

Othello abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 1

Ruthlessness

Situation: Roderigo is by now upset with Iago, convinced that Iago has not given Desdemona the jewels he had given him to give to her, saying “the jewels would have corrupted a nun.” But he lets Iago convince him that by killing Cassio, Roderigo could reinstate his relationship with Desdemona. Iago convinces Roderigo that Othello (and therefore Desdemona) would be required to remain in Cyprus if Cassio were to somehow die.

IAGO: Here stand behind this bulk. Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home. Fear nothing. I'll be at thy elbow.

RODERIGO: Be near at hand. I may miscarry in 't.

IAGO: Be bold and take thy stand.

He moves aside.

RODERIGO: I have no great devotion to the deed. 'Tis but a man gone. Forth, my sword!

He draws his sword.

Iago to himself, No. 4

If he kills Cassio and Cassio

Kills him, it's my gain that their deaths be so.

Roderigo's tomorrow must not come

To be. I dare not let that happen to

Me, for he may seek restitution from

Me for all the gold and jewels that I through

Trickery took from him as ever so

Fine gifts for Desdemon. If Cassio

At the hand of Roderigo doth brook

Death, I'm at risk, for he hath in his day

To day life so much beauty that I look

Ugly when compared. Further, the Moor may

Unfold my treachery to him; stand I

There in much peril. Cassio must die.

Cassio enters.

RODERIGO: Villain, thou diest!

He thrusts his sword at Cassio.

CASSIO: My coat is better than thou know'st.

He draws and stabs Roderigo.

RODERIGO: O, I am slain!

Roderigo falls. Iago stabs Cassio in the leg and exits.

CASSIO: I am maimed forever!