

Details Summary of Othello

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Act - I

Othello and Desdemona's Secret Marriage

Act I: Scene 1: Roderigo, a nobleman, and Iago, a soldier, are arguing on a street in Venice. Roderigo is in love with a lady named Desdemona. He has given Iago a lot of money because Iago promised to give gifts to Desdemona from Roderigo and speak nicely about him to her. Roderigo wants to marry Desdemona. But now, they hear that Desdemona has secretly left her father's house. Her father is Brabantio, a Senator. Desdemona has run away with Othello, a Moor (an African man) who is a General in the army.

Roderigo is upset because he feels he has lost both Desdemona and his money. Iago then tells Roderigo that he likes to trick people and lie to get what he wants. He also has a plan. Iago hates Othello because Othello gave the job of lieutenant to Cassio, a job Iago wanted. Iago wants to bring Othello down, and in the end, Roderigo will have Desdemona. Their first step is to wake up Brabantio and cause trouble. They shout and knock loudly until Brabantio comes to his window. Iago tells Brabantio that Desdemona has run away with Othello. Brabantio becomes very angry. He joins Roderigo to wake the neighbors and start looking for Desdemona.

Act I: Scene 2: Iago tells Othello that someone might try to end his marriage with Desdemona. But Othello feels safe because he is an important man in Venice. Othello is going to meet the Duke and some Senators because there is an emergency. Cassio arrives to bring Othello to the meeting. Iago tells Cassio that Othello has married Desdemona. Brabantio and his group arrive, and Brabantio angrily threatens Othello. He accuses Othello of using magic to make Desdemona fall in love with him. Brabantio says Desdemona would never marry Othello willingly. Brabantio wants Othello to be arrested, but they all go to meet the Duke first because it's urgent.

Act I: Scene 3: Many reports have come from Cyprus. The reports say that a Turkish fleet is going to attack Cyprus. The number of ships isn't clear, but there is definitely danger. Othello comes into the meeting with Cassio, Brabantio, Iago, and others. The Duke immediately asks Othello to lead the army in protecting Cyprus.

Then, Brabantio speaks up about his daughter. He says his daughter must have been tricked with magic because she would never choose to marry Othello on her own. The Duke says he will help Brabantio with a legal case against whoever did this, but when he finds out that it is Othello, he asks Othello to explain what happened.

Othello speaks calmly and explains how he and Desdemona fell in love. He tells his story in a powerful way. Othello then asks the Duke to call Desdemona so she can speak for herself. Iago goes to get her. After hearing Othello's story, the Duke says that he also thinks his daughter would have fallen in love with Othello if she had heard the same story. Desdemona arrives and speaks. She says that she respects her father for raising her, but now that she is married, her loyalty belongs to her husband, just like her mother's loyalty belongs to her father. Desdemona falls in love with Othello because of the stories he tells her about his life. Othello gives Desdemona a handkerchief as a special gift early in their marriage.

The handkerchief is very important to Othello because it is a family heirloom given to him by his mother. She told him it had magical powers to keep love strong. Othello gives it to Desdemona as a symbol of his love for her.

Othello is told he must go to Cyprus immediately to defend it, and Desdemona asks if she can go, too. The Duke agrees. Othello must leave that very night, so he asks Iago to follow later on another ship and bring Desdemona along with everything she needs. Iago's wife, Emilia, will take care of Desdemona as her maid. As Othello is leaving, Brabantio tells him to be careful because Desdemona deceived her father, so she might deceive Othello too. But Othello is sure that Desdemona is loyal to him.

Iago and Roderigo are left alone. Roderigo is very sad and says he wants to drown himself. Iago tells him that being so sad is silly. He convinces Roderigo to go to Cyprus and wait for Desdemona. Iago says Desdemona will soon get tired of Othello, and then Roderigo will have his chance. Iago tells Roderigo to bring plenty of money because he will help him win Desdemona.

