

Othello abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Resentment

Situation: Othello has just eloped with Desdemona, a leading Venetian senator's beautiful daughter. Othello recently chose Michael Cassio as his lieutenant and Iago as his standard bearer. Iago considers the assignment demeaning. Iago lets his friend Roderigo know in an indirect way that as a result of this insult he will avenge the Moor.

RODERIGO: 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. Now, sir, be judge yourself whether I in any just term am obligated to love the Moor.

RODERIGO: I would not follow him, then.

Iago to Roderigo

O, sir, be content. We cannot all be
Masters, nor all masters cannot truly
Be followed. I with care follow the Moor
To serve my own interests. You shall note there's
Many a knave when he's grown too old, sure
As the donkey, serving for food, that wears
Out his time, is cashiered. As God rules me,
I follow but myself, not for duty,
But seeming so for my peculiar end.
Others keep their hearts to themselves, throwing
But shows of service on their lords. I'll send,
When my outward action shows, exposing
To all, the true figure my heart doth weave.
Soon then I'll wear my heart upon my sleeve.

IAGO: I am not what I seem to be. Call up her father. Rouse him. Go after Othello, proclaim him in the streets, incense her kinsmen, and plague him with flies.

RODERIGO: Here is her father's house. I'll call aloud. What ho, Brabantio!

IAGO: Awake! What ho, Brabantio! Thieves, thieves! Look to your house, your daughter, and your money bags.