

Othello abbreviated

Act 3, Scene 3

Deception

Situation: Doing her best to help Cassio regain his position as Othello's lieutenant, innocent Desdemona lobbies her husband on Cassio's behalf. The cunning and deceptive Iago independently through innuendo causes Othello to question his wife's faithfulness.

IAGO: For Michael Cassio, I dare be sworn I think that he is honest.

OTHELLO: I think so too.

IAGO: Men should be what they seem.

OTHELLO: I prithee speak to me as to thy thinkings, as thou dost ruminare, and give thy worst of thoughts the worst of words.

Iago to Othello, No. 2

Perchance I am mistaken in my guess,
As it is my nature's plague, I confess,
To let my jealousy shape faults that shame
Me, so your quiet could be disturbed but
To know my thoughts. Dear my lord, the good name
In our fair lives is the immediate
Jewel of our souls. He that steals my purse takes
Trash, but he that filches my good name makes
Me poor. Jealousy's the green-eyed monster
Which doth mock its victim. The wife whose sin
Is not hidden, whose husband distrusts her,
Knows he's been wronged, and loves her not, lives in
Bliss. But he who loves and has not found out,
But suspects, doth live a pained life in doubt.

OTHELLO: O misery!

IAGO: Good God, the souls of all my tribe defend from jealousy!

OTHELLO: Why, why is this? No, Iago, 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. I speak not yet of proof. Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio; wear your eyes thus, not jealous nor secure. 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: Dost thou say so?

IAGO: She did deceive her father, marrying you.