes were filled with tears when she heard of the distresses of his youth. With innocent candour she bade him at last, if ever he had a friend that loved her, to teach him how to tell her Othello's story—'and that would woo her.'

In other words, she is not won through the eye, though we must take Othello to have been a stately figure, but through the ear: 'I saw Othello's visage in his mind.' She becomes his through her sympathy with him in all he has suffered and achieved:—

'She loved me for the dangers I had pass'd,
And I loved her that she did pity them.

This only is the witchcraft I have used. . . .

DUKE. I think this tale would win my daughter too.'

Such, then, is the relation in which the poet has decreed that these two shall stand to each other. This is no love between two of the same age and the same race, whom only family enmity keeps apart, as in *Romeo and Juliet*. Still less is it a union of hearts like that of Brutus and Portia, where the perfect harmony is the result of tenderest friendship in combination with closest kinship, added to the fact that the wife's father is her husband's hero and ideal. No; in direct contrast to this last, it is a union which rests on the attraction of opposites, and which has everything against it—difference of race, difference of age, and the strange, exotic aspect of the man, with the lack of self-confidence which it awakens in him.

Iago expounds to Roderigo how impossible it is that this alliance should last. Desdemona fell in love with the Moor because he bragged to her and told her fantastical lies; does any one believe that love can be kept alive by prating? To inflame the blood anew, 'sympathy in years, manners, and beauties' is required, 'all which the Moor is defective in.'

The Moor himself is at first troubled by none of these reflections. And why not? Because Othello is not jealous.

This sounds paradoxical, yet it is the plain truth. Othello not jealous! It is as though one were to say

water is not wet or fire does not burn. But Othello's is no jealous nature ; jealous men and women think very differently and act very differently. He is unsuspicious, confiding, and in so far stupid—there lies the misfortune ; but jealous, in the proper sense of the word, he is not. When Iago is preparing to insinuate his calumnies of Desdemona, he begins hypocritically (iii. 3) :—

‘O, beware, my lord, of jealousy ;
It is the green-eyed monster . . .’

Othello answers :

‘’Tis not to make me jealous
To say my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays and dances well ;
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.’

Thus not even his exceptional position causes him any uneasiness, so long as things take their natural course. But there is no escaping the steady pursuit of which he, all unwitting, is the object. He becomes as suspicious towards Desdemona as he is credulous towards Iago—‘Brave Iago !’ ‘Honest Iago !’ Brabantio's malison recurs to his mind—‘She has deceived her father, and may thee’ ; and close on it crowd Iago's reasons :

‘Haply, for I am black
And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have, or for I am declined
Into the vale of years,—yet that's not much.’

And the torment seizes him of feeling that one human being is a sealed book to the other—that it is impossible to control passion and appetite in a woman, though the law may have given her into one's hands—until at last he feels as if he were stretched on the rack, and

Iago can exult in the thought that not all the drowsy syrups of the world can procure him the untroubled sleep of yesterday. Then follows the mournful farewell to all his previous life, and on this sadness once more follows doubt, and despair at the doubt :—

‘I think my wife be honest and think she is not ;
I think that thou art just and think thou art not,’

—until all his thoughts are centred in the craving for revenge and blood.

Not naturally jealous, he has become so through the working of the base but devilishly subtle slander which he is too simple to penetrate and spurn.

It is not, indeed, Othello’s jealousy, but his credulity, that is the prime cause of the disaster ; and even so must Desdemona’s noble simplicity bear its share in the blame. Between them they render possible the complete success of a man like Iago.

The figure of Desdemona is one of the most charming Shakespeare has drawn. She is more womanly than other women, as the noble Othello is more manly than other men. So that after all there is a very good reason for the attraction between them ; the most womanly of women feels herself drawn to the manliest of men.

The subordinate figures are worked out with hardly less skill than the principal characters of the tragedy. Emilia especially is inimitable—good-hearted, honest, and not exactly light, but still sufficiently the daughter of Eve to be unable to understand Desdemona’s naïve and innocent chastity.

At the end of Act iv. (in the bedroom scene) Desdemona asks Emilia if she believes that there really are women who do what Othello accuses her of. Emilia answers in the affirmative. Then her mistress asks again : ‘Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?’

and receives the jesting answer, 'The world's a huge thing: it is a great price for a small vice:

'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, the wrong is but a wrong i' the world; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.'

