

## DE NIEUWE TONEELBIBLIOTHEEK

Deze tekst is afkomstig van de online bibliotheek op [www.denieuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl](http://www.denieuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl).

De rechten, inclusief en met name de rechten voor uitvoering, liggen voor alle teksten bij de auteur en het is dan ook verplicht om voor elke vorm van uitvoering toestemming bij de betreffende schrijver aan te vragen. Voor elke schrijver is het van groot belang om te weten of zijn teksten worden uitgevoerd, dus neem alstublieft bij elke lezing, encenering, bespreking in het onderwijs e.d. even contact op met de auteur! Het contact adres voor deze tekst is:

<b>Schrijver</b>	Dood Paard
<b>Titel</b>	Bye-Bye (Othello - adaptation for two men)
<b>Jaar</b>	2011
<b>Uitvoering</b>	

Copyright (C) 2011 by Dood Paard

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

# *OTHELLO*

AN ADAPTATION BY  
KUNO BAKKER & GILLIS BIESHEUVEL

---

DOOD PAARD

ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
SAM GARRETT

De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek, Text #125  
1604, William Shakespeare  
© 2011, adaptation Dood Paard  
© 2011, English translation Sam Garrett  
First printing, 2012

ISBN 978-94-6076-125-6  
NUR 307

No part of this book may be reproduced in any  
way without written permission from the  
authors and De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek

*Editorial staff*  
Alexandra Koch  
Ditte Pelgrom  
Sandra Tromp Meesters  
*Typography & lay-out*  
Connie Nijman  
*Print*  
Hollandridderskerk, Ridderkerk

[info@denieuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl](mailto:info@denieuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl)  
*Postal address*  
De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek  
Willem Beukelsstraat 43  
1097 CT Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

You can purchase this book at:  
[www.deniuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl](http://www.deniuwetoneelbibliotheek.nl)

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

# OTHELLO

AN ADAPTATION BY  
KUNO BAKKER & GILLIS BIESHEUVEL

ENGLISH TRANSLATION  
SAM GARRETT

DE NIEUWE  
TONEELBIBLIOTHEEK

*The Othello in this booklet is an adaptation of Shakespeare's text. This adaptation / translation was made for the performance of Bye Bye, by the Dood Paard theater company, which had its Dutch-language premiere in the spring of 2011.*

*The main idea behind the adaptation was that it was to be performed by two actors. In the course of our work on it, we were particularly struck by the brilliant dialogues between Iago and Othello, which form the core of the play. We began by translating those parts first and then, like ripples fanning out from a stone tossed into a pond, added those scenes which we felt were needed to create enough context to understand the main characters' motives or, just as often, to simply gaze on them in amazement.*

*In translating Shakespeare's texts into Dutch, we went in search of an idiom that would combine immediacy with poetry. As with all of Dood Paard's Shakespeare translations, we did not attempt to follow the metric pattern of the original.*

*Nevertheless, the tone and color of the word and the rhythm of the sentence have been granted an importance equal in full measure to the meaning of the text itself.*

*The English version of our adaptation was done by prize-winning translator Sam Garrett. In it he has transposed the play of lightness and earnest, of humor and tragedy, into a beautiful text which does full justice to our original while bearing a highly personal stamp of his own.*

*Kuno Bakker and Gillis Biesheuvel*



# Dramatis personae

RODERIGO

JAGO

OTHELLO

DESDEMONA

EMILIA

I

*act I-I*

RODERIGO You must be joking.

Iago! What am I supposed to think?

I give you all my money  
and still don't have a clue.

IAGO Jesus Christ.

Listen to me.

I find this baffling as well.

Disgusting.

RODERIGO I mean

you do hate him, don't you?

IAGO That's putting it mildly.

Three people, all three of them with clout  
lobbied personally on my behalf



to make me his lieutenant.

I know what I'm worth

and what I deserve.

But arrogant and self-satisfied as he is

he brushes them off

with some cock-and-bull story

full warlike rhetoric

and in the end he sends them packing.

'Actually,' he says

'I've already picked my lieutenant.'

And who do you think that was?

Actually, some number-cruncher

by the name of Michael Cassio

from Florence, of all places

who knows of war

mostly what he reads in books.

Much wind but little lightning.

But he got the job.

And I

who he saw fight in Rhodes and Cyprus

against Christian and heathen alike

am written off

at the expense

of a walking balance sheet.

An accountant he chooses

to be his lieutenant

and I, for Christ's sake

the standard bearer to

His Royal Swarthiness.

RODERIGO I'd rather be his ax man.

IAGO What do you expect?

The system's rotten to the core.

Promotion goes by way of a word put in

and not, as before

by seniority

by standing in line and waiting your turn.

Judge for yourself, then  
what Othello is in my eyes.

RODERIGO Then I wouldn't work for him.

IAGO Don't you worry about that.

I work for him in the service of myself.

Were I Othello, I'd think twice  
before cuddling up to Iago.

And should my acts  
ever betray my inner motives

I soon will find my heart lying in my hand  
as food for ravens.

I am not what I am.

2

*act I-2*

IAGO Although I've killed my share  
of men at war  
I'm not in favor of cold-blooded murder.  
I should probably be less scrupulous.  
I felt like puncturing Brabantio  
like an overblown balloon.

OTHELLO It is good that you did not.

IAGO Hmm, it wasn't easy.  
But listen, are you two really married?  
For Brabantio has connections and  
will force you to annulment  
or riddle you with complaints

and bend the law  
until it meets his ends.

OTHELLO Let him try.

My reputation will see to it  
that his charges are dismissed.

If need be

I'll brag about my royal lineage.

You know, Iago

if I didn't love Desdemona so much

I'd trade in this hominess in an instant  
for the jewels of distant shores.

What are those torches?

IAGO That is the father, out for blood  
with his howling band of buddies.

Go inside quickly, my lord.

OTHELLO Not me

let them find me.

My deeds, my rights and my uprightness

will absolve me of all blame.

Are you sure it's them?

3

*act 1-3*

RODERIGO Iago.

IAGO Who's there?

RODERIGO What must I do now?

IAGO Go to bed and go to sleep.

RODERIGO I'm going to drown myself  
on the spot.

IAGO If you do that  
I'll never talk to you again.

You idiot.

RODERIGO Idiocy is living on  
when living is a torment.

Dying is the medicine prescribed to us  
when death is our doctor.

IAGO Your clichés are deadlier by far.

I've been around the block a few times Roderigo  
and since the day I learned the difference between  
happiness and pain

I have never met a man  
who knew how to love himself.

I'd rather be a baboon  
than drown myself over some chickadee.

RODERIGO What am I to do?

I'm ashamed to be in love like this  
but I have no power to change a thing.

IAGO No power?

No power in your pants, you mean!

We ourselves decide who or what we are.

Our body is a garden, our will the gardener.

And the question is

will we grow nettles, or will we sow lettuce  
plant sage and harvest thyme?



Do we choose a single herb  
or do we go for variety?

