

## Othello abbreviated

Act 2, Scene 3.1

### Deviousness

**Situation:** Setting Cassio up for a fall, Iago talks Cassio into drinking too much, saying “What, man! ‘Tis a night of revels.” Too much wine causes Cassio to get into a fight with Montano, a Cypriot official. By this time Iago’s friend Roderigo had angered Cassio. Cassio, upset with Roderigo and having had too much to drink, easily gets into his fight with Montano. The whole unfortunate episode was set-up by Iago. These unpleasant events happen just before Othello enters. Othello becomes understandably angered by the fighting and commotion.

OTHELLO: Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil. Your name is great in mouths of wisest censure. What’s the matter that you unlace your reputation thus. Give me answer to it.

MONTANO: Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger. Your officer Iago can inform you while I spare speech, which something now offends me, of all that I do know, unless self-charity be sometimes a vice, and to defend ourselves it be a sin when violence assails us.

OTHELLO: If I stir, or do but lift this arm, the best of you shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know how this foul rout began. ‘Tis monstrous. Iago, who began ‘t?

MONTANO: If thou dost deliver more or less than truth, thou art no soldier.

IAGO: There is no need to refer to my soldiership.

### Iago to Othello, No. 1

I’d rather words from my mouth would ne’er flow  
Than have them do offense to Cassio.  
Yet I persuade myself that by speaking  
The truth nothing shall wrong him. We were here  
Talking, when chasing a scared man, waving  
His sword, comes Cassio, the man in fear  
Of his life. Montano asks Cassio  
To pause while I pursued the poor fellow,  
Who outran my purpose. When I came back  
You had arrived to part them. I did fret  
For him, seeing his untimely attack.  
But men are men; the best sometimes forget.  
Though Cassio did some little wrong to  
Him, rage can o’ercome some men who serve you.

OTHELLO: I know, Iago, thy honesty and love doth make light of this matter. Cassio, I love thee, but nevermore be officer of mine.