When Iago is alone on stage, he thinks about his situation. He feels happy because he has secured his money. He has also heard a rumor that Othello slept with his wife, Emilia. Even though he doesn't believe this rumor, he decides to act as if it's true because it will fuel his

hate for Othello. Iago also plans to take Cassio's job of lieutenant, which he believes should have been his in the first place.

Act - II

Iago Starts His Evil Plan

Act II: Scene 1: From now on, everything happens in Cyprus, in the Venetian military fort. Montano, the Governor of Cyprus, is waiting for the Venetian soldiers to arrive. But their ships are delayed because of a big storm at sea. A messenger comes and says that the storm has damaged the Turkish fleet so much that Cyprus is safe now. The first Venetian ship to arrive is Cassio's ship, followed by Desdemona's ship. Desdemona's first question is about Othello. She is worried about him. As they wait for Othello, they talk, and Iago watches carefully, thinking of a way to use Cassio's politeness to his advantage.

Othello finally arrives. He is happy and victorious. Othello, Desdemona, and everyone else go into the fortress. Iago stays behind to talk to Roderigo. Iago tells Roderigo that Desdemona is actually in love with Cassio. He convinces Roderigo to start a fight with Cassio. This will cause trouble and might get Cassio removed from his position. Then, Iago, alone, says how much he hates Othello. His plan isn't fully clear yet, but Iago is going to try to make Othello crazy with jealousy.

Act II: Scene 2: A herald announces that there will be a big celebration tonight. They are celebrating two things: the Turkish fleet is no longer a threat, and Othello has just gotten married.

Act II: Scene 3: Cassio is in charge of the night watch during the party. He gets instructions from Othello. Othello tells the soldiers to drink only a little and stay peaceful. Cassio and Iago are the ones responsible for making sure everything goes smoothly. Then Othello and Desdemona go to bed together for the first time since they got married.

When they are alone, Iago starts talking to Cassio. He makes jokes about Desdemona, but Cassio doesn't react. Then, Iago invites Cassio to drink with him. Cassio says no at first, but Iago keeps encouraging him until he agrees. After Cassio drinks, Iago pushes Roderigo to start a fight with Cassio. Others join the fight, and Iago sends Roderigo to ring the alarm bell. The

bell wakes Othello and his soldiers, who rush to the scene. Othello demands to know who started the fight. Iago pretends to be reluctant but finally says it is Cassio. Othello is very upset and immediately takes away Cassio's post. Then, he and Desdemona go back to bed.

Later, Iago gives Cassio advice. He tells Cassio to ask Desdemona to speak to Othello for him and help him get his job back. Cassio thinks this is a good idea. Iago then gets his wife, Emilia, to arrange a private meeting between Cassio and Desdemona.

Act - III

Othello Becomes Jealous

Act III: Scene 1: Cassio meets with some musicians and a clown (a country person) and asks the clown to go find Emilia for him. Iago sends Emilia to talk to Cassio. Emilia tells Cassio that Desdemona and Othello are talking about what happened the night before. Desdemona is speaking in favor of Cassio, and Othello, who likes Cassio, is planning to forgive him and give him his lieutenant post back when the time is right.

Act III: Scene 2: Othello sends a letter back to Venice by ship. After that, he goes to check the fort to make sure everything is secure.

Act III: Scene 3: Cassio speaks to Desdemona, asking her to help him by talking to Othello. He wants Desdemona to convince Othello to forgive him and give him his post back. Desdemona agrees to help because Cassio is an old friend of Othello's. She promises to talk to Othello about it many times until he forgives Cassio and brings him back.

When Othello and Iago enter, Cassio quickly leaves because he feels ashamed of what happened the night before. As Cassio leaves, he hugs Desdemona. Iago sees this and makes a sly comment, "Hmm, I don't like that," trying to make Othello suspicious. Desdemona talks about Cassio, and Othello, wanting to please her, agrees to meet Cassio, but he is lost in his own thoughts.