Do we opt for laziness  
or do we wield the hoe?

It's our will that decides.

If life's scales

did not weigh reason against urge

our passion and filthy nature

would move us

to the most perverse of deeds.

But we have understanding

to rein in our impulses

our fleshly lusts and unbridled randiness.

From which I deduce that what you call love

is only a bad case of crabgrass.

RODERIGO Nothing could be less true.

IAGO Aw, your lust whines

and your will surrenders.

Come on, be a man.

Drowning is for kittens and for puppies.

I am your friend

and I bind myself with bonds of steel

to that which you have coming.

Never could I help you better than now.

Cash in your holdings.

Go off with them to war.

And paste a beard

on that sweet puss of yours.

See to money, I say.

Desdemona won't stay in love

with that camel jockey

not for long

– see to money –

nor he with her.

It was a flame that flared up

and will gutter just as quickly

See to money, I say.

These Arabs are always in for something new.

Bring all the money you have.

The food that tastes as sweet

as honey to him now

will soon turn bitter as black tea.

She'll have to trade him in

for something younger.

When she tires of his body

she'll see the error of her ways.

She'll trade him in. For sure.

So see to money.

If you need to waste yourself, well then

choose something more elegant

than drowning –

Gather all the money you can.

A cold day in hell  
it will be when some little sacrament  
and the brittle vows between  
a wandering Berber  
and a highly discerning Venetian dame  
can keep you from enjoying her favors.  
Go get your money.  
Drowning is for wets.  
Better to gag with pleasure  
at the end of your rope  
than to wear cement overshoes  
and so miss paddling in her wading pool.

RODERIGO And you  
will you stick out your neck for me  
if need be?

IAGO Have I ever failed you?  
Come on, get your money.

I said it once

and I' ll say it again:

I hate that Berber.

It is whispered that he

between my very own sheets

has performed duties reserved for me.

I don't know if it's true

but my suspicion

tells me so

and prompts my hand.

So I have reason enough to hate

and you not a jot less.

Let's work together.

You make him wear the cuckold's horns

have your fun, and let me have my way.

Hurry now, scrape up some cash.

Tomorrow more of this.

Bye bye.

RODERIGO See you.

IAGO And not another word of drowning, hear?

RODERIGO I am a changed man.

IAGO Get moving, see you then.

And bring enough cash.

RODERIGO I' ll sell all that I hold.

4

*act II-I*

IAGO Come here.

If you are brave, listen to me now.

Tonight Cassio stands guard.

And you know

that Desdemona's stuck on him.

RODERIGO On him? Preposterous.

IAGO Sssh.

She fell head over heels for that Arab

with his big talk and his whopping lies.

But is she going to stick

with that mythomaniac?

You don't believe that, do you?

Looks do count, after all.

How much pleasure could she derive  
from his sooty face?

Once the sporting's over  
and the blood has cooled  
only beauty, compatibility in age  
behavior and appearance  
– all things that Berber lacks –  
can ignite the fire of lust once more.

Her sensitive little self will feel misused  
and be revolted by the Arab.

Nature will force her to choose anew.

And who but Cassio will seize the prize?

A mover and a shaker, concerned above all  
with seeming reasonable and civilized  
in the service of his goatish lusts.

Besides, he's young and cute  
that's why the sweet thing  
already has her eye on him.



RODERIGO I can't believe that.

She's a pious girl.

IAGO A pious pussy, you mean.

Her wine is from no different grapes  
than any.

Were she so pious  
she never would have gone for that Berber.

A pious little twat.

You saw for yourself  
how she diddled with his fingers?

RODERIGO Of course  
but that was pure politeness.

IAGO Pure randiness  
which promises little piety.

But listen

I brought you here from Venice  
and ask that you now stand guard  
along with Cassio

who doesn't know you from Adam.

See if you can piss him off

by speaking loudly

or questioning his competence

or somesuch.

RODERIGO Good.

IAGO He's hot-tempered

and quick to take offense.

And might even strike you

with his pikestaff.

Get him to do that.

It's enough

to make the Cypriots rise up in arms

and force him to resign his post

in order to restore the island's peace.

That will pave the way for your desires

and give me the proper means

to reach our end.

RODERIGO I will do so, if I'm able.

IAGO Of course you're able.

I have to bring his bags ashore now.

Adieu.

RODERIGO Bye bye.

*exit Roderigo*

IAGO I believe

that Cassio is truly mad about her.

And she him.

That Berber, I hate to say

is level-headed, loving and loyal

and will, I think

be a good husband to Desdemona.

I too have my eye on her

but not purely out of lust

no, more out of vengefulness

for I suspect our horny Arab

has been riding my little pony

and the thought alone  
devours me from the inside out.  
Nothing will heal my heart  
but to make him pay  
woman for woman.  
Or else I'll pour that Berber full of a jealousy  
from which no man can recover.  
Young Cassio is going to take some knocks  
and rightly so  
for I fear that Cassio, too  
has blown his nose in my pillow.

5

*act III-3*

DESDEMONA Be certain of this, Cassio  
that I shall do for you  
all that lies within my power.  
Do not doubt it for a moment.  
Your rank will be restored.  
Be sure of that  
when I commit to something  
I keep on to the bitter end.  
Othello shall not rest.  
I'll keep him awake till he concedes  
and talk at him till he surrenders.  
His bed will be a blackboard  
his table a witness stand.

At everything he does I shall bring up  
Cassio's plight.

Rest assured, Cassio  
for I, your counsel, would rather die  
than surrender your case.

*exit Cassio and Desdemona*

*enter Othello and Iago*

IAGO Hmm, don't like the looks of this.

OTHELLO What did you say?

IAGO Nothing. At least... No, forget it.

OTHELLO Was that Cassio I saw bid farewell to my  
wife?

IAGO Cassio?

But why would he sneak away  
when he saw you?

So guiltily.

OTHELLO I think it was he.

*enter Desdemona*

DESDEMONA Hi, love.

I was just approached by a man  
whose spirit groans  
beneath your disapproval.

OTHELLO Who's that?

DESDEMONA Your lieutenant, Cassio.

Listen, if my charm or influence  
means anything to you  
Then give him back his job, okay?  
For truly, if he does not love you  
and it was not by accident  
but purposefully  
that he did any wrong  
than I don't know who to trust anymore.  
Please, take him back on.

OTHELLO Did I just see him on his way out?

DESDEMONA Indeed

and he was so deeply shaken

that he left a portion of his sorrow  
behind, with me, and now I feel it too.  
Take him back on.

OTHELLO Not now, Desdemona  
some other time.

DESDEMONA But soon then.

OTHELLO For you, my sweet, as soon as I can.

DESDEMONA Tonight, at dinner?

OTHELLO No, not tonight.

DESDEMONA Tomorrow lunch, then?

OTHELLO I won't be coming home for lunch.

I have a meeting with the officers by the wall.

DESDEMONA Tomorrow night, then?

Or else Tuesday morning?

Tuesday afternoon, or evening?

Let's say Wednesday morning.

