

Othello abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 2.1

Remorse

Situation: Believing Cassio has been killed, Othello says to himself “Desdemona, your dear lies dead.” He leaves for home to smother his wife. Separately, Iago, to protect himself from what Roderigo might say, kills his friend Roderigo, Roderigo having only wounded Cassio.

Desdemona is asleep in her bed. Othello enters with a light.

Othello to himself

I'll not shed her blood, nor scar her whiter
Than snow skin, as smooth as alabaster.
Yet she must die or else she'll betray more
Men. It's the cause, my soul, the cause, not you
Chaste stars. It is the cause. I'll close the door
And douse the light, and do what I must do.
If I quench the candle I can restore
The former light should I decide wherefore
To repent, but once I put out thy light,
I know not where there is the heat that can
Your light relume, or let your faithless flight
Resume. I must weep, but these tears won't ban
What I here must do. 'Tis the sorrow of
Heaven that I must strike the one I love.

Desdemona awakes.

DESDEMONA: Who's there? Othello? Will you come to bed, my lord?

OTHELLO: Have you prayed tonight, Desdemona?

DESDEMONA: What may you mean by that?

OTHELLO: Well, do it, and be brief. I would not kill thy soul.

DESDEMONA: Talk you of killing?

OTHELLO: Ay, I do.

DESDEMONA: Then heaven have mercy on me.

OTHELLO: Peace, and be still.