Later, Iago talks to Othello, dropping hints that he knows something bad but won't say it. Othello says he won't get jealous, but we can see he is already starting to worry. He starts thinking that maybe Desdemona really doesn't love him, just like her father said. Othello feels insecure and wonders if he's not good enough for Desdemona. Iago leaves, and Othello

becomes more confused, thinking maybe his wife is looking at other men. He feels he might need to stop loving her. But he tries to convince himself that it isn't true.

When Desdemona comes back, Othello looks at her carefully, searching for signs of betrayal. She tries to calm him by using a handkerchief, but Othello angrily pushes it away. They go in for dinner, and Emilia, Desdemona's maid, picks up the handkerchief. Her husband, Iago, had asked her to steal it many times before. Emilia decides to make a copy of it for Iago. When Iago arrives, he grabs the handkerchief from Emilia.

When Othello returns, Iago notices that Othello is restless and upset. Othello starts talking wildly, convinced that Desdemona has cheated on him. Othello angrily demands proof of Desdemona's unfaithfulness. Iago, cornered, quickly makes up a story. He says that Cassio talked in his sleep, hugged him, called him "Desdemona," and cursed Othello. Iago also tells Othello that he saw Cassio wiping his face with a handkerchief with strawberries on it, the same handkerchief Othello had given Desdemona.

Othello, filled with rage, no longer feels love. He now wants revenge. Othello vows to take action, and Iago promises to help him. Othello wants Cassio dead, and Iago agrees to do it. Othello also starts thinking about how to kill Desdemona.

Act III: Scene 4: Desdemona sends for Cassio, hoping to tell him that she spoke to Othello for him. At the same time, she is worried because she lost her special handkerchief. When Othello enters, he says he has a headache and asks for a handkerchief to wrap his head. He insists that it must be the strawberry-embroidered one. Desdemona tries to talk about Cassio again and avoid his questions about the handkerchief, but Othello becomes furious and storms out.

Meanwhile, Cassio gives the handkerchief to Bianca, a woman he is seeing. He found the handkerchief in his room (Iago had placed it there) and asks her to make a copy of it for him. Cassio says he will return the original when he finds the owner. Bianca immediately realizes that the handkerchief belongs to another woman and gets angry. She blames Cassio of having another lover.

Act - IV

Othello Decides to Kill Desdemona

Act IV: Scene 1: In a conversation, Iago tells Othello that Cassio has confessed to having sex with Desdemona. This news is too much for Othello to handle, and he becomes very upset and faints. When Cassio arrives, Iago tells him that Othello is having an epileptic fit and that he has had these fits before. Instead of helping Othello, Iago says they should let the fit pass. Iago sends Cassio away but asks him to come back later. When Othello wakes up, he is filled with thoughts of being a man whose wife has cheated on him. Iago tells Othello to hide and watch Cassio when he returns. Iago says he will make Cassio talk about his romantic encounters with Desdemona.

Othello hides and watches, but he is too emotional to realize that Iago is tricking him. Iago talks to Cassio about Bianca, but Othello can only see Cassio laughing and smiling. He thinks Cassio is laughing about Desdemona. Then, Bianca comes in with Desdemona's handkerchief, which she throws back at Cassio. When Othello sees the handkerchief, he believes it is the final proof that Desdemona has been unfaithful. Now, Othello is certain that he must kill both Cassio and Desdemona that night.

Act IV: Scene 2: Othello questions Emilia about Desdemona and Cassio. Emilia tells him that nothing inappropriate has happened between them. But Othello doesn't believe her. He thinks Desdemona is so clever that she has even fooled her maid. Othello then talks to Desdemona in private. He threatens to send her away and calls her horrible names like "whore" and "strumpet." Desdemona, shocked, denies everything.

Emilia enters, and Othello leaves. Desdemona is exhausted and confused. She knows she is being punished but has no idea why. Emilia suspects that someone has turned Othello against Desdemona and made him jealous. When Desdemona asks Iago for advice, Iago lies and says Othello is only angry because of his work with the government.