Please, tell me when

but make it no longer than three days.



Really, he is sorry.

And a little slip-up like that

– except perhaps in war, I suppose –

can hardly be a violation

calling for such punishment.

When can he come by?

Tell me, Othello.

I seriously ask myself

what you could ask of me

that I would deny

or at which I would protest.

Listen! Michael Cassio helped you

to win my heart.

And each time I spoke badly of you

he sprang to your defense.

Is it so hard to give him back his job?

I would –

OTHELLO Hush now –

He may come when he feels like it.

I can refuse you nothing.

DESDEMONA Wait a minute

I'm not asking you for a favor.

It's more like reminding you

to wear your gloves

or eat a balanced meal

or put on your warm coat

or not to drink too much

before taking to horseback.

No, if ever I ask you for something

on which our love depends

be sure it will be something big

and important

and hard to say yes to.

OTHELLO I can refuse you nothing.

But if you don't mind

I need to be alone.

DESDEMONA And what if I refuse?

Only kidding.

Bye, sweetie.

OTHELLO Bye, Desdemona

I'll be there in a bit.

DESDEMONA Follow your heart

and whatever you do

I'm still your woman.

OTHELLO Delicious imp.

I am lost if I stop loving you

And if I stop loving you, I am lost.

*exit Desdemona*

IAGO Commander-in-chief

of the armed forces...

OTHELLO Excuse me?

IAGO Did Cassio actually know

you were in love with her?

OTHELLO Yes, of course.

Why do you ask?

IAGO Just checking, to see if I was right.

No further harm.

OTHELLO No further harm?

What was on your mind?

IAGO That he didn't know her yet, back then.

OTHELLO Yes, he did.

He was always running back and forth  
with letters.

IAGO Really?

OTHELLO Really?

What do you mean, really?

Is there anything wrong with that?

Can't he be trusted?

IAGO Trusted?

OTHELLO Trusted?

Yes, trusted, that's what I said!

IAGO As far as I know for a certainty.

OTHELLO But what do you think?

IAGO What I think?

OTHELLO What I think?

You sound like a goddamn echo.

Stop playing peek-a-boo!

Some gruesome monster's hidden away here  
and you don't want to show me.

Something's going on.

'I don't like the looks of this.'

That's what you said just now

when Cassio took leave of Desdemona.

What looks didn't you like?

And when I told you how he helped me  
win her heart

you shouted 'Really?'

Deep grooves appeared on your brow

as if some terrible idea

was locked up in there.

If you love me, speak your mind.

IAGO You know that I do love you.

OTHELLO I think you do.

I know you have a big heart  
that you are true as true can be  
and that you weigh your words.

But that's precisely why this stammering  
alarms me.

A cheat would do that on purpose  
but coming from an honest man  
these are signs of a heart  
choking on its own decency.

IAGO Really

Michael Cassio

I think

is honorable.

OTHELLO I think so too.

IAGO One is what one seems.

What you are not, you mustn't seem.

OTHELLO Indeed, you are what you seem.

IAGO That's why I think  
that Cassio is honorable.

OTHELLO No, there's something else.

Come on, tell me what you think.

What's going on inside that head of yours?

Pull no punches, use the worst of words  
to ventilate the worst of thoughts.

IAGO I'm sorry.

I am bound by duty

but even a slave can't be forced to do that:  
to speak his thoughts.

For what if they are mean and false?

Even the finest house can have a grubby sink  
the purest heart at times impure motives.

OTHELLO You betray your own friend  
when you think he's being deceived

and say nothing.

IAGO Listen, Othello

sometimes I get things all wrong

I tend to look for treachery everywhere

I'm suspicious

sometimes for no good reason

So please

don't heed my shaky accusations

or let my vague and sloppy observations

ruin your good spirits:

it wouldn't be good for your peace of mind and

welfare

or my own self-respect and credibility

were I to say what I am thinking.

OTHELLO For God's sake, man!

What are you talking about?

IAGO A good reputation

is the rock beneath my character.



He who steals my money  
steals worthless scrap  
'tis nothing, 'tis nothing  
it once was mine and now it's his  
and before him  
it belonged to a whole crowd of others –  
Yet he who filches my reputation  
makes himself no richer  
but me all the poorer.

OTHELLO Jesus, tell me what's on your mind.

IAGO No. Even if my heart lay in your hand.

As long as it is mine to guard, I say nothing.

OTHELLO Ha.

IAGO Beware of jealousy  
that green-eyed monster.

That feeds itself laughing  
on its victim's heart.

A cheated man who knows it  
and loves no more is lucky.

But it is a blade twisted in your heart  
if you love deeply and yet you doubt.

When you suspect, loving all the while.

OTHELLO Hideous.

IAGO To be poor and content  
is to be a wealthy man.

But wealth is bitter as the greenest gall  
when you're afraid to lose it.

Good God, spare the hearts of my friends from  
jealousy.

OTHELLO Why – why are you saying this?

Do you believe I wish to live with jealousy  
just to see a new suspicion wax and wane  
with every new phase of the moon?

No: to doubt once is to be sure forever.

I'd be a nincompoop

to worry about the sort of  
ghost-stories 'round the campfire  
that you are telling me.

I will not be jealous  
if you say my love is lovely  
well-rounded  
easy to get on with  
frank in her ways  
that she sings and dances and plays well:  
that makes a pretty thing only prettier.

Though I have faults of my own  
I will not let the fear  
that she might be untrue  
drive a ring through my nose.

She had eyes in her head  
and she chose for me.

No, Iago

I must see before I doubt

and if I doubt, then proof

and with proof:

farewell love, farewell jealousy.

IAGO What a relief!

Now I know that I can speak my heart.

Listen.

I say nothing yet of proof.

But watch Desdemona

when Cassio is by her.

Look without jealousy

but with discernment.

It would be too bad if your goodness

were to be abused by your indulgence.

Take care.

I know our country.

In Venice they display pranks to heaven

that they wouldn't show at home.

Their conscience never says:

do not

but

do not let it be known.

OTHELLO Do you mean that?

IAGO She deceived her father  
when she chose for you.

For when she seemed to shiver  
and shake at the sight of you  
she was, in fact, all googly-eyed.

OTHELLO True enough.

IAGO That's what I'm saying.

If she can fake at such a tender age  
so well that her father walks straight into it  
like an open man-hole –

He thought there was sorcery at play.

But I should be ashamed of myself.

Forgive me, please.

I favor you too much, that's all.

OTHELLO I'm eternally in your debt.

IAGO I see this comes as quite a blow.

OTHELLO No, not at all.

No.

Absolutely not.

IAGO Well, I'm afraid it does.

I hope you realize that

I'm saying all this out of love.

I see that you are moved.

But please, don't take my words  
out of context.

It is suspicion, nothing more.

OTHELLO I won't do that.

IAGO If you did

my words could have a hideous effect  
unintended.

Cassio's a dear, dear friend and –

Othello, I see that you are moved.

OTHELLO No, not really moved.