In passages like this a mildly playful note is struck in the very midst of the horror. And according to his habit and the custom of the times, Shakespeare also introduces, by means of the Clown, one or two deliberately comic passages; but the Clown's merriment is subdued, as Shakespeare's merriment at this period always is.

The composition of *Othello* is closely akin to that of *Macbeth*. In these two tragedies alone there are no episodes; the action moves onward uninterrupted and undissipated. But the beautiful proportion of all its parts and articulations gives *Othello* the advantage over the mutilated *Macbeth* which we possess. Here the crescendo of the tragedy is executed with absolute *maestria*; the passion rises with a positively musical effect; Iago's devilish plan is realised step by step with consummate certainty; all details are knit together into one firm and wellnigh inextricable knot; and the carelessness with which Shakespeare has treated the necessary lapse of time between the different stages of the action, has, by compressing the events of months and years into a few days, heightened the effect of strict and firm cohesion which the play produces.

Othello is the only one of Shakespeare's tragedies which does not treat of national events, but is a family tragedy—what was later known as *tragédie domestique* or *bourgeoise*. But the treatment is anything but

bourgeois ; the style is of the very grandest. One gets the best idea of the distance between it and the *tragédie bourgeoise* of later times on comparing with it Schiller's *Kabale und Liebe*, which is in many ways an imitation of *Othello*.

We see here a great man who is at the same time a great child ; a noble though impetuous nature, as unsuspecting as it is unworldly. We see a young woman, all gentleness and nobility of heart, who lives only for him she has chosen, and who dies with solicitude for her murderer on her lips. And we see these two elect natures ruined by the simplicity which makes them an easy prey to wickedness.

A great work *Othello* undoubtedly is, but it is a monograph. It lacks the breadth which Shakespeare's plays as a rule possess. It is a sharply limited study of a single and very special form of passion, the growth of suspicion in the mind of a lover with African blood and temperament—a great example of the power of wickedness over unsuspecting nobility. Taken all in all, this is a restricted subject, which becomes monumental only by the grandeur of its treatment.

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

DUKE OF VENICE.

BRABANTIO, *a senator.*

Other SENATORS.

GRATIANO, *brother to Brabantio.*

LODOVICO, *kinsman to Brabantio.*

OTHELLO, *a noble Moor in the service of the Venetian state.*

CASSIO, *his lieutenant.*

IAGO, *his ancient.*

RODERIGO, *a Venetian gentleman.*

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

CLOWN, *servant to Othello.*

DESDEMONA, *daughter to Brabantio and wife to Othello.*

EMILIA, *wife to Iago.*

BIANCA, *mistress to Cassio.*

*Sailor, Messenger, Herald, Officers, Gentlemen,
Musicians, and Attendants.*

Scene—Venice : a Sea-port in Cyprus.

OTHELLO, THE MOOR OF VENICE.

ACT THE FIRST.

SCENE I.

Venice. A street.

Enter RODERIGO and IAGO.

ROD. Tush! nevertell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this.

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

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

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

Nonsuits my mediators ; for, *Certes*, says he,
I have already chose my officer.

And what was he ?

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

ROD. By heaven, I rather would have been his
hangman.

IAGO. Why, there's no remedy ; 'tis the curse
of service,

Preferment goes by letter and affection,
And not by old gradation, where each second
Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
Whether I in any just term am affined
To love the Moor.

ROD. I would not follow him then.

IAGO. O, sir, content you ;

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

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

Do themselves homage : these fellows have some
soul ;

And such a one do I profess myself. For, sir,
It is as sure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago :
In following him, I follow but myself ;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming so, for my peculiar end :
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In 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.

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

IAGO.

Call up her father,

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

ROD. 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.

ROD. What, ho, Brabantio ! Signior Brabantio,
ho !

IAGO. Awake ! what, ho, Brabantio ! thieves !
thieves ! thieves !

Look to your house, your daughter and your bags !
Thieves ! thieves !

BRABANTIO appears above, at a window.

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

ROD. Signior, is all your family within ?

IAGO. Are your doors lock'd ?

BRA. Why, wherefore ask you this ?

IAGO. 'Zounds, sir, you're robb'd ; for shame,
put on your gown ;

Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul ;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. Arise, arise ;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandsire of you :
Arise, I say.