Later, Roderigo tells Iago that he is tired of chasing Desdemona and wants to give up. Iago then makes a bold plan. He tells him that Othello and Desdemona will leave Cyprus shortly. He convinces Roderigo to kill Cassio, saying that Cassio's death will prevent Othello from being sent elsewhere and, therefore, keep Desdemona in Cyprus. Then, shortly, he will win Desdemona. Roderigo, although unsure, agrees to go along with the plan.

Act IV: Scene 3: After dinner, Othello tells Desdemona to go to bed and dismiss her maid. Desdemona and Emilia talk about what's happening. Emilia thinks Desdemona's marriage to Othello was a mistake, but Desdemona doesn't regret it. Desdemona feels that something bad

is going to happen. She asks Emilia that if she dies, she wants to be wrapped in one of her wedding sheets, which are now on the bed. Desdemona then sings the "Willow Song," remembering a maid named Barbary whose lover went mad, left her, and she died singing this sad song.

Act - V

The Tragic Deaths

Act V: Scene 1: Meanwhile, at night, on a street in Cyprus, Iago gives Roderigo a weapon and tells him to wait for Cassio and then kill him. Iago stays nearby, hiding, as Roderigo tries to attack Cassio but fails. Instead, Cassio wounds Roderigo. Iago quickly jumps into the fight, wounds Cassio from behind in his leg, and runs away. Othello hears Cassio's cries and thinks that Iago has killed Cassio as planned. Othello runs off to complete his plan. Graziano and Lodovico arrive, looking for what caused the noise. Iago then shows up, acting like he just got there. He pretends to be worried about Cassio, and then he kills Roderigo, acting as if he's punishing him for attacking Cassio. Bianca arrives and is concerned about Cassio's injury. Iago tries to blame her for the attack on Cassio. Lodovico, Graziano, and others help carry Cassio away to get his wound treated.

Act V: Scene 2: In the play's final scene, Desdemona is asleep in bed when Othello enters with a candle. He is calm. He won't shed her blood, he whispers, but he must kill her or else "she'll betray more men." He kisses her. She wakes up and invites him to come to bed, but Othello tells her to pray for forgiveness before she dies. He doesn't want to kill her soul. Desdemona realizes that Othello wants to kill her. She becomes scared, though she knows she is innocent. She cries and begs him not to kill her. She asks him to banish her instead or let her live a little longer, but Othello smothers her, likely with a pillow.

Emilia knocks on the door. Othello hides Desdemona's body behind the curtain beside the bed and opens the door. Emilia brings unexpected news: Cassio has killed Roderigo, not the other way around. Then, from the bed, Desdemona speaks, saying she has been wrongly murdered. Emilia calls for help. Desdemona, with her dying breath, says she is innocent and that no one killed her, and then she dies.

Othello and Emilia debate. Othello says he killed Desdemona because she was unfaithful. Emilia insisted that Desdemona was loyal. Othello says that Cassio was with Desdemona, and

Iago knew everything. Emilia suddenly understands the truth and repeatedly says, "My husband." Othello talks about justice and how much he loves Desdemona, but he still believes Iago is honest. Emilia curses Iago and calls for help.

Montano, Gratiano, Iago, and others rush in. Emilia challenges Iago to defend himself. Iago admits that Desdemona was with Cassio, but Emilia knows this is a lie. She tells everyone how she found the handkerchief and gave it to Iago because he asked her to steal it. Iago, angry and desperate, stabs Emilia and runs away. As she dies, Emilia tells Othello that Desdemona truly loves him. Othello finally realizes he was tricked by Iago.

Iago is caught and brought back. Othello and Cassio demand to know why he did all this, but Iago refuses to explain and says he will never speak again. Othello, heartbroken, asks everyone to remember him honestly as someone who "loved not wisely, but too well." Then, he stabs himself, falls on the bed, and dies.

Lodovico takes control. He gives Othello's house and property to Gratiano, who is Othello's relative through marriage. Cassio is now in charge and will decide Iago's punishment. Lodovico will return to Venice with the sad news.