I believe that Desdemona has been true.

IAGO Long may she remain so  
and long may you continue  
to believe so.

OTHELLO But still  
once nature slips the leash –

IAGO Yes, that's the point.  
I'll put it rather bluntly:  
not to give in to the many advances  
from men of her own background  
of the same color skin  
and the same social class  
to whom one feels attracted by nature –  
Do you catch my drift?  
Such unnatural behavior  
would almost seem proof  
of an obsessive itch for decadence.

Don't misunderstand me  
I'm not talking specifically about her  
though once her common sense awakes  
I fear she'll compare you  
with her countrymen  
and feel regret.

OTHELLO All right, all right already.

Go now.

Keep me posted.

Ask your wife Emilia to keep her eyes peeled.

Leave me now, if you will, Iago.

IAGO Then leave I shall.

*exit Iago*

OTHELLO Why has she chosen me as her own?

That faithful talkbox knows more  
sees more, thinks more, much more  
than he lets on.

*enter Iago*



IAGO Othello, please, just let it go.

Time will do its work.

Of course Cassio must regain his rank

he is extremely suited for it

but if you can delay it a little while

you can plumb his soul

and his intentions too.

Watch Desdemona

see if she pleads on his behalf

and, above all

with how much force and passion.

From that you can learn a great deal.

And meanwhile realize

that I allow my fears to lead me

– a thing I fear with reason –

and believe in her innocence, please.

OTHELLO I'll watch myself.

IAGO Then now I'm really off.

*exit Iago*

OTHELLO There's a man you can count on.

Sharp as a tack

when it comes to what makes people tick.

If indeed she proves to be a rutting filly

I'll cut the reins and leave her

to her fate.

At a gallop. Trot trot. Tick-tack.

And gone she'll be.

Perhaps because I'm black

and not as suave as these armchair generals

perhaps because time's gravity

has made me droop

– still, not too shabby if you ask me –.

Whatever the case, I've been deceived

and retch at the thought of her.

What a relief!

Being in a relationship is such a curse.

I can say: she's mine.

But her desires are not.

I'd rather be a warted toad

in the corner of some dank basement

than leave a little chunk of my beloved

to someone else.

That's the shitty thing about success.

When you fall

you fall farther than the fools below.

It can't be helped. Like death and taxes.

A man-child born

is a man-child born with horns.

*enter Desdemona*

DESDEMONA Hi, sweetheart.

Those friendly islanders are waiting for you

In the banquet hall.

OTHELLO How thoughtless I have been.

DESDEMONA Why do you sound so glum?

Aren't you feeling well?

OTHELLO This stabbing feeling in my forehead here  
and here.

DESDEMONA Not enough sleep  
it will go away.

Tie my kerchief 'round your head.

It will be gone within the hour.

OTHELLO It is too small a thing.

Leave it.

Come, let us go in.

DESDEMONA I'm sorry you're not feeling well.

*exit Othello and Desdemona*

*enter Emilia*

EMILIA What luck

that I have found this kerchief!

Her first present from Othello.

My husband

– who must be off his nut –

has begged me a hundred times  
to steal it  
but she holds it so dear  
and promised Othello not to ever lose it  
that she carries it with her always.

First I'll have a copy made  
and give that to Iago.

I don't know what he plans to do  
but why not humor him?

*enter Iago*

IAGO Hey, whoa!

What are you doing here alone?

EMILIA Stop sneaking up on me!

I have something for you.

IAGO What kind of something?

Something sweet?

EMILIA Wha?

IAGO Or something dirty?

EMILIA Christ, man.

What would you give me for that kerchief?

IAGO What kerchief?

EMILIA What kerchief?

Why

the kerchief Othello gave to Desdemona  
and that you keep asking me to steal.

IAGO Did you steal it?

EMILIA No, she dropped it by accident.

And I found it by accident.

Look, here it is.

IAGO Ah, good girl!

Give it here.

EMILIA What do you plan to do with it  
that you wanted me to steal it so badly?

IAGO What business is that of yours?

EMILIA If it's not for something useful  
then give it back.

Desdemona will go mad if she loses it.

IAGO It is none of your bee's wax.

I can put it to good use.

Bye bye.

For as my grandma always said:

'dangerous conceits

are in their natures poisons

which at the first are scarce

found to distaste

but, with a little act upon the blood

burn like the mines of sulphur. '

*exit Emilia*

*enter Othello*

Oh look, my friend is back.

Opium or valium

or all the Rohypnol in the world

won't procure him the sweet, silly sleep

of which he drank so deeply only yesterday.

OTHELLO Oh. Faithless.

She.

Me.

Oh.

IAGO Come, come, Othello.

Knock it off.

OTHELLO Go away.

Vanish.

You have put me on the rack.

No, I swear to God

I'd rather be cheated on a thousand times  
than know it once.

IAGO What's all this about?

OTHELLO What did I know  
of her secret slutty rendezvous?  
I saw nothing, thought nothing  
knew no pain



I slept well every night, ate well

I whistled while I worked.

Cassio's kisses I never tasted on her lips.

If I am robbed, but miss nothing

then don't tell me

and I have not been robbed.

IAGO A terrible thing to hear.

OTHELLO The whole army

as far as I'm concerned

the cannon fodder too

may bend her to its will

as long as I know nothing.

Gone, forever, my peace of mind

gone too my happiness.

Gone, the saber's rattle and grandeur of war

that lend ambition its sheen.

Oh, gone, my snorting steed

my blaring trumpet

stirring drum-roll

keening fife

proud banner and gone the whole shebang

the pride, the glint of sun on steel

iron discipline of the deadly war machine.

Screaming as one voice

to drown out the thunder.

Gone: Othello is unmanned.

IAGO I don't understand!?

OTHELLO Rat-fucker.

Prove that she's a whore

Show me, I must see it with my own eyes.

Or I'll gut you like a mackerel.

IAGO Have we sunk so low?

OTHELLO Show me.

Prove it beyond a reasonable doubt.

Or you are dead meat.

IAGO Listen, please, dear friend..

OTHELLO If you besmirch her and torture me  
forget then all forms of mercy.

Worse than this defies all thought  
were you to gas and burn a continent.

IAGO My God. I'm speechless.

Are you human?

Have you a heart and reason?

So fire me.

I am an idiot.

My honesty turns against me.

Hideous world.

Look, look then, world!

It is dangerous to be open and frank.

Thanks for sharing.

The love for my friend I banish now  
for that love has led to this shame.

OTHELLO No, stop  
you must be honest.

IAGO I must be sensible.

To be honest is to be dumb.

You destroy that

which you would have saved.

OTHELLO I don't know what to think;

Desdemona is true and she is not.

You are honest and you are not.

I must have proof.

Her name, so unblemished as Diana's visage  
is now besmeared and black as my own face.

As long as rope or knife, poison, fire  
or a roaring river still exist

I cannot bear this.

I must be sure.

IAGO I see this passion eats away at you.

I'm sorry if I insinuated a thing.

You want to be sure?