BRA. What, have you lost your wits ?

ROD. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

BRA. Not I : what are you?

ROD. My name is Roderigo.

BRA. The worser welcome :

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

ROD. Sir, sir, sir,—

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

ROD. Patience, good sir.

BRA. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice ;

My house is not a grange.

ROD. 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.

BRA. 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.

BRA. Thou art a villain.

IAGO. You are—a senator.

BRA. This thou shalt answer; I know thee,
Roderigo.

ROD. Sir, I will answer any thing. But, I beseech you,

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

BRA. 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 above.]

IAGO.

Farewell ; for I must leave you :

It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
To be produced—as, if I stay, I shall—
Against the Moor : for, I do know, the state,
However this may gall him with some check,
Cannot with safety cast him, for he's embark'd
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,
Though I do hate him as I do hell-pains,
Yet, for necessity of present life,
I must show out a flag and sign of love,
Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely
find him,

Lead to the Sagittary the raised search ;
And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [*Exit.*
Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and Servants with torches.

BRA. It is too true an evil : gone she is ;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her ? O unhappy girl !
With the Moor, say'st thou ? Who would be a
father !

How didst thou know 'twas she ? O, she deceives
me

Past thought ! What said she to you ? Get more
tapers :

Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think
you ?

ROD. Truly, I think they are.

BRA. O heaven! How got she out? O treason
of the blood!

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act. Is there not charms
By which the property of youth and maidhood
May be abused? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

ROD. Yes, sir, I have indeed.

BRA. 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?

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

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

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another street.

Enter OTHELLO, IAGO, and Attendants with torches.

IAGO. Though in the trade of war I have slain
men,

Yet do I hold it very stuff o' the conscience
To do no contrived murder: I lack iniquity
Sometimes to do me service: nine or ten times
I had thought to have yerked him here under the
ribs.

OTH. 'Tis better as it is.

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

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

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

OTH. Not I: I must be found:

My parts, my title and my perfect soul
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they?

IAGO. By Janus, I think no.

Enter CASSIO, and certain Officers with torches.

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

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

OTH. What is the matter, think you?

CAS. 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, raised and met,
Are at the duke's already: you have been hotly
call'd for;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
The senate hath sent about three several quests
To search you out.

OTH. 'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you. *[Exit.*

CAS. Ancient, what makes he here?

IAGO. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded a land
carack:

If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

CAS. I do not understand.

IAGO. He's married.

CAS.

To who?

Re-enter OTHELLO.

IAGO. Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

OTH.

Have with you.

CAS. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

IAGO. It is Brabantio. General, be advised;

He comes to bad intent.

*Enter BRABANTIO, RODERIGO, and Officers
with torches and weapons.*

OTH.

Holla! stand there!

ROD. Signior, it is the Moor.

BRA.

Down with him, thief!

[They draw on both sides.

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

OTH. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew
will rust them.Good signior, you shall more command with years
Than with your weapons.BRA. O thou foul thief, where hast thou stow'd
my daughter?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her;
For I'll refer me to all things of sense,
If she in chains of magic were not bound,
Whether a maid so tender, fair and happy,
So opposite to marriage that she shunn'd
The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,
Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
Of such a thing as thou, to fear, not to delight.
Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense

That thou hast practised on her with foul charms,
Abused her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weaken motion : I'll have 't disputed on ;
'Tis probable and palpable to thinking.
I therefore apprehend and do attach thee
For an abuser of the world, a practiser
Of arts inhibited and out of warrant.
Lay hold upon him : if he do resist,
Subdue him at his peril.

ОТН. Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest :
Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
Without a prompter. Where will you that I go
To answer this your charge ?

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

OTH. What if I do obey?
How may the duke be therewith satisfied,
Whose messengers are here about my side,
Upon some present business of the state
To bring me to him?

FIRST OFF. 'Tis true, most worthy signior ;
The duke's in council, and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

BRA. 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;

For if such actions may have passage free,
Bond-slaves and pagans shall our statesmen be.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.

A council-chamber.

*The DUKE and Senators sitting at a table ;
Officers attending.*

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

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

DUKE. And mine, a hundred and forty.

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

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

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

FIRST OFF. A messenger from the galleys.

Enter a Sailor.

DUKE. Now, what's the business ?

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

DUKE. How say you by this change ?