OTHELLO Want? Must. Shall.

IAGO And can.

Be that.

But how?

How can one be sure?

By peeping at her like some little pervert?

While she does the dirty deed?

OTHELLO Death! Death! Death!

IAGO T'would be a fair chore, I suppose

to trick them into that.

They'd have to be insane

to diddle each other

with someone else around.

What then? What now?

What shall I say?

Where must we find certainty?

You'll never get to see that

not even if they were lewd as goats

randy as baboons

horny as bitch-wolves in heat  
and reckless as a pair of drunken trolls.  
But if eyewitness accounts and hearsay  
– which tell a truth of their own, my lord –  
can grant you certainty, then you'll have it.

OTHELLO Give me proof of her adultery  
open and shut.

IAGO It's a hard task you give me.

But now that I have wandered  
down this road  
due to my own stupid honesty and love  
I shall not turn back.

Not long ago I slept over at Cassio's:  
I had a toothache and barely caught a wink.  
And you know, you've got these people  
who blather in their sleep  
– Cassio is one of those.

In his sleep I heard him say:

'Sweet Desdemona

we must take care and hide our love.'

And then he seized my hand and squeezed it

groaned: 'Cara mia'

and kissed me on the lips

he almost sucked my tongue out by the root threw

his leg over mine

and sighed, and kissed

and then cried out: 'why, oh why

did that barbarian have to find you first!'

OTHELLO Oh. Hideous. Most hideous.

IAGO Listen, it was only a dream.

OTHELLO But one which speaks

of previous experience.

IAGO Yes, even though it was a dream

it does make them look rather guilty

and might support evidence  
otherwise too scanty.

OTHELLO I shall tear her to pieces.

IAGO We must control ourselves.

We haven't seen anything yet  
she may be faithful – still.

But tell me

have you ever seen that kerchief of hers?

The one with the strawberries on it?

OTHELLO Seen it!?

It was I who gave it her, my first gift of love.

IAGO Could well be

but I saw Cassio with just such a kerchief

–I know for sure it was the one she wears –  
using it to wipe his beard.

OTHELLO Be that the one –

IAGO Be that the one, or another of hers –



With the evidence we have  
it speaks against her.

OTHELLO I wish

that slave had forty- thousand lives.

One is too little

too meager for my vengeance.

Now I know for sure.

Look here, Iago

all the vain love I had

is blown to kingdom come.

Bye bye!

Black vengeance

rear your head from deepest hell

love, surrender your crown and throne

to a hate without mercy.

Heart, burst beneath the weight

of this poisonous cargo.

IAGO Try to stay calm.

OTHELLO Blood, blood, blood.

IAGO Calm down, I tell you  
perhaps you'll change your mind.

OTHELLO Never, Iago, never.

I am a sea where the tide never turns.

My murderous thoughts roll in

like pounding waves

never to recede

and will allow no love to mingle

with the current

until a ruthless vengeance

has calmed the surf.

I swear with all I have.

IAGO Don't get up yet.

Bear witness

eternal glowing coals above

forces of nature

that surround us witness this

that Iago hereby places head and hands  
and heart

in the service of the cuckold Othello.

In heartfelt empathy I shall obey  
even the bloodiest of commands.

OTHELLO Thank you for your friendship.

It means everything to me.

And I shall put you to work at once:

within three days I want to hear from you  
that Cassio is asleep in Jesus.

IAGO My friend is no more.

What's done is done –

at your request, of course.

But pray, let her live.

OTHELLO God's wounds!

The cunning bitch.

God's wounds, I say!

Come with me.

I'm off to think about the best way

I can finish her off.

You're my lieutenant now.

IAGO Always at your service.

6

*act III-4*

DESDEMONA Where could that kerchief be?

EMILIA I don't know, Desdemona.

DESDEMONA I would rather have lost  
my purse, I tell you.

Good thing Othello is sure of himself  
and not the jealous kind.

Otherwise he'd flip his lid.

EMILIA Is he not jealous?

DESDEMONA Who, he?

No, that subtropical sun  
burned it right out of him.

EMILIA Look, here he comes.

*enter Othello*

DESDEMONA This time I won't let him go.

Fetch Cassio.

How are you feeling, Othello?

OTHELLO Fine.

And you?

DESDEMONA Fine.

OTHELLO Give me your hand.

This palm is moist.

DESDEMONA Yet still young and free of care.

OTHELLO All indications of a full and generous  
heart.

Hot, hot and sopping wet!

This hand of yours

calls for strict restraint

for fasting and prayer

a thousand lashes

godly devotion

for here we have  
a young and sweaty devil  
who rails against heaven.

It is a pretty hand.

A hand that's free.

DESDEMONA And you should know  
for it was this hand that gave you my heart.

OTHELLO An open hand.

Once you gave your hand with all your heart  
today your hand, but not your heart.

DESDEMONA I don't get it.

Come now, your promise.

OTHELLO Which promise was that, pussycat?

DESDEMONA I've called for Cassio  
that you might speak to him.

OTHELLO My nose is runny and my gullet  
raw and burning as the gates of hell.

Could I borrow your kerchief?

DESDEMONA Of course.

OTHELLO No, the one I gave you.

DESDEMONA I don't have it with me.

OTHELLO You don't have it with you?

DESDEMONA No, I really don't.

OTHELLO Ooooh, that's bad news!

My mother received it from a man of Egypt.

And it has special powers:

as long as you keep it

you stay in love with the one who gave it.

But lose it or give it away

and disaster pounces.

DESDEMONA Is that possible?

OTHELLO Of course.

It has magic powers.

It is dyed in mummy juice

squeezed from the hearts

of a thousand virgins.



DESDEMONA No kidding?

OTHELLO I kid you not.

So take good care of it.

DESDEMONA If only I had never had it.

OTHELLO Ha. And why is that?

DESDEMONA Why do you sound  
so strange and excited?

OTHELLO Is it lost? Is it gone?

Tell me, has it disappeared?

DESDEMONA What's all this about?

OTHELLO What's that?

DESDEMONA It is not lost

but even if it were, what then?

OTHELLO What?

DESDEMONA It is not lost, I'm telling you.

OTHELLO Fetch it then, show it to me.

DESDEMONA Okay, but not right now.

This is some trick, to avoid what I'm asking.

Please, take Cassio back on.

OTHELLO Fetch the kerchief

I am getting dizzy.

DESDEMONA Come on

you'll never find a man as capable.

OTHELLO The kerchief.

DESDEMONA Please

I want to talk about Cassio.

OTHELLO The kerchief.

DESDEMONA A man

who's built his career on love for you

fought beside you –

OTHELLO The kerchief.

DESDEMONA Really

you're being unreasonable.

OTHELLO Goddamn.

EMILIA And you're saying

this guy's not jealous?

DESDEMONA I've never seen him  
like this before.

EMILIA Men are like stomachs  
and we their food.

They gobble us down greedily

And when they're full

barf us all over the street.

7

*act IV-4*

IAGO Do you really think so?

OTHELLO Do I think so, Iago?

IAGO So what

a little kissing behind the curtains?

OTHELLO Kissing is not allowed.

IAGO Or lying around naked with her friend

for a couple of hours in bed

with only the best of intentions.

OTHELLO Naked in bed, Iago

with only the best of intentions?

That is slapping the devil in the face.

To do a thing like that with good intentions

is like asking Satan to deliver cupcakes  
in heaven.

IAGO But if they don't do anything  
then you could turn a blind eye?

Look, if I give my love a kerchief –

OTHELLO Then what?

IAGO Well, then it belongs to her.

And if it's hers

she may, methinks

give it to another man.

OTHELLO Her virtue is hers as well:

may she surrender that too?

IAGO Her virtue is made of stuff invisible

many possess it who don't have it at all.

But, okay, a kerchief like that –

OTHELLO Jesus, I wish I had forgotten.

You said – it's as though a raven

were picking at my memory –

you said he had my kerchief.

IAGO Yes, but so what?

OTHELLO It doesn't sound too good.

IAGO If I were to say

that I had seen him make a fool of you?

Or heard him say

– the way that braggarts can't shut up

after they've hopped some easy piece of fluff –

OTHELLO Did he say something?

IAGO Oh, did he!

But, believe me

nothing he won't deny right away.

OTHELLO What did he say?

IAGO God, that he – I don't know.

That he –

OTHELLO What? What?

IAGO Lay.

OTHELLO With her?

IAGO With her, on top of her, as you like.

OTHELLO Lay with her? Lay on her?

Lay, lay, she was laid, she lied!

Lay on her!

Christ, the obscenity –

Kerchief. Confession. Kerchief. –

Confess and then hang him for his troubles.

First hanged and then confessed.

I'm shaking like a leaf.

This gloom's a sign

that my fears are justified.

It's not the words that make me shake.

Arggh.

Noses, ears and lips.

It can't be true?

Confess. Kerchief. Devil.

*faints*

*comes to*

IAGO Are you okay?

Did you fall down, go 'boom'?

OTHELLO Are you ridiculing me?

IAGO Ridiculing you?

No, of course not.

I was wishing you'd shoulder your problems like a man.

OTHELLO A man with horns  
is a monster and a beast.

IAGO Then our city streets are full of beasts  
and many monsters walk about in suits.

OTHELLO Has he confessed?

IAGO Come on and be a man!

Forget not that every male with stubble  
groans beneath the same burden.

Millions lie at night 'twixt sheets  
befouled by others.

You're in better shape than that



yet still it remains an infernal joke:  
there in your safe bed  
suspecting nothing  
to kiss the lips of your adulteress.  
No, I need to know  
so that I know what I am  
and what she shall become.

OTHELLO Well put, well put indeed.

IAGO Wait.

A little exercise in patience here.

While you were lying in a swoon –  
not really, excuse me

a sign of much manhood –

suddenly Cassio was standing here.

I shooed him away

came up with a plausible excuse

for your weakness

and asked him to come back later for a talk.

Which he promised.

Hide yourself and witness the condescending and  
mocking look upon his face.

For I shall have him tell again the whole story  
start to finish

where, in what position, how often, how long and  
when

He did the deed with Desdemona  
and will do it again.

Pay careful attention to his attitude.

And please, control yourself  
try not to act like some sentimental baby.

OTHELLO Listen, Iago.

I shall apply my patience most craftily  
But also – hear me well – most bloodily.

IAGO Sounds good to me, Othello.

But all things in moderation.

Go now and hide.

*Iago talks to Cassio sneeringly about his favorite whore. But Iago makes Othello believe that Cassio is talking about Desdemona.*

OTHELLO How shall I kill him  
let me count the ways!

IAGO Did you see him smirk  
over his own dastardly deed?

OTHELLO Iago.

IAGO And did you see the kerchief?

OTHELLO Was it mine?

IAGO Absolutely yours.

And how he sang her praises  
that foolish woman, your beloved.  
She gave it to him  
and he gave it to his favorite whore.

OTHELLO I'll kill him slowly  
for nine long years.

Sweetest, lovely, pretty wife.

IAGO You must forget her.

OTHELLO Yes, may she rot and burn  
and return to hell this night  
her life is over.

No, my heart has turned to stone  
it pains me to touch it.

There is no lovelier creature  
in all this world:

in bed with an emperor

she orders his comings and goings.

IAGO No, you're going about this all wrong.

OTHELLO She shall hang

I'm only telling you how she is:

she is a cunning seamstress

a virtuoso with her instrument.

The way she plays the flute  
would tame the wildest bear.

With so much skill and fantasy.

IAGO That only makes it worse.

OTHELLO A thousand times worse  
a thousand times.

And really, such a willing character.

IAGO Ready and willing, yes.

OTHELLO No, indeed.

It is such a pity, Iago –

Oh, Iago, such a pity, Iago.

IAGO If you can't help but drool  
over her immoral acts  
then let her go about her business  
for if it doesn't hurt you  
who does it hurt?

OTHELLO I'll saw her into pieces.

Would she make me a cuckold!?

IAGO It's not very nice of her.

OTHELLO With Cassio, my lieutenant.

IAGO Adding insult to injury like that.

OTHELLO Bring me poison, Iago  
this very night.

I shall not lay everything on the table  
lest her beautiful body  
make me change my mind.

Tonight, Iago.

IAGO Not with poison, no!

Strangle her in bed –  
that same bed she's befouled.

OTHELLO Good, yes, justice.

A nice touch, that. Very well.

IAGO And leave Cassio to me.

Tonight you shall hear more.

OTHELLO Excellent, good.

8

*act IV-2*

OTHELLO So you have never seen a thing?

EMILIA No never heard a thing  
nor ever suspected her.

OTHELLO Yes you did, you saw Cassio –  
together with her.

EMILIA Never did I see anything improper  
and I could hear every word they said.

OTHELLO You mean, they never whispered?

EMILIA Never.

OTHELLO Or sent you away?

EMILIA Never.

OTHELLO To fetch her fan, her glove  
her mask or something?

EMILIA Never.

OTHELLO That's strange.

EMILIA I'm sure she's faithful  
really.

If you think otherwise  
then chase that thought away  
for it infects your heart.

If some lecher has whispered this in your ear  
then he deserves the worst of punishments.

OTHELLO Ask her to come here.

Hurry up.

*exit Desdemona*

She says all kinds of things.

But she's still a brothelkeeper

who hides her dirtiest tricks

beneath the flat rock of appearance.

And meanwhile Desdemona acts

like the holy Virgin Mary herself.



*enter Desdemona*

DESDEMONA Othello, what is it?

OTHELLO Please, darling, do come here.

DESDEMONA What's up?

OTHELLO I want to see your eyes  
look at me.

DESDEMONA Why are you acting so creepy?

OTHELLO One of your duties, Emilia  
is to leave the copulators alone  
behind closed doors  
to cough or clear your throat  
– 'uh-hum' –  
when someone's coming.  
Get to work, get to work. Go.

*exit Emilia*

DESDEMONA What on earth  
are you talking about?

I understand the anger in your words

but not the words themselves.

OTHELLO Say it. What are you?

DESDEMONA Your wife, my sweet.

Your faithful, loving wife.

OTHELLO Come, swear by it

and curse yourself.

So the Devil knows

who's waiting for him

and isn't fooled by your angel face.

Curse yourself twice over.

Swear that you've been true.

DESDEMONA I am that, and that is enough.

OTHELLO You are that, yes

untrue as all hell.

DESDEMONA With whom?

With whom, tell me?

How have I been untrue?

OTHELLO Ah, Demon-ah, Desdemona

Be gone, be gone, be gone.

DESDEMONA Oh terrible day.

Why are you weeping?

Am I the cause of those tears?

Do you believe that my father  
is behind your reprimand?

Then do not put the blame on me.

If he casts you away

then me he casts away as well.

OTHELLO If I were faced with evil days

if disease and scandal

were heaped upon my head

were starvation to stare me in the eye

and I myself and all my hopes

be taken prisoner

then I would have found

one drop of patience in myself.

But to be pointed out for all time

as the brunt of the joke!

Yes, even that I could bear  
very well in fact, quite well.

But to have that place

where I have kept my heart

where I live or where I die

the source from which my life's stream flows

or otherwise falls dry –

to be evicted from that place

or have it made a cesspit

for the spawning of filthy frogs.

Oh, now your cheeks have lost their glow!

Patience, young angel with your rosy lips

yes, now your gaze is grim as hell itself.

DESDEMONA I hope you know

that I've been faithful.

OTHELLO Oh yes, faithful

as flies on meat at noon's hot hour

that mount each other soon  
as they are hatched.

Noxious you are  
a weed seeming lovely and aromatic  
that pricks and stings the senses.  
I wish that you were never born.

DESDEMONA Christ, could it be  
that I have done something terrible  
without knowing about it?

OTHELLO Could this white page be made  
to scribble 'whore' upon?

Done something.

Done?

Poxie whore!

Done something.

The moon eclipses in shame.

Even the riotous wind hides away

in the deepest grottos and plugs its ears.

Done something!

Shameless slut.

DESDEMONA Now you're going too far.

OTHELLO Are you no slut, then?

DESDEMONA No, I don't suppose I am.

If guarding this body against advances  
on behalf of the man I love  
makes me no slut  
then I am not.

OTHELLO What? Not a whore?

DESDEMONA No, by all that I hold dear.

OTHELLO How can that be?

DESDEMONA This is too pathetic.

OTHELLO I'm so very sorry.

For a moment there I thought you were  
that cunning whore from Venice  
who married Othello.

You.

Madam.

Who guards the ports of hell –

you, yes, you.

Here's where we get off.

And here's money for your pains.

So lock the door and seal your lips

and keep Desdemona here.

9

*act v-2*

*Othello watches Desdemona sleep*

OTHELLO It is her crime

her crime, my God

I will not speak the words

oh stars in all your purity

it is her crime.

Still, I shall not shed her blood

or cut into her snow-white skin

smooth as marble.

Yet die she shall

or other men she will betray.

Put out the light and then put out the light.

If I snuff out your flame, good candle



and then regret my act  
I can give you back your light.  
But you, most perfect act of Nature  
if I put out your light  
I do not know where I can find  
Prometheus' fire  
to make you flame again.  
If I pick a rose  
it does not bloom on  
but withers.  
Unpicked I revel in your smell.  
Sweet breath  
that almost breaks in two the sword of justice.  
Once more, and once more.  
Once you are dead, you must remain so:  
I slay you, and love you still.  
Once more.  
The final time.

So sweet yet oh-so deadly.

I must weep.

But the tears I shed are cruel.

My pain is great.

I punish because I love.

She's waking up.

DESDEMONA Who are you? Othello?

OTHELLO Yes, Desdemona.

DESDEMONA Are you coming to bed  
dearest?

OTHELLO Have you washed yourself?

DESDEMONA Yes, my love.

OTHELLO If there is any crime  
of which you've not come clean  
then purify your conscience too.

DESDEMONA What do you mean by that darling?

OTHELLO Just do it

And make it quick.

I'll wait over there.

I will not kill you unprepared

no, for God's sake

I would not kill your soul.

DESDEMONA Did you say 'kill'?

OTHELLO You heard me right.

DESDEMONA My God.

OTHELLO Amen is all I'll add to that.

DESDEMONA But if you say that

you will not kill me.

OTHELLO Hmm.

DESDEMONA Still, you're scaring me.

When you look at me

with that murderous gaze.

I don't know why I should be afraid

for I have done no wrong.

But still, I'm scared.

OTHELLO Reflect on the error of your ways.

DESDEMONA My only error is  
to love too much.

OTHELLO Yes, and for that you must die.

DESDEMONA That is unnatural  
to kill for having loved.

Why are you chewing on your lip like that?

A fire is raging inside you  
you're shaking like a leaf.

It's a sign of something

but I hope

I hope

it doesn't point to me.

OTHELLO Peace, be still.

DESDEMONA Okay.

So tell me: what's going on?

OTHELLO The kerchief that I found so fair  
and gave to you

you gave to Cassio.

DESDEMONA No, I swear.

Bring him here, ask him yourself.

OTHELLO Sweet angel, beware  
beware of perjury.

You're lying on your deathbed.

DESDEMONA Me?

But not to die already.

OTHELLO Yes, any moment now.

So confess your sins most freely  
for denying every charge I make  
will not foil or undo my plan.

You must die.

DESDEMONA O, my God

have pity on me.

Have pity on me, Othello.

I have never done you wrong  
never loved Cassio as anything more  
than a good friend

never given him anything precious.

OTHELLO Goddamn it

I saw my kerchief in his hand.

Liar, you turn my heart to stone  
and make a murder out of what I meant  
to be a sacrifice.

I saw that kerchief.

DESDEMONA He must have found it.

I never gave it to him.

Bring him here  
and let him tell you himself.

OTHELLO He has already told all.

DESDEMONA What?

OTHELLO That he has known you.

DESDEMONA What? In the Biblical sense?

OTHELLO Yes.

DESDEMONA He would never say a thing  
like that.

OTHELLO Indeed, he will never say a thing again.

My friend Iago has seen to that.

DESDEMONA Is that true?

Is he dead?

OTHELLO If he had lives like hairs on his head  
my vengeance would have plucked them  
one by one.

DESDEMONA He has been led into a trap  
and I am lost.

OTHELLO Drop dead, whore  
crying your eyes out over him  
here, in front of me?

DESDEMONA Send me away  
but don't kill me.

OTHELLO Lie down, whore.

DESDEMONA Let me live tonight  
murder me tomorrow.

OTHELLO If you put up a fight...

DESDEMONA Just half an hour longer.

OTHELLO I have begun

and there is no stopping me –

DESDEMONA A final prayer, please.

OTHELLO Too late.

DESDEMONA Oh, Othello. Othello. Othello.

*he kills her*

EMILIA Othello, Othello.

Open up.

Othello, Othello.

OTHELLO Who shouts there?

EMILIA Open up. Othello. Othello.

OTHELLO Who is it?

EMILIA Oh, Othello

I have to talk to you.

OTHELLO It's Emilia.

Hold on.



EMILIA Please, I have to talk to you.

Oh, Othello.

OTHELLO I'm coming, Emilia.

*enter Emilia*

Where are you?

What's going on here anyway?

EMILIA A most hideous murder  
has been performed.

OTHELLO What? Just now?

EMILIA Yes, just now.

OTHELLO It is the moon's fault.

She approaches the earth too close  
and drives men mad.

EMILIA Cassio has killed Rodrigo.

OTHELLO Rodrigo, dead?

And Cassio, dead?

EMILIA No, Cassio is not dead!

OTHELLO Cassio not dead?

*Emilia sees the dead Desdemona*

EMILIA Who did this?

OTHELLO No one, I did.

How could she be killed?

EMILIA Yes, who knows?

OTHELLO It wasn't me.

She cheated on me, she was a whore.

EMILIA You're lying.

You're mad.

OTHELLO She was a snake in the grass.

EMILIA And you a wolfman, gory with blood.

She was faithful as a puppy.

OTHELLO She and Cassio were bumping uglies.

Ask your husband if you don't believe me.

Hang me high from the rafters of hell

if I had no good reason

to apply this sanction most extreme.

Your husband knows everything.

EMILIA My husband?

OTHELLO Your husband.

EMILIA That she was cheating on you?

OTHELLO Yes, with Cassio.

Or else I would never-ever-ever  
have done such a thing.

EMILIA My husband?

OTHELLO Yes, he was the first to tell me.

Honest as he is  
he cannot bear the sickly smell  
of pitiful fiddling about.

EMILIA My husband?

OTHELLO Why do you keep asking me that?

Your husband, yes.

EMILIA My husband said she was cheating?

OTHELLO That's him.

That's what I said, your husband.

Don't you know the word?

My friend, your husband.

The most honest and upright Iago.

EMILIA If he says that

may his limbs rot one by one.

He's lying through his teeth

his nose, his ears.

She was wild about that filthy Arab.

OTHELLO What!

EMILIA Do to me whatever you like.

You are not worthy of heaven.

And you are not worthy of her.

OTHELLO Shut your goddamn face, woman.

EMILIA Ass. Fool. Brainless barbarian.

What you have done –

I'm not afraid of your sword –

I'll scream it all over the place

even if you kill me twenty times.

Help, help, ho, help.

This ape has murdered my Desdemona.

Murder. Murder.

*enter Iago*

Good going, Iago

letting murderers lay the blame on you.

If you're a man, then say he's lying.

He claims you said

that Desdemona was untrue.

I know you didn't do that

you're not that mean.

Say it.

My heart is breaking.

IAGO I told him what I thought.

I told him nothing more

than what he himself saw

as being true.

EMILIA But did you ever tell him

that she was untrue?

IAGO Yes.

EMILIA You lied.

A hideous lie.

A lie, a cruel, cruel lie.

She, cheating with Cassio?

Did you say it was Cassio?

IAGO With Cassio, yes.

Come on now, shut your mouth.

EMILIA No, I will not shut my mouth.

I have to speak.

Desdemona lies here in bed  
murdered.

And your lies lay behind that murder.

Cruel, cruel, cruel.

I've got it now

– it stinks to high heaven –

oh, cruelty.

I figured as much.

I shall do myself in.

Oh, cruel, most cruel.

IAGO Have you gone mad?

Hurry up, go home.

EMILIA Not much chance, Iago  
of me ever going home again.

OTHELLO Oh, oh, oh.

EMILIA Yes, fall to your knees  
and scream as you like.

For you have taken the dearest  
purest thing there is  
and murdered it.

*Othello* premiered as *Bye Bye* on the 8th of March  
2011 at the Frascati Theater, Amsterdam

with:

Kuno Bakker

Gillis Biesheuvel

Chaib Massaoudi

[www.doodpaard.nl](http://www.doodpaard.nl)



Toneelgezelschap Dood Paard (Amsterdam, 1993) is a theater collective consisting of Kuno Bakker, Gillis Biesheuvel, Marten Oosthoek, Raymond Querido, René Rood and Manja Topper. Dood Paard has in the past translated and adapted a number of Shakespeare's plays, including *Titus Andronicus*, *Julius Caesar*, *Coriolanus*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Troilus en Cressida*.

Translator and writer Sam Garrett (1956) is an American who currently divides his time between Amsterdam and the French Pyrenees. As well as work by Arnon Grunberg and Tommy Wieringa, he has also translated books by Tim Krabbé, Geert Mak and Frank Westerman.

William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616) was an English poet and playwright, widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and the world's pre-eminent dramatist. His surviving works, including some collaborations, consist of about 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems, and several other poems. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright.

## Toneelwerk

### Tragedies

*The Tragedy of Titus Andronicus* – 1593/1594

*The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* – 1595/1596

*The Tragedy of Julius Caesar* – 1599

*The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* –  
1600/1601

*The Tragedy of Othello, The Moor of Venice* – 1604

*The Tragedy of King Lear* – 1605

*The Tragedy of Macbeth* – 1606

*The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra* – 1606/1607

*The Life of Timon of Athens* – 1607/1608

*The Tragedy of Coriolanus* – 1607/1608

### Komedies

*The Comedy of Errors* – 1592-1594

*The Taming of the Shrew* – 1593/1594

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* – 1594

*Love's Labour's Lost* – 1594/1595

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* – 1595/1596

*The Merchant of Venice* – 1596/1597

*The Merry Wives of Windsor* – 1597 – *revisie ca.*

1600/1601

*Much Ado About Nothing* – 1598/1599

*As You Like It* – 1599

*Twelfth Night, or What You Will* – 1601/1602

*All's Well That Ends Well* – 1602/1603

*Measure for Measure* – 1604

## Historical plays

*The First Part of King Henry the Sixth* – 1589/1590 –  
*revisie* 1594/1595

*The Second Part of King Henry the Sixth –*

1590/1591

*The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth – 1590/1591*

*The Tragedy of Richard the Third – 1592/1593*

*Edward III – 1592-1595 - – auteurschap onzeker*

*The Life and Death of King John – 1594-1596*

*The Tragedy of King Richard the Second – 1595*

*The First Part of King Henry the Fourth – 1596/1597*

*The Second Part of Henry the Fourth – 1598*

*The Life of Henry the Fifth – 1599*

*The History of Troilus and Cressida – 1601/1602*

*The Life of King Henry the Eighth – 1612/1613*

## Romances

*Pericles, Prince of Tyre – 1607/1608*

*The Tragedy of Cymbeline – 1609/1610*

*The Winter's Tale – 1610/1611*

*The Tempest – De storm – 1611*

